United States Department of State
Bureau of Diplomatic Security

DIPLOMATIC SECURITY: *2007 YEAR IN REVIEW*

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Our Mission

The Bureau of Diplomatic Security (DS), the law enforcement and security arm of the U.S. Department of State, provides a secure environment for the conduct of American diplomacy.

To advance American interests and foreign policy, DS protects people, property, and information at more than 285 State Department missions worldwide.

A leader in international investigations, threat analysis, cyber security, counterterrorism, and security technology, DS is the most widely represented U.S. security and law enforcement organization in the world.

MESSAGE FROM THE ACTING ASSISTANT SECRETARY

The Bureau of Diplomatic Security confronted and overcame many challenges in 2007. By year's end, the Bureau had developed new tools and processes to meet emerging needs and to continue providing extraordinary security to those that DS protects.

- DS coordinated security for two major international events that saw the largest concentration of foreign leaders on U.S. soil in 2007: The 62nd session of the United Nations General Assembly in New York City and the Annapolis Conference on Middle East peace held at the U.S. Naval Academy.
- One of the Bureau's greatest challenges continues to be safeguarding lives in Iraq. Following the release of recommendations from the Secretary of State's Panel on Personal Protective Services in Iraq in October, DS began rapidly implementing the panel's suggestions for improved security contractor operations in Iraq.
- The year 2007 was a record year for DS criminal investigators. DS investigations resulted in 1,550 individuals being arrested in the United States on visa, passport, and other fraud charges, and another 406 arrests on similar charges overseas.

This Year in Review highlights only some of our accomplishments. Behind each of our successes lies an extraordinary team of men and women who perform outstanding work every day throughout the world. It is because of their dedication and sacrifice that the Bureau of Diplomatic Security can achieve our mission: to protect people, property, and information critical to our national security.

Gregory B. Starr
Acting Assistant Secretary of State
Bureau of Diplomatic Security

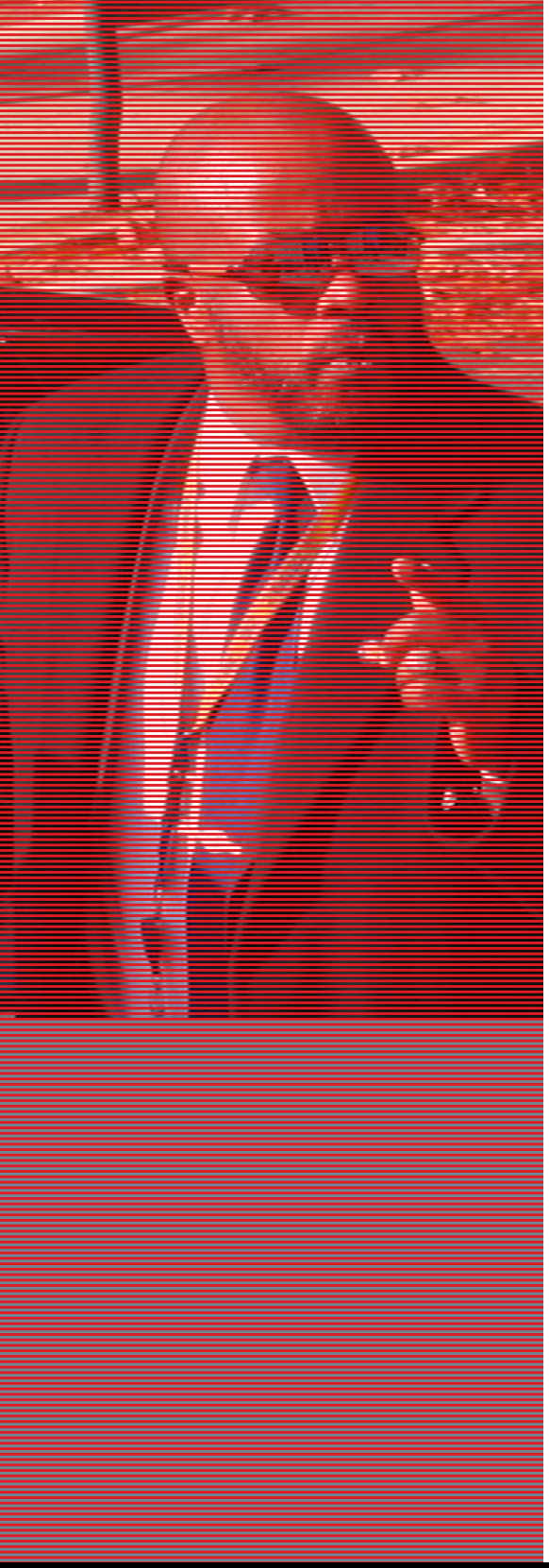
Protecting The Peace Process

One of DS's proudest achievements was its coordination of security operations for the Annapolis Conference on Middle East peace held at the U.S. Naval Academy in November. The event was attended by two heads of state, 45 foreign ministers, six international agency delegates, and more than 800 members of the international press corps.

As the designated federal coordinating agency for the conference's security, DS worked with more than two dozen federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies to ensure the conference was held in a safe and secure environment.

DS personnel staffed 30 protective details for the conference, including those of the Palestinian Authority president and Israeli foreign minister.

DS has an ever-expanding role in securing key international events. The Annapolis Conference marked the first time that DS was the designated tactical operations coordinator for a security event of this magnitude. DS directed operations of more than 100 tactical law enforcement officers from DS and half a dozen other agencies for incident and emergency response.



PROTECTING PEOPLE

One of Diplomatic Security's primary responsibilities is to safeguard the lives of those engaged in U.S. diplomacy at home and abroad.

U.S. Secretary of State Travel

DS personnel provide around-the-clock protection to the nation's top diplomat, U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice. In 2007, DS special agents traveled more than 200,000 air miles with Secretary Rice to 25 countries, including to the annual APEC conference in Australia, the G-8 Summit in Berlin, a joint trip with President George W. Bush through Latin America, and visits to Afghanistan, the Palestinian territories, and Iraq.

Safety in High-Threat Locations

Because of the extraordinary threat environments in which U.S. officials often must work at our diplomatic missions abroad, DS engineers and technologists developed, tested, and deployed several new security technologies in 2007.

