

ICASS Recognition Award Nomination

1) Name of Nominee: Charles Morrill <i>Position Title/Grade</i> Management Officer, FS-03	<i>Post Name & Office:</i> Libreville, Management Section <i>Agency of Nominee:</i> Department of State
2) Name of Nominator Nathan Holt  <i>Position Title</i> Deputy Chief of Mission	<i>Agency of Nominator</i> Department of State
3) ICASS Council Chair (overseas); or Bureau EX or equivalent (domestic) Grace Genuino, State <i>Name & Agency:</i> 	4) Date of Nomination: May 22, 2009

5) Description of the outstanding service or innovation performed by the nominee, including the impact on your post or office. If making claim to monetary savings, state the dollar amount and basis for making the claim. You may add additional pages as necessary.

Please see attached Nomination Memo

6) If appropriate, was this individual's outstanding service or innovation documented using measurements or surveys? If so, please describe the measurement and the result.

As detailed in the attached nomination memo, Charles' contribution was documented by the annual ICASS Customer Satisfaction survey. Under his leadership, Libreville's average annual score rose from 3.54 in 2008 to 4.10 in 2009. Post went from being a laggard in the AF bureau, to beating the AF and Worldwide averages.

ICASS Recognition Award Nomination Memorandum

Charles H. Morrill
Management Officer
U.S. Embassy
Libreville, Gabon

When Management Officer Charles Morrill arrived in Libreville in the fall of 2007 he found a Post reeling from years of under investment in equipment and infrastructure, a workforce not adequately prepared for the challenges that faced them, and sinking morale among both ICASS employees and customers. At 3.54 out on a scale of 5.00, Post's ICASS Average Customer Satisfaction Scores that first year captured the prevailing mood of the Post. Over the past two years, Charles has demonstrated tremendous talent in orchestrating a reversal of a year-on-year downward trend in ICASS Customer Satisfaction Scores. The most recent average score is 4.1, a dramatic improvement that put Libreville ahead of the AF and Worldwide averages. For this achievement, and the excellent leadership and management skills he has displayed, I nominate him for an ICASS Recognition Award.

GETTING POST'S FINANCIAL HOUSE IN ORDER

Perhaps Charles' greatest contribution to Post and ICASS has been his tireless efforts to garner more resources for Post, particularly through the Partial Year Invoice (PYI) and TDY Invoice processes. When Charles arrived at Post with just three weeks to go in the fiscal year, he discovered that PYIs had not been submitted for two new agencies that had arrived at Post some six months earlier. Though it was past the annual submission deadline, Charles lobbied the Department and ICASS not only to pay the PYIs for the previous fiscal year, but also to increase the target of the subsequent fiscal year by a corresponding annualized amount. This resulted in a \$175,000 increase in the ICASS budget target that would have otherwise been lost to Post. At the same time, Charles applied to the budget some \$300,000 in carry over funds which Post risked losing if it continued to allow this to pass on from year-to-year unspent. The increased base and carry over funds enabled Post to hire additional employees, fund increased training, and invest in much needed equipment and infrastructure.

With increased military cooperation between both Sao Tome and Gabon and the US, including a growing number of ship visits and military exercising, as well as a growing number of visits from non-military agencies, Charles recognized that the drain on embassy resources should be compensated. He drafted and implemented a TDY policy and this year Post has begun issuing its first TDY invoices. Charles has been a tireless champion of direct charging agencies whenever possible, something that had not been done in the past simply because it was deemed to be more time consuming than it is worth. By tracking overtime, fuel consumption, and cell phone usage for each visiting agency, Post has been able to recover valuable funds that it is able to apply funding priorities, including training and infrastructure.

Charles has been a frugal steward of the taxpayer's money and has achieved real savings through his cost savings initiatives. To cite just one example, by switching most ICASS employees from Post-paid to pre-paid cell phones and issuing regular bills of collection to all employees, Charles has been able reduce ICASS phone expenditure from \$87,300 in FY2007 to an anticipated \$61,000 this year, a 30 percent reduction. Comparable savings have also been realized in fuel, water, and electricity consumption.

A strong advocate of the use of technology, Charles implemented the payment of LES salaries and commercial vendors by Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT). This has shortened the time it takes to pay vendors from the time of certification from ten to three days, and reduced the workload of the cashier whose job it was to track and dispense checks printed in Charleston. True to form, Charles was ahead of the curve: payment of vendors by EFT was optional when the initiative was started and now it is recommended that all Post's move in this direction. Libreville has also begun storing digital archives of B&F records, reducing the volume of paper that will eventually have to be moved to NEC.

WEBPASS and eSERVICES

In all aspects of his work, Charles has embraced technology as a way of improving the delivery of ICASS services. Many of the changes that Charles pushed for in his first year are now part and parcel of the Collaborative Management Initiative (CMI), which meant that Post had already implemented most of the initiatives before they were made mandatory. For example, within months of arriving at Post and a year before it was rolled out through CMI, Charles deployed eServices across the mission. The ICASS Customer Satisfaction survey result from his first year provided a catalyst for this change. In addition to low scores in areas like Procurement (3.50) and Building Maintenance (2.78), there were comments such as "procurement requests seem to go into a black hole" and "work order requests are simply ignored." Scores in these areas in the most recent survey have risen to 4.06 and 4.05, respectively. The lionshare of this improvement stems from investments in training and equipment, but much of the credit must also go to eServices which has provided our customers and service providers with a way of tracking service requests.

Another area in which Charles has been ahead of the curve has been the creation of an Intranet site for the Embassy. When tasked by the Front Office to put in place a site that could be used both for internal communication and for promoting the Post to potential bidders, Charles studied all the options decided to pursue a SharePoint. This was a full year before SharePoint was deployed as the Department-wide standard for Intranet sites. This site has been tremendously successful. For the first time, Post has a single repository for such documents as Management Notice, Policy Notices, and CLO Newsletters. In the most recent bidding cycle Post received a respectable number of bidders for every position and all positions were filled by Post's first choice. For a Post that in the not so distant past was in the "hard-to-fill category," we have done very well. Some bidders, including those that ultimately assigned to Post, have commented that this site was instrumental in helping them to decide to bid on Libreville.

COMMUNICATION AND BUY-IN

If nothing else, eServices and a SharePoint Internet site are primarily vehicles for communication with customers. Part of Charles' strategy has also been concerted communication with other stakeholders, including Post's ICASS agencies. Buy-in of this constituency has been deemed critical and to achieve this Charles has reinvigorated Post's ICASS Council and Budget Committees. Though we are a small Post and membership in these committees is overlapping, Charles and the ICASS Council Chair have worked with members to educate them on the different roles and responsibilities of the two committees. Charles has used meeting as an opportunity to talk about CMI and to seek their input on ways that we can improve customer service. Likewise, the newly formed CMI Quality Assurance Team, which meets weekly to discuss the roll out of various CMI projects, has been instrumental in bringing about change.

For all these reasons, I nominate Charles Morrill for an ICASS Recognition Award.

Nathan Holt
Deputy Chief of Mission
US Embassy Libreville