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Washington, D.C. 20237  
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U.S. AGENCY FOR  
GLOBAL MEDIA

330 Independence Avenue SW | Washington, DC 20237 | usagm.gov

Office of General Counsel  
Freedom of Information Act Office

August 27, 2021

Email

**RE: Request Pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act – FOIA #20-035**

This letter is in response to your Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request dated June 17, 2020 to the U.S. Agency for Global Media (USAGM), which the Agency received on the same date. In your request, you asked for

*“[A] copy of each presentation or briefing given to OMB or the White House or their staff or leadership, by the Agency for Global Media, during the time frame January 1, 2018 to the present.”*

For tracking purposes, your request has been assigned **Reference Number FOIA20-035**. Please refer to this number in all future correspondence with our office regarding your request.

The Agency has completed its search for and review of the records responsive to your request, and a copy of those records are enclosed. The other documents are on the Agency’s website. See links below.

[https://www.usagm.gov/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/USAGMBudget\\_FY20\\_CBJ\\_3-15-19.pdf](https://www.usagm.gov/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/USAGMBudget_FY20_CBJ_3-15-19.pdf)

<https://www.usagm.gov/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/USAGM-FY-2018-PAR-FINAL.pdf>

No information was redacted or withheld, and all responsive documents have been provided to you.



The Agency is waiving all fees for this request and the enclosed records are provided to you at no charge.

This concludes the Agency's response to your FOIA request and it is now closed. You may contact me or the Agency's FOIA Public Liaison at 202-203-4550 for further assistance or to discuss any aspect of your request. Additionally, you may contact the Office of Government Information Services (OGIS) at the National Archives and Records Administration to inquire about the FOIA mediation services they offer. The contact information for OGIS is as follows:

Office of Government Information Services  
National Archives and Records Administration  
8601 Adelphi Road-OGIS  
College Park, Maryland 20740-6001  
E-mail: [ogis@nara.gov](mailto:ogis@nara.gov);  
Telephone: 202-741-5770  
Toll free: 1 877-684-6448  
Facsimile: 202-741-5769

Finally, if you are not satisfied with this response to your request, you may file an administrative appeal with the Agency by writing to: Chairperson, Access Appeal Committee, USAGM, Suite 3349, 330 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20237. Your appeal must be postmarked or transmitted by fax to 202-203-4548 within 90 days of the date of this letter.

If you have any questions regarding your request, please contact me at 202-203-4550, the Office of the General Counsel at the above address, or at [foia@usagm.gov](mailto:foia@usagm.gov).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "James McLaren".

James McLaren  
Deputy General Counsel

Enclosures

# BBG Strategy and Research

OMB Briefing  
February 28, 2018



# BBG Strategic Plan 2018-2022

## “Information Matters: Impact and Agility in U.S. International Media”

- Ties to National Security Strategy
  - Pillar 3 – Information Statecraft
  - Pillar 4 – Champion American Values
- Outlines Impact Objectives and Agility Objectives with supporting performance goals in budget

# BBG Impact Model

- Consistent with best practices in media impact
- Measures impact aligned with our mission – to inform, engage, and connect people around the world in support of freedom and democracy
- Presents 40 indicators (12 core and 28 optional) to account for a variety of media environments, drawn from a variety of data sources – survey research, digital analytics (web and social), anecdotal, other sources
- Impact model indicators are used for performance management from the agency level, down to the individual language service level

# Impact Pillars

Inform + Engage/  
Connect + Be  
Influential

To **inform, engage & connect**

people around the world

**in support of freedom and democracy.**

# Impact Pillars

**Inform** +

- 1 Reach Target **Audiences**
- 2 Provide **Value**

**Engage/  
Connect** +

- 1 Engage Target **Audiences**
- 2 Engage/Connect **Media Market**
- 3 Create **Loyalty**

**Be  
Influential**

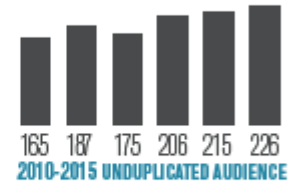
WITH

- 1 **Audiences**
- 2 **Media**
- 3 **Government**

in support of freedom  
and democracy

## Reach Audiences

Weekly Reach



Weekly Digital Visits



Weekly Reach of Target Segment\*



## Provide Value



Provide Exceptional or Unique Information



Audience Finds Information or Service Trustworthy/Credible

# Inform

\* Optional Indicator.

## Engage Audiences

Digital Engagement



Shared something  
or talked with someone  
as a result of reporting\*



## Engage Media

Content Co-creation  
with affiliates\*



Content  
downloaded  
by affiliates\*



## Create Loyalty

Audience is likely  
to continue to use



Appointment  
listening  
or viewing\*



# Engage/ Connect

\* **Optional Indicator.**

## People

Increased audience understanding of current events



## Media

Drive the news agenda/high profile news pickups\*



## Government

Attention from government officials\*



# Be Influential

\* **Optional Indicator.**

in support of freedom  
and democracy



# BBG Research

- Conduct research using a variety of methods in over 100 countries in order to understand audiences and our impact
- Research also provides market intelligence, including demographic information, media usage, and audience feedback on particular programming efforts
- Types of research
  - Quantitative – Full surveys, omnibus surveys
  - Qualitative – Focus groups, monitoring panels

# Next Steps in Research Methodology

- Implementing Business Intelligence tools to integrate digital and survey data
- Implementing Big Data analytics
- Looking into semiotics (visual data)
- Subnational variation (versus national surveys)
- Looking into automated analysis of datasets via Artificial Intelligence

## NSC/OMB Update on USAGM Venezuela Transmission

### Funding Breakout (from signed IAA):

Year One:	AM Tower and Tuning Unit	\$275,000
Two Year:	Transmission for AM Programming	\$438,000
Two Year:	Program Placement and Advertising	\$787,000

### AM Transmission

USAGM is examining options for medium wave/AM, cross-border transmission which will reach into Venezuela, providing at least two hours of content daily. As of November 20, the most promising option to get a reasonable signal into Venezuela is a tower in Anguilla.

In order to operationalize the medium wave, USAGM anticipates procuring and installing a tower, guy wires, guy wire insulators, base insulator, base and guy anchor foundations, aviation obstruction lights, lighting transformer, lightning gaps, feed, grounding, and all other accessories required for a tower to withstand local construction and wind load codes and to function as an AM radiator.

The license is held by Caribbean Beacon Limited, a company incorporated under the laws of Anguilla and having its registered office at Meridian Corporate Services Ltd., Kamilah House, The Valley, Anguilla. They hold licenses for two frequencies, 690 kHz and 1610 kHz. We have been discussing 1610 kHz as there is currently only one transmitter.

What we get for helping to rebuild the station depends on the contract negotiations. Their initial quoted rate was \$300 per hour, but given that USAGM will be making a capital investment in rebuilding the station after damage from a natural disaster, the station has offered to give us more favorable lease terms. They put another option on the table that if we installed a second transmitter as part of the rebuild, that we could have use of one of the frequencies 24/7 for essentially the cost of electricity. Depending on the length of the agreement, this may be the best option. There are also some issues to be addressed with the facility's land lease. USAGM's technical lead for this project will meet with the station and local government representatives in the first week of December and return with more information and a timeline.

### Other Facilities Considered:

- Bonaire – The preferred facility, but they will not lease to us due to safety concerns for their staff.
- Colombia – Still under consideration, but far from ready to begin transmission. This is not even a facility, just a license and frequency. We would need to find a site, construct a tower and building, and procure a transmitter.
- Curacao – We had contacts for two facilities in Curacao, one through a consultant that we use and one through a former Radio Netherlands employee. Neither resulted in any tangible possibilities.
- Montserrat – We are looking into the opportunity to construct a very high power facility on Montserrat. This is not normally available in the Western Hemisphere. It is available because the station that was on the frequency was destroyed by a volcano. The government of Montserrat has looked favorably on our inquiries on re-establishing that facility. This is a long-

term project, but would provide USG media presence throughout the Caribbean, Central America, and the northern part of South America.

The challenge has been finding a station that is powerful enough, and on a clear enough frequency, to provide a signal over a large part of Venezuela, and with an owner that is willing to lease time to us. The options that meet all of those criteria are very limited.

Terrestrial FMs have very limited coverage, so border FMs not a reasonable option to reach large audiences. Airborne FMs over international waters are illegal so would become legitimate military targets. Tethered aerostat-based FMs in a neighboring country could theoretically work, but are very expensive, based on our previous investigations into such systems with DARPA and others, and may or may not violate regional broadcast agreements. Coverage would have to be evaluated and likely would not approach that of nighttime AM coverage. Most AM stations in the region are lower power and since we are looking outside Venezuela, they need to be powerful enough to put in a reasonably strong nighttime sky wave signal to cover any significant part of Venezuela. We could also provide shortwave coverage to Venezuela immediately, but research in the region suggests that shortwave is not widely used.

USAGM continues to be open to any other options for radio broadcasting into Venezuela, if there are opportunities we have not yet uncovered.

### **Program Placement and Advertising**

To grow audience inside Venezuela, USAGM will also pay for placement of VOA programming on several national TV and radio stations, and will support financially-squeezed independent media in Venezuela by buying advertising, promotions and public service announcements to raise awareness of U.S.-funded programs available in Venezuela. The agency will place direct ads on social media, TV and radio that will provide specific information about where and when USAGM content is available. It will also buy newspaper/magazine space for informational interviews and promos.

USAGM plans to spend the \$787,000 allocated for program placement and advertising as follows:

- TV advertising and placement: \$300,000
  - National and regional reach
  - Includes 10 minutes of advertising (divided among 30 second spots) of existing VOA programs and platforms per week for two years, plus paid placement of 30 minutes of programming per month
- Radio advertising and placement: \$120,000
  - National and international reach (including along the Colombian border)
  - Includes 10 minutes of advertising (divided among 20 second spots) of existing VOA programs and platforms per week for two years, plus paid placement of 30 minutes of programming per month
- Web advertising: \$150,000
  - National and international reach (including diaspora in Colombia, Ecuador, Spain)
  - \$9,000 per one million impressions
- Other (Print magazines/newspapers): \$110,800
- Pre-production: \$106,200 (audio, video, and web/print graphics)

# BBG Evidence Briefing – FATAA Implementation and Best Practices

OMB Briefing  
July 9, 2018

# Strong Foundation at BBG for FATAA M&E Guidance

- Objective, unambiguous indicators, based on data that has Validity, Integrity, Precision, Reliability, and adheres to professional standards (e.g., American Evaluation Association). We consistently strive to increase the last element, Timeliness, through quicker vehicles and methods, e.g., omnibus and subnational surveys, greater variety of real-time digital analytics.
- Indicators outlined are logically linked to program efforts and measure changes plausibly caused by the program.
- Established very clear methodologies for data collection, use, and aggregation, and always include an assessment and disclosure of assumptions and limitations.
- Experienced professionals with the highest technical expertise in the industry to provide services.
- Agency policies and practices encourage alignment of efforts with international partners (e.g., BBC, DW).

# Recent Progress and Developments





- Internal distribution of data, program summaries, and contextual information.
  - SWAT Teams providing competitive landscape scans to language services and network leadership
- Implementing Business Intelligence tools to integrate digital and survey data.
  - Launched two dashboards
- Implementing Big Data analytics
  - BBG is working with Microsoft to bring Azure/PowerBI resource for implementing big data analytics



# Indicators in Action: Language service SWAT Report

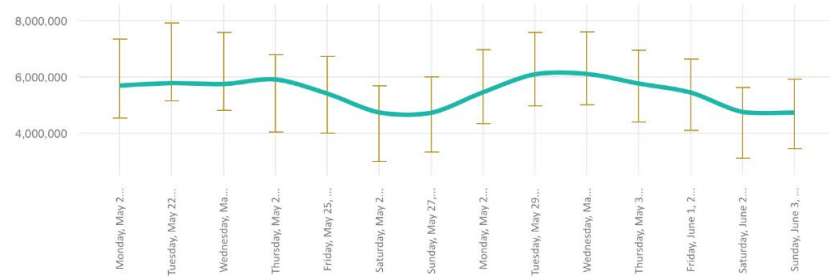
## OPR SWAT: Persian

### OTT / VOD Iranian Domestic Providers

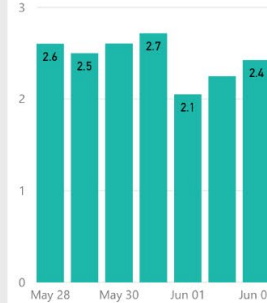
Name	Ownership	App stats	Live feed	Summary
 Aparat*	Saba Idea Technology Company	<a href="#">Google Play</a> 100k-500k <b>Rating:</b> 4.6 (1,127 reviews) <a href="#">CafeBazaar</a> 4M+ <b>Rating:</b> 3.9 (81,626 reviews)	<a href="https://www.aparat.com/live">https://www.aparat.com/live</a>	The second most visited website in Iran according to Alexa, Aparat is known as Iran's YouTube. Like its counterpart, the website/app has grown into live broadcasts, but with limited local channels (mostly, if not all, IRIB channels) <a href="#">being livestreamed</a> on the platform.
 Aio IPTV*	Baran Telecom	<a href="#">Google Play</a> 100k-500k <b>Rating:</b> 4.0 (1,218 reviews) <a href="#">CafeBazaar</a> 200k+ <b>Rating:</b> 4.2 (54,277 reviews)	<a href="https://tv.aionet.ir/twepg/8">https://tv.aionet.ir/twepg/8</a>	"In 2016 a new IPTV service was underway with the announcement that Perception TV had been chosen by Baran Telecom to provide its IPTV platform. It was chosen due to its multi-screen capabilities (Live TV, Catch-up TV, VoD, DVR) and end-to-end capabilities which allow for fast deployment to connected devices. The IPTV service is called AIO and plans to have around 500,000 subscribers by year-end. Baran Telecom is a licensed provider in Iran which a focus on providing IPTV and OTT services." Budde Report
 Filimo*	Saba Idea Technology Company	<a href="#">Google Play</a> 50k-100k <b>Rating:</b> 4.1 (458 reviews) <a href="#">CafeBazaar</a> 500k+ <b>Rating:</b> 3.3 (14,715 reviews)	N/A	Saba Idea Technology's (Aparat owner) film platform. VOD of select Western, Bollywood, and local movies/shows.
 Tavoos	Nims Machines	<a href="#">Roku</a> N/A <b>Rating:</b> 3.5 (367 reviews)	N/A	Live Iranian ethnic TV channels (over 150 channels) in the following languages: Persian, English, Turkish, Arabic, Kurdish, Afghan (Dari), Armenian, Hebrew, French and German! Channels <a href="#">include</a> :  May be inactive?

# Distribution of Data: Real-time Dashboards

WEB VISIT TRENDS  
LAST 14 DAYS, ALL SITES



WEB AVG. TIME SPENT  
LAST 7 DAYS IN MINS, ALL SITES



FACEBOOK  
LAST 7 DAYS, TOTAL INTERACTIONS

7.4M

YOUTUBE  
LAST 7 DAYS, TOTAL INTERACTIONS

797.5K

IMPACT STORIES



## Africa

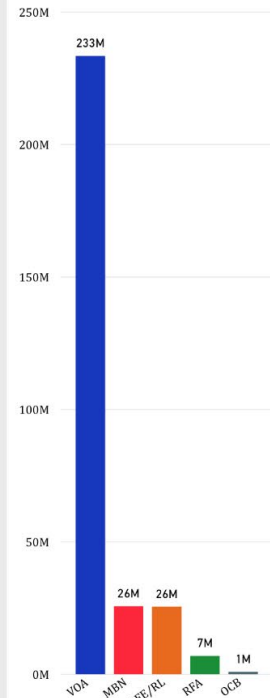
"If I'm here and I see a fire, I will run like hell. I would run away, and the people were running away. But for him to have that courage and get people out," Kwabena Mensah told VOA about his son Emmanuel, who died saving others from a New York City apartment fire.



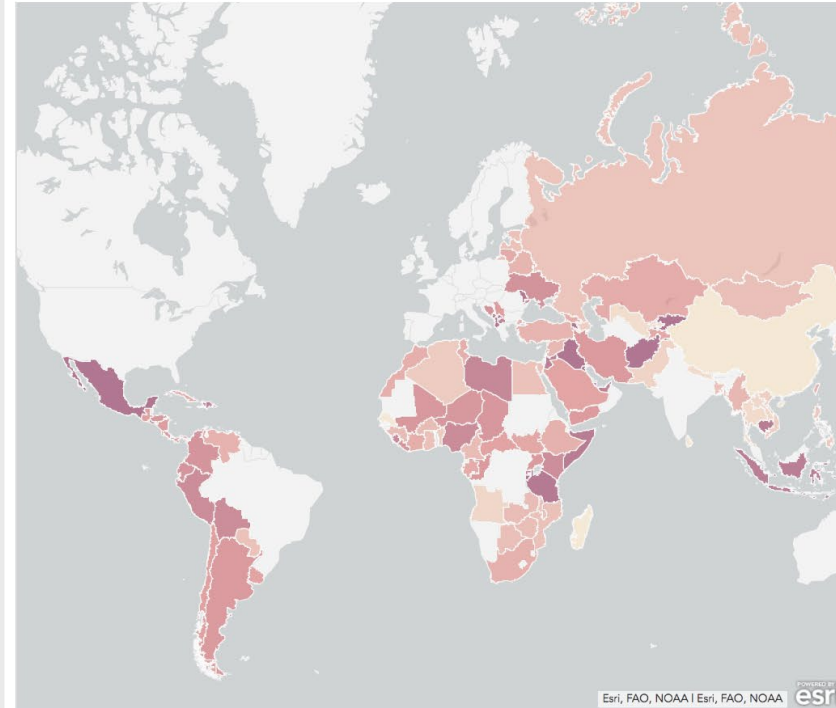
## South and Central Asia

Radio Azadi reporter Ahmad Shah Fetrat was in Farah on May 15 and 16, providing audiences on-location reporting as Afghan government forces battled Taliban fighters for control of the provincial capital of Afghanistan's western Farah Province. Radio Azadi also

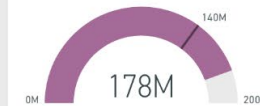
TOTAL ENTITY AUDIENCE  
COUNTRY-WIDE SURVEYS



WEEKLY REACH OF USIM BY COUNTRY  
COUNTRY-WIDE SURVEYS



VIDEO VIEWS (FB & YT)  
LAST 7 DAYS, IN MINS



TIME WATCHED (FB & YT)  
LAST 7 DAYS, IN MINS



TWITTER  
LAST 7 DAYS, TOTAL INTERACTIONS

265.8K

INSTAGRAM  
LAST 7 DAYS, TOTAL INTERACTIONS

1.9M



## English

The New York Times quoted from VOA contributor Greta Van Susteren's interview with U.S. National Security Adviser John Bolton in an article about the impact of recent changes in President Trump's national security team. It said: "For more than a decade, and as recently as



## Eurasia

Digital-only products related to the week's news cycle proved to be strong performers. A video of a military orchestra honoring a 97-year-old veteran in Odessa was Current Time's top performing video last week with 2.5 million views, and seemed to resonate



## East Asia

Authorities are imposing regular "home stays" on Muslim Uyghur families in northwest China's Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (XUAR) as part of an increasingly invasive "strike hard" campaign, according to New York-based Human Rights Watch (HRW), which



## East Asia

Myanmar on Thursday rebutted a declaration by the world's top Islamic intergovernmental body condemning the Southeast Asian nation's army for targeting Rohingya Muslims in "systematic" ethnic cleansing and calling on member states to collectively



# Next Steps for BBG Evidence and Evaluation

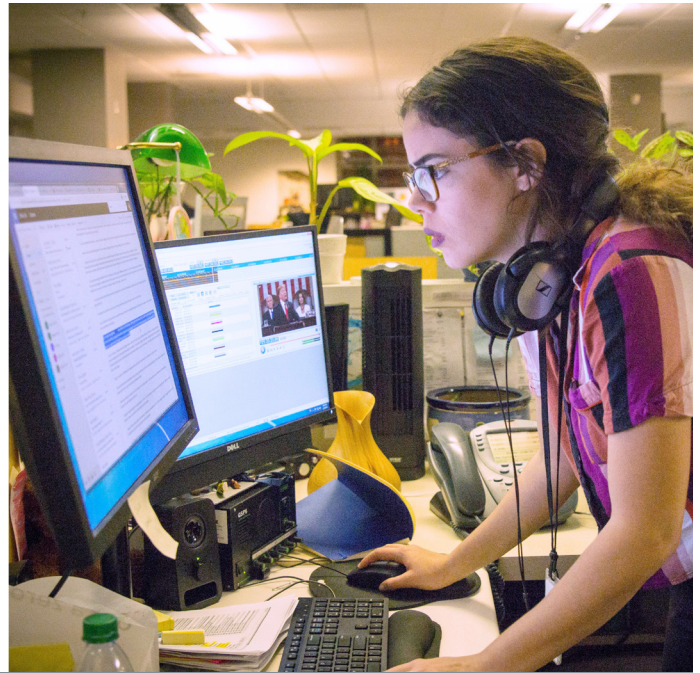
- Develop a transparent and evidence-based methodology that allows for further integration of digital and survey analytics to provide a more thorough understanding of our audience size, composition, preferences, and behavior.
- Expand distribution and real-time access to analytics through continued development of dashboards.
- Experiment with big data analytics and predictive modeling to create more sophisticated audience typologies and better predict their behavior/preferences.
- Examining automated analysis of datasets via Artificial Intelligence (VOA is already actively working on AI for analysis and tagging of metadata to content).
- Refinement and expansion of behavioral indicators.
- Looking into semiotics (visual data).





U.S. AGENCY FOR  
GLOBAL MEDIA

UNITED STATES  
BROADCASTING  
BOARD OF  
GOVERNORS



# FY 2020 Congressional BUDGET JUSTIFICATION





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# Executive Summary

## U.S. AGENCY FOR GLOBAL MEDIA Summary of Appropriations

**FY 2018 - FY 2020**

(in thousands)

### INTERNATIONAL BROADCASTING OPERATIONS *Programs, Projects, and Activities*

	FY 2018 ACTUALS	FY 2019 ANNUALIZED CR	FY 2020 REQUEST
<b>FEDERAL ENTITIES</b>			
Voice of America	\$ 256,236	\$ 250,060	\$ 189,926
Office of Cuba Broadcasting	\$ 29,144	\$ 29,144	\$ 12,973
International Broadcasting Bureau	\$ 56,896	\$ 58,576	\$ 52,121
<i>Internet Freedom; Anti-Censorship     (non-add to IBB)</i>	\$ 13,800	\$ 13,800	\$ 9,500
Office of Technology, Services, and Innovation	\$ 177,075	\$ 181,843	\$ 151,978
<b>TOTAL, FEDERAL ENTITIES</b>	<b>\$ 519,351</b>	<b>\$ 519,623</b>	<b>\$ 406,998</b>

### NON-FEDERAL ENTITIES

Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty	\$ 124,038	\$ 124,038	\$ 86,767
Radio Free Asia	\$ 44,013	\$ 44,013	\$ 33,531
Middle East Broadcasting Networks	\$ 110,312	\$ 110,312	\$ 96,229
<b>TOTAL, NON-FEDERAL ENTITIES</b>	<b>\$ 278,363</b>	<b>\$ 278,363</b>	<b>\$ 216,527</b>

### TOTAL, INTERNATIONAL BROADCASTING OPERATIONS

	<b>\$ 797,714</b>	<b>\$ 797,986</b>	<b>\$ 623,525</b>
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### BROADCASTING CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS *Programs, Projects, and Activities*

Broadcasting Capital Improvements	\$ 5,814	\$ 9,700	\$ 4,551
<b>TOTAL, BROADCASTING CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS</b>	<b>\$ 5,814</b>	<b>\$ 9,700</b>	<b>\$ 4,551</b>
<b>USAGM GRAND TOTAL - Appropriation/Request</b>	<b>\$ 803,528</b>	<b>\$ 807,686</b>	<b>\$ 628,076</b>

And above all, we value the dignity of every human life, protect the rights of every person, and share the hope of every soul to live in freedom. That is who we are.

—President Donald J. Trump; July 6, 2017; Remarks by President Trump to the People of Poland

For Fiscal Year (FY) 2020, the U.S. Agency for Global Media (USAGM) is requesting \$628.1 million to pursue its mission to inform, engage and connect people around the world in support of freedom and democracy.

## USAGM's Role in U.S. Foreign Policy

Serving as America's civilian international media agency, USAGM is comprised of the Voice of America (VOA), Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL), Radio Free Asia (RFA), Alhurra TV and Radio Sawa (under the Middle East Broadcasting Networks – MBN) and Radio and TV Martí (under the Office of Cuba Broadcasting – OCB). These five dynamic, modern networks provide content through digital platforms, television, and radio in 60 languages to more than 100 countries.

The USAGM networks advance U.S. national interests and universal values of freedom by providing audiences in closed societies, or where free media is not yet fully established, with consistently accurate and compelling journalism and other content that opens minds and stimulates debate. U.S. international media demonstrates to the world the values of American society: freedom, openness, rule of law, democracy, and hope.

As the National Security Strategy explains, “Stable, prosperous and friendly states enhance American security and boost U.S. economic opportunities.” In covering the current affairs and foreign policy of the United States, USAGM networks open a window into democracy in action, in all its richness and complexity, a prism through which global audiences can see reflected their own struggles to build sustainable democratic systems.

USAGM pursues its mission in an increasingly challenging global environment. In a world awash in media and interconnected as never before, governments and nonstate actors, including extremist groups like ISIS and Boko Haram, have weaponized information to generate a relentless, sophisticated stream of false narratives that too often go unchallenged. As detailed in the National Security

Strategy, “Rival actors use propaganda and other means to try to discredit democracy. They advance anti-Western views and spread false information to create divisions among ourselves, our allies, and our partners.” Government funded broadcasters, including China Central Television (CCTV) and Russia’s RT international television network, inundate audiences with disinformation about global events and depict the United States on an irreversible downward social spiral, with failing institutions and global strength on the wane. Global press freedom has deteriorated steadily during the past decade and internet freedom is declining as more governments censor information, block access, and expand surveillance.

## Building on Recent Investments

USAGM is in the midst of a significant multi-year transformation effort designed to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the agency, and to increase its impact on the audiences it serves worldwide. This undertaking aligns with the Administration’s National Security Strategy and President Trump’s management priorities of effectiveness, efficiency, and accountability, and advances USAGM’s 2018-2022 Strategic Plan.

In FY 2018, USAGM reached a weekly audience of 345 million across radio, television, and the internet—a 24 percent increase from the FY 2017 audience of 278 million. This growth continues the agency’s upward trend in audience reach in recent years, reflecting both the quality of content and the global demand for a trusted source of news and information.

In FY 2020, the USAGM networks will seek to leverage their successes, which include:

- **LAUNCHING OF VOA 365, USAGM’S NEW 24/7 PERSIAN-LANGUAGE GLOBAL NETWORK** – VOA and RFE/RL will augment their existing collaboration by confronting Iranian disinformation and speaking directly to the Iranian people in-country through a 24/7 media presence, modeled after Current Time, a similar endeavor targeting Russian-speaking populations in Russia and its periphery. VOA 365 builds on VOA’s Persian Service and RFE/RL’s top-rated Radio Farda to provide 24/7 live and unfiltered coverage of global news and events through its expanded pool of studios and correspondents stationed across the globe. The network, which follows USAGM’s shift from a country-based content model to

language-based model, will play an essential role in USAGM's effectiveness in Iran by providing critical objective news and information about the United States, Iran and the world to the Persian-speaking diaspora around the world and young, future leaders inside the country.

- **CREATION OF A MANDARIN DIGITAL NEWS NETWORK TO ENGAGE AUDIENCES** – In the same vein as the 24/7 global language networks of Current Time and VOA 365, this new network pivots USAGM's Mandarin-language programming from traditional radio and satellite broadcasts towards digital and social media content for Mandarin-speakers worldwide, including the extensive Chinese diaspora, Chinese overseas workers, and the growing population of Chinese citizens traveling globally for business, pleasure, and education. USAGM research suggests our ability to access audiences in-country and around the world is strongest using a digital strategy, and VOA and RFA have both found these to be effective channels for information-seeking people to evade government firewalls. Despite China's aggressive and widespread actions to control the media and information space inside of China and regionally, both VOA and RFA have seen impressive audience reach on digital platforms and among highly educated Chinese adults as well as evidence of high trustworthiness among users. A 2017 survey of China, commissioned by USAGM, found record audiences for VOA and RFA content – 67 million weekly – mostly on digital platforms.
- **CONTINUED EXPANSION OF RFE/RL AUDIENCE AND RUSSIAN-LANGUAGE CONTENT** – The Current Time TV and digital network provides Russian speakers across Russia, Ukraine, Central Asia, the Caucasus, the Baltics, Eastern Europe and as far away as Israel with access to factual, accurate, topical and trustworthy information, and serves as a reality check on disinformation that is driving conflict in the region. The measured weekly audience of RFE/RL's Russian-language content, including RFE/RL's Radio Svoboda and Current Time, has nearly doubled from 2016, now reaching 6.4 percent of Russian adults, or nearly 6.6 million people. In 2018, Current Time's videos received approximately 500 million views online and across social media platforms, with more than half coming from inside of Russia.
- **REACHING CRITICAL AUDIENCES IN CENTRAL AMERICA AND VENEZUELA** – In Central America and Venezuela, VOA reaches local audiences with continued operations and comprehensive coverage of the Venezuelan government, the country's on-going leadership crisis, and the U.S. and international community's response.

- **REPORTING AND BROADCASTING TO CRITICAL AUDIENCES IN INFORMATION-RESTRICTED ENVIRONMENTS, SUCH AS NORTH KOREA** – Surveys of defectors and travelers from North Korea consistently note that USAGM is highly influential in the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK or North Korea), and USAGM continually looks for opportunities to expand transmissions there. In addition, a jointly produced video project from RFA and VOA has helped to counter North Korean government propaganda by showing North Koreans the reality of life outside the DPRK.
- **DEVELOPMENT OF REFUGEE-FOCUSED BROADCASTS** – Broadcasts to information-deprived refugee populations in Bangladesh and Kenya provide news and English-language instruction, mitigating the potential for violent radicalization.
- **RFE/RL ENGAGEMENT WITH NEW AUDIENCES IN BULGARIA AND ROMANIA** – Recent RFE/RL expansion of operations into Bulgaria and Romania, a region targeted by Russian propaganda, aims to help the growth of a free press and promote democratic values and institutions.
- **ROLLOUT OF A MULTI-YEAR MBN TRANSFORMATION PLAN** – MBN has recently embarked on a multi-year transformation plan to fundamentally improve programming content and production quality across all MBN media. MBN’s transformation efforts include refreshing programming targeted to Iraq and the Levant with new energy and focus, expanding and reprioritizing digital output, and upgrading its broadcast model to cloud-based IP infrastructure.
- **OCB MODERNIZATION** – OCB is modernizing its news delivery, including: a total transformation on its digital page; live interaction of anchors with independent reporters in Cuba; and collaboration with VOA’s Latin American Division, maximizing the sharing of content and resources.
- **IMPROVEMENT OF ESSENTIAL AGENCY TECHNOLOGY OPERATIONS** – USAGM’s Office of Technology, Services and Innovation (TSI) continues to advance the operations of the agency’s networks through the rollout of enhanced program production, archiving and distribution infrastructure, continued support of High Definition (HD) video production and delivery, upgrade of business processes, and modernization in critical technical areas and aggressive expansion of its extremely successful cyber-security posture.

- **INTEGRATION OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI) TOOLS INTO THE AGENCY'S WORKFLOWS** – The Office of Policy and Research (OPR) within the International Broadcasting Bureau (IBB) is coordinating across USAGM to develop improved research-based tools for analysis and decision-making. In support of the 2019 executive order on “Maintaining American Leadership in Artificial Intelligence,” which calls on federal agencies to consider AI a priority, planning is underway for AI tools to be tested, applied and integrated into USAGM workflows for the purposes of improving analysis and streamlining inefficiencies across the agency. USAGM is uniquely suited to benefit from these tools due to the centrality of data to the news and media industries, as well as its access to real-time digital analytics and a recently re-launched, fully-integrated data management system. USAGM is in the process of investing in AI tools to provide better insights into audience behavior and trends, detect anomalous behavior (e.g. state-level site-blocking and technical problems), detect misinformation campaigns, fraud detection, and aid content creators.

## Organizational Change and Progress

The FY 2017 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) made major reforms to the International Broadcasting Act (IBA) of 1994 (P.L. 103-236, as amended). The changes are designed to modernize the agency, including the empowerment of a full-time Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and additional operational authorities. Recent efforts to leverage the new NDAA authorities include:

- **MODERNIZING THE AGENCY'S NAME** – The new name, the “U.S. Agency for Global Media”, more accurately communicates to taxpayers, network affiliates and other partners the modern technology and media platforms used to achieve the agency’s mission, as well as the global scope of its work. Today, USAGM operates on mediums far beyond broadcast television and radio, including the internet, mobile devices, smart television applications and digital radio, reaching a weekly audience of over 345 million people in 60 languages in over 100 countries. As an independent, international media organization—protected by a “firewall” that prohibits editorial interference—the agency will continue to put objective, professional news and content to work on behalf of U.S. global interests and serve a vital role in U.S. public diplomacy and national security.

- **INNOVATIVE USE OF CONTRACTING AUTHORITIES** – Contractors are a critical part of USAGM’s workforce, both in terms of journalists who generate impactful content and support staff, such as human resources and financial management. VOA alone relies on the specialized skills of over 600 contractors to develop and deliver content to its audience. USAGM is exploring different approaches to streamline management of these contractors, maintain competitive compensation for them, and increase the agility with which leadership can leverage its contractor resources to complement its robust federal workforce.
- **RENEWAL OF WORKFORCE RESHAPING TOOLS** – USAGM has partnered with the Office of Personnel Management to renew its Voluntary Early Retirement Authority (VERA) and use of Voluntary Separation Incentive Payments (VSIP) through FY 2019 to continue evolving the agency’s workforce for the demands of today’s markets and technologies. USAGM will seek to continue leveraging these tools through FY 2020.

## Budget Request Overview

For FY 2020, USAGM is requesting \$628.1 million, which is \$179.6 million or 22 percent below the FY 2019 annualized Continuing Resolution level of \$807.7 million. The reductions are allocated among the USAGM entities as identified in the summary of appropriations table at the end of this section. Most reductions will be achieved through elimination of programming staff and contractors and the reduction of broadcasting and direct language service to certain territories. The funding allocations prioritize regions of strategic importance to U.S. national security, optimize the use of technology to reach audiences, and reflect sharing of resources and content across entities to the greatest extent possible. The five strategic priorities of USAGM as outlined below will drive budget decisions throughout FY 2019 and FY 2020.

Additionally, Appendix B contains budget tables for each entity at the language service level that provide greater granularity for the proposed FY 2020 funding allocations. Appendix D contains tables for each entity that summarize the major increases and decreases that add up to the proposed change in total funding for each entity.



## USAGM Strategic Priorities

The USAGM CEO has worked with the five network heads and other key stakeholders to refine the agency's five strategic priorities. These priorities tie to objectives in the USAGM's 2018-2022 Strategic Plan and will maximize the agility, efficiency, and impact of the networks and enable the agency to more effectively address the rapidly evolving media environment.

### 1. MAXIMIZE PROGRAM DELIVERY AGILITY

Maximizing platform agility allows USAGM's networks to seamlessly adapt to the fast-changing content consumption preferences of their audiences. By streamlining operations and leveraging innovative research, the agency will rapidly evolve its market-by-market distribution strategy, ensuring continuously growing relevance.

### 2. ENHANCED STRATEGIC COOPERATION BETWEEN NETWORKS

USAGM will expand the five networks' coordination by extending the successful U.S. International Media Coordinating Committee (ICC) model to mid-level working groups while remaining focused on the complementary missions of the agency's entities. At the center of this collaborative effort will be increasing the level of content sharing and curation among and within its five networks, and leveraging resources where it makes sense to better report on the stories that matter to audiences worldwide.

### 3. FOCUS ON KEY ISSUES AND AUDIENCES

USAGM is prioritizing resources to ensure that its activities advance the broad foreign policy priorities of the United States, including the universal values of freedom and democracy. To this end, the agency is targeting its resources strategically to provide accurate and credible news and information for audiences most impacted by state-sponsored disinformation and violent extremism, particularly by campaigns of terror. These vulnerable populations are located, among other places, in Russia and its periphery, China and its periphery, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Iran, Cuba, Venezuela, Sub-Saharan Africa, camps for refugees and internally-displaced persons worldwide, Arabic speakers across the Middle East, and nations threatened by extremist attack or influence.

**4. IMPROVED ACCOUNTABILITY AND IMPACT MEASUREMENT**

USAGM has emphasized measuring the effectiveness of its programs and activities by putting the audience first and holding itself accountable. The agency has enhanced its comprehensive Impact Model to measure factors beyond audience reach and instead assess and evaluate the impact that USAGM programming actually has on the lives of each of its audiences and their communities. Master storytelling requires research to be integrated at the front-end, and the agency is committed to leapfrogging others in the media landscape to impact new audiences.

**5. TARGETED PUBLIC/PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS ON INNOVATION AND MEDIA REACH**

USAGM is focused on launching several new public/private partnerships with leading private sector stakeholders. The goal of the public-private partnerships is to harness the power of agency resources together with non- and for-profit organizations in order to combine networks, expertise, and resources to better serve audiences around the world.

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U.S. AGENCY FOR GLOBAL MEDIA  
Summary of Appropriations  
**FY 2018 - FY 2020**

(in thousands)

**INTERNATIONAL  
BROADCASTING OPERATIONS**  
*Programs, Projects, and Activities*

**FEDERAL ENTITIES**

	<b>FY 2018 ACTUALS</b>	<b>FY 2019 ANNUALIZED CR</b>	<b>FY 2020 REQUEST</b>	<b>FY 2020 vs. FY 2019</b>	<b>FY 2020 vs. FY 2019 %</b>
Voice of America	\$256,236	\$250,060	\$189,926	-\$60,134	-24%
Office of Cuba Broadcasting	\$ 29,144	\$ 29,144	\$ 12,973	-\$ 16,171	-55%
International Broadcasting Bureau	\$ 56,896	\$ 58,576	\$ 52,121	-\$ 6,455	-11%
<i>Internet Freedom; Anti-Censorship     (non-add to IBB)</i>	\$ 13,800	\$ 13,800	\$ 9,500	-\$ 4,300	-31%
Office of Technology, Services, and Innovation	\$177,075	\$181,843	\$151,978	-\$29,865	-16%
<b>TOTAL, FEDERAL ENTITIES</b>	<b>\$ 519,351</b>	<b>\$ 519,623</b>	<b>\$406,998</b>	<b>-\$112,625</b>	<b>-22%</b>

**NON-FEDERAL ENTITIES**

Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty	\$ 124,038	\$ 124,038	\$ 86,767	-\$ 37,271	-30%
Radio Free Asia	\$ 44,013	\$ 44,013	\$ 33,531	-\$ 10,482	-24%
Middle East Broadcasting Networks	\$ 110,312	\$ 110,312	\$ 96,229	-\$ 14,083	-13%
<b>TOTAL, NON-FEDERAL ENTITIES</b>	<b>\$278,363</b>	<b>\$278,363</b>	<b>\$ 216,527</b>	<b>-\$ 61,836</b>	<b>-22%</b>

<b>TOTAL, INTERNATIONAL BROADCASTING OPERATIONS</b>	<b>\$ 797,714</b>	<b>\$797,986</b>	<b>\$623,525</b>	<b>-\$174,461</b>	<b>-22%</b>
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**BROADCASTING CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS**

*Programs, Projects, and Activities*

Broadcasting Capital Improvements	\$ 5,814	\$ 9,700	\$ 4,551	-\$ 5,149	-53%
<b>TOTAL, BROADCASTING CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS</b>	<b>\$ 5,814</b>	<b>\$ 9,700</b>	<b>\$ 4,551</b>	<b>-\$ 5,149</b>	<b>-53%</b>
<b>USAGM GRAND TOTAL - Appropriation/Request</b>	<b>\$803,528</b>	<b>\$807,686</b>	<b>\$628,076</b>	<b>-\$179,610</b>	<b>-22%</b>

U.S. AGENCY FOR GLOBAL MEDIA  
Summary of Positions and FTEs  
FY 2018 - FY 2020

	FY 2018 Actuals		FY 2019 Annualized CR		FY 2020 Request	
	ON-BOARD POSITIONS	FULL-TIME EQUIVALENT	FUNDED POSITIONS	FULL-TIME EQUIVALENT	FUNDED POSITIONS	FULL-TIME EQUIVALENT
<b>INTERNATIONAL BROADCASTING OPERATIONS</b>						
<b>FEDERAL EMPLOYEES</b>						
<b>Voice of America</b>	<b>1,020</b>	<b>923</b>	<b>1,085</b>	<b>1,082</b>	<b>840</b>	<b>837</b>
<i>American/Domestic Employees</i>	1,003	909	1,068	1,068	823	823
<i>Foreign Nationals DH/ Personnel Service Agreements</i>	17	14	17	14	17	14
<b>Office of Cuba Broadcasting</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>52</b>
<i>American/Domestic Employees</i>	108	111	111	111	52	52
<b>International Broadcasting Bureau</b>	<b>185</b>	<b>164</b>	<b>185</b>	<b>172</b>	<b>186</b>	<b>172</b>
<i>American/Domestic Employees</i>	185	164	185	172	186	172
<b>Office of Technology, Services and Innovation</b>	<b>367</b>	<b>259</b>	<b>450</b>	<b>335</b>	<b>450</b>	<b>335</b>
<i>American/Domestic Employees</i>	156	159	189	190	189	190
<i>Foreign Nationals DH/ Personnel Service Agreements</i>	211	100	261	145	261	145
<b>SUBTOTAL, FEDERAL EMPLOYEES</b>	<b>1,680</b>	<b>1,457</b>	<b>1,831</b>	<b>1,700</b>	<b>1,528</b>	<b>1,396</b>
<b>NON-FEDERAL ENTITY EMPLOYEES</b>						
<b>Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty</b>	<b>698</b>		<b>826</b>		<b>658</b>	
<i>American/Domestic Employees</i>	698		826		658	
<i>Foreign Nationals DH/ Personnel Service Agreements</i>						
<b>Radio Free Asia</b>	<b>263</b>		<b>286</b>		<b>215</b>	
<i>American/Domestic Employees</i>	253		262		194	
<i>Foreign Nationals DH/ Personnel Service Agreements</i>	10		24		21	
<b>Middle East Broadcasting Networks</b>	<b>750</b>		<b>898</b>		<b>928</b>	
<i>American/Domestic Employees</i>	436		545		565	
<i>Foreign Nationals DH/ Personnel Service Agreements</i>	314		353		363	
<b>SUBTOTAL, NON-FEDERAL ENTITY EMPLOYEES</b>	<b>1,711</b>		<b>2,010</b>		<b>1,801</b>	
<b>USAGM TOTALS</b>	<b>3,391</b>	<b>1,457</b>	<b>3,841</b>	<b>1,700</b>	<b>3,329</b>	<b>1,396</b>

# Legislative Proposal Requests

The United States Agency for Global Media requests two legislative proposals as part of the FY 2020 President's Budget appropriations language and one proposal to authorize the USAGM Foundation. The proposed appropriations language is located after the proposal descriptions below.

## 1. **HIRING QUALIFIED NON-U.S. CITIZEN JOURNALISTS**

One of the most pressing challenges VOA currently faces is finding skilled, professional, multimedia language-qualified journalists. This proposal would allow the agency to return to considering applications from all suitably-qualified candidates on an equal basis, including those of non-U.S. citizens. With the recent transition to television and digital platforms, VOA often must look outside of the agency, and often outside the U.S., to find candidates with the combination of relevant qualifications and language skills, including local dialect and/or current local vernacular skills. Often, the local dialect and vernacular skills can only be found in applicants who have recently been speaking and working in-country, and those skills are necessary to target and retain the largest audiences, especially youth cohorts. However, since 2015 the Agency has been operating under the decision of an arbitrator that mandates consideration of all U.S. citizen applicants before non-citizens, even if the non-citizen is the only one of the candidates with sufficient skills/accent in the local language to carry out the responsibilities. In some cases, there is an extreme dearth of U.S. citizen journalists with the necessary language skills, and in several instances VOA has canceled a solicitation because qualified non-citizens were deemed ineligible when in the same applicant pool with underqualified U.S. citizens. This proposal will simply restore, not expand agency authority to the purpose reflected in a 1983 report by the Committee on Foreign Relations (No. 97-429): "it is not in the interest of the United States or of U.S. citizens to jeopardize the quality of [international] programming in order to insure that 'minimally qualified' Americans fill every possible position. The ability to communicate information accurately in a foreign language hinges on language capability which includes an idiomatic grasp of the language, not just textbook language. International broadcasting is a competitive field which requires the best possible staff to attract and maintain an overseas audience. The quality of U.S. broadcasts reflects the quality of the

message and the seriousness of our intent in broadcasting. . . . A suitably qualified person does not mean one who is qualified under minimum standards, but a person whose skills match the demands of the position as well as the demands of the Agency.

## 2. SURGE CAPACITY FUND TRANSFER AUTHORITY

The United States International Broadcasting Surge Capacity Fund, already authorized by current law (22 USC 6216), allows the President to provide financial and technical resources for up to six months to USAGM to carry out broadcasting activities in a geographical area during a crisis abroad. This provision would permit transfers of unobligated balances from expired USAGM accounts into the Surge Capacity Fund.

## 3. USAGM FOUNDATION

The agency seeks authority to establish the USAGM Foundation to assist the families of fallen journalists. The purpose of the Foundation will be to encourage, accept, and administer private gifts from non-Federal and private entities for the purposes of a) offering financial assistance to the families of USAGM journalists, stringers, or support personnel who die in the course of their USAGM duties to cover funeral costs, living expenses, and other related financial hardship costs; and b) funding evacuation, safety, medical, or other related costs in the event any USAGM journalists, stringers, or support personnel are in immediate life-threatening danger or are injured during the course of their USAGM duties. Despite USAGM's best efforts to ensure the safety of its journalists abroad, the agency is limited in mobilizing resources and assistance to our journalists under current law, and over the years 18 USAGM journalists have paid the ultimate price in the service of the U.S. government.

## Proposed International Broadcasting Operations Appropriations Language:

For necessary expenses to enable the [Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG)] *United States Agency for Global Media (USAGM)*, as authorized, to carry out international communication activities, and to make and supervise grants for radio, internet, and television broadcasting including to the Middle East, [\$656,342,000] \$623,525,000: Provided, That in addition to amounts otherwise available for such purposes, up to [\$31,135,000] \$32,782,600 of the amount appropriated under this heading may remain available until expended for satellite transmissions, surge capacity, and Internet freedom programs, of which

not less than \$10,000,000] \$9,500,000 shall be for Internet freedom programs: Provided further, That of the total amount appropriated under this heading, not to exceed \$35,000 may be used for representation expenses, of which \$10,000 may be used for such expenses within the United States as authorized, and not to exceed \$30,000 may be used for representation expenses of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty:

Provided further, That funds made available under this heading may be used for purposes authorized by section 801(5) of the United States Information and Educational Exchange Act of 1948 (22 U.S.C. 1471(5)): Provided further, That funds made available under this heading may be used for purposes authorized by section 804(20) of the United States Information and Educational Exchange Act of 1948 (22 U.S.C. 1474(20)): *Provided further, That funds made available under this heading may be used for purposes authorized by section 804(1) of the United States Information and Educational Exchange Act of 1948 (22 U.S.C. 1474(1)), if equally or better qualified United States citizen applicants are not available when such job vacancies occur:*

Provided further, That the [BBG] USAGM shall notify the Committees on Appropriations within 15 days of any determination by the [BBG] USAGM that any of its broadcast entities, including its grantee organizations, provides an open platform for international terrorists or those who support international terrorism, or is in violation of the principles and standards set forth in subsections (a) and (b) of section 303 of the United States International Broadcasting Act of 1994 (22 U.S.C. 6202) or the entity's journalistic code of ethics:

Provided further, That significant modifications to [BBG] USAGM broadcast hours previously justified to Congress, including changes to transmission platforms (shortwave, medium wave, satellite, Internet, and television), for all [BBG] USAGM language services shall be subject to the regular notification procedures of the Committees on Appropriations:

Provided further, That in addition to funds made available under this heading, and notwithstanding any other provision of law, up to \$5,000,000 in receipts from advertising and revenue from business ventures, up to \$500,000 in receipts from cooperating international organizations, and up to \$1,000,000 in receipts from privatization efforts of the Voice of America and the International Broadcasting Bureau, shall remain available until expended for carrying out authorized purposes:



*Provided further, That the USAGM may transfer to, and merge with, funds under the heading “International Broadcasting Surge Capacity Fund”, pursuant to section 316 of the United States International Broadcasting Act of 1994 (22 U.S.C. 6216), for obligation or expenditure by the USAGM for surge capacity, any of the following: (1) unobligated balances of expired funds appropriated under the heading “International Broadcasting Operations” for fiscal year 2019, except for funds designated by the Congress for Overseas Contingency Operations/Global War on Terrorism pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 (2 U.S.C. 901(b)(2)(A)), at no later than the end of the fifth fiscal year after the last fiscal year for which such funds are available for their stated purposes; and (2) funds made available for surge capacity under this heading.*

# Voice of America (VOA)

## Funding (\$ in Thousands)

FY 2018 ACTUALS	FY 2019 ANNUALIZED CR	FY 2020 REQUEST
\$ 256,236	\$ 250,060	\$ 189,926

## Overview

Voice of America is the U.S. government broadcaster to the world, providing fact-based news and information to audiences with limited or no access to a free press and promoting the growth of democratic values and institutions. With programs in 46 languages, VOA covers the United States and the world in ways that inform, engage, and connect with audience needs and interests, and are locally targeted in every country and region where VOA exists.

VOA tells America's story, explaining its people, institutions, and culture. VOA broadcasts more than 2,100 hours of radio and television, plus 24/7 web and social media programming each week, contributing a weekly audience of 275.2 million to USAGM's total measured weekly audience of 345 million. In addition to its measured audience, VOA also has measured its effectiveness: 84 percent of its weekly audiences say they trust VOA to provide accurate and reliable information, and 76 percent say VOA helps them understand current events relevant to their lives.<sup>1</sup>

VOA focuses on several key areas:

- Telling America's story through U.S. perspectives and coverage of democracy and civil society
- Serving as a model of free expression by providing uncensored news to un-free countries with a restricted media environment
- Providing fact-based alternatives to propaganda
- Using enhanced reporting to counter violent extremism and radicalization of vulnerable populations

<sup>1</sup> From USAGM-commissioned surveys, as reported in the FY 2018 USAGM Performance and Accountability Report

VOA customizes its strategies to reach audiences on their preferred platforms and devices, and in the languages they speak at home. Particular emphasis is paid to territories where violent extremism can breed – including Africa, South Asia, and Indonesia; state sponsors of terrorism – including North Korea and Iran; and countries where information is perverted or censored, such as China, Turkey, and Russia. As audiences shift to mobile and social media, digital distribution is integral to VOA’s mission.

## FY 2019 and FY 2020 Initiatives

### Telling America’s story through U.S. perspectives and coverage of democracy and civil society

VOA covers “America’s story” comprehensively. Its journalists travel around the United States to report on the people and places off the beaten path, and on communities where residents come from different backgrounds but share a value system and belief in the American way. Some of the coverage is in the language of the countries where VOA is heard, seen, and read. It is about the various diaspora of first, second, and third generation immigrants whose opinions are still highly valued in their home countries. Other coverage, including the weekly interview program *Plugged in with Greta Van Susteren* and the digital newsmagazine *VOA Connect*, informs global audiences on American culture, values, and politics. In FY 2018, VOA’s *Off the Highway* explored the views of those living in rural America. Further initiatives also include expansion of reporting out of VOA’s Silicon Valley bureau on issues like entrepreneurship, technology, and innovation — important topics to key VOA audiences.

In FY 2019, VOA Eurasia Division is producing short cross-platform documentaries focusing on diaspora communities in the United States. The series, *Ambassadors of the American Experience*, will profile prominent diaspora personalities and organizations and their contributions to the American society and provide audiences with greater insights and understanding of the American society and institutions. VOA Indonesian will bring Indonesian social media stars to travel the United States and cover the diversity of America.

With degrees from American universities offering the ticket to success and prestige around the world, covering international students in the United States

is a critical part of VOA's mission. In FY 2019, VOA is expanding its coverage of education, contracting with noted bloggers to tell their stories from the perspective of students, teachers, and citizens of other countries who aspire to study here. The VOA Mandarin Service will create a month-long profile of colleges attractive to Chinese students, and have coordinated news coverage to explore the critical differences between the U.S. education system and that in China.

### Serving as a model of free expression by providing uncensored news to restricted media countries

In 2018, governments around the world increasingly used technology to tighten controls on free expression. Many rolled out government-financed media that reported only news that their leaders favored. VOA coverage stood out for its lack of bias and for its relevance to the lives of its audiences worldwide. VOA focused on using a combination of broadcast and digital platforms to engage with audiences in closed societies and worked to gain preferred placement on platforms that are still available in markets where the government has started to crack down.

Elections in Russia, Turkey, Zimbabwe, Cambodia, Burundi, Mali, Indonesia, and Pakistan in FY 2018 had major implications for U.S. foreign relations. VOA coverage was hailed as unbiased. The VOA-sponsored live presidential debate in Zimbabwe brought the two main candidates together for the first time. VOA Khmer provided unmatched reporting on Cambodia's shrinking political space despite being forced off its FM affiliates. VOA Urdu shed light on Pakistani electoral politics with original stories on abducted peace activists, violence targeting local candidates, and the influence of fake news. VOA's effectiveness in advocating for free expression and democratic principles can be seen in how opponents reacted; in Burundi, VOA was temporarily banned two weeks before a vote to extend the sitting president's term.

In FY 2019, VOA will show the world how free societies govern, through its coverage of both the 2018 U.S. midterm Congressional elections and the run-up to the 2020 U.S. Presidential election, including the broadcast of key speeches simultaneously translated into multiple languages, building upon its simultaneous translation model pioneered during the last political cycle. VOA will expand coverage of political conventions and major events throughout the 2020 Presidential campaign season, with the objective of explaining the political

process in America and informing foreign audiences how democracy functions and what goes into an election cycle.

### Persian language TV network expansion

In Iran, where the government bans satellite dishes and online access to international media, weekly audiences for VOA Persian grew to nearly 16 percent of Iranian adults.<sup>2</sup> The service evaded censorship by using web and social media and satellite television to cover live events showcasing the U.S. side of events important to Iranians – frequently, stories either not reported by Iran state media or spun to reflect only the Iranian regime’s interests. The expansion of VOA live coverage has significantly penetrated Iran.

In FY 2019, VOA Persian will take its market-leading television network to a new level, enhancing the quality and scope of its 24/7 satellite service, expanding the critical global and regional news relating to Iran, and the granular, audience-focused information it provides about U.S. policy toward Iran and the region.

VOA Persian will also add specialty web and TV programming focusing on the issues of corruption and inequality in the Iranian regime that have sparked continuing and widespread protests. The project, under the umbrella VOA 365, will be led by the Voice of America in cooperation with Radio Farda, the Persian language arm of RFE/RL.

### Expand television broadcasts to North Korea

VOA Korean launched television and video programs to North Korea in FY 2017. Because of paralyzing restrictions on free expression in the country – listening to or watching international media can send offenders *and their families* to prison – the service focused on senior officials inside North Korea who have access to the Internet and international satellites, and on North Korean officials and contract workers abroad. VOA Korean launched its television roundtable *Washington Talk* – in English and Korean – and drew praise from Korea experts for its interpretation of events affecting North Korea in a way that North Korean officials can understand. The service also looked critically at North Korea, such as when they movingly covered North Korea’s abduction of Japanese citizens in a half-hour documentary that focused on gross human rights violations committed by the North.

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2 USAGM Iran research, 2017

The Korean Service also used the attractiveness of the outside world to reach North Korean audiences, addressing the huge ignorance in North Korea about life in the United States. In FY 2017, the Korean Service began a continuing documentary series about Koreans in the United States, focusing on Palisades Park, New Jersey—a flourishing town that has the largest percentage of Koreans in America, which continued in FY 2018. In FY 2019, the program is expanding to other large Korean communities in the U.S.

VOA Korean will also add daily news and weekly “world-view” programming to provide information that many North Korean officials may not know.

### Increase coverage of Central America and Venezuela

The VOA Spanish Service expanded its coverage of the fragile countries of Nicaragua and Venezuela in FY 2018. The unpopular governments in both countries have repressed local media and all but banned coverage of the frequent anti-government demonstrations taking place. VOA worked closely with influential media partners, taking advantage of VOA’s credibility, impact, and its unique position in the United States. Leading Venezuela media partner “El Nacional” added a website section to focus on VOA content. VOA Spanish focused on news and information from the United States, the threats to human rights and freedom of the press in the two countries, and the rampant corruption that undermined the economies and spirit of both. The service had stringers providing daily reporting from Venezuela, counterbalancing government media as well as Russian and Chinese outlets. VOA reporters also traveled to Nicaragua for onsite coverage including reporting on the youth movement and its role in the quest for democracy.

Despite government pressure against VOA, local media in both countries use VOA Spanish reporting about their countries and the United States as local news. In Venezuela, despite government censorship, VOA Spanish reached 8.3 percent of the population.<sup>3</sup> In Nicaragua, where censorship is less formal, VOA Spanish reached nearly 14 percent of adults each week.<sup>4</sup>

VOA will expand coverage from Venezuela, placing additional reporters on the ground, expanding co-productions with Venezuelan media partners, and nurturing digital media partnerships. In addition, the service will expand its

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<sup>3</sup> USAGM research, 2016

<sup>4</sup> USAGM research, 2017

use of co-produced reports to leverage affiliate audiences and continue reporting on such topics as U.S. sanctions, immigration and refugees, Latin America-U.S. relations, and social issues such as child malnutrition, hunger, crime, and corruption.

### VOA Mandarin Expansion

VOA Mandarin delivers on fact-based reporting of events and a wide range of perspectives from the United States. In FY 2018, VOA Mandarin expanded its digital and broadcast footprints through segments on hot-button topics such as U.S./China trade tensions and programs such as *Issues and Opinions*. Serving as “wake up” broadcast television for China, the service’s *Eye on America* covered occurrences in America while China slept. VOA Mandarin also expanded its use of live experts and social media influencers in its coverage, adding nuance to its reporting on China, the U.S., and U.S./China policy. It used technology to circumvent China’s “Great Firewall” and reached 2.7 percent (29 million) of Chinese adults via digital means on a weekly basis, and 1.1 percent (11.9 million) of adults via TV and 0.6 percent (6.6 million) via radio broadcasts. Though under state control, Chinese media regularly published or cited VOA reporting, a significant advancement for the VOA Mandarin Service, whose transmissions are jammed by China and whose website is blocked by its government censors.

VOA’s China Branch told stories not reported by Chinese media, many of which involved human rights. VOA Mandarin broke the story of forced deportations from Chinese cities of poor people from China’s countryside seeking work there. A special VOA web section, Dragon’s Reach, focused on the hidden and public aspects of Chinese imperialism. VOA Mandarin presented the United States side of trade disputes and of tensions in the South China Sea that were misreported by Chinese media reporting, and broadcast live from the Congressional-Executive Committee on China that highlighted human rights violations by the Beijing government. As the North Korean situation heated up, the Service produced frequent specials live from Korea and from the scene of the Trump/Kim summit, covering multiple angles not reported by Chinese state media.