DS engineers developed additional electronic countermeasures to protect DS vehicles in Afghanistan and delivered new chemical- and radiological-based systems to detect explosives there.

To enhance the safety of DS personnel operating in areas where maps were unavailable, unreliable or outdated, DS introduced a new vehicle navigation and tracking system.

In Iraq, DS adapted its security operations and processes to ensure the highest level of professionalism by its security contract personnel and to avoid unnecessary loss of life. In response to recommendations from the Secretary of State's Panel on Personal Protective Services in Iraq, by year's end DS implemented several changes to its protective activities in Iraq, including:

- An increase in the number of DS special agents working in Iraq. This influx of personnel ensures that DS special agents accompany certain personal security details transporting protectees throughout the country.
- A requirement that security firms working under DS contract provide their personnel with cultural awareness training and Arabic translators as needed.
- An agreement that improves communication channels with Iraqi law enforcement, security, and military agencies involving DS security contractors or personnel.
- Digital Video Recording systems for incident reporting for protective vehicles.

- Establishment of a permanent working group consisting of DS and the Multi-National Force-Iraq to develop common operating procedures, ensure information exchange, and establish optimal situational awareness.

To enhance security for Department of State personnel overseas, DS unveiled several new innovations, including:

- The Department of State's first armored 1-ton chassis passenger van for safely transporting U.S. Embassy staff in Jerusalem.
- An armored ambulance capable of safely entering a "hot zone" and comfortably transporting the wounded to medical facilities. The first of these armored ambulances was delivered in August to the U.S. Embassy in Kabul.
- Improved blast protection for armored counter-attack vehicles — known as BearCats — that are used for protecting Diplomatic Security motorcades in high-threat environments.

Rewards for Justice

Another initiative that has contributed enormously to saving lives is the Rewards for Justice (RFJ) program. One of America's most valuable assets in the global war on terrorism, the program offers rewards for information that prevents or successfully resolves an act of international terrorism against the United States. Since its inception in 1984, RFJ has paid more than $77 million to more than 50 people who provided credible information.

The year 2007 was a banner year for RFJ, which delivered rewards totaling $15 million for the successful resolution of terrorist cases in the Philippines and the United States.

RFJ paid $10 million in June to sources in Manila for providing key information that contributed to successful military operations against two terrorist leaders. Khadaffy Janjalani and Abu Solaiman, leaders of the Philippines-based terrorist group Abu Sayyaf, had been responsible for the kidnappings and deaths of American and Filipino citizens. Both men were killed subsequently in gun battles with the Armed Forces of the Philippines.

This and other rewards made 2007 the second-highest payout year in the history of the RFJ program.

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Overseas Security Advisory Council

Another of DS's successful life-saving programs is the Overseas Security Advisory Council (OSAC), an innovative public-private partnership between the Department of State and some 5,000 constituent organizations from U.S.-based businesses, non-government organizations, faith-based organizations, and academic institutions that have people and assets overseas.

OSAC has developed a comprehensive, efficient, and effective system for sharing timely foreign threat and security information with its U.S. private-sector partners.

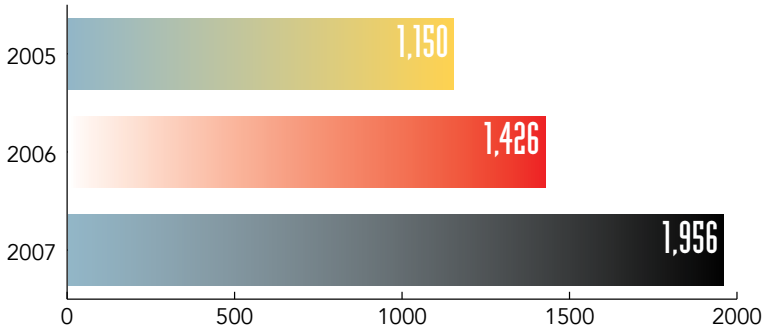
In 2007, OSAC increased its visibility among academic institutions by co-hosting seminars on health, safety, and security issues relevant to students. OSAC representatives also spoke at numerous conferences on college campuses to educate students, faculty, and administrators about safety overseas.

In June 2007, OSAC delivered its first group briefing via the Internet simultaneously to some two dozen OSAC constituents in various locations across the United States. This new Webcasting technology enables OSAC to deliver information faster to the private sector and to receive constituent feedback nearly simultaneously. By disseminating timely threat information that helps its constituent organizations protect themselves during emergencies, OSAC plays a significant role in saving lives and advancing the Department of State's strategy to protect U.S. private-sector interests abroad.

Criminal Investigations

Another way in which DS protects lives is through its robust criminal investigations program. DS investigations into passport and visa fraud and related crimes play a vital role in protecting our national security and supporting the U.S. Government's strategic goal of limiting the mobility of transnational terrorist groups and organized criminal enterprises.

Arrest Totals



In 2007, DS investigators facilitated the arrest of 1,550 individuals in the United States on charges of visa and passport fraud and other related crimes.

