Report of the Accountability Review Boards on the Embassy Bombings in Nairobi and Dar Es Salaam

January 1999
The Honorable Madeleine Albright
Secretary of State
Department of State
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Madam Secretary:

Pursuant to your mandate establishing Accountability Review Boards to examine the facts and circumstances surrounding the August 7, 1998, bombings of the U.S. Embassies in Nairobi, Kenya, and Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania, the two Boards herewith submit their combined report. The two terrorist bombings resulted in the deaths of over 220 persons and injuries to more than 4,000 people. Twelve American USG employees and family members and 40 Kenyan and Tanzanian USG employees were among those killed. Both chanceries and several other buildings were severely damaged or destroyed. The FBI investigation of criminal suspects in the attacks is ongoing.

Having completed an extensive review in Washington, Nairobi and Dar Es Salaam, the Boards were most disturbed at two interconnected issues: first, the inadequacy of resources to provide security against terrorist attacks and, second, the relative low priority accorded security concerns throughout the US government by the Department, other agencies in general, and on the part of many employees both in Washington and in the field. Saving lives and adequately addressing our security vulnerabilities on a sustained basis must be given a higher priority by all those involved if we arc to prevent such tragedies in the future.

The Boards did not find reasonable cause to believe that any employee of the United States Government or member of the uniformed services breached his or her duty in connection with the August 7 bombings. However, we believe there was a collective failure by several Administrations and Congresses over the past decade to invest adequate efforts and resources to reduce the vulnerability of US diplomatic missions around the world to terrorist attacks.

We wish to commend the particular diligence and professionalism of the US Ambassador in Nairobi, Prudence Bushnell, in seeking security enhancements for the embassy long before the bombing, including efforts to relocate the post away from its vulnerable location. We also applaud the leadership of Dar Es Salaam’s Charge d’Affaires John Lange and the remarkable personal courage of the embassy staffs in Nairobi and Dar Es Salaam for their response to the attacks, including countless hours spent in locating and rescuing victims, providing for emergency assistance, and managing to restore embassy operations under conditions of extreme crisis.
The Boards found that intelligence provided no immediate tactical warning of the August 7 attacks. We understand the difficulty of monitoring terrorist networks and concluded that vulnerable missions cannot rely upon such warning. We found, however, that both policy and intelligence officials have relied heavily on warning intelligence to measure threats, whereas experience has shown that transnational terrorists often strike without warning at vulnerable targets in areas where expectations of terrorist acts against the US are low.

The security systems and procedures at both posts at the time of the bombings were in general accord with Department policy. However, those systems and procedures followed by all the embassies under the Department’s direction did not speak to large vehicular bomb attacks or transnational terrorism nor the dire consequences that would result from them. Both embassies were located immediately adjacent or close to public streets and were especially vulnerable to large vehicular bombs. The Boards found that too many of our overseas missions are similarly situated. Unless these vulnerabilities are addressed on a sustained and realistic basis, the lives and safety of USG employees and the public in many of our facilities abroad will continue to be at risk from further terrorist bombings.

In our investigations of the bombings, the Boards were struck by how similar the lessons were to those drawn by the Inman Commission over 14 years ago. What is most troubling is the failure of the US government to take the necessary steps to prevent such tragedies through an unwillingness to give sustained priority and funding to security improvements.

We are advancing a number of recommendations that deal with the handling of terrorist threats and attacks, the review and revision of standards and procedures to improve security readiness and crisis management, the size and composition of our missions, and the need to have adequate and sustained funding for safe buildings and security programs in the future. We recognize that the Department of State and other U.S. government agencies are already making adjustments and taking measures to enhance the protection of our personnel and facilities abroad. It is clear, however, that much more needs to be done.

We viewed as our primary and overriding responsibility the submission of recommendations that will save lives of personnel serving at U.S. missions abroad in the future. We ask that you review the recommendations with that objective in mind.

It has been a distinct honor to serve on these Boards.

Adm. William J. Crowe, US Navy (Ret.)
Chairman
Nairobi Board

Amb. Michael H. Armacost (Ret.)
Amb. Philip C. Wilcox, Jr. (Ret.)
Dr. Janne E. Nolan
Mr. Arthur W. Donahue
Amb. Richard C. Brown
Executive Secretary

Dar Es Salaam Board

Amb. Terence A. Todman (Ret.)
Mr. David Busby
Dr. Lynne E. Davis
Mr. Montgomery L. Rogers
Mr. Kenneth R. McKune
Executive Secretary
REPORT OF THE
ACCOUNTABILITY REVIEW BOARDS

BOMBINGS OF THE US EMBASSIES
IN NAIROBI, KENYA AND DAR ES SALAAM, TANZANIA
ON AUGUST 7, 1998

Board Members:

Admiral William J. Crowe, Chairman

Nairobi Board:

Amb. Michael H. Armacost

Amb. Philip C. Wilcox, Jr.

Dr. Janne E. Nolan

Mr. Arthur W. Donahue

Amb. Richard C. Brown – Executive Secretary

Dar Es Salaam Board

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Mr. David Busby

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Mr. Kenneth R. McKune – Executive Secretary

January 8, 1999
INTRODUCTION

Pursuant to the Omnibus Diplomatic and Anti-Terrorism Act of 1986 (PL99-399), as amended, the Secretary of State convened Accountability Review Boards on October 5, 1998 to review the circumstances regarding the August 7, 1998 bombings of the US Embassies in Nairobi, Kenya, and Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania. These attacks killed more than 220 people, including 12 US Government American employees and family members, 32 Kenyan national USG employees, and 8 Tanzanian national USG employees (Attachment A). In addition, they injured more than 4,000 Kenyans, Tanzanians and Americans. The bombings severely damaged or destroyed the chanceries in Nairobi and Dar Es Salaam, as well as several other buildings.

The Boards’ members were selected by the Secretary of State and by the Director of Central Intelligence. Admiral William J. Crowe, Jr. was named Chairman for both Boards. Because of the links between the two bombings, including the near simultaneous explosions at the two locations, and because of common security issues relevant to both events, the two Boards are submitting one report, with separate detailed sections for Nairobi and Dar Es Salaam.

The criminal investigation of the bombings by the Federal Bureau of Investigation is still underway. Eleven persons with suspected ties to the Sunni Muslim extremist, Usama bin Laden, have been indicted in New York and two suspects are in US custody. Two other individuals have been detained by Tanzanian authorities in Dar Es Salaam. The size and type of explosives remain under investigation.

As called for by the statute, this report examines: whether the incidents were security related; whether security systems and procedures were adequate and implemented properly; the impact of intelligence and information availability; whether any employee of the United States Government or member of the uniformed services breached his or her duty; and finally, whether any other facts or circumstances in these cases may be relevant to appropriate security management of United States missions abroad.

The renewed appearance of large bomb attacks against US embassies and the emergence of sophisticated and global terrorist networks aimed at US interests abroad have dramatically changed the threat environment. In addition, terrorists may in the future use new methods of attack of even greater destructive capacity, including biological or chemical weapons. Old assumptions are no longer valid. Today, USG employees from many departments and agencies work in our embassies overseas. They work and live in harm’s way, just as military people do. (See attachment B detailing attacks against US diplomatic installations from 1987 to 1997.) We must acknowledge this and remind Congress and our citizenry of this reality of foreign service life. In turn, the nation must make greater efforts to provide for their safety. Service abroad can never be made
completely safe, but we can reduce some of the risks to the survival and security of our personnel. This will require a much greater effort in terms of national commitment, resources, and procedures than in the past.

In 1985, an Advisory Panel on Overseas Security, chaired by Admiral Bobby Ray Inman, produced a comprehensive report on the issue. In our investigation of the embassy bombings in Nairobi and Dar Es Salaam, we observed that many of the problems identified in that landmark report persist. Adequate funds were never provided to implement the Inman recommendations. Instead, there were drastic cuts in State Department appropriations. Furthermore, officials in the Department of State who testified before the Boards were uniformly skeptical that the funding necessary for essential security at our posts over the long term would be obtained.

We understand that there will never be enough money to do all that should be done. We will have to live with partial solutions and, in turn, a high level of threat and vulnerability for quite some time. As we work to upgrade the physical security of our missions, we should also consider reducing the size and number of our embassies through the use of modern technology and by moving, in some cases, to regional posts in less threatened and vulnerable countries.

All employees serving overseas should assign a higher priority to security and adjust their lifestyles to make their workplaces and residences safer. In overseas missions there is a tendency for people to continue doing their work in a certain way, letting the system provide for their safety. This attitude must be changed. Security priorities must be everyone’s responsibility if we are going to defeat terrorists. Work priorities will have to be adjusted to make embassies tougher and to improve the overall odds. This process will succeed only if it starts at the top.

We cannot allow terrorists to force us to retreat from defending our interests abroad. Making our people safe and deterring or frustrating terrorist attacks send a strong signal of US determination and capability.