In FY 2019, VOA Mandarin will overhaul its 24/7 *Weishi* satellite channel, adding more live coverage of U.S.-based discussions of China.

### Providing fact-based alternatives to propaganda

VOA's Russian Service expanded its partnership with RFE/RL and the Current Time digital network as questions of Russian involvement in U.S. elections dominated the news cycle. VOA Russian provided live coverage on the network of hearings and events occurring in the U.S. surrounding the controversy, focusing on angles of concern to Russian-speakers in the periphery of Russia and within the country itself. VOA Russia provided fact-based alternatives to Russian propaganda for the Current Time network of television stations around the former Soviet Union, and, in greater depth, to web and social media audiences. Via its *Polygraph.info* fact-checking site, it helped audiences distinguish between the facts of news stories and Russian media's too-often fictional approach to journalism.

### Targeting Disinformation

VOA will enhance and expand its cross-platform programming into media markets targeted by disinformation and propaganda. For Russian speakers, it will prioritize expansion of its Current Time-branded programming and digital video initiatives focused on reaching new audiences in Russia, Ukraine, the Balkans and South Caucasus, and deepening their engagement with VOA's content. In all territories, VOA will improve its ability to make data-driven decisions on programming and embrace developing agile content that responds in real time to falsehoods and anti-American narratives sponsored by foreign governments.

VOA Russian will also expand its digital video production beyond hard news and geopolitics to include documentaries and shorter social media-friendly products targeting the so-called "Generation Z" — digital natives who have largely experienced political life under Russia's current authoritarian regime. Topics will include education (studying in America), new technologies, the future of work, and the Kremlin's manipulation of the media.



## Using enhanced reporting to counter violent extremism and radicalization of vulnerable populations

In FY 2018, VOA employed a variety of methods to counter violent extremism and the radicalization of vulnerable populations. The audience for VOA's Extremism Watch Desk grew to one million followers on Facebook. Watch Desk personnel produced hundreds of multimedia stories on terrorism and extremism in the South and Central Asia region and the Middle East. The stories it produced were shared across the USAGM networks and seen by internet users around the world. VOA Hausa created a weekly series of online videos aimed at at-risk youth to discuss radical Islam's flawed ideologies. The programs, reaching more than 100,000 viewers online each week, were also distributed to schools and public meetings.

VOA will expand its youth-oriented Facebook Live program *Fadi Mu Ji* to broadcast stations in the Lake Chad Basin and, via satellite, to Hausa speakers around Africa and to the Nigerian diaspora.

In FY 2018, VOA Indonesian closely covered the rise of Islamic conservatives in the country to challenge for leadership of the world's largest Muslim country. In FY 2019, the Service will look closely at Islam and issues of Islamic tolerance of other religions.

With Albania, Kosovo, and Bosnia increasingly becoming sources of recruitment for ISIS, VOA's Balkan Services has accelerated coverage of regional unemployment and government corruption that may have resulted in arms from the Balkans ending up in the hands of ISIS fighters. In FY 2019, VOA's Balkan Services will expand coverage of terrorism in the region, creating multimedia content focusing on problems caused by ethnic divisions and lack of government leadership. In FY 2020, VOA will start an online forum for discussion of de-radicalization, featuring both solutions and the opinions of those who abandoned their commitment to radical groups and extremist ideologies.

Within the former Federally Administered Tribal Areas of Pakistan (FATA), home to the Afghan Taliban, VOA's Deewa Service plays a particularly strong role in countering violent extremism by combatting disinformation. As part of its campaign against radicalism, the Service has added extra programming that focused on the lead up to the merger of the tribal areas into Pakistan's Khyber

Pakhtunkhwa and the end of colonial-era laws that had governed the FATA since the turn of the 20th century.

In FY 2019, VOA Deewa is exploring the costs of Islamic radicalization to the family and to society.

VOA will continue a multiyear project begun in FY 2018, to focus on a vulnerable population at risk for radicalism: the more than 53 million refugees and internally displaced persons in the world. Working with non-governmental organizations, this programming counters violent extremism by supporting entrepreneurship and education, helps reunite families, provides access to vital medical and social information, and informs audiences throughout the region about U.S. assistance to those in need.

### Refugee-focused broadcasts and coverage

Refugee populations are frequently underemployed or unemployable, often with little knowledge of the local language. They have few sources of accurate information about their circumstances or of the outside world. Absent positive influences, they represent a potentially radicalized underclass targeted by extremists and terrorist organizations. VOA produced a multipart news series and documentary about the most recent of the refugee crises – the nearly one million newly-arrived Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh, fleeing “ethnic cleansing” in Burma – and distributed English Learning programming for the refugee camps and Rakhine State in Burma.

In FY 2019, VOA will mitigate the possibility of refugee radicalization by providing information and communications links for refugees in targeted crisis areas, in the languages they speak. VOA will place content in the Rohingya language in the Kugupalong refugee camp and in the Somali and Swahili languages at the Dadaab refugee camp in Kenya, two of the largest refugee camps in the world. Content will focus on issues important to refugees. VOA will recruit, train, and hire “citizen journalists” (stringers) in refugee areas. Content will be delivered in the most effective means available depending on local laws, including radio (SW and FM), video content via flash drives, and web/mobile/social applications.

In FY 2020, VOA will expand radio and television programming in English for the 285,000 mostly South Sudanese refugees at Uganda’s Bidibidi camp and the 185,000 refugees at Kenya’s Kakuma camp. And VOA will raise worldwide

awareness of the crisis in cooperation with the UN High Commissioner on Refugees and the International Organization for Migration through a dramatic feature-length television and video documentary showing the full scope of the refugee crisis. Entitled *A Day in the Life of a Refugee*, the program will use VOA camera crews to document refugee life, shot where refugees are living on the same day around the world.

### Other initiatives: Digital growth

Digital is now the fastest-growing platform for VOA. Audiences grew by 500 percent between 2012 and 2017<sup>5</sup> (during the same period, TV doubled and radio grew by one-third). Most VOA services have robust online audiences, even in markets like Iran and China that are difficult to reach because of censorship. The bulk of digital growth has come via traffic to VOA social media. VOA sets its own internal targets, customized by language, focusing on the platforms most likely to reach mass audiences.

On YouTube, according to FY 2018 data, VOA is ranked number one among media companies in Iran, Somalia, and Central Africa Republic. It was in the top five in China, Ethiopia, Cambodia, Albania, Bosnia, Haiti, Laos, Burma, Uzbekistan, and Zimbabwe. VOA Persian was in the top five most engaged media Instagram accounts in Iran. And on Facebook, VOA was the number one media page in Afghanistan, Burundi, Cambodia, and DRC, and in the top five in Angola, Haiti, Indonesia, Iran, Laos, Somalia, Tanzania, and Zimbabwe.

VOA will pioneer new delivery methods and content styles in order to reach young, internet-savvy users on rising chat apps such as Telegram, Line, and WhatsApp. These platforms have already started to eclipse older social networks like Facebook, but will require new methods of analytics because these platforms often have none. VOA will expand its exclusive distribution agreement with the photo sharing social media company Line in Indonesia to other languages and territories.

In FY 2020, VOA will expand its use of improved metrics with real-time monitoring tools, allowing content to be quickly adapted and distributed to align with audience interests, quickly addressing unmet information needs.

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5 USAGM surveys 2012-2017

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#### Automate journalistic processes to enable more original reporting

VOA is working on implementing Content Management and Media Asset Management systems that will automate and ease journalist back-office duties, including transcription, translation, textual analysis, and facial recognition. These will help journalists to quickly and accurately add appropriate metadata to VOA content to increase search results, an important audience metric.

#### Expand alternatives to government-controlled media in Turkey

VOA will expand its satellite and web broadcasts to Turkey as fact-based, objective alternatives to the single story line coming from Turkish government media.

#### Other initiatives: Technical growth

In FY 2018, VOA continued work to upgrade all TV studios and master control facilities to high definition (HD), converted VOA London studios to HD, installed labor-saving TV production automation equipment, and began facility-wide renovation of studios and equipment in Washington, DC to accommodate Persian news expansion. In FY 2019, VOA will improve video connectivity between New York, Los Angeles, London, and Washington; install a new newsroom computer operating system; and unify set and graphic design for maximum efficiency and to keep the on-air look competitive with other broadcasters. TV studio production hours will expand from 8 to 12 hours per day.

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# Office of Cuba Broadcasting (OCB)

## Funding (\$ in Thousands)

FY 2018 ACTUALS	FY 2019 ANNUALIZED CR	FY 2020 REQUEST
\$ 29,144	\$ 29,144	\$ 12,973

## Overview

OCB administers Radio and Television Martí programs as well as the MartiNoticias.com website and its social media platforms from its headquarters in Miami, Florida. Radio and TV Martí broadcast 24 hours per day to the people of Cuba.

OCB also administers the USAGM's shortwave transmitting station in Greenville, North Carolina. Radio and TV Martí works daily with independent journalists and members of the civil society. According to industry data, almost 40 percent of the Cuban population has limited access to internet, and in a population of over 11 million inhabitants, there are now an estimated 4.5 million cellular phones in Cuba. A substantial number of Cubans are using Facebook and other social media, and OCB's social media presence has increased on those platforms.

## FY 2019 and FY 2020 Initiatives

Beginning June of 2018, under new leadership, OCB has experienced a large transformation, reinventing itself to position OCB in the 21st Century and increase the level of penetration to serve the changing demographics of the Cuban people. During this time, Radio Martí has created six new daily radio shows and thirteen new radio weekend shows as well as added three new hours of hard news to have a daily total of six hours of hard news.

In FY 2020, OCB seeks to have 24 hours of original programming with emphasis on news, entertainment and diversity. TV Martí has already created 14 new shows and expanded the TV news from one half hour to one hour and a half. TV Martí now has 36 hours of new original programming per week versus 10 hours per

week previously. The goal for the rest of FY 2019 and heading into FY 2020 is to reach 75 hours of original TV programming per week.

In the last six months of 2018, Radio and TV Martí produced the most ambitious journalistic project in its history, airing 35 one hour radio shows and 7 one hour TV shows of a special series *Cuba 60 Años*, a historic series looking back at Castro's sixty year regime.

The goal for FY 2019 and FY 2020 is to create and produce a comprehensive series about the 30th anniversary of the fall of communism in Europe and its impact on Cuba. Four more series of historic significance will be produced in FY 2019 and FY 2020.

### Utilizing alternate methods to reach the island of Cuba

In FY 2019 and FY 2020, OCB will increase its communications with independent journalists, civic society leaders, religious leaders, and the LGBT community, connecting them with OCB's worldwide network of correspondents and interacting on the air. OCB has gone through a total transformation of its digital page and all social platforms in order to engage directly with the people of Cuba. The OCB Director is a member of the Cuba Internet Task Force created by the President of the United States. The Task Force will deliver the final recommendations to the Secretary of State and the President in May of 2019 which will be implemented in FY 2020. OCB is also working with USAGM's Office of Internet Freedom to implement new programs in FY 2019 and FY 2020.

### Strategy based on research

In the coming months, the U.S. Agency for Global Media will conduct a new audience survey in Cuba to compare to the previous survey conducted in early 2017. The previous survey indicated that 96 percent of Martí's weekly audience considered Radio and TV Martí trustworthy. Ninety-six percent of their audience also responded that Martí helped them to form opinions on several important Cuban issues.

## Increased collaboration with VOA Latin American Division

All OCB's platforms have increased the collaboration with VOA's Latin America Division. TV Martí will not only partner with VOA to cover the major events in a cost saving approach, but will begin providing the VOA Latin America Division with special programs produced in-house that will air on dozens of independent TV stations throughout Latin America.

OCB has instituted new radio and TV shows, plus special series and programs. OCB has also met with the point person from the USAGM Office of Business Development about marketing shows to affiliates in Latin America, and has offered several new programs that will likely be accepted in many countries. OCB has offered *Automania*, a TV show about new cars, *Millenium*, a TV show for young people, and *Democracia y Libertad*, a TV show teaching democracy in general. OCB has also offered *Cuba 60 Años*, a series that can be marketed across Latin America. OCB also produces *Venezuela en Crisis*, a TV show containing analysis on Venezuela, and *Nicaragua en Portada*, a TV show containing news on Nicaragua.

In radio, OCB will have *Querer es Poder*, a half hour show with a psychologist who advises on family issues as well as the show *De Mujer a Mujer*, which is about general issues for women.



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# International Broadcasting Bureau (IBB)

## Funding (\$ in Thousands)

FY 2018 ACTUALS	FY 2019 ANNUALIZED CR	FY 2020 REQUEST
\$ 56,896	\$ 58,576	\$ 52,121

## Overview

The International Broadcasting Bureau (IBB) provides oversight to the federal entities of the USAGM. IBB develops support services for all components of USAGM, including in some cases, non-federal grantees. IBB personnel manage the day-to-day implementation of the CEO's strategic vision, while enabling the USAGM to deliver programs to a diverse global audience. IBB personnel handle programming support, including agency strategy and management services, and a robust internet anti-censorship program that links network content to audiences in restricted media environments.

IBB offices are vital to USAGM operations, providing many required functions including: coordinating USAGM strategic planning; researching the impact of broadcast content; providing financial services and planning the agency's budget and execution; awarding and administering contracts; supporting personnel through human resources, labor and employee relations, training, and other vital services; conducting relations with Congress, the media, and other interests; and ensuring physical security.

## FY 2019 and FY 2020 Initiatives

### Expansion of Research Programs

In FY 2020, the USAGM proposes expansion of the impact research program, especially the tools aimed at giving storytellers a distinct advantage in reaching new targeted audiences. The United States Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy called the USAGM "an interagency leader in measurement and evaluation" and recommended in its FY 2018 report for the USAGM to increase "the budget, human resource, and database capacity to systemically complete

this work [evaluating progress on long-term public diplomacy and international broadcasting activities' goals.]" The USAGM will further enhance the impact of research efforts by continuing to participate in a "whole of government" collaboration, which includes joint projects, exchanging research data, and sharing best practices with other research entities, such as the Department of State.

The increased impact research would be directed at key audience segments in strategic/priority markets. Specifically, increased quantitative and qualitative impact research would be targeted towards:

- Migrating from short modules in omnibus surveys towards full USAGM surveys in high priority markets. In recent years, due to acute budget limitations, the agency was forced to replace a number of its annual full USAGM surveys with short modules in omnibus surveys. While such omnibus modules can provide audience reach data, they are not sufficient for impact assessment or to gain a solid understanding of changing patterns of media consumption. The agency therefore needs to conduct full USAGM surveys in more of its priority markets.
- Expanding impact studies, including national surveys and qualitative studies that assist in developing loyalty, reliability and trust for United States international media content within Russia and the former Soviet Union.
- Impact studies on engaging next generation influencers on mobile, social, and digital media in regions experiencing high levels of violent extremism.
- Expanding digital analytics capabilities (acquisition of advanced tools, and contractor support to ensure analytics tracking across an expanded suite of content management systems and mobile application platforms).
- New data architecture that combines methodology to tell a more robust story across qualitative and quantitative metrics.
- Implementing industry-leading data modeling techniques to fully integrate data from fieldwork, digital analytics, and market ratings in order to provide accurate and real-time updates on the reach of our content. Data modeling will also enable the agency to better utilize a variety of open-source and proprietary data sources, as well as predict future trends in key media markets.

## Federal employee enhancement efforts

The multi-year Leadership 2020 program continues with a shift from assessment and strategy to learning and leadership support. The goal of this leadership development effort is to improve USAGM employee engagement and satisfaction, as well as the quality of leadership provided by agency managers.

All supervisors and managers will participate in OPM's 360 Leadership Assessment and establish Leadership Development Plans. A 40 hour annual learning requirement for supervisors has also been established. The current effort is to provide a robust catalog of relevant formal and informal learning opportunities for managers. These will include both classroom and on-line learning as well as discussion groups and self-directed learning. Additionally, USAGM is working to formalize coaching and mentoring for managers. This will include opportunities for peer coaching and peer support groups. These are key resources necessary to effect behavior and culture changes that will result in more effective leadership.

As a result of efforts to improve workforce satisfaction and engagement, USAGM established a dedicated internal communications staff that works with associates from around the agency to assist in the effort. To maximize communication with and among the workforce, and cognizant of the widespread use of social media, the group recently launched an interactive, internal online platform. This allows staff to stay connected by sharing events and initiatives with agency colleagues; and it boosts engagement and connection within the USAGM community. The internal communications team continues to promote and educate the workforce on the use of this tool to increase participation. Given the evolving trends in social media and communications, this team is evaluating new tools and methods to effectively keep the workforce informed and facilitate discussions around key issues. The goal of the internal communications team effort is to provide transparent communication of agency strategies and priorities and facilitate feedback and collaboration which are necessary to improve productivity, engagement, and workplace satisfaction.

## International Broadcasting Bureau

# Office of Internet Freedom (OIF)

### Funding *(\$ in Thousands)*

FY 2018 ACTUALS	FY 2019 ANNUALIZED CR	FY 2020 REQUEST
\$ 13,800	\$ 13,800	\$ 9,500

## Office of Internet Freedom Overview

Since 2012, USAGM has supported activities to circumvent internet censorship by foreign governments in order to distribute news content and better provide a forum for free expression and the practice of journalism in closed countries. In 2016, USAGM established the OIF to conduct governance and oversight of USAGM-funded Internet Freedom (“IF”) activities, on behalf of the CEO and Board. In FY 2019, the USAGM will fulfill its internet freedom mandate by supporting technology initiatives that increases unrestricted access to the free flow of information online for people in who would otherwise be cut off or silenced by online censorship, monitoring, and surveillance.

## Notable FY 2019 Program Changes

Prioritize anti-censorship funds within FY 2020 budget levels to:

- Reach a wider mass-market of users in repressive information markets;
- Encourage and promote ongoing use and adoption of anti-censorship tools;
- Fund tools that securely enable access to USAGM content, that allow for the practice of journalism in closed or repressive societies, and that ensure open access to information for citizens in censored environments;
- Assist broadcasters in the creation of instructional materials and training on bypassing internet censorship and digital safety; and
- Support the grant-based Internet Freedom program at Radio Free Asia, Open Technology Fund (OTF), to:
  - Incubate advanced forms of circumvention fostering their direct and third party adoption, with an emphasis on maintaining the

“United States Government’s technological advantage over such censorship techniques”;

- Support encryption technologies that strengthen the resiliency of key circumvention technologies and directly protect journalists and sources from reprisals for creating and disseminating USAGM content, as well as the audiences consuming it; and
- Ensure a resilient and open internet in closed societies by identifying and addressing emerging threats to internet freedom such as exposing platform-based censorship, mitigating the use of social media sock-puppets, and hardening key technologies to protect people from digital attacks.

## Recent Accomplishments

### Continue to Refine Strategic Initiatives for the Office of Internet Freedom (OIF)

Refining processes for strategic initiatives to conduct governance and oversight of the USAGM Internet Freedom Program, including the compliance and evaluation of all USAGM-funded internet freedom projects, and to provide appropriate anti-censorship technologies and services, including education and training, to citizens and journalists across USAGM’s broadcasting regions to allow the agency’s journalists to safely create, access and share digital news and other information without fear of repressive censorship or surveillance.

### Increased Capacity and Reach

In coordination with USAGM language services, the Office of Internet Freedom has extended the deployment of USAGM-funded anti-censorship technologies in their broadcasting regions to enable citizens and journalists to safely access and share USAGM news information and other online content.

### Developed IF Training and Education Initiatives

Created anti-censorship training materials in-house and conducted several educational and training exercises for USAGM’s broadcasting and network

services and affiliates on the existence and use of anti-censorship technologies to safely access and share online information, as well as on the security of digital communications.

### Developed IF Tool Promotion Initiatives

In coordination with relevant USAGM anti-censorship vendors, OIF created promotional materials in multiple languages for raising awareness and promoting USAGM-funded circumvention tools across USAGM broadcasting regions.

### Supported Anti-Censorship Analytics Tool

Supported the continued development of a reporting console (Dashboard) to aggregate online data consumption and other analytics from multiple USAGM-funded censorship circumvention technologies into a unified view for enhanced monitoring and tracking of the use of the technologies.

## FY 2019 and FY 2020 Initiatives

### Oversight

OIF continues to perform oversight to ensure OTF compliance with relevant rules and regulations in the execution of congressionally mandated use of Internet Freedom funds for technology projects as well as perform implementation, support, awareness, and training of USAGM entities. The Director of the OIF will participate in the OTF proposal review process as a member of the OTF Advisory Council and have full access to the proposal vetting lifecycle. OTF is demonstrably successful and an industry leader in identifying, soliciting, vetting, and fostering projects from Proof of Concept to a Minimal Viable Product (MVP) and beyond. OTF has the expertise necessary for such initiatives including technical development, field research, and rapid response intervention and supporting at-risk communities.

### Deploy Cost Effective Internet Access Technologies

OIF will deploy cost effective Internet access technologies to expand the capacity and reach of its online circumvention programs across desktop computers and mobile devices to allow citizens and journalists across USAGM broadcasting regions to safely

access and share online news and other information without fear of repression. In addition to technologies mentioned above, internet freedom technologies ready for deployment now are Tor .onion services, the Globaleaks secure tip platform, Signal receiving devices, WhatsApp dissemination platform, and SecureDrop and/or other secure technologies. OIF will be responsible for enabling USAGM entities to utilize these services in a secure and user-friendly manner.

## Production

OIF will provide the ongoing maintenance of entity-implemented services as long as these services meet entity needs and OIF technical standards.

## Internet Freedom Tool Publication Initiatives

OIF continues to explore, develop, and implement new or enhanced initiatives designed to publicize the availability of Internet freedom technologies and services, both internally and in key audiences, in order to increase and extend the adoption of anti-censorship technologies through social media, messaging apps, TV, radio, and other promotions.

## Conduct Education and Training

OIF will continue to educate and train USAGM's broadcasting network services, affiliates, and target audiences in multiple languages on the existence and use of anti-censorship technologies to safely access and share online information, as well as on the security of digital communications. Specifically training USAGM entities, their journalists and their networks on digital safety practices and techniques as well as tool usage. Trainings of USAGM entities will utilize known competent professional trainers with expertise in these tools and techniques, as well as and cultural/regional awareness and sensitivity as appropriate. To ensure knowledge is retained and internal capacity increased, a Digital Security Fellowship program will be initiated for USAGM in-country journalists most at risk.

## Research and Studies

OIF will conduct anti-censorship research and studies, as needed, in support of USAGM's Internet Freedom activities.



## Funding Collaboration

OIF regularly participates in external review panels of related technology proposals including those at the State Department's Internet Freedom Program.

## Open Technology Fund (OTF) Overview

The OTF is the USAGM-supported grant-based global internet freedom program fighting online censorship by providing internet freedom tools, techniques and technology for USAGM networks to source, create, and disseminate accurate news and information to audiences around the world. OTF supports the development of technology, software, research, and capacity-building initiatives that protect and help journalists, human rights defenders, political dissidents, and other sources and consumers among the world's most vulnerable and oppressed living in unfree societies, often under authoritarian rule. Nearly 2 billion people regularly use OTF-supported technology to circumvent restricted internet connections, strengthen their online security, and enhance their digital privacy.

Each OTF project is subjected to a rigorous multi-disciplinary review process.<sup>6</sup> OTF supports a diverse range of projects in various life stages including bringing proof-of-concept technology to user-friendly implementation, incubating fresh approaches and new ways of thinking and making sure that evolving censorship technology and techniques are analyzed in real-time to prepare counter and future measures. The OTF team reviewed and responded to more than 650 requests for funding totaling more than \$85 million in 2016 and expended 85 percent of program budget on direct and indirect support for well over 100 projects. In 2017, these figures continue to grow significantly through OTF's projects, fellowship and lab services. OTF's open approach to supporting internet freedom and coordination with federal internet freedom programs keeps costs to taxpayers low and ingenuity high in the global fight against censorship. OTF projects make notable technological advances that ensure a resilient open internet, the hardening of core infrastructure and key technologies, and that the work is localized and secured to protect users and promote adoption in closed societies around the world.

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<sup>6</sup> All OTF projects and fellowships are competitively selected based on rigorous multi-disciplinary review received through year-long open calls for submissions.

OTF leverages its public funds by working with private funders and enables effective and efficient use of its funds by working with other U.S. Government funders supporting Internet privacy and security such as the National Science Foundation, Department of Homeland Security's Science and Technology Division, Naval Research Lab, National Institute of Standards and Technology at the Department of Commerce as well as relevant counterparts at the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) and in the Department of Defense.

## Recent Accomplishments<sup>7</sup>

### Fighting the Censors & Expanding the Internet Freedom Community

OTF supported numerous anti-censorship technologies including, but not limited to, CGIProxy; "the original anti-censorship software," allowing anyone anywhere to view and share web content and NewNode which is the first decentralized peer-to-peer content delivery protocol, enabling data distribution free from censorship, spying, and attack.

As part of OTF's efforts to identify and research evolving forms of censorship online, Wechatoscope aims to develop a systematic, scalable, and robust system to collect, analyze, and visualize a representative set of censored messages of Wechat's public accounts in China.

### Journalist, Civil Society, and Governmental Outreach

OTF supported Rapid Response engagements across the globe assisting at-risk individuals (journalists, human rights activists, and NGO workers) in response to digital attacks and other forms of online censorship including in places such as Gambia, DRC, Tibet, Iran, Thailand, Bahrain, Sudan, Ethiopia, Pakistan, Vietnam, and Azerbaijan. Working in coordination with partner programs OTF works to thwart censorship and digital threats as they arise.

OTF-supported tools are widely considered to be among the most safe, secure, and effective tools available and are recommended for use by journalists and activists in high-risk environments by the Committee to Protect Journalists, Reporters Without Borders, Freedom House, Electronic Frontier Foundation, and the UN, among others. Multiple OTF funded tools including FreeWeChat, TurkeyBlocks,

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<sup>7</sup> Please refer to OTF's 2017 Annual Report for more detail: <https://www.opentech.fund/news/fy-2017-annual-report/>

HikingGFW, OONI-Probe, and others help journalists identify and verify censorship activities so that they can then report on those activities for the public.

### Funding Collaboration

OTF regularly participated in numerous external review panels of related technology proposals including those at the State Department's Internet Freedom Program, National Science Foundation's Secure and Trustworthy Cyberspace Program, and many others, maximizing coordination with other funders and to integrate internet freedom work where appropriate.

## FY 2019 and FY 2020 Initiatives<sup>8</sup>

### Boosting Research and Implementations of Emerging Circumvention Techniques

Supporting projects creating new forms of circumvention in response to ever more sophisticated censorship tactics occurring in real-time against sources, journalists, netizens, and content consumers.

### Advancing the Security and Usage of Privacy-Enhancing Technologies

Privacy-enhancing technologies serve a critical role both as a circumvention tool and to protect the identity of the most vulnerable communities such as journalists and activists when using the internet. These projects will focus on mitigating known vulnerabilities, increasing the accessibility of anonymity tools and improving third party integrations.

### Enhancing Censorship Detection, Analysis and Visualization

Supporting projects developing detection tools and analyzing censorship events including website blocking, app specific blocking, shutdowns, the underlying techniques being employed and exposing censorship on country specific content platforms that prevent people from creating, accessing and sharing information online.

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<sup>8</sup> All OTF projects and fellowships are competitively selected based on rigorous multi-disciplinary review received through year-long open calls for submissions.

## Expanding the Robustness of Core Infrastructure

OTF supports digital security and circumvention projects by providing core infrastructure or the building blocks of everyday Internet Freedom technology used by people throughout the world to increase their access, privacy, and security online, such as sustaining or improving PGP, SSL, SSH, Tor, OTR, pluggable transports and code libraries. These are the technologies that are core to secure internet freedom tools used to protect journalists and their sources in closed communication environments.

## Rapidly Responding to Urgent Internet Censorship Emergencies

Provide as-needed support and services for at risk factors such as independent media and human rights defenders facing threats such as website defacements, DoS attacks, malware found on websites, internet blocking, and hacked email accounts. This support provides OTF an on-the-ground view of how Internet Freedom technology is doing in the field.

## Strengthening and Broadening the Internet Freedom Talent Pipeline

These efforts provide support and services that maintain and grow the Internet Freedom community's technological advantage. Efforts will continue to make it easier for new and better talent to augment the existing core community's capabilities. The goal is to improve knowledge share, collaboration, diversity, and ultimately resiliency and effectiveness within the next generation of Internet Freedom leaders.

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# Technology, Services and Innovation (TSI)

## Funding (\$ in Thousands)

FY 2018 ACTUALS	FY 2019 ANNUALIZED CR	FY 2020 REQUEST
\$ 177,075	\$ 181,843	\$ 151,978

## Overview

The Technology, Services and Innovation (TSI) office oversees and manages a broad array of technical and infrastructure functions, primarily delivering program content for all USAGM networks and providing information technology support to much of the agency, including VOA. The TSI Director is also the USAGM Chief Information Officer (CIO) and runs the agency's CIO Council. In FY 2020, TSI will continue its support of essential USAGM technical operations through carefully focused initiatives, prudent but aggressive reductions, and maintenance of ongoing efforts in key areas. TSI will continue the USAGM's realignment of its critical delivery network, ensuring that programs are available to target audiences on their rapidly evolving preferred platforms in the most cost-effective manner.

TSI continues to move the USAGM away from traditional broadcasting technologies, such as cross-border radio transmissions—shortwave (SW) and medium wave (MW)—to other delivery systems that are rapidly growing in effectiveness and are less expensive to operate (e.g., FM radio, DTH [direct-to-home] satellite, internet streaming, mobile, and social media). In FY 2019, TSI will also deploy video-on-demand with programming from all five USAGM networks. These platforms help USAGM deliver programming to affiliate and partner stations as well.

In FY 2019, TSI will continue to support the FM radio network in the critical target countries of Iraq and Syria, but will terminate distribution of and support for terrestrial radio in most of the Arabic-speaking Middle East and North Africa, allowing MBN's Radio Sawa to shift more of its resources to enhanced digital platforms.

In FY 2019, TSI is supporting VOA365, USAGM's new 24/7 Persian-language global television and digital network, modeled on the successful RFE/RL and VOA co-produced Current Time network. TSI provides DTH (direct-to-home) satellite delivery to key markets and—through its Office of Business Development—will identify affiliates in key markets that will carry this programming.

TSI has supported VOA television efforts more broadly by enhancing the infrastructure required to produce and archive programs, and in FY 2018 High Definition (HD) audio and video capabilities were expanded to the greatest extent possible in order to ensure that USAGM programs remain competitive in target markets.

Following up on very successful rollouts of major business process improvements — including an expansive e-Training portal and tracking system, a robust electronic performance management system, and an electronic time and attendance system — TSI will continue to pursue modernization and business improvements through process streamlining and technical upgrades.

USAGM is further bolstering its IT Risk Management and IT operations security efforts. These are already robust relative to the size of the agency and have successfully kept at bay continuous attacks by some of the most sophisticated, state-sponsored cyberwarfare threats in the world.

Efforts to electronically jam or otherwise block USAGM programs will continue to be monitored and effectively combatted.

In recent years, about two-thirds of the agency's weekly audience consume USAGM's content via an extensive network of more than 3,000 affiliate partners. TSI's Office of Business Development will continue to grow this extremely valuable syndication network to provide more opportunities for strategic placement of USAGM programming. TSI's Training Division will continue to support USAGM affiliates that distribute USAGM content around the world, as training is a valuable tool to help develop and retain affiliate stations. The Training Division will also continue to seek partnerships and funding with other USG entities, such as USAID and the CDC, to deliver journalism training more broadly on a range of important issues, such as battling official corruption and promoting HIV/AIDS education.

## FY 2019 and FY 2020 Initiatives

TSI will continue its support of essential agency operations in FY 2020 through network realignment; continued rollout of enhanced program production, archiving, and distribution infrastructure; continued support of HD video production and delivery; upgrading of business processes; modernization in critical technical areas and aggressive expansion of its extremely successful cybersecurity posture.

### Continue Leveraging Affiliates and Partners to Further USAGM Mission

TSI's Business Development team is focusing on several initiatives, including:

- **BUILD ON RECORD AUDIENCES VIA AFFILIATE ENGAGEMENT**

Maintaining momentum to build on record audience levels will continue to be key to TSI's strategy moving forward. Business Development continues its work to strengthen the bonds with the affiliate network to grow audience and encourage free and independent media in the areas in which USAGM operates. In FY 2018, TSI successfully signed new digital, TV, and radio affiliates in most key markets, despite operating with lower staff levels.

Strengthening relationships with affiliates pays dividends. When the VOA Africa division recently launched a new program called "Our Voices" that features African women, Business Development had already placed the program on 23 affiliates, more than had ever agreed to take a brand-new show from VOA before. Among these affiliates is eTV South, a network seen in over 40 countries across Africa.

- **CONTINUE TO GROW DISTRIBUTION CHANNELS FOR CURRENT TIME**

As of February 2019, Current Time, the joint Russian-language production of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty and VOA, is seen in 20 countries via more than 90 distributors and 50 affiliates (nine of which are within Russia itself). The project has been a great success, as well, on digital platforms and is offered on Megogo, a very popular video-on-demand app in the region, and other global video-on-demand platforms such as FilmOn.tv. USAGM continues to penetrate Russia with the Current Time network, but also to reach Russian-speaking populations throughout the region and around the world. In FY 2019 and FY 2020, TSI will continue to expand successful Current Time distribution by focusing on further reaching diaspora populations of Russian speakers.



- **BUILD ON “WASHINGTON BUREAU”**

In Latin America and Indonesia, USAGM has proven the effectiveness of reaching prime-time audiences with hard news directly, and often live, from Washington. The Washington Bureau concept provides live and valuable content to the affiliate network, often placing our staff inside the editorial meetings of our affiliates. This offers an important and high-impact outlet for our news content. TSI successfully facilitated VOA newsroom English-language Washington Bureau reports with VIP English-language affiliates in such places as Nigeria and India. Affiliates in Latin America and Asia, particularly Indonesia, continued to take Washington Bureau coverage.

The concept is catching on with VOA affiliates in Africa, as well. ZNBC (Zambia National Broadcasting Corporation) and Open News in South Africa are now receiving VOA news using the Washington Bureau model. Open News uses an average of five VOA stories and packages every week in their news programs. With some recent liberalizing of the media in Ethiopia, Nigeria, and Zimbabwe, TSI’s African priorities will include these markets in FY 2019 and FY 2020.

Globally, TSI will particularly seek to add Washington Bureau partners interested in VOA English-language reporting.

- **EXTEND MBN’S “RAISE YOUR VOICE” CAMPAIGN**

MBN’s multi-platform “Raise Your Voice” campaign has provided an outlet to young people across the Middle East to counter the propaganda spread by ISIS and become a platform for citizens to discuss and engage on topics that underlie the appeal of extremist ideology.

TSI’s Business Development worked with Voice of America to extend the concept to Nigeria, where Boko Haram extremists continue to operate and recruit followers. VOA’s version—*Fadi Mu Ji (Speak Out!)*—is featured prominently online and on social media and is part of affiliate Channels TV’s growth across Nigeria’s northern region, where Boko Haram operates.

Other potential opportunities to work with prominent affiliates in markets facing extremist threats will be sought.

- **SUPPORT AFFILIATES IN VENEZUELA**

As the political crisis in Venezuela evolves, in FY 2019 and FY 2020 TSI will continue to seek ways to expand existing affiliate relationships and find new opportunities to distribute USAGM content targeting Venezuelan audiences.

Strengthening partnerships in other Latin American countries facing political or other destabilizing factors, such as Nicaragua and El Salvador, will also be prioritized.

- **EXPAND AFFILIATE NETWORKS IN SOUTHEAST ASIA**

As the media market in Burma and elsewhere in Southeast Asia fragments, it is increasingly important to foster free and independent media there. Partnering with affiliates offers our VOA and Radio Free Asia networks an opportunity to leverage existing goodwill and provide nascent outlets the opportunity to both learn from and gain credibility from the partnerships.

TSI will monitor this media landscape that is growing more restrictive and controlled, and where there has been particular criticism launched against USAGM for its coverage of the ongoing Rohingya crisis, for example. In FY 2017, VOA and RFA affiliates FM radio broadcasts were taken off the air in Cambodia. The Cambodian government has recently hinted that it would be open to allowing VOA and RFA broadcasts back on the air in local markets. TSI will work to reestablish and expand affiliate relationships in Cambodia.

- **EXPAND DIGITAL PROGRAM DISTRIBUTION PLATFORMS**

The agency's affiliate distribution portal, USAGM Direct ([www.usagmdirect.com](http://www.usagmdirect.com)), has been a cost-effective way to distribute content to affiliates. Affiliates create a login and password, then have access to all USAGM materials uploaded to the Direct site. The uploads occur automatically when content is produced using the agency's content management systems. Direct offers affiliate partners a range of relevant content they may download and distribute, and offers USAGM analytics to see what content is particularly popular. In FY 2019, TSI will make critical adjustments to improve the functionality of the platform.

Business Development also continues to deploy a streaming TV/Video-On-Demand capability that will allow USAGM audiences to catch up on any missed programs. The platform will allow diaspora outside of the United States and other audiences not served by an affiliate to consume USAGM

content in a Netflix-like experience via devices such as Roku, Apple TV, Amazon Fire TV, and internet-connected TVs made by Samsung, Sony, Phillips, and other major brands. According to research firm Conviva, streaming TV consumption continues to grow globally at a staggering rate with a 52 percent increase in plays and a 63 percent increase in viewing hours. Internet-connected TVs now account for as many streaming TV plays as mobile devices, with 38 percent and 39 percent share respectively, and more than twice as many hours of viewing time. In FY 2019 and FY 2020, TSI will deploy this Video-On-Demand feature on at least 10 platforms, in as many as 20 languages.

### USAGM'S Global Network Realignment

USAGM considers target audience preferences whenever media platforms are developed and utilized. At the same time, the agency acknowledges that some markets enjoy a much more diverse media landscape than others. The result is the widest global content distribution portfolio among all western media organizations.

Over the years, the use of shortwave (SW) radio has declined globally. TSI has responded by consolidating broadcasts to more cost-effective transmitting stations and reducing or even eliminating SW where it is no longer relevant. In markets where SW does still retain a sizable, valuable audience, such as Africa and parts of East Asia, TSI is committed to making SW service available in the most cost-effective way possible.

To meet this need, TSI funded the upgrade of the Kuwait Transmitting Station (KTS), which enjoys a superior strategic location and relatively low operating costs, in order to serve remaining shortwave audiences better. In FY 2020, spending on USAGM's SW and MW network will be limited to maintenance and repairs required to ensure functionality and the safety and security of personnel and property at USAGM's SW and MW sites.

In FY 2019, some extraordinary repairs are required at the USAGM transmitting station on the Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI). On October 24, 2018, Super Typhoon Yutu made landfall on the main islands of Saipan and Tinian, severely damaging USAGM's transmitting infrastructure there. Recovery efforts started immediately following the storm. The sites will continue those efforts using salvaged and spare materials and in-house resources. Broadcasts to

North Korea, China, and other target countries in East Asia have been affected. Some transmissions have been moved to other sites, including leased sites, but there is insufficient capacity to accommodate all USAGM programming to the region.

In FY 2019, TSI will complete closure of the USAGM facility in Poro, Philippines. TSI's systematic and thorough review of all transmission leases will continue in FY 2020, identifying further opportunities for savings. In the years between 2010 and 2016, total costs associated with cross border radio (SW and MW) have declined by over \$25 million (34.5 percent), and this decrease is expected to continue as USAGM responds to market needs and as the Administration and Congress authorize USAGM to shutter less effective legacy facilities.

### Content Delivery Migration

For decades, the only reliable, cost-effective means to deliver content from USAGM headquarters to transmitting stations and affiliates globally was via leased satellite bandwidth. As newer, lower-cost technologies have emerged, TSI has upgraded its Wide Area Network (WAN) to utilize more local Internet Service Providers (ISPs) and Managed Media Service Providers (MMSPs), using an outsourced, managed Multiprotocol Label Switching (MPLS) and raw internet.

At the same time, in FY 2018 TSI continued optimizing its satellite bandwidth capacity. Optimization included digital compression rate standardization for HD and Standard Definition (SD) video distribution and audio (radio) distribution via satellite. In FY 2019, USAGM will further reduce its satellite usage costs by migrating “backhaul” content distribution from satellites to more economical means, and continuing to transition from leased raw satellite bandwidth to integrated satellite channels via managed network service providers. By utilizing GSA's CS3 (Complex Commercial SATCOM Solutions) contracting vehicle, USAGM will be able to procure these services at the best price.

### Satellite Delivery to Russia, China, Iran, and Other Areas

TSI is applying the savings achieved through optimization of its global delivery network to the placement of USAGM content on key regional satellites within “bouquets” of popular programming channels (bouquets are channels packaged together to appeal to particular audiences and markets). This strategy allows

the targeting of new, in-country HD reception capability within mature satellite delivery platforms. It also allows TSI to reach key target audiences and minimize cost. TSI has created a workflow to launch channels quickly, enabling alignment of our content with other global news and current affairs programming for DTH (direct-to-home) and affiliate-network distribution.

In FY 2018, TSI implemented 24/7 distribution of Current Time on satellite Eutelsat 36B with full coverage of Russia. Service was implemented expeditiously ahead of Russia's national elections and implemented through a fully managed satellite services solution that integrated Current Time into a network bouquet with other Russian programming. This move not only reduced USAGM costs, but also limits Russia's ability to jam the signal because any jamming of Current Time would jam these other Russian channels, as well.

A similarly beneficial move was made for all MBN content, channelized via Eutelsat's owned and operated teleport service as part of a mix of other channels destined for Middle Eastern audiences in Nilesat's direct-to-home coverage area. In addition to making MBN channels available on free-to-air channel bouquets, TSI also successfully negotiated with Orbital Showtime Networks' (OSN's) to make Al Hurra HD and Al Hurra Iraq HD networks available to over one million newly addressable subscribers on OSN's DTH premium service. This move is the first step in USAGM's planned total replacement of the costly Eutelsat Hotbird satellite.

To reach China, including Tibet, TSI has identified alternative satellite services to continue providing satellite TV and radio service to China. Telstar 18, the most popular satellite in China, is at the end-of-life and was taken out of service in the first quarter of FY 2019. USAGM has developed alternatives providing enhanced coverage of China that will continue to allow TSI to leverage the widespread use of satellite receiver dishes across the country in both C- and Ku-band and provide accessible programming where our access to local cable, satellite channel bouquets, and internet is restricted. USAGM will simultaneously distribute HD and SD TV programming and capitalize on the migration of Chinese audiences to HDTV, while not stranding legacy SD viewers.

To counter the ongoing threat of intentional interference (i.e., jamming) of its broadcasts in any media, to China or elsewhere, USAGM will remain diligent in pursuing regulatory, technical, political, and public communication avenues to address the issue. USAGM has been at the forefront of the battle against satellite

jamming, working closely with other international broadcasters, the Department of State, non-governmental organizations, satellite operators, and industry groups. As part of the official U.S. delegation to the World Radio Communication Conference, USAGM successfully lobbied for a proposal calling on member states to “take the necessary steps” to end jamming. In FY 2019 and FY 2020 at the World Radio Communication Conference, USAGM will work with other major international broadcasters, broadcast unions and satellite operators in support of new initiatives to counter jamming.

As the USAGM’s network continues to diversify and the agency utilizes a broad mix of agency-owned and third-party content delivery platforms, real-time monitoring of our satellite streams becomes more challenging. To meet this challenge, in FY 2019, TSI’s Network Control Center will implement a network of remote devices at key international distribution sites to provide real-time monitoring capabilities of USAGM content delivery.

In FY 2020, TSI will work with a private firm to stand up an off-site data center and WAN hub. This third-party network will allow USAGM to ensure faster, more reliable, more economical access to USAGM content for audiences and affiliates. It will also make the agency more agile, in that USAGM will be able to provide uplink services to new potential target markets, affiliates, and others more quickly.

### Expanding FMs

Radio remains a very popular platform in many USAGM markets. USAGM global weekly radio audiences have risen by 45 million people since 2012, with a 15 percent boost from 2017 to 2018 alone, to 140 million people. While shortwave continues to be a relevant means of delivery in several African markets, in most countries rapid growth and competition in the media market have shifted radio habits heavily towards FM. The USAGM provides 24/7 FM radio programming in over 30 markets across the continent.

The FMs with the highest reach are in markets that are relatively underserved. In FY 2018, TSI installed new FM transmission systems in several important places, including Brazzaville, Congo; Mogadishu, Somalia; and Mbuji-Mayi and Matadi, DRC. In FY 2019 USAGM has already placed new FM systems in Lomé, Togo and Mombasa, Kenya. In the remainder of FY 2019 and FY 2020, TSI will seek to install FM systems in Kampala, Uganda and Vientiane, Laos, as well as other

potential sites deemed high priority, such as refugee camps. While TSI, through its Office of Business Development, also places USAGM content on FM affiliates, USAGM's FMs help to ensure that USAGM remains on the air, especially during crises when affiliates may feel pressured to remove or limit their carriage of USAGM programming.

### **Business Process and Technology Modernization Integrated Help Center**

Consolidating a variety of TSI's support services into an integrated team in FY 2018 and FY 2019, TSI has begun implementing an integrated Help Center, a user support team that will include the IT help desk, the digital asset management system, the Network Control Center, telecommunications, and building facilities teams. TSI will use multiple technologies, such as SharePoint and social media resources, to improve technology support services throughout the organization. The result will be a one-stop shop for desktop, phone, digital and facilities support.

### **Transforming Agency Business Systems**

TSI is leading the USAGM's transformation of business process systems. In FY 2018, TSI deployed a digital invoice payment system, in order to help Contract Officers better track contractors' work, project budgets, and payments. The system will also reduce the potential for fraud and abuse. Further refinements and enhancements to these and other systems will continue in FY 2019 and FY 2020.

In FY 2019, TSI will participate in the USAGM's effort to identify a new HR (human resources) management system and customize it to USAGM needs. The current system, provided through a partnership with the Department of Defense, is being discontinued in mid-2019. A new system will need to be firmly in place by then.

TSI is also assisting USAGM's Office of Security select and deploy a new case tracking solution to improve and streamline workflows and reduce duplicate data entry. Further, TSI is helping create a new IT environment that will better manage sensitive data, thanks to tighter security controls and policies.

In FY 2020, TSI will continue to roll out cloud storage and procure and deploy a new enterprise-wide incident, asset, and change management system.



## Office of CIO, Risk Management, and Capital Planning and Investment Control (CPIC)

In FY 2018, the agency director issued a delegation of authority to the CIO in the interest of continuing to ensure that the agency has the best possible cybersecurity posture and Information Resource Management (IRM). To promote IT management best practices across the agency, the CIO established a CIO Council, chaired by the CIO and attended by CIOs or equivalent representatives from the USAGM's broadcast entities.

In addition, TSI's IT Risk Management division continued development of policies and procedures to establish IT risk management evaluation processes for capital planning and investment control and agency enterprise risk management, as required by a variety of legislative and regulatory drivers, including the Clinger-Cohen Act of 1996 and OMB's Circular A-130.

In FY 2019 and FY 2020, USAGM will work to mature this body and elevate its oversight and advisory functions to ensure that agency IT policies and systems are consistently developed and implemented.

### Continued Focus on Cybersecurity

USAGM continues to bolster its IT security posture in order to protect USAGM from persistent threats from a variety of nation-state actors seeking to attack government institutions like the Voice of America, and to comply with existing IT security directives and laws. FY 2018 saw TSI's Information Security Division continue to leverage offerings from the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and key vendors to further bolster USAGM's IT security defenses. USAGM efforts are in keeping with best practices and efforts to comply with the Federal Information Security Management Act (FISMA). USAGM is one of only four agencies government-wide piloting DHS's Privileged Account Management and Usage Monitoring program.

Since FY 2018, TSI has been working to mature USAGM's Information Security Program through the development of IT security policies and a complete set of documentation templates, as well as training technical staff on how to complete and maintain security documentation. TSI also completed security assessments and will develop a comprehensive Information Security Architecture.



In FY 2020, TSI will focus its IT security resources on enterprise-level contingency and disaster recovery planning, collaborating with agency management and staff to integrate information security and privacy concerns and review into enterprise-level contingency and disaster recovery solutions. TSI is also collaborating with USAGM's new Risk Management Officer to integrate IT security and privacy concerns into the enterprise-level Risk Management Program.

### Continue Leveraging Cloud Services and Other Technologies to Boost Workforce Effectiveness and Efficiency

Facing potential problems with on-site digital storage reaching full capacity and end-of-life storage technology in FY 2018, TSI created an archive in a private cloud with recovery capability in order to aid emergency and business continuity efforts. Storage was proactively migrated from agency headquarters directly to the Cloud, eliminating significant maintenance concerns.

The transition to cloud storage is part of a larger effort to boost emergency work and disaster-recovery capabilities, as well as support the agency's telework policy. Along with other network and infrastructure upgrades, this reflects the USAGM's ongoing focus on modernizing its IT systems, a top Administration priority. The USAGM will continue migrating storage from on-site to the Cloud in FY 2019 and FY 2020, focused primarily on systems and data that are most at-risk.

# Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL)

## Funding (\$ in Thousands)

FY 2018 ACTUALS	FY 2019 ANNUALIZED CR	FY 2020 REQUEST
\$ 124,038	\$ 124,038	\$ 86,767

## Overview

Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL) is a private, nonprofit, multimedia news corporation funded by the United States Government through appropriations to USAGM that serves as a surrogate media source in 26 languages and in 22 countries, including Afghanistan, Iran, Pakistan, Russia, and Ukraine. With headquarters in Prague, 20 local offices (including Kabul, Moscow, and Kyiv), and more than 1,000 journalists throughout its coverage region, RFE/RL's proximity to its audiences facilitates the production of compelling, locally oriented programming.

Reaching a measured audience of nearly 34 million people each week, RFE/RL promotes democratic values and institutions by reporting the news in countries where a free press is banned by the government or not fully established. RFE/RL's journalists provide what many people cannot get locally: uncensored news, responsible discussion, and open debate.

RFE/RL's mission is founded on the principle that the first requirement of democracy is a well-informed citizenry. By promoting the free flow of information, RFE/RL supports the development of civil society and thus contributes to long-term development and stability in the regions it covers. The National Security Strategy urges America to stand as "a beacon of liberty and opportunity around the world." RFE/RL embodies that hope and brings it directly to audiences across its target region.

## FY 2019 and FY 2020 Initiatives

Through its comprehensive multimedia strategy, RFE/RL uses both traditional media platforms and innovative digital operations to reach and engage new

audiences via impactful reporting. Across all platforms, RFE/RL refutes aggressive state-sponsored disinformation; provides an alternative to violent extremist propaganda; and reports on issues that otherwise would not be covered by local press in its coverage area.

### An Alternative to Kremlin-Controlled Media

RFE/RL provides an alternative to Kremlin-controlled media both in Russia and in countries where Russia seeks to expand its influence.

RFE/RL's Russian Service, Radio Svoboda, is on the forefront of reporting on the socio-political environment inside of Russia, covering news that would otherwise be missing from the market and serving as a fact checker for disinformation propagated by the state-controlled media. The Service regularly features interviews with opposition figures in the Russian Federation, in-depth political analysis of current events and policies within the country, and live video reporting from across the country.

The Current Time TV and digital network provides Russian speakers across Russia, Ukraine, Central Asia, the Caucasus, the Baltics, Eastern Europe and as far away as Israel with access to factual, accurate, topical, and trustworthy information, and serves as a reality check on disinformation that is driving conflict in the region. Current Time aims to depoliticize the Russian language by serving as a bias-free news source for all Russian speakers, who are often limited to Kremlin-controlled media options even when living far beyond Russia's borders. Led by RFE/RL in cooperation with the VOA, Current Time places a premium on live news coverage that allows skeptical audiences numbed by fake news and Kremlin narratives to judge events on the ground themselves, delivering on-location reporting from the Russian presidential election and opposition protests, the Trump-Putin summit in Helsinki, the 2018 World Cup, the Skripal poisoning in England, Ukraine's Azov Sea crisis, the ongoing war in Donbas, and other major news events. Current Time covers social and political protests that state media ignore and reports extensively on corruption and the ongoing war in eastern Ukraine. Its feature programs have cast a more intimate light on life in Russia, Ukraine, and beyond, telling the untold stories of ordinary residents in unheralded places whose efforts are improving life for their neighbors and communities. The network's documentary series has opened a wider world of

experience to its audiences by screening more than 100 films on its platforms that are often barred from mainstream distribution in Russia because of political content.

In addition to its TV operation, Current Time's digital arm (Current Time Digital) engages audiences with its content via social media — including, critically, audiences inside Russia, where Current Time television is barred from terrestrial broadcast and most cable systems. In 2018, Current Time's videos received approximately 500 million views online and across social media platforms, with more than half coming from inside of Russia. Current Time has bolstered its reporting capabilities in Russia, Ukraine, and throughout its coverage region. In the year ahead, Current Time will expand its news and programming capabilities in Ukraine, the Baltics and Central Asia, continue to build live news capabilities, implement infrastructure upgrades, and present new network graphics and image campaigns aimed at building awareness of the Current Time anchors, brand, and mission as part of its strategy to broaden audiences and boost engagement across the Russian-speaking market.

The measured weekly audience of RFE/RL's Russian-language content, including RFE/RL's Russian Service and Current Time, has nearly doubled from 2016, now reaching 6.4 percent of Russian adults, or nearly 6.6 million people.

RFE/RL also leverages the strength and credibility of its reporting beyond specific target countries and into the broader region. As the Russian Federation attempts to build media silos wherein Kremlin-controlled media is the only available source of news, RFE/RL actively works to provide a powerful alternative in these markets. RFE/RL runs several initiatives that provide RFE/RL reporting free of charge to subscribing media outlets, creating a force-multiplier effect by leveraging RFE/RL content far beyond our own platforms. Expanding upon the initial success of RFE/RL's Central Asia Newswire which began in 2015, RFE/RL launched, in FY 2018, a newswire for the Balkans and a newswire for Russian-language media. Media outlets increasingly rely on RFE/RL reporting, which offers a powerful alternative to disinformation in the region and serves as a useful source of local and regional news in areas where professional reporting would otherwise not be present.

In Russia, RFE/RL also provides programming in vernacular languages to the North Caucasus, Tatarstan, and Bashkortostan via its North Caucasus Language

Service and its Tatar-Bashkir Service. The two language services provide reporting on topics that would otherwise not be covered by the Russian media, as well as engage audiences in retaining important local heritage such as study of regional languages.

In FY 2020, RFE/RL will continue to focus resources on providing timely, balanced, fact-based journalism to advance press freedom and target audiences most vulnerable to state-sponsored disinformation.

### Countering Violent Extremism (CVE)

With extremism on the rise across RFE/RL's coverage region, RFE/RL's language services provide a vital alternative to the disinformation and destructive messages propagated by extremist groups. RFE/RL content gives audiences context and up-to-date reporting on the tragic impact of extremist atrocities and provides a platform for audiences to raise issues and concerns which then often rise to the attention of local authorities.

In Southwest Asia, RFE/RL reports on the competing Taliban and ISIS insurgencies, and the way the people of Afghanistan and Pakistan live their lives despite the constant threat of violence. RFE/RL's Afghan Service, known locally as Radio Azadi, is one of the most popular and trusted media outlets in Afghanistan, providing accurate information on domestic and regional politics, extremism, corruption, warlord-ism, gender issues, human rights, and other under-reported or misreported topics. In April 2018, two RFE/RL Afghan Service journalists and one trainee of the Service were tragically killed in a targeted attack against journalists in the country, reinforcing the message that the country has a long way to go until all its citizens can live freely without fear of violence from terrorist forces. Radio Mashaal, whose reporting provides an alternative to extremist propaganda in Pakistan's tribal regions, delivers rich and insightful news and information to its audiences across both radio and digital platforms. Pakistan's Interior Ministry shut down Radio Mashaal's offices in Islamabad in January 2018, on orders from the country's spy agency, (the ISI); however, RFE/RL continues to report to a large audience in the country despite interference from both the Pakistani government and extremists.

In Central Asia, political and economic instability have led to a rise in support for extremist Islam, which has made the region a key source of ISIS recruits fighting

in Syria, Iraq, Russia, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and elsewhere. Starting at the end of FY 2017 and continuing in FY 2018, RFE/RL launched “Not in Our Name,” a comprehensive regional counter-extremism project, with the goal to empower communities to stand up to violent extremist recruiters that claim to represent them. RFE/RL journalists traveled to several regions of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan, exploring how residents can work together on the local and national levels to prevent the spread of violence and extremism via town halls, facilitated discussions, and video portraits of those who had lost loved ones. The resulting documentary video series was distributed and screened throughout the region and online. A partner project to the documentary series is an online initiative with the same title, wherein digital media teams directly engage with social media audiences in a dialogue about hot-button extremism-related topics and events.

In the Western Balkans, a region beset with political, security, and economic challenges, RFE/RL’s Balkans Service is tasked with engage all sides with its reporting and analysis of developments in Bosnia, Serbia, Montenegro, Macedonia, and Kosovo. The Balkans Service has provided comprehensive coverage of the refugee crisis, political tensions between Serbia and Kosovo, government instability in Macedonia and Montenegro, Russia’s destabilizing influence throughout the region, and the recruitment of foreign fighters to Syria and Iraq from Bosnia and Kosovo. The Service also engages young audiences in conversations regarding the harmful effects of radicalization within their societies. RFE/RL expanded this type of reporting in FY 2018 with the creation of a Balkans-oriented digital media team, as well as a campaign entitled *Not in My Name* for Bosnia and Kosovo that directly engages social media audiences in responsible dialogue about issues surrounding extremism and risks in their countries. These projects seek to explore the root causes of extremism and by extension to dissuade those vulnerable to extremist ideologies.

In FY 2020, CVE will continue to be a primary reporting focus for RFE/RL with ongoing coverage of the impact of radical Islamic extremism on people in Southwest and Central Asia, the Balkans, and across RFE/RL’s coverage area.

## Enhancing Persian-language Operations

Audiences in Iran look to RFE/RL's Persian language service Radio Farda for critical updates about their country. The latest research from Gallup shows that 9.6 million Iranians (or 15.7 percent Iran's adult population) use Farda's programming via radio, television, the web or social media weekly, an increase of almost 5.4 million people from the previous survey. Audiences place their trust in Farda's ability to impartially report the truth — in surveys, 77 percent of Iranians say they trust Farda's content. When protests broke out in Iran in December 2017 and January 2018, eyewitnesses from more than 23 cities sent Farda videos and other content from across the country, and Farda's website set a record of 2 million-page views on January 1. The week around the protests, videos were viewed 4.7 million times on Farda's main Facebook page, an increase of 243 percent compared to the previous week. Audiences also sent nearly 7,000 comments to Farda's Persian-language live blog about the protests. Farda's extremely high level of audience engagement during major events underscores both its critical role in the country and the trust that audiences have in its news coverage.