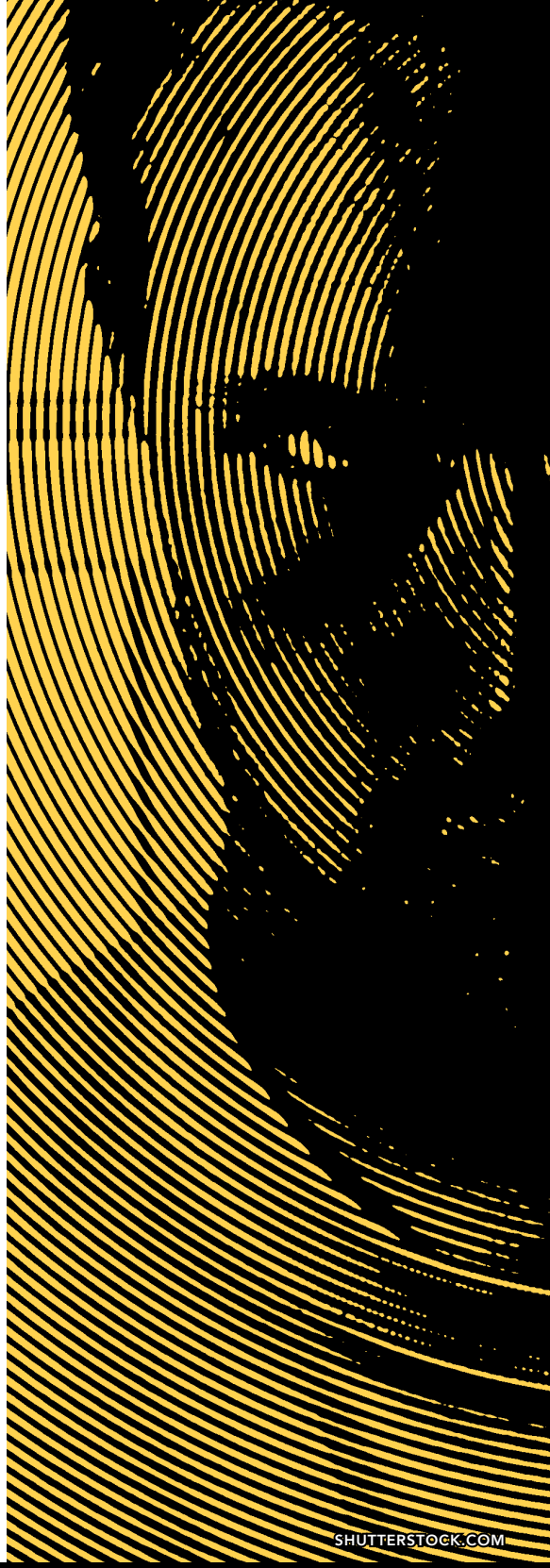
In foreign countries, our regional security officers worked closely with their host-nation counterparts to investigate and apprehend suspects engaged in travel document fraud. DS, working with U.S. consular officials and foreign law enforcement agencies, facilitated the arrests of 406 persons for visa and passport fraud and similar charges, bringing DS's arrest total for the year to a record-breaking 1,956.

DS criminal investigations led to several important successes:

- The arrest and indictment of a U.S. Army officer in August for the attempted kidnapping of a Foreign Service Officer traveling to Minneapolis. DS worked jointly with our counterparts in the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) to investigate and apprehend the suspect.
- The indictment of a Shreveport, Louisiana, man for e-mailing death threats to a Canadian government official and his family. The case was initiated after the Royal Canadian Mounted Police reported the threats to the DS regional security officer at the U.S. Embassy in Ottawa.
- An intensive, inter-agency investigation with the FBI and Kenyan law enforcement personnel that resulted in the arrest and successful prosecution of several criminals who murdered a U.S. diplomat's wife and mother-in-law during a violent carjacking in Nairobi and an Embassy employee's father and brother in a separate incident.

Tracking Fugitives

DS personnel also assisted other U.S. and foreign law enforcement agencies in locating, apprehending, and returning to justice fugitives hiding in the United States and abroad. In 2007, Diplomatic Security assisted with the return of six fugitives domestically and 107 fugitives internationally. Among these fugitives were seven individuals wanted for murder, 31 for sexual assault of a minor, and 14 for narcotics charges. Others were wanted on charges of child pornography, parental abduction, weapons sales to a terrorist organization, human smuggling, and money laundering.



In Pursuit Of Pedophiles

Among the most infamous of fugitives that DS helped return to justice in 2007 was Kenneth John Freeman.

Arguably one of the year's most notorious alleged child molesters, the 44-year-old former Sheriff's Deputy was accused of recording himself raping his daughter and then posting the video on the Internet. The video became one of the most widely downloaded child pornography videos in recent years.

DS worked with federal and local law enforcement agencies to track down Freeman in Suzhou, China, help apprehend him in Hong Kong, and facilitate his return to Washington State in October. Freeman had been one of the top 15 most-wanted fugitives by both the U.S. Marshals Service and the Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

Diplomatic Security also played a key role in returning fugitive Alan J. Horowitz to the United States from Chennai, India. Horowitz, an ordained Orthodox rabbi and former child psychologist, is an alleged serial sexual predator of children.

After significant coordination by DS's regional security officers stationed in New Delhi, Chennai, and Mumbai, Indian officials apprehended Horowitz in the seaside resort town of Mahabalipuram. DS and FBI special agents accompanied him aboard a flight to Newark, New Jersey, where Horowitz was handed over to U.S. Marshals.

Both men had been featured on separate episodes of "America's Most Wanted" television program. Both men will now face justice thanks to the efforts of Diplomatic Security and its law enforcement partners.

Dignitary Protection

DS protects foreign dignitaries visiting the United States as well as some foreign leaders overseas. In 2007, DS fielded a total of 207 protective security details for foreign dignitaries in the United States. DS also provided training and support for security details of the presidents of Afghanistan and Liberia.

DS coordinated protective security operations for the 62nd session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA 62) held in September in New York City. DS security preparations took more than a year to complete and involved 385 DS Special Agents, additional DS uniformed personnel and support staff, 115 federal law enforcement agents from the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives and the U.S. Marshals Service, and additional personnel and resources from several state and local agencies. During this two-week international event, DS coordinated and supervised the movement of more than 120 highly specialized armored and unarmored protection vehicles through New York City streets and the simultaneous establishment of a Midtown Manhattan operations center. In all, DS protected some 35 foreign officials attending UNGA 62.

Diplomatic Security personnel assisted in security operations and protected foreign dignitaries at several other high-visibility domestic functions:

- The Global Climate Conference held in Washington, D.C.
- The 2007 State of the Union Address
- The funeral of former President Gerald R. Ford
- The address by Jordan's King Abdullah II Al Hussein to a joint meeting of Congress
- Annual International Monetary Fund/World Bank Meetings

DS participated in security planning and operations for several overseas special events in which U.S. athletes, officials, or other American interests were involved, including:

- The 2007 Copa America Games
  Venezuela
- The 2007 Pan American and Parapan America Games
  Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
- The Africa Growth and Opportunity Act Forum
  Accra, Ghana
- The Asia Pacific Economic Conference
  Sydney, Australia
- The United Nations Global Climate Change Conference
  Bali, Indonesia

Training

One of Diplomatic Security's most effective counterterrorism initiatives continued to be its Antiterrorism Assistance program (ATA) that provides training and equipment to foreign law enforcement and security organizations to enhance their capabilities to detect, deter, counter, and investigate terrorist activities. In 2007, ATA instructors conducted 266 training sessions for law enforcement organizations of 64 foreign nations allied in the Global War on Terrorism.

