



Office of Inspector General

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United States Department of State
and the Broadcasting Board of Governors
Office of Inspector General

Office of Audits Middle East Region Operations

Evaluation of Emergency Action Plans for Embassy Baghdad and Consulates General Basrah and Erbil

Report Number AUD/MERO-12-18, January 2012

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Spotlight: Evaluation of Emergency Action Plans for Embassy Baghdad and Consulates General Basrah and Erbil

Office of Inspector General
AUD/MERO/12-18

Why OIG Conducted This Audit

The Foreign Affairs Handbook requires all U.S. embassies and posts to prepare an emergency action plan (EAP) that provides procedures for responding to foreseeable emergency situations. Emergency situations can differ depending on location and political stability in a particular region, so an EAP must be tailored to the specific post.

Objectives

The Office of Inspector General (OIG) conducted this audit to determine whether existing or definable resources were available and adequate to respond to emergencies, personnel under COM authority were aware of the emergency procedures, the EAP was effective as demonstrated by practice drills and exercises, and the EAP was current and encompassed all personnel under COM authority.

What OIG Determined

The *Foreign Affairs Handbook* requires U.S. embassies to maintain emergency action plans (EAP) to respond to emergency situations. OIG determined the Embassy Baghdad EAP was prepared in compliance with Department of State guidance and that embassy officials had identified the resources required to implement the EAP. Embassy Baghdad conducted emergency drills and used the results to improve emergency preparedness and responsiveness. Embassy staff has access to the online EAP, and all newly arriving employees receive training. (b) (5)

[REDACTED]

(b) (5)

[REDACTED]



**United States Department of State
and the Broadcasting Board of Governors**

Office of Inspector General

PREFACE

This report was prepared by the Office of Inspector General (OIG) pursuant to the Inspector General Act of 1978, as amended, and Section 209 of the Foreign Service Act of 1980, as amended. It is one of a series of audit, inspection, investigative, and special reports prepared by OIG periodically as part of its responsibility to promote effective management, accountability and positive change in the Department of State and the Broadcasting Board of Governors.

This report is the result of an assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of the office, post, or function under review. It is based on interviews with employees and officials of relevant agencies and institutions, direct observation, and a review of applicable documents.

The recommendations therein have been developed on the basis of the best knowledge available to the OIG and, as appropriate, have been discussed in draft with those responsible for implementation. It is my hope that these recommendations will result in more effective, efficient, and/or economical operations.

I express my appreciation to all of those who contributed to the preparation of this report.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "H. W. Geisel", written in a cursive style.

Harold W. Geisel
Deputy Inspector General

Acronyms

COM	Chief of Mission
DOD	Department of Defense
DS	Bureau of Diplomatic Security
EAP	Emergency Action Plan
FAH	Foreign Affairs Handbook
OIG	Office of Inspector General

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Executive Summary

The *Foreign Affairs Handbook* (FAH)¹ requires U.S. embassies throughout the world to maintain an emergency action plan (EAP) that provides procedures to respond to emergency situations such as bombs, fires, civil disorders, and evacuations. The Department of State, Office of Inspector General (OIG), conducted this evaluation to determine whether Embassy Baghdad and its constituent posts, Consulates General Basrah and Erbil, had comprehensive, up-to-date, and adequately tested EAPs. The scope of the evaluation was limited to five annexes contained in the U.S. Embassy Baghdad, Iraq, Emergency Action Plan.

OIG determined that the five annexes (C, “Civil Disorder,” D, “Internal Defense,” E, “Destruction of Sensitive Material,” G, “Hostage Taking,” and K, “Drawdown and Evacuation”) were prepared in compliance with Department of State (Department) guidance and that embassy officials had identified the resources required to implement the EAP. Specifically, Embassy Baghdad had conducted emergency drills and used the results of those drills to develop lessons learned and improve the level of emergency preparedness and responsiveness. Embassy staff had access to the EAP on the embassy Intranet site, and all newly arriving staff attended a mandatory security briefing in which the EAP was discussed.