Successful overseas terrorist attacks kill our people, diminish confidence in our power, and bring tragedy to our friends in host countries. When choosing embassy sites, safety and security concerns should guide our considerations more than whether a location may be convenient or of historic, symbolic importance. Most host countries want US embassies to be safe. If they don’t, we probably shouldn’t be there. There is every likelihood that there will be further large bomb and other kinds of attacks. We must face this fact and do more to provide security or we will continue to see our people killed, our embassies blown away, and the reputation of the United States overseas eroded.
The near simultaneous vehicular bombings of the US Embassies in Nairobi, Kenya, and Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania, on August 7, 1998, were terrorist incidents costing the lives of over 220 persons and wounding more than 4,000 others. Twelve American USG employees and family members, and 32 Kenyan and 8 Tanzanian USG employees, were among those killed. Both chanceries withstood collapse from the bombings, but were rendered unusable, and several adjacent buildings were severely damaged or destroyed. In examining the circumstances of these two bombings, the Accountability Review Boards for Nairobi and Dar Es Salaam determined that:

1. The terrorists intended to destroy the chanceries; to kill or injure US Government employees and others in the chanceries; and to damage US prestige, morale, and diplomacy. Thus, according to P.L.99-399, the incidents were security related.

2. The security systems and procedures for physical security at the embassies in Nairobi and Dar Es Salaam as a general matter met and, in some cases, exceeded the systems and procedures prescribed by the Department of State for posts designated at the medium or low threat levels. However, these standard requirements had not sufficiently anticipated the threat of large vehicular bomb attacks and were inadequate to protect against such attacks.

The Department of State, in fact, does not apply its security standards fully. For far too many* of its overseas facilities it implements them only “to the maximum extent feasible,” applying “risk management.” For example, neither the chancery in Nairobi nor in Dar Es Salaam met the Department’s standard for a 100 ft. (30m) setback/standoff zone. Both were “existing office buildings” occupied before this standard was adopted; so a general exception was made. The widespread use of such exceptions worldwide with respect to setback and other non-feasible security standards reflects the reality of not having adequate funds to replace all sub-standard buildings within a short period of time. Thus in the interim before Inman buildings could be constructed, exceptions were granted. In light of the August 7 bombings, these general exceptions to the setback requirement in particular mask a dangerous level of exposure to similar attacks elsewhere.

3. The security systems and procedures relating to actions taken at Embassies Nairobi and Dar Es Salaam were, for the most part, properly implemented. In Nairobi, the suicide bomber failed in his attempt to penetrate the embassy’s outer perimeter,

* Note: Passages here and elsewhere in this document marked with an asterisk (*) indicate more details can be found in the classified version of the report.
thanks to the refusal of local guards to open the gates. In Dar Es Salaam, the suicide bomber likewise failed to penetrate the perimeter, apparently stopped by guards and blocked by an embassy water truck.

However, neither post’s Emergency Action Plan anticipated a car bomb scenario. Nor were there explicit Department requirements for dealing with such contingencies in EAP worldwide guidelines, despite clear Inman Report recommendations. While car bombs are often immediately preceded by some types of as was the case in Nairobi, personnel inside embassies are not trained to react properly, nor do perimeter guards have appropriate equipment.

4. There was no credible intelligence that provided immediate or tactical warning of the August 7 bombings.

- A number of earlier intelligence reports cited alleged threats against several U.S. diplomatic and other targets, including the embassies in Nairobi and Dar Es Salaam. All of these reports were disseminated to the intelligence community and to appropriate posts abroad, but were largely discounted because of doubts about the sources. Other reporting-while taken seriously-was imprecise, changing and non-specific as to dates, diminishing its usefulness. Additionally, actions taken by intelligence and law enforcement authorities to confront suspect terrorist groups including the Al-Haramayn non-governmental organization and the Usama Bin Laden (UBL) organization in Nairobi, were believed to have dissipated the alleged threats. Indeed, for eight months prior to the August 7 bombings, no further intelligence was produced to warn the embassies in Nairobi and Dar Es Salaam.*

- The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) investigation of the bombings is still underway but, thus far, has uncovered no information indicating that the earlier intelligence reporting could have predicted the time or place of the attacks. Information from FBI and intelligence sources could yet be developed, however, to implicate some of the individuals or groups cited in the earlier intelligence reporting, or more likely, to further amplify understanding of the UBL organization’s role in the bombings.

5. The Boards found that both the intelligence and policy communities relied excessively on tactical intelligence to determine the level of potential terrorist threats to posts worldwide. The Inman Report noted and previous experience indicates that terrorist attacks are often not preceded by warning intelligence. The establishment of the Counter Terrorism Center with an inter-agency team of officers has produced tactical intelligence that has enabled the US to thwart a number of terrorist threats.* But we cannot count on having such intelligence to warn us of such attacks.
The Boards did not find reasonable cause to believe that any employee of the United States Government or member of the uniformed services was culpable of dereliction of his or her duties in connection with the August 7 bombings. The Boards did find, however, an institutional failure of the Department of State and embassies under its direction to recognize threats posed by transnational terrorism and vehicle bombs worldwide. Policy-makers and operational officers were remiss in not preparing more comprehensive procedures to guard against massive truck bombs. This combined with lack of resources for building more secure facilities created the ingredients for a deadly disaster. Responsibility for obtaining adequate resources for security programs is widely dispersed throughout the US government as is decision making for determining security policies and procedures. No one person or office is accountable for decisions on security policies, procedures and resources. Ambassadors who are specifically charged with responsibility for the security of US diplomatic personnel assigned to their posts lack adequate authority and resources to carry out this responsibility.

The Boards were especially disturbed by the collective failure of the US government over the past decade to provide adequate resources to reduce the vulnerability of US diplomatic missions to terrorist attacks in most countries around the world. Responsibility for this failure can be attributed to several Administrations and their agencies, including the Department of State, the National Security Council, and the Office of Management and Budget, as well as the US Congress.

The US response to the August bombings was resourceful and often heroic. However, in the absence of significant training and contingency planning to deal with mass casualties and major destruction from terrorist bombs, the response was occasionally chaotic and marred by a host of planning and logistical failures, especially in the area of military transportation. The Foreign Emergency Support Teams (FESTs) arrived in Nairobi and Dar Es Salaam about 40 hours after the bombings, having experienced delays of 13 hours. There was disjointed liaison between the State Department, as the lead agency, and the Defense Department, FBI and other agencies. The personnel selection of the FESTs was ad hoc and not ideal. Medical and other emergency equipment was not always ready and available for shipment.

In the wake of these two terrorist acts, the Department of State and other US government organizations focused quickly on the lessons learned. They immediately reviewed the vulnerabilities of our embassies and missions abroad and took steps to strengthen perimeter security at all posts, to re-prioritize the construction and
upgrades necessary to bring our overseas US facilities up to what are referred to as “Inman standards,” and Congress appropriated over $1 billion in supplemental funds.

10. This is only the first step in what is required to provide for the security of Americans in embassies overseas. We must undertake a comprehensive and long-term strategy for protecting American officials overseas, including sustained funding for enhanced security measures, for long-term costs for increased security personnel, and for a capital building program based on an assessment of requirements to meet the new range of global terrorist threats. This must include substantial budgetary appropriations of approximately $1.4 billion per year maintained over an approximate ten-year period, in addition to savings from the closure of overseas installations where increased capital and security costs outweigh the magnitude of overall US interests. Additional funds for security must be obtained without diverting funds from our major foreign affairs programs.

Key Recommendations

The 1986 Omnibus Diplomatic and Anti-Terrorism Act established the legal basis for the Accountability Review Board and specifically requires that acts of terrorism against US diplomatic installations abroad, wherein the loss of life or significant property damage occurs, be investigated with a view, among other factors, toward determining whether security systems and procedures were adequate and were implemented. After addressing these issues in this report, the Boards will propose and elaborate on a number of recommendations aimed at improving security systems and procedures. We provide a listing of the recommendations below.* The bulk of them are necessitated by the use of large vehicular bombs, a threat that has not been fully appreciated in recent years. The first 15 recommendations deal with adjustments in systems and procedures to enhance security of the work place. The final six recommendations address how to improve crisis management systems and procedures. All are directed toward achieving the objective of saving lives. They are urgent and need to be acted upon immediately. No single measure will accomplish the objective but, taken together, they should substantially improve the security for US personnel serving abroad.

Three additional recommendations deal with intelligence and information availability, matters the Boards are also enjoined to address under the law.* (Details and rationale for all of the recommendations are contained in the classified version of the report.)

1. Improving Security Systems and Procedures

A. Work Place Security Enhancements
1. Emergency Action Plans for all posts should be revised to provide a “special alarm signal” for large exterior bombs and duck-and-cover practice drills in order to reduce casualties from vehicular bombs. Special equipment should be provided to perimeter guards.*

2. Given the worldwide threat of transnational terrorism which uses a wide range of lethal weapons, including vehicle bombs, every post should be treated as a potential target and the Department of State’s Physical Security Standards and policies should be revised to reflect this new reality.