ATA-trained foreign law enforcement and security agencies scored several dramatic successes against international terrorism and transnational crime:

- In Indonesia, Task Force 88, a special antiterrorism unit trained and equipped by ATA, conducted an operation that resulted in the death of one of Southeast Asia's most-wanted terrorists, the dismantling of his organization, the arrest of several other suspected terrorists, and the seizure of several complete explosive devices and a large quantity of bomb-making material. In a separate operation, Task Force 88 personnel assisted in the arrest of Abu Dujana, the military leader of the Jamaah Islamiyah (JI) terrorist group, along with five other JI members.

- In Quetta, Pakistan, criminal investigators trained in ATA post-blast investigation techniques recovered from a bombing site a cell phone SIM card that was analyzed subsequently by an ATA-designed and -funded Pakistani forensics laboratory. The forensic lab staff, also trained by ATA, retrieved evidence from the cell phone card that resulted in the arrest of numerous suspects and the seizure of two bombs.

- In Thailand, members of a Royal Thai Police tactical team who had completed ATA training conducted a successful raid in which they safely rescued a kidnapped American citizen and arrested eight suspects.

- In Colombia, ATA training in hostage-rescue techniques for the elite GAULA anti-kidnapping units of the Colombian National Police and Armed Forces has contributed to a 78 percent decrease in kidnappings since 2004.

- In Liberia, ATA-trained Special Situation Services (SSS) personnel in Monrovia were called to assist local police with a hostage situation at the home of a former Liberian minister. The three responding SSS officers safely extricated the hostages from the home.

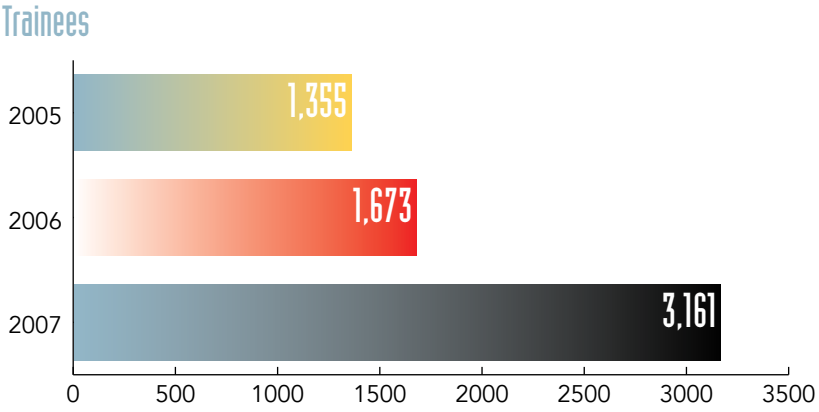
- In the Philippines, ATA's computer security training helped local authorities shut down and successfully prosecute a Manila-based organization of hackers from various nations who had defrauded U.S. telecommunications firms of approximately $55 million.

Diplomatic Security continues to invest in training as a means to enhance the performance of its security personnel and to enable U.S. officials and their family members to better prepare themselves for living and working overseas.

In 2007, DS conducted training at 17 U.S. diplomatic posts abroad in various specialty areas, such as surveillance detection and security screening equipment operations. These training missions are designed to provide, in a single visit, training for all post security and emergency response elements: local guards, surveillance detection personnel, first responders, local bodyguards, and Marine Security Guards. The training concludes with a field training exercise designed to ensure coordination and communication between all post security elements and employees in the event of an attack.

In February, the Diplomatic Security Training Center launched the Foreign Affairs Counter Threat course, a major Department of State initiative aimed at helping Foreign Service personnel and eligible family members develop their personal security skills. The course emphasizes preparation for the rigors of serving in Iraq and other highly dangerous assignments. In 2007, the Training Center provided this counter-threat instruction to nearly 1,100 students from 20 different U.S. Government agencies.

The Training Center also saw an 89 percent increase in the number of DS personnel trained in "hard skills," such as defensive driving. DS trained 3,161 federal employees who were assigned to high-threat diplomatic posts, compared to 1,673 the previous year.



DS Intercepts Explosives In Backpack At Embassy Vienna

October 1, 2007 started out like any other day for Diplomatic Security personnel protecting the U.S. Embassy in Vienna, Austria.

But when a man arrived at the embassy compound carrying a backpack and appearing nervous, DS personnel on the scene immediately took notice and had the backpack scanned by the Embassy's screening systems. This quick and decisive action by DS averted a potential tragedy.

The Embassy explosives detection system picked up molecular traces of two types of explosives on the surface of the backpack, and an X-ray scan by security officers detected suspicious content.

DS personnel took the necessary steps that led to the arrest of the suspect and removal of the backpack's dangerous cargo, which consisted of two hand grenades, two kilograms of nails (intended for shrapnel effect), and 20 grams of explosives.

Had it not been for the vigilance and quick thinking of DS security personnel and the critical information generated by Diplomatic Security's advanced security technology systems, the day might have had a different outcome.