In FY 2019, in support of USAGM's revamped 24/7 Persian-language television channel rebranded as VOA365, RFE/RL will reboot its one-hour breakfast program, *Breakfast with News*, emphasizing more outside reports, a wider variety of topics (including health and technology) that appeal to younger news consumers, and higher production values to compete with other Persian-language media. Additionally, RFE/RL will seek to contribute new, unique current affairs and topical programming to the effort. RFE/RL will also expand Farda's digital operations, including building relationships with existing social media influencers and reinforcing the reporting of both VOA365 and Farda's own operations. This will include optimizing messaging app platforms, such as WhatsApp and Telegram, as the means of distributing news and other content.

In FY 2020, RFE/RL will focus on continued programming enhancements and contributions to VOA365, as well as broadening its digital audiences within Iran.



## Engaging Digital Audiences

RFE/RL continues to build on its success as a full-fledged multimedia news organization, as it evolves from the traditional radio model.

Language services across the company enhanced online and social media content and increased measured audience engagement with digital news content. RFE/RL also strengthened digital and video operations across multiple language services to bring more reporting to audiences in these markets. In FY 2018, RFE/RL launched sixteen new video programs across its operating region, which succeeded in engaging audiences and delivering them news and information in an easily accessible format. The enhancement of multimedia reporting has paid off, as in FY 2018, RFE/RL made great strides in digital engagement. From October 1, 2017 through September 30, 2018, RFE/RL websites were visited 508 million times, representing a 15 percent increase from the previous year. The number of video views across RFE/RL YouTube channels doubled in FY 2018 when compared to FY 2017, reaching more than 1.0 billion views on the platform. On Facebook, 1.4 billion video views were recorded, 67 percent more than the in the previous fiscal year. 353 million Facebook users engaged with RFE/RL content, an increase of 27 percent from FY 2017. Many language services also devoted resources toward Instagram, leading to RFE/RL garnering 160 million video views on the platform during the fiscal year. RFE/RL recorded 2.6 billion combined views across Facebook, YouTube and Instagram in FY 2018.

In particular, RFE/RL's Armenian Service's excellent multimedia news performance was highlighted during the popular uprising in that country in spring 2018, where the Service served as the nation's most reliable and objective information source. Due to critical digital progress at RFE/RL, the Armenian Service has become a multimedia powerhouse, capable of offering multiple live video streams along with radio, web and social network production. Armenian Service traffic skyrocketed across all platforms. Between April 13 and May 9, 2018, the Armenian Service received 12.5 million websites visits; 28.9 million website page views; 48.3 million YouTube video views; and 151 million Facebook video views. All Armenian television channels used its reporting, which also spread globally with RFE/RL video and reporting appearing on CNN, BBC, Aljazeera, France24, *The Washington Post*, *The New York Times* and many other outlets.

RFE/RL will launch digital-only services for Bulgaria and Romania, both countries



in which RFE/RL formerly operated and which have seen a steady degradation of democratic values in recent years despite being members of the European Union. RFE/RL's new operations in these countries will focus on providing multimedia reporting and analysis and partnering with local media to amplify existing projects that promote public accountability and debunk false news. Bulgaria and Romania are susceptible to Russian influence, have mixed affinities between Russia and the West, and have recently faced weakened democratic institutions, including declines in the freedom of their media environments.

In FY 2020, RFE/RL will continue to boost digital engagement efforts across its reporting regions, developing specialized content strategies for the most popular platforms amongst its key audiences. RFE/RL will expand digital operations, with a specific focus on broadening engagement with audiences in Iran and the Balkans, as well as creating strategic partnerships with local media to further grow RFE/RL's digital presence.

### Investigative Reporting

From intensified attacks against independent media and civil society to corruption at the highest levels of governments, RFE/RL language services focus attention on underreported issues in their target countries. That credible reporting is a beacon of freedom to audiences living under corruption and underscores fundamental individual liberties for RFE/RL's global audiences. This work has led to frequent threats and attacks against RFE/RL journalists.

RFE/RL's Ukrainian Service is a leader in uncovering corruption, through the Service's investigative TV program *Schemes*, which delivers high-impact reporting on corruption among Ukraine's political elites that has informed official investigations, led to high-level dismissals, and contributed to greater awareness about public accountability in Ukraine. In April 2018, the Kyiv-based Center for Content Analysis included RFE/RL's Ukrainian Service in its list of the top five most effective media brands in Ukraine.

In Central Asia, the Kyrgyz Service — in particular 28-year-old reporter Ulanbek Egizbaev, who died tragically in July 2018 in an accidental drowning — has been instrumental in uncovering corruption. Among the Kyrgyz Service's investigative pieces, Egizbaev's 2018 reporting exposed illegal land sales involving public officials within exclusive neighbors of Kyrgyzstan's capital, exposed the illegal sale

of burial plots at Bishkek's cemeteries where graves are supposed to be free, and documented a \$100 million corruption scandal that caused a newly modernized thermal power plant in Bishkek to break down during the coldest spell of the winter.

In the Caucasus, RFE/RL's Azerbaijani Service conducted well-executed and professional reporting in its coverage of elections in Azerbaijan in April 2018, including capturing video exposing evidence of voter fraud. The Azerbaijani Service's website remains under a formal government ban imposed in May 2017. In a scathing April 6 statement that referred to the ban and other attacks on the country's independent media, the Committee to Protect Journalists said Azerbaijan's authorities had cleansed the political landscape of "virtually all formal avenues of expressing dissent." Despite the pressure from the Azerbaijani government, the Service continues to function as an essential source for news, deploying local reporting networks and a vigorous digital strategy to inform and connect with an online and satellite audience that numbers in the millions.

In October 2018, RFE/RL's Georgian Service launched a new, biweekly, 15-minute investigative TV program that looks deeply into topics affecting Georgia. For example, the first episode of the program, *Liberty Monitor*, investigated allegations of nepotism and how high-ranking officials promote their family members in the civil service, sometimes even creating special positions for them.

In FY 2020, throughout its target region, RFE/RL will continue to pursue investigative anti-corruption journalism that sheds light on the struggles of civil society and issues pertinent to women and youth audiences and focuses on stories that would otherwise not be covered by local media outlets.

### Optimizing Operations Towards Greater Efficiency and Reach

In the past year, RFE/RL has reorganized its Central Newsroom to create better workflow and synergies within the company and allow for enhanced coordination in its reporting across the 22 countries in its coverage region.

RFE/RL also optimized its Central Asia reporting operations with its upgraded facilities and reporting hub in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan. *Current Time Asia*, Current Time's half-hour news show dedicated to Central Asia premiered live from

RFE/RL's Bishkek bureau in January 2018. The move makes the program one of the very few prime-time news programs to air live in the region. Increased production from Bishkek allows RFE/RL programs to reach audiences in a more direct and timely way.

Beginning in FY 2018 and continuing into FY 2019, RFE/RL will work to reorganize Radio Farda operations toward increasing content production across all platforms as well as to support the new joint 24/7 TV and digital network targeting Iranians globally.

In FY 2020 RFE/RL will eliminate its Georgian Service, Tatar-Bashkir Service, and North Caucasus Language Service. RFE/RL will also reduce its Balkans Service by discontinuing operations in Montenegrin and Macedonian.

# Radio Free Asia (RFA)

## Funding (\$ in Thousands)

FY 2018 ACTUALS	FY 2019 ANNUALIZED CR	FY 2020 REQUEST
\$ 44,013	\$ 44,013	\$ 33,531

## Overview

RFA is a private, nonprofit, multimedia corporation funded by the United States Government through appropriations to USAGM that serves as surrogate media, substituting for domestic media in Asian countries that prevent or restrict freedom of the press. RFA is funded through, and operates under, a grant agreement with USAGM. RFA broadcasts in Burmese, Cantonese, Khmer, Korean, Lao, Mandarin, Tibetan, Uyghur, and Vietnamese on shortwave (SW), medium wave (AM), satellite, television, online through websites, and through apps and social media platforms. RFA delivers accurate and timely local news, information, analysis and commentary, providing a public forum for the audiences it serves.

RFA is an authoritative source of East and Southeast Asian news. Each month, RFA averages over 500 pickups of its exclusive news reports in major local, regional and global media outlets. This includes RFA generated content that is re-published on well-trafficked global and regional blogs and diaspora media outlets. These media pickups, particularly by large syndicates and wire services, amplify RFA's reach into its target countries and to relevant diaspora communities.

As part of USAGM's Internet Freedom effort, RFA manages the Open Technology Fund (OTF), which supports: research to better understand the types of censorship occurring around the globe and the effectiveness of the tools to combat that censorship; the expansion of real-time applied knowledge for the Internet freedom community improvements to effectiveness and scalability of anti-censorship efforts and a user-focused approach to meeting the needs of at-risk journalists, human rights, democracy and free speech defenders globally. The OTF supports the development of software to secure communications in countries where governments engage in internet censorship, monitoring and surveillance, online repression, and offline reprisals for online speech. These

tools and techniques provide individuals with the capabilities to protect their communications from repressive regimes enabling proper sourcing and fact-checking for USAGM content creation, as well as offer more secure access to censored content and to combat the manipulation of information technologies against individual freedoms.

## **FY 2020 Program Changes**

In FY 2020, RFA will close Mandarin Service and Cambodian Service TV and radio broadcasts, continuing both services' online and social media presence. In addition, RFA will reduce other staffing and expenses.

## **FY 2019 and FY 2020 Initiatives**

In addition to transformational digital content and programming initiatives, RFA has expanded training programs and opportunities to further improve its programs and develop multimedia skills among journalists who can then reach out to their audiences more effectively on social media, agilely adapting to emerging digital platforms that dominate the media user landscape. RFA is also conducting training for women journalists who are underrepresented in most of the countries RFA broadcasts to and whose work resonates with growing female audiences. RFA is participating in BBC's "The 50/50 Project" which aims at gender equality in contributors.

### **RFA Korean**

In the face of rapidly shifting dynamics on the Korean Peninsula, RFA Korean will expand coverage on North Korea domestic news on all platforms. RFA Korean will continue producing high-quality video reality programs to enhance the information flow to the North and counter pervasive false narratives and to expand fact-based understanding of North Korean experiences outside the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK). RFA's line-up of modern relatable reality TV programs continues to focus on the lives of North Korean defectors in South Korea and provide authentic insight into life outside the DPRK. In FY 2020, RFA Korean will further integrate short form news videos, infographics, photos, and illustrations with news content and feature stories to create content specifically tailored for popular social media platforms. RFA Korean will continue

to leverage its position as a major source of trusted news and information to audiences in DPRK to keep citizens informed about issues of interest and have relevance to their daily lives. Programming will both cover topics the audience wants to learn about as well as counter falsehoods presented by Pyongyang's propaganda machine.

RFA Korean produced another set of video/YouTube programming conveying the reality of North Korean defectors' lives outside the DPRK to potential NK viewers, and provided a credible authentic alternative to propaganda against South Korea pushed by the North Korean state-controlled media monopoly. Three different series will be launched in FY 2019: Health Plan B, My Journey, and Education in the South, each with a uniquely resonant appeal to North Korean viewers.

### RFA Uyghur

As the only Uyghur language news outlet for the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (XUAR), RFA Uyghur will continue to broaden its current programming from radio to television/web videos to incorporate stories that inspire and induce discussion among news makers, experts, and the general population on timely topics of interest to our audience. Despite continued threats and detention of RFA Uyghur reporters' families, the service will continue to serve as the most credible news source on the Chinese government's crackdown on Uyghurs in XUAR. The service will make significant efforts to produce more video, audio, and infographic content for social media platforms which has proven to be very popular among the Uyghur exile community and shared by that community back to XUAR through a variety of means. The service will also produce a new weekly TV/web talk show dedicated to discussing cultural and religious issues and other current affairs in the face of continued Chinese government suppression of Uyghurs' cultural, religious, and ethnic identity. The service will continue its investigative feature series that showcases Uyghurs' struggles to protect their identity, culture, and very lives in today's XUAR.

### RFA Tibetan

The key focus of our Tibetan audience in FY 2020 will be the next Sykong (presidential) and parliamentary election to be conducted by the Tibetan exile government or the Central Tibetan Administration ("CTA"). RFA Tibetan service

will expand popular TV programming and social media platforms to deliver timely, balanced and objective coverage on the election from Dharamsala, other parts of India, and Tibetan exile communities around the world. At the same time, on all platforms, RFA Tibetan Service will continue to produce investigative reports inside Tibet on efforts to preserve Tibetan identity, culture, language, natural environment, and history to combat their erosion by the ruling Chinese government, and break day-to-day local stories on the suppression of their fundamental human rights. RFA will also continue expanded coverage of His Holiness the Dalai Lama for Tibetans living under CCP rule who take substantial risks even to keep a photograph of His Holiness.

## RFA Burmese

The 2020 national elections will be a major test of Burma's questionable transition to democracy. To date the National League for Democracy government led by Aung San Suu Kyi has failed to make substantial reforms and or challenge the military that still wields most of the power in the country. Press freedom is in a perilous state as more incidents of military and state-run censorship and retaliation become public. RFA Burmese has an important role to play in reporting on the various factions that will be vying for control over the country going forward. Despite recent incidents of press intimidation, as in the 2015 elections, RFA Burmese will station reporters around the country to cover the issues unique to each region and how the various parties plan to respond to them - before during and after the elections.

## Recent Accomplishments

### RFA Mandarin

Even as the CCP is tightening the use of Virtual Private Networks (VPNs) and other internet circumvention methods in the country, RFA Mandarin's social media profile continues to grow substantially throughout 2018, as reflected in digital engagement, interaction, and video views, and shows great potential for further expansion with increased investment of energy and resources. For instance, followers of RFA Mandarin Service's Facebook page shows a strong growth rate of 26 percent in FY 2017-FY 2018.

With a solid base of more than 277K followers, Mandarin Service's Twitter account has taken off since October 2017, and has drawn a total of 423K retweets and likes. For RFA's Mandarin Service Twitter is more than a content distribution platform - Mandarin team members strategically use it to conduct online surveys and invite followers to submit tips, questions, comments, and self-made videos to include in news reports and TV programs.

Since October 2017, RFA Mandarin's YouTube channel has garnered more than 6.4 million views, and its 73k subscribers spent a total of 40-million minutes watching videos. The channel's branding revamp helped it steadily add more than 22.5K subscribers during 2018 alone. RFA Mandarin service's video team created a popular series entitled *China, explained* as an important objective voice to explain internal developments in China's politics, society, and economy. Video reports covered China's constitutional amendment erasing term limits; #metoo in China; the anniversaries of June 4th, "709" crackdown on human rights lawyers, and Liu Xiaobo's death; religious persecution nationwide; China's development into a surveillance state; and China's overseas influence ("sharp power") campaign.

## RFA Lao

RFA Lao Service has been highlighting China's growing influence in Laos as the Asian giant pours massive investments into its impoverished neighbor's economy and provides billions of dollars of soft loans for infrastructure development under Beijing's One Belt One Road Initiative. Its investigation into the Chinese railroad project linking the two countries is featured in a joint web project with VOA entitled "The Dragon's Reach." The Lao service has also been highlighting corruption fueled by the lack of transparency within the authoritarian government as well as other controversial issues, including land grabs, human rights abuses, and environmental degradation stemming from, among other activities, dam construction.

RFA's social media presence in Laos includes Facebook and it uses this medium to step up interaction with audience and reach new sources. RFA Lao has 150,000 Facebook followers and it receives roughly 65 percent of story tips and leads from Facebook, especially Facebook Messenger groups.



## RFA Uyghur

RFA Uyghur Service has been breaking the shocking stories of Uyghurs being detained in re-education camps in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (XUAR) since mid-2017. It is now estimated that nearly one million Uyghurs are in the camps all over XUAR. Uyghur service's reports are continuously cited by major media, the US Department of State and the academia around the world which made the Uyghur situation one of the most concerning human rights issues today. RFA Uyghur service serves as the leading news source for Uyghur speaking community as well as for the Western media and human rights observers.

In 2018, Uyghur service produced a comprehensive multimedia web report on the suppression of Uyghurs since Communist Party Secretary Chen Quanguo came to power in August 2016. Chen rolled out one harsh policy after another targeting the Muslim Uyghurs and using advanced technology to make Xinjiang a police state. Starting in late 2017, six of Uyghur service reporters reported to RFA about missing families members in Xinjiang. Some of these reporters' families have been harassed or threatened by local police to ask their families to quit RFA work over the years. This issue has been addressed by the US Department of State and various members/committees on Capitol Hill. Despite the pressure, Uyghur service is still on the front line delivering news from inside Xinjiang and looks to expand Uyghur-language content in FY 2019.

## RFA Korean

RFA Korean Service also expanded the use of social media to amplify its reach and leverage the phenomenon of human proxies bringing information from the outside into the Hermit Kingdom. From January to July 2018, RFA Korean Facebook fans had a solid 41 percent growth compared to the same period in 2017. YouTube subscribers increased 89 percent in 2018.

As the leading source of North Korean news inside and outside the country, RFA Korean's exclusive and breaking reports are closely followed by other media, as well as by the South Korean government, the North Korean regime and North Korean defectors living in South Korea. A few of our most resonant reports in 2018 included: the inter-Korean summit in April 2018; the US- NK summit in Singapore in 2018; exclusive interviews with prominent US policy makers such as National

Security Advisor John Bolton; and an investigative series that, among other topics, examined the lives of North Korean refugees in Canada and the NK abductee issue in Japan.

### RFA Cantonese

RFA Cantonese Service's "Go Digital" strategy had a fruitful year in FY 2018 and FY 2019, as it successfully expands the reach of RFA storytelling from short wave radio broadcasts to disseminate over the dynamic social media platforms relied upon by Cantonese audiences. RFA Cantonese aggressively expanded its YouTube platform, populating it with engaging short-form videos and talk shows. From July 2017 to July 2018, RFA Cantonese accumulated total viewing/listening time on YouTube of 100.4 million minutes, garnering 10 million views — 3,722,000 views in two months alone (May and June 2018). This is an increase of 338 percent compared to the same period in 2017. Cantonese readers also engaged with content at rates 6 to 9 times higher than the prior year in terms of comments, shares, and likes. Audience retention grew from 31 percent to 41 percent.

### RFA Tibetan

RFA Tibetan Service has 440K followers on their official Facebook page and the service is constantly engaging with the Tibetan audience on social media platforms and various spin-off pages. From 2017 to 2018, the Socialbaker data shows strong growth of followers in India and the engagement rate increased 12.7 percent. The subscriptions doubled on Tibetan YouTube channel in 2017 to 2018 (currently 84K) which proved the service's efforts and strategy to enhance video production and TV programming to be very effective in garnering new audiences.

Tibetan Service's exclusive interviews and stories in 2018 were of great interest to Tibetan listeners and audience, including notably the news of fire in Jokhang Temple, the most sacred temple in all of Tibet. Consistent with other breaking news events, RFA Tibetan was the first news media outlet to break this story even while China was censoring related information to the outside world. Another noteworthy story is about a famous Tibetan filmmaker Dhondup Wangchen who arrived in US in December 2017 after a risky escape from Tibet. He was given political asylum in the United States. He gave the first interview to RFA Tibetan service giving details of his work and his experience in Chinese prison.

## RFA Vietnamese

RFA Vietnamese Service dropped its SW radio due to aggressive jamming, which rendered SW an ineffective distribution platform. Instead RFA Vietnamese is expanding its video and social media content and exploring new and more secure avenues for online distribution such as Minds. Aside from increased harassment and imprisonment of in-country journalists and bloggers, the government recently enacted a new cyber law that will require all technology companies to store their sensitive data inside the country by 2019. If companies like Facebook and Google comply, Vietnamese citizens will no longer have secure access to independent news and information. RFA's in-country contributors were harassed, intimidated and jailed into silence during 2018. RFA Vietnamese Facebook views grew 113 percent to reach a total of 73 million and its overall Facebook engagement rose by 25 percent.

## RFA Burmese

RFA Burmese Facebook doubled the number of fans to 3.8 million over the past year and maintains high rates of engagement averaging 25 percent. The RFA Burmese in-depth weekly TV news program, “RFA Here & Now”, was forced off DVB (Democratic Voice of Burma) by the government because of its use of the word “Rohingya”. So RFA Burmese is now focusing more on its radio and Facebook content. It has produced unique and ground-breaking programs on “Hate Speech and Facebook”, “Drug Use and Trafficking in Northern Shan State”, “Rakhine Migrants Replacing Rohingyas in Sittwe”, and continues to expose the injustice against the former child soldier who has been imprisoned for telling his story to RFA. After the arrest of two Reuters journalists, in-country media are heavily self-censoring the news they cover. So RFA focuses on sensitive subjects they gloss over, including the Rohingya crisis which grows more desperate by the day.

## RFA Khmer

RFA Khmer Service had to completely revamp its operations after the government shut down all its FM affiliates, forced the closure of the Phnom Penh office, arrested two former RFA journalists and continues to harass family members of former RFA Cambodian staff. However the Service still produces two hours of radio and 30 minute webcast daily using contributions from citizen journalists, stringers in BKK, and reporting from DC-based staff. The RFA Khmer Facebook

fan base — now at 5.7 million — accounts for about half of Cambodians using Facebook and leads all major news outlets in Facebook live video by a wide margin. A great deal of reporting has been devoted to explaining the hallmarks of a free and fair election, and why the 2018 elections are considered illegitimate by most of the international community.

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# Middle East Broadcasting Networks, Inc. (MBN)

## Funding *(\$ in Thousands)*

FY 2018 ACTUALS	FY 2019 ANNUALIZED CR	FY 2020 REQUEST
\$ 110,312	\$ 110,312	\$ 96,229

## Overview

Middle East Broadcasting Networks, Inc. (MBN) is a private, nonprofit, multimedia corporation funded by the United States Government through appropriations to USAGM that provides the United States with a direct line of communication with Arabic-speaking people of the Middle East and North Africa. MBN is funded through, and operates under, a grant agreement with USAGM. MBN's mission is to: expand the spectrum of ideas, opinions and discourse available in the media across the Middle East and North Africa; provide objective, accurate and relevant news and information; and to present America's people, policies, and perspectives comprehensively. Through its broadcasts and multimedia platforms, MBN seeks to inform, engage and connect with the region's peoples in support of universal freedoms.

MBN produces programming at its headquarters in Northern Virginia and production outlets in Washington, D.C., Iraq, UAE, Lebanon, Egypt, Israel, Morocco, and Tunisia. Satellite and terrestrial television broadcasts and medium wave (AM) and FM radio broadcasts are transmitted via USAGM's global transmission network. MBN engages with audiences across a range of social media properties.

## MBN Programming

### Alhurra

Alhurra's Pan-Arab news and information channel was launched in February 2004 to provide a reliable source of objective television news and information

across the Middle East. Alhurra-Iraq was launched in April 2004 to provide targeted local news and programming to the people of Iraq. Alhurra is unique within the Middle East satellite television market in its ability to provide audiences the American perspective, giving context to the Administration's policies as well as insight from diverse voices throughout the broad U.S. public policy community and the people of the United States.

Alhurra is distributed on satellite as well as via terrestrial transmitters throughout Iraq. Alhurra is streamed on its news and information website, *Alhurra.com*, and content is distributed through digital platforms, including YouTube, Facebook, and mobile apps

### Radio Sawa

Radio Sawa was launched in 2002 and broadcast 24/7 on programming streams targeted to the sub-regions of the Middle East. Radio Sawa can be heard throughout the Middle East through FM and medium wave (AM) transmissions on eight streams including: Iraq (FM and AM); Levant, including Jordan and the West Bank (FM); the Gulf (FM and AM); Egypt (AM); Morocco (FM); Sudan, Libya, Djibouti and Yemen (FM and AM); Lebanon and Syria (FM); and Mauritania (FM). Six of the current pan-Arab radio streams will be terminated; MBN will maintain the Iraq stream and a Syria and Levant stream.

### MBN Digital

MBN has established several digital properties targeted to engage both broad and specific audiences, including *Alhurra.com*, Maghreb Voices, Raise Your Voice, and Elsaha. The digital properties span Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and websites.

## FY 2019 and FY 2020 Initiatives

### Continuing the Transformation

MBN is committed to continue implementation of its multi-year transformation plan designed to fundamentally improve programming content and production quality across all MBN media within available resources, including significant changes to its Iraq programming, MBN digital properties, and its broadcast infrastructure.

### Refreshing Programming Targeted to Iraq and the Levant

Programming on MBN's platforms across media designed to engage with the people of Iraq, including the Alhurra Iraq channel, the Radio Sawa Iraq stream, and MBN's Raise Your Voice digital platform, will be restructured in FY 2019. Alhurra Iraq's programming grid is being refreshed to infuse new energy and focus. MBN is aligning human resource capacity with new programming plans, similar to the Pan-Arab refresh, by making changes as required both domestically and overseas. MBN will refocus programming to ensure relevance in today's context.

The revamped Radio Sawa Iraq stream is expanding its substantive content built around live talk shows, pre-produced informational programs and news. The newly formatted Radio Sawa Iraq stream features almost 11 hours of live news and long-form Iraq-focused programming per day (weekdays), a 90 percent increase over the current programming strategy. The Radio Sawa Levant stream will be wholly recreated to reflect the programming elements of the Iraq stream, dramatically decreasing music programming elements and providing more substantive and pointed content.

The MBN digital property that targets Iraq and the Levant, designed to counter violent extremism online by enlightening the audience and providing alternatives to extremists' narratives, will be rebranded and restructured. MBN will realign resources to produce more original, premium digitally focused content.



## Expanding and Reprioritizing Digital Output

MBN will continue to pursue an expanded and improved digital capacity to further its transformation. MBN will integrate and synergize now-independent digital platforms that have been developed over the past several years. It is realigning resources to create one team that supports the Alhurra-centric umbrella as well as distinct targeted brands, including but not limited to its Iraq and Levant targeted platform, Maghreb Voices, and Elsaha, the video-only channel to engage the people of Egypt to a degree not possible through traditional media.

In FY 2019, MBN will begin planning for a digital Sawa 2.0 platform, leveraging the Sawa brand developed since 2002 as an independent digital offshoot targeting the connected, social-savvy generation across the MENA. It will be smart content with smart packaging developed for a range of smart devices.

Through FY 2019 and FY 2020, MBN will evolve its digital efforts to: pursue a strategy of providing in-depth content through simple storytelling; work to improve its content management platform; improve its apps; align its digital workflow and branding guidelines; upgrade staff skills; and work to build strong alliances and partnerships with top tech and social media firms, as well as its USAGM sister media organizations worldwide.

## Upgrading Broadcast Infrastructure

In FY 2019, we anticipate significant restructuring of the human and technical resources in MBN's Broadcast Operations department. MBN will begin a migration from a traditional satellite broadcast model to a more current, cloud-based IP infrastructure. New workflows and equipment will be used to employ the latest HD standards for IP media transport.

## Consistently Realigning Resources

To ensure that resources are available to reflect MBN's highest priority requirements, beginning in FY 2019, six Pan-Arab Radio Sawa streams will be eliminated. MBN will only operate the refreshed Sawa Iraq and Levant streams as previously described and will pursue a digital strategy to retain audiences in the areas where the six Sawa streams are being terminated. MBN will continue to realign human and fiscal resources to reflect new programming challenges and plans.

## Recent Accomplishments

### Launching Transformation

In FY 2018, MBN initiated the implementation of a multi-year transformation plan designed to fundamentally improve programming content and production quality across all MBN media. MBN strives to become a more impactful thought leader that drives positive change through access to rich content relevant to the people of the region and U.S. public diplomacy priorities. Wholesale reengineering of MBN's operations initiated in FY 2018 includes:

### Renewing Programming

With television by and large still the foremost information source for the majority of the region's people, MBN's first major transformational initiative in FY 2018 was to redefine and upgrade Alhurra Pan-Arab television programming that targets people across 22 countries. A newly imagined programming grid was established to revitalize and redefine the channel. The new grid includes a dynamic blend of news coupled with select, quality programming that drives contemplation and engagement on issues of relevance to the target audience and concerns. In FY 2018, refocused news hours and new information programs were created and prepared for launch, including:

- **AL YOUM** — A daily (5 days per week) revamped, live morning show in the American tradition, including coverage of political, social, and cultural issues from the region.
- **SAM AND AMMAR** — A weekly show where two intellectuals share their unfiltered and cutting edge views of current affairs and spotlight Washington's political and economic decisions that impact the target region.
- **THE TALK IS SYRIAN** — A weekly show that analyzes, through discussion and visual elements, the developments, factions, human crises, and overall political situation in Syria.
- **DEBATABLE** — A weekly show wherein the renowned Ibrahim Essa promotes critical thinking while analyzing radical Islamic ideas and raises questions on how these ideas are dictating lives and risk essential freedom.

- **CAPITAL DECISION** — A weekly show that displays American foreign policy with insiders who shape and influence the policies.
- **GULF TALK** — A weekly show that addresses current news and developments in the Gulf countries.
- **ISLAM HURR (FREE ISLAM)** — A weekly show that focuses on enlightenment values instilling the language and adaptation of “free, moderate Islam” into daily life.
- **FORBIDDEN** — A weekly show that provides a platform for silenced intellectual moderate voices and ideas whose work is banned or marginalized in Arab Countries
- **INSIDE WASHINGTON** — A restructured weekly American current affairs program that addresses political and social issues.
- **INVESTIGATIVE REPORTS** — A weekly no-holds barred show that highlights and encapsulates the best of original, Alhurra investigative reports produced by Alhurra’s new investigative news unit.
- **DEFECTING BACK HOME** — A limited run series that explores life after Daesh from the point of view of ex-Daesh fighters who address how they joined Daesh, what they saw and did, why they left, and how they are coming back to life.
- **MY STORY** — A limited run series focusing on Arab-Americans/immigrants who have achieved success as defined in many ways because of the refuge America has provided them.
- **HUNNA AMERICA** — A limited run series tackling what makes America what it is today from a historical and cultural perspective — from the founding fathers to American Civil War the reality of today, filmed on the scene where these events happened.

The new grid — comprised of 73 percent news programming, 20 percent original information programming and 7 percent externally acquired programming — defines Alhurra as a distinctly American channel with an American voice supporting human dignity and universal rights and values. Nearly one-third of the programming day for the Pan-Arab Alhurra channel is now generated from

the region, including its *Al Youm* (“Today”) show repositioned as a 2-hour morning show. For the first time ever Alhurra is in sync with the region’s news cycle rather than struggling to catch up.

### Rebuilding Capacity

Successful implementation of the new programming strategy required significant human and infrastructure capacity upgrades and strategic realignments in FY 2018. As such, staff was restructured to meet new programming requirements, which triggered a series of job eliminations, layoffs as well as recruiting for new and upgraded skill sets both domestically and overseas. Through actions taken, by the end of FY 2018, a stronger MBN workforce is in place to attack the new demands within available resources.

Reorganization of MBN’s workforce breaks down program silos and overcomes related obstacles to efficiency, consistency, and holistic programming strategies. With the new structure, MBN will ensure coordinated content creation and timely utilization across platforms, and take advantage of technology to facilitate delivery. MBN is creating a pool of forward-thinking, talented, multi-media journalists supporting the mission and organizational goals. The restructuring facilitates cooperation and integration across departments inspiring all to work cooperatively.

In addition to workforce restructuring and reorganization, production capabilities were upgraded in FY 2018 to support the new programming vision and rebranding strategy. Studios were refreshed at headquarters and in the region, graphics were redesigned for all major properties, and production workflows and technologies were initiated that will ultimately create the dynamic, flexible work environment necessary to keep up with a hyper-competitive and saturated Arabic media market.

### Realigning Resources

In alignment with priorities in FY 2018, MBN ceased shortwave radio broadcasting to Darfur and reduced its live programming on Radio Sawa, eliminating live news updates during the region’s overnight hours and the supporting resources.

## Increasing Awareness

MBN is working to further audience engagement and increase brand awareness through newly initiated outreach efforts. In FY 2018, to advance refocused programming goals, MBN partnered with the U.S. Institute of Peace to host its first of several planned overseas conferences to discuss and explore issues relating to conflict resolution, resilience and inclusive politics. This first conference facilitated discussions about the complex and pressing questions regarding human dignity in the region today. The public discussion, open to policy makers, peacebuilding MBN practitioners, students, US and Tunisian government personnel, activists, and the general public, was designed to initiate a deep dive into the topic of human dignity in the MENA region.

# Broadcasting Capital Improvements (BCI)

## Funding *(\$ in Thousands)*

FY 2018 ACTUALS	FY 2019 ANNUALIZED CR	FY 2020 REQUEST
\$ 5,814	\$ 9,700	\$ 4,551

## Overview

Broadcasting Capital Improvements (BCI) provides funding for large-scale capital projects and for improvements and maintenance of USAGM's global transmission network and digital multimedia infrastructure. The Office of Technology, Services, and Innovation (TSI) manages most of the BCI projects to benefit all elements across the agency. The BCI account also supports capital projects managed by Voice of America (VOA), the Office of Cuba Broadcasting (OCB), and the Office of Management Services (OMS) Office of Security. These USAGM offices will continue support of essential agency technical operations in FY 2020 through carefully focused investments and maintenance of ongoing efforts in a number of critical areas. BCI funds support the capital and equipment aspects of these critical agency efforts.

TSI will continue to replace outdated HVAC (heating, ventilating, and air conditioning) equipment older than 10 years in the Cohen building and install the most energy-efficient units available to improve reliability, effectiveness and cost savings. In FY 2019, USAGM is replacing its two enterprise-level UPS (Universal Power Supply) systems that provide redundant electricity and protect the Agency's critical electronic infrastructure from surges and other potentially damaging irregularities in commercial power.

As part of USAGM's global network realignment, in FY 2018 and FY 2019, TSI upgraded its cross-border capacity at the Kuwait Transmitting Station, in order to serve USAGM's legacy radio audiences in Africa in a more cost-effective manner, at less cost than other USAGM-operated sites or expensive leased capacity. The project makes it easier to potentially close or reduce usage of other, costlier transmission sites while continuing to serve SW audiences.

In FY 2020, BCI spending on the USAGM cross-border transmission sites will focus on regular maintenance and repairs to ensure functionality and protect life and property.

## FY 2019 and FY 2020 Initiatives

### TSI Initiatives

BCI monies in FY 2018 and FY 2019 are funding the approved reconfiguration of the shortwave broadcast infrastructure at the Kuwait Transmitting Station. This will allow USAGM to maintain cross-border transmissions to key regions, particularly Africa, and achieve long-term cost savings by allowing USAGM to shift mission-critical but higher cost transmissions from other stations in the USAGM network to Kuwait.

Starting in FY 2018 and finishing in FY 2019, TSI is installing and deploying three newer SW transmitters at the Greenville, NC transmitting station. The three newly installed transmitters replace transmitters that were obsolete and highly inefficient and expensive to operate. Many replacement parts were unavailable and had to be custom manufactured, affecting transmitter availability. The newly installed transmitters will provide increased transmission capability to Cuba at a lower operational cost and greater reliability.

In FY 2020, TSI will focus its regular station maintenance and repair efforts on issues that impact functionality, or the safety and security of USAGM personnel and equipment. Some extraordinary repairs are required at the USAGM transmitting station on the Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI), following the landfall on October 24th, 2018 of Super Typhoon Yutu on the main islands of Saipan and Tinian. Recovery efforts started immediately following the storm with salvaged and spare material and in-house resources, not BCI funds. Broadcasts to North Korea, China, and the other target countries in East Asia have been affected. While some transmissions have been moved to other sites, including leased sites, there is insufficient capacity to accommodate all USAGM programming to the region and many replacement sites are not as effective in covering East Asia as CNMI.

## VOA Initiatives

VOA will accomplish the following initiatives in FY 2019 and FY 2020:

- Working with USAGM, VOA will establish a Continuity of Operations (COOP) facility to allow distribution of multiple simultaneous programming streams, to be used in the event of localized disruptions that would prevent VOA from broadcasting from the Cohen Building.
- VOA will replace its television playout servers, which are at end of life.
- VOA will merge its radio/television master controls into a single, virtualized monitoring center with staff savings estimated at \$400,000 (and a two-year payback of the investment).
- VOA will purchase required transmission equipment and facilities for use during the 2020 Democratic and Republican Party Conventions.
- VOA will initiate a five year refresh of its studio sets, lighting, and monitors, beginning with its Studio 47.
- VOA will initiate a three year computer, monitor, and CPU refresh program for its desktop hardware and associated software, starting with its oldest 200 (of 600) computers.
- VOA will implement a new cloud-based Media Asset Management system and News Production System to enable cloud production workflows for digital and television content creation and distribution. This will align the VOA with the Federal government's initiative to harness cloud technologies for infrastructure thereby creating a more flexible and agile computing environment.
- VOA will upgrade its content management system to enable more efficient handling of HD video content.

## Recent Accomplishments

Installation of a new fire alarm system at the Philippines Transmitting Station is underway and will be completed for most of the site in the third quarter of FY 2019. The installation for the remainder of the site will be completed by the second quarter of FY 2020.



In FY 2019, TSI will complete the replacement of Sao Tomé's medium wave (MW) tower that collapsed during a recent severe storm on the island.

In FY 2018 and FY 2019, TSI and VOA completed or will complete all high definition (HD) television initiatives in the Washington DC broadcast facility, including:

- Conversion to HD master control transmission facility (eight channels).
- Installation of a hybrid HD Internet Protocol-based routing system and physical plant to save costs and more efficiently process incoming and outgoing video content.
- Co-location and consolidation of VOA radio and TV master control facilities, enabling efficiencies and repurposing of technical staff.
- Completion of social media origination capability in user-operated studios which will enhance efficiencies and repurposing of technical staff.
- Initiate integrated media asset management system upgrades which will enhance the efficient handling of HD video content and the transition to desktop video editing of routine stories, reducing costs.
- Completion of the London bureau's TV and radio studio upgrade.
- Completion of the IP-based switch modernizing control room traffic and delivery from analog to digital over-IP.

# Performance Budget Information

## Introduction

This Performance Budget includes a summary of the United States Agency for Global Media (USAGM) strategic plan, a summary of the status of the Agency's performance, and descriptions of the Agency's performance indicators. This integrated budget and performance section connects the USAGM strategic goals, strategic and management objectives and performance goals, and it fulfills requirements of the Government Performance and Results Modernization Act of 2010 for an annual performance plan. USAGM's annual Performance and Accountability Report (PAR) provides detailed performance information and can be found on the Agency website, [www.usagm.gov](http://www.usagm.gov).

## Summary of the 2018-2022 USAGM Strategic Plan

USAGM's 2018-2022 strategic plan continues an ambitious roadmap to expand the reach and impact of U.S. international media in support of American strategic interests. It also responds to new calls for institutional agility as reflected in the Administration's management priorities, which emphasize mission, service, and stewardship. The plan informs the FY 2020 budget request and continues the integration of performance, budget planning, and management of USAGM.

The mission of USAGM is to inform, engage and connect people around the world in support of freedom and democracy.

This mission is achieved through two strategic goals:

- Expand freedom of information and expression
- Communicate America's democratic experience and values

Free press and free expression are universally acknowledged as key to free, open, democratic societies, which in turn support American interests through stability, peace, alliances, and trade. Communicating America's democratic experience and values serves the same purpose. In covering the United States, we open a window onto democracy in action.

## Current Context of the USAGM

The key environmental factors facing USAGM are: global declines in media freedom, national security challenges, rising media competition, and the multitude of modern communications technologies.

Free expression, religious liberty, human rights, and similar values important to the United States are under assault across the globe. Resurgent authoritarianism and spreading extremism imperil U.S. interests. Europe is witnessing a return to Cold War tensions of state authority versus popular will. Extremist rhetoric and incitement to violence directly threaten U.S. national security interests in Iraq, Syria, Afghanistan, Yemen, Somalia, and elsewhere, compounded by the adroit adoption of digital and social media by actors around the world, including ISIS and others.

The struggles unfolding have significant information or propaganda components. Governments and non-state actors have weaponized information to generate a relentless, sophisticated stream of false narratives that too often go unchallenged. ISIS, Boko Haram, and other non-state actors exploit modern media tools to promote extremist views, sow seeds of discontent, and subvert democratic ideals. Through both direct broadcasts and social media campaigns, hostile governments inundate audiences with disinformation about global events and depict the United States on an irreversible downward social spiral, its institutions failing and its global strength on the wane.

Consumers of news and information have an unprecedented array of options from which to choose. For example, social media and citizen journalism provide broadcasters with opportunities to collect and disseminate information, while interacting with audiences. In many regions, USAGM broadcasts face growing competition from local news sources and international broadcasters. While this information explosion seems to point to more openness and freedom, the trend in recent years has been toward less press freedom and growing Internet censorship in key markets. Freedom House and Reporters Without Borders have documented steep declines in world freedom and press freedom.

When U.S. international media began in 1942, programs were broadcast via shortwave. Since then, the number of transmission options has grown, and

listener preferences and media access have changed. The technology to transmit and receive news and information is constantly improving and changing. USAGM has kept up with these developments, which offer extraordinary opportunities for unfiltered, direct dialogue with audiences around the world. USAGM transmits content through terrestrial and satellite television, radio (shortwave, medium wave, FM, and satellite), the Internet (websites with streaming audio and video as well as social media, such as Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube), and numerous mobile technologies, including apps and mobile Web.

To serve audiences in less developed areas of the world, USAGM must continue to broadcast via traditional technologies, such as shortwave, and maintain capability and improve efficiency on these platforms by replacing antiquated equipment. But to stay relevant in competitive news markets and serve current and future audiences, USAGM must continue to invest in new cutting-edge technology. In areas where ownership and usage of shortwave radio has declined significantly, the Agency has evolved away from broadcasting in that medium. USAGM has closed transmission stations, repurposed equipment and invested these savings in platforms that the audience has shifted to, primarily television and digital media.

USAGM relies on extensive market research to identify audience preferences and the most appropriate programming mix and delivery options for specific audiences. In addition to research about the effectiveness of programming, USAGM commissions research on the overall media markets in its broadcast countries to better understand how these markets are developing and the capabilities that each Agency network needs to remain competitive. As new technologies emerge, market research enables USAGM to be forward-thinking and strategically positioned to fulfill its mission. USAGM undertakes a comprehensive assessment of the languages in which Agency networks broadcast during the annual Language Service Review. This review examines qualitative and quantitative research on the performance of programming, audience reach and impact, as well as media usage and ownership. The review forms the basis for proposing to enhance existing language services, start new ones, or, in some instances, end service in a particular language.

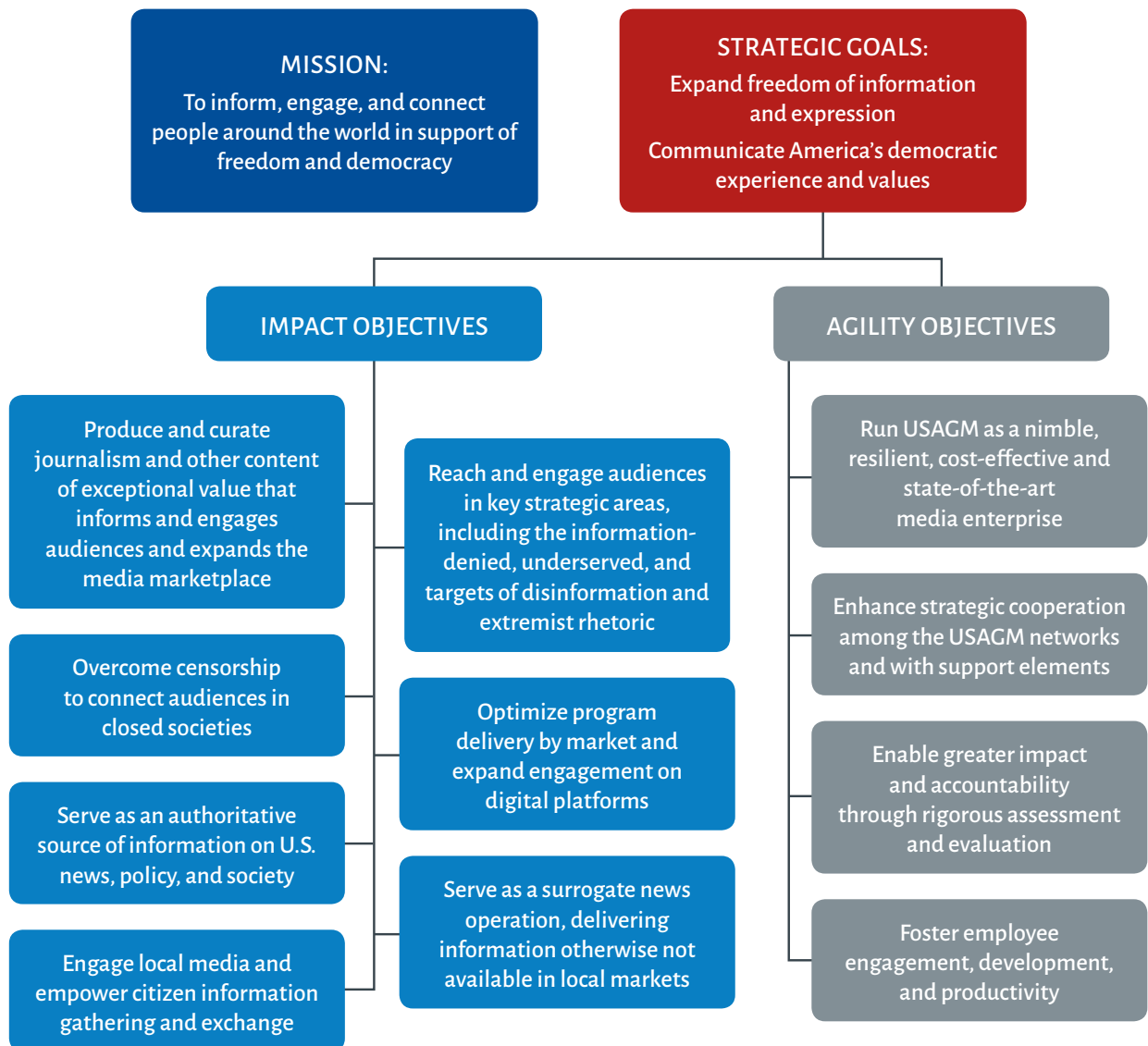
USAGM's Strategic Plan prioritizes setting the program mix and delivery platforms to meet market demand. This is critical to ensure that USAGM achieves its legislative mandate to reach as many people as possible with news and information that gains their trust and makes a difference in their lives via the most effective delivery systems.

### Impact Model

In recognition that impact is about more than audience reach, USAGM's 2012-2016 strategic plan set the goal of developing a multi-factor model to define impact. USAGM began implementing the model in 2014. It ties to USAGM's mission statement and examines effectiveness in the areas of informing, engaging and connecting audiences, and being influential. These effects are considered in the short, medium and long term in various sectors – people, local media and institutions. The model employs a mix of quantitative and qualitative measures.

This Impact Model informs the strategic plan and performance goals that support USAGM's Impact Objectives. During the past two years, the model has formed the basis of USAGM's strategic review process in which the Agency sets clear goals and targets for performance indicators that define success in each target country and region.

## Impact and Agility Objectives and Performance Goals



USAGM's two strategic goals are supported by seven impact objectives and four agility objectives, each of which has supporting performance goals. All of the performance indicators supporting the impact objectives come from the USAGM Impact Model. Future targets are based on leadership direction and expert analysis of many factors including: current positioning in the media market, anticipated future trends, and proposed budgetary resources. Because USAGM does not have resources to conduct full media surveys annually in each country, many of the indicators are targeted to remain stable or change only slightly from the current level of performance. These objectives and goals map out Agency priorities for the next two years.

## Impact Objective 1: Produce and curate journalism and other content of exceptional value that informs and engages audiences and expands the media marketplace

Journalism is the daily work of USAGM broadcasters, and producing fact-based, verifiable news and information must be preeminent in Agency strategy. To have impact, USAGM journalism must reach audiences, meet their interests along the breadth of subjects that matter to their lives and, at the same time, add value in expanding the media marketplace. USAGM's aim is not just to follow the 24-hour news cycle but to drive the news agenda through original stories, investigative reporting, in-depth analysis, and a unique cross-cultural perspective that helps audiences become sophisticated consumers of news and media.

USAGM will:

- As required by statute, provide news and other programming that is accurate, objective, and comprehensive and in accordance with the highest professional standards of journalism.
- Produce news and information, consistent with audience preferences and mission requirements, on issues which are not addressed adequately by media in the target area, e.g., human rights and good governance.
- Offer non-news content that research, web analytics, and audience and affiliate feedback show is of vital interest to audiences, such as health, science, and technology.
- Produce enterprise reporting through deep and lasting exploration of critical issues in the countries USAGM targets.
- Curate content from and co-create content with reputable partners, as appropriate and consistent with broadcasting standards and editorial guidelines.

USAGM tracks its progress in achieving Impact Objective 1 with the following performance goals:

## Impact Performance Goal 1.1: Reach significant audiences

<b>MEASURED WEEKLY AUDIENCE</b> <i>(in millions)<sup>1</sup></i>						
Network	FY 2016 Actual	FY 2017 Actual	FY 2018 Target <sup>6</sup>	FY 2018 Actual	FY 2019 Target <sup>7</sup>	FY 2020 Target <sup>7</sup>
USAGM <sup>2</sup>	278	278	179	345	337	260
VOA	236.6	236.8	141.0	275.2	265.0	205.0
RFE/RL	26.9	25.8	23.5	33.9	34.2	33.8
RFA <sup>3</sup>	6.4	6.9	6.9	50.7	49.5	12.0
MBN <sup>4</sup>	27.5	25.7	27.5	24.7	27.0	28.0
OCB <sup>5</sup>	NA	1.0	1.0	1.0	2.0	2.5

<sup>1</sup> Measured weekly audience is the number of people in target areas listening to or viewing USAGM programming or online materials in the past week according to representative face-to-face or phone surveys. It is influenced by a number of factors that vary across broadcasters, including number of languages, number and type of distribution platforms, and media environment.

<sup>2</sup> The USAGM weekly audience is unduplicated, i.e., a member of the audience is counted only once, regardless of the number of times, platforms, or networks they consume each week.

<sup>3</sup> RFA audience figures include audiences for only six of their nine language services. USAGM is not able to conduct representative quantitative audience research for Korean, Tibetan, and Uyghur. The audience increase in FY 2018 is due to new data from China.

<sup>4</sup> MBN's measured weekly audience is lower in FY 2018 than FY 2017 because Algeria, with a population of 27 million, is not included in 2018 reach. As of FY 2018, the Algeria data was 6 years old, exceeding USAGM's 5-year limit for survey data.

<sup>5</sup> Because of the historical limitations of reliable survey data in Cuba, FY 2017 was the first year that weekly audience was presented for OCB.

<sup>6</sup> FY 2018 targets are from the FY 2019 Congressional Budget Request and were set based on significant proposed budget decreases.

<sup>7</sup> Factors contributing to FY 2019 and 2020 targets include current positioning in the media market, anticipated future trends, and proposed budgetary resources. FY 2019 targets for VOA reflect potential audience loss due to decreased original programming during the lapse in appropriations. The FY 2020 target for VOA reflects the elimination of all or most radio programming in several large markets, particularly Latin America and Indonesia. For RFE/RL, the FY 2020 target reflects proposed language service eliminations and reductions (Georgian, Tatar-Bashkir, North Caucasus, and Balkans). For RFA, loss of all FM transmission in Cambodia is expected to reduce historically large audiences there, as transmission has been reduced to shortwave and online, both of which have smaller potential audiences than FM radio. For FY 2020, proposed elimination of RFA Mandarin and Khmer



services would result in a large audience decrease. MBN's targets for FY 2019 and FY 2020 reflect possible reach reductions in Iraq, where political pressures on MBN have increased in recent months. MBN also expects the reduction in Radio Sawa FM broadcasts across the region to temper reach, balanced by projected increases in reach by FY 2020 as a result of the network's relaunch.

**Indicator:**

**MEASURED WEEKLY AUDIENCE:** This indicator comes from national surveys and measures the number of people in target areas listening to or viewing USAGM programming or online materials in the past week. The measure is obtained through representative face-to-face or phone surveys for each language service (except Korean, Uyghur, Tatar-Bashkir, Tibetan, and Turkmen) and for the countries served by USAGM that were surveyed within the past five years. It does not include data from online digital analytics. It is based upon the measurement of the "regular listening audience," a statistical standard international media organizations have long used to report international radio audience reach. Regular listening or viewing audience (radio, TV or Internet) has over the years been consistently defined as all adults listening or viewing at least once a week, as determined by an audience survey that has an adequately designed sample. The USAGM weekly audience is unduplicated, i.e., a member of the audience is counted only once, regardless of the number of times, platforms, or networks they consume each week. USAGM does not conduct surveys in every country every year, so reach figures may in some cases reflect weekly reach measures collected from up to five years in the past. This may result in an over or underestimation of actual reach. In the FY 2018 USAGM audience figure (345 million), only 1.6 percent (5.6 million) of the total audience comes from data collected in FY 2014 (surveys from Angola, Ghana, Guinea, Kuwait, Niger, Palestinian Territories, Qatar, and Rwanda) and 1.6 percent (5.5 million) comes from data collected in FY 2015 (surveys from Abkhazia, Bahrain, Burkina Faso, Chechnya, Dagestan, Malawi, FATA, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Syria, Taiwan, and Zimbabwe). Additionally, political restrictions or volatility in certain markets may prevent the measurement of current reach for services broadcasting to these areas. In FY 2018, these areas included North Korea, Eritrea, Tibet, Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, and Tajikistan.

USAGM is in the process of revamping its audience measurement methodology in order to integrate other data sources, such as web and social media analytics and commercial ratings data. This new methodology will be thoroughly tested and validated before it is rolled out for performance reporting.

**Impact Performance Goal 1.2:**  
Provide programming that audiences find trustworthy

<b>PROGRAM CREDIBILITY<sup>1</sup></b> <i>Percent of weekly audience who consider information to be very or somewhat trustworthy</i>						
NETWORK	FY 2016 Actual	FY 2017 Actual	FY 2018 Target	FY 2018 Actual	FY 2019 Target <sup>3</sup>	FY 2020 Target <sup>3</sup>
	Simple average	Weighted average				
VOA	86	83	82	84	82	82
RFE/RL	87	80	82	77	77	78
RFA	86	93	86	77	77	78
MBN	82	80	80	80	80	80
OCB <sup>2</sup>	NA	97	97	97	100	100

<sup>1</sup> Beginning with FY 2017, the scores for program credibility are weighted averages, based on audience size, of all program credibility scores obtained by an entity. In previous years, these scores were simple averages of the scores by country. Scores from FY 2016 and prior years are not comparable to the FY 2017 and subsequent scores.

<sup>2</sup> Because of the historical limitations of reliable survey data in Cuba, FY 2017 was the first year that credibility was presented for OCB.

<sup>3</sup> Factors contributing to FY 2019 and 2020 targets include current positioning in the media market, anticipated future trends, and proposed budgetary resources. VOA expects that new data arriving in FY 2019 and 2020 may show an erosion in qualitative indicators, such as trust, as a result of multiple factors including decreases in original content, more limited broadcast hours, and changing attitudes toward the U.S. in target countries. RFA's trust numbers are based on data from Cambodia (where trust is 92 percent), Burma (at 87 percent) and China (at 75 percent). Because these numbers are weighted by audience size, China's audience perceptions predominate. RFA anticipates continued high levels of trust in Southeast Asia, any change of which will likely not be reflected in this composite number. The outsize effect of results in China will also influence VOA's trust results, though to a lesser degree. Trust for MBN already is high, given the tendency of audiences in the region to be skeptical of all media, and is expected to continue but not increase.

**Indicator:**

**PROGRAM CREDIBILITY:** This indicator is determined by a question in representative surveys about trustworthiness of news and information of those sampled respondents who listened to or viewed each station in the past week. The answers are registered on a four-point scale: Trust a great deal, Trust it somewhat, Do not trust it very much, Do not trust it at all. The credibility index is a weighted average, by audience size, of the percentage of those answering the

question in the survey (excluding those who did not respond or did not know) who endorsed trust a great deal or somewhat. Credibility estimates are not included for countries where the number of regular listeners/viewers/online users is so small ( $n = <50$ ) that the estimate is unreliable.

## Impact Performance Goal 1.3: Provide programming that increases the audiences' understanding of current events

UNDERSTANDING <sup>1</sup>						
<i>Percent of weekly audience who report that the broadcasts have increased their understanding of current events somewhat or a great deal</i>						
NETWORK	FY 2016 Actual	FY 2017 Actual	FY 2018 Target	FY 2018 Actual	FY 2019 Target <sup>3</sup>	FY 2020 Target <sup>3</sup>
	Simple average	Weighted average				
VOA	86	81	81	76	75	75
RFE/RL	81	81	83	73	74	75
RFA	NA	NA	85	52	54	55
MBN	80	71	70	70	70	75
OCB <sup>2</sup>	NA	96	96	96	100	100

<sup>1</sup> Beginning with FY 2017, the scores for understanding are weighted averages, based on audience size, of all understanding scores obtained by an entity. In previous years, these scores were simple averages of the scores by country. Scores from FY 2016 and prior years are not comparable to the FY 2017 and subsequent scores.

<sup>2</sup> Because of the historical limitations of reliable survey data in Cuba, FY 2017 was the first year that understanding was presented for OCB.

<sup>3</sup> Factors contributing to FY 2019 and 2020 targets include current positioning in the media market, anticipated future trends, and proposed budgetary resources. VOA expects that new data arriving in FY 2019 and 2020 may show an erosion in qualitative indicators, such as understanding, as a result of multiple factors including decreases in original content, more limited broadcast hours, and changing attitudes toward the U.S. in target countries. For RFA, this metric is derived from measurements in China and Burma only. RFA anticipates some growth in this metric in a planned survey in Cambodia based on similar results from previous surveys. As with the trust metric, however, opportunities for significant growth are limited by the overwhelming size of RFA's China audience. Although RFA expects improvement in this measure for Chinese audiences also, opportunities to conduct additional surveys in China are limited. MBN's understanding target increase in FY 2020 assumes improvements as a result of the MBN relaunch that focuses, in part, on greater coverage of news and current events.

### Indicator:

UNDERSTANDING OF CURRENT EVENTS: This indicator is determined by a question in representative surveys asking past week listeners/viewers/online users of [language] whether the broadcasts have “increased their understanding of current events.” The answers are registered on a four-point scale: a great deal, somewhat, very little, or not at all. The understanding indicator is a weighted average, by audience size, of the percentage of those answering the question in the survey (excluding those who did not respond or did not know) who chose “a great deal” or “somewhat.”

## Impact Performance Goal 1.4: Provide programming that is influential with audiences

<b>HELPS FORM OPINIONS ON IMPORTANT TOPICS<sup>1</sup></b> <i>Percent of weekly audience who report that the broadcasts have helped them form opinions on important topics somewhat or a great deal</i>					
<b>NETWORK</b>	<b>FY 2017 Actual</b>	<b>FY 2018 Target</b>	<b>FY 2018 Actual</b>	<b>FY 2019 Target<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>FY 2020 Target<sup>2</sup></b>
<b>VOA</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>60</b>
<b>RFE/RL</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>56</b>
<b>RFA</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>88</b>
<b>MBN</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>75</b>
<b>OCB</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>85</b>

<sup>1</sup> This was a new measure in FY 2017. Actuals are not available for FY 2016.

<sup>2</sup> Factors contributing to FY 2019 and 2020 targets include current positioning in the media market, anticipated future trends, and proposed budgetary resources. VOA expects that new data arriving in FY 2019 and 2020 may show an erosion in qualitative indicators, including this measure, as a result of multiple factors including decreases in original content, more limited broadcast hours, and changing attitudes toward the U.S. in target countries. MBN's FY 2019 and 2020 targets for this measure assume improvements as a result of MBN relaunch that includes a greater focus on issues audiences cannot find in other regional media.