3. For those US diplomatic buildings abroad not meeting Inman standards, essential physical security upgrades should be made immediately and should include a number of specific measures involving perimeters and counter-surveillance.*

4. The Secretary of State should personally review the security situation of embassy chanceries and other official premises, closing those which are highly vulnerable and threatened but for which adequate security enhancements cannot be provided, and seek new secure premises for permanent use, or temporary occupancy, pending construction of new buildings.

5. Demarches to all governments with whom we have relations should be made regularly to remind them of their obligation to provide security support for our embassies. For those governments whose police forces need additional training to enable them to provide more adequate protection, the Department should provide training under the Anti-Terrorism Assistance (ATA) program. The Department should also explore ways to provide any necessary equipment to host governments to upgrade their ability to provide adequate protection. Failure by a host government to honor its obligations should trigger an immediate review of whether a post should be closed.

6. The Department of State should radically reformulate and revise the “Composite Threat List” and, as a part of this effort, should create a category exclusively for terrorism with criteria that places more weight on transnational terrorism. Rating the vulnerability of facilities must include factors relating to the physical security environment, as well as certain host governmental and cultural realities.* These criteria need to be reviewed frequently and all elements of the intelligence community should play an active role in formulating the list. The list’s name should be changed to reflect its dual purpose of prioritizing resource allocation and establishing security readiness postures.

7. The Department of State should increase the number of posts with full time Regional Security Officers, seeking coverage of as many chanceries as possible. The Department should also work with the Marine Corps to augment the number of Marine
Security Guard Detachments to provide coverage to a larger number of US diplomatic missions.

8. The Department of State should provide all Regional Security Officers comprehensive training on terrorism, terrorist methods of operation, explosive devices, explosive effects, and other terrorist weapons to include weapons of mass destruction such as truck bombs, nuclear devices and chemical/biological weapons.*

9. The Department of State should define the role and functions of each of the US embassies abroad for the coming decade with a view toward exploiting technology more fully, improving their efficiency, ensuring their security, and reducing their overall cost. The Department should look specifically at reducing the number of diplomatic missions by establishing regional embassies located in less threatened and vulnerable countries with Ambassadors accredited to several governments.

10. The physical security standards specified in the State Department’s Security Standards and Policy Handbook should be reviewed on a priority basis and revised as necessary in light of the August 7 and other large bombings against US installations.

11. When building new chanceries abroad, all US government agencies, with rare exceptions, should be located in the same compound.

12. The Department of State should work within the Administration and with Congress to obtain sufficient funding for capital building programs and for security operations and personnel over the coming decade (estimated at $1.4 billion per year for the next 10 years), while ensuring that this funding should not come at the expense of other critical foreign affairs programs and operations. A failure to do so will jeopardize the security of US personnel abroad and inhibit America’s ability to protect and promote its interests around the world.

13. First and foremost, the Secretary of State should take a personal and active role in carrying out the responsibility of ensuring the security of US diplomatic personnel abroad. It is essential to convey to the entire Department that security is one of the highest priorities. In the process, the Secretary should reexamine the present organizational structure with the objective of clarifying responsibilities, encouraging better coordination, and assuring that a single high-ranking officer is accountable for all protective security matters and has the authority necessary to coordinate on the Secretary’s behalf such activities within the Department of State and with all foreign affairs USG agencies.

14. The Department of State should expand its effort to build public support for increased resources for foreign affairs, and to add emphasis on the need to protect US
representatives abroad from terrorism, without sacrificing other important foreign policy programs.

15. The Department of State, in coordination with the intelligence community, should advise all posts concerning potential threats of terrorist attacks from the use of chemical, biological or nuclear materials, should establish means of defending against and minimizing the effect of such attacks through security measures and the revision of EAP procedures and exercises, and should provide appropriate equipment, medical supplies, and first responder training.

B. Better Crisis Management Systems and Procedures

1. Crisis management training for mass casualty and mass destruction incidents should be provided to Department of State personnel in Washington to improve Task Force operations to assure a cadre of crisis managers.

2. A revitalized program for on-site crisis management training at posts abroad should be funded, developed, expanded, and maintained.

3. The FEST should create and exercise a team and equipment package configured to assist in post blast crises involving major casualties and physical damage (while maintaining the package now deployed for differing counter terrorism missions). Such a new configuration should include personnel to assist in medical relief, public affairs, engineering and building safety.

4. A modern, reliable, air-refuelable FEST aircraft with enhanced seating and cargo capacity to respond to a variety of counter terrorism and emergency missions should be acquired urgently for the Department of State. Clearly defined arrangements for a backup aircraft are also needed.

5. The Department of State should work closely with the Department of Defense to improve procedures in mobilizing aircraft and adequate crews to provide more rapid, effective assistance in times of emergency, especially in medical evacuations resulting from mass casualty situations. The Department of State should explore as well, chartering commercial aircraft to transport personnel and equipment to emergency sites, if necessary to supplement Department of Defense aircraft.

6. The Department of State should ensure that all posts have emergency communications equipment, basic excavation tools, medical supplies, emergency documents, next of kin records, and other safety equipment stored at secure off-site locations in anticipation of mass destruction of embassy facilities and heavy US casualties.
II. Intelligence and Information

1. In order to enhance the flow of intelligence that relates to terrorism and security, all such intelligence should normally be disseminated to concerned levels of the policy and analytic community; compartmentalization of such information should be limited to extraordinary situations where there is a clear national security need for limited dissemination.

2. The Department of State should assign a qualified official to the DCI’s Counter Terrorism Center; and

3. The FBI and the Department of State should consult on ways to improve information sharing on international terrorism to ensure that all relevant information that might have some bearing on threats against or security for US missions or personnel abroad is made available.*
NAIROBI: DISCUSSION AND FINDINGS

Discussion

On August 7, 1998, at approximately 10:30 a.m. local time, terrorists driving in a truck detonated a large bomb in the rear parking area, near the ramp to the basement garage, of the American Embassy in Nairobi. A total of 213 people were killed, of whom 44 were American Embassy employees (12 Americans and 32 Foreign Service National employees). Ten Americans and eleven FSNs were seriously injured. An estimated 200 Kenyan civilians were killed and 4,000 were injured by the blast in the vicinity of the embassy.

Damage to the embassy was massive, especially internally. Although there was little structural damage to the five story reinforced concrete building, the explosion reduced much of the interior to rubble-destroying windows, window frames, internal office partitions and other fixtures on the rear side of the building. The secondary fragmentation from flying glass, internal concrete block walls, furniture, and fixtures caused most of the embassy casualties. The majority of the Kenyan casualties resulted from the collapse of the adjacent Ufundi Building, flying glass from the nearby Co-op Bank Building and other buildings located within a two to three block radius. Other casualties were pedestrians or motorists in the crowded streets next to the embassy.

The local-hire contract guards at the rear of the Embassy saw the truck pull into the uncontrolled exit lane of the rear parking lot just as they closed the fence gate and the drop bar after a mail van had exited the embassy’s garage. (The drop bar paralleled a series of steel bollards which encircled the embassy outside the steel grill fence that surrounds the chancery.) The truck proceeded to the embassy’s rear access control area but was blocked by an automobile coming out of the Co-op Bank’s underground garage. The blocking auto was forced to back up allowing the truck to come up to the embassy drop bar.

When one of the two terrorist occupants of the truck demanded that the guards open the gates, they refused. One of the terrorists then began shooting at the chancery and the other tossed a flash grenade at one of the guards. The guards, who were unarmed, ran for cover and tried to raise the Marine Security Guard at the command post (Post #1) on a hand held radio and by a phone in the nearby guard booth. They were unsuccessful; the embassy’s single radio frequency was occupied with other traffic; the telephone was busy. In the several seconds time lapse between the gunshots/grenade explosion and the detonation of the truck bomb, many embassy employees went to the windows to observe what was happening. Those who did were either killed or seriously injured.

Neither the post’s Emergency Action Plan, which followed State Department guidelines, nor any relevant drills had prepared employees for actions to take in the event of a vehicular bomb or firearms being discharged in the immediate vicinity of the
embassy. Had the employees been trained to lie on the floor and seek cover when they heard the grenade blast, some lives could have been saved.

