

Finally, interviews with consular staff in a small number of representative posts abroad will also be required to obtain "front-line" input to many questions of the perceived effects of services provided and of basic alternatives, such as eliminating certain services.

The general thrust of this portion of the evaluation will be to question the fundamental assumptions underlying the existing Consular Services program, to assess alternatives, and to clarify and attempt to operationalize a set of program objectives.

The program design issue comprises several elements. These are: the distribution of demand for consular services and resources dedicated to this demand; the need for information systems and standards; the program delivery environment; and the feasibility and practicality, with respect to legal and resource constraints, of various delivery options. This latter aspect is closely linked to the clarification of mandate; here the emphasis is more on specific delivery options for particular groups of services. The underlying concern of this issue is the reconciliation of the increasing demand for consular services and the decreasing resources available to provide these services.

The program design issue will be addressed by a number of related methods. The distribution of demand and requirements for indicators and standards will be primarily addressed by analysis of program statistics and interviews with Bureau staff and consular officers. The prime aims of the statistical analysis are to determine if any patterns exist, to identify representative posts, and to gain a clearer, sharper understanding of the nature of service demands and of the distribution of workload by type of service. The analysis will be based on descriptive statistics. There is likely to be a need to collect data not now available especially on the resource distribution among various services to facilitate this analysis.* The prime aims of the interviews are to try to corroborate the conclusions from the statistical analysis, to identify how management might make effective use of the data, and to determine what indicators are presently used. Then, the necessity, feasibility and practicality of developing and implementing standards and new indicators will be determined.

* Almost certainly this could be accomplished on a sampling basis for a limited period of time.