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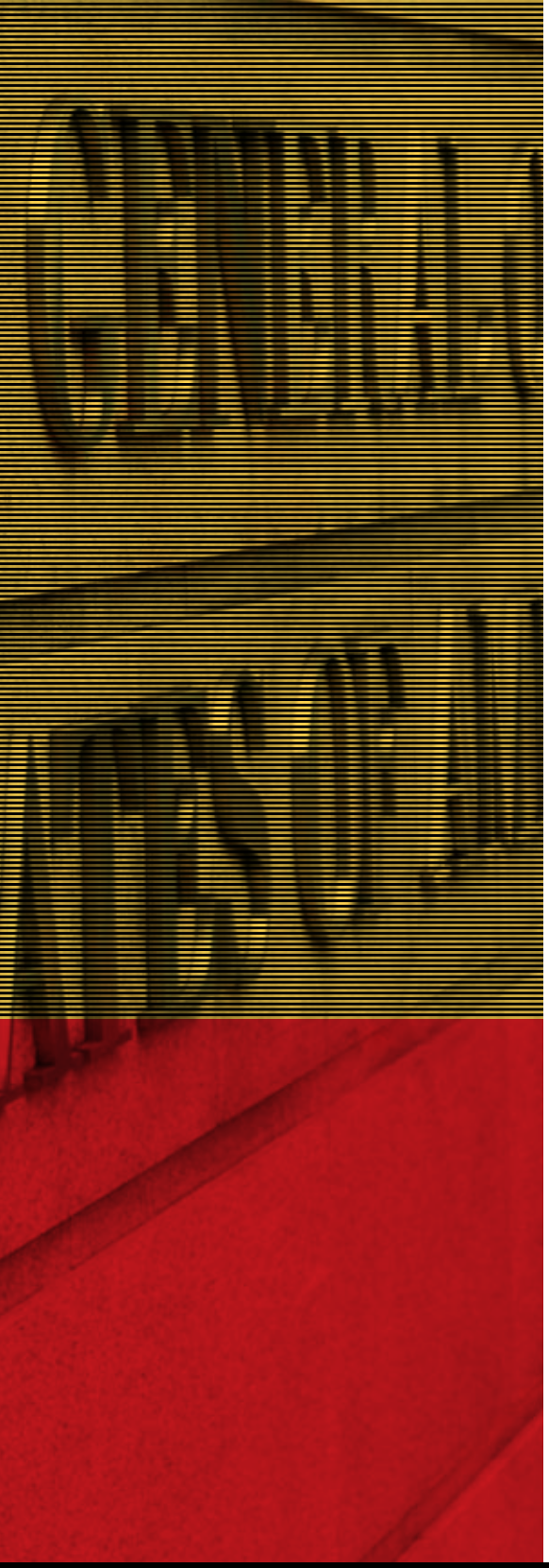

PROTECTING PROPERTY

Domestic Facilities

U.S. diplomatic missions and facilities throughout the world are attractive targets for terrorists. This includes the Department of State's Harry S Truman headquarters building, the U.S. Mission to the United Nations in New York City, the President's guest quarters known as Blair House, all U.S. Passport Offices, 16 Passport Agency offices, and 285 U.S. diplomatic missions around the world.

DS protects these facilities with a variety of protective security tools and personnel, such as DS uniformed guards for domestic facilities, local guard forces for overseas facilities, access-control programming and operations, and physical and technical countermeasures.

Overseas Facilities

To protect U.S. diplomatic buildings overseas, DS maintains a comprehensive program of worldwide protection for every U.S. Embassy and Consulate, as well as housing units for U.S. diplomatic personnel and their families. Regional Security Officers in every U.S. Embassy manage 24/7 security coverage of these facilities through careful planning, training and exercises, monitoring operations, countermeasures, and emergency response programs.

American Presence Posts

DS led efforts to develop operational plans for American Presence Posts (APP), first proposed by Secretary Rice as part of her Transformational Diplomacy initiative. An APP is a small U.S. diplomatic outpost established in selected foreign cities without a U.S. diplomatic presence where the Department of State has determined a U.S. diplomatic presence is needed. The Department may open as many as 25 of these smaller diplomatic offices worldwide in the coming years. To protect these facilities and their personnel, DS formulated uniform APP physical security standards, and helped the Department develop and finalize a comprehensive security cost analysis and APP start-up plans. The first American Presence Posts opened for business in 2007 in Pusan, South Korea and Wuhan, China.

Vehicles

To assist in the safe recovery of DS armored vehicles disabled during protective security operations, DS developed a new armored tow truck for use in high-threat regions of the world. The new vehicle will permit DS personnel to travel safely into hot zones to recover damaged protective vehicles that otherwise would have to be destroyed in place or that might be seized by hostile forces.

Security Technology

In 2007, DS remained at the cutting edge of technological development and deployment in protecting its facilities and property throughout the world. DS significantly expanded its "Security Management System enterprise," a computer-based system for monitoring security and controlling access of Department of State facilities overseas. Last year, this coverage was extended to a total of 222 overseas facilities. The system records activity and conditions at U.S. diplomatic missions around the world.

Identification Cards

DS success on a new ID card program in 2007 helped make the Department of State a recognized leader in the federal government's implementation of Homeland Security Presidential Directive 12. This directive requires federal agencies to develop and deploy for their employees and contract personnel a Personal Identity Verification credential that is secure, reliable, and interoperable among all federal agencies. By deploying this new ID card, DS ensures that only authenticated and cleared individuals have access to Department facilities and information systems.

In 2007, DS increased the number of Department employees and contractors with these new identification cards from less than 100 to 14,279. That milestone earned the Department of State the distinction of being the first federal agency to issue more than 10,000 of the new cards, as well as the only agency to actually use it for facility access control.

Energy Assets

The Department of State assists allied nations in enhancing the security of their critical infrastructure and key resources on which the U.S. Government depends for its operations.

Under the Department's Critical Energy Infrastructure Protection Initiative, DS worked with friendly nations in the Middle East to help them secure their energy facilities. In one country, DS assisted officials in developing new national standards for energy protection, applying a new methodology to determine protection needs, and developing a training academy for a new facilities protection force. In another partner nation, DS personnel conducted a vulnerability assessment of key petroleum facilities as a preliminary step toward enhancing security for those installations.

These efforts directly enhanced the security of the United States by reducing the risk to foreign infrastructures to which our nation is inextricably linked.