### Indicator:

**HELPS AUDIENCES FORM OPINIONS ON IMPORTANT TOPICS:** This indicator is determined by a question in representative surveys asking past week listeners/viewers/online users of [language] whether the broadcasts have helped them form opinions on important topics. The answers are registered on a four-point scale: a great deal, somewhat, very little, or not at all. This indicator is a weighted average, by audience size, of the percentage of those answering the question in the survey (excluding those who did not respond or did not know) who chose “a great deal” or “somewhat.”

In addition to these performance goals, USAGM will present narrative evidence that it is accomplishing Impact Objective 1, including:

- Original reporting on issues of importance to audiences (as reported on surveys)
- Citations of USAGM reporting in influential news outlets
- Content curation that offers media options not otherwise available in the local market

## Impact Objective 2: Reach and engage audiences in key strategic areas, including the information-denied, underserved, and targets of disinformation and extremist rhetoric

In deciding where to target, USAGM considers the local media situation, along with U.S. strategic interests, and prioritizes countries that lack a free or developed press. Special consideration is given to populations at risk due to extremist rhetoric and disinformation. USAGM prioritizes reaching audiences in areas plagued by extremism, where extremist forces espouse a violent ideology and execute campaigns of terror that threaten U.S. and regional security and stymie free, open, democratic societies. Another key focus area is audiences subjected to state-sponsored disinformation campaigns, which seek to undermine democratic norms and the very idea of objective truth. In all target countries, the USAGM networks seek to grow their audience base and reach those traditionally underserved by USAGM broadcasts. Populations in the target countries are overwhelmingly young – a challenge, but also a chance for us to connect with a demographic that in many cases has never even heard of us. USAGM’s current audiences are approximately 58 percent male and 42 percent female – an imbalance ripe for correcting. USAGM understands that to reach and be relevant with these audiences, it needs to provide them with content that not only informs them of international and local news, but assists them in building and participating in a civil society.

USAGM will:

- Prioritize countries lacking freedom and democracy or faced with disinformation or extremism, where accurate, credible news and information are lacking. Boost service to these areas, where feasible.
- Introduce service in selected new languages to reach sizeable new audiences in countries where USAGM products are urgently needed.
- Reach out to women and youth with programming that addresses issues of concern and relevance to their lives.
- Sharpen audience segmentation and targeting to drive content strategies and better address gender and age demographics, as well as psychographic segments.
- Serve as a conduit for the transmission of reporting from inside closed societies lacking press freedom to outside audiences.
- Ensure strong local news coverage, as warranted by events, to meet urgent audience needs in areas of crisis.

- Draw on the experiences of the world's many models of free societies, in particular the U.S., to present a broad array of political views and debates

USAGM tracks its progress in achieving Impact Objective 2 with the following performance goals:

**Impact Performance Goal 2.1: Achieve significant audience reach in environments subject to extremist rhetoric and violence**

Country or Region	FY 2016 Actual	FY 2017 Actual	FY 2018 Target <sup>1</sup>	FY 2018 Actual	FY 2019 Target <sup>2</sup>	FY 2020 Target <sup>2</sup>
<b>INCREASE OR MAINTAIN WEEKLY AUDIENCES IN:<sup>3</sup></b>						
<b>Iraq<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>42.6%</b>	<b>42.6% (Jan 2016)</b>	<b>42%</b>	<b>42.6% (Jan 2016)</b>	<b>44%</b>	<b>46%</b>
<b>Kenya</b>	<b>12.1% (Aug 2015)</b>	<b>20.2% (Feb 2017)</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>20.2% (Feb 2017)</b>	<b>18%</b>	<b>18%</b>
<b>Nigeria</b>	<b>21.0% (Feb 2016)</b>	<b>21.0% (Feb 2016)</b>	<b>23%</b>	<b>21.0% (Feb 2016)</b>	<b>21%</b>	<b>21%</b>
<b>Afghanistan</b>	<b>49.4% (Nov 2015)</b>	<b>38.5% (Nov 2016)</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>38.5% (Nov 2016)</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>30%</b>
<b>Pakistan (excluding FATA and Gilgit Baltistan)</b>	<b>5.7% (Jun 2014)</b>	<b>2.9% (Aug 2016)</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>2.9% (Aug 2016)</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>3%</b>
<b>FATA regions<sup>5</sup></b>	<b>26.4% (Jun 2015)</b>	<b>26.4% (Jun 2015)</b>	<b>27%</b>	<b>26.4% (Jun 2015)</b>	<b>27%</b>	<b>27%</b>
<b>Central Asia<sup>6</sup></b>	<b>2.7 million</b>	<b>3.9 million</b>	<b>4.1 million</b>	<b>3.9 million</b>	<b>4.1 million</b>	<b>4.3 million</b>

<sup>1</sup> FY 2018 targets for VOA assumed a reduction in audience reach based on FY 2018 budget level.

<sup>2</sup> Factors contributing to FY 2019 and 2020 targets include current positioning in the media market, anticipated future trends, and proposed budgetary resources. For Pakistan, the FY 2020 target reflects proposed reductions to VOA Urdu radio. For Iraq, the targets are lower than originally anticipated due to increased political interference with MBN broadcasts in Iraq in recent months.

<sup>3</sup> Multi-country estimates are presented in real numbers, rather than percentages, because of the potential high variations in percentages across covered countries. The countries and regions listed were selected by USAGM experts and represent a subset of those that the USAGM networks target with programming that provides news and information to counter extremist messaging.

<sup>4</sup> Iraq includes audience for Alhurra, Radio Sawa, and VOA Kurdish and English. FY 2018 and beyond also include audience for www.Irfaasawtak.com.

<sup>5</sup> The USAGM survey of FATA covers the following territories of Pakistan where probability sampling was possible: Bajaur and Mohmand agency and the frontier regions of DI Khan, Kohat, Lakki, and Peshawar, which are now part of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province.

<sup>6</sup> Includes data from Kazakhstan (Nov 2016), Kyrgyzstan (Mar 2016), Tajikistan (June 2016), Uzbekistan (May 2017). Data for Turkmenistan were not collected during the past five years.

#### Indicator:

Measured weekly audience is explained above under Impact Performance Goal 1.1. For individual countries, the measured weekly audience is expressed as a percentage of the adult population covered by the survey.

#### Impact Performance Goal 2.2: Increase audience reach in information-denied environments

Country	FY 2016 Actual	FY 2017 Actual	FY 2018 Target	FY 2018 Actual	FY 2019 Target <sup>1</sup>	FY 2020 Target <sup>1</sup>
INCREASE OR MAINTAIN WEEKLY AUDIENCES IN: <sup>2</sup>						
China	0.28% (June 2014)	0.28% (June 2014)	0.3%	6.2% (Aug 2017)	6.2%	6.3%
Vietnam	3.6% (Mar 2015)	3.6% (Jul 2016)	4.0%	3.6% (Jul 2016)	3.6%	3.6%
Laos	5.0% (Dec 2012)	2.4% (Sep 2016)	2.0%	2.4% (Sep 2016)	2.4%	2.4%
Turkmenistan <sup>3</sup>	2.2% (Oct 2011)	NA	2.5%	NA	2.5%	2.5%
Uzbekistan	1.6% (Sep 2012)	1.6% (May 2017)	2.0%	1.6% (May 2017)	2.0%	2.0%
Iran	14.9% (Aug 2015)	14.9% (Aug 2015)	14%	23.4% (Sep 2017)	23%	23%
Azerbaijan	3.5% (Dec 2015)	3.5% (Dec 2015)	3.5%	3.5% (Dec 2015)	3.5%	3.5%
Cuba	NA	11.1% (Mar 2017)	11.1%	11.1% (Mar 2017)	20%	25%

Continue to serve and monitor information-denied environments lacking representative survey data, including North Korea, Eritrea, Syria, Tibet, and Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region.



<sup>1</sup> Factors contributing to FY 2019 and 2020 targets include current positioning in the media market, anticipated future trends, and proposed budgetary resources.

<sup>2</sup> Selected countries include those targeted by the USAGM networks, in which USAGM is able to conduct research, that have the lowest press freedom scores on external indices.

<sup>3</sup> USAGM was not able to conduct a representative survey in Turkmenistan for the past five years. Efforts to obtain new data are currently underway.

### Indicator:

Measured weekly audience is explained above under Impact Performance Goal 1.1. For individual countries, the measured weekly audience is expressed as a percentage of the adult population covered by the survey.

### Impact Performance Goal 2.3: Reach audiences in environments targeted by state-sponsored disinformation campaigns

Country	FY 2016 Actual	FY 2017 Actual	FY 2018 Target	FY 2018 Actual	FY 2019 Target <sup>1</sup>	FY 2020 Target <sup>1</sup>
INCREASE OR MAINTAIN WEEKLY AUDIENCES IN: <sup>2</sup>						
The Russian Federation	4.9% (Jun 2016)	4.9% (Jun 2016)	Reach 6% of adults on all platforms	7.5% (May 2018)	8%	8%
Ukraine	18.0% (Jun 2016)	18.0% (Jun 2016)	Reach 20% of adults on all platforms	18.0% (Jun 2016)	20%	20%
Moldova	32.1% (Feb 2016)	32.1% (Feb 2016)	Maintain FY17 audience reach	32.1% (Feb 2016)	32%	32%
Kazakhstan	0.9% (Jan 2011)	9.6% (Nov 2016)	Maintain FY17 audience reach	9.6% (Nov 2016)	10%	10%
Tajikistan	11.4% (Jun 2016)	10.8% (Jun 2017)	Maintain FY17 audience reach	10.8% (Jun 2017)	11%	11%
Estonia	5.2% (Aug 2015)	5.1% (Jun 2016)	Reach 7% of adults on all platforms	5.1% (Jun 2016)	7%	8%
Latvia	7.2% (Aug 2015)	5.2% (Jul 2016)	Reach 7% of adults on all platforms	5.2% (Jul 2016)	7%	8%
Lithuania	10.0% (Aug 2016)	10.0% (Jul 2016)	Reach 11% of adults on all platforms	10.0% (Jul 2016)	10%	10%

<sup>1</sup> Factors contributing to FY 2019 and 2020 targets include current positioning in the media market, anticipated future trends, and proposed budgetary resources.

<sup>2</sup> The countries and regions listed were selected by USAGM experts and represent a subset of those that the USAGM networks target with programming that provides news and information to counter state-sponsored propaganda.

**Indicator:**

Measured weekly audience is explained above under Impact Performance Goal 1.1. For individual countries, the measured weekly audience is expressed as a percentage of the adult population covered by the survey.

**Contextual Indicators:**

Freedom House Rankings	# of USAGM target countries ranked as:		
	Not Free	Partly Free	Free
2017 FREEDOM OF THE PRESS	61	53	10
2019 FREEDOM IN THE WORLD (POLITICAL)	50	51	23

Note: Freedom House last released Freedom of the Press rankings in 2017.

In addition to these performance goals, USAGM will present narrative evidence that it is accomplishing Impact Objective 2, including:

- News reports or audience descriptions of USAGM impact in environments subject to extremism, information withholding, and disinformation campaigns
- High-profile international news pickups of original reporting from inside closed societies

### Impact Objective 3: Overcome censorship to connect audiences in closed societies

For almost 70 years U.S. international broadcasting has fought censorship in all its forms. Today, as the global media environment undergoes a dynamic revolution, access to a truly free press is actually in decline. Jamming of radio and TV broadcasts, including USAGM's, continues in a number of countries. Journalists suffer harassment and violence daily. Media laws often restrict free flows of information, limiting the ability of international news organizations to distribute their content. The Internet in particular is under assault, even as audiences increasingly access and share our content on digital platforms and via social media. The Agency upholds the universal right of citizens everywhere to receive and impart information without restriction. USAGM works on many fronts to make news and information accessible to its global audiences with the aim of enabling not only unfettered access to agency products but also the full spectrum of independent news sources on the Internet.

USAGM will:

- Lead in assisting the world's citizens to gain access to information on all platforms, advocating on the international stage and coordinating within the U.S. government and with international broadcasters and other allies.
- Help audiences understand through journalistic reports the practices and policies of Internet censorship and circumvention.
- Fund technologies that counter Internet censorship and Internet blocking and allow citizens and journalists to operate securely online.
- Increase effective use of social media and digital platforms to combat censorship.
- Provide in-house digital expertise to address real-time censorship and jamming issues in targeted regions.
- Cultivate information-sharing relationships on Internet freedom matters with other federal agencies, nonprofits, and the private sector.

USAGM tracks its progress in achieving Impact Objective 3 with the following performance goal:

### Impact Performance Goal 3.1: Increase usage of internet freedom products

	FY 2016 Actual	FY 2017 Actual	FY 2018 Target	FY 2018 Actual	FY 2019 Target <sup>1</sup>	FY 2020 Target <sup>1</sup>
<b>Increase weekly unique users on Psiphon</b>	NA	649,040	812,500	967,763	1,000,000	1,200,000
<b>Increase weekly visits to USAGM web sites through Psiphon</b>	NA	8,794,243	10,500,000	8,452,100	13,125,000	13,125,000
<b>Increase proxy traffic through Psiphon</b>	11,048 TB	15,402 TB	19,000 TB	21,725 TB	24,000 TB	29,000 TB

<sup>1</sup>Factors contributing to FY 2019 and 2020 targets include evaluations of Internet censorship changes in target countries, audience metrics and surveys from USAGM broadcasters, as well as projections based on usage trends from previous years.

**Indicators:**

The measures for this performance goal reflect various aspects of usage of Psiphon, a USAGM-supported proxy tool for circumventing internet censorship. Metrics include average number of weekly unique users on Psiphon, average weekly visits to USAGM websites through Psiphon (measured as the number of landing pages served), and annual proxy traffic through Psiphon.

**Contextual Indicator:**

2018 Freedom House Rankings	# of countries with customized USAGM-sponsored circumvention tools ranked as:		
	Not Free	Partly Free	Free
FREEDOM ON THE NET	10	2	4

In addition to these performance goals, USAGM will present narrative evidence that it is accomplishing Impact Objective 3, including:

- Engagement on the international stage to combat satellite and radio jamming
- Development of new technologies and activities to counter Internet censorship and blocking
- Education about and promotion of circumvention and digital security technologies

**Impact Objective 4: Optimize program delivery by market and expand engagement on digital platforms**

It is essential that USAGM reach audiences on their preferred media platforms. USAGM is aligning how it delivers content with how consumers access it now and in the future. USAGM will continue growing and enhancing new distribution methods, with specific attention to social and mobile platforms. On traditional media, USAGM is continually migrating to the most effective broadcast channels, including satellite and broadcast television and FM radio. The Agency is aggressively expanding and improving on its successful model of affiliations and syndication of content on all platforms. Ultimately, USAGM seeks to utilize the platforms that work best for the market at hand to get content to as many users as possible.

USAGM will:

- Increase distribution on platforms that USAGM knows audiences are using – FM, satellite and broadcast television, and mobile devices – continuing our migration away from legacy platforms where they do not reach audiences.
- Expand reach and engagement on digital platforms, including new streaming and over-the-top platforms.
- Find creative ways to penetrate closed societies, through flash drives, DVDs, and other alternative delivery means.
- Expand local distribution through affiliation with strong local television and FM radio stations and digital platforms and, where possible, installation of FM transmitters.
- Draw on research and other inputs to tailor format and presentation styles to audience needs and media usage habits, creating content that can break through ever-increasing clutter.
- Exploit the falling cost of video production by updating USAGM broadcasting facilities to support growing audience appetite for TV and video.

USAGM tracks its progress in achieving Impact Objective 4 with the following performance goals:

#### Impact Performance Goal 4.1: Increase web traffic

AVERAGE WEEKLY VISITS TO WEBSITE <sup>1</sup>						
Network	FY 2016 Actual	FY 2017 Actual	FY 2018 Target (increase over FY 17)	FY 2018 Actual	FY 2019 Target (increase over FY 18) <sup>2</sup>	FY 2020 Target (increase over FY19) <sup>2</sup>
VOA	6,957,800	8,810,700	9,691,800	8,850,000	2%	2%
RFE/RL	7,500,200	8,464,600	8,887,800	9,751,200	5%	5%
RFA	848,700	901,200	946,200	1,010,900	5%	5%
MBN	490,300	1,092,400	1,201,600	854,500	15%	15%
OCB	162,800	172,500	189,800	142,600	10%	10%

<sup>1</sup>Data in the chart above should be compared across years and not across broadcasters, in part because broadcasters are measuring different numbers of websites and languages. Numbers do not include some proxy

visits. These figures include some, but not all, traffic to apps. Traffic to social media sites (Facebook, Twitter, etc.) is also not included here.

<sup>2</sup> Factors contributing to FY 2019 and 2020 targets include current positioning in the media market, anticipated future trends, and proposed budgetary resources, specifically linear regression of past performance and industry forecasts of digital media access across target regions. Projected growth is lowest for VOA due to the relative linguistic diversity of the audience it must cover. VOA's targets take into account budget cuts in radio and TV, which may drive some audience segments to digital platforms while also reducing content available for reuse on digital platforms.

#### Indicator:

**AVERAGE WEEKLY VISITS:** This indicator measures the number of visits to USAGM websites and mobile sites over a 52-week period and creates an average based on 52 weeks of data coinciding with the fiscal year. This indicator does not measure visits to social media sites such as Facebook, YouTube, or Twitter. Average weekly visits are derived from online analytic data tracked in Adobe Analytics. Unlike measured weekly audience reported above, average weekly visits to websites are not unduplicated, meaning one individual could account for multiple visits.

### Impact Performance Goal 4.2: Increase audience interaction via social media

DIGITAL ENGAGEMENT ACTIONS						
Network	FY 2016 Actual	FY 2017 Actual	FY 2018 Target (increase over FY 17)	FY 2018 Actual	FY 2019 Target (increase over FY 18) <sup>1</sup>	FY 2020 Target (increase over FY 19) <sup>1</sup>
VOA	Baselines not established.	4,937,600	5,431,400	4,126,700	2%	4%
RFE/RL		2,106,100	2,316,700	2,261,300	1%	5%
RFA		1,125,300	1,237,800	823,200	1%	4%
MBN		646,700	743,700	883,000	15%	15%
OCB		32,200	35,420	2,541,000	10%	10%

<sup>1</sup> Factors contributing to FY 2019 and 2020 targets include current positioning in the media market, anticipated future trends, and proposed budgetary resources. Changes in the Facebook algorithm favoring posts from friends and family over those of “publishers” have reduced the number of USAGM posts that appear in people’s Facebook feeds. For RFA this change has been particularly acute as the new approach was piloted in one of its largest social media markets – Cambodia. Furthermore, qualitative research for RFA suggests growing fear of engaging on Facebook with sensitive news content in Southeast Asia. Although there was a drop in direct audience interaction with content, other metrics show double digit growth in RFA subscriptions and fans, especially on YouTube and an increase in video viewing overall and video retention. For MBN, an increase in digital engagement actions expected as a result of enhanced focus on digital and revamped content and production.

**Indicator:**

**DIGITAL ENGAGEMENT ACTIONS:** This indicator measures the weekly average number of engagement actions on currently measurable platforms, currently Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube. Engagement actions include measurable actions that demonstrate an activity beyond just consuming content: liking or “favoriting” or reacting to a USAGM post, commenting on a USAGM post, sharing/retweeting a USAGM post, liking or following a USAGM account or profile for the first time (i.e. this is counted only once, during the first week someone follows a USAGM account.) These actions are tracked through online analytics by a third party vendor (Socialbakers).

**Impact Performance Goal 4.3: Build strong affiliate relationships**

NUMBER OF AFFILIATIONS (BROADCAST, ONLINE, AND MOBILE)						
	FY 2016 Actual	FY 2017 Actual <sup>1</sup>	FY 2018 Target <sup>2</sup>	FY2018 Actual	FY 2019 Target <sup>3</sup>	FY 2020 Target <sup>4</sup>
VOA	2,265	2,411	1,726	2,247	2,000	1,600
RFE/RL	761	798	671	777	815	700
RFA	35	7	8	11	9	10

<sup>1</sup> The drop in RFA affiliates in FY 2017 reflects the loss of affiliates in Cambodia and the correction of an erroneous overcount in previous years.

<sup>2</sup> Anticipated losses were due to proposed FY18 reductions to services with large affiliate networks in both VOA and RFE/RL.

<sup>3</sup> Factors contributing to FY 2019 targets include current positioning in the media market, anticipated future trends, and proposed budgetary resources, specifically a restructuring of the affiliate database system which resulted in a lower affiliate count, with a focus on larger high-impact affiliates within that count as well as a loss of RFA affiliates in Burma due to government pressure surrounding Rohingya reporting.

<sup>4</sup> Factors contributing to FY 2020 targets include current positioning in the media market, anticipated future trends, and proposed budgetary resources, specifically anticipated reductions due to VOA Indonesian, VOA Spanish, and VOA Urdu programming cuts and RFE/RL Georgian, Montenegrin, and Macedonian elimination.

**Indicator:**

**AFFILIATIONS:** Affiliates – broadcast stations and digital platforms that carry USAGM content – are a primary gatekeeper between the USAGM networks and their end users. Counting the number of affiliates, then, offers a measure of the appeal of the programming to these vital gatekeepers and distributors of the

USAGM networks' content. As shortwave usage wanes in parts of the world, the importance of affiliations with local medium wave and FM radio and television stations grows. With the growth of digital and mobile technology, there are new forms of affiliations, including online and mobile. The affiliation indicator counts all stations or outlets that regularly retransmit content from the USAGM networks

In addition to these performance goals, USAGM will present narrative evidence that it is accomplishing Impact Objective 4, including:

- Shifting platforms to respond to changing audience preferences
- Using alternative, creative ways to deliver content

#### **Impact Objective 5: Serve as an authoritative source of information on U.S. news, policy, and society**

Representing American society and presenting and discussing U.S. policy are legislated mandates for the Agency and thus constitute mission imperatives. USAGM's coverage of the U.S. is comprehensive across all elements of society, but aims overall to convey the practice of democracy in all of its complexity. It is not about persuading audiences to admire the U.S.; it is about helping them see how the U.S. manages the challenges of a democratic society – from economic growth to fiscal crises to race relations to educating youth to addressing environmental change. These topic areas find ready comparisons in USAGM's target countries and resonate with the Agency's audiences in practical, meaningful ways. Carrying out this element of our mission requires sensitivity and creativity. Currents of anti-Americanism still run strong in some parts of the world, necessitating deft outreach that stresses dialogue, not monologue. The way people interact with media today, with emphasis on interaction, further affirms this approach. At the same time, America's still dominant role on the global stage makes it a focal point of international attention, and its national language is the one that tens of millions of people around the world seek to learn. VOA, in particular, is uniquely



mandated and positioned to leverage these advantages to connect with diverse international audiences, serving as a U.S. news bureau for affiliate partners and providing English-learning programming.

USAGM will:

- Serve as a U.S. bureau for media outlets across the world that wish to engage with us for news, analysis, and perspectives from the United States – on the model that has succeeded in Ukraine, Latin America, Nigeria, Indonesia, and elsewhere.
- Portray the breadth and diversity of the American experience, with particular attention to diaspora communities and Americans outside of big cities.
- Emphasize English learning as a vehicle for positive audience engagement and interaction as well as information on American society and culture.
- Meet the global interest in American politics with in-depth coverage and analysis of national elections and coverage of other political events to impart the news and to elucidate the democratic process, with stories localized to make them interesting to specific target regions.
- Satisfy the world’s growing appetite for learning English through TV and radio programs, online instruction, printed instructional materials, and innovative short-form videos designed for social media.

USAGM tracks its progress in achieving Impact Objective 5 with the following performance goal:

Impact Performance Goal 5.1: Provide programming that increases audiences’ understanding of the U.S.

<b>UNDERSTANDING OF AMERICAN SOCIETY<sup>1</sup></b> <i>Percent of weekly audience who report that the broadcasts have increased their understanding of American society somewhat or a great deal</i>						
NETWORK	FY 2016 Actual	FY 2017 Actual	FY 2018 Target	FY 2018 Actual	FY 2019 Target <sup>2</sup>	FY 2020 Target <sup>2</sup>
	Simple average	Weighted average				
VOA	62	67	70	62	61	61
MBN	45	44	50	42	50	55
OCB	NA	85	85	85	90	95

<sup>1</sup>Beginning with FY 2017, the scores for understanding of American society are weighted averages, based on audience size, of all understanding of American society scores obtained by an entity. In previous years, these scores

were simple averages of the scores by country. Scores from FY 2016 and prior years are not comparable to the FY 2017 and subsequent scores.

<sup>2</sup>Factors contributing to FY 2019 and 2020 targets include current positioning in the media market, anticipated future trends, and proposed budgetary resources. VOA expects that new data arriving in FY 2019 and 2020 may show an erosion in qualitative indicators, such as understanding of American society, as a result of multiple factors including decreases in original content, more limited broadcast hours, and changing attitudes toward the U.S. in target countries. MBN expects moderate increases in this indicator as a result of greater U.S.-focused programming despite the fact that most audiences do not closely follow U.S. news and events.

## Indicator:

**UNDERSTANDING OF AMERICAN SOCIETY:** This indicator is determined by a question in representative surveys asking past week listeners/viewers/online users of a USAGM entity's broadcasts in a particular language whether the broadcasts have "increased their understanding of American society." The answers are registered on a four-point scale: a great deal, somewhat, very little, or not at all. The understanding indicator is a weighted average, by audience size, of the percentage of those answering the question in the survey (excluding those who did not respond or did not know) who chose "a great deal" or "somewhat."

<b>UNDERSTANDING OF U.S. FOREIGN POLICY<sup>1</sup></b> <i>Percent of weekly audience who report that the broadcasts have increased their understanding of U.S. foreign policy somewhat or a great deal</i>						
NETWORK	FY 2016 Actual	FY 2017 Actual	FY 2018 Target	FY 2018 Actual	FY 2019 Target <sup>2</sup>	FY 2020 Target <sup>2</sup>
	Simple average	Weighted average				
VOA	60	68	65	60	60	60
MBN	43	43	50	42	50	55
OCB	NA	89	89	89	90	95

<sup>1</sup> Beginning with FY 2017, the scores for understanding of U.S. foreign policy are weighted averages, based on audience size, of all understanding of U.S. foreign policy scores obtained by an entity. In previous years, these scores were simple averages of the scores by country. Scores from FY 2016 and prior years are not comparable to the FY 2017 and subsequent scores.

<sup>2</sup>Factors contributing to FY 2019 and 2020 targets include current positioning in the media market, anticipated future trends, and proposed budgetary resources. VOA expects that new data arriving in FY 2019 and 2020 may show an erosion in qualitative indicators, such as understanding of U.S. foreign policy, as a result of multiple factors including decreases in original content, more limited broadcast hours, and changing attitudes toward the U.S. in target countries. MBN expects moderate increases in this

**Indicator:**

UNDERSTANDING OF U.S. FOREIGN POLICY: This indicator is determined by a question in representative surveys asking past week listeners/viewers/online users of a USAGM entity's broadcasts in a particular language whether the broadcasts have "increased their understanding of U.S. foreign policy." The answers are registered on a four-point scale – a great deal, somewhat, very little, or not at all. The understanding indicator is a weighted average, by audience size, of the percentage of those answering the question in the survey (excluding those who did not respond or did not know) who chose "a great deal" or "somewhat."

Impact Performance Goal 5.2: Provide exceptional news and information

<b>UNIQUENESS<sup>1</sup></b> <i>Percent of weekly audience reporting that broadcaster presents information they cannot get from other media</i>						
NETWORK	FY 2016 Actual	FY 2017 Actual	FY 2018 Target	FY 2018 Actual	FY 2019 Target <sup>2</sup>	FY 2020 Target <sup>2</sup>
	Simple average	Weighted average				
VOA	25	29	22	31	29	29

<sup>1</sup> Beginning with FY 2017, the scores for uniqueness are weighted averages, based on audience size, of all uniqueness scores obtained by an entity. In previous years, these scores were simple averages of the scores by country. Scores from FY 2016 and prior years are not comparable to the FY 2017 and subsequent scores. Uniqueness scores for the other networks are presented in Impact Performance Goal 6.2: Serve as a surrogate news operation, delivering information otherwise not available in local markets.

<sup>2</sup> Factors contributing to FY 2019 and 2020 targets include current positioning in the media market, anticipated future trends, and proposed budgetary resources. VOA expects that new data arriving in FY 2019 and 2020 may show an erosion in qualitative indicators, such as uniqueness, as a result of multiple factors including decreases in original content, more limited broadcast hours, and changing attitudes toward the U.S. in target countries.

**Indicator:**

**UNIQUENESS:** This indicator is determined by a question in representative surveys asking past week listeners/viewers/online users of any language how much of the information provided by the entity is also available from other sources on the radio, TV, or Internet. The answers are registered on a four-point scale – All of it is available elsewhere, Some of it is available elsewhere, Very little of it is available elsewhere, None of it is available elsewhere. The unique information indicator is a weighted average, by audience size, of the percentage of those answering the question in the survey who chose “very little” or “none.”

In addition to these performance goals, USAGM will present narrative evidence that it is accomplishing Impact Objective 5, including:

- Successful deployment of the U.S. bureau model
- Exceptional or unique coverage of important U.S. news stories

## Impact Objective 6: Serve as a surrogate news operation, delivering information otherwise not available in local markets

In environments where state-run media are dominant and independent media are either not allowed or not fully established, the USAGM networks, particularly RFE/RL and RFA, often play a surrogate role, acting as local media would if they were free to operate. In this role, the networks emphasize domestic news for their geographically-defined audiences and cover developments specific to defined target markets, especially in countries without a free press or in transition. They focus on local news events not covered in state-controlled domestic media, as well as other sensitive topics, including religion, science, and locally-banned literature and music. They give voice to dissidents and opposition movements, while maintaining balanced coverage, and serve as platforms for a range of opinions and voices from these countries.

USAGM will:

- Build strong networks of local stringers across target regions.
- Where possible, maintain an on-the-ground bureau presence, to report local news from a local perspective.
- Where in-country access is limited, cultivate networks of trusted contributors and closely monitor official and alternative media.
- Use social media and other interactive tools to gather information from closed societies, amplifying voices of those struggling for free expression.
- Provide platforms for free expression of various viewpoints and work to help people bridge traditional divides, including class, ethnicity, religion, etc.

USAGM tracks progress in achieving Impact Objective 6 with the following performance goals:

Impact Performance Goal 6.1: Provide programming that increases audiences' understanding of current events in target countries

<b>UNDERSTANDING OF CURRENT EVENTS IN TARGET COUNTRY<sup>1</sup></b> <i>Percent of weekly audience who report that the broadcasts have increased their understanding of current events in the target country somewhat or a great deal</i>					
<b>NETWORK</b>	<b>FY 2017 Actual</b>	<b>FY 2018 Target</b>	<b>FY 2018 Actual</b>	<b>FY 2019 Target<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>FY 2020 Target<sup>2</sup></b>
<b>RFE/RL</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>79</b>
<b>RFA</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>86</b>
<b>MBN</b>					
<b>OCB</b>					
<b>VOA in relevant markets to be determined</b>					

<sup>1</sup>This is a new measure in FY 2018. Actuals are not available for FY 2016 and only available for a small number of language services for FY 2017 and FY 2018. The question will be incorporated into the core USAGM questionnaire going forward.

<sup>2</sup> Factors contributing to FY 2019 and 2020 targets include current positioning in the media market, anticipated future trends, and proposed budgetary resources.

#### **Indicator:**

**UNDERSTANDING OF CURRENT EVENTS IN TARGET COUNTRY:** This indicator is determined by a question in representative surveys asking past week listeners/viewers/online users of [language] whether the broadcasts have “increased their understanding of current events in [target country].” The answers are registered on a four-point scale: a great deal, somewhat, very little, or not at all. The understanding indicator is a weighted average, by audience size, of the percent of those answering the question in the survey (excluding those who did not respond or did not know) who chose “a great deal” or “somewhat.”

## Impact Performance Goal 6.2: Provide exceptional news and information

<b>UNIQUENESS<sup>1</sup></b> <i>Percent of weekly audience reporting that broadcaster presents information they cannot get from other media</i>						
NETWORK	FY 2016 Actual	FY 2017 Actual	FY 2018 Target	FY 2018 Actual	FY 2019 Target <sup>2</sup>	FY 2020 Target <sup>2</sup>
	Simple average	Weighted average				
RFE/RL	25	22	28	25	25	26
RFA	NA	82	82	40	50	60
MBN	NA	20	48	32	48	55
OCB	NA	78	78	78	85	90

<sup>1</sup>For FY 2017, the MBN estimate was based on Libya only. Beginning with FY 2017, the scores for uniqueness are weighted averages, based on audience size, of all uniqueness scores obtained by an entity. In previous years, these scores were simple averages of the scores by country. Scores from FY 2016 and prior years are not comparable to the FY 2017 and subsequent scores.

<sup>2</sup>Factors contributing to FY 2019 and 2020 targets include current positioning in the media market, anticipated future trends, and proposed budgetary resources. RFA's measure for this indicator was derived only from Burma data, where the rapidly changing media landscape and negative responses to Rohingya coverage may have influenced this figure. FY 2019 and FY 2020 targets assume additional data from upcoming surveys. MBN expects modest increases in this indicator as a result of increased focus on content not available in other regional media.

### Indicator:

The uniqueness indicator is defined above under Impact Performance Goal 5.2.

In addition to these performance goals, the USAGM will present narrative evidence that it is accomplishing Impact Objective 6, including:

- Coverage of important local news stories that other media are not covering

## Impact Objective 7: Engage local media and empower citizen information gathering and exchange

Local media affiliates are the primary means through which the USAGM networks now reach their target audiences in most markets. However, the relationship with these media partners is about much more than just content delivery. By developing these media networks and connecting our affiliates to one another, USAGM fosters rich, open media ecosystems. USAGM leads by example in its journalistic practices, but it also increasingly partners with affiliates on content

co-creation, sometimes even participating in daily editorial meetings. USAGM also provides training to indigenous media on topics ranging from journalism principles to business practices. In a similar way, USAGM works to connect audiences to one another, and to foster the free flow of information, often through a wide array of web, mobile, and social media tools. These tools have made media personal, moving the power from centralized broadcasters to a new class of bloggers, activists, videographers, and a content-generating public. They are using media not only to tell their stories on a digital world stage but also to connect with one another to chart the future of their communities and build new forms of civil society.

USAGM will:

- Deepen relationships with key local media affiliates, providing editorial guidance, training and technical assistance, and other resources to strengthen local, independent media sectors.
- Nurture citizen journalism and channel user-generated content from inside repressive states.
- Link citizens within repressive societies to one another and to external audiences through social media networks.
- Facilitate dialogue across religious, national and ethnic groups.
- Enter into a “global conversation” with USAGM audiences by using social media tools to identify, source, and distribute news content into the channels where people are having conversations about their community and the world.



The USAGM tracks progress in achieving Impact Objective 7 with the following performance goals:

Impact Performance Goal 7.1: Increase engagement with local media outlets

	FY 2017 Actual	FY 2018 Target	FY 2018 Actual	FY 2019 Target <sup>1</sup>	FY 2020 Target <sup>1</sup>
<b>Number of USAGM affiliates with national reach that air custom or interactive segments during primetime<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>50</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>70</b>
<b>Number of weekly downloads from affiliate content distribution portal, Direct<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>1,650</b>	<b>1,413</b>	<b>2,750</b>	<b>3,000</b>	<b>3,500</b>

<sup>1</sup> Factors contributing to FY 2019 and 2020 targets include current positioning in the media market, anticipated future trends, and proposed budgetary resources.

<sup>2</sup> These were new measures in FY 2017. Actuals for FY 2016 are not available.

**Indicators:**

The indicators for increasing engagement with local media outlets include: the number of USAGM affiliates (radio or TV) with national reach that air custom or interactive segments (also known as “bureau” reports, produced jointly with the USAGM networks) during primetime and the average number of weekly downloads (audio, video, text, or photos) from Direct, the affiliate content distribution portal.

## Impact Performance Goal 7.2: Increase sharing of USAGM programming

<b>SHARING</b> <i>Percent of weekly audience who shares news heard/read/seen on broadcaster at least once a week<sup>1</sup></i>						
NETWORK	FY 2016 Actual	FY 2017 Actual	FY 2018 Target	FY 2018 Actual	FY 2019 Target <sup>2</sup>	FY 2020 Target <sup>2</sup>
	Simple average	Weighted average				
VOA	55	45	44	46	45	45
RFE/RL	44	48	52	44	48	50
RFA	64	49	50	41	42	45
MBN	52	67	67	67	67	55
OCB	NA	56	56	56	70	75

<sup>1</sup> Beginning with FY 2017, the scores for sharing are weighted averages, based on audience size, of all sharing scores obtained by an entity. In previous years, these scores were simple averages of the scores by country. Scores from FY 2016 and prior years are not comparable to the FY 2017 and subsequent scores.

<sup>2</sup> Factors contributing to FY 2019 and 2020 targets include current positioning in the media market, anticipated future trends, and proposed budgetary resources. VOA expects that new data arriving in FY 2019 and 2020 may show an erosion in qualitative indicators, such as sharing, as a result of multiple factors including decreases in original content, more limited broadcast hours, and changing attitudes toward the U.S. in target countries. For RFA, qualitative research suggests a growing fear of sharing news content on social media in Cambodia and Burma, especially around domestic topics heavily featured in RFA, including coverage of the Rohingya crisis in Burma. MBN expects a decrease in this measure in FY 2020 due to the increased use of digital media in the MENA and the reluctance of audiences to share information via digital media.

### Indicator:

**SHARING OF PROGRAMMING:** This indicator is determined by a question in representative surveys asking past week listeners/viewers/online users in any language how often they share news that they have heard, seen, or read from a USAGM entity with friends or relatives, or with their social network. The answers are registered on a five-point range – Daily or most days per week, At least once a week, At least once a month, Less than once a month, Never. The sharing indicator is a weighted average, by audience size, of the percentage of those answering the question in the survey who chose “Daily or most days per week” or “At least once a week.”

In addition to these performance goals, USAGM will present narrative evidence that it is accomplishing Impact Objective 7, including:

- Substantive engagement with key local media affiliates
- Citizen journalism and user-generated content
- USAGM-facilitated dialogue across religious, national and ethnic groups (on interactive programs and digital platforms)

## Agility Objective 1: Run USAGM as a nimble, resilient, cost-effective, and state-of-the-art media enterprise

By virtue of historical circumstance, today's USAGM is a complex amalgam of diverse media outlets and respective support organizations, operating under different legal and administrative frameworks. The result is an organization that has sometimes lacked the agility to operate in a rapidly evolving global media environment and the standardization that enables rational resource allocations. However, in recent years, the Agency has begun a fundamental transformation in order to appropriately fulfill its charter and meet the challenges of growing geopolitical instability and substantial budgetary constraints.

USAGM will:

- Pursue an efficient and effective organizational structure.
- Enhance the Agency's technological platforms and workflows, enabling it to continually adapt to global standards in content acquisition, manipulation, and distribution, as well as audience consumption behaviors.
- Automate and streamline business processes and workflows.
- Employ cloud-based technology to achieve nimbleness, resilience, and cost-savings.
- Protect USAGM from persistent threats from state and non-state actors through enhancements to its cybersecurity posture.

USAGM tracks progress in achieving Agility Objective 1 with the following performance goals:

### Agility Performance Goal 1.1: Streamline program delivery

	FY 2016 Actual	FY 2017 Actual	FY 2018 Target	FY 2018 Actual	FY 2019 Target	FY 2020 Target
<b>Transition to Internet and fiber optic content distribution to stations and uplinks, migrating away from more costly satellite distribution</b>	<p>100% of USAGM owned/operated uplink facilities have MPLS or Internet connectivity for content distribution.</p> <p>40% of satellite-based distribution feeds (including OCB, PNN, and VOA China TV) have been transferred to terrestrial circuits.</p>	50% of satellite-based distribution feeds transferred to terrestrial circuits.	<p>75% of satellite based distribution feeds transferred to terrestrial circuits;</p> <p>Complete reengineering of MPLS network from Hub and Spoke to Multi-Point direct to uplink distribution architecture;</p> <p>25% of satellite based contribution feeds transferred to commodity/public internet.</p>	<p>USAGM is in the process of transferring these feeds and expects 75% of satellite-based distribution feeds transferred to terrestrial circuits by Q3 FY 2019.</p> <p>50% of MPLS network transferred from Hub and Spoke to any-to-any mesh network.</p> <p>40% of contribution feeds are now leveraging public Internet for Primary or Back-up.</p>	<p>100% of satellite based distribution feeds convert to terrestrial circuits.</p> <p>75% of all contribution feeds moved off satellite for either primary or secondary connections.</p> <p>If secondary, costly satellite back-up is eliminated.</p>	<p>100% of all satellite contribution feeds are converted to terrestrial circuits.</p> <p>100% of all DTH content migrated to DTH multiplex platforms housed with like news and current affairs services in same language.</p>
<b>Optimize remaining shortwave distribution, taking advantage of the strategic location and lower operating cost of Kuwait Transmitting Station</b>	NA	Closed Sri Lanka Transmitting Station	<p>Close Poro Transmitting Station</p> <p>Procure and install new antennas for Kuwait Transmitting Station</p> <p>Review all transmission leases to identify further opportunities for savings</p>	<p>Poro Transmitting Station closed; handover pending final action by Filipino government.</p> <p>Installation of new antenna at Kuwait Transmitting Station underway, expected to be complete in Q2 FY 2019.</p>	<p>Final handover of Poro Transmitting Station.</p> <p>Complete installation of new antenna at Kuwait Transmitting Station.</p> <p>Continue to invest in the expansion of the Kuwait Transmitting Station, utilizing whatever resources may be available, in order to realize longer-term savings.</p> <p>Restore CNMI Transmitting Station with whatever resources may be available.</p> <p>Review all transmission leases to identify further opportunities for savings.</p>	Maintenance and repair efforts to USAGM transmission facilities focused on functionality and protecting human life and property.

<b>Expand FM transmissions, to match audience preferences</b>	5 FMs installed: 1 in Niger, 4 in Dem. Rep. of Congo	All 5 FMs in progress; contract actions completed, installations will fall into FY2018	Install new FM transmitters in Brazzaville, Rep. of Congo; Mogadishu, Somalia; and Mbuji-Mayi and Katanga, DRC	New FMs installed in Brazzaville and Pointe Noire, Rep. of Congo; Mbuji-Mayi and Katanga, DRC	Install FM transmitters in key cities: Lome, Togo; potential FMs in Kampala, Uganda; Mombasa, Kenya, and Lusaka, Zambia currently being pursued; Maputo, Mozambique Harare, Zimbabwe under consideration	Potential FMs in Vientiane, Laos; Phnom Penh; and FMs in Douala and Yaounde, Cameroon under consideration
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## Agility Performance Goal 1.2: Automate and streamline key business processes

	<b>FY 2016 Actual</b>	<b>FY 2017 Actual</b>	<b>FY 2018 Target</b>	<b>FY 2018 Actual</b>	<b>FY 2019 Target</b>	<b>FY 2020 Target</b>
<b>Complete business process reengineering and automation of business and media workflows</b>	Automated Time and Attendance System rolled out to 85% of federal entities, with a projected completion in Q1 FY 2017. Automated Time and Attendance system now being incorporated into existing payroll (DFAS) system.  Procure to Pay has been put on hold, pending funding.	Completed integration of payroll and time and attendance systems.  Completed rollout of electronic performance management system.  Deployed electronic invoice payment system for domestic invoices; foreign invoices to be added in FY 2018.	Begin consolidation of support team efforts, including IT help desk, building facilities, Network Control Center, and telecoms, into integrated Solutions Center.	Consolidation of support team efforts, including IT help desk, building facilities, Network Control Center, and telecoms, into integrated Solutions Center (now named TSI Help Center) began.	Complete consolidation of support efforts into TSI Help Center.  Participate in Agency effort to identify a new HR management system. The current system, provided through a partnership with the Department of Defense, is being discontinued in 2019.  Roll out unified communications capability to 67% of Agency userscommunications capability to 67% of Agency userscommunications capability to 67% of Agency users.	Continue to refine and improve USAGM's suite of key business process tools  Extend unified communications capability to 100% of Agency users.

Agility Performance Goal 1.3: Leverage cloud services and other technologies to boost workforce effectiveness and efficiency.

	FY 2017 Baseline	FY 2018 Target	FY 2018 Actual	FY 2019 Target	FY 2020 Target
<b>Migrate onsite systems to cloud for enhanced effectiveness and efficiency</b>	<p>Transitioned onsite digital archive system to a private cloud with recovery capability.</p> <p>Completed migration of intranet content to cloud-based platform.</p> <p>Upgraded IT infrastructure with more storage, bandwidth, and security.</p>	<p>Commence migration of onsite workstation/user storage to cloud for enhanced portability and a more robust backup/disaster recovery profile.</p> <p>Begin transition of some broadcast operations to cloud-based playout and switching systems</p>	<p>Migration of onsite workstation/user storage to cloud for enhanced portability and a more robust backup/disaster recovery profile nearly complete (80%). Full completion expected in Q2 FY 2019.</p> <p>Transition of some broadcast operations to cloud-based playout and switching systems has not yet begun.</p>	<p>Complete migration of onsite workstation/user storage to cloud for enhanced portability and a more robust backup/disaster recovery profile.</p> <p>Continue transition of radio broadcast operations to cloud-based playout and switching systems.</p> <p>Begin implementing off-site, carrier neutral Data Center.</p> <p>Implement high availability and high capacity metro fiber ring between USAGM headquarters and Data Center. Relocate WAN and all connections to new Data Center. Increase capacity to the Internet tenfold and implement high-speed cloud connections.</p> <p>Mature and expand support for business analytics suite that drives USAGM increased utilization of data-driven strategy and decision-making</p>	<p>Relocate USAGM headquarters network core to offsite data center to replace current core and to facilitate potential building relocation.</p> <p>Leverage Data Center-hosted storage systems to replace current on-premises storage.</p> <p>Implement Managed Service Provider (MSP) service model for 24 x 7 x 365 network support.</p> <p>Complete transition of radio broadcast operations to cloud-based playout and switching systems.</p> <p>Extend business analytics suite and AI to assist journalists by automating a number of translation and simple story posting tasks</p>

Note: This is a new measure in FY 2017. Actuals are not available for FY 2016.

Agility Performance Goal 1.4: Strengthen resilience and risk posture of the agency

	FY 2017 Baseline	FY 2018 Target	FY 2018 Actual	FY 2019 Target	FY 2020 Target
<b>Strengthen USAGM's cybersecurity posture</b>	USAGM implemented cybersecurity measures that extend high-level DHS cybersecurity protection to agency-specific gaps, such as email, the network, and end points.	Continue to leverage offerings from the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and key vendors to further bolster USAGM cybersecurity, including piloting DHS's Privileged Account Management and Usage Monitoring Program.	Made progress toward defined level of maturity of IT Information Security Program.  Piloted DHS CDM tools to enhance the Agency's ability to identify and mitigate the impact of cyber threats. Full rollout expected in Q1 FY 2019	Continue to develop IT Information Security Program policies and strategies.  Start to implement Multi-Factor Authentication for all users.  Enhance controls for system access; enhancing cloud system identity management; and enhancing protection of sensitive data and addressing privacy concerns.	Complete maturation of IT Information Security Program policies and strategies.  Implement SSL traffic monitoring capabilities and defenses.  Pilot DHS's Privileged Account Management and Usage Monitoring Program.
<b>Use Enterprise Risk Management<sup>1</sup> to manage risks and optimize costs related to the achievement of USAGM objective</b>	USAGM created an IT risk management division within the Office of the CIO.	Integrate IT risk management processes and decisions into agency-wide ERM system.	USAGM created an agency-level ERM framework, governance structure, and risk identification process.	Identify, assess and analyze enterprise risks and develop a profile that reflects significant risks to achievement of agency mission.	Continue the ERM cycle, advancing toward a more mature model.

Note: This is a new measure in FY 2017. Actuals are not available for FY 2016.

<sup>1</sup>Enterprise Risk Management (ERM) provides a framework which typically involves identifying particular events or circumstances relevant to the organization's objectives (risks and opportunities), assessing them in terms of likelihood and magnitude of impact, determining a response strategy, and monitoring progress



## Agility Performance Goal 1.5: Migrate to High Definition (HD) video production and transmission

	FY 2017 Baseline	FY 2018 Target	FY 2018 Actual	FY 2019 Target	FY 2020 Target
<b>Upgrade program production and delivery systems to HD capable</b>	<p>All TV studios fully HD capable.</p> <p>Automated HD TV channel set up for testing.</p>	<p>Develop more HD channels.</p> <p>Complete upgrade of Digital Asset Management System to make HD production and archiving more efficient.</p> <p>Expand and upgrade onsite storage capacity to accommodate HD files.</p> <p>Enable global delivery of HD content direct-to-home and to affiliates.</p>	<p>Both satellite and terrestrial network have been modified to incorporate HD delivery capability.</p> <p>Preparations completed to enable upgrade of Digital Asset Management System to make HD production and archiving more efficient.</p> <p>Onsite storage capacity to accommodate HD files expanded and upgraded.</p> <p>Global delivery of HD content direct-to-home and to affiliates enabled.</p>	<p>Complete upgrade of Media Asset Management System to make news orchestration, HD production and archiving more efficient.</p> <p>Begin working with USAGM broadcast networks to identify more IT services and systems that can be shared and unified in order to gain efficiencies and cost savings.</p> <p>Continue to evolve global network and agency IT environment utilizing the most cost-effective mix of onsite technology infrastructure with cloud-based and other services to maximize compatibility, sustainability, security, serviceability, reliability, and global accessibility of IT systems.</p>	<p>Continue to evolve global network and agency IT environment utilizing the most cost-effective mix of onsite technology infrastructure with cloud-based and other services to maximize compatibility, sustainability, security, serviceability, reliability, and global accessibility of IT systems.</p> <p>Unify IT systems and services across the Agency where possible in order to gain efficiencies and cost savings.</p>
<b>% of video streams transmitted in HD<sup>1</sup></b>	20%	75%	50%	100%	100%

Note: This are new measures in FY 2017. Actuals are not available for FY 2016.

<sup>1</sup> USAGM anticipates that the SD to HD transition for most of the target audiences will take several more years. Each HD stream will have a corresponding SD stream until that time.

In addition to these performance goals, USAGM will present narrative evidence that it is accomplishing Agility Objective 1, including:

- Ability to nimbly react to a rapidly changing environment
- Resilience in the face of cyber threats
- Other projects to improve workplace safety and security

## **Agility Objective 2: Enhance strategic cooperation among USAGM networks and with support elements**

USAGM is one of the world's largest news-gathering and reporting enterprises with 50 overseas news bureaus, 3,800 employees, and 1,500 stringer reporters. Each of the Agency's five networks generates original reporting every day from in and around the world's hotspots – the Sahel and Central Africa, the Afghanistan-Pakistan border region, Burma, China, Egypt, Iran, North Korea, Russia, Syria, Yemen, et al – primarily in vernacular languages for target audiences in these areas. Too little of this rich content is translated and shared across USAGM to augment international news coverage for other USAGM vernacular services or made available to other global audiences in English. USAGM is remedying this by facilitating coordination among broadcast entities and support elements through the International Coordinating Committee (ICC), comprised of the heads of each of our five networks, and reinforcing their unique and respective mission-driven legislated roles in areas served by multiple broadcasters. USAGM will also continue to collaborate with other U.S. government entities on areas of mutual concern.

USAGM will:

- Ensure coordinated and complementary mission-driven operations and content in markets served by two USAGM media entities.
- Build and sustain internal content-sharing mechanisms, aligning internal editorial support and coordination, as needed.
- Employ new bridge editors and other content-sharing mechanisms to channel original reporting from the language services to the central newsrooms and across USAGM to get maximum mileage out of the content the Agency currently produces.
- Better leverage news gathering, including stringer and correspondent networks or rotating correspondents, across USAGM to ensure required editorial coordination and avoid redundancy.

- Align all support functions to USAGM priorities, strategies, and goals.
- Participate in inter-agency meetings, committees, and strategies in support of U.S. government priorities to ensure that USAGM capabilities, expertise, actions, and impact are fully and accurately shared with other government entities.

USAGM tracks progress in achieving Agility Objective 2 with the following performance goals:

#### Agility Performance Goal 2.1: Increase opportunities for sharing content across USAGM language services and networks

	FY 2017 Baseline	FY 2018 Target	FY 2018 Actual	FY 2019 Target	FY 2020 Target
<b>Establish and employ systems for sharing content across language services and networks, including bridge editors and rotating correspondents</b>	Establish editorial coordinating committee	Share news planning weekly and undertake joint reporting projects	Launched a joint reporting project on China, <i>The Dragon's Reach</i> , involving all five networks	Launch VOA-RFE/RL joint news network for Iran	Modernize network Content Management Systems (CMS)

#### Agility Performance Goal 2.2: Enhance working-level coordination among networks and with support offices

	FY 2017 Baseline	FY 2018 Target	FY 2018 Actual	FY 2019 Target	FY 2020 Target
<b>Building on ICC success, establish cross-agency working groups to leverage resources and expertise across networks and support offices</b>	Editorial coordinating committee established	Extend cross-agency working groups to other areas, such as IT	CIO Council and Digital Governance Council established; CTO appointed	Establish working group on acquired programming  Establish data taxonomy standards through Digital Governance Council	Continue and extend cross-agency working groups, as needed

#### Agility Performance Goal 2.3: Ensure complementary coverage in markets

served by more than one USAGM network.

	FY 2017 Baseline	FY 2018 Target	FY 2018 Actual	FY 2019 Target	FY 2020 Target
<b>Conduct periodic content analysis of services that serve the same market</b>	Conducted content analysis of VOA and RFE/RL coverage in Iran	Conduct content analysis of VOA and RFA coverage in Burma	Conducted content analysis of VOA and RFA coverage in Burma	Conduct content analyses of OCB and VOA coverage in Spanish-language markets	Conduct content analyses in other markets served by multiple networks

In addition to these performance goals, USAGM will present narrative evidence that it is accomplishing Agility Objective 2, including:

- Coordination and planning among networks and with support offices
- Original reporting shared across language services and networks

### Agility Objective 3: Enable greater impact and accountability through rigorous assessment and evaluation

USAGM's mission is about more than just reaching audiences. USAGM has prioritized the development and implementation of a comprehensive Impact Model that assesses the extent to which we are accomplishing this mission and making a difference in people's lives. The Impact Model features a full suite of impact indicators, tied to the mission, which can be customized to different media and political environments. In order to successfully deploy the Impact Model across all USAGM language services, we need fresh and full media research from across our broadcast regions. We also need to make this information available and accessible to decision-makers across USAGM and its networks. In the same way that we hold our networks responsible for accomplishing the USAGM mission, we must also hold individuals responsible for carrying out their job duties in support of the mission. USAGM has renewed its focus on personnel appraisals for the federal workforce and is currently undertaking several initiatives that will strengthen this important accountability tool.

USAGM will:

- Continue to implement and refine the USAGM Impact Model with incremental improvements.
- Offer briefings to U.S. government groups, other international broadcasters, and other interested organizations to share lessons learned from the path-breaking Impact Model.
- Feed impact data into planning and decision-making at all levels of the Agency.
- Within the federal workforce, shift to a five-tier personnel performance appraisal system, tied to performance awards, and hold managers accountable for completing performance appraisals.
- Initiate periodic 360 reviews for all managers in the federal workforce.

USAGM tracks its progress in achieving Agility Objective 3 with the following performance goals:

#### Agility Performance Goal 3.1: Strengthen research and evaluation program

	FY 2017 Actual	FY 2018 Target	FY 2018 Actual	FY 2019 Target <sup>1</sup>	FY 2020 Target <sup>1</sup>
Number of USAGM target countries with full USAGM media surveys conducted in the current or prior fiscal year	33	35	18	22	30
Percentage of surveys used to report performance data that were conducted in the current or prior fiscal year	71%	73%	19%	25%	40%

Note: This is a new measure in FY 2017. Actuals are not available for FY 2016. USAGM is currently rebalancing the range of research methods that it employs, including surveys, commercial ratings, and digital analytics.

### Agility Performance Goal 3.2: Improve personnel evaluation processes

	FY 2017 Actual	FY 2018 Target	FY 2018 Actual	FY 2019 Target	FY 2020 Target
<b>Strengthen personnel evaluation processes and compliance in the federal workforce</b>	Transitioned to 5-tier electronic personnel system, 40% of employees have personnel evaluations completed  Provide managers with training on performance management	1100% of managers trained in performance management  75% of all employees have personnel evaluations completed on-time	77% of managers trained in performance management. Additional training for remaining managers scheduled for Q1 FY 2019  76% of employees had personnel evaluations completed	Continuous refresher on performance management mandated in development plans for managers and supervisors  100% of all employees have personnel evaluations completed on-time	Continuous refresher on performance management mandated in development plans for managers and supervisors  100% of all employees have personnel evaluations completed on-time
<b>Implement 360 feedback tools for managers in the federal workforce (reviews to be scheduled every three years)</b>	Curriculum finalized	100% of managers and supervisors reviewed  75% of managers and supervisors with development plans in place	90% of managers and supervisors reviewed  50% of managers and supervisors with development plans in place	90% of managers and supervisors reviewed  80% of managers and supervisors with development plans in place	100% of managers and supervisors reviewed  100% of managers and supervisors with development plans in place

Note: This is a new measure in FY 2017. Actuals are not available for FY 2016.

### Agility Performance Goal 3.3: Improve performance culture of agency

<b>RESULTS-ORIENTED PERFORMANCE CULTURE INDEX</b> <i>(from Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey)</i>						
	FY 2016 Actual	FY 2017 Actual	FY 2018 Target	FY 2018 Actual	FY 2019 Target	FY 2020 Target
<b>USAGM</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>56</b>
<b>Government-wide (for comparison)</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>54</b>		<b>56</b>		

In addition to these performance goals, USAGM will present narrative evidence that it is accomplishing Agility Objective 3, including:

- Organizational learning through the use of research and evaluation
- Pilot projects to bring research data and evaluation products to senior leaders and other key decision makers

## Agility Objective 4: Foster employee engagement, development, and productivity

USAGM's diverse, multi-cultural, and multi-talented workforce offers a rich range of experience and expertise to carry out the Agency's mission. Key to success in a rapidly changing, highly competitive global media environment is flexibility to develop innovative products for the Agency's target countries consistent with emerging priorities, programming formats, and advances in technology. Enhanced skill sets are required to program for and transmit via multiple media platforms – radio, TV, Internet, mobile, and through social media. USAGM employees are most effective when they are well motivated, trained, and led. Continued efforts to equip and energize the entire USAGM workforce are critical as the Agency confronts mounting competitive pressures worldwide.

