

Brown, Melissa A **RELEASED, NON-RESPONSIVE DELETED**

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Sent: Thursday, October 25, 2007 7:03 AM
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Subject: O-I #142-07
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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE
 REVIEW AUTHORITY: FRANK TUMMINIA
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SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED

OFFICIAL INFORMAL #142-07
 2007

October 25,

(SBU) Adoption Irregularities: A/S Maura Harty arrives late next month, and she'll have much on her plate. The adoptions cases we are getting are increasingly problematic, with strong indications of a return to "baby buying" and worse. The paper trail for almost every case raises questions, and we find problems and further questions in virtually every case we investigate. Some of this is due to orphanages and others trying to discover ways to hide facts so that we can't get to the bottom of cases, but also cannot find smoking guns. The system outlined below should help a lot.

(SBU) Adoption Program Change: On October 19, USCIS approved the long-awaited (and long needed) new Adoption Visa Processing System for Vietnam. The policy becomes effective on October 29. Under this system prospective adoptive parents (PAP) will file their petitions to USCIS HCMC for review prior to their travel to Vietnam. This will help us avoid the problem we've faced to date, i.e., conducting investigations AFTER the PAP's take custody of the presumed orphan. If we then discover that the child does not fit the U.S. definition of an orphan, the PAP's are very often devastated. Now the investigation, if any, will be completed before the PAP's arrive in country. In consultation with USCIS, we are moving ahead with implementation. To accommodate those who are farther along in the process, we will accept cases as before for a number of weeks after the October 29 implementation date. We released an announcement to this effect to all registered Adoption Service Providers. We have since learned that there is discussion in Washington about adjusting the implementation dates. Post feels strongly that we should stick to the current schedule. In our experience, USCIS engages on this issue only episodically, and getting to where we are now has been an 11-month saga. We shouldn't wait any longer. At present this is FYI only, but we may be asking for your help in the future to stay with the plan.