From the Director

In 2011, the initial concept of Harvard Global Support Services (GSS)—a department that could help faculty, students, and staff navigate the nuances and risks of international travel and work—came to fruition. Over the past six years, we have focused our services in three core areas: safety and security; operational guidance and collaboration; and in-country administrative support. We created three distinct yet interdependent teams to support these functions: International Safety and Security, Client Services, and Harvard Global (HG).

Our department’s quick and steady growth has presented challenges and opportunities that drive us to find solutions for our internal processes and for Harvard’s international travel and activities. In the past year, we implemented several new resources to increase our bandwidth and improve information sharing; these resources include self-service tools on the GSS website for some of our clients’ and travelers’ most common questions, an upgrade to our customer relationship management (CRM) software, and a social media analytics platform alerting us to real-time global intelligence and incidents. This year in particular, we focused on raising awareness of our services through increased outreach efforts and on better preparing travelers by providing more tailored pre-departure trainings and access to online resources. We also continued to facilitate collaboration across University departments and consult with faculty, students, and staff on operational matters abroad that ranged from outbound visa requirements and hiring practices to tax laws and export regulations in support of research projects and educational programming on all seven continents. And in its fifth year, HG continued its steady expansion overseas on behalf of a growing list of Harvard Schools, departments, and centers. We were thrilled to help two new offices celebrate their inaugurations this year in Tunis and Johannesburg, and we are eager to provide their ongoing in-country administrative support—as we have in Dubai, London, and Mumbai—so that they can focus on achieving the goals of their academic programs.

Of course, increased awareness of, interest in, and use of our services has also encouraged us to look inward and make adjustments. In the past year, we clarified the GSS vision and strategy to establish more clear objectives and goals as we transition from start-up-mode to mature organization. Over the coming year, we will undertake strategic assessments of our organizational structure, service model, vendors, business systems, and branding to ensure that we are aligned in the best way to serve our clients, travelers, and stakeholders.

I hope you enjoy reading about the work we have done and the initiatives we are planning. I am excited to continue working with such committed, talented, and resourceful staff in GSS, whose dedication assists in making the University’s mission overseas possible. It has been an amazing first year as Director of GSS, and I look forward to working with you and many others across the University to support Harvard’s array of international activities.

Our Vision and Strategic Priorities

The Harvard community easily accesses the resources needed to safely, confidently, and judiciously fulfill its mission abroad.

- Develop GSS as an organization
- Improve processes to enhance clients’ experiences
- Expand our reach within the Harvard community
- Enhance clients’ ability to assess and mitigate risk
FY17 At a Glance

5,964 travelers on 8,034 trips
163 countries visited
4 HG offices and 1 historic property managed in 5 countries

73 employees hired in 25 countries for Harvard programs
1,454 inquiries addressed for 481 departments
298 medical and security incidents triaged

Our Mission
Global Support Services (GSS) promotes Harvard’s excellence in teaching, learning, and research globally by supporting and enabling international projects, travel, and operations; mitigating risks to the University and individuals; and responding to overseas emergencies.
FY17 Accomplishments

implemented More Proactive Measures for Travelers
We created a more robust travel safety questionnaire for students that prompts them to consider and identify risks and mitigation strategies for their destination and provides us with a more comprehensive overview of their travel and activities so we can better advise them. We also introduced new travel briefs that provide registered travelers with a confirmation of their Harvard Travel Registry submission, trip itinerary, country-specific information about their destination, and pre-departure advice and resources. And in response to traveler feedback for tailored pre-departure education and training, we delivered more destination-specific briefings, including two in collaboration with University partners: one with Harvard University Information Technology focusing on counterintelligence and data security for the men’s basketball team’s trip to China and one with the Office of Sexual Assault Prevention and Response focusing on gender and sexual identity abroad for undergraduate students traveling to South Korea.

Provided Support for Clients and Projects
We continued to help clients find solutions to their operational challenges—ranging from outbound visas and shipping regulations to hiring researchers and making payments abroad. As we have learned, each inquiry and project is unique; some of the projects we consulted on this year included shipping frozen human specimens from rural Kenya to Massachusetts for a research project, transporting scientific equipment to the South Pacific Ocean to measure atmospheric formaldehyde in Antarctica, and providing continued operational guidance for a multi-year tuberculosis study in Mongolia. And following several executive orders on immigration in 2017, we expanded our scope to meet the University’s urgent needs for a 24/7 emergency hotline and collaboration and reporting among offices to communicate with, inform, and advocate for those affected.

Expanded into New Geographies
On behalf of the Center for African Studies and the Center for Middle Eastern Studies, HG opened two new offices in South Africa and Tunisia, respectively, to further the Centers’ research and programming on the continent. We also received and managed our first overseas gifts in India and South Africa, onboarded 19 new employees in nine countries, and took ownership of a historic property in London on behalf of the Graduate School of Design (GSD). The house at 22 Parkside was completely renovated, and GSD hosted its first fellows in residence in early 2017.

Improved Business Intelligence Systems and Web Properties
We implemented several new tools and resources to enhance our efficiency and information sharing within GSS and with our clients and travelers. The new harvardglobal.org website highlights HG’s services and supported projects and provides current and prospective employees and clients with easily-accessible resources and information. On the GSS website, a new Harvard Travel Assist eligibility questionnaire and a guide to international employment provide our clients with self-service resources for our most frequently-asked questions. To improve our internal processes for case management, knowledge sharing, and reporting, we upgraded from Microsoft Dynamics CRM to Salesforce. And to improve our real-time global intelligence monitoring, we incorporated DataMinr, a social media analytics dashboard that quickly detects and alerts us to high-impact events and critical information.
Support by the Numbers

**CLIENT SERVICES**

- Visas/Immigration* 26%
- Harvard Travel Assist 16%
- Proof of Coverage 23%
- HR/Payroll/Personal Tax 23%
- Other** 8%
- Medical 7%
- Consultations 6%
- Executive Order 4%
- Export/Import/Contracts 3%
- Broad Setup 3%
- IT/Data 2%

666 Cases

*Includes 29 executive order cases that were also supported by Harvard Travel Assist and our safety & security team. **Includes outreach and ad-hoc inquiries.

