



governmentattic.org

"Rummaging in the government's attic"

Description of document: Responses to Questions for the Record (QFR) provided to Congress by the Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG), 2009 *

Request date: 13-June-2014

Released date: 29-September-2014

Posted date: 13-October-2014

* Note: Some records are undated

Source of document: BBG FOIA Office
Room 3349
330 Independence Ave. SW
Washington, D.C. 20237
Fax: (202) 203-4585

The governmentattic.org web site ("the site") is noncommercial and free to the public. The site and materials made available on the site, such as this file, are for reference only. The governmentattic.org web site and its principals have made every effort to make this information as complete and as accurate as possible, however, there may be mistakes and omissions, both typographical and in content. The governmentattic.org web site and its principals shall have neither liability nor responsibility to any person or entity with respect to any loss or damage caused, or alleged to have been caused, directly or indirectly, by the information provided on the governmentattic.org web site or in this file. The public records published on the site were obtained from government agencies using proper legal channels. Each document is identified as to the source. Any concerns about the contents of the site should be directed to the agency originating the document in question. GovernmentAttic.org is not responsible for the contents of documents published on the website.



330 Independence Ave.SW
Cohen Building, Room 3349
Washington, DC 20237

T 202.203.4550
F 202.203.4585

*Office of the General Counsel
Freedom of Information and Privacy Act Office*

September 29, 2014

RE: Request Pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act – FOIA #14-040

This letter is an acknowledgment of your Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request to the Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG), dated June 13, 2014, which the Agency received June 16, 2014. In your request, you ask for “a copy of each response to a Question for the Record (QFR) provided to Congress by the BBG, created since January 1, 2009, and if too voluminous, narrow the scope to records created since January 1, 2012.”

Since this office receives a large quantity of requests each year, your request was assigned **Reference Number FOIA14-040**. You should refer to this number in all future correspondence so that your file can be located in a timely fashion to provide you with the best service possible. Also, be advised that the Agency processes FOIA requests on a first in, first out basis.

For purposes of assessing fees pursuant to the OMB Fee Guidelines, you were placed in Category III, the “all other requester” category. Consistent with Category III, you were to be assessed charges to recover the full direct costs of searching for the requested documents and the duplication of those documents. However, the agency has completed its search and review of the documents you requested, and no chargeable fees were associated with your request. Certain information was redacted pursuant to FOIA Exemption 6 to protect the personal privacy interests of the individuals concerned, and those redactions are marked (b)(6) on the documents.

This completes the agency’s response to your request and it is now closed. Because information was redacted from the responsive documents provided, you may appeal those adverse determinations. If you wish to do so, you must send your appeal within thirty (30) calendar days from the date of this letter to the Chairperson, Access Appeal Committee, BBG, Suite 3349, 330 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20237. For all other inquiries, I can be reached at the address and phone numbers listed above.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'A. T. Krog', is written over a blue ink stamp.

Andrew T. Krog
FOIA and Privacy Act Officer



**Questions for the Record Submitted to
Secretary of State Hillary Clinton by
Senator John Kerry (#12)
Senate Foreign Relations Committee
January 13, 2009**

Question:

On January 1, 2009, the Government of Azerbaijan abruptly terminated broadcasts of Radio Free Europe (RFE) on its domestic airwaves. This termination effectively ended broadcasts to 80-90 percent of RFE Azeri service's listeners. The position of the Azeri government is that Russian and Iranian radio broadcasts were also terminated. Both of these countries share long borders with Azerbaijan, which regularly broadcast in Russian and Azeri. Needless to say RFE and the BBC do not enjoy similar geographic advantages. U.S. funds RFE in order to increase the plurality of information in relevant countries. What can and should the Secretary of State, who sits on the Broadcasting Board of Governors and has responsibility for RFE, do to ensure that listeners in Azerbaijan and other countries can continue to receive these broadcasts?

Answer:

Radio Liberty and Voice of America -- alongside the BBC -- are, indeed, a much needed source of information for Azerbaijani citizens to participate in a pluralistic debate. We have been clear in our communications from Washington and the Embassy in Baku that removal of the broadcasts from domestic radio and television frequencies constituted a serious setback to freedom of speech in Azerbaijan. Without distribution on these popular domestic channels, VOA and RFE/RL's substantial audiences in Azerbaijan will be lost. The U.S. Ambassador in Baku made it clear that continuing this course will fundamentally alter the relationship between our governments.

Representatives of the Broadcasting Board of Governors and the Embassy have requested that talks begin in early February aimed at restoring VOA and RFE/RL access to the same frequencies they were licensed to use prior to January 1, 2009, where they can continue to inform public discourse as Azerbaijan moves forward with its democratic debate. We remain committed to working with the government of Azerbaijan to ensure that these broadcasts can continue on the radio and television networks where they enjoyed a substantial audience.

Unfettered access to information across international borders is fundamental, and the Department will be vigorous in defending this right wherever it is threatened.

Drafted: (b) (6) [Redacted]

Cleared: (b) (6) [Redacted]

PRE-HEARING QUESTIONS for the RECORD
SENATOR JOHN KERRY
NOMINATION of MICHAEL MEEHAN to be
MEMBER, BROADCASTING BOARD of GOVERNORS

Please provide the following information in relation to the recent incident involving you and Weekly Standard reporter John McCormack:

- a. a detailed description of the incident;

I accompanied Massachusetts Attorney General Martha Coakley to an event on Capitol Hill on Tuesday, January 12th. Upon exiting the event the Attorney General paused on the sidewalk in front of a crowd of reporters, campaign operatives and others.

When she finished taking questions from the media, she proceeded to leave the event and was pursued up the street by several individuals who continued to shout questions, impeding her progress down the sidewalk. In the commotion, I became entangled with an individual who was rushing past me. He fell over a low patio fence. I stopped to help him up, asked him if he was alright and he said yes. I asked him if he was a member of the media, as he was not wearing any media credentials. After showing me his credential from his wallet, he ran past me and I departed for my vehicle.

In the commotion of the moment, I believe I acted too aggressively in trying to ensure the safety of the Attorney General. Upon discovering the name of the reporter, I attempted to contact him several times to apologize. He returned my calls late the next afternoon and accepted my apology.

- b. whether you knew Mr. McCormack prior to the incident and whether there had been any previous incidents of a similar nature between the two of you;

I did not know Mr. McCormack prior to the event. We had never met or had a professional interaction previously.

- c. a description of any subsequent contact between you and Mr. McCormack concerning the incident, including whether you apologized to Mr. McCormack; and

As mentioned above, upon learning his name I attempted to contact Mr. McCormack through his office phone number. I placed several calls to him late Tuesday evening and Wednesday morning, and left an apology on his office voicemail. He returned my call on Wednesday afternoon, at which time I apologized to him directly and he accepted.

I have not had any other contact with him.

d. whether and in what manner you would handle similar situations differently in the future.

I strongly believe in the freedom of the press, and through my years in media relations I have worked to enhance media access to our government leaders. In my 25 years of working with the media on Capitol Hill, it has been my experience that members of the press customarily wear media credentials when interviewing elected officials.

The situation was somewhat chaotic. Nonetheless, I should have been more careful to be aware of my surroundings and to avoid physical contact with anyone. I am embarrassed by the incident and I have apologized and it was accepted. It has been a learning experience for me and I am confident that it will never happen again.