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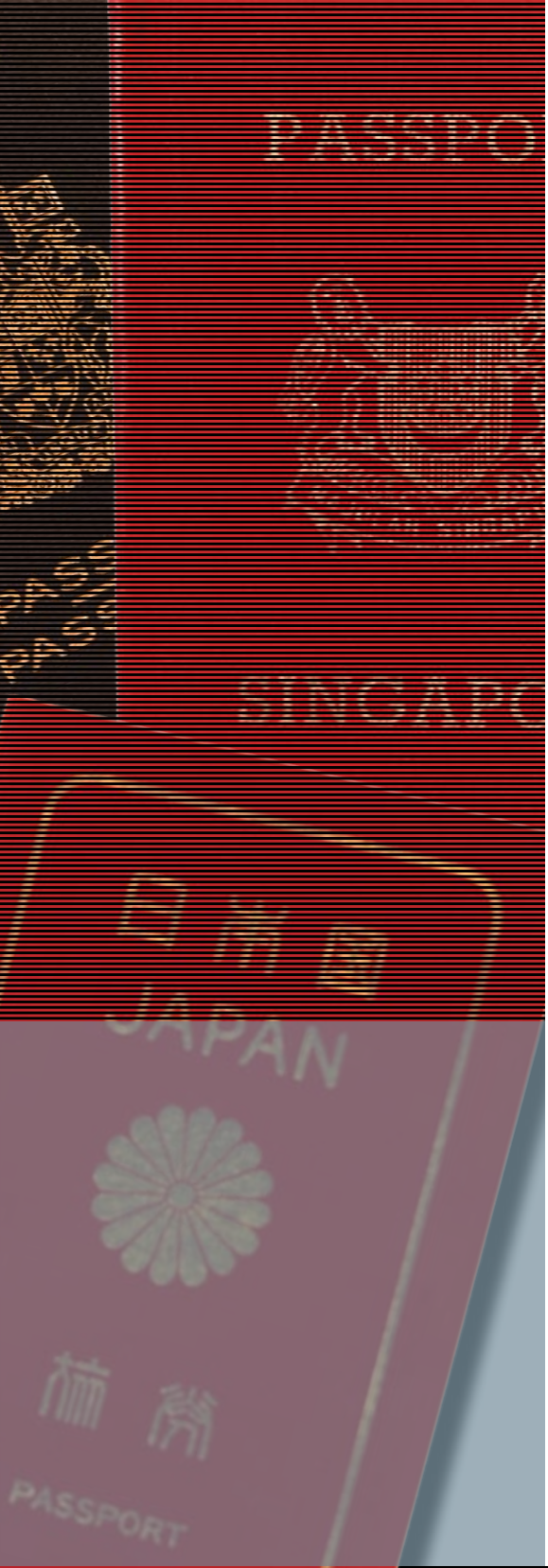
The Brisk Business Of Counterfeit Documents

In early October 2007, a DS investigator in Jakarta, Indonesia coordinated with the Jakarta Metro Police raids on three large-scale document vending operations and facilitated the arrest of proprietors.

The raids resulted in the discovery of over 1,700 names of applicants who had used the vendors' services and approximately 230 applicants who received U.S. visas through the use of counterfeit documents supplied by these three vendors.

Half a world away, in the metropolitan Washington D.C. area, DS investigators identified and arrested a document vendor who had sold fraudulent identity documents to 191 individuals.

The suspect was convicted subsequently, sentenced to 15 years in prison, and ordered to forfeit $3.1 million in assets.



PROTECTING INFORMATION

Although saving lives is unquestionably the top priority of Diplomatic Security, DS recognizes that the loss of critical or classified information can have serious implications for the well-being of those we protect, as well as the security of the nation. Ensuring the availability and integrity of the Department's worldwide data and communications networks and the information that travels through them is essential to conducting diplomacy.

Computer System Security

DS administers a comprehensive program for protecting the Department's information, including 24/7 network monitoring, threat analysis, and incident handling. DS computer security professionals develop and test security standards that are built into all computer systems used by the Department to counter the threat of unauthorized access to information. Bureau engineers and technicians are working constantly to develop new technologies that enhance the performance and security of the Department's worldwide automated information and telecommunications systems.

Background Investigations/Security Clearances

DS protects Department personnel and facilities by conducting more than 25,000 background investigations on job applicants, employees and contractors each year. The findings of these investigations assist the Department in determining a person's suitability for employment, as well as what level of access an individual should have to classified information.

DS has been recognized with several awards for improving the clearance process. Last year the Bureau rapidly and efficiently processed clearances for more than 3,000 contractor personnel who provide critical protective services and local guard force services in Iraq and Afghanistan.

DS also responded quickly in the summer of 2007, when the Department of State needed to reduce a backlog in the processing and issuance of passports. In response, the Department hired more than 423 new employees and 2,675 contractors, but before they could begin work, all had to undergo a background investigation. From June to October 2007, DS investigators reviewed thousands of clearance applications, interviewed more than 20,000 references, and successfully conducted 2,716 background investigations, permitting the Department to augment its workforce and reduce the passport backlog by September.

Information-Sharing Environment

Diplomatic Security is a key player in the Department of State's implementation of the Information Sharing Environment, a government-wide effort to share terrorism information across U.S. federal, state, local, and tribal jurisdictions, and with foreign partners.

A DS proposal was incorporated in the National Strategy for Information Sharing, issued by President George W. Bush in October, to emphasize that information sharing with foreign partners is "a key component of international outreach and cooperation to protect U.S. critical infrastructure."

Early in the year, DS played a significant role in negotiations that led to a landmark security agreement with the European Union on the exchange of classified terrorism information.

Classified Information

Through its Diplomatic Courier Service, DS ensures the secure movement of classified U.S. Government material worldwide. These materials often are more than just papers and file folders — diplomatic pouches often consist of thousands of pounds of equipment and construction materials bound for sensitive posts.

For example, since the United States began construction of its new embassy compound in Beijing in October 2004, Diplomatic Couriers have escorted and delivered 22 million pounds of sensitive building supplies and other classified materials in a series of 104 trans-Pacific and regional sorties.

In 2007, Diplomatic Couriers expended a total of 85,233 work hours moving more than 14.5 million pounds of classified diplomatic pouch materials to U.S. Government facilities by air, sea, and land routes.

The Diplomatic Courier Service escorts classified materials for federal agencies other than the U.S. Department of State and seeks reimbursement for these shipments. The year 2007 marked the Courier Service's third consecutive record-breaking year for cost-recovery as the Service increased its reimbursements to $29.1 million.

DS takes a proactive approach to protecting classified information. In 2007, Diplomatic Security personnel provided 734 counterintelligence awareness briefings to more than 21,000 federal employees throughout the federal government, ranging from newly hired to senior government officials and members of Congress.

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Visa and Passport Fraud

Fraudulent information has become a major commodity for criminal enterprises involved in the production and sale of false visas and passports to individuals seeking to enter the United States. These document vendors may even provide authentic travel documents obtained through fraudulent means.