The embassy had only one radio frequency and no alert alarms for use by perimeter guards. The Board estimates that there was a certain time lapse between the time the guards saw the truck enter the rear parking lot and the detonation of the bomb. The inability of the perimeter guards to alert those inside the chancery of what they anticipated might be an impending truck bomb explosion could have been remedied in a couple of ways. Had the Kenyan Government granted the embassy’s long-standing request to have more than one radio frequency, the perimeter guards would have had a dedicated frequency to communicate with the MSG at Post #1 who, in turn, could have triggered the embassy’s internal alarm system, giving personnel time to take cover. Second, either a radio electronic emergency alarm in the possession of the perimeter guards or an alarm button in the rear guard booth to activate the embassy’s internal alarm system could have permitted the guards there to trigger the system directly, warning employees of the impending blast. In either scenario, a special alarm signal for “duck and cover” which does not exist on Nairobi’s and any other US embassy’s “Selectone” alarm system would have to be programmed since it has never been prescribed by the Department of State.*

The Embassy building was constructed under the supervision of the Foreign Buildings Operations in the early 1980’s before the Inman standards were produced. It was located at the intersection of two of the busiest streets in Nairobi, near two mass transit centers. It lacked sufficient setback from the streets and from adjacent buildings. To help extend its limited setback, the Embassy was surrounded by a 2.6 meter high steel picket vertical bar fence. An outer perimeter was established beyond the fence with a line of steel bollards, ranging 5 meters to 18 meters in distance from the outer walls of the chancery. The window frames were not anchored into the core structure, but the windows were covered by 4mm Mylar protective film.

Before August 7, Nairobi was designated as a “medium” threat post in the political violence and terrorism category, and the embassy was in compliance with that threat level’s physical security standards and procedures as prescribed by the Department except for the lack of a 100ft setback/standoff zone. However, the bombing revealed that the Department’s system for determining terrorism threat levels, which in turn determine physical security standards and procedures, was seriously flawed. Additional criteria are now being applied to achieve a more realistic threat profile. The Boards will comment further on these criteria, and make recommendations on increased standards and the funding to achieve them.*

There were no intelligence reports immediately before the bombing to have warned the embassy of the August 7 blast. However, a number of earlier intelligence reports cited alleged threats against several US diplomatic and other targets including the
US Embassy in Nairobi. While all of these reports were disseminated to the intelligence community and to appropriate posts abroad, they were largely discounted because of doubts about the sources. Other reporting was imprecise, changing and non-specific as to dates, diminishing its usefulness. Additionally, actions taken by intelligence and law enforcement authorities to confront suspect terrorist groups in Nairobi, including the Al-Haramayn non-governmental organization and the Usama Bin Laden (UBL) organization, were believed to have dissipated the threats.

The embassy responded to these reported threats by increasing the number of roving guards around the perimeter of the chancery, closer monitoring of the visa line, and additional vehicular and perimeter searches. The Regional Security Officer (RSO) advised personnel on security precautions and the importance of reporting incidents of surveillance. She and the Marine Security Guards (MSGs) conducted numerous emergency react drills (with only MSG participation), and the RSO asked the Kenyan Government to enhance security around the embassy, especially to engage in counter-surveillance activities, and met with the Kenyan police to discuss their bomb react scenarios. The embassy also requested and received a team from Washington to further familiarize the MSGs and the local guards about explosive devices, and the Emergency Action Committee met frequently to review security procedures and upgrades.

The Ambassador cabled Washington on December 24, 1997, reviewing the threats and the response to them by the embassy and the Kenyan government. She pointed to certain reports about terrorist threats aimed at the mission, as well as threats of crime and political violence, and emphasized the embassy’s extreme vulnerability due to lack of standoff. She asked for Washington’s support for a new chancery.

The Department responded to the Ambassador’s cable in January, 1998, saying that after a review of the threat, the post’s current security rating for political violence and terrorism of “medium” was appropriate, and that no new office building was contemplated by FBO. The Department offered to send a security assessment team to assist the Embassy in identifying areas where security could be upgraded, and they found ways to reduce the number of embassy personnel, through reassignments to Pretoria.

The security assessment team arrived in March (after the Department refused an offer by the military’s US Central Command, CENTCOM, to conduct a joint security assessment of the post) and made a review of the embassy’s needs. No report was ever filed by the team. Subsequent cables from the embassy and an interview with one of the team’s engineers showed that the Department was prepared to support all the post’s requests for upgrades, even beyond the normal standards required for a medium threat post. The embassy senior management, the RSO, and the visiting team did not particularly focus on upgrades in the rear of the embassy or possible vehicle bomb attacks, but instead concentrated on ways to reduce the danger from crime and political violence. They approved a fence for the parking lot in front of the Embassy, as well as
roll down doors for the chancery’s front entrance and the rear basement garage door. (The latter door, broken for several months, had been replaced by a temporary two panel swing door which remained open during the day.) These improvements were in process and had not been completed by the time of the August 7 bombing. As it turned out, they would have made no difference in mitigating the blast, given its size. Nor would they have deterred the terrorists from getting as close to the chancery as they did.

In March 1998, the Department of State issued a world-wide alert drawing attention to an Usama bin Laden threat against American military and civilians. However, this alert was not accompanied by any special warning or analysis that embassies in East Africa might be targeted by Bin Laden’s group.

Ambassador Bushnell, in letters to the Secretary in April 1998, and to Under Secretary Cohen a month later, restated her concern regarding the vulnerability of the embassy, repeating the need to have a new chancery that would meet Inman standards. Ms. Cohen responded in June stating that, because of Nairobi’s designation as a medium security threat post for political violence and terrorism and the general soundness of the building, its replacement ranked relatively low among the chancery replacement priorities. She drew attention to FBO’s plan to extend the chancery’s useful life and improve its security to include $4.1 million for the replacement of the windows.

Sporadic efforts by the embassy to gain control over the back parking lot—and thus to expand the setback—met with limited success. Though efforts were made several years earlier to obtain embassy control of all parking spaces in that area from the Co-op Bank, this proved unsuccessful. The embassy in late 1997 increased the number of roving guards in the rear area to ensure that unauthorized persons would not park in those slots leased to the embassy. In May 1998 the Bank wrote a letter to the embassy inviting it to share the cost of installing a fence along side the parking lot and a lift bar barrier at the exit to Haile Selassie Avenue (through which the terrorist vehicle entered on August 7). The letter was never formally answered. Interviews by the Board of embassy personnel revealed that the embassy did not consider this its responsibility, since the fence and the barrier were not on embassy property and were being installed in any case. Also, the embassy had experienced difficulty obtaining permission from the Kenyan government for building a fence around the front parking lot. There was a concern that the Bank had not received permission from the government for the construction in the back, and if US funds had been used, the government might condemn the move, bring a lawsuit, and generate adverse publicity against the embassy.

The Co-op Bank’s fence had been completed by August 1998, but the lift bar intended for the exit was lying on the ground ready for installation at the time of the bombing. While it is uncertain whether the embassy’s participation in the Co-op Bank’s project might have expedited the installation of the lift bar barrier, its presence could have provided an additional hurdle the terrorists would have had to overcome to enter the
embassy’s rear parking lot area. However, even if the barrier had discouraged the terrorists from entering the rear lot, they still could have proceeded up Haile Selassie Avenue for approximately 50 feet to detonate the bomb at a point even closer to the chancery than the back gate barrier, thereby causing as much if not more damage to the embassy.

That the embassy did not seek more actively to gain control of the back lot reflected the prevailing view in the embassy and in Washington at that time that the crime threat was far more serious than the terrorist threat. This conclusion was based in part on the judgment of intelligence officials in Washington and in Nairobi that the potential terrorist threats had dissipated by the latter part of 1997 and that no new threat had been uncovered specifically aimed at the embassy. Terrorism was seen as a serious but non-specific potential threat, whereas crime, including muggings and murder in the immediate vicinity of the embassy, was a daily reality that posed a continual threat to every member of the embassy family.

The embassy’s local guard program,* under contract with the United International Investigative Service (UIIS) since 1997, is one of the largest in the world. Many of the guards serving around the chancery’s perimeter had worked for UIIS’s predecessors. Training levels called for in the UIIS contract fell well short of the specifications, both in quality and frequency. Of particular note was the absence of training and procedures on vehicular bombs. While the guards were trained on search and identification of parcel bombs (IEDs) concealed on vehicles, they were not given any direction on threat, search recognition and reaction to suspect vehicle bombs. No procedures or guidelines were established that would cause guards to raise an alarm if a strange truck pulled into the parking lot and/or up to the gate of the embassy.

Another anomaly was that guards at embassy residences possessed radio electronic duress or panic alarms to activate in times of emergency while those at the chancery did not. Nor did the local guards participate in embassy emergency drills or have much interchange with the MSG detachment. In spite of these deficiencies, however, the guards in the rear parking lot on August 7 performed valiantly and their courageous refusal to permit the terrorists access to the embassy’s garage prevented an even greater disaster.

After the bombing, all embassy personnel from the Ambassador on down responded quickly and heroically to care for those injured, account for and properly handle those who died, and coordinate the myriad details of reestablishing operations while dealing with the crisis.