USAGM will:

- Promote human capital planning and management as a top priority for senior executives, managers, and supervisors throughout the agency.
- Consistently communicate organizational goals, objectives, priorities, and performance expectations in a timely manner to staff at all levels in the agency.
- Ensure a safe and secure work environment for all employees.
- Implement manager training curriculum focusing on performance management, human capital planning and processes, communication, and financial and administrative management.
- Improve the consistency and credibility of agency performance management processes.
- Develop cross-training and internal development standards and procedures, as applicable.
- Foster employee participation in agency health and wellness programs.

zUSAGM tracks its progress in achieving Agility Objective 4 with the following performance goals:

#### Agility Performance Goal 4.1: Strengthen internal communications

	FY 2017 Baseline	FY 2018 Target	FY 2018 Actual	FY 2019 Target	FY 2020 Target
<b>Establish/enhance two-way communication channels for better lateral and vertical communication</b>	Improved communication by establishing and promoting internal social media, town halls, suggestion boxes, and focus groups	Continue to use communication channels to maximize engagement with all staff	Maintained communication over established channels and introduced an internal social media channel accessible to staff at all five networks	Strengthen communication and engagement by maximizing use of established communication channels and networking events	Optimize a culture of communication and engagement over internal channels and in-person employee engagement
<b>Improve transparency and accountability using internal communication initiatives</b>	Provided an intranet page, weekly internal newsletter, and regular senior leadership announcements to all staff	Continue to build a communication culture that encourages transparency, accountability, and collaboration	Increased visits to CEO intranet page with weekly CEO Flash Report. Hosted internal networking events to strengthen engagement and communication.	Continue to strengthen transparency and accountability by expanding and fortifying internal communication processes	Continue to evaluate and manage internal communication processes to increase staff morale and engagement

#### Agility Performance Goal 4.2: Improve employee training and development

<b>Percentage of employees who believe that the workforce has the job-relevant knowledge and skills necessary to accomplish organizational goals</b> <i>(from Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey)</i>						
	FY 2016 Actual	FY 2017 Actual	FY 2018 Target	FY 2018 Actual	FY 2019 Target	FY 2020 Target
<b>USAGM</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>75</b>
<b>Government-wide (for comparison)</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>71</b>		<b>80</b>		

Note: In FY 2018, the wording of this question changed from “The workforce has the job-relevant knowledge and skills necessary to accomplish organizational goals” to “My work unit has the job-relevant knowledge and skills necessary to accomplish organizational goals.”

USAGM expects slower implementation of this performance target as the result of budgetary constraints forcing a greater reliance on subscription-based, online training.



In addition to these performance goals, USAGM will present narrative evidence that it is accomplishing Agility Objective 4, including:

- Employee training and development
- Mentoring program relaunch

## Performance Budget Appendix: Information on Impact Indicators

The impact indicators that USAGM uses to measure performance are explained above, following each performance goal. Most of these indicators are drawn from USAGM surveys of target countries and regions. These surveys are conducted in accordance with the highest professional standards via local market research firms around the world through contracts with outside research organizations. Response rates vary widely by country, with the higher response rates generally in Africa (Burundi is highest with 99%) and lowest response rates in Eurasia (Belarus is lowest with 26%). Further information on the USAGM research program and methodology can be found on the USAGM website at: <https://www.usagm.gov/strategy-and-performance/performance-accountability/>

Several of the impact indicators (including program credibility, understanding of current events, uniqueness, understanding of American society, understanding of U.S. foreign policy, understanding of current events in target country, and sharing of programming) are based on a subset of surveyed markets. This is due to one of the following reasons:

- The weekly audience was too small for analysis ( $n < 50$ ).
- The question was not asked due to space limitations. This is mainly the case in cases where USAGM buys space on third party surveys, and in some instances where USAGM uses phone rather than face-to-face interviews. (The former require a shorter questionnaire.)

Furthermore, beginning with FY 2017, the scores presented in this section are weighted averages, based on audience size, of all such scores obtained by an entity. In previous years, these scores were simple averages of the scores by country. USAGM shifted to weighted averages in order to more accurately reflect the views of individual audience members. Scores from FY 2016 and prior years are not comparable to the FY 2017 scores.

## Verification and Validation of Indicators

The performance indicators are a best effort to measure each broadcast network's level of performance and effectiveness. To achieve maximum objectivity and independence from the networks being evaluated, these measurements are coordinated by USAGM and performed by outside contractors. VOA, OCB, RFE/RL, RFA and MBN audience research is carried out by multiple independent research contractors. The USAGM research director computes network-wide performance values, and sends them to the appropriate network research director for verification.

The standards of the Conference of International Broadcasting Audience Researchers and other standards-setting organizations are followed for the design and conduct of sample surveys. A technical report is produced for every survey, which describes the sampling plan, the problems encountered in the field, and the methods of resolution. These standards are being improved to allow computation of margins of error that will include design effects, where feasible.

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# Appendix A:

## Summary of Major Reduction Proposals

The USAGM Budget Request for FY 2020 includes reductions and enables the agency to focus available resources on foreign policy priorities, including Russia, North Korea, China, Iran, and countering violent extremism. The Request permits USAGM to maintain investments in modern media platforms, such as television and digital media. In FY 2020, the USAGM proposes to make targeted reductions aimed at minimizing administrative costs, scaling back less effective transmissions, and reducing or ending service in several languages.

Please note that only major reductions are identified below. The staffing reductions described below will take the form of attrition and reductions-in-force, where necessary. The Office of Personnel Management workforce shaping tools, such as voluntary early retirements and voluntary separation incentive payments will be used as appropriate. A full explanation of the change between the FY 2019 and FY 2020 funding levels for each entity can be found in the Summary of Increases and Decreases charts found in the Appendix.

### Voice of America (VOA)

#### Reduce VOA Technical Staffing (Studio and Production Operations) [\$11M]

VOA will reduce staff and some contractors used in studios and central editing as a result of language service programming reduction and via the elimination of the central program acquisition office from a fully-programmed TV and radio stream to a “backhaul” model, enabling reductions in radio and television master controls and traffic personnel.

#### Reduce VOA News Center [\$14M]

VOA will reduce staff and eliminate contractors, leaving only coverage of U.S.-focused topics (science and technology, U.S. politics, U.S. governmental and social systems), resulting in VOA language services generating the majority of their own content and the refocusing of voanews.com from a general news site to a specialty site (about the U.S. and activities in the territories served by VOA).

Reduce VOA Russian Service [5M]

VOA will reduce the Russian service by fifty percent. This will impact the amount of programming VOA can contribute to Current Time as well as reduce staff and contractors.

Eliminate Dedicated VOA Afghanistan Radio and Web Programming [3M]

VOA will reduce Afghanistan-focused service to television-only, with RFE/RL maintaining some radio and web production duties.

Reduce VOA Latin America Division [3M]

VOA will eliminate all non-investment funding, leaving a small staff to provide customized story content for the Spanish Service's affiliates. VOA will also reduce Creole programming.

Reduce VOA Persian Service [6M]

VOA will eliminate employees who lack digital or television skills and whose jobs are largely eliminated by contractors who are competent in those areas. VOA will halt recently launched channel expansion.

Reduce VOA Urdu Radio [2M]

VOA will reduce the daily hours of radio broadcasts to Pakistan.

Reduce VOA Mandarin/Korean/Indonesian Programming [10M]

VOA will reduce Mandarin staff and programming as well as eliminate Mandarin radio programming, end recent expansion into video products for Korean programming, and reduce radio broadcasts by fifty percent to Indonesia.

Reduce VOA Cantonese Radio Programming [1M]

VOA will eliminate Cantonese radio content and associated staff.

Freeze Hiring of Employees and Contractors [2M]

VOA will freeze the hiring of new or replacement employees and contractors during staff turnover, except as it relates to broader efforts to further reduce costs and reposition skillsets.

Reduce Deewa Radio Programming [1M]

VOA will make reductions in radio broadcasts to the Afghanistan/Pakistan border region.

Reduce VOA Chief Digital Office (CDO) [ \$2M]  
VOA will delay transition to a new Content Management System.

## Office of Cuba Broadcasting (OCB)

Program Decreases [ \$16M]  
Staffing and contract reductions in the offices of Directorate, Administration, Radio Martí, New Media, Central News, TV Martí, Technical Operations, Computer Services, and Greenville Transmitting Station.

## International Broadcasting Bureau (IBB)

Internet Anti-Circumvention (IAC) Program Decreases [ \$4M]  
IBB will decrease its Internet Freedom Program by \$4.3M as instructed by OMB.

Decrease Contract Support and Streamline Operations [ \$2M]  
IBB will decrease funding for administrative contract support in the OCFO, OMS, and OWSD. IBB will find efficiencies, streamline operations, and review contracts to reduce operational costs in order to achieve savings in FY 2020.

## Technology, Services and Innovation (TSI)

Radio and Transmission Station Reductions [ \$24M]  
TSI will significantly reduce its portfolio of cross-border shortwave and medium wave radio transmissions, largely prioritizing cuts where the audiences are smallest, in order to free up resources for digital and other platforms. In addition to cutting broadcasts from USAGM owned and operated transmission facilities, TSI will reduce, renegotiate, or eliminate costly leased transmission services wherever possible. These reductions will impact USAGM broadcast operations to certain target regions.

Global Network Realignment [ \$3M]  
TSI will reduce global network satellite delivery costs by migrating more of USAGM's satellite delivery to lower-cost digital distribution technologies and consolidating or eliminating remaining satellite contracts. USAGM TV programming to some target regions may be impacted.



### Administrative, Telecommunication , and Organizational Efficiencies [\$3M]

TSI will find efficiencies, streamline operations, and review contracts to reduce operational costs in order to achieve further savings in FY 2020. TSI efforts will include continued rollout of unified communications, migration of IT systems from on-premises to managed cloud storage, and other economical refinements to USAGM's IT environment. TSI will also realize savings through employee attrition, holding non-critical positions vacant wherever possible.

### Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL)

#### Discontinue Pashto broadcasts to the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) in northwest Pakistan [\$2M]

RFE/RL will discontinue Radio Mashaal, RFE/RL's Pashto-language service targeted to Pakistan's tribal areas, which was previously funded with OCO funds.

#### Reduce Russian Service radio and 24/7 news operation [\$1M]

RFE/RL will reduce the costs of Russian Service radio and 24/7 news operation by finding efficiencies, streamlining operations, and reducing operating expenses.

#### Discontinue Programs [\$4M]

RFE/RL will eliminate its Georgian Service, Tatar-Bashkir Service, and North Caucasus Language Service. RFE/RL will also reduce its Balkans Service by discontinuing operations in Montenegrin and Macedonian. Given the planned discontinuation of MW transmissions from Lithuania, RFE/RL will also discontinue Belarusian radio operations. RFE/RL's Belarusian Service will complete its transition to digital, including audio content in its digital strategy. RFE/RL will also continue to shift Radio Farda to digital and find efficiencies in Radio Farda's operations, including enhancing internal coordination and better leveraging platforms in order to best meet audience needs in Iran.

#### Reduce Locally Employed Staff Costs [\$4M]

RFE/RL will reduce locally employed staff costs.

## Enhancement Decreases [\$18M]

In FY 2016 through FY 2019, RFE/RL received additional funding to expand programming in response to growing threats to democracy and press freedom in RFE/RL's broadcast region. RFE/RL will discontinue these programs in FY 2020 as follows:

- Improvements to Persian Programming – (\$3.9M)
- Countering Russian Influence – (\$4.4M)
- Eastern Europe Language Expansion - Bulgaria and Romania – (\$1M)
- Digital and Video for Next Generation Influencers – (\$4M)
- Raise Your Voice to Central Asia – (\$1.3M)
- Current Time - (\$3.8M)

## Radio Free Asia (RFA)

### Elimination of RFA Cambodian and Mandarin Services [\$11M]

RFA will eliminate Cambodian and Mandarin Services which will save \$8 million in salaries and benefits, \$2 million in operations, and \$0.5 million in headquarters rent when the sublet spaces are vacated by the services.

## Middle East Broadcasting Networks, Inc.. (MBN)

### Reduction in Technical and Bureau Operations [\$15M]

MBN anticipates significant savings resulting from the planned migration to an IP-based infrastructure, including but not limited to reduced costs of content delivery to headquarters and other lower recurring operational costs. Additional savings, as required, will be generated through prioritization of overseas staffing and bureau operations.

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# Appendix B: Budget Tables

U.S. AGENCY FOR GLOBAL MEDIA  
VOICE OF AMERICA  
Summary of Appropriated Funds  
**FY 2018 - FY 2020**  
(in thousands)

VOICE OF AMERICA	FY 2018 ACTUALS	FY 2019 ANNUALIZED CR	FY 2020 REQUEST
<b>VOA DIRECTOR</b>			
VOA Director Office/Resource Management/Research/PR	\$ 7,127	\$ 4,511	\$ 3,511
VOA Chief Digital Officer	\$ 4,833	\$ 5,331	\$ 3,331
Contract Journalists and Other Support	\$ 5,383	\$ 5,500	\$ 4,500
<b>SUBTOTAL, VOA DIRECTOR</b>	<b>\$ 17,343</b>	<b>\$ 15,342</b>	<b>\$ 11,342</b>
<b>ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR, PROGRAMMING DIRECTORATE</b>	<b>\$ 8,239</b>	<b>\$ 9,814</b>	<b>\$ 9,814</b>
<b>STUDIO AND PRODUCTION OPERATIONS</b>			
Director of Operations	\$ 1,296	\$ 3,052	\$ 3,052
Central Production Services Division	\$ 19,691	\$ 8,829	\$ 8,829
Operations Support Division	\$ 20,075	\$ 25,498	\$ 14,498
Technical Support Division	\$ 9,557	\$ 7,772	\$ 7,772
<b>SUBTOTAL, ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR, OPERATIONS</b>	<b>\$ 50,619</b>	<b>\$ 45,151</b>	<b>\$ 34,151</b>
<b>AFRICA DIVISION</b>			
Division Chief	\$ 4,155	\$ 4,017	\$ 4,017
Bambara Service		\$ 307	\$ 307
Central Africa (Kinyarwanda, Kirundi)	\$ 1,484	\$ 1,365	\$ 1,365
English to Africa	\$ 6,394	\$ 5,594	\$ 5,594
French To Africa Service	\$ 4,928	\$ 4,415	\$ 4,415
French to Trans Sahel / Central African Republic			
Hausa Service	\$ 3,145	\$ 3,424	\$ 3,424
Horn Of Africa (Amharic, Tigrigna, Afaan Oromoo)	\$ 3,183	\$ 2,785	\$ 2,785
Portuguese Service	\$ 1,127	\$ 1,434	\$ 1,434
Somali Service	\$ 2,318	\$ 2,382	\$ 2,382
Swahili Service	\$ 1,872	\$ 1,694	\$ 1,694
Zimbabwe/Shona/Ndebele/English	\$ 1,605	\$ 1,186	\$ 1,186
<b>SUBTOTAL, AFRICA DIVISION</b>	<b>\$ 30,211</b>	<b>\$ 28,603</b>	<b>\$ 28,603</b>

VOICE OF AMERICA	FY 2018 ACTUALS	FY 2019 ANNUALIZED CR	FY 2020 REQUEST
<b>EAST ASIA &amp; PACIFIC DIVISION</b>			
<i>Division Chief</i>	\$ 3,036	\$ 2,150	\$ 2,150
<i>Burmese Service</i>	\$ 3,527	\$ 3,168	\$ 3,168
<i>Cantonese Service</i>	\$ 883	\$ 1,187	\$ 187
<i>Indonesian Service</i>	\$ 5,674	\$ 6,173	\$ 5,173
<i>Khmer Service</i>	\$ 2,564	\$ 2,431	\$ 2,431
<i>Korean Service</i>	\$ 6,793	\$ 6,327	\$ 3,327
<i>Lao Service</i>	\$ 898	\$ 754	\$ 754
<i>Mandarin Service</i>	\$ 12,092	\$ 12,342	\$ 6,342
<i>Thai Service</i>	\$ 855	\$ 922	\$ 922
<i>Tibetan Service</i>	\$ 3,710	\$ 3,344	\$ 3,344
<i>Vietnamese Service</i>	\$ 2,179	\$ 2,241	\$ 2,241
<b>SUBTOTAL, EAST ASIA &amp; PACIFIC DIVISION</b>	<b>\$ 42,211</b>	<b>\$ 41,039</b>	<b>\$ 30,039</b>
<b>EURASIA DIVISION</b>			
<i>Division Chief</i>	\$ 4,128	\$ 2,791	\$ 2,791
<i>Albanian Service</i>	\$ 1,924	\$ 1,355	\$ 1,355
<i>Armenian Service</i>	\$ 669	\$ 545	\$ 545
<i>Bosnian Service</i>	\$ 1,149	\$ 835	\$ 835
<i>Georgian Service</i>	\$ 897	\$ 600	\$ 600
<i>Macedonian Service</i>	\$ 645	\$ 352	\$ 352
<i>Russian Service</i>	\$ 9,937	\$ 9,085	\$ 4,085
<i>Serbian Service</i>	\$ 1,684	\$ 1,248	\$ 1,248
<i>Ukrainian Service</i>	\$ 2,337	\$ 2,601	\$ 2,601
<b>SUBTOTAL, EURASIA DIVISION</b>	<b>\$ 23,370</b>	<b>\$ 19,412</b>	<b>\$ 14,412</b>
<b>LATIN AMERICA DIVISION</b>			
<i>Division Chief</i>	\$ 1,410	\$ 606	\$ 606
<i>Creole Service</i>	\$ 1,162	\$ 1,169	\$ 869
<i>Spanish Service</i>	\$ 3,012	\$ 5,369	\$ 2,669
<i>Production Unit</i>	\$ 62	\$ 551	\$ 551
<b>SUBTOTAL, LATIN AMERICA DIVISION</b>	<b>\$ 5,646</b>	<b>\$ 7,695</b>	<b>\$ 4,695</b>
<b>SOUTH ASIA DIVISION</b>			
<i>Division Chief (South Asia + NECA)</i>	\$ 4,047	\$ 3,034	\$ 3,034
<i>Afghanistan Service</i>	\$ 7,821	\$ 8,015	\$ 5,015
<i>VOA Radio Deewa (Pashto)</i>	\$ 4,557	\$ 5,083	\$ 4,083
<i>Azerbaijani Service</i>	\$ 919	\$ 669	\$ 669
<i>Bangla Service</i>	\$ 1,680	\$ 1,538	\$ 1,538
<i>Kurdish Service</i>	\$ 3,606	\$ 4,571	\$ 4,571
<i>Turkish Service</i>	\$ 2,206	\$ 3,420	\$ 3,420
<i>Urdu Service</i>	\$ 5,917	\$ 5,661	\$ 3,661
<i>Uzbek Service</i>	\$ 1,038	\$ 698	\$ 698
<b>SUBTOTAL, SOUTH ASIA DIVISION</b>	<b>\$ 31,791</b>	<b>\$ 32,689</b>	<b>\$ 26,689</b>

VOICE OF AMERICA	FY 2018 ACTUALS	FY 2019 ANNUALIZED CR	FY 2020 REQUEST
<b>VOA PERSIAN</b>	\$ 16,264	\$ 17,714	\$ 11,714
<b>ENGLISH DIVISION</b>			
<i>Division Chief</i>	\$ 42		
<i>All other programs</i>	\$ 395		
<b>SUBTOTAL, ENGLISH DIVISION</b>	\$ 437		
<b>CENTRAL NEWS</b>			
<i>VOA Central News</i>	\$ 23,879	\$ 24,346	\$ 10,212
<i>Home Leave &amp; Transfer (HLT)</i>	\$ 167	\$ 207	\$ 207
<b>SUBTOTAL, CENTRAL NEWS</b>	\$ 24,046	\$ 24,553	\$ 10,419
<b>DOMESTIC BUREAUS</b>			
<i>Los Angeles</i>	\$ 334	\$ 317	\$ 317
<i>New York</i>	\$ 637	\$ 840	\$ 840
<i>Silicon Valley</i>	\$ 125	\$ 295	\$ 295
<b>SUBTOTAL, DOMESTIC BUREAUS</b>	\$ 1,096	\$ 1,452	\$ 1,452
<b>OVERSEAS BUREAUS AND NEWS CENTERS</b>			
<i>Bangkok</i>	\$ 572	\$ 958	\$ 958
<i>Beijing</i>	\$ 565	\$ 724	\$ 724
<i>Cairo</i>	\$ 39		
<i>Dakar</i>	\$ 259	\$ 299	\$ 299
<i>Hong Kong</i>	\$ 176	\$ 220	\$ 220
<i>Islamabad</i>	\$ 460	\$ 373	\$ 373
<i>Istanbul</i>	\$ 336	\$ 318	\$ 318
<i>Jakarta</i>	\$ 314	\$ 450	\$ 450
<i>Johannesburg</i>	\$ 205	\$ 238	\$ 238
<i>London</i>	\$ 1,035	\$ 1,674	\$ 1,674
<i>Moscow</i>	\$ 253	\$ 340	\$ 340
<i>Nairobi</i>	\$ 484	\$ 411	\$ 411
<i>Seoul</i>	\$ 265	\$ 591	\$ 591
<b>SUNTOTAL, OVERSEAS BUREAUS</b>	\$ 4,963	\$ 6,596	\$ 6,596
<b>GRAND TOTAL, VOA</b>	\$ 256,236	\$ 250,060	\$ 189,926

U.S. AGENCY FOR GLOBAL MEDIA  
OFFICE OF CUBA BROADCASTING (OCB)  
Summary of Appropriated Funds

**FY 2018 - FY 2020**

(in thousands)

<b>OFFICE OF CUBA BROADCASTING</b>	<b>FY 2018 ACTUALS</b>	<b>FY 2019 ANNUALIZED CR</b>	<b>FY 2020 REQUEST</b>
<i>OCB Directorate and Advisory Board</i>	\$ 579	\$ 943	\$ 523
<i>Administration*</i>	\$ 3,879	\$ 3,861	\$ 2,931
<i>Radio Marti</i>	\$ 5,347	\$ 5,449	\$ 1,825
<i>New Media</i>	\$ 1,612	\$ 1,640	\$ 324
<i>Central News</i>	\$ 4,385	\$ 4,124	\$ 1,402
<i>TV Marti</i>	\$ 6,391	\$ 5,992	\$ 1,632
<i>Technical Operations</i>	\$ 2,781	\$ 2,895	\$ 1,499
<i>Computer Services</i>	\$ 963	\$ 1,042	\$ 622
<i>Greenville Transmitting Station</i>	\$ 3,207	\$ 3,198	\$ 2,215
<b>GRAND TOTAL, OCB</b>	<b>\$ 29,144</b>	<b>\$ 29,144</b>	<b>\$ 12,973</b>

\*Administration includes office space and guard service.

U.S. AGENCY FOR GLOBAL MEDIA  
INTERNATIONAL BROADCASTING BUREAU (IBB)  
Summary of Appropriated Funds

**FY 2018 - FY 2020**

(in thousands)

<b>INTERNATIONAL BROADCASTING BUREAU</b>	<b>FY 2018 ACTUALS</b>	<b>FY 2019 ANNUALIZED CR</b>	<b>FY 2020 REQUEST</b>
<i>Director, International Broadcasting Bureau</i>	\$ 2,030	\$ 2,543	\$ 2,443
<i>Office of Management Services</i>	\$ 5,676	\$ 3,382	\$ 2,983
<i>Office of Chief Financial Officer</i>	\$ 11,679	\$ 12,794	\$ 12,238
<i>Office of Policy and Research</i>	\$ 7,224	\$ 6,653	\$ 6,653
<i>Office of Communications and External Affairs</i>	\$ 1,871	\$ 1,556	\$ 1,356
<i>Office of General Counsel</i>	\$ 1,358	\$ 2,059	\$ 2,059
<i>Office of Contracting and Procurement</i>	\$ 3,210	\$ 3,608	\$ 3,608
<i>Office of Human Resources</i>	\$ 5,793	\$ 5,576	\$ 5,576
<i>Office of Workforce Support and Development</i>	\$ 1,689	\$ 1,616	\$ 1,016
<i>Office of Civil Rights</i>	\$ 870	\$ 983	\$ 983
<i>Office of Policy</i>	\$ 879	\$ 865	\$ 865
<i>Office of Security</i>	\$ 2,284	\$ 2,260	\$ 1,960
<i>Office of Internet Freedom<sup>1</sup></i>	\$ 12,333	\$ 14,681	\$ 10,381
<b>GRAND TOTAL, IBB</b>	<b>\$ 56,896</b>	<b>\$ 58,576</b>	<b>\$ 52,121</b>

<sup>1</sup> Per OMB's Passback final decision, Internet Freedom funding will decrease from \$13.8M in FY 2019 and FY 2018 to \$9.5M in FY 2020.



U.S. AGENCY FOR GLOBAL MEDIA  
OFFICE OF TECHNOLOGY, SERVICES, AND INNOVATION (TSI)  
Summary of Appropriated Funds

**FY 2018 - FY 2020**

(in thousands)

<b>TECHNOLOGY, SERVICES &amp; INNOVATION (TSI)</b>	<b>FY 2018 ACTUALS</b>	<b>FY 2019 ANNUALIZED CR</b>	<b>FY 2020 REQUEST</b>
<b>TECHNOLOGY, SERVICES, AND INNOVATION DIRECTOR</b>			
<i>Director</i>	\$ 323	\$ 215	\$ 215
<i>Home Leave &amp; Transfer (HLT)</i>	\$ 420	\$ 464	\$ 464
<b>SUBTOTAL, TSI DIRECTOR</b>	<b>\$ 743</b>	<b>\$ 679</b>	<b>\$ 679</b>
<b>OFFICE OF THE CIO</b>	\$ 9,272	\$ 10,387	\$ 10,306
<i>Global Networks Division</i>	\$ 7,024	\$ 7,226	\$ 7,226
<i>Satellites</i>	\$ 16,138	\$ 20,708	\$ 20,708
<b>SUBTOTAL, OFFICE OF THE CIO</b>	<b>\$ 32,434</b>	<b>\$ 38,321</b>	<b>\$ 38,240</b>
<b>INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY DIRECTORATE</b>	<b>\$ 13,698</b>	<b>\$ 13,089</b>	<b>\$ 13,089</b>
<b>TECHNOLOGY SUPPORT DIRECTORATE</b>	<b>\$ 9,582</b>	<b>\$ 8,665</b>	<b>\$ 8,750</b>
<b>OFFICE OF BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT</b>	<b>\$ 1,540</b>	<b>\$ 1,601</b>	<b>\$ 1,601</b>
<i>Regional Marketing Offices</i>	\$ 9,813	\$ 10,167	\$ 10,157
<b>SUBTOTAL, OFFICE OF BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT</b>	<b>\$ 11,353</b>	<b>\$ 11,768</b>	<b>\$ 11,758</b>
<b>RESOURCE AND PROJECT MANAGEMENT DIRECTORATE</b>	\$ 2,892	\$ 2,966	\$ 2,966
<i>Project Management</i>	\$ 1,062	\$ 1,130	\$ 1,130
<i>Facilities Management</i>	\$ 36,566	\$ 35,479	\$ 35,779
<b>SUBTOTAL, RESOURCE AND PROJECT MANAGEMENT DIRECTORATE</b>	<b>\$ 40,520</b>	<b>\$ 39,575</b>	<b>\$ 39,875</b>
<b>BROADCAST TECHNOLOGIES DIVISION</b>	<b>\$ 2,557</b>	<b>\$ 2,433</b>	<b>\$ 2,433</b>
<i>Leased Transmissions</i>	\$ 6,205	\$ 6,538	\$ 6,622
<i>FM Transmissions</i>	\$ 1,112	\$ 957	\$ 1,000
<b>SUBTOTAL, BROADCAST TECHNOLOGIES DIVISION</b>	<b>\$ 9,874</b>	<b>\$ 9,928</b>	<b>\$ 10,055</b>

TECHNOLOGY, SERVICES & INNOVATION (TSI)	FY 2018 ACTUALS	FY 2019 ANNUALIZED CR	FY 2020 REQUEST
<i>Operations Division</i>	\$ 1,877	\$ 1,695	\$ 1,706
<i>Worldwide Procurement (WWP)</i>	\$ 3,375	\$ 2,932	\$ 2,932
<b>SUBTOTAL, OPERATIONS DIVISION</b>	<b>\$ 5,252</b>	<b>\$ 4,627</b>	<b>\$ 4,638</b>
<b>STATIONS DIVISION</b>			
<b>DOMESTIC TRANSMITTING STATIONS</b>			
<i>Tinian</i>	\$ 5,878	\$ 5,861	\$ 5,776
<b>SUBTOTAL, DOMESTIC STATIONS</b>	<b>\$ 5,878</b>	<b>\$ 5,861</b>	<b>\$ 5,776</b>
<b>OVERSEAS TRANSMITTING STATIONS</b>			
<i>Afghanistan</i>	\$ 3,876	\$ 3,892	\$ 3,891
<i>Botswana</i>	\$ 2,517	\$ 2,634	\$ 2,619
<i>Germany</i>	\$ 12,181	\$ 12,312	\$ 12,241
<i>Kuwait</i>	\$ 13,268	\$ 13,584	\$ 13,537
<i>Philippines</i>	\$ 6,945	\$ 7,520	\$ 7,435
<i>Sao Tome</i>	\$ 4,413	\$ 4,439	\$ 4,350
<i>Thailand</i>	\$ 3,756	\$ 4,073	\$ 4,034
<b>SUBTOTAL, OVERSEAS STATIONS</b>	<b>\$ 46,956</b>	<b>\$ 48,454</b>	<b>\$ 48,107</b>
<b>MONITORING OFFICES</b>	<b>\$ 785</b>	<b>\$ 876</b>	<b>\$ 876</b>
<b>PROGRAM DECREASES</b>			
<i>Radio and Transmission Station Reductions</i>			\$ (23,938)
<i>Global Network Realignment</i>			\$ (2,846)
<i>Administrative, Telecommunication and Organizational Efficiencies</i>			\$ (3,081)
<b>GRAND TOTAL, TSI</b>	<b>\$ 177,075</b>	<b>\$ 181,843</b>	<b>\$ 151,978</b>

U.S. AGENCY FOR GLOBAL MEDIA  
RADIO FREE EUROPE/RADIO LIBERTY (RFE/RL)  
Summary of Appropriated Funds  
**FY 2018 - FY 2020**

(in thousands)

<b>RADIO FREE EUROPE/RADIO LIBERTY (RFE/RL)</b>	<b>FY 2018 ACTUALS</b>	<b>FY 2019 ANNUALIZED CR</b>	<b>FY 2020 REQUEST</b>
<b>NEWS DIVISION</b>			
<i>Director</i>	\$ 2,487	\$ 3,111	\$ 2,725
<i>Marketing &amp; Affiliates</i>	\$ 1,211	\$ 1,124	\$ 991
<i>Multimedia Strategy, Development and Training</i>	\$ 1,942		
<b>LANGUAGE SERVICES</b>			
<i>Armenian</i>	\$ 1,885	\$ 1,891	\$ 1,770
<i>Azerbaijani</i>	\$ 1,928	\$ 1,899	\$ 1,694
<i>Balkans (Bosnian, Macedonian, Serbian, Albanian, Montenegrin, Croatian)</i>	\$ 5,148	\$ 4,865	\$ 2,480
<i>Belarusian</i>	\$ 2,387	\$ 2,363	\$ 1,951
<i>Bulgarian</i>		\$ 700	
<i>Current Time TV and Digital</i>	\$ 12,461	\$ 12,444	\$ 4,354
<i>Georgian</i>	\$ 2,512	\$ 2,736	\$ 1,220
<i>Kazakh</i>	\$ 1,687	\$ 1,976	\$ 1,085
<i>Kyrgyz</i>	\$ 2,582	\$ 2,479	\$ 1,548
<i>Radio Farda (Persian)</i>	\$ 8,932	\$ 14,330	\$ 4,954
<i>Radio Free Afghanistan (Dari and Pashto)</i>	\$ 5,222	\$ 5,297	\$ 4,663
<i>Radio Mashaal (Pashto)</i>	\$ 3,324	\$ 3,389	\$ 1,040
<i>Romanian to Moldova and Romania</i>	\$ 1,918	\$ 2,537	\$ 1,741
<i>Russian</i>	\$ 8,001	\$ 7,752	\$ 4,620
<i>North Caucasus (Chechen)</i>	\$ 1,201	\$ 1,345	\$ 247
<i>Tajik</i>	\$ 1,949	\$ 2,164	\$ 1,180
<i>Tatar-Bashkir</i>	\$ 1,447	\$ 1,388	\$ 503
<i>Turkmen</i>	\$ 819	\$ 882	\$ 605
<i>Ukrainian</i>	\$ 4,512	\$ 5,224	\$ 4,962
<i>Uzbek</i>	\$ 1,866	\$ 1,965	\$ 1,403
<i>News and Current Affairs</i>	\$ 5,127	\$ 4,823	\$ 4,156
<i>Multimedia Strategy, Development and Training</i>		\$ 1,432	\$ 985
<b>SUBTOTAL, PROGRAMMING DIVISION</b>	<b>\$ 80,548</b>	<b>\$ 88,116</b>	<b>\$ 50,877</b>

<b>RADIO FREE EUROPE/RADIO LIBERTY (RFE/RL)</b>	<b>FY 2018 ACTUALS</b>	<b>FY 2019 ANNUALIZED CR</b>	<b>FY 2020 REQUEST</b>
<b>ADMINISTRATION, MANAGEMENT &amp; FINANCE</b>			
<i>Office of President</i>	\$ 6,364	\$ 6,313	\$ 5,616
<i>Technology Division</i>	\$ 34,639	\$ 29,229	\$ 23,876
<i>Finance Division</i>	\$ 3,935	\$ 6,643	\$ 4,751
<i>Human Resources Division</i>	\$ 2,300	\$ 2,254	\$ 1,647
<b>SUBTOTAL, ADMINISTRATION, MANAGEMENT &amp; FINANCE</b>	<b>\$ 47,238</b>	<b>\$ 44,439</b>	<b>\$ 35,890</b>
<b>SUBTOTAL, RFE/RL</b>	<b>\$ 127,786</b>	<b>\$ 132,555</b>	<b>\$ 86,767</b>
<i>(-) Balances In - Prior Year Balances In/Recoveries</i>			
<i>FY 2017 - Current Time OCO Funds - Transfer from USAID</i>	\$ (4,130)		
<i>FY 2017 - Current Time Ukraine Advertising</i>	\$ (20)		
<i>FY 2017 - Raise Your Voice</i>	\$ (973)		
<i>FY 2017 - Georgian Perveli TV Pilot Project from TSI</i>	\$ (169)		
<i>FY 2017 - Next Generation Influencers</i>	\$ (3,406)		
<i>FY 2017 - TV/Video Infrastructure Improvement and Storage</i>	\$ (1,506)		
<i>FY 2017 - Farda TV</i>	\$ (750)		
<i>FY 2017 - Ukrainian TV Pilot from TSI</i>	\$ (160)		
<i>FY 2016 - Current Time Advertising</i>	\$ (17)		
<i>FY 2015 - Bureau Improvement</i>	\$ (1,887)		
<i>(+) Balances Out</i>			
<i>FY 2018 - Return of Funds (CEEMC)</i>	\$ 1,170	\$ (1,170)	
<i>FY 2018 - FY 2019 Q1 of Radio Baltic Waves Belarus and Russia AM Transmission from TSI</i>	\$ 43	\$ (43)	
<i>FY 2018 - New Initiatives Startup Costs (Bulgaria, Romania, Current Time)</i>	\$ 1,125	\$ (1,125)	
<i>FY 2018 - Persian 24/7 Initiative</i>	\$ 3,786	\$ (3,786)	
<i>FY 2018 - Georgian Perveli TV Pilot Project from TSI</i>	\$ 169	\$ (169)	
<i>FY 2018 - Ukrainian TV Pilot from TSI</i>	\$ 110	\$ (110)	
<i>FY 2017 - Current Time OCO Funds - Transfer from USAID</i>	\$ 124	\$ (124)	
<i>FY 2017 - Current Time Ukraine Advertising</i>	\$ 20	\$ (20)	
<i>FY 2017 - Raise Your Voice</i>	\$ 233	\$ (233)	
<i>FY 2017 - Georgian Perveli TV Pilot Project from TSI</i>	\$ 94	\$ (94)	
<i>FY 2017 - Next Generation Influencers</i>	\$ 561	\$ (561)	
<i>FY 2015 - Bureau Improvement</i>	\$ 167	\$ (167)	
<i>Post-Program Plan Transfers:</i>			
<i>Transfer to USAGM - Grantee Consolidation Study Phase 1</i>	\$ 110		
<i>Transfer to IBB - Return of Funds</i>	\$ 800		
<i>Transfer from TSI - Radio Baltic Waves MW Q1 FY 2019</i>	\$ (87)		
<i>Transfer from TSI - Ukraine Public TV Project</i>	\$ (70)		
<b>GRAND TOTAL, RFE/RL</b>	<b>\$ 124,038</b>	<b>\$ 124,038</b>	<b>\$ 86,767</b>

U.S. AGENCY FOR GLOBAL MEDIA  
RADIO FREE ASIA (RFA)  
Summary of Appropriated Funds  
**FY 2018 - FY 2020**  
(in thousands)

<b>RADIO FREE ASIA (RFA)</b>	<b>FY 2018 ACTUALS</b>	<b>FY 2019 ANNUALIZED CR</b>	<b>FY 2020 REQUEST</b>
<b>PROGRAMMING DIVISION</b>			
<i>Executive Editor</i>	\$ 2,695	\$ 2,593	\$ 2,381
<b>PROGRAM SERVICES</b>			
<i>Burmese Service</i>	\$ 1,922	\$ 1,811	\$ 1,689
<i>Cambodian Service</i>	\$ 1,561	\$ 1,730	
<i>Cantonese Service</i>	\$ 1,107	\$ 1,056	\$ 985
<i>Korean Service</i>	\$ 2,573	\$ 2,759	\$ 2,574
<i>Korea DPRK TV</i>	\$ 2,610	\$ 1,083	
<i>Laotian Service</i>	\$ 1,255	\$ 1,385	\$ 1,292
<i>Mandarin Service</i>	\$ 4,936	\$ 4,327	
<i>Tibetan Service</i>	\$ 4,351	\$ 4,352	\$ 4,060
<i>Uyghur Service</i>	\$ 1,278	\$ 1,398	\$ 1,304
<i>Vietnamese Service*</i>	\$ 1,324	\$ 1,369	\$ 1,277
<b>PROGRAM OFFICES</b>			
<i>Bangkok Office</i>	\$ 113	\$ 103	\$ 96
<i>Dharamsala Office</i>	\$ 97	\$ 87	\$ 81
<i>Hong Kong Office</i>	\$ 840	\$ 1,042	\$ 972
<i>Phnom Penh Office</i>			
<i>Seoul Office</i>	\$ 519	\$ 707	\$ 660
<i>Taipei Office</i>	\$ 212	\$ 454	\$ 424
<i>Yangon Office</i>	\$ 380	\$ 386	\$ 360
<b>SUBTOTAL, PROGRAMMING DIVISION</b>	<b>\$ 27,773</b>	<b>\$ 26,642</b>	<b>\$ 18,155</b>
<b>ADMINISTRATION, MANAGEMENT &amp; FINANCE</b>			
<i>Office of the President</i>	\$ 940	\$ 892	\$ 832
<i>Internet Freedom Salaries (Open Technology Fund)</i>	\$ 1,200	\$ 1,200	
<i>Internet Freedom (Open Technology Fund)</i>			
<i>Research, Training, and Evaluation</i>	\$ 668	\$ 784	\$ 731
<i>Technical Operations</i>	\$ 9,582	\$ 8,519	\$ 7,469
<i>HQ Facilities</i>	\$ 4,260	\$ 4,448	\$ 3,908
<i>Communications</i>	\$ 573	\$ 454	\$ 424
<i>Finance</i>	\$ 1,857	\$ 1,858	\$ 1,733
<i>Human Resources</i>	\$ 289	\$ 299	\$ 279
<b>SUBTOTAL, ADMIN, MGT &amp; FINANCE</b>	<b>\$ 19,369</b>	<b>\$ 18,454</b>	<b>\$ 15,376</b>
<b>SUBTOTAL, RFA</b>	<b>\$ 47,142</b>	<b>\$ 45,096</b>	<b>\$ 33,531</b>
<i>(-) Balances In - Prior Year Balances In/Recoveries</i>			
<i>RFA Carryover - DPRK</i>	\$ (2,610)	\$ (1,083)	
<i>RFA Carryover - Phnom Penh Closure</i>	\$ (275)		
<i>RFA Carryover - Security Upgrade</i>	\$ (65)		
<i>FY2014 RFA Recoveries</i>	\$ (127)		
<i>FY2015 RFA Recoveries</i>	\$ (92)		
<i>(+) Balances Out - Consolidation Study</i>			
<i>Consolidation Study</i>	\$ 40		
<b>GRAND TOTAL, RFA</b>	<b>\$ 44,013</b>	<b>\$ 44,013</b>	<b>\$ 44,013</b>

\* All Vietnamese broadcast time has been eliminated. All Vietnamese news content – including print, audio and video – is carried on the internet via their webpage, Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter.

U.S. AGENCY FOR GLOBAL MEDIA  
MIDDLE EAST BROADCASTING NETWORK (MBN)  
Summary of Appropriated Funds  
**FY 2018 - FY 2020**  
(in thousands)

MIDDLE EAST BROADCASTING NETWORK	FY 2018 ACTUALS	FY 2019 ANNUALIZED CR	FY 2020 REQUEST
<b>PROGRAMMING</b>			
<i>Alhurra</i>	\$ 31,233	\$ 31,105	\$ 27,935
<i>Radio Sawa</i>	\$ 6,570	\$ 5,019	\$ 5,061
<i>Afia Darfur</i>	\$ 138		
<i>MBN Digital</i>	\$ 7,256	\$ 10,676	\$ 11,980
<b>SUBTOTAL, PROGRAMMING</b>	<b>\$ 45,197</b>	<b>\$ 46,800</b>	<b>\$ 44,976</b>
<b>OVERSEAS OFFICES</b>			
<b>IRAQ</b>	<b>\$ 4,297</b>	<b>\$ 4,967</b>	<b>\$ 5,261</b>
<i>Baghdad</i>	\$ 3,824	\$ 4,193	\$ 4,419
<i>Erbil</i>	\$ 473	\$ 774	\$ 842
<b>PAN ARAB</b>	<b>\$ 18,750</b>	<b>\$ 14,306</b>	<b>\$ 15,832</b>
<i>Beirut</i>	\$ 3,083	\$ 2,659	\$ 2,767
<i>Cairo</i>	\$ 2,153	\$ 1,173	\$ 1,565
<i>Dubai</i>	\$ 11,921	\$ 9,457	\$ 10,452
<i>Jerusalem</i>	\$ 1,593	\$ 1,017	\$ 1,048
<b>MAGHREB</b>	<b>\$ 834</b>	<b>\$ 829</b>	<b>\$ 1,035</b>
<i>Rabat</i>	\$ 644	\$ 663	\$ 734
<i>Tunis</i>	\$ 190	\$ 166	\$ 301
<b>SUBTOTAL, OVERSEAS OFFICES</b>	<b>\$ 23,881</b>	<b>\$ 20,102</b>	<b>\$ 22,128</b>
<i>Technical Operations</i>	\$ 21,136	\$ 44,695	\$ 15,345
<i>Administration</i>	\$ 13,060	\$ 10,994	\$ 11,864
<i>Creative Services</i>	\$ 7,363	\$ 4,994	\$ 4,416
<b>SUBTOTAL, MBN</b>	<b>\$ 110,637</b>	<b>\$ 127,585</b>	<b>\$ 98,729</b>
<i>Transfer to USAGM for Financial System</i>	\$ 500		
<i>Transfer to USAGM for Consolidation Study</i>	\$ 98		
<i>Balances In - Prior Year Recoveries</i>	\$ (2,500)	\$ (2,500)	\$ (2,500)
<i>Balances In - RYV Iraq</i>	\$ (985)		
<i>Balances In- Egypt Digital</i>	\$ (500)		
<i>Balances In - Sets/Graphics/Advertising</i>	\$ (7,002)		
<i>Balances In - Dubai Buildout</i>	\$ (2,968)		
<i>Balances In - FY 2018 Base</i>	\$ (1,741)		
<i>Balances Out - Advertising</i>	\$ 673	\$ (673)	
<i>Balances Out - Infrastructure/Equipment</i>	\$ 14,100	\$ (14,100)	
<b>GRAND TOTAL, MBN</b>	<b>\$ 110,312</b>	<b>\$ 110,312</b>	<b>\$ 96,229</b>

BROADCASTING BOARD OF GOVERNORS  
BROADCASTING CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS (BCI)  
Summary of Appropriated Funds

**FY 2018 - FY 2020**

(in thousands)

<b>BROADCASTING CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS</b>	<b>FY 2018 ACTUALS</b>	<b>FY 2019 ANNUALIZED CR</b>	<b>FY 2020 REQUEST</b>
<b>MAINTENANCE, IMPROVEMENTS, REPLACE AND REPAIR (MIRR)</b>			
<i>Continuing M&amp;R</i>	\$ 2,299	\$ 2,222	\$ 1,965
<i>VOA TV M&amp;R</i>	\$ 31	\$ 615	\$ 543
<i>Security M&amp;R</i>	\$ 989	\$ 582	\$ 514
<i>HVAC System M&amp;R</i>	\$ 501	\$ 554	\$ 489
<i>Office of Cuba Broadcasting</i>	\$ 269	\$ 143	\$ 126
<b>UPGRADE OF EXISTING FACILITIES PROJECTS</b>	\$ 224	\$ 4,550	
<b>SATELLITES</b>			
<i>Satellite &amp; Terrestrial Program Feeds</i>	\$ 1,501	\$ 1,034	\$ 914
<b>GRAND TOTAL, BCI</b>	<b>\$ 5,814</b>	<b>\$ 9,700</b>	<b>\$ 4,551</b>

U.S. AGENCY FOR GLOBAL MEDIA  
Funding from Outside Sources (estimated)

**FY 2018 - FY 2020**

(\$ in Whole Dollars)

<b>FUNDS SOURCE</b>	<b>FY 2017/18 FUNDS</b>	<b>FY 2018 FUNDS</b>	<b>FY 2018/19 FUNDS</b>	<b>FY 2019 FUNDS</b>	<b>FY 2020 FUNDS</b>	<b>TOTALS</b>
UNITED STATES AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT (USAID)			\$ 66,525			\$ 66,525
DEPARTMENT OF STATE (DOS)	\$ 1,554,549	\$ 879,000	\$ 2,431,762	\$ 103,051		\$ 4,968,362
CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL (CDC)	\$ 375,000	\$ 350,000	\$ 200,000	\$ 155,000		\$ 1,080,000
UNITED STATES PACIFIC COM- MAND (PACOM)		\$ 1,982,500		\$ 475,000		\$ 2,457,500
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 1,929,549</b>	<b>\$ 3,211,500</b>	<b>\$ 2,698,287</b>	<b>\$ 733,051</b>		<b>\$ 8,572,387</b>



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# Appendix C: Broadcast Hours

## U.S. AGENCY FOR GLOBAL MEDIA Broadcast Hours FY 2018 - FY 2020

LANGUAGE SERVICE	FY 2018 ACTUALS	FY 2019 ANNUALIZED CR	FY 2020 REQUEST
<b>VOICE OF AMERICA</b>			
<b>AFRICA DIVISION</b>			
<i>Bambara Service</i>	8.00	8.00	8.00
<i>Central Africa (Kinyarwanda, Kirundi)</i>	40.55	40.55	40.55
<i>English To Africa Service</i>	145.00	145.00	145.00
<i>French to Africa and the Trans Sahel</i>	174.00	176.50	176.50
<i>Hausa Service</i>	16.50	16.50	16.50
<i>Horn Of Africa (Amharic, Tigrigna, Afaan Oromoo)</i>	34.50	34.50	34.50
<i>Portuguese Service</i>	10.25	10.25	10.25
<i>Somali Service</i>	28.91	28.91	28.91
<i>Swahili Service</i>	16.78	16.78	16.78
<i>Zimbabwe/Shona/Ndebele/English</i>	17.00	17.00	17.00
<b>TOTAL, AFRICA DIVISION</b>	<b>491.49</b>	<b>493.99</b>	<b>493.99</b>
<b>EAST ASIA &amp; PACIFIC DIVISION</b>			
<i>Burmese Service</i>	58.50	58.50	58.50
<i>Cantonese Service</i>	54.67	54.67	0.67
<i>English to Asia Programs</i>	7.06	7.06	7.06
<i>Indonesian Service</i>	52.95	52.95	34.67
<i>Khmer Service</i>	11.50	11.50	11.50
<i>Korean Service</i>	49.71	49.71	48.25
<i>Lao Service</i>	4.67	4.67	4.67
<i>Mandarin Service</i>	193.94	193.94	94.76
<i>Thai Service</i>	9.08	9.08	9.08
<i>Tibetan Service</i>	208.34	208.34	208.34
<i>Vietnamese Service</i>	13.00	13.00	13.00
<b>TOTAL, EAST ASIA &amp; PACIFIC DIVISION</b>	<b>663.42</b>	<b>663.42</b>	<b>490.50</b>

U.S. AGENCY FOR GLOBAL MEDIA  
Broadcast Hours  
FY 2018 - FY 2020

LANGUAGE SERVICE	FY 2018 ACTUALS	FY 2019 ANNUALIZED CR	FY 2020 REQUEST
<b>VOICE OF AMERICA - CONTINUED</b>			
<b>EURASIA DIVISION</b>			
<i>Albanian Service</i>	3.67	3.67	3.67
<i>Armenian Service</i>	1.58	1.58	1.58
<i>Bosnian Service</i>	2.58	2.58	2.58
<i>Georgian Service</i>	1.08	1.42	1.42
<i>Macedonian Service</i>	1.05	1.05	1.05
<i>Russian Service</i>	8.58	11.08	5.54
<i>Serbian Service</i>	2.75	2.75	2.75
<i>Ukrainian Service</i>	2.83	2.83	2.83
<b>TOTAL, EURASIA DIVISION</b>	<b>24.12</b>	<b>26.96</b>	<b>21.42</b>
<b>LATIN AMERICA DIVISION</b>			
<i>Creole Service</i>	15.63	15.63	11.16
<i>Spanish Service</i>	88.33	88.33	2.60
<b>TOTAL, LATIN AMERICA DIVISION</b>	<b>103.96</b>	<b>103.96</b>	<b>13.76</b>
<b>SOUTH ASIA DIVISION</b>			
<i>Dari</i>	31.67	31.67	3.38
<i>Pashto</i>	31.67	31.67	3.38
<i>VOA Radio Deewa (Pashto)</i>	63.33	63.33	49.33
<i>Azerbaijani Service</i>	28.25	28.25	28.25
<i>Bangla Service</i>	8.52	8.59	9.84
<i>Kurdish Service</i>	64.10	64.10	64.10
<i>Turkish Service</i>	12.50	12.50	12.50
<i>Urdu Service</i>	81.74	81.74	66.64
<i>Uzbek Service</i>	11.50	11.50	11.50
<b>TOTAL, SOUTH ASIA DIVISION</b>	<b>333.28</b>	<b>333.35</b>	<b>248.92</b>

U.S. AGENCY FOR GLOBAL MEDIA  
Broadcast Hours  
FY 2018 - FY 2020

	FY 2018 ACTUALS	FY 2019 ANNUALIZED CR	FY 2020 REQUEST
<b>LANGUAGE SERVICE</b>			
<b>VOICE OF AMERICA - CONTINUED</b>			
<b>PERSIAN NEWS NETWORK</b>	<b>168.00</b>	<b>168.00</b>	<b>168.00</b>
<b>ENGLISH DIVISION</b>			
<i>All other programs</i>	360.84	360.84	360.84
<b>TOTAL, ENGLISH DIVISION</b>	<b>360.84</b>	<b>360.84</b>	<b>360.84</b>
<b>TOTAL, VOICE OF AMERICA</b>	<b>2,145.11</b>	<b>2,150.52</b>	<b>1,797.43</b>
<b>OFFICE OF CUBA BROADCASTING</b>			
<i>Radio Marti</i>	168.00	168.00	168.00
<i>TV Marti</i>	168.00	168.00	168.00
<b>TOTAL, OFFICE OF CUBA BROADCASTING</b>	<b>336.00</b>	<b>336.00</b>	<b>336.00</b>
<b>RADIO FREE EUROPE/RADIO LIBERTY</b>			
<i>Armenian</i>	26.40	26.40	26.40
<i>Azerbaijani</i>	73.10	73.10	73.10
<i>Balkans (Bosnian, Serbian, Albanian, Macedonian, Montenegrin, Croatian)</i>	73.80	73.80	68.40
<i>Belarusian</i>	169.80	169.80	1.60
<i>Bulgarian</i>	0.00	0.00	0.00
<i>Current Time TV and Digital</i>	147.00	147.00	168.00
<i>Georgian</i>	21.50	21.50	0.00
<i>Kazakh</i>	1.80	1.80	1.80
<i>Kyrgyz</i>	62.80	62.80	62.80
<i>Radio Farda (Persian)</i>	168.00	168.00	168.00
<i>Radio Free Afghanistan (Dari and Pashto)</i>	63.90	63.90	63.90
<i>Radio Mashaal (Pashto)</i>	66.10	66.10	0.00
<i>Romania (Romanian to Moldova)</i>	16.50	16.50	16.50
<i>Russian</i>	168.00	168.00	168.00

U.S. AGENCY FOR GLOBAL MEDIA  
Broadcast Hours  
FY 2018 - FY 2020

LANGUAGE SERVICE	FY 2018 PROGRAM PLAN	FY 2019 ANNUALIZED CR	FY 2020 REQUEST
<b>RADIO FREE EUROPE/RADIO LIBERTY - CONTINUED</b>			
<i>North Caucasus (Chechen)</i>	0.00	0.00	0.00
<i>Tajik</i>	38.00	38.00	38.00
<i>Tatar-Bashkir</i>	0.00	0.00	0.00
<i>Turkmen</i>	56.00	56.00	56.00
<i>Ukrainian</i>	44.40	44.40	44.40
<i>Uzbek</i>	168.00	168.00	168.00
<i>News and Current Affairs</i>	0.00	0.00	0.00
<b>TOTAL, RADIO FREE EUROPE/RADIO LIBERTY</b>	<b>1365.10</b>	<b>1365.10</b>	<b>1,124.90</b>
<b>RADIO FREE ASIA</b>			
<i>Burmese Service</i>	63.00	63.00	63.00
<i>Cambodian Service</i>	59.50	59.50	0.00
<i>Cantonese Service</i>	49.00	49.00	49.00
<i>Korean Service</i>	63.00	63.00	63.00
<i>Laotian Service</i>	42.00	42.00	42.00
<i>Mandarin Service</i>	168.00	168.00	0.00
<i>Tibetan Service</i>	154.00	154.00	154.00
<i>Uyghur Service</i>	42.00	42.00	42.00
<i>Vietnamese Service*</i>	0.00	0.00	0.00
<b>TOTAL, RADIO FREE ASIA</b>	<b>640.50</b>	<b>640.50</b>	<b>413.00</b>
<b>MIDDLE EAST BROADCASTING NETWORK</b>			
<i>Alhurra</i>	168.00	168.00	168.00
<i>Radio Sawa</i>	168.00	168.00	168.00
<i>MBN Digital</i>	168.00	168.00	168.00
<b>TOTAL, MIDDLE EAST BROADCASTING NETWORK</b>	<b>504.00</b>	<b>504.00</b>	<b>504.00</b>

\* All Vietnamese broadcast time has been eliminated. All Vietnamese news content – including print, audio and video – is carried on the internet via their webpage, Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter.