(b) (5)



¹ 12-FAH-1, “Emergency Planning Handbook.”

Background

The FAH² requires that all U.S. embassies and posts prepare an EAP that provides procedures for responding to foreseeable emergency situations. The emergency situations can differ depending on location and political stability in a particular region, so an EAP must be tailored to the specific post. An EAP generally consists of eight chapters, 12 annexes, and nine appendices.

The EAP chapters focus on the legal basis for the authorities and responsibilities for emergency planning and on the organization and identification of personnel designated to fill leadership roles for emergency response, and they describe actions needed for assisting a post's private U.S. citizen community during an emergency. The annexes contain information on how posts should prepare for different types of emergency situations, which may differ from plan to plan based on the post security environment. The appendices contain information such as command and control locations, logistics and transportation, and facility information. (Titles of chapters, annexes, and appendices for the Embassy Baghdad EAP are listed in Appendix B.)

Department guidance³ for EAPs requires all posts to have an EAP and each EAP to be reviewed annually and revised as needed. The guidance also requires each post to have an Emergency Action Committee, which is responsible for preparing and updating the EAP. The Emergency Action Committee includes subject matter experts representing key functions from the mission. Emergency Action Committee members are appointed by the COM, who also selects an Emergency Action Committee chairperson. The Emergency Action Committee's specific responsibilities include the following:

- Conducting vulnerability assessments to identify the post's critical infrastructure assets to be protected.
- Assessing the post's and host government's capabilities and limitations for emergency response.
- Using the results of the capabilities and limitation assessments to draft the EAP.
- Developing the tripwires⁴ and actions to take when those events are met.
- Updating the EAP as required.

To ensure uniformity, posts are required to use the Crisis and Emergency Planning Application when preparing and updating their EAP. The Crisis and Emergency Planning Application is a Web-based application designed to assist in the development of EAPs and ensure compliance with the Emergency Planning Handbook. The Crisis and Emergency Planning Application is designed to produce an EAP that complies with all 12-FAH-1 requirements, allowing embassies to copy and paste language from the 12-FAH-1 to their respective EAP.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Tripwires are events that activate, initiate, or set in motion plans to prevent harm to the post, its personnel, the U.S. citizen community, or other U.S. national interests.

Once the Emergency Action Committee certifies in the Crisis and Emergency Planning Application that a section of the EAP is complete and accurate, the Crisis and Emergency Planning Application automatically sends a copy of that section to the Bureau of Diplomatic Security (DS) for review. After completing its review, DS notifies the post of the results. Once the post addresses any substantive issues, DS publishes the unclassified portions of the EAP on the DS Web site. The EAPs, including any classified portions, are posted to DS's Secure On-line User Resource and Communication Environment.

Evaluation Objective

The objective of this evaluation was to determine whether

- existing or definable resources were available and adequate to respond to emergencies covered by selected EAP annexes,
- personnel under COM authority were aware of the emergency procedures,
- the EAP was effective as demonstrated by practice drills and exercises, and
- the EAP was current and encompassed all personnel under COM authority.

This evaluation is one of three reports concerning EAPs. This report focuses on the U.S. Mission Iraq EAP. The two other reports will focus on U.S. Mission Afghanistan and U.S. Mission Pakistan EAPs.

As noted in Appendix A, "Scope and Methodology, the evaluation was limited to the EAP annexes on civil disorder, internal defense, destruction of sensitive material, hostage taking, and drawdown and evacuation, as these are the areas that are most relevant to recent events in the Middle East.

Evaluation Results

Embassy Baghdad's Emergency Action Plan Was Adequate (b) (5)

Embassy Baghdad's EAP Annexes C, D, E, G, and K were prepared and tested in accordance with FAH⁵ requirements. Specifically, the post had identified and made available the resources needed to respond to the emergencies covered in the five annexes. In addition, the post kept its staff informed of the emergency procedures and periodically conducted practice drills to test and improve the EAP. (b) (5)

⁵ 12-FAH-1.