In Washington the Task Force formed in the State Department’s operations center established immediate contact with embassy personnel who had transferred operations to the USAID building across Nairobi from the bombed out chancery. The
Task Force began to ascertain the extent of the damage and the casualties, and mobilized resources to dispatch to Nairobi. A FEST departed within about six hours of its alert time. Its aircraft broke down in Rota, Spain, causing a 15-hour delay before a backup plane could arrive and be loaded. Though the FEST arrived in Nairobi nearly 40 hours after the blast, its contingent brought welcomed relief to the embassy, helping the Ambassador and her staff with restoring embassy functions, assisting with communications, and helping with the rescue and other emergency relief efforts.

On August 9, another US Air Force plane with additional support personnel from Washington broke down in Sicily and was delayed by about 8 hours before the group could proceed to Kenya. And, when the US Air Force’s Nightingale medevac aircraft arrived in Nairobi from Germany on August 8, its load capacity prevented it from bringing needed medical supplies already palletized and positioned in Germany. The Board heard differing views from embassy medical personnel and from the US Air Force concerning reasons why the medevac aircraft did not return immediately to Germany with some of the most seriously wounded Americans. There was a misunderstanding about crew rest requirements and the need for pre-flight stabilization of patients by Air Force medical personnel before departure. Kenyan medical professionals at the Nairobi Hospital where the wounded Americans were receiving care claimed that US Air Force medical personnel were insensitive. The first military medical evacuation did not take place until 40 hours after the bombing. A second medical evacuation 70 hours after the bombing went much more smoothly.

A unit of US Marines (FAST Marines) was dispatched to Nairobi from Bahrain to help provide security for the embassy. Their aircraft experienced delays as well. And the FBI sent some 200 agents to the scene to find and detain the perpetrators of the bombing. These groups performed well in important aspects of the crisis.

With the large influx of people from Washington and elsewhere into Nairobi, there were the inevitable coordinating problems with some personnel having to be reminded at times that the Ambassador was ultimately in charge. Logistical facilities were overloaded. The FEST, which normally deals with evolving terrorist crises like hostage taking, realized that its regular personnel package was not quite appropriate for the situation faced in Nairobi. In Washington, shift changes in personnel on the Task Force bought confusion and unnecessary repetition of requests to the field. Because of the massive damage to embassy operations and the high number of embassy casualties, operations were at times chaotic. Given the extensive damage to embassy operations and the large number of casualties, the Task Force had to call on offices seldom used in normal evacuations and other emergencies.

Some of the logistical and coordination problems with the US Air Force, for example, could have been alleviated if clear instructions had been provided and better liaison established in advance through designated points of contact. The Department of
State’s Bureau of African Affairs has completed an after action report from which valuable lessons learned should be instructive for the future. Better crisis management, training and contingency planning seem imperative if the Department of State is to handle mass casualties and destruction emergencies in a more expeditious and professional manner. The Department should also explore the cost effectiveness of chartering commercial aircraft in times of emergency to provide more reliable airlift.

Media attention following the bombing was intense and, since Nairobi is a regional hub for the international media, the journalists’ appetite was immediate and immense. The Embassy’s public affairs (USIS) officers were, by their own admission, overwhelmed. They concentrated on answering the queries of the international press and let the local press languish. By the second day after the explosion, the local media turned ugly, focusing their anger on the Embassy in particular and the US in general. The local press reported that the Americans were concerned only with their own people, ignoring the plight and suffering of the many Kenyans who were killed or injured. Had additional public affairs personnel been dispatched to Nairobi immediately following the bombing, this media problem might have been better anticipated and ameliorated. Also, the Department insisted on clearing in advance whether the Ambassador could appear at press conferences and what she could say during those conferences. These limits on the Ambassador’s discretion to speak publicly unnecessarily limited her ability to counter the firestorm of criticism in the local media.

Findings

As required by statute, the Board makes these findings:

1. The bomb that exploded in the rear parking lot of the US Embassy in Nairobi on August 7, 1998 was detonated by terrorists who intended to cause loss of lives and destruction of property. Thus, according to P.L. 99-399 the incident was security related.

2. No recent tactical intelligence information existed to alert the embassy to the August 7 bombing. Intelligence received in 1997 about plans for vehicle bomb attacks or assassinations was carefully vetted, but by early 1998 these alleged threats had been discredited or found moot. In retrospect, the Department and the intelligence community relied too heavily on warning intelligence to measure the threat of terrorism and failed to take other factors into account in determining and confirming in 1998 that the threat of terrorism was only medium. Also, the embassy was heavily preoccupied with the critical crime level.

3. In the fall of 1997, the embassy’s management, upon receiving intelligence information regarding a potential terrorist bomb, took additional steps to upgrade
security at the post. The Ambassador alerted Washington to the embassy’s extreme vulnerability and called for and received assistance in 1998 from the Department of State for a few physical security upgrades beyond those required for a “medium” threat post for political violence and terrorism. In her messages to Washington, the Ambassador also requested that the chancery be relocated. Officials throughout the Department of State rejected this, citing lack of funds and the designation of Nairobi, as a medium threat post, as an unlikely terrorist target.

4. Security systems and procedures at the embassy were implemented well within, and even beyond, the medium threat level established by the Department of State, although the building had virtually no setback, having been built before the standard was established and therefore was exempted.

5. -- Local security guards performed as they had been instructed and refused the terrorists access to the embassy perimeter.

6. But a number of security shortcomings existed. The most critical was that no attention was paid to vehicle bomb attacks in the Department’s EAP guidance or the embassy’s security procedures and systems- The security guards were not trained for such a contingency. They did not have alarm mechanisms to give warning of such an attack. There was no internal embassy alarm signal to warn of a car bomb attack. And embassy personnel were not informed about what to do in case of a car bomb warning.

7. The embassy did not have a radio frequency dedicated to security communications, which would have enhanced security, because the Kenyan government had consistently rejected this request.

8. More rigorous efforts by the embassy could possibly have been made to secure more control over the rear parking lot. But legal impediments and public relations concerns served as constraints. It is uncertain whether additional control would have deterred the terrorists or lessened the damage from the blast, given the lack of setback at other points around the chancery.

9. In the aftermath of the bombing, the FEST, the medical teams, US Air Force crews and aircraft, and others from Washington provided invaluable support to the embassy. But logistical problems caused delays in the arrival of people and resources- And the massive influx of personnel from numerous US agencies into Kenya brought problems of coordination and logistical overload in Nairobi. Heavy media criticism in Nairobi could have been alleviated by more public affairs officers on the scene and by giving the Ambassador more flexibility in dealing with the press. The Department’s Task Force performed valiantly under extremely difficult circumstances, but there were problems of discontinuity of leadership and
organization. The Department’s ability to handle emergencies involving mass
casualties and heavy damage to embassy operations needs to be improved through
crisis management training and better contingency planning.

10. The Board finds no employee of the US government or member of the uniformed
services, as defined by Section 303(a)(l)(B) of the Act, breached his or her duty.

11. The Board finds a possible breach of responsibility in the contractor’s administration
of the contract for the training of the embassy guards. -But even if this training had
been carried out, it would not have affected what happened in the bombings.

12. In the review of systems and procedures required by the law, the Board finds that
systemic and institutional failures in Washington were responsible for: a) a flawed
process for assessing threat levels worldwide which underestimated the threat of
terrorism in Nairobi, notwithstanding the Ambassador’s repeated pleas, b) a chronic
major lack of funds for building new, safer embassies, to replace buildings like the
Nairobi chancery, which, even had there been no terrorist threat, was in a dangerous
location and extremely vulnerable to crime and mob violence, and c) failing to
prepare for vehicle bombs by providing guidance in Emergency Action Plans to deal
with such attacks, and the warning alarm signals and systems to alert personnel to
imminent bomb attacks.

13. The Board wishes to commend the embassy personnel for their professionalism and
courage in their performance both during and after the disaster.
Discussion

According to physical evidence and reports from persons on the scene just prior to the bombing; on the morning of Friday, August 7, 1998, a truck laden with explosives drove up Laibon Road to one of the two vehicular gates of the US Embassy in Dar Es Salaam. Apparently unable to penetrate the perimeter because it was blocked by an embassy water tanker, the suicide bomber detonated his charge at 10:39 a.m. at a distance of about 35 feet from the outer wall of the chancery. The type and quantity of explosives are still under investigation.

The bomb attack killed eleven people; one other is missing and presumed dead. Another 85 people were injured. No Americans were among the fatalities, but many were injured, two of them seriously. The chancery suffered major structural damage and was rendered unusable, but it did not collapse. No one inside the chancery was killed, in part due to the strength of the structure and in part to simple luck. A number of third-country diplomatic facilities and residences in the immediate vicinity were severely damaged, and several American Embassy residences were destroyed, as were dozens of vehicles. The American Ambassador’s residence, a thousand yards distant and vacant at the time, suffered roof damage and collapsed ceilings.