DS investigates document fraud at home and in other countries, detects and rejects false visa applications at U.S. consulates and embassies overseas, apprehends suspects domestically, and facilitates arrests of suspects abroad.

At the San Ysidro, California point of entry just south of San Diego, DS launched a document fraud investigation along the U.S.-Mexico border. Within 6 weeks of launching the program, 16 suspects were arrested for passport fraud. As a result of this success, DS has embedded its special agents full time with Customs and Border Protection agents at the border post in San Ysidro and another in Nogales, Arizona.

Last year, DS Special Agents in San Francisco apprehended 40 suspects as part of the highly successful "Operation Death Match" in which they cross-checked death identities from state vital records offices against issued U.S. passports. The DS investigation has resulted in more than 250 fraud cases, 115 arrests, and 91 convictions.

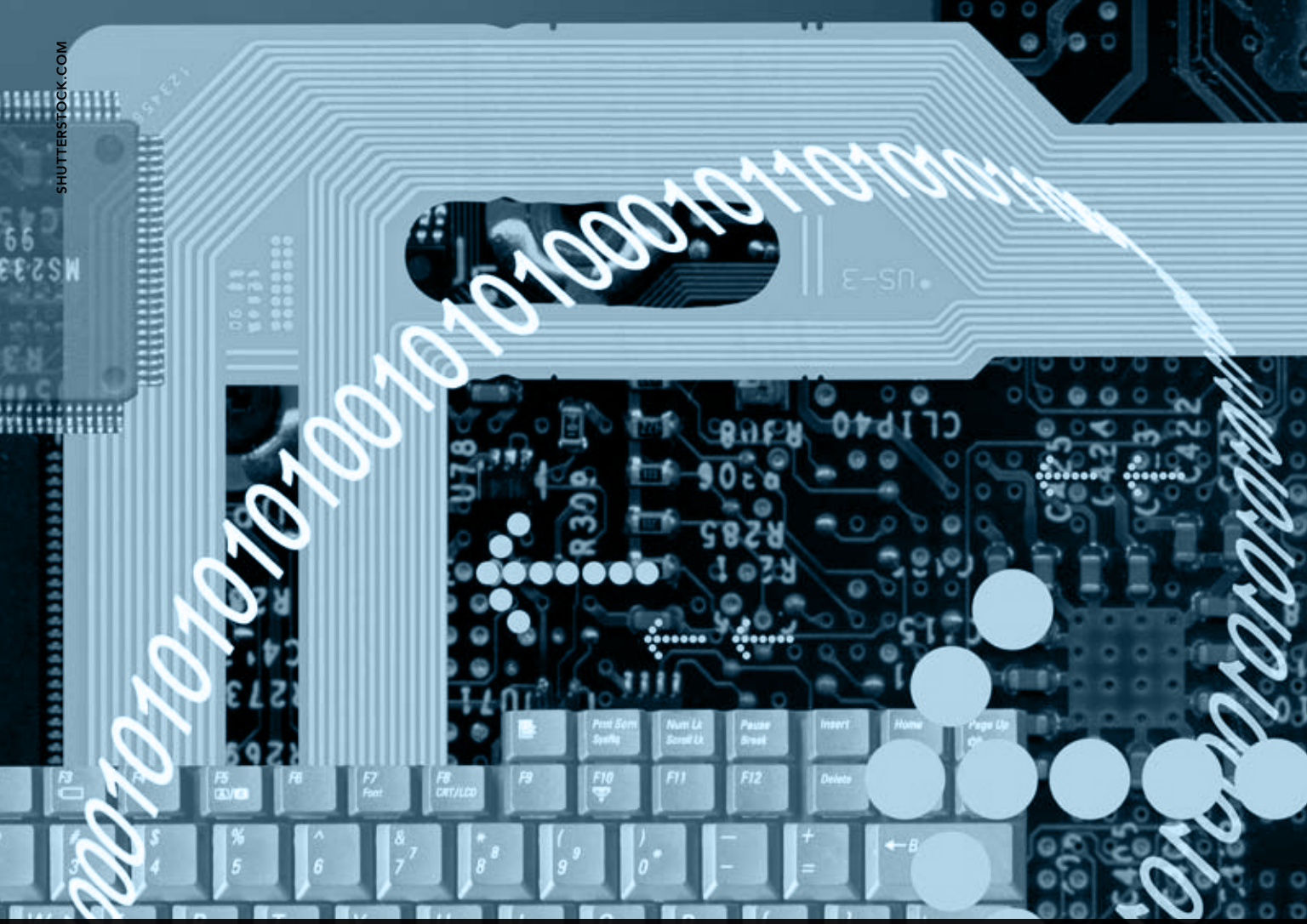
By protecting the integrity of U.S. travel documents, DS helps protect the security of our national borders.

Electronic Forensics

DS conducts sophisticated analysis and recovery of information from electronic devices. Working in a state-of-the-art facility in suburban Washington, D.C., this highly skilled staff of special agents and civilian forensic examiners, network analysts, and evidence technicians have helped to close cases and win convictions.

In late 2007, DS investigators discovered evidence on computers belonging to an international alien-smuggling and visa fraud ring that led three of four suspects to ask for plea agreements. The fourth suspect was tried and convicted subsequently. DS experts developed crucial evidence for the case by analyzing more than 500 gigabytes of seized information — the equivalent of five floors of books in an academic research library.

In recent years, DS has seen a dramatic increase in the number of crimes involving computers and other electronic technologies. Last year, DS opened 150 forensic cases, many of which are in support of ongoing DS criminal investigations.



Wireless Prototype Enhances Security Operations

At the 2007 United Nations General Assembly, DS successfully tested a new method for delivering secure communications and video feeds to DS security personnel via handheld electronic devices.

The new system uses wireless Internet technology to stream live video images from DS vehicles to DS users with specially configured cell phones and handheld personal computers the size of a pack of cigarettes.

It also permits users to send and receive secure text messages. Like a normal e-mail system, users may direct their communications to individual users, groups of users, or a DS command center.

This prototype paves the way for deployment of a more secure mode of communications for DS special agents and support personnel in the field. This new technology also will enhance the ability of DS to protect lives by permitting our special agents to see and assess venues and situations before they arrive on site with their protectee.