Emergency Action Plan Annexes Provide Guidance

Embassy Baghdad's EAP Annexes C, D, E, G, and K provide guidance to COM personnel areas as follows:

- Annex C, "Civil Disorder" – This annex⁶ provides guidance for situations such as "general strikes, anniversaries of highly emotional incidents, major holidays . . . , demonstrations, . . . curfews, or any other politically inspired activity that has the potential for violence, whether or not it is directed against U.S. personnel or premises."
- Annex D, "Internal Defense" – This annex⁷ provides guidance "to safeguard" embassy or consulate employees "when an incident . . . requires an internal defense response." Such incidents include "terrorism, mob action or political unrest," and they "may occur without warning or as a result of days or weeks of increasing tension."
- Annex E, "Destruction of Sensitive Materials" – This annex⁸ provides guidance aiming "to prevent classified national security information, as well as Sensitive But Unclassified (SBU) information and materials,"⁹ from being compromised by reducing the quantity of classified and SBU material held at posts."
- Annex G, "Hostage Taking" – This annex¹⁰ "provides guidance for dealing with a kidnapping or hostage taking of any U.S. citizen, . . . as well as dealing with a hostage barricade situation, other than an aircraft hijacking." This annex includes a "Missing Person Information Card," which should be filled out by the employee as part of the check-in process upon the employee's arrival at post.
- Annex K, "Drawdown and Evacuation" – This annex¹¹ provides guidance for posts to follow when a drawdown of post personnel or options for evacuation situations occur. According to the annex, "These include standing fast, allowing employees and [eligible] family members to depart post . . . as well as limiting the number of incoming staff," and evacuation under Authorized Departure or Ordered Departure.

Embassy Baghdad's Emergency Action Plan Was Adequately Resourced and Tested

Embassy Baghdad's EAP Annexes C, D, E, G, and K contained all information required by the FAH (12 FAH-1). In addition, the post had identified and made available the resources

⁶ Annex C-1.1, "Overview-Purpose."

⁷ Annex D-1.1(a) and (b), "Overview-Purpose."

⁸ Annex E-1.1(a), "Overview-Purpose."

⁹ Sensitive But Unclassified information is information that is not classified for national security reasons but that warrants administrative control and protection from public or other unauthorized disclosure for other reasons. Sensitive But Unclassified material could include personal information, such as social security numbers, proprietary information, and law enforcement information.

¹⁰ Annex G-1.1(a) and (b), "Overview-Purpose."

¹¹ Annex K-1.1, Overview-Purpose."

needed to respond to the emergencies covered by those annexes, kept staff informed of the applicable emergency procedures, and periodically conducted practice drills to test and improve the annexes. The resources made available included manpower, vehicles, equipment, and an agreement with DOD to provide security for COM personnel serving in Iraq. Each annex included points of contact for every emergency situation cited in the annex. OIG verified that the points of contact list contained accurate information, including names, position titles, telephone numbers, and email addresses. Annexes had detailed instructions to individuals or groups, including the incident commanders, the person receiving the threat, and the Emergency Action Committee.

The post ensured that all staff was aware that the EAP was located on the post's Intranet site. The post also conducted weekly testing of the public address system, the "Big Voice," during which time specific instructions were given for every emergency type. The Regional Security Office requires all newcomers under COM to attend a mandatory security briefing. The OIG team attended this briefing and found that the Regional Security Office agent who provided the briefing discussed the EAP, pointed out its location on the post's Intranet site, and asked everyone to review the EAP.