At the time of the attack, two contract local guards were on duty inside a perimeter guard booth, while two others were in the pedestrian entrance screening area behind the booth and another was in the open area behind the water truck. All five were killed in the blast. The force of the blast propelled the filled water tanker over three stories into the air. It came to rest against the chancery building, having absorbed some of the shock wave that otherwise would have hit the chancery with even greater force. The driver of the water tanker was killed, but his assistant, seen in the area shortly before the explosion, is missing without trace and presumed dead.

The US Embassy in Dar Es Salaam moved into the former Israeli Embassy compound in May, 1980. The embassy was located at 36 Laibon Road and consisted of a three-story Chancery, originally built as the Israeli Chancery in the early 1970’s, and a four-story Annex, added in 1980. Both buildings were located in an enclosed compound. The construction of both the Chancery and Annex was of reinforced concrete beam and post configuration. The floors and ceilings were of concrete slab design and the exterior and partition wall areas of concrete block. Ground floor windows in the Chancery were minimal, possibly designed to limit potential bomb damage.

The Chancery and Annex were surrounded by a perimeter wall which provided a 10-12 meter setback between the embassy and adjacent streets and properties. The base of the wall was a combination of concrete block and reinforced concrete onto which
tubular metal picket fencing alternated with concrete pilasters. Hardened guard booths were located at each of the entryways to the compound.

Pedestrian visitor and vehicle screening was conducted at the perimeter, primarily at the Laibon Road entryway nearest the Consulate/Admin Annex where the bomber apparently intended to force access. Two vehicle entry gates allowed access to the compound and both were manually operated double-swing gates constructed of a tubular steel framework. “Delta barriers” provided additional access controls. Both of these were inoperative at the time of the bombings and one had been out of repair for over two years, despite attempts to make it operational. All visitors and approved-for-access vehicles were screened prior to entry. Vehicles were screened outside the gates by local guards with Diplomatic Security (DS)-provided inspection mirrors. The MSGs monitored local guard actions via Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) from the MSG booth, Post #1. Unfortunately, there was no video recording capability associated with the CCTV that might have provided information helpful to the post-blast investigation, nor were there special duress alarms at embassy perimeter guard posts which could have been used to warn of vehicle bomb threats.

A MSG detachment was assigned to the Embassy under the command of a Gunnery Sergeant. Unarmed local guards provided by a local security firm, ULTIMATE SECURITY, were employed in support of embassy security operations. There were no armed police provided by the host government. The ULTIMATE SECURITY guards were thorough in inspecting all vehicles prior to allowing them access to the compound. The Marine Gunnery Sergeant and MSG detachment frequently tested the guards in detection of bombs placed in vehicles.

Regional Security Officer (RSO) John DiCarlo arrived at post on 22 July 1998 and, following his own observations of vehicles being inspected by local guards, changed procedures to insure that vehicles were screened outside the compound before being allowed to enter. The RSO also reviewed all local guard and MSG emergency procedures upon his arrival. RSO-required briefings on evacuation procedures and emergency drills were held on a regular basis throughout the year. “Selectone” alarm drills to identify contingencies, such as package bombs, were held on a weekly basis and such a drill had been completed 30 minutes before the bombing. There were no drills, however, specifically designed to contend with vehicular bombs.

Because the political violence threat (which includes terrorism) in Dar Es Salaam was considered “low,” there was no priority attached to providing a greater setback than existed. A security survey conducted by the Department of State’s Office of Security Oversight within the Office of the Inspector General in early 1993 noted that “the chancery’s setback of from 25 to 75 feet from the roadway is considered adequate, given the terrorist threat level.” The Compliance Follow-up Review, dated March 1994, seemed to agree, noting in paragraph three that “while some Middle Eastern governments
and organizations with ties to terrorism are present in Dar Es Salaam, they have not been active in targeting American interests in Tanzania. The low (threat) rating appears reasonable.” It was noted, however, that “dense traffic on the (Laibon) side street could pose a problem if the threat from terrorism were to increase.”

Changes in physical security procedures such as those instituted by the new RSO in July 1998 and the previous addition of 4mm Mylar film on all windows were not required for “low” threat posts but were made anyway because of the recognition that “vulnerability” is a better criterion than “threat potential” in determining which security measures should be put in place at any given post.

The Dar Es Salaam Emergency Action Plan prepared by the RSO in May 1998, like other EAP’s submitted in accordance with requirements specified by the Bureau of Diplomatic Security, did not specifically mention vulnerability to vehicular bomb attack, but did describe emergency routes of evacuation and assembly points in the event of a package bomb threat.

The MSG detachment at Dar Es Salaam regularly performed react drills and embassy fire drills. React drills involve only the MSG personnel. Fire drills involved the entire embassy. Specifically, fire drills were conducted in March and June of 1998. Two package bomb react drills were conducted in April and June 1998 and four other drills were conducted during the March-June time frame. The MSG detachment was not only ready but also, in the immediate aftermath of the explosion, performed efficiently, as well.

When the bomb went off, four Marines were in their quarters not far from the embassy. They mobilized quickly and headed for the embassy. Had they had specific kinds of emergency react gear at their quarters, they believe they could have been more effective in responding to the evolving emergency.*

The FEST personnel from Washington were delayed 24 hours in taking off because of the late decision to add a second aircraft (the regular FEST aircraft was designated to Nairobi) and the subsequent problems in identifying a suitable plane. Because of the nature of the bombing in Dar Es Salaam and the quick response of the embassy staff and the Tanzanian government, the delay did not affect materially the management of the Dar Es Salaam crisis. When the FEST personnel did arrive, they did a professional job. Particularly helpful were the FBO engineers who shored up the chancery structurally so that the investigation and security surveys could proceed. The post was unanimous in noting that what they needed most, but did not get, was help in the form of supplementary foreign service personnel who could assist the post in secretarial, political and public affairs responsibilities.
The handling of the press and public affairs in Dar Es Salaam was textbook quality. Post Public Affairs Officer (PAO), Dudley Sims, quickly established contact with the Department of State’s Operations Center to coordinate public affairs strategy. The press was kept away from the bomb site for security reasons and no on-camera interviews were permitted. Care was taken to avoid any speculation on the origin of size of the bomb. Nevertheless, stand-up press conferences were held and human interest interviews with embassy survivors of the blast were arranged. The PAO ensured that local press groups were included in all briefings in addition to the international press corps which arrived on the scene quickly and in large numbers. So heavy were the demands from the press that the post suggested including a Public Affairs specialist on future FEST teams to help with this important element of crisis management.

Findings

As required by statute, the Board makes these findings:

1. The August 7 vehicular bombing of the US Embassy in Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania, which occurred almost simultaneously with the bombing of the US Embassy in Nairobi, Kenya, was a terrorist attack intended to cause loss of lives, serious injuries, and destruction of the embassy. Under the provisions of P.L. 99-399, this incident was therefore security related.

2. With the notable exception of failing to meet the Department’s standard for a 100 ft. setback/standoff zone, the security systems and security procedures at the US Embassy in Dar Es Salaam prior to and on August 7, 1998 were in accord with, and in some ways exceeded, Department of State standards for overseas posts assessed as having a “low” threat rating for political violence and terrorism.

   • In view of the August 7 bombings, it is apparent that the Department’s standards themselves, as well as the application of those standards to the majority of overseas Embassy facilities, are inadequate. The standards and their application require immediate review; for both short-term and long-term measures.

3. The security systems and security procedures in force at the US Embassy in Dar Es Salaam prior to and on August 7 were, so far as the Board could determine, properly implemented.

   • The bomb vehicle, which appears to have been blocked by an embassy water truck at the closed embassy’ gates, did not succeed in penetrating the embassy’s outer perimeter. Five local guards in the vicinity of the bomb vehicle were all killed.
Just 30 minutes prior to the bombing, the embassy had conducted its weekly “alarm recognition” drill, and mission personnel were familiar with emergency procedures and evacuation sites, albeit, there was no specific alarm or drill for vehicle bombs.

Although not required at this low threat post, a duress alarm system for perimeter guard post and a recording capability for the CCTV would have been useful.

There was no information or intelligence to warn of the actual attack. A report about a year prior to the attack alleged that the US Embassy in Dar Es Salaam would “have to be attacked” after the US Embassy in Nairobi was bombed. This report was fully disseminated but discredited because of serious doubts about the source. It did, however, have the impact of reminding officials that attacks can occur anywhere, reinforcing the security procedures and training implemented at Embassy Dar Es Salaam.*

The Board finds that no employee of the US Government or member of the uniformed services, as defined by Section 303(a) (l)(B) of the Act, breached his or her duty. To the contrary, the post and all of its personnel are to be commended for the professionalism with which they undertook their responsibilities prior to the attack and for their personal courage in the aftermath.

The Marine Security personnel at the Marine quarters at the time of the bombing did not have react gear to respond to the emergency.* While in this case, the lack of such equipment did not impede their arrival at the embassy, other more dire scenarios in the future dictate consideration of having additional gear stored at Marine quarters for emergency use.