# Appendix D:

## Summary of Increases and Decreases

U.S. AGENCY FOR GLOBAL MEDIA  
VOICE OF AMERICA (VOA)  
Summary of Increases and Decreases  
**FY 2019 - FY 2020**  
(in thousands)

PROGRAM ACTIVITY	INCREASES	DECREASES	BUDGET
<b>FY 2019 ANNUALIZED CR</b>			<b>\$ 250,060</b>
<b>WAGES</b>			
Reduce VOA employees		\$ 28,985	
<b>CURRENT SERVICE INCREASES</b>			
<b>CURRENT SERVICES DECREASES</b>			
<b>PROGRAM INCREASES</b>			
<b>PROGRAM DECREASES</b>		\$ 31,149	
Reduce Studio and Production Operations		\$ 5,676	
Reduce VOA News Center		\$ 6,326	
Reduce VOA Russian Service		\$ 3,344	
Eliminate dedicated VOA Afghan Radio & Web programming		\$ 989	
Reduce VOA Latin America Division (Spanish and Creole)		\$ 1,344	
Reduce VOA Persian Service		\$ 3,634	
Reduce VOA Urdu Radio Programming		\$ 1,172	
Reduce VOA Mandarin Programming		\$ 2,451	
Reduce VOA Cantonese Radio Programming		\$ 408	
Reduce VOA Korean Programming		\$ 1,462	
Reduce VOA Indonesian Radio Programming		\$ 408	
Reduce VOA Deewa Radio Programming		\$ 1,000	
Reduce VOA Chief Digital Office		\$ 2,000	
Freeze hiring of contractors		\$ 935	
<b>NET PROGRAM CHANGES</b>		<b>\$ (60,134)</b>	
<b>TOTAL FY 2020 VOA REQUEST</b>			<b>\$ 189,926</b>

U.S. AGENCY FOR GLOBAL MEDIA  
OFFICE OF CUBA BROADCASTING (OCB)  
Summary of Increases and Decreases  
**FY 2019 - FY 2020**  
*(in thousands)*

PROGRAM ACTIVITY	INCREASES	DECREASES	BUDGET
<b>FY 2019 ANNUALIZED CR</b>			<b>\$ 29,144</b>
<b>WAGES</b>			
<b>CURRENT SERVICE INCREASES</b>			
<b>CURRENT SERVICES DECREASES</b>			
<b>PROGRAM INCREASES</b>			
<b>PROGRAM DECREASES</b>		\$ 16,171	
<i>Directorate</i>		\$ 420	
<i>Administration</i>		\$ 930	
<i>Radio Martí</i>		\$ 3,624	
<i>New Media</i>		\$ 1,316	
<i>Central News</i>		\$ 2,722	
<i>TV Martí</i>		\$ 4,360	
<i>Technical Operations</i>		\$ 1,396	
<i>Computer Services</i>		\$ 420	
<i>Greenville Transmitting Station</i>		\$ 983	
<b>NET PROGRAM CHANGES</b>		<b>\$ (16,171)</b>	
<b>TOTAL FY 2020 OCB REQUEST</b>			<b>\$ 12,973</b>

U.S. AGENCY FOR GLOBAL MEDIA  
INTERNATIONAL BROADCASTING BUREAU (IBB)  
Summary of Increases and Decreases  
**FY 2019 - FY 2020**  
(in thousands)

PROGRAM ACTIVITY	INCREASES	DECREASES	BUDGET
<b>FY 2019 ANNUALIZED CR</b>			<b>\$ 58,576</b>
<b>WAGES</b>			
<b>CURRENT SERVICE INCREASES</b>			
<b>CURRENT SERVICES DECREASES</b>			
<b>PROGRAM INCREASES</b>			
<b>PROGRAM DECREASES</b>		\$ 6,455	
<i>Internet Freedom Program Reduction</i>		\$ 4,300	
<i>Administrative contract support Reductions</i>		\$ 2,155	
<b>NET PROGRAM CHANGES</b>		<b>\$ (6,455)</b>	
<b>TOTAL FY 2020 IBB REQUEST</b>			<b>\$ 52,121</b>



U.S. AGENCY FOR GLOBAL MEDIA  
TECHNOLOGY, SERVICES AND INNOVATION (TSI)  
Summary of Increases and Decreases  
**FY 2019 - FY 2020**  
*(in thousands)*

PROGRAM ACTIVITY	INCREASES	DECREASES	BUDGET
FY 2019 ANNUALIZED CR			\$ 181,843
WAGES			
CURRENT SERVICE INCREASES			
CURRENT SERVICES DECREASES			
PROGRAM INCREASES			
PROGRAM DECREASES		\$ 29,865	
Transmitting Station Network Realignment		\$ 23,938	
Global Network Realignment		\$ 2,846	
Administrative, Telecommunication and Organizational Efficiencies		\$ 3,081	
NET PROGRAM CHANGES		\$ (29,865)	
TOTAL FY 2020 TSI REQUEST			\$ 151,978

U.S. AGENCY FOR GLOBAL MEDIA  
RADIO FREE EUROPE/RADIO LIBERTY (RFE/RL)  
Summary of Increases and Decreases

**FY 2019 - FY 2020**

(in thousands)

PROGRAM ACTIVITY	INCREASES	DECREASES	BUDGET
<b>FY 2019 ANNUALIZED CR</b>			<b>\$ 124,038</b>
<b>WAGES</b>		\$ 4,000	
<i>Reduce Locally Employed Staff Costs</i>		\$ 4,000	
<b>CURRENT SERVICE DECREASES</b>		<b>\$ 8,266</b>	
<i>Direct and Indirect Cost Reduction</i>		\$ 8,266	
<b>ENHANCEMENT DECREASES</b>		<b>\$ 18,374</b>	
<i>Improvements to Persian Programming</i>		\$ 3,850	
<i>Countering Russian Influence</i>		\$ 4,400	
<i>Eastern Europe Language Expansion - Bulgaria and Romania</i>		\$ 1,000	
<i>Digital and Video for Next Generation Influencers</i>		\$ 4,030	
<i>Expand Raise Your Voice to Central Asia</i>		\$ 1,250	
<i>Current Time</i>		\$ 3,844	
<b>PROGRAM INCREASES</b>			
<b>PROGRAM DECREASES</b>		<b>\$ 6,631</b>	
<i>Discontinue Pashto Broadcasts to FATA</i>		\$ 2,200	
<i>Rationalize Radio and 24/7 News Operations for Russia and Iran; Cease Radio to Belarus</i>		\$ 1,050	
<i>Discontinue Macedonian</i>		\$ 337	
<i>Discontinue Montenegrin</i>		\$ 273	
<i>Discontinue Georgian</i>		\$ 1,095	
<i>Discontinue North Caucasus</i>		\$ 917	
<i>Discontinue Tatar-Bashkir</i>		\$ 759	
<b>NET PROGRAM CHANGES</b>		<b>\$ (37,271)</b>	
<b>TOTAL FY 2020 RFE/RL REQUEST</b>			<b>\$ 86,767</b>

U.S. AGENCY FOR GLOBAL MEDIA  
RADIO FREE ASIA (RFA)  
Summary of Increases and Decreases  
**FY 2019 - FY 2020**  
*(in thousands)*

PROGRAM ACTIVITY	INCREASES	DECREASES	BUDGET
<b>FY 2019 ANNUALIZED CR</b>			<b>\$ 44,013</b>
<b>WAGES</b>		\$ 7,995	
<i>Reduction of Salary and Benefits for RFA operations and the elimination of Cambodian and Mandarin Services.</i>		\$ 7,995	
<b>CURRENT SERVICE INCREASES</b>			
<b>CURRENT SERVICES DECREASES</b>			
<b>PROGRAM INCREASES</b>			
<b>PROGRAM DECREASES</b>		\$ 2,487	
<i>Reduction of RFA GOE operations and the elimination of Cambodian and Mandarin Services.</i>		\$ 1,947	
<i>HQ rent reduction (Sublet space vacated by Cambodian and Mandarin Services)</i>		\$ 540	
<b>NET PROGRAM CHANGES</b>		<b>\$ (10,482)</b>	
<b>TOTAL FY 2020 RFA REQUEST</b>			<b>\$ 33,531</b>

U.S. AGENCY FOR GLOBAL MEDIA  
MIDDLE EAST BROADCASTING NETWORKS, INC (MBN)  
Summary of Increases and Decreases

**FY 2019 - FY 2020**

(in thousands)

PROGRAM ACTIVITY	INCREASES	DECREASES	BUDGET
<b>FY 2019 ANNUALIZED CR</b>			<b>\$ 110,312</b>
<b>WAGES</b>	\$ 301		
<i>Projected Health Insurance Increase</i>	\$ 301		
<b>CURRENT SERVICE INCREASES</b>	<b>\$ 3,290</b>		
<i>Mandatory Contractual Increases</i>	\$ 290		
<i>Presidential Election Coverage</i>	\$ 500		
<i>Operational Costs Funded by Prior Year Recoveries</i>	\$ 2,500		
<b>CURRENT SERVICES DECREASES</b>		<b>\$ 15,174</b>	
<i>Reduction in Technical and Bureau Operations</i>		\$ 15,174	
<b>PROGRAM INCREASES</b>			
<b>PROGRAM DECREASES</b>		\$ 2,500	
<i>Further Use of Recoveries to Offset Operational Costs</i>		\$ 2,500	
<b>NET PROGRAM CHANGES</b>	<b>\$ 3,591</b>	<b>\$ (17,674)</b>	
<b>TOTAL FY 2020 MBN REQUEST</b>			<b>\$ 96,229</b>

U.S. AGENCY FOR GLOBAL MEDIA  
 BROADCASTING CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS (BCI)  
 Summary of Increases and Decreases  
**FY 2019 - FY 2020**  
*(in thousands)*

PROGRAM ACTIVITY	INCREASES	DECREASES	BUDGET
FY 2019 ANNUALIZED CR			\$ 9,700
WAGES			
CURRENT SERVICE INCREASES			
CURRENT SERVICES DECREASES			
PROGRAM INCREASES			
PROGRAM DECREASES		\$ 5,149	
<i>Kuwait Expansion Project</i>		\$ 4,550	
<i>Reduction in Capital Modernization Projects</i>		\$ 599	
NET PROGRAM CHANGES		\$ (5,149)	
TOTAL FY 2020 BCI REQUEST			\$ 4,551





U.S. AGENCY FOR  
GLOBAL MEDIA

UNITED STATES  
BROADCASTING  
BOARD OF  
GOVERNORS

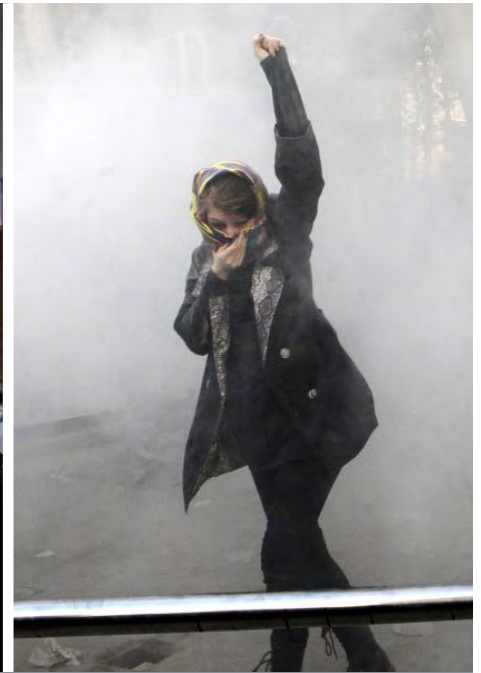


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U.S. AGENCY FOR  
GLOBAL MEDIA

UNITED STATES  
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GOVERNORS



# FY 2018 Performance and Accountability Report





# Message from the U.S. Agency for Global Media CEO and Governing Board Chairman

On behalf of the U.S. Agency for Global Media (USAGM), we are pleased to present the Performance and Accountability Report (PAR) for Fiscal Year (FY) 2018. This report includes the results of this year's audit of the agency's financial statements, measures our performance against our FY 2018 objectives, highlights the accomplishments of the past year, and identifies the challenges that lie ahead.

In August 2018, the Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG) changed its name to the United States Agency for Global Media. The new name reflects our modernization, shift to digital platforms, and forward momentum, and better explains to constituents the work and significance of the agency and its networks in advancing U.S. interests and American national security around the world.

However, the mission of USAGM remains unchanged: to inform, engage, and connect people around the world in support of freedom and democracy. USAGM broadcast services include two federal entities: the Voice of America (VOA) and the Office of Cuba Broadcasting (OCB); and three USAGM-sponsored grantees: Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL), Radio Free Asia (RFA), and the Middle East Broadcasting Networks (MBN).

The programming of USAGM networks is consumed by a worldwide measured audience of 345 million people in 58 languages each week, an unprecedented year-on-year increase of 67 million. This audience growth occurred in key strategic countries – China, where we now have a weekly audience of 65 million people in Mandarin, Cantonese, and English; Iran, where we maintain a weekly audience of 14 million Farsi speakers; and Russia, where our weekly Russian audience is almost eight million.

USAGM upholds freedom of expression and information as universal human rights by exemplifying and supporting free media that foster and sustain free and democratic societies. USAGM networks pursue this mission through their own engaging content on television, radio, internet, social and mobile platforms. They also do so by working closely with media partners around the world that bring our compelling content into local markets, establishing valuable connections to critical institutions that, in turn, support civil society and democratic principles.

With media sources proliferating around the world, information is more powerful than ever. But the existence of more media does not yield more press freedom. According to Reporters Without Borders, media freedom remains highly threatened, with significant deteriorations over the past five years. Their global indicator of media freedom registered its worst ever value in 2017 and remains essentially unchanged in 2018. Well-funded state and non-state media outlets inundate audiences with disinformation about current affairs at both the U.S. and global level.

Using professional journalism, USAGM networks provide an alternative to disinformation and extremist propaganda. RFE/RL and VOA have stepped up their Russian-language social media outreach and are engaging more audiences with balanced information and rigorous fact-checking. *Current Time*, USAGM's 24/7 Russian-language global digital network led by RFE/RL in partnership with VOA, has gained traction online and through a wide network of distributors – more than 84 in 19 countries – in the nearly two years since it launched. New research from Russia shows an increased audience for USAGM content, up 28 percent since the last survey, despite our restricted access to standard broadcast channels. In 2017, more than half the network's 400 million online video views came from inside Russia. Since its launch in February 2017, *Current Time* has earned more than 1.3 million followers across all social media platforms.

With programming in several dozen languages, thousands of media partners, and on-the-ground reporting capabilities around the world, USAGM networks are also well poised to react quickly in crisis situations. In FY 2018, USAGM provided extensive coverage of Burma's Rohingya refugee crisis, ongoing civil war in Syria, human rights abuses against ethnic Uyghurs in China, peaceful revolution in Armenia, protests in Iran, and political crises in Nicaragua and Venezuela. Violent extremism continued to be an area of focus for USAGM networks, with coverage on Boko Haram in Nigeria; the Taliban in South Asia; and ISIS in the Middle East, Balkans, Central Asia, and elsewhere. USAGM also continues to give audiences platforms to speak out and address extremism and the underlying causes of terrorism with *Raise Your Voice* in Iraq, *Maghreb Voices* in North Africa, *Not in Our Name* in Central Asia and the Balkans, and documentaries and call-in programs in Nigeria.

In order to impact audiences, USAGM must provide quality programming and earn the trust of audiences. We are monitoring that progress through our impact model, which tracks engagement, connection, and influence with audiences, media

institutions, and governments through a range of quantitative, qualitative, digital, and anecdotal indicators. With high levels of impact on a range of measures, USAGM is reaching larger audiences than ever.

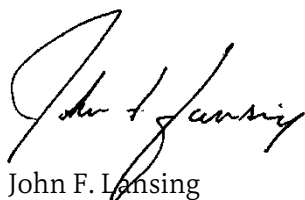
The CEO leads USAGM through a collaborative, decentralized approach with the U.S. International Coordinating Committee (ICC), which is made up of the heads of the five USAGM networks. Through the CEO-chaired ICC bi-monthly meetings, the five USAGM networks collaborate on strategic and operational issues to move the agency forward.

Today, USAGM is focused on several key initiatives to increase our impact in a challenging environment. We are:

- Maximizing program delivery agility;
- Enhancing strategic coordination between networks;
- Focusing on key issues and audiences;
- Improving accountability and impact measurement; and
- Targeting public-private partnerships on innovation and media reach.

The financial and performance data presented in this report are fundamentally complete and reliable. We are pleased that the independent auditors gave our financial statements an unmodified opinion for the fourteenth year. We recognize that there are a number of significant items identified by the external audit that will require our continued attention and diligent improvement. We are committed to directly addressing these challenges and reinforcing progress.

We are proud to report the achievements of the U.S. Agency for Global Media during FY 2018. We strive to effectively and efficiently use the resources entrusted to us by the Administration, Congress, and the public to further our global mission.



John F. Lensing  
Chief Executive Officer and Director



Kenneth Weinstein  
Broadcasting Board of Governors  
Chairman

November 15, 2018

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# Introduction

## **PURPOSE OF THE PERFORMANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY REPORT**

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This FY 2018 Performance and Accountability Report (PAR) provides performance and financial information for the U.S. Agency for Global Media (USAGM), formerly known as the Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG). This integrated presentation of the Agency's program performance, financial accountability, and managerial effectiveness is intended to assist Congress, the President, and the public in assessing USAGM's performance relative to its mission and stewardship of the resources entrusted to it.

This report satisfies the reporting requirements of the following legislation:

- Federal Managers' Financial Integrity Act of 1982 (FMFIA)
- Government Performance and Results Act of 1993 (GPRA)
- Government Management Reform Act of 1994 (GMRA)
- Reports Consolidation Act of 2000
- Accountability of Tax Dollars Act of 2002
- Improper Payments Information Act of 2002
- Improper Payments Elimination and Recovery Act of 2010
- Improper Payments Elimination and Recovery Improvement Act of 2012
- Government Performance and Results Modernization Act of 2010 (GPRAMA)
- Grants Oversight and New Efficiency Act (GONE)

## **STRUCTURE OF THE PERFORMANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY REPORT**

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The report includes the following sections:

### **Management's Discussion and Analysis (MD&A)**

The MD&A is an overview of USAGM, its organizational structure, and mission. It includes a summary of the Agency's program highlights and accomplishments for FY 2018 and USAGM's management and performance challenges. The MD&A also includes the results of the Agency's FY 2018 FMFIA internal control review and a section on management assurances.

**Performance Information**

The performance section presents annual program performance information as required by GPRA and GPRAMA and describes the Agency's progress in meeting its operational strategic goals. A summary of the FY 2018 performance objectives is presented, as well as information about the outcome of specific performance indicator targets and a summary explanation of the verification and validation of performance measures used in the report.

**Financial Information**

The financial section contains USAGM's financial statements for the federal entities and the related Independent Auditor's Report. In this section, USAGM has prepared and presented all four statements as required by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circular A-136, Financial Reporting Requirements.

**Other Information**

This section contains the Inspector General's statement on management and performance challenges along with USAGM's response. It also contains a summary of the financial statement audit, management assurances, payment integrity, and grants oversight and new efficiency information.

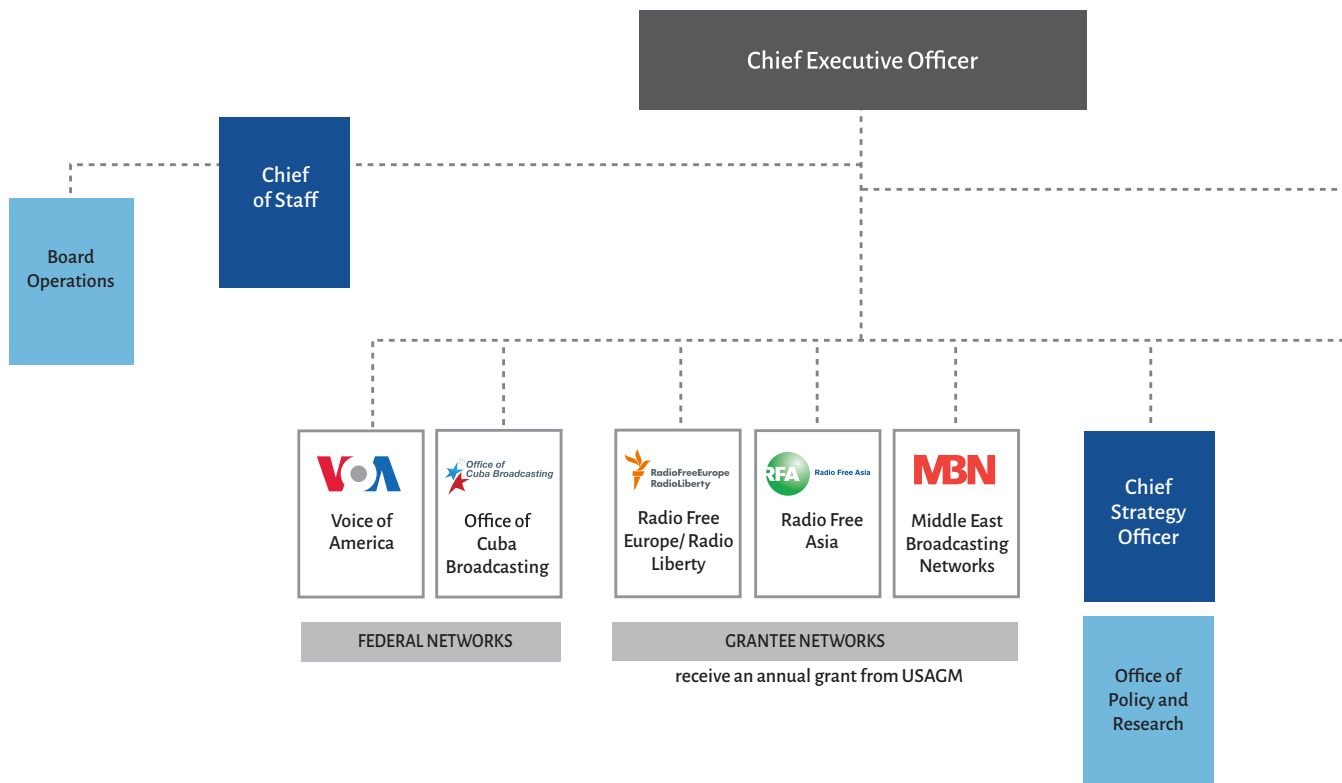


## Section 1:

### Management's Discussion and Analysis

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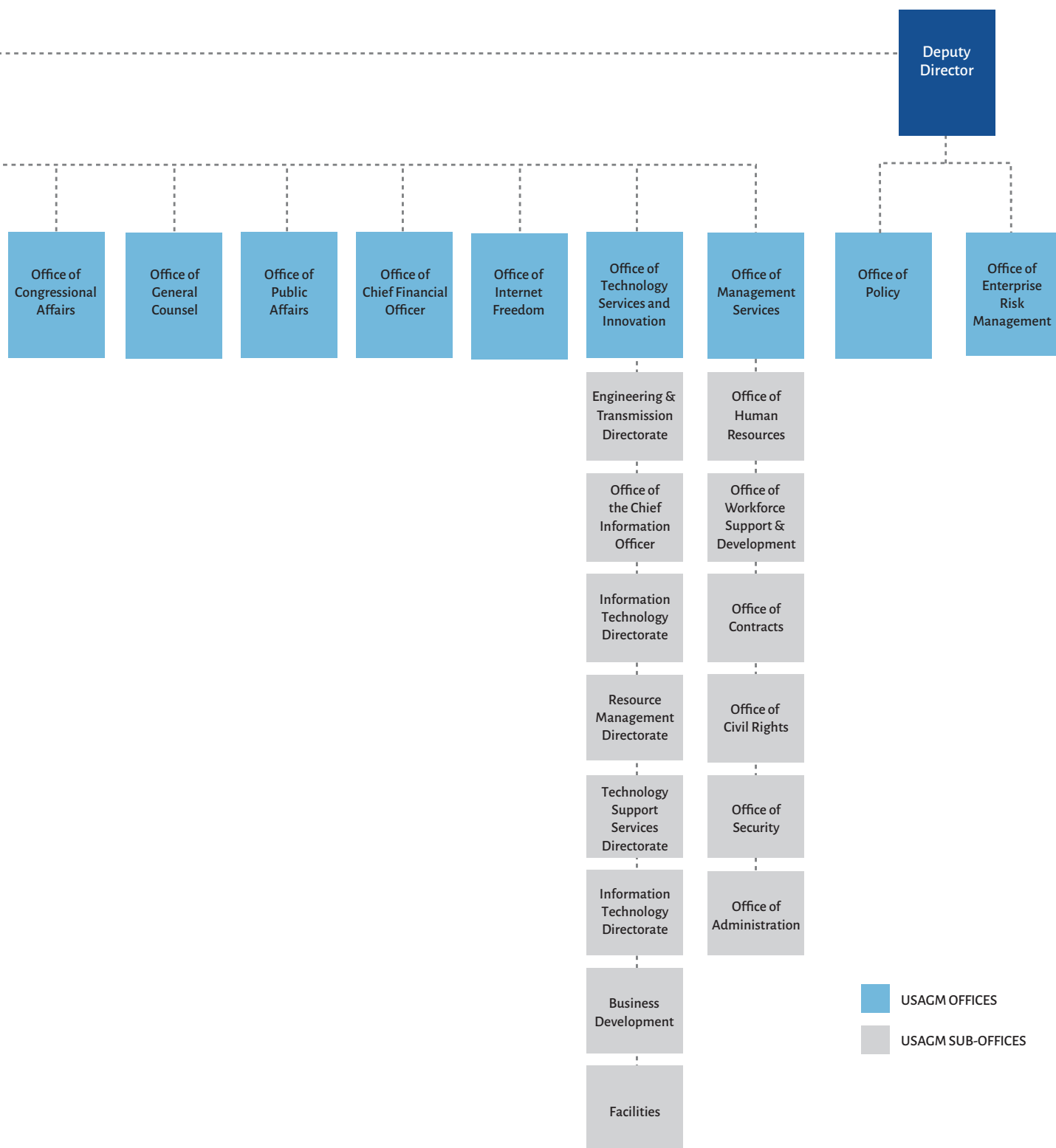
## USAGM ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE



## USAGM MISSION

**To inform, engage, and connect people around the world  
in support of freedom and democracy.**

The U.S. Agency for Global Media (USAGM) informs, engages, and connects people around the world in support of freedom and democracy through its international media programs. Around the world, 345 million people consume USAGM programming each week via radio, television, and the Internet. All USAGM broadcast services adhere to the standards and principles of the International Broadcasting Act of 1994, as amended, and support the USAGM mission.



# USAGM Organization

Recently renamed USAGM, the Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG) became an independent federal entity on October 1, 1999, as a result of the 1998 Foreign Affairs Reform and Restructuring Act (Public Law 105-277). The BBG was created to administer civilian international media funded by the U.S. Government in accordance with the U.S. International Broadcasting Act of 1994, as amended. The Fiscal Year 2017 National Defense Authorization Act made several significant reforms to the Agency's management structure. Some of these took immediate effect, others will come into force at a future date. Primarily, the act authorized the position of Chief Executive Officer (CEO). Under the new statutory structure, the CEO will serve as agency head, assuming all leadership, management, and operational authorities, including the key duty of acting as the firewall against political interference in the networks' journalism, ensuring the independence and integrity of BBG broadcasters. Currently, the Agency's Governing Board remains in place. The legislation authorizes a new Presidentially-appointed, five-member, bipartisan Advisory Board, which includes the Secretary of State that would replace the existing Board. The currently serving CEO, John F. Lansing, was expressly retained by the legislation as the Agency's inaugural CEO. Future CEOs will be presidentially nominated and, upon Senate confirmation, be appointed by the President.

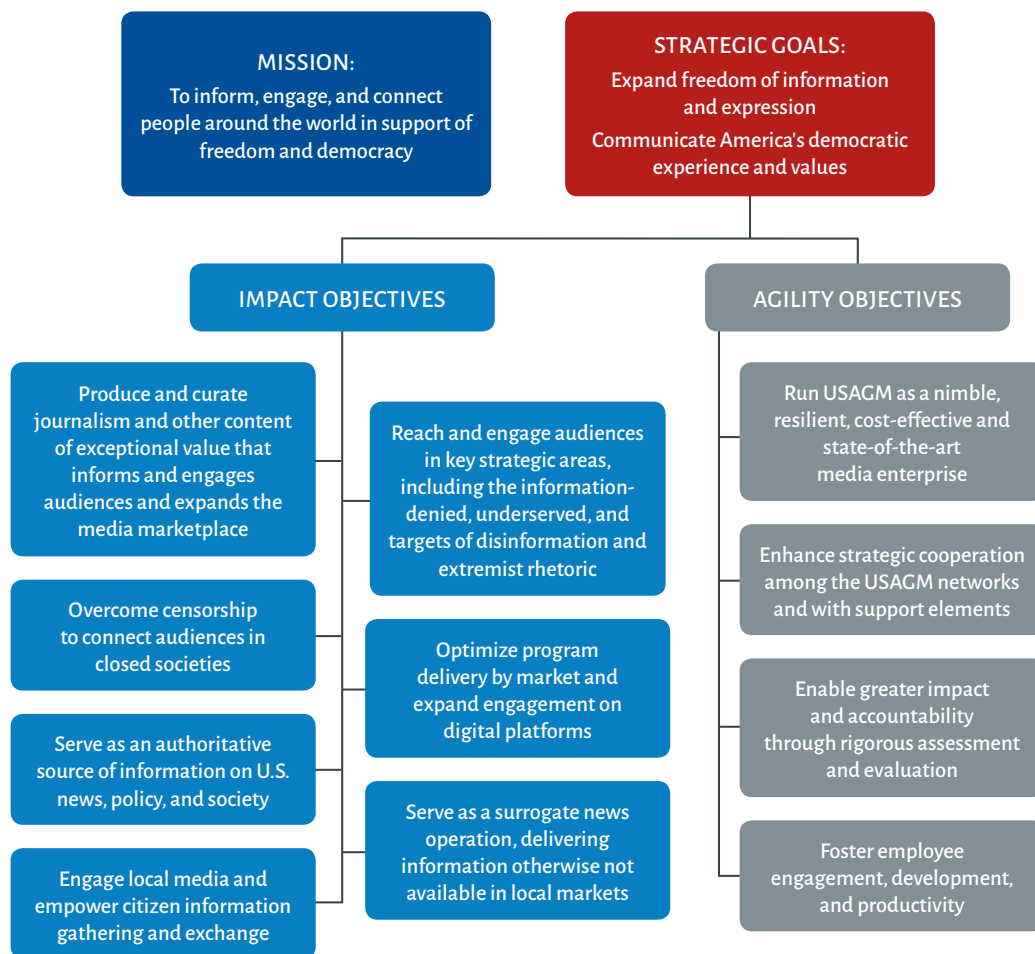
The FY 2017 NDAA also gave the CEO authority to take other steps to modernize the Agency, including changing its name. We recognize the overdue need to communicate to U.S. taxpayers not only the modern technology and media platforms used to achieve our mission, but also the global scope of our work. Today, the Agency operates on mediums far beyond broadcast television and radio, including the internet, mobile devices, smart television applications, and digital radio. The "U.S. Agency for Global Media" name better conveys that we are a U.S. government-funded, multiplatform media agency producing content in 58 languages with a worldwide, unduplicated weekly audience of 345 million people in more than 100 countries.

# FY 2018 Goals and Objectives

In the Strategic Plan covering FY 2018-2022, USAGM has set two strategic goals:

- **Expand freedom of information and expression**
- **Communicate America's democratic experience and values**

In support of these goals, the Strategic Plan sets out seven Impact Objectives and four Agility Objectives:



The Agency set performance goals supporting each of the Impact and Agility Objectives. Highlights of USAGM's performance in FY 2018 are presented on the following pages. Full performance results are presented in Section Two.

# Performance Highlights

Over the past year, USAGM has effectively distributed breaking news, in-depth reporting and reasoned analysis on traditional and new media platforms, illustrating that international media is the most effective U.S. tool to provide accurate news and information and relevant discussions to those who do not receive this from their own media.

**Around the world, 345 million people consume USAGM programing each week in 58 languages.**



**Key accomplishments in FY 2018 include:**

- MBN initiated the implementation of a multi-year transformation plan designed to fundamentally improve programming content and production quality across all MBN media. In addition they launched new television programs, bringing moderate voices to the crowded Arabic-language media marketplace.
- Nearly a quarter of Iranian adults (23 percent) tuned into VOA and RFE/RL broadcasts each week, despite the government bans on satellite dishes and online access to international media. VOA Persian showcased the U.S. side of events important to Iranians, stories either not reported or misreported by Iran state media. As mass protests broke out in Iran in December 2017 and January 2018, eyewitnesses from more than 23 cities provided RFE/RL's Farda with videos from within the country, setting records for the service online and on social media.
- RFA's Uyghur Service broke shocking stories of the nearly one million Uyghurs being detained in re-education camps in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region since mid-2017. The Uyghur Service's reports are continuously cited by major media, Members of Congress, the U.S. Department of State, and academics around the world, and have made the Uyghur situation one of the most concerning human rights issues today. Despite pressure on RFA journalists, including harassment and disappearance of family members in Xinjiang, the RFA Uyghur Service serves as the leading news source for the Uyghur speaking community as well as for the Western media and human rights observers.
- VOA's Africa Division launched a new English-language television program, "Our Voices," a round-table discussion hosted by pan-African women journalists. It aims to create a community of empowerment where women talk about serious matters in their lives, on the African continent and around the world, including politics, business, and migration.
- OCB put in place a network of correspondents throughout the world, reporting news about Cuba and connecting with independent reporters on the island. In addition, news programs have been expanded to better serve the Cuban audience.

## IMPACT OBJECTIVE 1:

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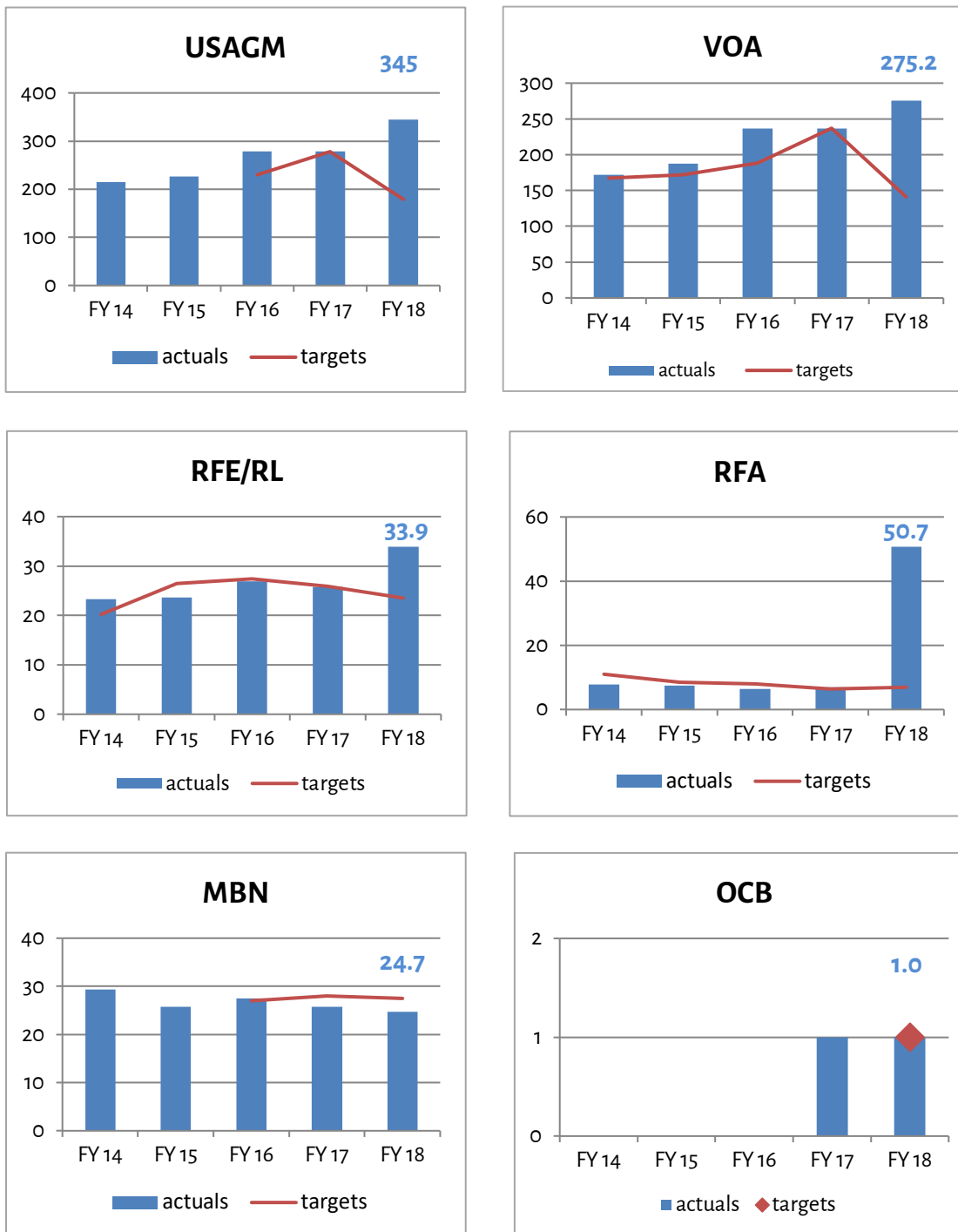
Produce and curate journalism and other content of exceptional value that informs and engages audiences and expands the media marketplace

### **Impact Performance Goal 1.1: Reach significant audiences**

A key measure of USAGM's success is its weekly audience. These charts present weekly audience for USAGM networks from FY 2014 to FY 2018, along with the targets set by the Agency. Although impact cannot be reduced to a single quantitative factor, USAGM has implemented an Impact Model, supported by a robust set of performance indicators to gauge success. All of the performance indicators for USAGM Impact Objectives come from the Impact Model.



Further discussion of these figures and results for the other performance goals and indicators are presented in Section Two: Performance Information. All audience numbers are in millions.



FY 2018 targets are from the FY 2019 Congressional Budget Request and were set based on significant proposed budget decreases. USAGM began setting overall annual audience targets for FY 2016; prior to that, targets were set for the individual networks only. FY 2016 is also the first year for which MBN set an overall audience target, rather than individual targets for Alhurra and Radio Sawa. FY 2017 is the first year that we have had national audience reach for OCB in Cuba, which has a measured weekly audience of 1.0 million.

# Ongoing Challenges

## **MEDIA ENVIRONMENT**

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Major factors shaping the global political and security context for USAGM activities include barriers to freedom of information, the changing nature of communications, sophisticated disinformation operations by state and non-state actors, and threats to security from extremism and instability. Extremist rhetoric and incitement to violence directly threaten U.S. national security interests in Iraq, Syria, Afghanistan, Yemen, Somalia, and elsewhere, while the adroit adoption of digital and social media by actors around the world, including the Islamic State and others, threatens core U.S. values of freedom, democracy, and respect for human rights. Meanwhile, sophisticated state propaganda sponsored by Russia, China, and other authoritarian regimes propagates false narratives and disinformation, confusing audiences in order to subvert democratic ideals. USAGM brands' credible, factual, and locally relevant journalism challenges these lies and half-truths, in order to support democratic values, open debate, and the peaceful resolution of conflicts.

To respond to this challenging environment, USAGM is focused on targeting key strategic areas aligned to U.S. foreign policy and on having and demonstrating impact.

A key challenge for USAGM is to deliver programming to audiences via the media and the formats they prefer, despite the instabilities and evolution of various media markets. USAGM is aggressively moving to formats and platforms that audiences use, including FM radio, TV, and digital platforms. In FY 2018, the USAGM completed the installation of four new FM stations: Brazzaville and Pointe Noire in Republic of Congo and Mbuji-Mayi and Katanga in Democratic Republic of Congo.

To reach audiences, USAGM is constantly working to overcome jamming and censorship. USAGM has been at the forefront of the battle against satellite jamming, working closely with other concerned parties and through international forums to fight satellite jamming. On behalf of its broadcasters, USAGM's Internet Anti-Censorship program counteracts activities undertaken by governments such

as China and Iran to restrict Internet access, constantly revising and updating its approaches and techniques to thwart Internet censorship.

USAGM responds to crises and political changes worldwide with surges in broadcasting. USAGM language services add additional coverage and create rich content to effectively and accurately inform people affected by crises and turmoil with very little lead-time and often with no defined end of surge. In FY 2018, USAGM provided extensive coverage of Burma's Rohingya refugee crisis, ongoing civil war in Syria, human rights abuses against ethnic Uyghurs in China, peaceful revolution in Armenia, protests in Iran, and political crises in Nicaragua and Venezuela. Violent extremism continued to be an area of focus for USAGM networks, covering Boko Haram in Nigeria, the Taliban in South Asia, and ISIS in the MENA region, the Balkans, Central Asia, and elsewhere. Moving forward, USAGM seeks to increase its ability and authority for crisis broadcasting.

## AUDIENCES

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Within this challenging environment, USAGM has achieved a record weekly audience of 345 million people. USAGM networks are focused on expanding their audiences and increasing their impact by targeting programming and delivery methods to engage key, strategic audiences in priority countries and regions aligned with U.S. interests. Through the annual Language Service Review process, USAGM language services identify key target audiences and associated impact goals and performance targets.

USAGM's Office of Policy and Research (OPR) made several changes in FY 2018 to improve strategic decision-making and program targeting throughout the Agency. OPR developed and deployed customized dashboards with integrated research, analytics, and impact data to the networks and language services. OPR also purchased new tools for improved targeting and analysis on digital and social media and integrated competitive landscape analysis into the annual Language Service Review process.

OPR is in the process of revisiting USAGM's audience measurement methodology in order to integrate other data sources, such as web and social media analytics and commercial ratings data. This new methodology will be thoroughly tested and validated before it is rolled out for performance reporting.

## INFRASTRUCTURE

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USAGM requires powerful and reliable infrastructure and equipment to fulfill its mission. USAGM customers – audiences and affiliate stations around the world – often have a number of news choices. To ensure these programs engage target audiences, USAGM must find ways to effectively deliver high quality programs in a format that is preferred by and accessible to the target audience. USAGM must manage a mix of media and technologies from traditional shortwave radio to satellite TV, internet, and mobile devices.

The rapidly evolving broadcast information technology market impacts much of USAGM's broadcast and transmission equipment. Different areas of the world depend on different types of broadcast technology, requiring USAGM to maintain a traditional transmission network, while investing in new media technology to support programming efforts such as news delivery via over-the-top video or social media. New infrastructure must be established and maintained along with existing infrastructure, and this maintenance is complicated by the advent of digital technology with shorter replacement cycles. Given these constraints, USAGM strives to judiciously allocate resources to address the most critical infrastructure requirements as well as recurring technical infrastructure requirements and one-time projects.

USAGM is aggressively shifting to digital platforms, targeting future leaders and influencers. Efforts include a new social media engagement tool to measure follows, likes, and comments for USAGM accounts on key platforms and new encryption and proxy tools to circumvent censorship.

On broadcast platforms, USAGM must carefully manage its transmission infrastructure to maintain a strong presence in critical markets, ensuring signal strength and reliability of broadcasts to vital areas throughout the world. USAGM works to meet this challenge by conducting in-depth analysis to meet the constant challenge of maintaining an effective and efficient transmission network.

USAGM's Office of Technology, Services, and Innovation has spearheaded a process of migration away from less-effective transmission to platforms that audiences prefer and transfer of transmission from costly facilities to lower-cost options.

## MANAGEMENT

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While audience preferences and research dictate the strategies of individual language services across USAGM, the Agency must remain flexible and capable of adapting to changes in regional priorities and broadcast strategies. USAGM must continually assess how best to scale and shape operations, including the right mix of language services, to meet the new challenges while enhancing performance.

Unpredictable global events and changing media consumption habits make it important that the Agency continually improve its ability to respond to events with agility and focus. As audience preferences in target broadcast areas have changed, USAGM has transitioned from radio-only broadcasts to multimedia news and information distribution, including television, the Internet, and mobile applications. Like surge broadcasts, these changes in distribution availability and audience preferences evolve quickly and require that USAGM be innovative to respond effectively and decisively.

Through the CEO-chaired International Coordinating Committee (ICC), the leaders of the five USAGM global networks have planned coordinated coverage and content sharing, exchanged best practices, de-conflicted challenges, and coordinated on strategic issues. In FY 2018, the five USAGM networks collaborated on a joint reporting project, *The Dragon's Reach*, focused on China's infrastructure spending around the world. The ICC also worked together to develop a coordinated coverage plan for the U.S.-North Korea Summit in Singapore, supporting programming for all networks. New technology governance structures were also put in place with an Agency-wide CIO and CTO appointed and the establishment of a CIO Council and Digital Governance Council to better coordinate and leverage technology across USAGM networks.

Internally, the quality, competence, and morale of the USAGM workforce is critical to mission achievement. As such, the Agency has made the development and motivation of its workforce a key component of its Strategic Plan for meeting future challenges. Issues of federal employee morale and satisfaction, made apparent in the results of federal employee surveys, are being addressed through comprehensive Workplace Solutions initiatives and the Leadership 2020 initiative.

# Financial Highlights

The USAGM financial statements are included in the Financial Section of this report.

The independent accounting firm, Kearney & Company, conducted our FY 2018 financial statement audit and issued an unmodified opinion on our Principal Financial Statements.

Preparing these statements allows USAGM to improve financial management and provide accurate and reliable information to Congress, the President, and the taxpayer. USAGM management is responsible for the integrity and objectivity of the financial information presented in the statements.

The financial statements and financial data presented in this report have been prepared from the accounting records of USAGM in conformity with accounting principles in the United States of America and incorporate the application of the standards as prescribed by the Federal Accounting Standards Advisory Board.

<b>Financial Highlights (in thousands)</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2017</b>
At End of the Year:		
<b>Condensed Balance Sheet Data:</b>		
Fund Balance with Treasury	\$ 253,742	\$ 222,120
Cash and Other Monetary Assets	3	3
Accounts Receivable	171	204
Advances to Surrogate Broadcasters	72,000	71,000
Property, Plant and Equipment	79,783	89,111
Other	874	1,668
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>\$ 406,573</b>	<b>\$ 384,106</b>
Accounts Payable and Other	\$ 30,407	\$ 33,142
Retirement and Payroll	42,184	42,001
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>\$ 72,591</b>	<b>\$ 75,143</b>
Unexpended Appropriations	\$ 266,944	\$ 232,094
Cumulative Results of Operations	67,038	76,869
<b>Total Net Position</b>	<b>333,982</b>	<b>308,963</b>
<b>Total Liabilities and Net Position</b>	<b>\$ 406,573</b>	<b>\$ 384,106</b>
For the Year:		
<b>Condensed Statement of Net Cost Data:</b>		
Total Cost	\$ 798,131	\$ 784,105
Total Earned Revenue	(3,721)	(4,840)
<b>Total Net Cost of Operations</b>	<b>\$ 794,410</b>	<b>\$ 779,265</b>

# Management Assurances

## FEDERAL MANAGERS' FINANCIAL INTEGRITY ACT

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The Federal Managers' Financial Integrity Act (FMFIA) of 1982 (Public Law 97-255) is designed to provide reasonable assurance that agencies institute management accountability and internal controls that support five objectives:

- Programs achieve their strategic objectives,
- Resources are effectively used consistent with the Agency's mission,
- Programs and resources are properly safeguarded against waste, fraud, and mismanagement,
- Information is reliable and timely to support decision making, and
- Agency complies with applicable laws and regulations.

For compliance with the FMFIA of 1982 and the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circular A-123, Management's Responsibility for Enterprise Risk Management and Internal Control, revised on July 2016; the Agency head of USAGM will provide the annual assurance statement on the status of:

- Effectiveness of internal control over financial reporting
- Effectiveness of internal control over operations
- Conformance with federal financial management system requirements
- Any material weakness found in the financial statements, which are derived from independent audits, Government Accountability Office (GAO), Office of the Inspector General (OIG) reviews, inspections or audits, and self-assessments conducted by USAGM's management

FMFIA Section 4, 3512(d) (2) (B) Section 4-31 U.S.C. 3512(d) (2) (B), commonly referred to as Section 4 of the Integrity Act, requires Senior Management to prepare an annual statement that includes a separate report on whether the agency's accounting system conforms to the principles, standards, and related requirements prescribed by the Comptroller General. If the agency's accounting system does not substantially conform to the requirements listed above, the report must list the non-conformance and discuss the agency's plans for bringing its system into compliance. Based on this requirement, USAGM has to be in

compliance with the Federal Information Security Management Act (FISMA). The OIG's FY 2017 FISMA report found that although USAGM continues to make progress, it continued to have risk management and monitoring deficiencies in its enterprise-wide security program.

During FY 2018, USAGM further implemented its Enterprise Risk Management (ERM) program by adding more resources, appointing a Chief Risk Officer (CRO), and incorporating the function into the CEO's office to establish a strong "tone at the top" for ERM. Since his appointment, the CRO has established an ERM governance structure, which includes a Risk Management Council and an ERM Working Group, completed an ERM framework and implementation plan, facilitated multiple ERM overview training sessions, and collected risk information across the Agency. Furthermore, the CRO completed the risk identification step of the ERM process, which surveyed over 30 program offices, and continued the risk assessment and analysis step to build USAGM's risk profile in FY 2019.

## **FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS AND REPORTING**

### **INTERNAL CONTROL REVIEW**

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Each year, USAGM receives an Independent Audit Report containing an opinion on our financial statements, a report on internal control over financial reporting, and a report on compliance with laws, regulations, contracts, and grant agreements. In addition to safeguarding resources and complying with laws and regulations, USAGM strives to fairly and accurately present financial reports that have a material effect on spending, budgetary, or other financial decisions.

### **FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS STRATEGIES**

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USAGM continues to update its Momentum financial system interfaces to provide increased functionality and a framework for future enhancements. Performing these updates enabled USAGM to comply with mandatory Federal Government procurement, accounting, and external reporting changes, particularly Treasury's Digital Accountability and Transparency Act (DATA) of 2014, as well as GSA's System for Award Management initiative. USAGM began converting international vendors to the Treasury Invoice Processing Platform for



vendor invoice processing with expected conversion completion in FY 2019. The agency funded the upgrade of Momentum to a current supported version with an expected timeframe in FY 2019. USAGM is converting to a new Human Resource system in FY 2019 to interface with the existing Defense Civilian Payroll System because its current process will be unsupported in FY 2019 by the payroll processing system. USAGM continues to implement greater processing efficiencies, a solid framework for upcoming requirements, and increased capabilities to remain accurate and effective.

#### **PAYMENT INTEGRITY PROGRAM**

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USAGM is dedicated to continuing to strengthen its improper payments program to ensure payments are valid and processed correctly. The Program utilizes an experienced and trained staff, a financial management system that is designed with control functions to mitigate risk, and an analysis process to review transactions and procedures.

USAGM performs assessments and procedures to comply with the Improper Payments Information Act of 2002 (IPIA), as amended, OMB Circular A-123 Appendix C, Part 1 and the OMB Memorandum updates. In previous years domestic payroll was deemed a highly susceptible program. With the conversion of all employees to a self-entry on-line payroll system and an interface of the on-line certified payroll records into the payroll processing system, USAGM was able to achieve improper payment testing results well below the threshold for two consecutive years. After concurrence from the OIG, OMB granted USAGM relief from annual reporting on domestic payroll in May of 2018.

More information on USAGM's activities safeguarding against improper payments can be found in Section Four.

# FY 2018 Statement of Assurance

The United States Agency for Global Media (USAGM) is responsible for establishing and maintaining effective Enterprise Risk Management (ERM) and Internal Control Programs that meet the objectives of the Federal Managers' Financial Integrity Act (FMFIA). During Fiscal Year (FY) 2018, USAGM continued towards establishing fully compliant assurance programs as required by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), Circular A-123 released on July 15, 2016. In the USAGM's ERM efforts, a Chief Risk Officer (CRO) was appointed to oversee, facilitate, and lead risk management activities across the Agency.

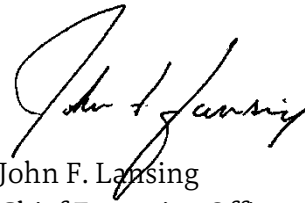
Continuing the progress that began in FY 2017, in June of 2018, I approved a Risk Management Strategic Framework and Implementation Plan that guides USAGM's ERM program. USAGM has collected risk-related data from across the Agency and is currently analyzing that data to build USAGM's first risk profile. In FY 2019, I look forward to signing the Agency's first Risk Profile to provide the necessary assurance that our decisions are driven by effective risk management.

USAGM has completed testing and documenting the internal controls around the financial reporting objectives and has determined that there are sufficient existing internal controls as necessary to support reliable financial reporting and compliance with applicable laws and regulations to mitigate the risks related to operations, reporting, and compliance over those processes, except as noted below.

During FY 2018, USAGM continued to address the process of identifying and mitigating invalid unliquidated obligations (ULOs), including implementation of a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for closeout and ULO processing. In addition, USAGM's Office of Chief Financial Officer performed closeouts, as well as developed a process to evaluate and address material obligations in conjunction with the program areas. These efforts resulted in the financial audit removing the significant deficiency determination for validity and accuracy of unliquidated obligations. The grantee monitoring process was not tested in

FY 2018 because the SOP for Grants Monitoring was not finalized until late in the fiscal year. USAGM implemented the new SOP on October 1, 2018 for FY 2019.

By maintaining our committed efforts, USAGM leadership is confident that, in collaboration with the OIG, we will successfully address the remaining concerns.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John F. Lansing". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "John" being particularly prominent.

John F. Lansing  
Chief Executive Officer and Director

# Limitations of Financial Statements

The principal financial statements are prepared to report the financial position and results of operations of USAGM, pursuant to the requirements of 31 U.S.C. 3515 (b). The statements are prepared from its books and records in accordance with Federal Generally Accepted Accounting Principles and the formats prescribed by the Office of Management and Budget. Reports used to monitor and control budgetary resources are prepared from the same books and records. The financial statements should be read with the realization that they are for a component of the U.S. Government.

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# FY 2018 Goals, Objectives, and Results

## **SUMMARY OF THE 2018-2022 USAGM STRATEGIC PLAN**

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USAGM's 2018-2022 strategic plan continues an ambitious roadmap to refine and expand the reach and impact of U.S. international media in support of American strategic interests. The plan informs USAGM budget requests and supports the integration of performance, budget planning, and management of USAGM.

The mission of the U.S. Agency for Global Media remains to inform, engage, and connect people around the world in support of freedom and democracy.

This mission is achieved through two strategic goals:

- Expand freedom of information and expression
- Communicate America's democratic experience and values

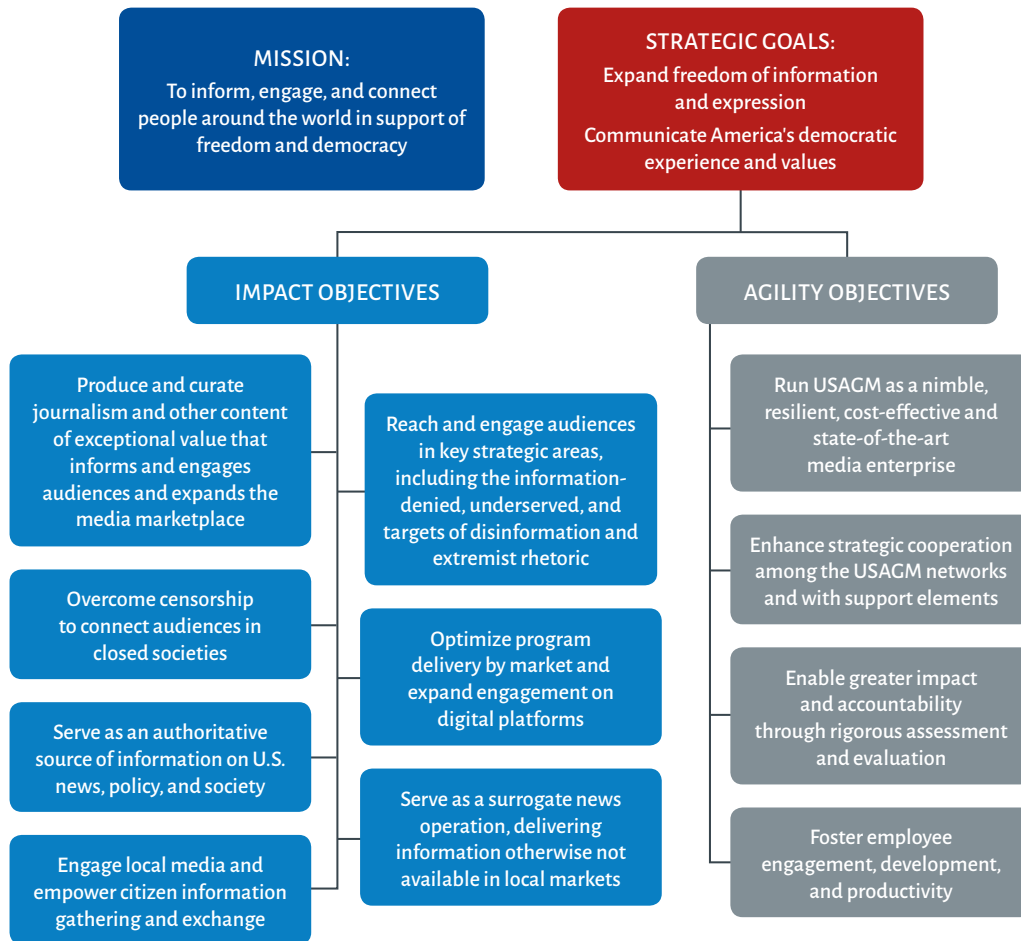
Both of these strategic goals serve to further the USAGM mission of supporting freedom and democracy. Free press and free expression are universally acknowledged as key to free, open, democratic societies, which in turn support American interests through stability, peace, alliances, and trade. Communicating America's democratic experience and values serves the same purpose. In covering the United States, we open a window onto democracy in action.

USAGM's two strategic goals are supported by seven impact objectives and four agility objectives, each of which has supporting performance goals. All of the performance indicators supporting the impact objectives come from the USAGM impact model.

Woven into these objectives are five USAGM priorities that will position the networks for success in the rapidly changing media environments:

- Maximizing program delivery agility
- Enhancing strategic cooperation between networks
- Focusing on key issues and audiences
- Improving accountability and impact measurement
- Targeting public-private partnerships on innovation and media reach

## IMPACT AND AGILITY OBJECTIVES



### IMPACT OBJECTIVE 1:

#### Produce and curate journalism and other content of exceptional value that informs and engages audiences and expands the media marketplace

Journalism is the daily work of USAGM broadcasters, and producing fact-based, verifiable news and information must be preeminent in Agency strategy. To have impact, our journalism must reach audiences, meet their interests along the breadth of subjects that matter to their lives and, at the same time, add value in expanding the media marketplace. Our aim is not just to follow the 24-hour news cycle but to drive the news agenda through original stories, investigative reporting, in-depth analysis, and a unique cross-cultural perspective that helps audiences become sophisticated consumers of news and media.



USAGM will:

- As mandated by Congress, provide news and other programming that is accurate, objective, and comprehensive and in accordance with the highest professional standards of journalism.
- Produce news and information, consistent with audience preferences and mission requirements, which are not addressed adequately by media in the target area, e.g., human rights and good governance.
- Offer non-news content that research, web analytics, and audience and affiliate feedback show is of vital interest to audiences, such as health, science, and technology.
- Produce enterprise reporting through deep and lasting exploration of critical issues in the countries we target.
- Curate content from and co-create content with reputable partners, as appropriate and consistent with broadcasting standards and editorial guidelines.

IMPACT OBJECTIVE 1: PRODUCE AND CURATE JOURNALISM AND OTHER CONTENT OF EXCEPTIONAL VALUE THAT INFORMS AND ENGAGES AUDIENCES AND EXPANDS THE MEDIA MARKETPLACE

**Impact Performance Goal 1.1: Reach significant audiences.**

Measured Weekly Audience (in millions)	FY 2014 Actual	FY 2015 Actual	FY 2016 Actual	FY 2017 Actual	FY 2018 Target	FY 2018 Actual
USAGM	215	226	278	278	179	345
VOA	171.6	187.7	236.6	236.8	141.0	275.2
RFE/RL	23.3	23.6	26.9	25.8	23.5	33.9
RFA	7.8	7.5	6.4	6.9	6.9	50.7
MBN	29.3	25.7	27.5	25.7	27.5	24.7
<i>Radio Sawa</i>	11.3	10.9	NA	NA	NA	NA
<i>Alhurra</i>	20.9	17.6	NA	NA	NA	NA
OCB	NA	NA	NA	1.0	1.0	1.0

**Notes:**

- FY 2018 targets are from the FY 2019 Congressional Budget Request and were set based on significant proposed budget decreases.
- Audience estimates do not include data for Eritrea, North Korea, Oman, Turkmenistan, or Tibetan and Uyghur regions of China, because political risk has made it impossible to carry out representative surveys in the target regions. This represents a significant portion of the countries and regions targeted by RFA language services.
- Since the FY 2015 PAR, USAGM has been reporting performance indicators for MBN overall, rather than reporting separately on Radio Sawa and Alhurra. This move brings them in line with the other broadcast entities.

## Impact Indicator:

### Measured Weekly Audiences

This indicator comes from national surveys and measures the number of people in target areas listening to, reading, or viewing USAGM programming or online materials in the past week. (USAGM also draws performance data from other sources, including digital analytics and social media metrics.) The measure is obtained for each language service (except Korean, Uyghur, Tatar-Bashkir, Tibetan, and Turkmen) and for the countries served by USAGM that were surveyed within the past five years. It is based upon the measurement of the “regular listening audience,” a statistical standard long used to report international radio audience measurement. Regular listening or viewing audience (radio, TV or Internet) has over the years been consistently defined as all adults listening or viewing at least once a week, as determined by an audience survey that has an adequately designed sample. The USAGM weekly audience is unduplicated, i.e., a member of the audience is counted only once, regardless of the number of times, platforms, or networks they consume each week. USAGM does not conduct surveys in every country every year, so audience figures may in some cases reflect weekly audience measures collected from up to five years in the past. This may result in an over or underestimation of actual audience. Additionally, political volatility in certain markets may prevent the measurement of current audiences for services broadcasting to these areas.

USAGM is in the process of revamping its audience measurement methodology in order to integrate other data sources, such as web and social media analytics and commercial ratings data. This new methodology will be thoroughly tested and validated before it is rolled out for performance reporting.

## Analysis of Results:

### USAGM

**Target: 179 million**

**Actual: 345 million**

With a weekly audience of 345 million, USAGM surpassed its target of 179 million (set based on significant proposed budget decreases). This increase is due primarily to audience growth in China, Iran, Russia, and Ethiopia.