INNOVATION

To remain successful in the security environment, DS is constantly looking ahead, pushing the limits of technology, adapting existing programs and equipment to meet new needs, or researching and designing entirely new solutions to existing problems.

Security Improvements

Over the past year, DS has launched many creative initiatives to overcome emerging challenges to the security programs of the Department of State.

At the United Nations General Assembly in September, engineers from DS introduced a portable armor wall system. These collapsible modular units allowed DS personnel to rapidly erect protective barriers against small- to medium-caliber weapons for use by uniformed officers at various checkpoints.

DS engineers introduced a real-time, video-streaming system installed in DS vehicles involved in protecting personnel. This new camera system permitted DS special agents to watch remotely from their base at a New York hotel live video feeds of events occurring outside of the specially equipped vehicles. The live mobile surveillance provided onsite situational awareness at dignitary arrival points. DS is the first federal government agency to use this technology.

DS implemented a tracking and distress alarm system that transmits near-real-time GPS data to monitoring stations. These technologies allow DS protective details and coalition partners to participate jointly in certain security operations.

To ensure the Department of State's worldwide network of computer and communications equipment is protected, DS deployed new elements of its proactive global cyber security scanning capability. This remote scanning technology enables DS computer security specialists to verify that the Department's computers comply with mandatory security configuration requirements. The capability also can detect common vulnerabilities in computers and networks at 277 U.S. diplomatic missions abroad and 38 domestic offices.

Diplomatic License Plates

To help U.S. law enforcement officers better identify foreign diplomatic vehicles operating in the United States, DS's Office of Foreign Missions introduced a redesigned diplomatic license plate in 2007. The Office of Foreign Missions implemented the change — the first change to the license plates since 1984 — to better distinguish them from other jurisdictions' plates.

Taking the Profit Out of Crime

Last year, DS concluded a successful visa fraud investigation that resulted in three guilty pleas, one conviction, and the forfeiture of nearly $2 million in criminal assets.

On December 4, 2007, a federal jury in Florida convicted Justin King on seven counts of visa fraud and alien smuggling. His three co-conspirators previously had pleaded guilty to similar charges.

All four individuals had used their labor-contracting firm, Eurohouse, to bring more than 200 aliens into the United States to work as hotel housekeepers using fraudulently obtained visas. When the government uncovered the conspiracy and stopped responding to visa applications submitted by Eurohouse, King and his cohorts created a new labor-contracting firm and continued their scam until they were arrested by DS special agents in Georgia and Florida.

As a result of this DS-led investigation and successful prosecution, King and his co-conspirators forfeited a beach home valued at $900,000 and $1 million in other assets, including vehicles and bank accounts.

Through this program, DS disrupts or dismantles criminal organizations and funds further investigations.

FISCAL INGENUITY

DS also achieved significant cost-reduction and cost-recovery successes last year that helped to reduce the Department of State's financial outlays and enhance financial resources.

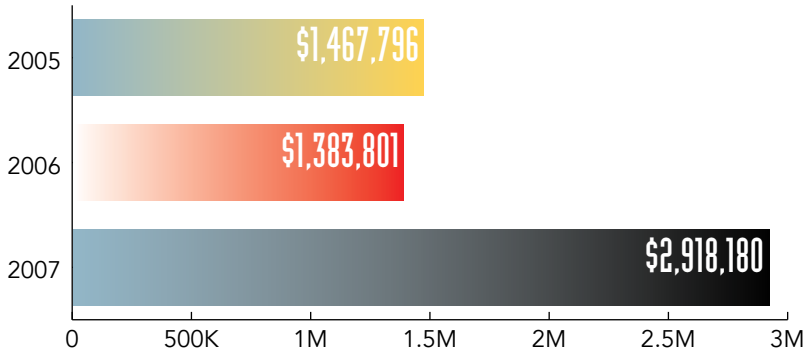
Tax-Relief Initiative

Through the Department's Diplomatic Tax-Relief Initiative, DS concluded reciprocal agreements with several foreign governments that will save the Department an estimated $54 million. This cost savings will be realized through the avoidance of foreign taxes that the U.S. Government would otherwise have paid on goods associated with the construction of new embassy and consulate compounds in Madagascar, Serbia, Ukraine, Zambia, Pakistan, and Latvia.

Asset Forfeiture

Adding to the federal government's bottom line was DS's participation in the U.S. Department of Justice Assets Forfeiture Fund, through which participating law enforcement agencies seize and share in the proceeds from forfeiture of criminal assets. In 2007, DS seized, forfeited and deposited $2,918,180 in assets into the fund. This record amount included cash, investment, savings and checking accounts, vehicles, jewelry, and real estate, and more than doubled the amount of seized property deposited into the fund by DS in the previous two years combined.

Asset Seizures



AP/WIDEWORLD PHOTOS

IN MEMORIAM

Just three short weeks into 2007, Diplomatic Security suffered a tragic loss. On January 23, five of our highly valued professional security colleagues lost their lives in service to our nation.

These brave men, employees of Blackwater (one of three private security contractors working for the State Department in Iraq), were killed when their helicopters came under attack while supporting a U.S. Embassy ground convoy traveling down a Baghdad street.

Their daily duty entailed sacrifice, service, commitment, and danger. They now take their place among the 33 private security professionals who have lost their lives protecting State Department personnel since 2003. These men understood the enormous risk in their mission. But they put the safety and security of others above their own.

DS also lost Clyde G. Nora, a Senior Examiner with the DS Office of Human Resources Management, and Nathan Marti, a DS Uniformed Officer based in Washington, D.C. Mr. Nora, a Foreign Service Officer, passed away May 16, while on assignment for DS in Los Angeles where he was examining Diplomatic Courier candidates.

Nathan Marti was a young, dedicated officer with a bright future. He was killed in the early morning hours of June 5, in a traffic accident on his way to work. His primary assignment was in the DS Security Control Center at the Department of State's Harry S Truman building.

All these men were dedicated colleagues who truly believed in DS's mission. We will always remember their courage and devotion to serving their country. Their bravery and selfless dedication will live on in the hearts of their families, their colleagues, and Americans everywhere.

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