Embassy Baghdad also conducts drills to test its response capabilities to attacks on the embassy and to make adjustments to the EAP based on lessons learned. For example, on March 11, 2011, the post conducted a mass casualty drill to provide embassy staff with skill sets and essential information for emergency situations and to lead to a more efficient and cohesive emergency response. Soon after, on May 15, 2011, an actual indirect fire attack took place on the post. Subsequently, the Regional Security Office identified weaknesses in the EAP that were exposed during the response to the drill and the attack and made recommendations to correct the weaknesses. For example, the Regional Security Office noted that a specific communications channel was overloaded with multiple reports of explosions from the same incoming rounds. The Regional Security Office implemented changes to avoid this type of problem from recurring. The post also conducted a safe haven drill on September 5, 2011, to meet the FAH¹² requirement to conduct periodic safety and security drills. In addition, the Bureau of Information Resource Management conducts quarterly emergency destruction drills. Those quarterly drills meet the requirements of Annex E,¹³ which requires periodic drills and "reevaluation of destruction plans, particularly when new personnel, functions or equipment are involved."

(b) (5)



¹² 12 FAH-1 H-765, "Post Drills."

¹³ Annex E, Addendum 2.1-3(5), "Preparations for Destruction and Recovery After Destruction—Actions of: Destruction of Automated Information Systems."

(b) (5)



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Scope and Methodology

The Office of Inspector General (OIG) initiated this work under the authority of the Inspector General Act of 1978, as amended, to evaluate the Mission Iraq Emergency Action Plan (EAP). This evaluation was limited to the EAP annexes on civil disorder, internal defense, destruction of sensitive material, hostage taking, and drawdown and evacuation, as these are the areas that are most relevant to recent events in the Middle East.

To determine whether the EAP specified and defined resources, to determine the existence and adequacy of those resources, and to determine whether the EAP was current, OIG reviewed the relevant EAP annexes, obtained supporting documentation such as lists of safes and shredders located on the Embassy Baghdad compound, and a list of armored vehicles. OIG also conducted interviews with embassy staff from the Regional Security Office, the General Services Office, the Fire Department, and the Deputy Chief of Mission.

To determine the effectiveness of the EAP as demonstrated by practice drills and exercises, OIG reviewed an after-action report of a mass casualty drill and an actual indirect fire attack. OIG also reviewed emergency destruction drill logs. To determine whether the EAP encompassed all Chief-of-Mission (COM) staff and whether staff was aware of emergency procedures, OIG reviewed the relevant memorandums of agreement between the Department of State and the Department of Defense for the latter to provide security for COM personnel serving in Iraq. OIG also verified that the embassy briefs all incoming personnel on emergency procedures and informs staff of the location of the EAP.

The OIG team conducted this review in Baghdad, Iraq, with fieldwork conducted in Iraq from June 2-18, 2011.

Review of Internal Controls

OIG performed steps to assess the adequacy of internal controls related to access controls. For example, the OIG team observed that only authorized personnel could access restricted areas such as the Tactical Operations Center and the Regional Security Office.

Use of Computer-Processed Data

OIG did not use computer-processed data for this evaluation.

OIG conducted this performance review in accordance with the *Quality Standards for Inspection and Evaluation*, issued in January 2011 by the Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency. OIG believes that the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for the findings and conclusions based on the review objective. OIG did not evaluate the quality of Embassy Baghdad's Emergency Action Plan.

Contents of Embassy Baghdad Emergency Action Plan

Chapters

- 100 - Legal
- 200 - Organization
- 300 - Consular Services
- 400 - Public Affairs
- 500 - Medical
- 600 - Mission Security
- 700 - Crisis Preparedness

Annexes

- Annex A - Bomb
- Annex B - Fire
- Annex C - Civil Disorder
- Annex D - Internal Defense
- Annex E - Destruction of Sensitive Materials
- Annex F - Weapons of Mass Destruction
- Annex G - Hostage Taking
- Annex H - Hijacking
- Annex I - Assistance to U.S. Citizens in a Major Accident or Disaster
- Annex J - Assistance to Host Country in a Major Accident or Disaster
- Annex K - Drawdown and Evacuation
- Annex L - Receipt of Evacuees
- Annex M - Regional Reconstruction Team-Erbil
- Annex N - Crisis Preparedness for Americans under COM Authority