**HARVARD GLOBAL**

1. Historic property owned and managed in the U.K.
2. Offices opened in South Africa and Tunisia
2. Grants managed in India and the U.S.
19. New employees hired in 9 countries
20. Gifts received and managed in Hong Kong, India, South Africa, and the U.K.

**SAFETY & SECURITY**

- Questionnaires 28%
- Consultations 16%
- Medical 22%
- Other 25%
- Briefings 6%
- Executive Order 7%
- Security 4%
- Orientations 3%
- Well-being checks 3%

788 Cases

Client Services’ work supported short- and long-term research projects, study abroad programs, conferences, and executive education for School, department, and center activities in 89 countries. Our caseload increased 56 percent over FY16, averaging 2.5 inquiries per day. We also managed the international employment setup process for 32 individuals hired by third-party vendors (up from 25 in FY16).

As an added benefit for faculty and staff, we partnered with U.S. Customs and Border Protection once again to host an on-campus Global Entry Trusted Traveler enrollment event, in which 102 individuals were able to join the program.

The HG grant and gift administration services enabled clients at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, the Lakshmi Mittal South Asia Institute, and GSD, among others, to receive funds that furthered their research activities in India, South Africa, the U.K. and the U.S.

New offices in Johannesburg and Tunis are helping the Center for African Studies and the Center for Middle Eastern Studies to further their research and programming on the continent.

And in addition to the 19 new hires, we provided administrative and payroll support for 22 existing employees across Africa, Asia-Pacific, Europe, and the Middle East.

Sixty-two percent of Safety & Security work involved proactive pre-departure education and planning. This included 51 trip- or program-specific briefings (up from 14 in FY16) and 198 individual consultations (up from 93 in FY16). We also conducted consultations and briefings for several high-profile University staff delegations and coordinated their location assessments and on-the-ground security.

Thirty-eight percent of our work was responsive to incidents and emergencies, including 15 well-being checks, 24 security cases, 29 executive order cases, and 172 medical cases.
Travel by the Numbers

TRIPS BY SCHOOL/UNIT

- FY17: 8,034 trips
- FY16: 10,115 trips

TRIPS BY COUNTRY RISK RATING

- Unrated: 69%
- Watch: 19%
- Elevated: 10%
- High: 2%

Registered trips had increased annually since FY14. Each leg of a multi-country trip is counted as one trip, so annual totals are dependent on travelers’ itineraries and changes to Harvard Schools’ international activities and programming. Changes like these for Harvard Business School and other programs contributed to a 21 percent decrease in registered trips from FY16. Meanwhile, the percentage of risk-rated travel in FY17 increased four percent over FY16. The chart at left reflects country-level ratings, but does not include regional ratings within a country, which may be higher or lower than the country rating. We adjust ratings as needed during the year based on global developments.

TRAVEL BY TRAVELER TYPE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>FY17</th>
<th>FY16</th>
<th>Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Graduate students</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undergraduates</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>-2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>-2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>-6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postdoc/Other academic</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>-5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5,964 travelers vs. 6,956 travelers

FAS includes the College, as well as faculty, staff, and other students who may have identified themselves as FAS. Radcliffe had 6 trips registered in FY17 versus 10 trips in FY16.
Initiatives for FY18 and Beyond

GSS Organizational Structure, Service Model, and Branding
We filled several vacancies in our sixth year, including a new Associate Director of Operations for Harvard Global, and we will fill the Associate Director for International Safety & Security position in early FY18. With our new staff and leadership team onboarded, GSS will undertake a comprehensive review of our organizational structure, client service model, and branding. These strategic assessments will enable us to determine the best way to collaborate efficiently, serve our clients, and improve our outreach, communications, and awareness.

Systems and Processes Improvements
To improve both our internal processes and our client-facing systems, we will conduct a needs assessment for our international travel support services and human resource systems. Our objective for the former is to evaluate qualified vendors to improve the current Harvard Travel Registry and Harvard Travel Assist program, which include travel tracking, global intelligence analysis and alerts, and emergency medical and security response. The objective of our HR process review is to automate areas of our work—such as accounting, benefits and payroll, and reporting—to reduce cyclical stress and increase bandwidth for client support and in-country growth. We will also evaluate options to improve our outbound visa services vendor.

Proactive and Self-Service Tools
We will continue our work with Schools, departments, and centers across the University to develop a comprehensive database and interactive world map of Harvard’s global operational footprint and risk profile. The database and map will enable the Harvard community to understand the breadth and scope of programs in a single geographic location and facilitate more connections and collaborations between groups. We will also add to our portfolio of online resources for international program managers and travelers. New tools include a financial planning guide, awareness campaigns for mental health and BGLTQ support abroad, and a series of short videos to educate travelers on safety and security topics for challenging and risky environments.

Contact Us
Whether you need to ship lizard DNA to Canada for a research project, hire a data collection team in Rwanda, or plan a Harvard-related trip to India, we can advise you on matters of safety and security, outbound visas, employment, exports, data security, office administration, and other operational and financial matters abroad.

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