VOA	Target: 141.0 million	Actual: 275.2 million
<p>Growth in VOA’s measured past-week global audience during FY 2018 far surpassed the FY 2018 target (set based on significant proposed budget decreases), adding 44.3 million weekly users and reaching a weekly audience of 275.2 million (with 5.9 million users measured by surveys more than 5 years ago no longer included in the estimate, the net weekly audience gain is 38.4 million). By far the largest increase in audience came in China, largely from newly measured online users, though weekly use of radio and TV products also rose. New surveys measured audience increases of about 2.5 million both in Iran (on satellite TV and online) and in Ethiopia (especially from new TV products but also on radio). In Russia, measured audience was stable, with some growth in TV and radio offset by a larger percentage of the adult population that could not be reached in the 2018 survey.</p>		

RFE/RL	Target: 23.5 million	Actual: 33.9 million
<p>RFE/RL’s weekly audience of 33.9 million in FY 2018 significantly exceeded RFE/RL’s target of 23.5 million. Compared to FY 2017, the weekly audience increased from 25.8 million. New field research was finalized in a very limited number of RFE/RL markets over the course of FY 2018 but significant audience gains were recorded in both Russia and Iran. RFE/RL in Russia, which includes Radio Svoboda as well as Current Time, increased its audience across all three platforms, radio, TV, and internet. In 2018, RFE/RL reached 6.6 percent of adult Russians weekly, or nearly 6.8 million people, up from 4.0 million adult Russians in June 2016. Its largest audience is online, where its audience increased from 2.4 million weekly in 2016 to 4.9 million in 2018. Radio and television have smaller audiences, but each platform reaches approximately 1.5 million Russians weekly. One in seven Iranian adults (15.7 percent) now follow Farda on radio, television, the web or social media compared to 7.1 percent in August 2015. In terms of people, the measured increase in Farda’s weekly audience means that 9.6 million Iranians use programming from Farda each week, an increase of almost 5.4 million people from the previous survey.</p>		

<b>RFA</b>	<b>Target: 6.9 million</b>	<b>Actual: 50.7 million</b>
<p>The exponential growth in RFA’s weekly audience from 6.9 million to 50.7 million was driven by significant growth in China and, to a lesser extent, in Burma. In China, RFA’s audience grew from more the a million Chinese adults to more than 44 million – nearly 38 million of whom used RFA online content, including RFA’s branded social media sites and exclusive blogs and online programs. In Burma, a June 2018 survey suggested that RFA had begun to turn around losses in the past two years, growing from nearly 1.8 million in 2015 to more than 2.2 million in 2018. Audience growth was fueled by viewers of its weekly “Here and Now” satellite television program, as well as growth in online audiences – especially RFA Facebook. Unfortunately, after this survey was completed, RFA Burmese television programming was removed from the popular DVB satellite because RFA’s coverage of the crisis in Rakhine State used the internationally recognized term “Rohingya” to describe the beleaguered Muslim minority there.</p>		

<b>MBN</b>	<b>Target: 27.5 million</b>	<b>Actual: 24.7 million</b>
<p>MBN’s past week measured audience for FY 2018 is lower than in FY 2017 because Algeria is not included in 2018 reach. This is because as of FY 2018, the Algeria data is six years old, exceeding USAGM’s five year limit for including data in measured reach. MBN launched new national surveys in FY 2018 in Egypt, Tunisia, and Algeria but as of the time of the 2018 PAR has only received final data from Tunisia. In that country, past week reach for Alhurra increased significantly from the last time it was measured from 3.4 percent in 2014 to 7.5 percent in 2018.</p>		

<b>OCB (Radio and TV Martí)</b>	<b>Target: 1.0 million</b>	<b>Actual: 1.0 million</b>
<p>USAGM did not commission a survey in Cuba in FY 2018, so OCB’s weekly audience remains unchanged in FY 2018.</p>		

IMPACT OBJECTIVE 1: PRODUCE AND CURATE JOURNALISM AND OTHER CONTENT OF EXCEPTIONAL VALUE THAT INFORMS AND ENGAGES AUDIENCES AND EXPANDS THE MEDIA MARKETPLACE

**Impact Performance Goal 1.2: Provide programming that audiences find trustworthy.**

Program Credibility <sup>1</sup> – percent of weekly audience who consider information to be very or somewhat trustworthy	FY 2014 Actual	FY 2015 Actual	FY 2016 Actual	FY 2017 Actual	FY 2018 Target	FY 2018 Actual
	Simple average			Weighted average		
VOA	89	86	86	83	82	84
RFE/RL	92	88	87	80	82	77
RFA	87	84	86	93	86	77
MBN	NA	86	82	80	80	80
<i>Radio Sawa</i>	83	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
<i>Alhurra</i>	84	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
OCB	NA	NA	NA	97	97	97

<sup>1</sup> Beginning with FY 2017, the scores for program credibility are weighted averages, based on audience size, of all program credibility scores obtained by an entity. In previous years, these scores were simple averages of the scores by country. Scores from FY 2016 and prior years are not comparable to the FY 2017 and subsequent scores. The FY 2017 weighted averages were first reported in the performance section of the FY 2019 Congressional Budget Justification.

**Impact Indicator:**

**Program Credibility**

This indicator is determined by the survey question about trustworthiness of news and information of those sampled respondents who listened to or viewed each station at least once a week. The answers are registered on a four-point scale – Trust it a great deal, Trust it somewhat, Do not trust it very much, Do not trust it at all. The credibility index is a weighted average, by audience size, of the percent of those answering the question in the survey (excluding those who did not respond or did not know) who report trusting news from the station a great deal or somewhat. Credibility estimates are not included for countries where the number of regular listeners/viewers/online users is so small (n = <50) that the estimate is unreliable.

## Analysis of Results:

VOA	Target: 82	Actual: 84
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VOA's program credibility score of 84 percent increased from FY 2017 and surpassed its FY 2018 target. In surveys newly available as of FY 2018, audience trust in VOA news was measured at 89 percent in China, at 94 percent in Burma, and 98 percent in Ethiopia. Users' trust in VOA news was stable in Iran at 67 percent, but was lower at 49 percent among users in Russia.

RFE/RL	Target: 82	Actual: 77
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RFE/RL's program credibility score of 77 percent fell short of its goal of 82 percent. RFE/RL continues to hold a high level of credibility among its audience with three out of four weekly listeners, viewers, and online users rating its programming as very or somewhat trustworthy, including key markets where worsening opinions of the United States have contributed to lower program credibility scores for the RFE/RL broadcast services operating there.

RFA	Target: 86	Actual: 77
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The drop in RFA's program credibility score to 77 in FY 2018 means RFA missed its target of 85 percent due to unexpectedly high audiences in China. Chinese audiences were not included in any past program credibility indicators because of small audience sizes. Because indicators are weighted by population, data from all other countries are overwhelmed by China. It is not surprising that RFA's credibility as measured in face-to-face surveys would be lower than in the more open markets of Cambodia and Burma, which provided the basis for all past credibility scores for RFA. China's more repressive control of media make survey respondents reluctant to admit finding banned materials appealing or credible. This welcome growth in Chinese audience provides a new baseline for all RFA indicators.

MBN	Target: 80	Actual: 80
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MBN's program credibility score of 80 in FY 2018 was on target. MBN continues to hold a high level of credibility among its audience, with 80 percent of weekly listeners, viewers, and online users rating its programming very or somewhat trustworthy.

OCB	Target: 97	Actual: 97
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USAGM did not commission a survey in Cuba in FY 2018, so OCB's credibility score remains unchanged in FY 2018.

IMPACT OBJECTIVE 1: PRODUCE AND CURATE JOURNALISM AND OTHER CONTENT OF EXCEPTIONAL VALUE THAT INFORMS AND ENGAGES AUDIENCES AND EXPANDS THE MEDIA MARKETPLACE

**Impact Performance Goal 1.3: Provide programming that increases the audiences' understanding of current events.**

Understanding – percent of weekly audience who report that the broadcasts have increased their understanding of current events somewhat or a great deal	FY 2014 Actual	FY 2015 Actual	FY 2016 Actual	FY 2017 Actual	FY 2018 Target	FY 2018 Actual
	Simple average			Weighted average		
VOA	90	85	86	81	81	76
RFE/RL	86	84	81	81	83	73
RFA	88	80	NA	NA	85	52
MBN	NA	81	80	71	70	70
<i>Radio Sawa</i>	77	81	NA	NA	NA	NA
<i>Alhurra</i>	77	81	NA	NA	NA	NA
OCB	NA	NA	NA	96	96	96

<sup>1</sup>Beginning with FY 2017, the scores for understanding are weighted averages, based on audience size, of all understanding scores obtained by an entity. In previous years, these scores were simple averages of the scores by country. Scores from FY 2016 and prior years are not comparable to the FY 2017 and subsequent scores. The FY 2017 weighted averages were first reported in the performance section of the FY 2019 Congressional Budget Justification.

**Impact Indicator:**

**Understanding of current events**

This indicator is determined by the survey question asking weekly listeners/viewers/online users of [language] whether the broadcasts have “increased their understanding of current events.” The answers are registered on a four-point scale – a great deal, somewhat, very little, or not at all. The understanding indicator is a weighted average, by audience size, of the percent of those answering the question in the survey (excluding those who did not respond or did not know) who chose “a great deal” or “somewhat.”



## Analysis of Results:

### VOA

Target: 81

Actual: 76

VOA's score on enhancing understanding of current events in FY 2018 was 76 percent, below the FY 2017 actual and FY 2018 target of 81 percent. Lower scores from weekly users in Russia and Iran contributed to the decline, although about six in ten users in both countries (as well as in China) say VOA content has increased their understanding of current events. FY 2018 survey data show high scores on understanding from almost all weekly VOA users in Ethiopia and eight in ten in Burma.

### RFE/RL

Target: 83

Actual: 73

RFE/RL's understanding score of 73 percent in FY 2018 declined compared to the previous year and did not meet the target of 83 percent. RFE/RL continues to increase the understanding of current events among a significant portion of its audience with 73 percent of weekly listeners, viewers, or online users reporting that its programs increased their understanding of current events.

### RFA

Target: 85

Actual: 52

Historically, RFA's understanding scores have been based on data from Burma and Cambodia, where audiences have been robust. In FY 2018, the welcome growth in audiences in China has meant that these indicators, weighted by population size, are reflective almost entirely of Chinese metrics. It is not surprising that RFA's understanding as measured in face-to-face surveys would be lower than in the more open markets of Cambodia and Burma. China's more repressive control of media make survey respondents reluctant to admit finding banned materials appealing or credible. This welcome growth in Chinese audience provides a new baseline for all RFA indicators.

### MBN

Target: 70

Actual: 70

MBN's understanding score of 70 percent in FY 2018 met the target.

### OCB

Target: 96

Actual: 96

USAGM did not commission a survey in Cuba in FY 2018, so OCB's understanding score remains unchanged in FY 2018.

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IMPACT OBJECTIVE 1: PRODUCE AND CURATE JOURNALISM AND OTHER CONTENT OF EXCEPTIONAL VALUE THAT INFORMS AND ENGAGES AUDIENCES AND EXPANDS THE MEDIA MARKETPLACE

**Impact Performance Goal 1.4: Provide programming that is influential with audiences.**

Helps form opinions on important topics Percentage of weekly audience who report that the broadcasts have helped them form opinions on important topics somewhat or a great deal	FY 2017 Actual	FY 2018 Target	FY 2018 Actual
VOA	62	67	63
RFE/RL	55	57	52
RFA	82	82	87
MBN	71	72	71
OCB	75	75	75

**Note:**

This was a new measure in FY 2017. Actuals for FY 2014-2016 are not available.

**Impact Indicator:**

**Helps form opinions**

This indicator is determined by a question in representative surveys asking past week listeners/viewers/online users of [language] whether the broadcasts have helped them form opinions on important topics. The answers are registered on a four-point scale: a great deal, somewhat, very little, or not at all. This indicator is a weighted average, by audience size, of the percentage of those answering the question in the survey (excluding those who did not respond or did not know) who chose “a great deal” or “somewhat.”

## Analysis of Results:

### VOA

Target: 67

Actual: 63

While VOA's score of 63 percent of weekly users who say its content has helped them form their own opinions reflects a small increase over the FY 2017 score, it is below its FY 2018 target. The lower score reflects the exclusion of data gathered more than five years ago, as well as a decline in the score from users in Iran (from 59 to 42). New data from Ethiopia showed almost nine in ten VOA users reporting that its news helped them form opinions, and increases to almost three-quarters of VOA users in Burma and more than four in ten users in Russia who said the same of VOA news.

### RFE/RL

Target: 57

Actual: 52

RFE/RL's score of 52 percent of weekly users who say its content has helped them form their own opinions did not meet the target of 57 percent. RFE/RL continues to be influential with its audience with 52 percent of weekly listeners, viewers, or online users reporting that the broadcasts have helped them form opinions on important topics somewhat or a great deal.

### RFA

Target: 82

Actual: 87

RFA's score of 87 percent of weekly users who say its content has helped them form their own opinions exceeded its target of 82 percent.

### MBN

Target: 72

Actual: 71

MBN's score of 71 percent of weekly users who say its content has helped them form their own opinions narrowly missed its target of 72 percent.

### OCB

Target: 75

Actual: 75

USAGM did not commission a survey in Cuba in FY 2018, so OCB's score of 75 percent of weekly users who say its content has helped them form their own opinions remains unchanged in FY 2018.

## IMPACT OBJECTIVE 2:

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### Reach and engage audiences in key strategic areas, including the information-denied, underserved, and targets of disinformation and extremist rhetoric

In deciding where to target, USAGM considers the local media situation, along with U.S. strategic interests, and prioritizes countries that lack a free or developed press. Special consideration is given to populations at risk due to extremist rhetoric and disinformation. USAGM prioritizes reaching audiences in areas plagued by extremism, where extremist forces espouse a violent ideology and execute campaigns of terror that threaten U.S. and regional security and stymie free, open, democratic societies. Another key focus area is audiences subjected to state-sponsored disinformation campaigns, which seek to undermine democratic norms and the very idea of objective truth. In all target countries, the USAGM networks seek to grow their audience base and reach those traditionally underserved by USAGM broadcasts. Populations in the target countries are overwhelmingly young – a challenge, but also a chance for us to connect with a demographic that in many cases has never even heard of us. USAGM’s current audiences are approximately 58 percent male and 42 percent female – an imbalance ripe for correcting. USAGM understands that to reach and be relevant with these audiences, it needs to provide them with content that not only informs them of international and local news, but assists them in building and participating in a civil society.

USAGM will:

- Prioritize countries lacking freedom and democracy or faced with disinformation or extremism, where accurate, credible news and information are lacking. Boost service to these areas, where feasible.
- Introduce service in selected new languages to reach sizeable new audiences in countries where USAGM products are urgently needed.
- Reach out to women and youth with programming that addresses issues of concern and relevance to their lives.
- Sharpen audience segmentation and targeting to drive content strategies and better address gender and age demographics, as well as psychographic segments.
- Serve as a conduit for the transmission of reporting from inside closed societies lacking press freedom to outside audiences.

- Ensure strong local news coverage, as warranted by events, to meet urgent audience needs in areas of crisis.
- Draw on the experiences of the world's many models of free societies, in particular the U.S., to present a broad array of political views and debates.

IMPACT OBJECTIVE 2: REACH AND ENGAGE AUDIENCES IN KEY STRATEGIC AREAS, INCLUDING THE INFORMATION-DENIED, UNDERSERVED, AND TARGETS OF DISINFORMATION AND EXTREMIST RHETORIC .

**Impact Performance Goal 2.1: Achieve significant audience reach in environments subject to extremist rhetoric and violence.**

	FY 2014 Actual	FY 2015 Actual	FY 2016 Actual	FY 2017 Actual	FY 2018 Target	FY 2018 Actual
Increase or maintain weekly audiences in: <sup>1</sup>						
Iraq <sup>2</sup>	35.5% (Jul 2012)	42.4% (Nov 2014)	42.6% (Jan 2016)	42.6% (Jan 2016)	42%	42.6% (Jan 2016)
Kenya	6.0% (Oct 2013)	12.1% (Aug 2015)	12.1% (Aug 2015)	20.2% (Feb 2017)	16%	20.2% (Feb 2017)
Nigeria	16.9% (Mar 2014)	18.1% (Jun 2015)	21.0% (Feb 2016)	21.0% (Feb 2016)	23%	21.0% (Feb 2016)
Afghanistan	52.8% (Jun 2014)	49.4% (Nov 2015)	49.4% (Nov 2015)	38.5% (Nov 2016)	30%	38.5% (Nov 2016)
Pakistan (excluding Former FATA and Gilgit Baltistan)	5.7% (Jun 2014)	5.7% (Jun 2014)	5.7% (Jun 2014)	2.9% (Aug 2016)	4%	2.9% (Aug 2016)
Former FATA region <sup>3</sup>	22.7% (Jul 2011)	26.4% (Jun 2015)	26.4% (Jun 2015)	26.4% (Jun 2015)	27%	26.4% (Jun 2015)
Central Asia <sup>4</sup>	1.8 million	2.4 million	2.7 million	3.9 million	4.1 million	3.9 million

<sup>1</sup> Multi-country estimates are presented in real numbers, rather than percentages, because of the potential high variations in percentages across covered countries. The countries and regions listed were selected by USAGM experts and represent a subset of those that the USAGM networks target with programming that provides news and information to counter extremist messaging.

<sup>2</sup> Iraq includes audience for Alhurra, Radio Sawa, and VOA Kurdish and English. FY 2018 figure also includes audiences for [www.Irfaasawtak.com](http://www.Irfaasawtak.com).

<sup>3</sup> The USAGM survey of FATA covers the following territories of Pakistan where probability sampling was possible: Bajaur and Mohmand agency and the frontier regions of DI Khan, Kohat, Lakki, Peshawar, which are now part of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province.

<sup>4</sup> Includes data from Kazakhstan (Nov 2016), Kyrgyzstan (Mar 2016), Tajikistan (June 2016), Uzbekistan (May 2017). Data for Turkmenistan were not collected during the past five years.

**Impact Indicator:**

Weekly audience is defined under Impact Performance Goal 1.1.

**Analysis of Results:**

New survey data were not available in any of these markets for FY 2018. As a result, the growth targets in Nigeria, Pakistan, former FATA region, and Central Asia were not met.

IMPACT OBJECTIVE 2: REACH AND ENGAGE AUDIENCES IN KEY STRATEGIC AREAS, INCLUDING THE INFORMATION-DENIED, UNDERSERVED, AND TARGETS OF DISINFORMATION AND EXTREMIST RHETORIC

**Impact Performance Goal 2.2: Reach audiences in information-denied environments.**

	FY 2014 Actual	FY 2015 Actual	FY 2016 Actual	FY 2017 Actual	FY 2018 Target	FY 2018 Actual
Increase or maintain weekly audiences in: <sup>1</sup>						
China	0.28% (Jun 2014)	0.28% (Jun 2014)	0.28% (Jun 2014)	0.28% (Jun 2014)	0.3%	6.2% (Aug 2017)
Vietnam	1.9% (Mar 2013)	3.6% (Mar 2015)	3.6% (Mar 2015)	3.6% (July 2016)	4.0%	3.6% (July 2016)
Laos	5.0% (Dec 2012)	5.0% (Dec 2012)	5.0% (Dec 2012)	2.4% (Sep 2016)	2.0%	2.4% (Sep 2016)
Turkmenistan <sup>2</sup>	2.2% (Oct 2011)	2.2% (Oct 2011)	2.2% (Oct 2011)	NA	2.5%	NA
Uzbekistan	1.6% (Sep 2012)	1.6% (Sep 2012)	1.6% (Sep 2012)	1.6% (May 2017)	2.0%	1.6% (May 2017)
Iran	28.2% (Jan 2014)	28.2% (Jan 2014)	14.9% (Aug 2015)	14.9% (Aug 2015)	14%	23.4% (Sep 2017)
Azerbaijan	3.1% (Sep 2012)	3.1% (Sep 2012)	3.5% (Dec 2015)	3.5% (Dec 2015)	3.5%	3.5% (Dec 2015)
Cuba	NA	NA	NA	11.1% (Mar 2017)	11.1%	11.1% (Mar 2017)
Continue to serve and monitor information-denied environments lacking representative survey data, including North Korea, Eritrea, Syria, Tibet, and Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region.						

<sup>1</sup> Selected countries include those targeted by USAGM networks, in which USAGM is able to conduct research, that have the lowest press freedom scores on external indices.

<sup>2</sup> USAGM was not able to conduct a representative survey in Turkmenistan for the past five years. Efforts to obtain new data are currently underway.

**Impact Indicator:**

Weekly audience is defined under Impact Performance Goal 1.1.

**Analysis of Results:**

For the countries listed, new survey data was only available in China and Iran. In both of these countries, USAGM significantly exceeded the targets and previous surveys. In China, weekly audience grew from 0.3 percent to 6.2 percent, while in Iran weekly audience grew from 14.9 percent to 23.4 percent.



IMPACT OBJECTIVE 2: REACH AND ENGAGE AUDIENCES IN KEY STRATEGIC AREAS, INCLUDING THE INFORMATION-DENIED, UNDERSERVED, AND TARGETS OF DISINFORMATION AND EXTREMIST RHETORIC

**Impact Performance Goal 2.3: Reach audiences in environments targeted by state-sponsored disinformation campaigns.**

	FY 2014 Actual	FY 2015 Actual	FY 2016 Actual	FY 2017 Actual	FY 2018 Target	FY 2018 Actual
Increase or maintain weekly audiences in: <sup>1</sup>						
The Russian Federation	2.7% (Dec 2013)	2.7% (Dec 2013)	4.9% (Jun 2016)	4.9% (Jun 2016)	Reach 6% of adults on all platforms	7.5% (May 2018)
Ukraine	20.8% (Apr 2014)	20.8% (Apr 2014)	18.0% (Jun 2016)	18.0% (Jun 2016)	Reach 20% of adults on all platforms	18.0% (Jun 2016)
Moldova	8.3% (Oct 2010)	8.3% (Oct 2010)	32.1% (Feb 2016)	32.1% (Feb 2016)	Maintain FY17 audience reach	32.1% (Feb 2016)
Kazakhstan	0.9% (Jan 2011)	0.9% (Jan 2011)	0.9% (Jan 2011)	9.6% (Nov 2016)	Maintain FY17 audience reach	9.6% (Nov 2016)
Tajikistan	3.4% (Oct 2012)	6.8% (Nov 2014)	11.4% (Jun 2016)	10.8% (Jun 2017)	Maintain FY17 audience reach	10.8% (Jun 2017)
Estonia	No data	5.2% (Aug 2015)	5.2% (Aug 2015)	5.1% (Jun 2016)	Reach 7% of adults on all platforms	5.1% (Jun 2016)
Latvia	No data	No data	7.2% (Aug 2015)	5.2% (Jul 2016)	Reach 7% of adults on all platforms	5.2% (Jul 2016)
Lithuania	No data	No data	10.0% (Aug 2016)	10.0% (Jul 2016)	Reach 11% of adults on all platforms	10.0% (Jul 2016)

<sup>1</sup> The countries and regions listed were selected by USAGM experts and represent a subset of those that USAGM networks target with programming that provides news and information to counter state-sponsored propaganda.

**Impact Indicator:**

Weekly audience is defined under Impact Performance Goal 1.1.

**Analysis of Results:**

Since very few national surveys were conducted in FY 2018, new data are available only from the May 2018 national survey in Russia. The target to reach additional audiences in Russia was exceeded with the results indicating that 7.5 percent of Russian adults use content from USAGM broadcasters weekly, up from 4.9 percent in the last survey. Weekly reach of Current Time in Russia jumped from 1.1 percent to 3.8 percent following the launch of the Current Time channel.

**Contextual Indicators:**

Freedom House Rankings	# of USAGM target countries ranked		
	Not Free	Partly Free	Free
2017 Freedom of the Press	61	53	10
2018 Freedom in the World (political)	49	51	24

**Note:**

Freedom House did not release Freedom of the Press rankings in 2018.

### IMPACT OBJECTIVE 3: OVERCOME CENSORSHIP TO CONNECT AUDIENCES IN CLOSED SOCIETIES

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For almost 70 years U.S. international broadcasting has fought censorship in all its forms. Today, as the global media environment undergoes a dynamic revolution, access to a truly free press is actually in decline. Jamming of radio and TV broadcasts, including USAGM's, continues in a number of countries. Journalists suffer harassment and violence daily. Media laws often restrict free flows of information, limiting the ability of international news organizations to distribute their content. The Internet in particular is under assault, even as audiences increasingly access and share our content on digital platforms and via social media. The Agency upholds the universal right of citizens everywhere to receive and impart information without restriction. USAGM works on many fronts to make news and information accessible to its global audiences with the aim of enabling not only unfettered access to Agency products but also the full spectrum of independent news sources on the Internet.

USAGM will:

- Lead in assisting the world's citizens to gain access to information on all platforms, advocating on the international stage and coordinating within the U.S. government and with international broadcasters and other allies.
- Help audiences understand through journalistic reports the practices and policies of Internet censorship and circumvention.
- Fund technologies that counter Internet censorship and Internet blocking and allow citizens and journalists to operate securely online.
- Increase effective use of social media and digital platforms to combat censorship.
- Provide in-house digital expertise to address real-time censorship and jamming issues in targeted regions.
- Cultivate information-sharing relationships on Internet freedom matters with other federal agencies, nonprofits, and the private sector.

IMPACT OBJECTIVE 3: OVERCOME CENSORSHIP TO CONNECT AUDIENCES IN CLOSED SOCIETIES

**Impact Performance Goal 3.1: Increase usage of internet freedom products**

	FY 2014 Actual	FY 2015 Actual	FY 2016 Actual	FY 2017 Actual	FY 2018 Target	FY 2018 Actual
Increase weekly unique users on Psiphon	NA	NA	NA	649,040	812,500	967,763
Increase weekly visits to USAGM web sites through Psiphon	NA	NA	NA	8,794,243	10,500,000	8,452,100
Increase proxy traffic through Psiphon	4,125 TB	8,900 TB	11,048 TB	15,402 TB	19,000 TB	21,725 TB

**Impact Indicators:**

**Aspects of Usage of Psiphon**

The measures for this performance goal reflect various aspects of usage of Psiphon, a USAGM-supported proxy tool for circumventing internet censorship. Metrics include average number of weekly unique users on Psiphon, average weekly visits to USAGM websites through Psiphon (measured as the number of landing pages served), and annual proxy traffic through Psiphon.

**Analysis of Results:**

**Weekly unique users**

**on Psiphon**

**Target: 812,500**

**Actual: 967,763**

With 967,763 weekly unique users on Psiphon, USAGM exceeded its target of 812,500 by almost 20 percent.

**Weekly visits to USAGM web**

**sites through Psiphon**

**Target: 10,500,000**

**Actual: 8,452,100**

Weekly visits to USAGM sites through Psiphon fell slightly in FY 2018 and did not meet the target of 10.5 million. USAGM's Office of Internet Freedom is examining the factors that led to this decline, including the throttling of Internet access by hostile governments.

### Proxy Traffic

through Psiphon

Target: 19,000 TB

Actual: 21,725TB

With 21,725 TB of traffic in FY 2018, proxy traffic through Psiphon greatly exceeded the target of 19,000 TB.

#### Contextual Indicator:

Freedom House Rankings	# of countries with customized USAGM-sponsored circumvention tools ranked as:		
	Not Free	Partly Free	Not Ranked
2018 Freedom on the Net	10	2	4

#### IMPACT OBJECTIVE 4:

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##### Optimize program delivery by market and expand engagement on digital platforms

It is essential that USAGM reach audiences on their preferred media platforms. USAGM is aligning how it delivers content with how consumers access it now and in the future. USAGM will continue growing and enhancing new distribution methods, with specific attention to social and mobile platforms. On traditional media, USAGM is continually migrating to the most effective broadcast channels, including satellite and broadcast television and FM radio. The Agency is aggressively expanding and improving on its successful model of affiliations and syndication of content on all platforms. Ultimately, USAGM seeks to utilize the platforms that work best for the market at hand to get content to as many users as possible.

USAGM will:

- Increase distribution on platforms that USAGM knows audiences are using – FM, satellite and broadcast television, and mobile devices – continuing our migration away from legacy platforms where they do not reach audiences.
- Expand reach and engagement on digital platforms, including new streaming and over-the-top platforms.
- Find creative ways to penetrate closed societies, through flash drives, DVDs, and other alternative delivery means.
- Expand local distribution through affiliation with strong local television and FM radio stations and digital platforms and, where possible, installation of FM transmitters.
- Draw on research and other inputs to tailor format and presentation styles to audience needs and media usage habits, creating content that can break through ever-increasing clutter.
- Exploit the falling cost of video production by updating USAGM broadcasting facilities to support growing audience appetite for TV and video.

IMPACT OBJECTIVE 4: OPTIMIZE PROGRAM DELIVERY BY MARKET AND EXPAND  
ENGAGEMENT ON DIGITAL PLATFORMS

**Impact Performance Goal 4.1: Increase web traffic.**

Average weekly visits to web and mobile sites	FY 2014 Actual	FY 2015 Actual	FY 2016 Actual	FY 2017 Actual	FY 2018 Target (increase over FY 17)	FY 2018 Actual
VOA	4,948,200	5,990,400	6,957,800	8,810,700	10%	8,850,000
RFE/RL	5,911,900	7,890,400	7,500,200	8,464,600	5%	9,751,200
RFA	922,700	764,700	848,700	901,200	5%	1,010,900
MBN	NA	249,400	490,300	1,092,400	10%	854,500
<i>Radio Sawa</i>	243,000	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
<i>Alhurra</i>	147,200	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
OCB	75,000	119,200	162,800	172,500	10%	142,600

**Note:**

- Numbers do not include some proxy visits and apps. These figures include some, but not all, traffic to apps. Traffic to social media sites (Facebook, Twitter, etc.) is also not included here.
- Data in the chart above should be compared across years and not across broadcasters, in part because broadcasters are measuring different numbers of web and mobile sites and languages (ranging from one to over 40).
- In FY 2014, USAGM made an investment in enterprise-quality digital analytical systems to provide a digital measurement and insights across all of its websites and mobile applications. This switch resulted in data discontinuity that required rebaselining in FY 2014. For FY 2014, VOA, RFE/RL, RFA, and OCB numbers are based on the initial configuration of the new analytics tool; MBN numbers are from the legacy analytics tool. In FY 2015 and beyond, all numbers are from the new analytics tool.

#### Impact Indicator:

##### Average weekly visitors:

This indicator measures the number of visits to USAGM websites and mobile sites over a 52 week period and creates an average based on 52 weeks of data coinciding with the fiscal year. These data are collected using the Adobe Analytics tool. Unlike measured weekly audience reported above, average weekly visits to websites are not unduplicated, meaning one individual could account for multiple visits.

#### Analysis of Results:

VOA	Target: 9,691,800	Actual: 8,850,000
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VOA's web and mobile traffic increased slightly from FY 2017 but did not meet the target set for FY 2018.

RFE/RL	Target: 8,887,800	Actual: 9,751,200
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RFE/RL's web and mobile traffic exceeded the target set for FY 2018.

RFA	Target: 946,200	Actual: 1,010,900
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RFA's web and mobile traffic continued to grow in FY 2018, exceeding its 5 percent growth target. RFA continued its strong focus on growth in social media traffic. Surveys and qualitative research suggest that, for many online audience members, direct consumption of RFA via its branded websites has been outstripped by consumption of content on YouTube, Facebook, and other social media platforms.

MBN	Target: 1,201,600	Actual: 854,500
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MBN's weekly web traffic in FY 2018 is below target primarily because of lower traffic to radiosawa.com and increased focus on social media for irfaasawtak.com.

OCB	Target: 189,800	Actual: 142,600
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OCB's web and mobile traffic declined from FY 2017 and did not meet the target set for FY 2018. However, their social media engagement, shown in the next performance goal, increased exponentially.



IMPACT OBJECTIVE 4: OPTIMIZE PROGRAM DELIVERY BY MARKET AND EXPAND ENGAGEMENT ON DIGITAL PLATFORMS

**Impact Performance Goal 4.2: Increase audience interaction via social media.**

Digital engagement action (average weekly)	FY 2016 Actual	FY 2017 Actual	FY 2018 Target (increase over FY 17)	FY 2018 Actual
VOA	Baselines not established	4,937,600	10%	4,126,700
RFE/RL		2,106,100	10%	2,261,300
RFA		1,125,300	10%	823,200
MBN		646,700	15%	883,000
OCB		32,200	10%	2,541,000

**Impact Indicator:**

**Digital Engagement Actions:**

This indicator measures the weekly average number of engagement actions on currently measurable platforms, currently Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube. Engagement actions include measurable actions that demonstrate an activity beyond just consuming content: liking or “favoriting” or reacting to a USAGM post, commenting on a USAGM post, sharing/retweeting a USAGM post, liking or following a USAGM account or profile for the first time (i.e. this is counted only once, during the first week someone follows a USAGM account). These actions are tracked through online analytics by a third party vendor (Socialbakers).

**Analysis of Results:**

**VOA** **Target: 5,431,400** **Actual: 4,126,700**

VOA social media engagement fell from FY 2017 and did not meet the target set for FY 2018.

**RFE/RL** **Target: 2,316,700** **Actual: 2,261,300**

Although engagement with RFE/RL content posted to the social media accounts tracked in Socialbakers remains high and grew compared to last year, RFE/RL did not meet its target to grow digital engagement actions by 10 percent.

<b>RFA</b>	<b>Target: 1,237,800</b>	<b>Actual: 823,200</b>
<p>This indicator is calculated using metrics from Western social media, which is banned and blocked in China. The bulk of RFA engagement with Western social media is from Southeast Asia, with some additional traffic in Hong Kong. The drop in engagement reflects significant changes in the social media environments Southeast Asia – including changes in the Facebook algorithm, which significantly disadvantaged media organizations compared to past years. Furthermore, political changes, especially in Cambodia and Burma, stifled some of the political discussions that had been happening on social media. High profile cases of Facebook users being prosecuted for posting politically sensitive comments chilled the atmosphere in the region. In Cambodia, which RFA was forced to flee in late FY 2017, qualitative research suggests increased fear around engagement on such issues as official corruption and last summer’s election. In Burma, social media discussion of the Rohingya issue on Facebook was tainted by serious military manipulation.</p>		
<b>MBN</b>	<b>Target: 743,700</b>	<b>Actual: 883,000</b>
<p>MBN exceeded its target for interactions on social media. This results, in part, from an increase in MBN’s social media content.</p>		
<b>OCB</b>	<b>Target: 35,420</b>	<b>Actual: 2,541,000</b>
<p>OCB dramatically increased its social media engagement in FY 2018, reflecting their increased emphasis on using social media to reach and engage with their audience.</p>		

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IMPACT OBJECTIVE 4: OPTIMIZE PROGRAM DELIVERY BY MARKET AND EXPAND  
ENGAGEMENT ON DIGITAL PLATFORMS

**Impact Performance Goal 4.3: Build strong affiliate relationships.**

Number of affiliations (broadcast, online, and mobile)	FY 2014 Actual	FY 2015 Actual	FY 2016 Actual	FY 2017 Actual	FY 2018 Target	FY 2018 Actual
VOA	1,838	2,088	2,265	2,411	1,726	2,247
RFE/RL	528	577	761	798	671	777
RFA	23	30	35	7*	8	11

\* The drop in RFA affiliates in FY 2017 reflects the loss of affiliates in Cambodia and the correction of an accidental over count in previous years.

**Impact Indicator:**

**Affiliations**

Affiliates – broadcast stations and digital platforms that carry USAGM content – are a primary gatekeeper between the USAGM networks and their end users. Counting the number of affiliates, then, offers a measure of the appeal of the programming to these vital gatekeepers and distributors of the USAGM networks' content. As shortwave usage wanes in parts of the world, the importance of affiliations with local medium wave and FM radio and television stations grows. With the growth of digital and mobile technology, there are new forms of affiliations, including online and mobile.

**Analysis of Results:**

<b>VOA Affiliates</b>	<b>Target: 1,726</b>	<b>Actual: 2,247</b>
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With 2,247 VOA affiliates, USAGM exceeded its target of 1,726 affiliations in FY 2018.

<b>RFE/RL Affiliates</b>	<b>Target: 671</b>	<b>Actual: 777</b>
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With 777 RFE/RL affiliates, USAGM exceeded its target of 671 affiliations in FY 2018.

<b>RFA Affiliates</b>	<b>Target: 8</b>	<b>Actual: 11</b>
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With 11 RFA affiliates, USAGM exceeded its target of 8 affiliates in FY 2018.

## IMPACT OBJECTIVE 5:

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### Serve as an authoritative source of information on U.S. news, policy, and society

Representing American society and presenting and discussing U.S. policy are legislated mandates for the Agency and thus constitute mission imperatives. USAGM's coverage of the U.S. is comprehensive across all elements of society, but aims overall to convey the practice of democracy in all of its complexity. It is not about persuading audiences to admire the U.S.; it is about helping them see how the U.S. manages the challenges of a democratic society – from economic growth to fiscal crises to race relations to educating youth to addressing environmental change. These topic areas find ready comparisons in USAGM's target countries and resonate with the Agency's audiences in practical, meaningful ways. Carrying out this element of our mission requires sensitivity and creativity. Currents of anti-Americanism still run strong in some parts of the world, necessitating deft outreach that stresses dialogue, not monologue. The way people interact with media today, with emphasis on interaction, further affirms this approach. At the same time, America's still dominant role on the global stage makes it a focal point of international attention, and its national language is the one that tens of millions of people around the world seek to learn. VOA, in particular, is uniquely mandated and positioned to leverage these advantages to connect with diverse international audiences, serving as a U.S. news bureau for affiliate partners and providing English-learning programming.

USAGM will:

- Serve as a U.S. bureau for media outlets across the world that wish to engage with us for news, analysis, and perspectives from the United States – on the model that has succeeded in Ukraine, Latin America, Nigeria, Indonesia, and elsewhere.
- Portray the breadth and diversity of the American experience, with particular attention to diaspora communities and Americans outside of big cities.
- Emphasize English learning as a vehicle for positive audience engagement and interaction as well as information on American society and culture.

- Meet the global interest in American politics with in-depth coverage and analysis of national elections and coverage of other political events to impart the news and to elucidate the democratic process, with stories localized to make them interesting to specific target regions.
- Satisfy the world's growing appetite for learning English through TV and radio programs, online instruction, printed instructional materials, and innovative short-form videos designed for social media.

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IMPACT OBJECTIVE 5: SERVE AS AN AUTHORITATIVE SOURCE OF INFORMATION ON U.S. NEWS, POLICY, AND SOCIETY

**Impact Performance Goal 5.1: Provide programming that increases audiences' understanding of the United States.**

Understanding of American society' – percent of weekly audience who report that the broadcasts have increased their understanding of American society somewhat or a great deal	FY 2014 Actual	FY 2015 Actual	FY 2016 Actual	FY 2017 Actual	FY 2018 Target	FY 2018 Actual
	Simple average			Weighted average		
VOA	66	60	62	67	70	62
MBN	NA	NA	45	44	50	42
OCB	NA	NA	NA	85	85	85

<sup>1</sup> Beginning with FY 2017, the scores for understanding of American society are weighted averages, based on audience size, of all understanding of American society scores obtained by an entity. In previous years, these scores were simple averages of the scores by country. Scores from FY 2016 and prior years are not comparable to the FY 2017 and subsequent scores. The FY 2017 weighted averages were first reported in the performance section of the FY 2019 Congressional Budget Justification.

Understanding of U.S. foreign policy <sup>1</sup> – percent of weekly audience who report that the broadcasts have increased their understanding of U.S. foreign policy somewhat or a great deal	Simple average			Weighted average		
	FY 2014 Actual	FY 2015 Actual	FY 2016 Actual	FY 2017 Actual	FY 2018 Target	FY 2018 Actual
VOA	64	61	60	68	65	60
MBN	NA	NA	43	43	50	42
OCB	NA	NA	NA	89	89	89

<sup>1</sup> Beginning with FY 2017, the scores for understanding of U.S. foreign policy are weighted averages, based on audience size, of all understanding of U.S. foreign policy scores obtained by an entity. In previous years, these scores were simple averages of the scores by country. Scores from FY 2016 and prior years are not comparable to the FY 2017 and subsequent scores. The FY 2017 weighted averages were first reported in the performance section of the FY 2019 Congressional Budget Justification.

## Impact Indicators:

### Understanding of American Society:

This indicator is determined by the survey question asking weekly listeners/viewers/online users of a USAGM network's broadcasts in a particular language whether the broadcasts have "increased their understanding of American society." The answers are registered on a four-point scale – a great deal, somewhat, very little, or not at all. The understanding indicator is a weighted average, by audience size, of the percent of those answering the question in the survey (excluding those who did not respond or did not know) who chose "a great deal" or "somewhat."

### Understanding of U.S. Foreign Policy:

This indicator is determined by the survey question asking weekly listeners/viewers/online users of a USAGM network's broadcasts in a particular language whether the broadcasts have "increased their understanding of U.S. foreign policy." The answers are registered on a four-point scale – a great deal, somewhat, very little, or not at all. The understanding indicator is a weighted average, by audience size, of the percent of those answering the question in the survey (excluding those who did not respond or did not know) who chose "a great deal" or "somewhat."

## Analysis of Results:

### Understanding of American Society

VOA	Target: 70	Actual: 62
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VOA's score for understanding of American society was 62 percent for FY 2018, below the comparable (weighted) score for FY 2017 and its target for the year. Unsurprisingly, given fraught relationships with the United States and threatening environments for survey respondents, new data from China show just over one in four VOA users reporting it helped them better understand American society, and audiences in both Russia and Iran were less likely to give high scores on this factor than they were as of in 2016 and 2015 respectively, dropping from about seven in ten to about half who said the station helped them understand American society. New data from Ethiopia showed more than eight in ten VOA users saying that its news increased their understanding of American society.

MBN	Target: 50	Actual: 42
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MBN's score for understanding of American society was 42 in FY 2018, versus the target of 50. The difference between the FY 2018 target and actual is attributable primarily to the lack of new data to update this year's number.

OCB	Target: 85	Actual: 85
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USAGM did not commission a survey in Cuba in FY 2018, so OCB's understanding of American society score remains unchanged in FY 2018.

### Understanding of U.S. Foreign Policy

VOA	Target: 65	Actual: 60
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VOA's score for increasing understanding of U.S. foreign policy was 60 in FY 2018, below its FY 2018 target and its FY 2017 level, though similar to simple average scores in FY 2015 and 2016. As with understanding of American society, the lower score reflects new data from China (with a third of users reporting increased understanding of U.S. foreign policy) and declines in scores in Russia and Iran where around half of VOA users say its news increased their understanding of the topic.

<b>MBN</b>	<b>Target: 50</b>	<b>Actual: 42</b>
<p>MBN’s score for understanding of U.S. Foreign Policy was 42, versus the target of 50. The difference between the FY 2018 target and actual is attributable primarily to the lack of new data to update this year’s number.</p>		
<b>OCB</b>	<b>Target: 89</b>	<b>Actual: 89</b>
<p>USAGM did not commission a survey in Cuba in FY 2018, so OCB’s weekly audience remains unchanged in FY 2018.</p>		



IMPACT OBJECTIVE 5: SERVE AS AN AUTHORITATIVE SOURCE OF INFORMATION ON U.S. NEWS, POLICY, AND SOCIETY

**Impact Performance Goal 5.2: Provide exceptional news and information**

Uniqueness' Percentage of weekly audience reporting that broadcaster presents information they cannot get from other media	Simple average		Weighted average		
	FY 2015 Actual	FY 2016 Actual	FY 2017 Actual	FY 2018 Target	FY 2018 Actual
VOA	25	25	29	22	31

'Beginning with FY 2017, the scores for uniqueness are weighted averages, based on audience size, of all uniqueness scores obtained by an entity. In previous years, these scores were simple averages of the scores by country. Scores from FY 2016 and prior years are not comparable to the FY 2017 and subsequent scores. The FY 2017 weighted averages were first reported in the performance section of the FY 2019 Congressional Budget Justification. Uniqueness scores for the other networks are presented in Impact Performance Goal 6.2: Serve as a surrogate news operation, delivering information otherwise not available in local markets.

**Note**

This was a new measure in FY 2015. Actuals for FY 2014 are not available.

**Impact Indicators: Uniqueness**

This indicator is determined by a question in representative surveys asking past week listeners/viewers/online users of any language how much of the information provided by the entity is also available from other sources on the radio, TV, or Internet. The answers are registered on a four-point scale – All of it is available elsewhere, Some of it is available elsewhere, Very little of it is available elsewhere, None of it is available elsewhere. The unique information indicator is a weighted average, by audience size, of the percentage of those answering the question in the survey who chose “very little” or “none.”

**Analysis of Results: Uniqueness**

**VOA**

**Target: 22**

**Actual: 31**

VOA's score for uniqueness improved in FY 2018 over FY 2017, and at 31 percent was well above the FY 2018 target of 22 percent. Available trend data show a large increase in Iran in VOA users who call its news unique (16 to 33 percent), and a modest increase among users in Russia (20 to 22 percent). FY 2018 surveys newly measured VOA users' positive assessments of the distinctiveness of the network's news at 44 percent in Burma and 38 percent in Ethiopia.

## IMPACT OBJECTIVE 6:

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### Serve as a surrogate news operation, delivering information otherwise not available in local markets

In environments where state-run media are dominant and independent media are either not allowed or not fully established, the USAGM networks, particularly RFE/RL and RFA, often play a surrogate role, acting as local media would if they were free to operate. In this role, the networks emphasize domestic news for their geographically-defined audiences and cover developments specific to defined target markets, especially in countries without a free press or in transition. They focus on local news events not covered in state-controlled domestic media, as well as other sensitive topics, including religion, science, and locally-banned literature and music. They give voice to dissidents and opposition movements, while maintaining balanced coverage, and serve as platforms for a range of opinions and voices from these countries.

USAGM will:

- Build strong networks of local stringers across target regions.
- Where possible, maintain an on-the-ground bureau presence, to report local news from a local perspective.
- Where in-country access is limited, cultivate networks of trusted contributors and closely monitor official and alternative media.
- Use social media and other interactive tools to gather information from closed societies, amplifying voices of those struggling for free expression.
- Provide platforms for free expression of various viewpoints and work to help people bridge traditional divides, including class, ethnicity, religion, etc.

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IMPACT OBJECTIVE 6: SERVE AS A SURROGATE NEWS OPERATION, DELIVERING  
INFORMATION OTHERWISE NOT AVAILABLE IN LOCAL MARKETS

**Impact Performance Goal 6.1: Provide programming that increases audiences’  
understanding of current events in target countries**

Understanding of current events in target country Percent of weekly audience who report that the broadcasts have increased their understanding of current events in the target country somewhat or a great deal	FY 2017 Actual	FY 2018 Target	FY 2018 Actual
RFE/RL	83	85	77
RFA	86	86	83
MBN	NA	NA	NA
OCB	NA	NA	NA
VOA in relevant markets to be determined	NA	NA	NA

**Note:**

This is a new measure in FY 2018. Actuals are not available for FY 2014-2016 and only available for a small number of language services for FY 2017 and FY 2018. The question will be incorporated into the core USAGM questionnaire going forward.

**Impact Indicators:**

**Understanding of current events in target country**

This indicator is determined by a question in representative surveys asking past week listeners/viewers/online users of [language] whether the broadcasts have “increased their understanding of current events in [target country].” The answers are registered on a four-point scale: a great deal, somewhat, very little, or not at all. The understanding indicator is a weighted average, by audience size, of the percent of those answering the question in the survey (excluding those who did not respond or did not know) who chose “a great deal” or “somewhat.”

## Analysis of Results:

### RFE/RL

Target: 85

Actual: 77

Based data from 11 countries and regions, RFE/RL's score regarding understanding of current events in the target country in FY 2018 was 77 percent, short of its target of 85 percent. RFE/RL continues to increase the understanding of current events in the target area through its surrogate broadcasting among a significant portion of its audience with 77 percent of weekly listeners, viewers, or online users reporting that its programs increased their understanding of current events in the target area.

### RFA

Target: 86

Actual: 83

Based on data from Burma and Cambodia, RFA's score regarding understanding of current events in the target country in FY 2018 was 83 percent, short of its target of 86 percent. RFA continues to increase the understanding of current events in the target area through its surrogate broadcasting among a significant portion of its audience with 83 percent of weekly listeners, viewers, or online users reporting that its programs increased their understanding of current events in the target area.

## IMPACT OBJECTIVE 6: SERVE AS A SURROGATE NEWS OPERATION, DELIVERING INFORMATION OTHERWISE NOT AVAILABLE IN LOCAL MARKETS

### Impact Performance Goal 6.2: Provide exceptional news and information

Uniqueness <sup>1</sup> Percentage of weekly audience reporting that broadcaster presents information they cannot get from other media	FY 2015 Actual	FY 2016 Actual	FY 2017 Actual	FY 2018 Target	FY 2018 Actual
Weighted average					
RFE/RL	32	25	22	28	25
RFA	NA	NA	NA	NA	40
MBN	NA	NA	20	48	32
OCB	NA	NA	78	78	78

<sup>1</sup> This was a new measure in FY 2015. Actuals are not available for FY 2014. Beginning with FY 2017, the scores for uniqueness are weighted averages, based on audience size, of all uniqueness scores obtained by an entity. In previous years, these scores were simple averages of the scores by country. Scores from FY 2016 and prior years are not comparable to the FY 2017 and subsequent scores. The FY 2017 weighted averages were first reported in the performance section of the FY 2019 Congressional Budget Justification.

## Impact Indicators:

### Uniqueness

This indicator is determined by a question in representative surveys asking past week listeners/viewers/online users of any language how much of the information provided by the entity is also available from other sources on the radio, TV, or Internet. The answers are registered on a four-point scale – All of it is available elsewhere, Some of it is available elsewhere, Very little of it is available elsewhere, None of it is available elsewhere. The unique information indicator is a weighted average, by audience size, of the percentage of those answering the question in the survey who chose “very little” or “none.”

## Analysis of Results:

### Uniqueness

RFE/RL	Target: 28	Actual: 25
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RFE/RL’s uniqueness score of 25 percent did not meet the target of 28 percent. RFE/RL continues to provide unique information to a significant proportion of its audience with one-quarter of weekly listeners, viewers, or online users reporting that “very little” or “none” of the information provided by RFE/RL is available elsewhere.

RFA	Target: NA	Actual: 40
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In FY 2018, RFA’s uniqueness score of 40 comes from Burma only. The FY 2019 Congressional Budget Justification mistakenly reported the RFA uniqueness score as 82, which was actually the score for the indicator measuring whether their broadcasts helped audience members form opinions on important topics.

MBN	Target: 48	Actual: 32
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MBN’s uniqueness score is lower than targeted, primarily because of the lack of new data.

OCB	Target: 78	Actual: 78
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USAGM did not commission a survey in Cuba in FY 2018, so OCB’s uniqueness score remains unchanged in FY 2018.

## IMPACT OBJECTIVE 7:

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### Engage local media and empower citizen information gathering and exchange

Local media affiliates are the primary means through which USAGM networks now reach their target audiences in most markets. However, the relationship with these media partners is about much more than just content delivery. By developing these media networks and connecting our affiliates to one another, USAGM fosters rich, open media ecosystems. USAGM leads by example in its journalistic practices, but it also increasingly partners with affiliates on content co-creation, sometimes even participating in daily editorial meetings. USAGM also provides training to indigenous media on topics ranging from journalism principles to business practices. In a similar way, USAGM works to connect audiences to one another, and to foster the free flow of information, often through a wide array of web, mobile, and social media tools. These tools have made media personal, moving the power from centralized broadcasters to a new class of bloggers, activists, videographers, and a content-generating public. They are using media not only to tell their stories on a digital world stage but also to connect with one another to chart the future of their communities and build new forms of civil society.

USAGM will:

- Deepen relationships with key local media affiliates, providing editorial guidance, training and technical assistance, and other resources to strengthen local, independent media sectors.
- Nurture citizen journalism and channel user-generated content from inside repressive states.
- Link citizens within repressive societies to one another and to external audiences through social media networks.
- Facilitate dialogue across religious, national and ethnic groups.
- Enter into a “global conversation” with USAGM audiences by using social media tools to identify, source, and distribute news content into the channels where people are having conversations about their community and the world.

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IMPACT OBJECTIVE 7: ENGAGE LOCAL MEDIA AND EMPOWER CITIZEN INFORMATION  
GATHERING AND EXCHANGE

**Impact Performance Goal 7.1: Increase engagement with local media outlets.**

	FY 2017 Actual	FY 2018 Target	FY 2018 Actual
Number of USAGM affiliates with national reach that air custom or interactive segments during primetime	50	30	60
Number of weekly downloads from affiliate content distribution portal, Direct	1,650	1,413	2,750

**Note:**

These were new measures in FY 2017. Actuals for FY 2016 are not available.

**Impact Indicator:**

**Custom/Interactive Segments and Weekly Downloads from Direct**

The indicators for increasing engagement with local media outlets include: the number of USAGM affiliates (radio or TV) with national reach that air custom or interactive segments (also known as “bureau” reports, produced jointly with the USAGM networks) during primetime and the average number of weekly downloads (audio, video, text, or photos) from Direct, the affiliate content distribution portal.

**Analysis of Results:**

**National affiliates airing custom segments  
during primetime**

**Target: 30**

**Actual: 60**

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With 60 national affiliates airing custom segments during primetime, USAGM exceeded its target for FY 2018.

**Weekly downloads**

**from Direct**

**Target: 1,413**

**Actual: 2,750**

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With 2,750 weekly downloads from the Direct affiliate portal, USAGM exceeded its target for FY 2018.

IMPACT OBJECTIVE 6: ENGAGE LOCAL MEDIA AND EMPOWER CITIZEN INFORMATION  
GATHERING AND EXCHANGE

**Impact Performance Goal 7.2: Increase sharing of USAGM programming.**

Sharing <sup>1</sup> - Percent of weekly audience who shared something heard/read/seen on broadcaster weekly	FY 2014 Actual	FY 2015 Actual	FY 2016 Actual	FY 2017 Actual	FY 2018 Target	FY 2018 Actual
	Simple average			Weighted average		
VOA	54	52	55	45	44	46
RFE/RL	48	54	44	48	52	44
RFA	55	56	64	49	50	41
MBN	NA	NA	52	67	67	67
OCB	NA	NA	NA	56	56	56

<sup>1</sup>Beginning with FY 2017, the scores for sharing are weighted averages, based on audience size, of all sharing scores obtained by an entity. In previous years, these scores were simple averages of the scores by country. Scores from FY 2016 and prior years are not comparable to the FY 2017 and subsequent scores. The FY 2017 weighted averages were first reported in the performance section of the FY 2019 Congressional Budget Justification.

**Impact Indicator:**

**Sharing of programming**

This indicator is determined by the survey question asking weekly listeners/viewers/online users in any language how often they share news that they have heard, seen, or read from a USAGM network with friends or relatives, or with their social network. The answers are registered on a five-point range – Daily or most days per week, At least once a week, At least once a month, Less than once a month, Never. The sharing indicator is a weighted average, by audience size, of the percent of those answering the question in the survey who chose “Daily or most days per week” or “At least once a week.”



## Analysis of Results:

VOA	Target: 44	Actual: 46
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VOA surpassed its FY 2018 target and its FY 2017 score for weekly sharing of its news by users, with closer to half of all its users (46 percent) reporting they share something they have seen or heard from VOA with their personal network. New data from Ethiopia estimates that more than eight in ten VOA users there share news from the network weekly; reported weekly sharing was up in Russia (to 43 percent) but lower in Iran and Burma.

RFE/RL	Target: 52	Actual: 44
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RFE/RL's score for sharing of programming was 44 percent in FY 2018, not meeting its target of 52 percent.

RFA	Target: 50	Actual: 41
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RFA's score for sharing of programming was 41 percent in FY 2018, not meeting its target of 50 percent.

MBN	Target: 67	Actual: 67
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MBN's score for sharing of programming was on target at 67 percent.

OCB	Target: 56	Actual: 56
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USAGM did not commission a survey in Cuba in FY 2018, so OCB's sharing score remains unchanged in FY 2018.

## AGILITY OBJECTIVE 1:

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### **Run USAGM as a nimble, resilient, cost-effective, and state-of-the-art media enterprise**

By virtue of historical circumstance, today's USAGM is a complex amalgam of diverse media outlets and respective support organizations, operating under different legal and administrative frameworks. The result is an organization that has sometimes lacked the agility to operate in a rapidly evolving global media environment and the standardization that enables rational resource allocations. However, in recent years, the Agency has begun a fundamental transformation in order to appropriately fulfill its charter and meet the challenges of growing geopolitical instability and substantial budgetary constraints.

USAGM will:

- Pursue an efficient and effective organizational structure.
- Enhance the Agency's technological platforms and workflows, enabling it to continually adapt to global standards in content acquisition, manipulation, and distribution, as well as audience consumption behaviors.
- Automate and streamline business processes and workflows.
- Employ cloud-based technology to achieve nimbleness, resilience, and cost savings.
- Protect USAGM from persistent threats from state and non-state actors through enhancements to its cybersecurity posture.

AGILITY OBJECTIVE 1: RUN USAGM AS A NIMBLE, RESILIENT, COST-EFFECTIVE, AND STATE-OF-THE-ART MEDIA ENTERPRISE AND ONGOING FISCAL CONSTRAINTS

**Agility Performance Goal 1.1: Streamline program delivery.**

Transition to Internet and fiber optic content distribution to stations and uplinks, migrating away from more costly satellite distribution	
FY 2014 Actual	MPLS infrastructure put in place to facilitate satellite optimization. MPLS has replaced leased fiber optic cables. 80% of owned uplink facilities have MPLS connectivity.
FY 2015 Actual	80% of USAGM owned/operated uplink facilities have MPLS connectivity. 100% of satellite based circuits used for Agency data (non-broadcast content) moved from satellite to terrestrial circuits. 15% of satellite-based distribution feeds have been transferred to terrestrial circuits.
FY 2016 Actual	USAGM owned/operated uplink facilities have MPLS or internet connectivity for content distribution.  40% of satellite-based distribution feeds (including OCB, VOA Persian, and VOA China TV) have been transferred to terrestrial circuits.
FY 2017 Actual	50% of satellite-based distribution feeds transferred to terrestrial circuits.
FY 2018 Target	75% of satellite based distribution feeds transferred to terrestrial circuits; Complete reengineering of MPLS network from Hub and Spoke to Multi-Point direct to uplink distribution architecture; 25% of satellite based contribution feeds transferred to commodity/public internet.
FY 2018 Actual	USAGM is in the process of transferring these feeds and expects 75% of satellite based distribution feeds transferred to terrestrial circuits by Q3 FY 2019. 50% of MPLS network transferred from Hub and Spoke to any-to-any mesh network. 40% of contribution feeds are now leveraging public Internet for Primary or Back-up.

**Optimize remaining shortwave distribution, taking advantage of the strategic location and lower operating cost of Kuwait Transmitting Station**

FY 2014 Actual	NA
FY 2015 Actual	NA
FY 2016 Actual	NA
FY 2017 Actual	Closed Sri Lanka Transmitting Station
FY 2018 Target	Close Poro Transmitting Station. Procure and install new antennas for Kuwait Transmitting Station Review all transmission leases to identify further opportunities for savings
FY 2018 Actual	Poro Transmitting Station closed. Installation of new antenna at Kuwait Transmitting Station underway, expected to be complete in Q2 FY 2019.

**Expand FM transmissions, to match audience preferences**

FY 2014 Actual	NA
FY 2015 Actual	NA
FY 2016 Actual	5 FMs installed: 1 in Niger, 4 in Dem. Rep. of Congo (DRC)
FY 2017 Actual	All 5 FMs in progress; contract actions completed, installations will fall into FY 2018
FY 2018 Target	Install new FM transmitters in Brazzaville, Rep. of Congo; Mogadishu, Somalia; and Mbuji-Mayi and Katanga, DRC
FY 2018 Actual	New FMs installed in Brazzaville and Pointe Noire, Rep. of Congo; Mbuji-Mayi and Katanga, DRC Mogadishu FM is underway, expected on air in Q1 FY 2019

**Analysis of Results:**

USAGM made progress in its goal of streamlining program delivery with some targets met and others anticipated to be met in FY 2019.