The arrival of the FEST personnel from Washington was delayed because of the late decision to add a second aircraft and the difficulty in locating an available plane. The delayed arrival had no adverse impact on managing the crisis. The FEST team was staffed with appropriate expertise but additional foreign service personnel to supplement the beleagured embassy staff would have been helpful.
ATTACHMENT A
The Embassy Victims

Killed
Nairobi

U.S. Citizens
Jesse Nathan Aliganga Jr. (Marine Corps)
Julian Bartley Sr.
Julian Bartley Jr.
Jean Rose Dalizu (Dept. of Defense)
Molly Huckaby Hardy
Kenneth Ray Hobson (Army)

Prabhi
Guptara Kvalera
Arlene Kirk (Dept of Defense)
Mary Louise Martin (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)
Ann Michelle O’Connor
Sherry Lynn Olds (Air Force)
Uttamial T. Shah

Foreign Service Nationals
Chrispin W. Bonyo
Lawrence A. Gitau
Hindu O. Idi

Tony Irungu
Geoffrey Kalio
G. Joel Kamau
Lucy N. Karigi
Francis M. Kibe
Joe Kiongo
Dominic Kithuva
Peter K. Macharia
Francis W. Maina
Cecelia Mamboleo
Lydia M. Mayaka
Francis Mbuga Ndungu
Kimeu N. Nganga
Francis Mbogo Njunge
Vincent Nyokie
Francis Olewe Ochilo
Maurice Okach
Edwin A.O. Omori
Lucy G. Onono
Evans K. Onsongo (Dept. of Agriculture)
Eric Onyango
Sellah Caroline Opati
Rachel M. Pussy (USIS)

Dar es Salaam

Foreign Service National
Yusuf Shamte Ndange

Contractors
Abdalla Mohamed
Abbas William Mwila
Bakari Nyumhu
Mwendeje Rajabu
Mohamed Mahundi Ramadani
Doto Lukua Ramadhani

MISSING
Dar es Salaam
Saidi Rogath, FSN

INJURED
Nairobi

U.S. Citizens
Ellen Bomer
Dan Briehl
Carol Hawley
Clyde Him
Gary Lunquist
Frank Pressley
Carolyn Riley
David Robertson
Lydia Sparks
Gary Spiers

contractors
Pauline Abdallah (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)
Joshua O’Kindo (Guard)

Foreign Service Nationals
Caroline W. Gichuru
Michael Kiari Ikonye
Moses M. Kinuya (Foreign Agriculture Service)
Livingstone Madahana
Grace N. Marangu
Gideon Maritim
Lydia N. Mbithi (Foreign Agriculture Service)
Margaret Ndungu
Josiah O. Obat (Voice of America)
Tobias O. Otieno (Foreign Commercial Service)
Mary Ofisi
Jael Adhiambo Oyoo
Josephat K. Wachira (Library of Congress)

Dar es Salaam
U.S. Citizens
Cynthia Kimble
Elizabeth Slater

Foreign Service Nationals
Eddieson Kepesa
Henry Kessy
Evitta Kwimbere
Nafisa Malik
Hosiana Mmbaga

(Taken from State Magazine, October 1998)
ATTACKS AGAINST
U.S. DIPLOMATIC INSTALLATIONS

1987-1997
ATTACKS AGAINST
U.S. DIPLOMATIC INSTALLATIONS -- 1987-1997

1987

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<td>Rocket</td>
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<td>04/14/87</td>
<td>U.S. Embassy-La Paz, Bolivia</td>
<td>Rocket</td>
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<td>U.S. Embassy-Madrid, Spain</td>
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1988

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<td>U.S. Charge d’Affaire Residence-Kabul,</td>
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02/24/88 USIS Library-Seoul, South Korea Firebombing
02/26/88 USIS Library-Kwangju, South Korea Attempted Bombing
03/01/88 American Cultural Center-Dhaka, Bangladesh Bombing
03/18/88 U.S. Embassy-La Paz, Bolivia Bombing
03/22/88 USIS Binational Center-Rancagua, Chile Firebombing
03/22/88 U.S. Embassy-Quito, Ecuador Firebombing
03/23/88 U.S. Embassy-Bogota, Colombia Rocket
04/02/88 U.S. Embassy-Caracas, Venezuela Grenade
04/07/88 U.S. Emb. Annex-Tegucigalpa, Honduras Arson
04/14/88 USIS Binational Center-Medellin Bombing
04/16/88 USIS Binational Center-Lima, Peru Bombing
04/16/88 USIS Binational Center-Lima, Peru Bombing
04/17/88 USIS Binational Center-San Jose, Costa Rica Bombing
04/20/88 U.S. Embassy Consular Section-Singapore Attempted Bombing
05/04/88 USIS Binational Center-Santiago, Dominican Republic Bombing
05/10/88 U.S. Embassy-Sanaa, Yemen Rocket
05/19/88 USIS Library-Seoul, South Korea Firebombing
05/20/88 U.S. Embassy-Seoul, South Korea Firebombing
05/23/88 U.S. Cultural Center-Kwangju, South Korea Firebombing
06/09/88 U.S. Amb. Residence-Lima, Peru Rocket
06/13/88 U.S. Cultural Center-Taegu, South Korea Firebombing
06/27/88 DEA Base Camp-Villa Tunari, Bolivia Strafing
07/03/88 U.S. Embassy-Madrid, Spain Attempted Rocket Attack
07/03/88 U.S. Amb. Residence-Madrid, Spain Bombing
07/04/88 U.S. Embassy-Manila, Philippines Bombing
08/05/88 U.S. Embassy-Manila, Philippines Bombing
08/06/88 U.S. Cultural Center-Kwangju, South Korea Firebombing
08/08/88 U.S. Emb. Commissary-La Paz, Bolivia Bombing
09/23/88 U.S. Consulate-Bucharest, Romania Firebombing
10/14/88 U.S. Cultural Center-Kwangju, South Korea Firebombing
10/26/88 U.S. Cultural Center-Taegu, South Korea Firebombing
10/28/88 USAID Facility-San Salvador, El Salvador Rocket
11/06/88 U.S. Cultural Center-Kwangju, South Korea Firebombing
11/07/88 U.S. Cultural Center-Kwangju, South Korea Firebombing
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**1989**

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**UNCLASSIFIED**
### 1990

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<td>U.S. Embassy-La Paz, Bolivia</td>
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**1993**

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<td>01/14/93</td>
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<td>Arson</td>
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<td>01/15/93</td>
<td>U.S. Embassy-Sanaa, Yemen</td>
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<td>01/16/93</td>
<td>USIS Binational Center-Lima, Peru</td>
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<td>03/03/93</td>
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<td>U.S. Embassy-Caracas, Venezuela</td>
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<td>U.S. Embassy-Lima, Peru</td>
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<td>Strafing</td>
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<td>TYPE OF ATTACK</td>
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<td>11/02/93</td>
<td>U.S. Cultural Center-Kwangju, South Korea</td>
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<td>USIS Binational Center-Lima, Peru</td>
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<td>U.S. Amb. Residence-Montevideo, Uruguay</td>
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<td>02/15/96</td>
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<td>U.S. Consulate-Chengdu, China</td>
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<td>U.S. Consulate-Monterrey, Mexico</td>
<td>Strafing</td>
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<td>U.S. Embassy-Manila, Philippines</td>
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<td>American School-Chennai, India</td>
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<td>American School-Karachi, Pakistan</td>
<td>Shooting</td>
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</table>
ATTACHMENT C
Anti-US Mass Casualty Incidents
ATTACHMENT D
LIST OF PERSONS INTERVIEWED BY
THE ACCOUNTABILITY REVIEW BOARDS

Abrahamson, Dave
FEST Team Member – Nairobi
Director of Operations
Office of Coordinator for Counter-Terrorism (S/CT)
Department of State

Armor, William
**Director/Office** of Intelligence and Threat Analysis
Bureau of Diplomatic Security
Department of State

Auldridge, Wendy
Logistical and Security
American Embassy, Nairobi

Barnes, Faye G.
Director
Family Liaison **Office**
Department of State

Barr, William
Public Affairs **Officer**
American Embassy, Nairobi

**Bergin, Peter**
Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary
Diplomatic Security Service
Department of State

Bishop, Vaughn
Political Section
American Embassy, Nairobi

Ann Marie Blum
Counter-Terrorism Analyst
Department of State
Bohn, Jeremiah D.
Corporal
United States Marine Corps
American Embassy, Dar Es Salaam

Boswell, Eric
Former Assistant Secretary
Bureau of Diplomatic Security
Department of State

Briahl, Daniel M.
Sergeant
Marine Security Guard
American Embassy, Nairobi

Brooks, John
Major General
Vice Director
Logistics Directorate/Joint Staff
Department of Defense