Appendices

- Appendix 1 - Master Contact List
- Appendix 2 - Mission Organization for Emergencies
- Appendix 3 - Command and Control Locations
- Appendix 4 - Assembly and Movement Surveys
- Appendix 5 - Medical Services Surveys
- Appendix 6 - Logistics and Transportation
- Appendix 7 - Communications
- Appendix 8 - Unified Command
- Appendix 9 - Facility Information

Appendix C



Embassy of the United States of America
Baghdad, Iraq

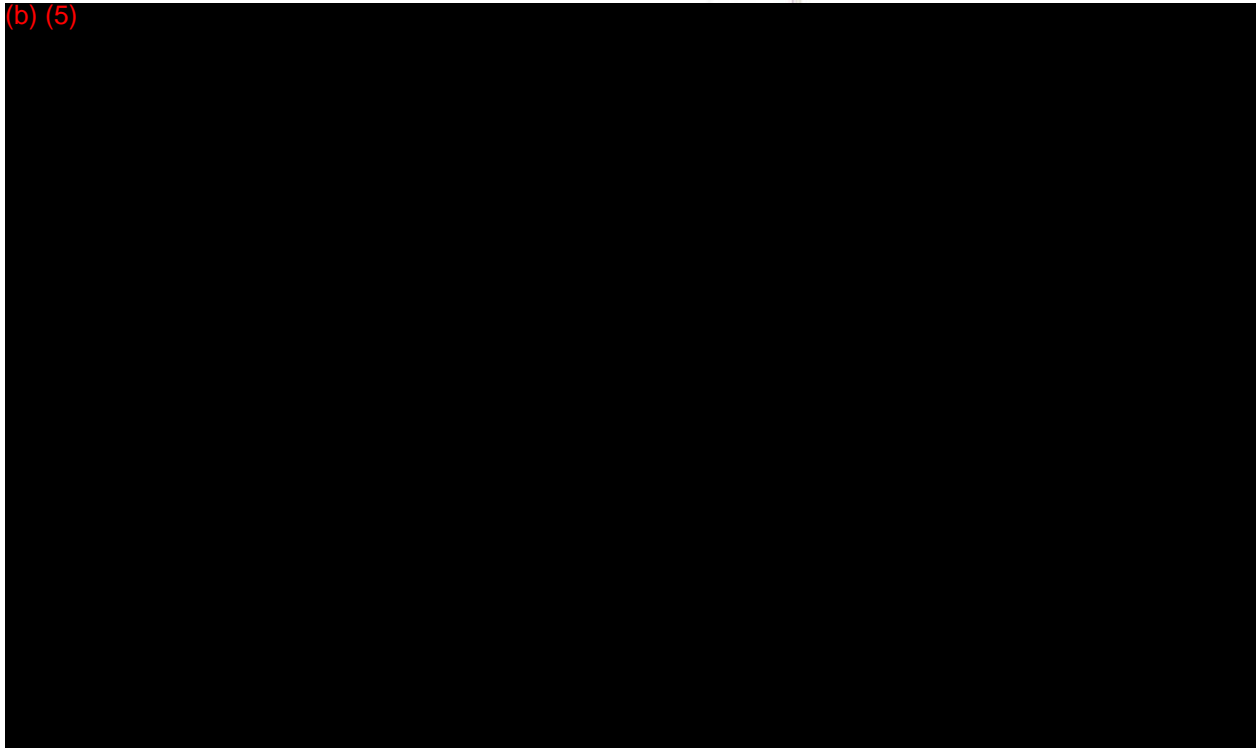
December 27, 2011

Ambassador Harold W. Geisel
Deputy Inspector General
Office of the Inspector General
U.S. Department of State

Dear Ambassador Geisel,

In the Office of the Inspector General's (OIG) November 30, 2011 draft report on emergency planning for U.S. Embassy Iraq, OIG made the following recommendation:

(b) (5)



Thank you for the opportunity to provide written comments on the report. Embassy Baghdad looks forward to the full implementation of the recommendation in the very near future.

Sincerely,



James E. Jeffrey
Ambassador

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