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FROM : Area Auditor General - Latin America (N)

SUBJECT: Letter Report of Audit No. 1-514-72-56
 Public Safety Project No. 514-11-710-066,
 USAID/Colombia

Date: July 7, 1972

I. SCOPE OF AUDIT

The Area Auditor General - Latin America (North), under the authority of AID Manual Order No. 203.5, has performed an interim audit of the subject Project. The objectives of the audit were to evaluate the progress and accomplishments of the Project; the utilization of AID furnished commodities; and the compliance with the provisions of the Project Agreement. The audit covered the period November 1, 1968 through November 30, 1971, and disbursements of \$909,533.

II. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Public Safety Program in Colombia was initiated in 1963 to furnish support in the development of a National Police organization and an internal security service. During the period covered by this audit, the USAID assistance has been provided only to the National Police Force. The assistance has consisted of technical advice, training, and improvement of mobility and communications through procurement of telecommunications equipment. Prior efforts had been concentrated in the field of training and direct assistance to the training element of the National Police. In addition to continuing assistance in these areas, assistance has been emphasized in the field of organization, management, planning and budgeting. Funds expended during the period of audit were categorized as follows:

Technicians	\$382,793
Participants	199,512
Commodities	234,990
Other Costs	<u>92,238</u>
Total	\$909,533 =====

Total obligations and expenditures through November 1971 for the Project were \$5,186,102 and \$4,941,227 respectively.

III. RESULTS OF AUDIT

A. Accomplishments

The Public Safety Project has provided valuable assistance to the Government of Colombia (GOC). The following achievements were observed during our audit.

1. Since the inception of the program, there have been 17 long-term advisors who provided technical guidance in the fields of Investigation, Training, Communications and Municipal Police Work. In addition, short-term advisors have been utilized under the Project.

2. A police training system has been established and over 60,000 students have received basic, refresher, and in-service training. There have been 456 participants under the program sent outside of Colombia to obtain training, which has produced a core of well-trained younger officers.

3. Regional communication, maintenance and supply centers have been established in Cali, Medellin, Santa Marta and Cucuta, and radio-teletype equipment has been installed. In Bogota, the National Police, assisted by USAID advisors, have constructed new facilities and improved their system to provide more efficient radio communications and rapid response time to calls for assistance. A new UHF system has been procured for the Bogota police patrol network, and a communications training center has been established for training police personnel.

4. There have been 137 vehicles and one airplane financed under this Project prior to 1969. Under a loan from the Export-Import Bank an additional 1,255 vehicles have been procured and are in use through the country.

5. The GOC has met its financial commitments as set forth in the various Project Agreements. These included the financing of international travel costs for participants, construction of new facilities, and administrative support of the program.

B. General Comments

We observed certain areas which require additional emphasis to achieve desired objectives. However, as the USAID was aware of these conditions and, where possible, was initiating action, we have not included any recommendations. The following paragraphs summarize our findings.

1. Available information shows a continuing increase in the crime rate. The current level of effort by the GOC and the USAID/Colombia has been unable to stop this increase. It is recognized, of course, that rising crime incidence is a complex social phenomenon which cannot be solved by police action alone.

The Chief of the Public Safety Division (PSD) has requested an increase in staff from five to seven to increase the level of effort provided by the USAID. This request was under consideration at the time of our audit; however, due to funding limitations and overall staff reductions within the USAID, present indications are that the increase will not be accommodated, barring special circumstances.

2. There are strong indications that certain reorganizations within the GOC could significantly improve the GOC's ability to control the crime rate. The USAID was aware of this condition but was of the opinion that this was not the appropriate time to submit recommendations in this area.

3. Communications equipment, particularly teletype equipment, provided by USAID had not been utilized for several years. However, during our audit, the PSD initiated action resulting in the utilization of this equipment by the GOC.

4. The National Police Transmissions Offices were not maintaining adequate stock-record accounting for their inventory. The PSD has designed a new inventory control system, and when completely implemented should resolve this problem area.

5. During our field trips to various sections of Colombia we observed field communications equipment that had not been operational for extended periods of time, awaiting repair. During the time of our audit the National Police and the USAID initiated action to make this equipment operational.

IV. FOLLOW-UP ON PRIOR AUDIT REPORTS

Audit Report No. 69-07, dated March 31, 1969, included nine recommendations. Action had been taken and these recommendations were implemented at the time of this present audit.

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