Burkart, Stephen.
Economics Officer
American Embassy, Nairobi

Bushnell, Prudence
Ambassador
American Embassy, Nairobi

Capelli, Steve
Office of Terrorism, Narcotics, and Crime
Bureau of Intelligence and Research
Department of State

Carpenter, David
Assistant Secretary
Bureau of Diplomatic Security
Department of State

Carpenter, Harlow J.
Administrative Officer
American Embassy, Dar Es Salaam
Carson, Johnnie
Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary
Bureau of African Affairs
Department of State

Charles, Kathleen
Deputy Assistant Secretary of Budget and Planning
Bureau of Finance and Management Policy
Department of State

Clarke, Richard
Chairman, (Interagency) Counter-Terrorism and Security Group
Director, Office of Global Issues and Multilateral Affairs
National Security Council

Cohen, Bonnie
Undersecretary for Management
Department of State

Cooke, Cassandra
Engineering Security Office
American Embassy, Nairobi

Corsun, Andrew
Office of Intelligence and Threat Analysis
Bureau of Diplomatic Security
Department of State

Craig, Ted
Former Kenya Desk Officer
Bureau of African Affairs
Department of State

Cross, Gary B. Jr.
Gunnery Sergeant
Marine Security Guard Detachment
American Embassy, Nairobi

DaSilva, Soter Dr.
Embassy Local Physician
American Embassy, Dar Es Salaam
Daugharty, Elizabeth
Formerly in Office of Threat Analysis
Bureau of Diplomatic Security
Department of State

Daugherty, Craig
Mobile Security Division
Bureau of Diplomatic Security
Department of State

David, Jeffrey
National Program Manager/Technical Support Working Group
Office of Special Technology
U.S. Navy

DiCarlo, John S.
Regional Security Officer
American Embassy, Dar Es Salaam

Dossa, Zaynul
Ultimate Security Manager
American Embassy, Dar Es Salaam

Dumont, Cedric Dr.
Director
Office of Medical Services
Department of State

Dunn, David
Director of East African Affairs
Bureau of African Affairs
Department of State

English, Burt
Head of A/FBO Team to Dar Es Salaam
Foreign Buildings Operations
Department of State

Eustace, John
Former Regional Security Officer for Dar Es Salaam
Department of State
Flowers, Clifton
Director/Construction Security Management Division
Foreign Buildings Operations
Department of State

Fusilier, Burley
Office of Anti-Terrorism Assistance
Bureau of Diplomatic Security
Department of State

Galant, Peter
FEST team member for Dar Es Salaam
Bureau of Diplomatic Security
Department of State

Gnehm, Edward
Ambassador
Director General of Foreign Service
Department of State

Godec, Robert F.
Counselor for Economic Affairs
American Embassy, Nairobi

Gonite, Samuel
Corporal
Marine Security Guard Detachment
American Embassy, Nairobi

Gray, Gordon
Director of Regional Affairs
Office of Coordinator for Counter-Terrorism (S/CT)
Department of State

Gurney, Charles
Former Desk Officer for Tanzania and Kenya
Bureau of African Affairs
Department of State

Hagerty, Patrick
Managing Director for Overseas Citizens Services
CA/OCS = Deputy Assistant Secretary for Overseas Citizens Service
Department of State
Hamilton, Clay  
Deputy Chairman  
Community Counter-Terrorism Board

Haralson, John T.  
Director, National Foreign Affairs Training Center  
Crisis Management Training  
Department of State

Hartman, Darlene  
Secretary – Regional Security Officer  
American Embassy, Dar Es Salaam

Holmes, Alan  
Assistant Secretary  
Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict (ASD/SOLIC)  
Department of Defense

Hunter, Charles  
Office of Protective Intelligence Investigations  
Bureau of Diplomatic Security  
Department of State

Hyland, Frank  
Former Chief of Warning Group at the Counter-Terrorism Center  
National Security Agency

Irvine, Richard L.  
Former Chairman of the Community Counter-Terrorism Board  
National Security Agency

Jakub, Michael  
Director of Technical Programs  
Office of Coordinator for Counter-Terrorism  
Department of State

Johnstone, Craig  
Director  
Office of Resources, Plans, and Policy (S/RPP)  
Department of State

Kane, John  
Assistant Regional Security Officer  
American Embassy, Nairobi
Kappesser, Randy
Counter-Terrorism Specialist
Department of the Army

Kennedy, Patrick
Assistant Secretary
Bureau of Administration
Department of State

Kimble, Patrick
Former Gunnery Sergeant
United States Marine Corps
American Embassy, Dar Es Salaam

Konner, Calvin M.
Consular Officer
American Embassy, Dar Es Salaam

Kourtz, Donna
Analytic Coordinator
Community Counter-Terrorism Board

Kresse, Kenneth
Counter-Terrorism Center
Central Intelligence Agency

Kyle, Robert
Associate Director for National Security and International Affairs
Office of Management and Budget

Lange, John E.
Deputy Chief of Mission
American Embassy, Dar Es Salaam

Liptak, Larry
Branch Chief
Physical Security Division
Bureau of Diplomatic Security
Department of State

Manzanares, Robert
Executive Director
Bureau of African Affairs
Department of State
Mariano, Nicholas
Acting Regional Security Officer (June-July 1998)
American Embassy, Nairobi

Marine, Michael
Deputy Chief of Mission
American Embassy, Nairobi

McCabe, Cody J.
Corporal
United States Marine Corps
American Embassy, Dar Es Salaam

McCoy, Gretchen MD
Regional Medical Officer
American Embassy, Nairobi

McGrath, Thomas
Director/Policy, Planning, and Budget Office
Bureau of Diplomatic Security
Department of State

McMullen, Christopher
Political/Economic Chief
American Embassy, Dar Es Salaam

McMullen, Laurel
Consular PIT Secretary
American Embassy, Dar Es Salaam

Melrose, Joseph
Ambassador
Headed FEST for Nairobi
Department of State

Montgomery, Steven
General Services Officer
American Embassy, Nairobi

Morton, Joe
Division Chief/Facility Protection Division
Bureau of Diplomatic Security
Department of State
Murphree, Terry
Associate Peace Corps Director
American Embassy, Dar Es Salaam

Nathanson, Alan
Regional Director – Office of African Affairs
Office of Overseas Operations, Bureau of Diplomatic Security
Department of State

Nolan, Stephen J.
Administrative Counselor
American Embassy, Dar Es Salaam

Norris, Russell
Construction Security Management Division
Foreign Buildings Operations
Department of State

Oakley, Phyllis
Assistant Secretary
Bureau of Intelligence and Research
Department of State

O’Brien, Robert
Director/Office of Overseas Operations
Bureau of Diplomatic Security
Department of State

O’Brien, Sean
Office of Protective Intelligence Investigations
Bureau of Diplomatic Security
Department of State

O’Connell, Geoff
Chief, Counter-Terrorism Center
Central Intelligence Agency

O’Connell, June
Consular Officer
American Embassy, Nairobi

Patchel, Anne
Kenya Desk Officer
Bureau of African Affairs
Department of State
Ross, Christopher  
Ambassador  
Coordinator for Counter-Terrorism  
Department of State

Roughead, Ronald  
Colonel  
Kenya/United States Liaison Office  
American Embassy, Nairobi

Ryan, Mary  
Assistant Secretary  
Bureau of Consular Affairs  
Department of State

Rychak, Wayne  
Counter-Measures and Information Security  
Bureau of Diplomatic Security  
Department of State

Scharf, Chris  
Information Officer  
American Embassy, Nairobi

Shimnek, Helen  
Counter-Terrorism Analyst  
Department of the Army

Simon, Steve  
Senior Director for Counter-Terrorism  
National Security Council

Simons, Bob  
Assistant Regional Security Officer  
American Embassy, Nairobi

Sparkman, Mark S.  
Regional Affairs Officer  
American Embassy, Dar Es Salaam
Steinitz, Mark
Director
Office of Analysis for Terrorism, Narcotics and Crime
Bureau of Intelligence and Research
Department of State

Stillman, Chris
General Services Officer
American Embassy, Nairobi

Stith, Charles R.
Ambassador
American Embassy, Dar Es Salaam

Stivason, Edward D.
Sergeant
United States Marine Corps
American Embassy, Dar Es Salaam

Stott, David
Political Officer
American Embassy, Nairobi

Thessin, James
Legal Advisor’s Office
Department of State

Thomas, Kendall
Seabee
American Embassy, Nairobi

Thomasson, Pat
Deputy Assistant Secretary for Foreign Buildings Operations
Foreign Buildings Operations
Department of State

Toussaint, Joe
Director/Program Executive Office
Foreign Buildings Operations
Department of State

Vandenbroucke, Lucien
Political Consular
American Embassy, Nairobi
In addition to the persons listed above, the Boards were briefed by representatives of the Department of Justice and the Federal Bureau of Investigation. The Boards also interviewed various foreign national employees in Nairobi-and Dar Es Salaam.