AGILITY OBJECTIVE 1: RUN USAGM AS A NIMBLE, RESILIENT, COST-EFFECTIVE, AND STATE-OF-THE-ART MEDIA ENTERPRISE CHANGE AND ONGOING FISCAL CONSTRAINTS

**Agility Performance Goal 1.2: Automate and streamline key business processes.**

Complete business process reengineering and automation of business and media workflows	
FY 2014 Actual	Automated Time and Attendance system has been delayed due to unavailability of funds; Analysis of Financial, HR and Payroll systems substantially underway and on track for completion in Q1 FY 2015.
FY 2015 Actual	Automated Time and Attendance System in testing phase. Pilot to roll-out in Q1 FY 2016; Integration of HR and Payroll delayed due to planning and funding issues; 80% of Procure to Pay analysis completed.
FY 2016 Actual	Automated Time and Attendance System rolled out to 85% of federal entities, with a projected completion in Q1 FY 2017. Automated Time and Attendance system now being incorporated into existing payroll (DFAS) system. Procure to Pay has been put on hold, pending funding.
FY 2017 Actual	Completed integration of payroll and time and attendance systems. Completed rollout of electronic performance management system. Deployed electronic invoice payment system for domestic invoices; foreign invoices to be added in FY 2018.
FY 2018 Target	Begin consolidation of support team efforts, including IT help desk, building facilities, Network Control Center, and telecoms, into integrated Solutions Center.
FY 2018 Actual	Consolidation of support team efforts, including IT help desk, building facilities, Network Control Center, and telecoms, into integrated Solutions Center (now named TSI Help Center) has begun. Expected completion in Q1 FY 2019.

**Analysis of Results:**

With several new automated systems rolled out in recent years, USAGM is now focused on consolidating support functions and expects that the new integrated Solutions Center will be online in Q1 FY 2019.

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AGILITY OBJECTIVE 1: RUN USAGM AS A NIMBLE, RESILIENT, COST-EFFECTIVE, AND STATE-OF-THE-ART MEDIA ENTERPRISE CHANGE AND ONGOING FISCAL CONSTRAINTS

**Agility Performance Goal 1.3: Leverage cloud services and other technologies to boost workforce effectiveness and efficiency.**

	FY 2017 Actual	FY 2018 Target	FY 2018 Actual
Migrate onsite systems to cloud for enhanced effectiveness and efficiency.	Transitioned onsite digital archive system to a private cloud with recovery capability.  Completed migration of intranet content to cloud-based platform.  Upgraded IT infrastructure with more storage, bandwidth, and security.	Commence migration of onsite workstation/user storage to cloud for enhanced portability and a more robust backup/disaster recovery profile.  Begin transition of some broadcast operations to cloud-based playout and switching systems.	Migration of onsite workstation/user storage to cloud for enhanced portability and a more robust backup/disaster recovery profile nearly complete (80%). Full completion expected in Q2 FY 2019.  Transition of some broadcast operations to cloud-based playout and switching systems has not yet begun.

**Note:**

This was a new measure in FY 2017. Actuals are not available for FY 2014-2016.

**Analysis of Results:**

USAGM is on track for cloud migration targets and expects completion in Q2 FY 2019.

AGILITY OBJECTIVE 1: RUN USAGM AS A NIMBLE, RESILIENT, COST-EFFECTIVE, AND STATE-OF-THE-ART MEDIA ENTERPRISE CHANGE AND ONGOING FISCAL CONSTRAINTS

**Agility Performance Goal 1.4: Strengthen resilience and risk posture of the agency.**

	FY 2017 Actual	FY 2018 Target	FY 2018 Actual
Strengthen USAGM'S cybersecurity posture	USAGM implemented cybersecurity measures that extend high-level DHS cybersecurity protection to Agency-specific gaps, such as email, the network, and end points.	Continue to leverage offerings from the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and key vendors to further bolster USAGM cybersecurity, including piloting DHS's Privileged Account Management and Usage Monitoring Program.	Made progress toward defined level of maturity of IT Information Security Program.  Piloted DHS CDM tools to enhance the Agency's ability to identify and mitigate the impact of cyber threats. Full rollout expected in Q1 FY 2019.
Use Enterprise Risk Management <sup>1</sup> to manage risks and optimize costs related to the achievement of USAGM objectives	USAGM created an IT risk management division within the Office of the CIO.	Integrate IT risk management processes and decisions into Agency-wide ERM system.	USAGM created an Agency-level ERM framework, governance structure, and risk identification process.

<sup>1</sup>Enterprise Risk Management (ERM) provides a framework which typically involves identifying particular events or circumstances relevant to the organization's objectives (risks and opportunities), assessing them in terms of likelihood and magnitude of impact, determining a response strategy, and monitoring progress

**Note:**

This was a new measure in FY 2017. Actuals are not available for FY 2014-2016.

**Analysis of Results:**

USAGM made progress toward, but did not achieve, the defined level of maturity of its IT Information Security Program, as determined by the OIG, in FY 2018. OIG acknowledged that USAGM completed or made progress on some system documentation, privacy policy documentation, training of ISSOs, and other tasks, but several operational tasks were not completed due to ongoing personnel and funding gaps.

During FY 2018, USAGM further implemented its Enterprise Risk Management (ERM) program by adding more resources, appointing a Chief Risk Officer (CRO), and incorporating the function into the CEO's office to establish a strong "tone at the top" for ERM.

AGILITY OBJECTIVE 1: RUN USAGM AS A NIMBLE, RESILIENT, COST-EFFECTIVE, AND STATE-OF-THE-ART MEDIA ENTERPRISE CHANGE AND ONGOING FISCAL CONSTRAINTS

**Agility Performance Goal 1.5: Migrate to High Definition (HD) video production and transmission.**

	FY 2017 Actual	FY 2018 Target	FY 2018 Actual
Upgrade program production and delivery systems to HD capable	<p>All TV studios fully HD capable.</p> <p>Automated HD TV channel set up for testing.</p>	<p>Develop more HD channels.</p> <p>Complete upgrade of Digital Asset Management System to make HD production and archiving more efficient.</p> <p>Expand and upgrade onsite storage capacity to accommodate HD files.</p> <p>Enable global delivery of HD content direct-to-home and to affiliates.</p>	<p>Both satellite and terrestrial network have been modified to incorporate HD delivery capability.</p> <p>Preparations completed to enable upgrade of Digital Asset Management System to make HD production and archiving more efficient.</p> <p>Onsite storage capacity to accommodate HD files expanded and upgraded.</p> <p>Global delivery of HD content direct-to-home and to affiliates enabled.</p>
% of video streams transmitted in HD <sup>1</sup>	20%	75%	50%

<sup>1</sup> We anticipate that the SD to HD transition for most of our target audience will take several more years. Each HD stream will have a corresponding SD stream until that time.

**Note:**

This was a new measure in FY 2017. Actuals are not available for FY 2014-2016.



**Analysis of Results:**

USAGM has modified both the satellite and terrestrial network to incorporate HD video capability. The rest of the network will see modifications completed as part of the satellite streamlining effort, targeted for Q2 FY 2019.

USAGM's Network Control Center (NCC) has enabled 100 percent HD video distribution capability, but complete HD delivery requires VOA's end-to-end HD upgrade project, which is due now by Q2 FY 2019. Currently approximately half of video delivery is HD. VOA anticipates Q2 FY 2019 completion.

## AGILITY OBJECTIVE 2:

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### Enhance strategic cooperation among USAGM networks and with support elements

USAGM is one of the world's largest news-gathering and reporting enterprises with more than 50 overseas news bureaus, 4,000 employees, and 1,500 stringer reporters. Each of the Agency's five networks generates original reporting every day from in and around the world's hotspots – the Sahel and Central Africa, the Afghanistan-Pakistan border region, Burma, China, Egypt, Iran, North Korea, Russia, Syria, Yemen, et al – primarily in vernacular languages for target audiences in these areas. Too little of this rich content is translated and shared across USAGM to augment international news coverage for other USAGM vernacular services or made available to other global audiences in English. USAGM is remedying this by facilitating coordination among broadcast entities and support elements through the International Coordinating Committee (ICC), comprised of the heads of each of our five networks, and reinforcing their unique and respective mission-driven legislated roles in areas served by multiple broadcasters. USAGM will also continue to collaborate with other U.S. government entities on areas of mutual concern.

USAGM will:

- Ensure coordinated and complementary mission-driven operations and content in markets served by two USAGM media entities.
- Build and sustain internal content-sharing mechanisms, aligning internal editorial support and coordination, as needed.
- Employ new bridge editors and other content-sharing mechanisms to channel original reporting from the language services to the central newsrooms and across USAGM to get maximum mileage out of the content the Agency currently produces.
- Better leverage news gathering, including stringer and correspondent networks or rotating correspondents, across USAGM to ensure required editorial coordination and avoid redundancy.
- Align all support functions to USAGM priorities, strategies, and goals.
- Participate in inter-agency meetings, committees, and strategies in support of U.S. government priorities to ensure that USAGM capabilities, expertise, actions, and impact are fully and accurately shared with other government entities.

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AGILITY OBJECTIVE 2: ENHANCE STRATEGIC COOPERATION AMONG USAGM NETWORKS AND WITH SUPPORT ELEMENTS

**Agility Performance Goal 2.1: Increase opportunities for sharing content across USAGM language services and networks.**

	FY 2017 Actual	FY 2018 Target	FY 2018 Actual
Establish and employ systems for sharing content across language services and networks, including bridge editors and rotating correspondents	Establish editorial coordinating committee	Share news planning weekly and undertake joint reporting projects	Launched a joint reporting project on China, <i>The Dragon's Reach</i> , involving all five networks

**Note:**

This was a new measure in FY 2017. Actuals from FY 2014-2016 are not available.

**Analysis of Results:**

USAGM networks continued sharing content and collaborating on reporting projects. One key effort this year was *The Dragon's Reach*, a special multi-media reporting project from all five networks that focused on the hidden and public aspects of Chinese imperialism.

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AGILITY OBJECTIVE 2: ENHANCE STRATEGIC COOPERATION AMONG USAGM NETWORKS AND WITH SUPPORT ELEMENTS

**Agility Performance Goal 2.2: Enhance working-level coordination among networks and with support offices.**

	FY 2017 Actual	FY 2018 Target	FY 2018 Actual
Building on ICC success, establish cross-agency working groups to leverage resources and expertise across networks and support offices	Editorial coordinating committee established	Extend cross-agency working groups to other areas, such as IT	CIO Council and Digital Governance Council established; CTO appointed

**Note:**

This was a new measure in FY 2017. Actuals from FY 2014-2016 are not available.

**Analysis of Results:**

In FY 2018, USAGM designated an Agency-wide Chief Information Officer (CIO) in the interest of continuing to ensure that the Agency has the best possible cybersecurity posture. To promote IT management best practices across the Agency, the CIO established a CIO Council, chaired by the CIO and attended by CIOs or equivalent representatives from the USAGM's broadcast entities. USAGM also established a Digital Governance Council and appointed its first Chief Technology Officer (CTO) to assess media and technology trends that give USAGM a competitive advantage while promoting a culture of openness and innovation.

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AGILITY OBJECTIVE 2: ENHANCE STRATEGIC COOPERATION AMONG USAGM NETWORKS AND WITH SUPPORT ELEMENTS

**Agility Performance Goal 2.3: Ensure complementary coverage in markets served by more than one USAGM network.**

	FY 2017 Actual	FY 2018 Target	FY 2018 Actual
Conduct periodic content analysis of services that serve the same market	Conducted content analysis of VOA and RFE/RL coverage in Iran	Conduct content analysis of VOA and RFA coverage in Burma	Conducted content analysis of VOA and RFA coverage in Burma

**Note:**

This was a new measure in FY 2017. Actuals from FY 2014-2016 are not available.

**Analysis of Results:**

USAGM's Office of Policy and Research conducted a brief review of RFA and VOA television and radio programming content to assess the extent of news and feature overlap between the two broadcast entities. From analysis of English-language transcripts of sample programs, it did not appear there was significant overlap in programming content between the RFA and VOA broadcasts. Both broadcasters appeared to be delivering high-quality programming that was consistent with the mission of their respective organizations. RFA focused almost exclusively on internal Burmese and cross-border issues and local content, while VOA took a broader international look that included world and regional issues, with sufficient local color to add relevance for the Burmese audience.

### AGILITY OBJECTIVE 3:

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#### Enable greater impact and accountability through rigorous assessment and evaluation

USAGM'S mission is about more than just reaching audiences. USAGM has prioritized the development and implementation of a comprehensive Impact Model that assesses the extent to which we are accomplishing this mission and making a difference in people's lives. The Impact Model features a full suite of impact indicators, tied to the mission, which can be customized to different media and political environments. In order to successfully deploy the Impact Model across all USAGM language services, we need fresh and full media research from across our broadcast regions. We also need to make this information available and accessible to decision-makers across USAGM and its networks. In the same way that we hold our networks responsible for accomplishing the USAGM mission, we must also hold individuals responsible for carrying out their job duties in support of the mission. IBB has renewed its focus on personnel appraisals and is currently undertaking several initiatives that will strengthen this important accountability tool.

USAGM will:

- Continue to implement and refine the USAGM Impact Model with incremental improvements.
- Offer briefings to U.S. government groups, other international broadcasters, and other interested organizations to share lessons learned from the path-breaking Impact Model.
- Feed impact data into planning and decision-making at all levels of the Agency.
- Within the federal workforce, shift to a five-tier personnel performance appraisal system, tied to performance awards, and hold managers accountable for completing performance appraisals.
- Initiate periodic 360 reviews for all managers in the federal workforce.

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AGILITY OBJECTIVE 3: ENABLE GREATER IMPACT AND ACCOUNTABILITY THROUGH  
RIGOROUS ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION

**Agility Performance Goal 3.1: Strengthen research and evaluation program.**

	FY 2017 Actual	FY 2018 Target	FY 2018 Actual
Number of USAGM target countries with full USAGM media surveys conducted in the current or prior fiscal year	33	35	18
Percentage of surveys used to report performance data that were conducted in the current or prior fiscal year	71%	73%	19%

**Note:**

This was a new measure in FY 2017. Actuals are not available for FY 2014-2016.

**Analysis of Results:**

USAGM did not achieve the targeted level of performance for this goal. USAGM is currently reexamining the range of research methods that it employs and will likely adjust balance of surveys with other data sources, including commercial ratings and digital analytics, in coming years.

AGILITY OBJECTIVE 3: ENABLE GREATER IMPACT AND ACCOUNTABILITY THROUGH RIGOROUS ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION

**Agility Performance Goal 3.2: Improve personnel evaluation processes.**

	FY 2017 Actual	FY 2018 Target	FY 2018 Actual
Strengthen personnel evaluation processes and compliance in the federal workforce	<p>Transitioned to 5-tier electronic personnel system, 40% of employees have personnel evaluations completed</p> <p>Provide managers with training on performance management</p>	<p>100% of managers trained in performance management</p> <p>75% of all employees have personnel evaluations completed on-time</p>	<p>77% of managers trained in performance management. Additional training for remaining managers scheduled for Q1 FY 2019</p> <p>76% of employees had personnel evaluations completed</p>
Implement 360 feedback tools for managers in the federal workforce (reviews to be scheduled every three years)	Curriculum finalized	<p>100% of managers and supervisors reviewed</p> <p>75% of managers and supervisors with development plans in place</p>	<p>90% of managers and supervisors reviewed</p> <p>50% of managers and supervisors with development plans in place</p>

**Note:**

This was a new measure in FY 2017. Actuals are not available for FY 2014-2016.

**Analysis of Results:**

USAGM made significant gains in improving personnel management in FY 2018, with an increase from 40 percent to 76 percent of employees with performance appraisals completed. However, the Agency fell short of the targets for manager training and 360 feedback.



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AGILITY OBJECTIVE 3: ENABLE GREATER IMPACT AND ACCOUNTABILITY THROUGH RIGOROUS ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION

**Agility Performance Goal 3.3: Improve performance culture of the Agency.**

Results-oriented performance culture index (from Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey)	FY 2014 Actual	FY 2015 Actual	FY 2016 Actual	FY 2017 Actual	FY 2018 Target	FY 2018 Actual
USAGM	44	47	47	48	49	51
Government-wide (for comparison)	51	52	53	54	NA	56

**Indicator:**

**Results-oriented Performance Culture Index**

This indicator is an index derived from the Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey and combines questions dealing with recognition, supervision, safety, work connection, and performance.

**Analysis of Results:**

<b>Results-oriented Performance Culture Index</b>	<b>Target: 49</b>	<b>Actual: 51</b>
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USAGM increased its score for the results-oriented performance culture index in FY 2018 from 48 to 51, surpassing its target of 49.

#### AGILITY OBJECTIVE 4:

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##### **Foster employee engagement, development, and productivity**

USAGM's diverse, multi-cultural, and multi-talented workforce offers a rich range of experience and expertise to carry out the Agency's mission. Key to success in a rapidly changing, highly competitive global media environment is flexibility to develop innovative products for the Agency's target countries consistent with emerging priorities, programming formats, and advances in technology.

Enhanced skill sets are required to program for and transmit via multiple media platforms – radio, TV, Internet, mobile, and though social media. USAGM employees are most effective when they are well motivated, trained, and led.

Continued efforts to equip and energize the entire USAGM workforce are critical as the Agency confronts mounting competitive pressures worldwide.

USAGM will:

- Promote human capital planning and management as a top priority for senior executives, managers, and supervisors throughout the Agency.
- Consistently communicate organizational goals, objectives, priorities, and performance expectations in a timely manner to staff at all levels in the Agency.
- Ensure a safe and secure work environment for all employees.
- Implement manager training curriculum focusing on performance management, human capital planning and processes, communication, and financial and administrative management.
- Improve the consistency and credibility of Agency performance management processes.
- Develop cross-training and internal development standards and procedures, as applicable.
- Foster employee participation in Agency health and wellness programs.

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AGILITY OBJECTIVE 4: FOSTER EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT, DEVELOPMENT AND PRODUCTIVITY

**Agility Performance Goal 4.1: Strengthen internal communications.**

	FY 2017 Actual	FY 2018 Target	FY 2018 Actual
Establish/enhance two-way communication channels for better lateral and vertical communication	Improved communication by establishing and promoting internal social media, town halls, suggestion boxes, and focus groups	Continue to use communication channels to maximize engagement with all staff	Maintained communication over established channels and introduced an internal social media channel accessible to staff at all five networks
Improve transparency and accountability using internal communication initiatives	Provided an intranet page, weekly internal newsletter, and regular senior leadership announcements to all staff	Continue to build a communication culture that encourages transparency, accountability, and collaboration	Increased visits to CEO intranet page with weekly CEO Flash Report. Hosted internal networking events to strengthen engagement and communication.

**Note:**

This was a new measure in FY 2017. Actuals are not available for FY 2014-2016.

**Analysis of Results:**

In FY 2018, USAGM established a dedicated internal communications staff, launched an internal social media channel, increased visits to CEO intranet page, and hosted internal networking events to strengthen engagement and communication.

**Agility Performance Goal 4.2: Improve employee training and development.**

Percentage of employees who believe that their work unit has the job-relevant knowledge and skills necessary to accomplish organizational goals (from Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey)	FY 2014 Actual	FY 2015 Actual	FY 2016 Actual	FY 2017 Actual	FY 2018 Target	FY 2018 Actual
USAGM	53	55	53	56	58	70
Government-wide (for comparison)	69	69	69	71	NA	80

**Note:**

In FY 2018, the wording of this question changed from “The workforce has the job-relevant knowledge and skills necessary to accomplish organizational goals” to “My work unit has the job-relevant knowledge and skills necessary to accomplish organizational goals.”

**Indicator:**

**Workforce Knowledge and Skills**

This indicator is taken from the Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey and measures the percentage of employees with positive responses to the statement that their work unit has the job-relevant knowledge and skills necessary to accomplish organizational goals.

**Analysis of Results:**

**Workforce Knowledge and Skills**

**Target: 58**

**Actual: 70**

In FY 2018, USAGM increased its score on the FEVS knowledge and skills question by 14 percentage points to 70. However, it is important to note that the wording of the question changed from general (“the workforce”) to specific (“my work unit”) and the corresponding government-wide average increased by 9 percentage points.

# Verification and Validation of Performance Measures

The performance indicators are a best effort to measure each broadcast entity's performance level. To achieve maximum objectivity, measurements are performed independently of the elements being evaluated whenever possible. The VOA, RFE/RL, RFA, MBN, and OCB audience research for the fiscal years reported was carried out by outside research providers under contract to the USAGM. The current contract, which was recompetited during FY 2017, is awarded to 15 firms. This shift from single to multiple awardees allows greater flexibility and competitive bidding among vendors, bringing down costs for individual research studies and allowing a broader range of methodologies to be employed and target countries studied. Network-wide performance values are computed by the USAGM's Office of Policy and Research and verified by each network's research director. USAGM is in the process of revamping its audience methodology in order to integrate other data sources, such as web and social media analytics and commercial ratings data. This new methodology will be thoroughly tested and validated before it is rolled out for performance reporting.

The standards of the Conference of International Broadcasting Audience Researchers and other standards-setting organizations are followed for the design and conduct of sample surveys. A technical report is produced for every survey which describes the sampling plan, the problems encountered in the field and the methods of resolution, and these are being improved to allow computation of margins of error that include design effects where feasible.

# FY 2018 Performance Objectives and Outcomes

The USAGM Agency-level performance objectives and measures are further supported and linked to language service goals, tactics, and targets. Listed below are the USAGM annual performance objectives, including key initiatives supported by the FY 2017 and 2018 investments, with summaries of the current status. Detailed accomplishments by regional performance objectives are also presented in the accomplishments in the following pages.

## REACH CRITICAL AUDIENCES IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA.

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**Produce engaging programming to serve as a platform for moderate voices in the Middle East and North Africa, countering extremist narratives.**

In addition to continuing its *Raise Your Voice* platform for Iraq and *Maghreb Voices* platform for North Africa, MBN launched two new programs that showcase moderate voices.

**Continue building mobile and social media audiences in the region by producing original content targeted to emerging news audiences.**

MBN's sustained focus on digital and social media content in FY 2018 led to a 36 percent increase in weekly engagement actions on social media, compared to the prior fiscal year.

## EXPAND AUDIENCE REACH IN STRATEGIC LOCATIONS IN THE NEAR EAST, SOUTH, CENTRAL ASIA AND EURASIA.

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**Provide solid journalism on television and social media to refute propaganda in Russia and the surrounding regions.**

USAGM's Current Time channel provided fact-based programming to audiences in 19 countries via more than 84 distributors. New research in Russia showed 28 percent growth in weekly audience since 2015.

**Leverage the newsgathering assets of VOA and RFE/RL and increase coordination in countries where both networks broadcast.**

VOA and RFE/RL coordinated and shared content across their broadcast regions, with joint programming efforts launched in Russian and underway in Persian.

#### **FOCUS BROADCASTING TO AUDIENCES OF STRATEGIC PRIORITY IN EAST ASIA.**

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**Engage with and produce new video content for social/digital audiences in East Asia, especially in Burma, Cambodia, China, and Vietnam.**

RFA and VOA experienced notable growth in digital and social engagement in China and throughout Southeast Asia, with new content, increased engagement, and high-ranking social media sites.

**Leverage the newsgathering assets of VOA and RFA and increase coordination in countries where both networks broadcast.**

VOA and RFA continued their productive collaboration this year, including a joint reporting project with all USAGM networks on the influence of Chinese investment around the world.

#### **REACH NEW AUDIENCES WITH INCREASED ENGAGEMENT IN AFRICA.**

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**Provide strong coverage of violent extremism in Africa, including documentaries for use and sharing on all platforms.**

VOA's documentary, *Boko Haram: Journey from Evil*, has found large audiences throughout Africa; Nigeria's most populous Muslim state is showing it in its countering violent extremism campaign at more than 900 public schools.

**Reach and engage young people and women, who are underrepresented among USAGM audiences in Africa and especially vulnerable to extremist recruitment and violence.**

VOA continued to reach out to youth and women through call-in shows and other programs, including a new round-table discussion program, "Our Voices," hosted by African women journalists.

## EXPAND AUDIENCE REACH IN STRATEGIC LOCATIONS OF LATIN AMERICA.

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### Explore merging OCB and VOA Spanish into a Spanish-language surrogate network.

While the proposed merger of OCB and VOA Spanish in the FY 2018 President's Budget was not supported by Congressional action, VOA's Spanish Service and OCB continued their long and mutually beneficial relationship, sharing reports, event coverage and facilities.

## ALIGN ESSENTIAL SUPPORT FUNCTIONS WITH BROADCASTING IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND PERFORMANCE GOALS.

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### Strengthen research capacity to identify appropriate target audiences and their preferred media, with the formats and content that appeal to them, and assess the impact of USAGM programming.

USAGM developed and began deploying customized dashboards with integrated research, analytics, and impact data to the networks and language services.

### Realign USAGM transmissions to maximize the effectiveness of program delivery resources.

USAGM continued to optimize its delivery network, shifting shortwave resources to more cost-effective locations and migrating from expensive, dedicated transoceanic satellite and fiber circuits to digital terrestrial circuits.

### Provide cutting-edge circumvention tools to audiences and independent media outlets in countries that restrict and censor Internet access.

In FY 2018, the USAGM Office of Internet Freedom and the Open Technology Fund at RFA increased the use of anti-censorship and digital privacy tools, including proxy products and private messaging.

### Provide enterprise-wide technical support for digital and social media innovation.

USAGM launched a Digital Governance Council and designated a Chief Technology Officer, in order to assess media and technology trends and promote a culture of openness and innovation.

### Build strong and collaborative relationships with affiliate partners in target markets.

The Office of Business Development initiated and supported affiliate partnerships in key markets, providing an important pathway to reach audiences.



**Maintain the firewall and continuously monitor programming quality in line with modern broadcast journalism principles through annual performance reviews of all broadcast services.**

Annual program reviews were conducted by USAGM broadcast networks. No firewall violations were reported.

**Support initiatives to improve financial, performance and budget integration as well as financial and acquisition processes.**

USAGM conducted its annual Language Service Review process, to inform resource decisions and develop performance goals and targets for each language service. The Office of the CFO and the Office of Contracts collaborated closely to address unliquidated obligations.

**Carry out USAGM's mission and goals with a workforce that is agile, skilled, diverse, well-led and motivated.**

In order to increase workplace engagement, USAGM launched the Leadership 2020 initiative and appointed dedicated internal communications staff.

**Address USAGM's most critical infrastructure maintenance and repair requirements.**

The Office of Technology, Services, and Innovation addressed critical infrastructure issues including transition to high definition video capacity, realignment of transmission assets, and migration from satellite to fiber delivery.

# Summary of FY 2018 Performance Accomplishments

## **FY 2018 Performance Objective**

**REACH CRITICAL AUDIENCES IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA**

**WEEKLY AUDIENCE: 29.3 MILLION <sup>1</sup>**

## **FY 2018 ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

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### ORGANIZATIONAL TRANSFORMATION

In FY 2018, MBN initiated the implementation of a multi-year transformation plan designed to fundamentally improve programming content and production quality across all MBN media. MBN strives to become a more impactful thought leader that drives positive change through access to rich content relevant to the people of the region and U.S. public diplomacy priorities. MBN's first major transformational initiative in FY 2018 was to redefine and upgrade Alhurra Pan-Arab television programming that targets people across 22 countries. A newly imagined programming grid was established to revitalize and redefine the channel. The new grid includes a dynamic blend of news coupled with select, quality programming that drives contemplation and engagement on issues of relevance to the target audience and U.S. concerns. In FY 2018, refocused news hours and new information programs were created and prepared for launch. In addition to workforce restructuring and reorganization, production capabilities were upgraded in FY 2018 to support the new programming vision and rebranding strategy.

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<sup>1</sup> Data from Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Palestinian Territories, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Tunisia, Turkey, UAE, Yemen.



*Ibrahim Essa on “Mokhtalaf Alayh” (“Debatable”) discusses controversial issues in the region, bringing new perspectives to topics related to political Islam and jihadism.*

#### ENCOURAGING MODERATE VOICES

Alhurra brought new talent to its television network, increasing the number of moderate voices to appear on the network. In FY 2018, MBN launched two programs that provide a distinctive voice to the crowded media marketplace. “Sam and Ammar” features Hudson Institute’s Sam Tadros and Syrian human rights activist Ammar Abdulhamid as they take on news and current events from the region and around the world, providing their thoughts in a witty debate, but with a reformist, independent slant. On “Mokhtalaf Alayh” (“Debatable”), Egyptian luminary and respected author Ibrahim Essa brings his provocative commentary and insights regarding controversial political and ideological issues in the region, especially those that are related to political Islam and jihadism. These voices, both on television and digital platforms, serve as an alternative to the extremist rhetoric found on other media outlets.

#### ONGOING COVERAGE OF SYRIA

Through years of grueling war in Syria, the north of the country has repeatedly been an epicenter of the conflict. Following efforts by the U.S.-led coalition to oust ISIS from Northern Syria, the Kurds have again borne the brunt of the latest upheaval in 2018. Despite the difficulties and dangers inherent in reporting from this war zone, Alhurra was one of the few Arab networks to provide a first-hand account from the Kurdish perspective, drawing attention to the suffering of Kurdish communities. This reporting covered numerous crucial humanitarian, social, and human rights issues, including the suffering of people taking shelter in caves; the fears of religious and ethnic minorities; the struggles of patients seeking treatment for injuries at hospitals; the dangers to people from landmines in ISIS-liberated areas; the destruction of churches and temples by ISIS; and the heavy damage incurred upon historic sites by Turkish airstrikes.



*Alhurra report on Jinwar, a self-sustaining village in Northern Syria established as a safe haven from war for Arab, Assyrian and Kurdish women.*



*Sam Tadros and Ammar Abdulhamid discuss the holocaust in an episode of Alhurra's "Sam and Ammar."*

#### COVERING TABOO ISSUES

MBN provides news stories not found in the Arabic-language press including human rights, freedom of speech and freedom of religion. An example during FY 2018 was when Alhurra's "Sam and Ammar" hosted an entire episode on the Holocaust. It is a story that is considered a taboo topic in regional press. Few in the Arabic speaking world have attempted to deal with the Holocaust as a historical event of great significance in world history and a challenge to the modern world. Also in FY 2018, Alhurra broadcast a one-hour documentary on the drug abuse epidemic in the Middle East, a topic rarely discussed in the media. The hour-long investigative documentary highlighted how this crisis was affecting people across the region and comes on the heels of the Alhurra-produced documentary on opioids in America. Feedback from MBN's social media platforms that were promoting the program show a total reach of 6.1 million people with 2.5 million views of excerpts of the documentary.

#### COVERING AND EXPLAINING AMERICAN POLICY

Alhurra provides the most in-depth coverage of the U.S. and U.S. foreign policy in Arabic to the region. The network has dedicated correspondents at the White House, State Department, Congress and the Pentagon and its talk shows regularly host American experts to discuss and debate U.S. policy towards the Middle East

and North Africa. In FY 2018, Alhurra hosted interviews with high profile officials within the Trump Administration to discuss U.S. goals in the region. The network interviewed former Secretary of State Rex Tillerson and National Security Advisor H.R. McMaster. The interviews were cited by hundreds of Middle Eastern and global media outlets and shared with the other USAGM entities.

#### MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN PEOPLE'S LIVES

MBN's "Maghreb Voices" profiled Mustapha Badouh, a coal miner from Jerrada, Morocco. He detailed the hardships and dangers that he faces each day. In less than a week, the video had more than 1.8 million views; 45,000 shares and nearly 5,000 comments. Many of the comments were asking how they can help this man. In a follow up story, Mustapha said he had received hundreds of calls from different countries offering support and assistance.



*VOA's Heather Murdock reports from a polling place in Istanbul during Turkey's 2018 presidential election.*

#### ISTANBUL BUREAU

VOA launched a new bureau in FY 2018 in Istanbul, Turkey, a critical target market and region for VOA as well as other USAGM entities. Relocated from Cairo, the new office provides a more-accessible hub for newsgathering across the key MENA region.



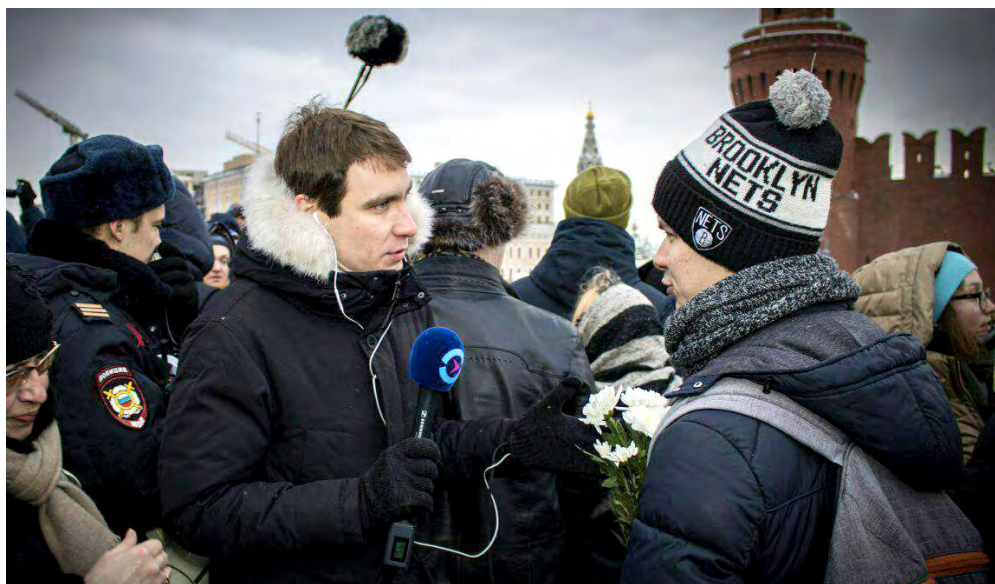
## **FY 2018 Performance Objective**

**EXPAND AUDIENCE REACH IN STRATEGIC LOCATIONS IN THE NEAR EAST,  
SOUTH, CENTRAL ASIA AND EURASIA**

**WEEKLY AUDIENCE: 57.6 MILLION <sup>2</sup>**

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## **FY 2018 Accomplishments**



*Current Time's reporters cover Russia and provide an alternative to Kremlin-controlled news.*

### **COUNTERING RUSSIAN DISINFORMATION**

In FY 2018, Russian state media moved aggressively to try to displace objective news sources with flashy but skewed news coverage that often undermined free societies or falsified each government's true motivations. USAGM networks mobilized a joint effort to provide fact-based content. Current Time, the Russian-language digital and television network led by RFE/RL in cooperation with VOA, is seen in 19 countries via more than 84 distributors and 49 affiliates (a handful of which are within Russia itself). USAGM continues to penetrate Russia with the Current Time network, but also to reach Russian-speaking populations

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<sup>2</sup> Data from Abkhazia, Afghanistan, Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Belarus, Bosnia, Chechnya, Dagestan, Estonia, FATA, Georgia, Iran, Kazakhstan, Kosovo, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Nepal, Pakistan, Russia, Serbia, Sri Lanka, Tajikistan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan.

throughout the region and around the world. In addition to its TV operation, Current Time's digital arm engages audiences with its content via social media — including, critically, audiences inside Russia, where Current Time television is barred from terrestrial broadcast and most cable systems. A 2018 Gallup poll, commissioned by USAGM, found a weekly audience of 7.7 million people in Russia for Current Time, RFE/RL, and VOA content, with the majority using digital platforms.

#### ENGAGING AUDIENCES IN IRAN

In Iran, where the government officially bans satellite dishes and online access to international media, weekly audiences for USAGM networks grew to nearly a quarter of Iranian adults (23 percent). VOA Persian evaded censorship by using web and social media and satellite television to cover live events showcasing the U.S. side of events important to Iranians – frequently, stories either not reported by Iranian state media or spun to reflect only the Iranian regime's interests. As protests broke out in Iran in December 2017 and January 2018, eyewitnesses from more than 23 cities provided RFE/RL's Farda with videos from within the country. Farda's website set a record of 2 million page views on January 1. The week around the protests, videos were viewed 4.7 million times on Farda's main Facebook page, an increase of 243 percent compared to the previous week. Farda's extremely high level of audience engagement during major events underscores both its critical role in the country and the trust that audiences have in its news coverage. Using a model similar to Current Time, VOA and RFE/RL are working together to launch an enhanced joint programming stream for Iran.

#### REACHING AUDIENCES IN SOUTH ASIA

In April 2018, two RFE/RL Afghan Service journalists and one trainee of the Service were tragically killed in a targeted attack against journalists in the country, reinforcing the message that the country has a long way to go until all of its citizens can live freely without fear of violence from terrorist forces.

In Pakistan's tribal regions, home to the Afghan Taliban, USAGM networks – VOA Deewa and RFE/RL Mashaal – play a particularly strong role in countering violent extremism. VOA Deewa added extra programming in FY 2018 that focused on the lead up to the merger of the tribal areas into Pakistan's Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and the end of colonial-era laws that had governed the Federally Administered



Tribal Areas since the turn of the 20th century. Radio Mashaal delivered rich and insightful news and information to its audiences across both radio and digital platforms. Pakistan's Interior Ministry shut down Radio Mashaal's offices in Islamabad in January 2018; however, RFE/RL and VOA continue to report to large audiences in the country despite interference from both the Pakistani government and extremists.

Elections in Pakistan in FY 2018 had major implications for U.S. foreign relations and VOA coverage was hailed as unbiased. VOA Urdu shed light on Pakistani electoral politics with original stories on abducted peace activists, violence targeting local candidates, and the influence of fake news.



*RFE/RL provided reliable on the ground coverage of Armenian protests in the spring of 2018.*

## ARMENIA

USAGM networks' multimedia news performance was highlighted during the popular uprising in that country in spring 2018, where RFE/RL and VOA Armenian served as reliable and objective information sources. The RFE/RL Armenian Service showcased their digital progress, offering multiple live video streams along with radio, web, and social network production. RFE/RL Armenian Service traffic skyrocketed across all platforms. Between April 13 and May 9,

2018, they received 12.5 million website visits; 28.9 million website page views; 48.3 million YouTube video views; and 151 million Facebook video views.

VOA Armenian was the first media outlet to report the U.S. State Department's reaction to Armenia's civil movement and Reps. Adam Schiff and Frank Pallone's congratulatory messages to Armenia's new Prime Minister, Nikol Pashinyan. The Service's reports were widely republished and discussed in traditional media and resonated across the Armenian-speaking online community. During the two-month crisis period in May, VOA Armenian recorded more than 20 million video views and 3 million engagement actions. All Armenian television channels used USAGM reporting, which also spread globally with video and reporting appearing on CNN, BBC, Aljazeera, France24, *The Washington Post*, *The New York Times* and many other outlets.

#### EXTREMISM IN THE BALKANS

With Albania, Kosovo, and Bosnia increasingly becoming sources of recruitment for ISIS, in FY 2018 VOA's Balkan Services accelerated coverage of regional unemployment and government corruption that may have resulted in arms from the Balkans ending up in the hands of ISIS fighters. The RFE/RL Balkan Service engages young audiences in conversations regarding the harmful effects of radicalization within their societies. RFE/RL expanded this type of reporting in FY 2018 with the creation of a Balkans-oriented digital media team, as well as a campaign entitled "Not in My Name" for Bosnia and Kosovo that directly engages social media audiences in responsible dialogue about issues surrounding extremism and risks in their countries. RFE/RL launched a newswire for the Balkans and a newswire for Russian-language media, providing RFE/RL reporting free of charge to subscribing media outlets.



*The “Not In Our Name” team on the set of one of ten town halls conducted major cities in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. These sessions were video-taped and produced in ten 30-minute segments and broadcast in the region and watched and used in local communities to help residents confront and prevent the spread of extremism.*

#### EXTREMISM IN CENTRAL ASIA

In Central Asia, political and economic instability have led to a rise in support for extremist Islam, which has made the region a key source of ISIS recruits fighting in Syria, Iraq, Russia, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and elsewhere. Starting at the end of FY 2017 and continuing in FY 2018, RFE/RL launched “Not in Our Name,” a comprehensive regional counter-extremism project, with the goal to empower communities to stand up to violent extremist recruiters that claim to represent them. RFE/RL traveled to several regions of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan, exploring how residents can work together on the local and national levels to prevent the spread of violence and extremism, and launched a documentary video series and companion online initiative.

**FY 2018 Performance Objective**  
**FOCUS BROADCASTING TO AUDIENCES OF STRATEGIC PRIORITY**  
**IN EAST ASIA | WEEKLY AUDIENCE: 126.6 MILLION <sup>3</sup>**

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**FY 2018 Accomplishments**



*VOA Korean's Eunjung Cho hosts Washington Talk.*

**VIDEO PROGRAMMING IN KOREAN**

VOA Korean launched new video programs for North Korea in FY 2018. VOA Korean launched its television roundtable *Washington Talk* in English and Korean, targeting senior officials inside North Korea who have access to the Internet and international satellites, and North Korean officials and contract workers abroad. VOA and RFA Korean continued the video programming they began in FY 2018, with VOA documenting Koreans living in the United States and RFA conveying the reality of North Korean defectors' lives outside the DPRK to potential North Korean viewers; both provide a credible alternative to propaganda pushed by the North Korean state-controlled media monopoly.

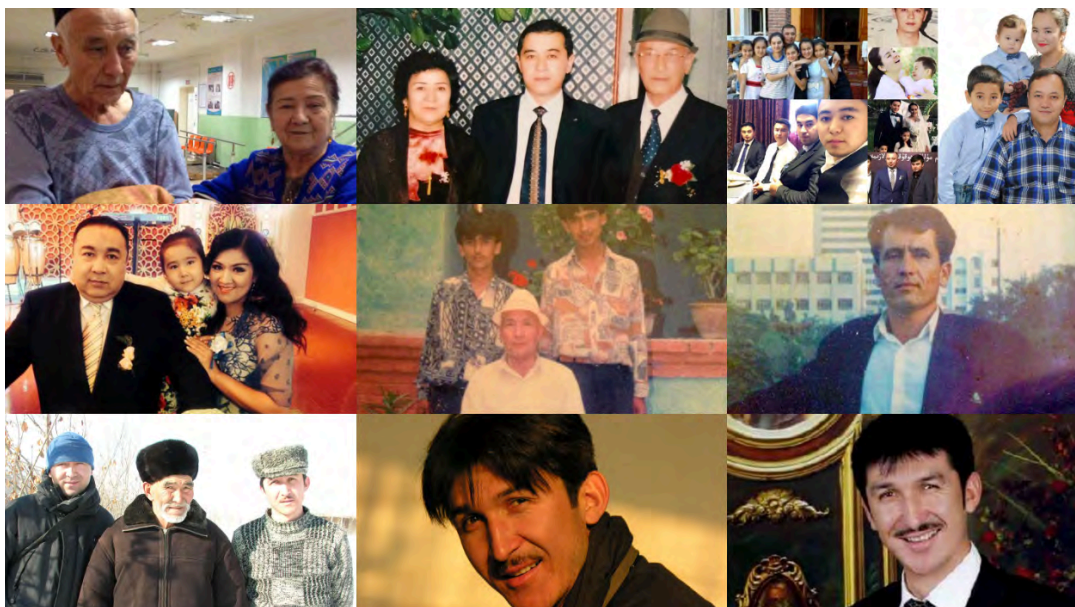
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<sup>3</sup> Data from Burma, Cambodia, China, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Laos, Mongolia, Philippines, South Korea, Taiwan, Thailand, Vietnam



## UYGHUR DETENTIONS IN CHINA

RFA's Uyghur Service broke shocking stories of Uyghurs being detained in re-education camps in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (XUAR) since mid-2017. It is now estimated that nearly one million Uyghurs are in the camps all over XUAR. The Uyghur Service's reports are continuously cited by major media, Members of Congress, the U.S. Department of State, and academics around the world, and have made the Uyghur situation one of the most concerning human rights issues today. Despite pressure on RFA journalists, including harassment and disappearance of family members in Xinjiang, the RFA Uyghur Service serves as the leading news source for the Uyghur speaking community as well as for the Western media and human rights observers.



*Radio Free Asia Uyghur Service reporters have spent years in exile covering unreported news and documenting human rights abuses in their homeland in northwestern China. Dozens of their family members, some picture above, have been detained.*

## ROHINGYA CRISIS IN BURMA AND BANGLADESH

When Rohingya refugees began pouring into Bangladesh, VOA Bangla, in coordination with VOA Burmese and the News Center, was quick to expand operations in the region and gain valuable reporting from inside the refugee camps. VOA Bangla created awareness about the poor living conditions for women and children in the Rohingya refugee camps in Cox's Bazaar among local people and members of government, who then came forward to lend assistance to two refugee assistance programs. As the crisis approached its one-year anniversary with no end in sight, VOA contributor Greta Van Susteren visited the region's main refugee complex to film a documentary highlighting the plight of the Rohingya. Among those to take notice were U.S. lawmakers, who called on Van Susteren to give testimony before the House Foreign Affairs Committee.



*VOA contributor Greta Van Susteren at the Kutupalong refugee camp in Bangladesh.*

The RFA Burmese in-depth weekly TV news program, “RFA Here & Now,” was forced off Democratic Voice of Burma by the government because of its use of the word “Rohingya” to refer to this disadvantaged Muslim minority group. RFA Burmese is now focusing more on its radio and Facebook content. It has produced unique and ground-breaking programs on hate speech, drug use and trafficking, and the Rohingya crisis. RFA Burmese Facebook doubled its number of fans to 3.8 million over the past year and maintains high rates of engagement. VOA Burmese averaged over 2.8 million video views per week across platforms (website, Facebook, and YouTube).

## REACHING AUDIENCES IN CHINA

A 2017 IPSOS survey of China, commissioned by USAGM, found a combined weekly audience of 65 million (6.2 percent) for VOA and RFA. The largest portion of this audience came from online platforms, including web and social media. Even as the CCP is tightening restrictions on the use of Virtual Private Networks (VPNs) and other internet circumvention methods in the country, RFA and VOA Mandarin's social media profiles continued to grow substantially throughout FY 2018, as reflected in engagement, interaction, and video views. Followers of RFA Mandarin Service's Facebook page grew by 24 percent from FY 2017 to FY 2018. With a solid base of more than 303 thousand followers, RFA Mandarin Service's Twitter account took off in FY 2018, and drew a total of 590 thousand retweets and likes. In FY 2018, RFA Mandarin's YouTube channel garnered more than 7.6 million views, and its 77 thousand subscribers spent a total of 47 million minutes watching videos. VOA Mandarin's website generated almost 50 million visits in FY 2018, with over 44 million article views and 6.8 million video views. The service's Facebook page had over 12 million video views, but their YouTube channel was even more successful, with over 80 million views this year.



#### MEDIA CRACKDOWN IN CAMBODIA

Facing headwinds from tightening censorship in Cambodia where government forced local radio affiliates to close or drop USAGM programs, VOA and RFA's Khmer Services made great inroads in reaching audiences through digital media. The VOA Khmer website received over 6.5 million visits, a 19 percent increase from the previous year. The VOA Khmer Facebook page drew over 10.5 million engagement actions and 37 million video views. The RFA Khmer Facebook fan base — now at 5.7 million — accounts for about half of Cambodians using Facebook. A great deal of USAGM reporting has been devoted to explaining the hallmarks of a free and fair election, and why the 2018 elections are considered illegitimate by most of the international community.

#### DIGITAL GROWTH IN VIETNAM

USAGM now relies primarily on digital platforms to reach audiences in Vietnam and is monitoring implementation of a new cyber law that will require all technology companies to store their sensitive data inside the country by 2019. RFA Vietnamese has expanded its video and social media content and is exploring new and more secure avenues for online distribution. Use of VOA Vietnamese video continued to grow in FY 2018. Across all platforms, they generated almost 460 million views. The website had over 27 million visits; their



articles were read over 37 million times. The VOA Vietnamese Facebook page had 300 million video views, received over 10 million reactions/comments/shares and ranked second among Vietnamese media pages, according to CrowdTangle. VOA Vietnamese YouTube channel subscribers grew by one-third to one half million, pushing the service into the top ten most popular channels in Vietnam.

#### DRAGON'S REACH

All five USAGM networks collaborated on a special multi-media reporting project, *The Dragon's Reach*, focused on the hidden and public aspects of Chinese imperialism. *The Dragon's Reach* aggregated reporting on China's "Belt and Road Initiative" with stories across Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Middle East and examined how this \$1 trillion investment is transforming lives, reshaping landscapes and tilting the geopolitical balance. Supporting USAGM's strategic priority to enhance cooperation among the networks, *The Dragon's Reach* offers a well-rounded look at China's economic and infrastructural reach with each network producing a variety of pieces that focus on their broadcast regions.



**FY 2018 Performance Objective**  
**REACH NEW AUDIENCES WITH INCREASED ENGAGEMENT IN AFRICA**  
**WEEKLY AUDIENCE: 68.1 MILLION <sup>4</sup>**

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**FY 2018 Accomplishments**



*Bukky Shonibare, a social media activist who has raised money and awareness in support of the Chibok schoolgirls, leads a rally in the VOA documentary Boko Haram: Journey from Evil.*

**COVERING VIOLENT EXTREMISM**

VOA has had a major impact in the target region with its documentary, *Boko Haram: Journey from Evil*. Nigeria's most populous Muslim state is showing it in its countering violent extremism campaign at more than 900 public schools. Former Boko Haram fighter Bana Umar says international radio helped convince him to leave the terrorist group. "I listened to these radio stations frequently to the

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<sup>4</sup> Data from Angola, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Central African Republic, Cote d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Gabon, Ghana, Guinea, Kenya, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Africa, South Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

extent that when I laid down to sleep I would be thinking of what I heard. I realized that all our activities were evil,” he told VOA Hausa at a military re-education camp in Maiduguri.

#### AMPLIFYING WOMEN'S VOICES

African women spoke out about sexual harassment highlighted by the #metoo movement on call-in shows with VOA English, Swahili, Hausa, and Portuguese. “The boss started approaching me with sexual advances,” a caller told VOA Swahili. “It started out as hints and developed into very aggressive gestures. A month later he tells me, ‘Don’t come back to work beginning tomorrow.’ I knew why.” Panel discussions included African activists and attorneys.



*The hosts from the new VOA show “OurVoices”*

#### BUILDING COMMUNITIES OF EMPOWERMENT

On the strength of a dynamic pilot program, English-language television affiliates signed up to broadcast VOA Africa’s “Our Voices,” a round-table discussion hosted by Pan-African women journalists. Using solutions-based journalism and integrated social media, “Our Voices” creates a community of empowerment where women talk about serious matters in their lives, on the African continent and around the world including politics, business, and migration as well as more traditional “women’s issues” such as child marriage, inheritance, female genital mutilation, reproductive health, and gender equity.



## CONNECTING ETHIOPIA AND THE U.S.

In a country where VOA broadcasts were jammed just five months earlier, Ethiopians watched state television carry VOA's live feed of Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed's rally with the diaspora community in Washington. "Live from VOA studio and ETV! Amazing!" wrote a Facebook fan. "We lived long to witness this!" On-the-scene VOA coverage of the prime minister in Washington, in Los Angeles, and in Minneapolis drew more than 2.5 million video views.



*VOA's Shaka Ssali and Paul Ndiho talking to voters during the elections in Zimbabwe.*

## ELECTION IN ZIMBABWE

VOA and the Zimpapers Television Network teamed up for the first televised presidential debate ahead of Zimbabwe's first election since the fall of Robert Mugabe last November. VOA "Straight Talk Africa" host Shaka Ssali joined ZTN anchor Ruvheneko Parirenyatwa in Harare for the freewheeling debate that was carried live on more than 80 African television and radio affiliates as well as Facebook Live. VOA coverage of Zimbabwe's first election without Robert Mugabe included live reporting from polling stations across the country, an interview by the PBS NewsHour, and three Facebook Live broadcasts from U.S.-Embassy-sponsored roundtables with the Zimbabwe Media Center. "VOA thanks you are great studio than ZBC and TV coz you capture all political parties," voter Godfrey Dongaronga wrote on Facebook.



*VOA Director Amanda Bennett speaks at the launch ceremony for the new VOA FM in Brazzaville in the Republic of Congo.*

#### NEW FM STATIONS

Radio remains a very popular platform in many USAGM markets, particularly in Africa. While shortwave continues to be a relevant means of delivery in several African markets, in most countries rapid growth and competition in the media market have shifted radio habits almost entirely towards FM. USAGM provides 24/7 FM radio programming in over 35 markets across the continent. In FY 2018, USAGM installed new FM transmission systems in several important places, including Brazzaville and Pointe Noire, Republic of Congo, and Mbuji-Mayi and Matadi, Democratic Republic of Congo. The Brazzaville station also provides some coverage into the megacity of Kinshasa, DRC.

**FY 2018 Performance Objective**  
**EXPAND AUDIENCE REACH IN STRATEGIC LOCATIONS**  
**IN LATIN AMERICA | WEEKLY AUDIENCE: 63.6 MILLION <sup>5</sup>**

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**FY 2018 Accomplishments**



*VOA's Celia Mendoza covering the humanitarian crisis at the Colombia-Venezuela border.*

**REACHING NICARAGUA AND VENEZUELA**

The VOA Spanish Service expanded its coverage of the fragile countries of Nicaragua and Venezuela in FY 2018. The unpopular governments in both countries have repressed local media and all but banned coverage of the frequent anti-government demonstrations there. VOA worked closely with influential media partners, taking advantage of VOA's credibility, impact, and its unique position in the United States. Leading Venezuela media partner "El Nacional" added a website section to focus on VOA content. VOA Spanish focused on news and information from the United States, the threats to human rights and freedom of the press in the two countries, and the rampant corruption that undermined

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<sup>5</sup> Data from Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay, Venezuela.



the economies and spirit of both. The Service had stringers providing daily reporting from Venezuela, counterbalancing government media as well as Russian and Chinese outlets. VOA reporters also traveled to Nicaragua for onsite coverage including reporting on the youth movement and its role in the quest for democracy. Despite government pressure against VOA, local media in both countries use VOA Spanish reporting about their countries and the U.S.

#### COVERING CUBA

OCB's network of independent reporters keeps growing, spurring the creation of more independent news media outlets on the island and the launch of many emergent digital outlets. In FY 2018, OCB put in place a network of correspondents throughout the world, reporting news about Cuba and connecting with independent reporters on the island. Beginning in June 2018, news programs have been expanded to better serve the Cuban audience, and OCB continues to expand its media network of correspondents. A strategic plan was put in place for FY 2018 and FY 2019. The plan includes, but is not limited to, the creation of a more modern style of delivering news and more live interaction of anchors with independent reporters in Cuba.



*Radio and TV Martí anchor Karen Caballero on set.*

#### USAGM COORDINATION

VOA's Spanish Service and OCB continued their long and mutually beneficial relationship, sharing reports, event coverage and facilities. On a daily basis, Radio Martí newscasts air VOA radio reports about the United States and Latin America and VOA and OCB staff share information pertaining to planned coverage of events. VOA reporters participate in Martí programming when covering events such as the Summit between President Trump and Kim Jung Un, and the Helsinki Summit between President Trump and Vladimir Putin. VOA reporters have provided OCB with extensive coverage during trips to focus on the Nicaragua crisis and the Venezuelan refugee crisis.



**FY 2018 Performance Objective**  
**ALIGN ESSENTIAL SUPPORT FUNCTIONS WITH BROADCASTING**  
**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND PERFORMANCE GOALS**

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**FY 2018 Accomplishments**

**EXTREMISM WATCH DESK**

In FY 2018, the audience for VOA's Extremism Watch Desk grew to 1 million followers on Facebook. Watch Desk personnel produced hundreds of multimedia stories on terrorism and extremism in the South and Central Asia region and Middle East. The stories it produced were used within VOA, across the USAGM entities, and by internet users around the world. The programs, reaching more than 100,000 viewers online each week, were also distributed to schools and public meetings.



*VOA reporter Deepak Dobhal was one of a team of reporters that travelled across the United States to tell the stories of rural America in "Off the Highway."*

**TELLING AMERICA'S STORY**

VOA covered "America's story" comprehensively. Its journalists traveled around the U.S. to report on the people and places off the beaten path and on communities whose residents come from different backgrounds but share a value system and belief in the American way. Some of the coverage was in the language of the countries where VOA is heard, seen, and read, often focusing on the various

diaspora of first, second, and third generation immigrants whose opinions are still highly valued in their home countries. Other coverage, including the weekly interview program *Plugged in with Greta Van Susteren* and the digital newsmagazine *VOA Connect*, informed global audiences on American culture, values, and politics. In FY 2018, VOA's *Off the Highway* explored the views of those living in rural America.

#### COUNTERING INTERNET CENSORSHIP

The USAGM Office of Internet Freedom (OIF) worked in coordination with USAGM language services to extend the deployment of USAGM-funded anti-censorship technologies in their broadcasting regions enabling citizens and journalists to safely access and share news, information, and other online content. OIF also developed training materials and conducted several anti-censorship educational and training exercises for USAGM's broadcasting and network services and affiliates. In addition, OIF created promotional materials in multiple languages to raise awareness and promote USAGM-funded circumvention tools across USAGM broadcasting regions, and supported the development of a reporting console to aggregate online data consumption and other analytics from multiple USAGM-funded censorship circumvention technologies into a unified view for enhanced monitoring and tracking of the use of the technologies.



*The Office of Internet Freedom outreach event on World Press Freedom Day brought OIF training materials and programs to the attention of VOA journalists.*



*The USAGM Leadership 2020 program launched in 2018 with managers and supervisors participating in 360° survey assessments.*

#### SUPPORTING WORKPLACE ENGAGEMENT

In January 2018, USAGM launched a multi-year comprehensive development initiative for all USAGM managers and supervisors, Leadership 2020. The program focuses on four components: 360° survey assessment, leadership development plans, 40 annual hours of required learning, and support and reinforcement. The goal of this leadership development effort is to improve USAGM employee engagement and satisfaction, as well as the quality of leadership provided by Agency managers.



Also as a result of efforts to improve workforce satisfaction and engagement, USAGM established a dedicated internal communications staff that works with associates from around the Agency to assist in the effort. To maximize communication with and among the workforce, and cognizant of the widespread use of social media, the group recently launched an interactive, internal online platform. This allows staff to stay connected by sharing events and initiatives with Agency colleagues; and it boosts engagement within the USAGM community. The internal communications team continues to promote and educate the workforce on the use of this tool in order to increase participation.



*Yemi Jimason from the Office of Public Affairs introduces staff to Workplace, USAGM's internal online platform.*

#### TECHNOLOGY COORDINATION AND GOVERNANCE

In FY 2018, USAGM designated an Agency-wide Chief Information Officer (CIO) in the interest of continuing to ensure that the Agency has the best possible cybersecurity posture. To promote IT management best practices across the Agency, the CIO established a CIO Council, chaired by the CIO and attended by CIOs or equivalent representatives from the USAGM's broadcast entities. USAGM also established a Digital Governance Council and appointed its first Chief Technology Officer (CTO) to assess media and technology trends that give USAGM a competitive advantage while promoting a culture of openness and innovation.



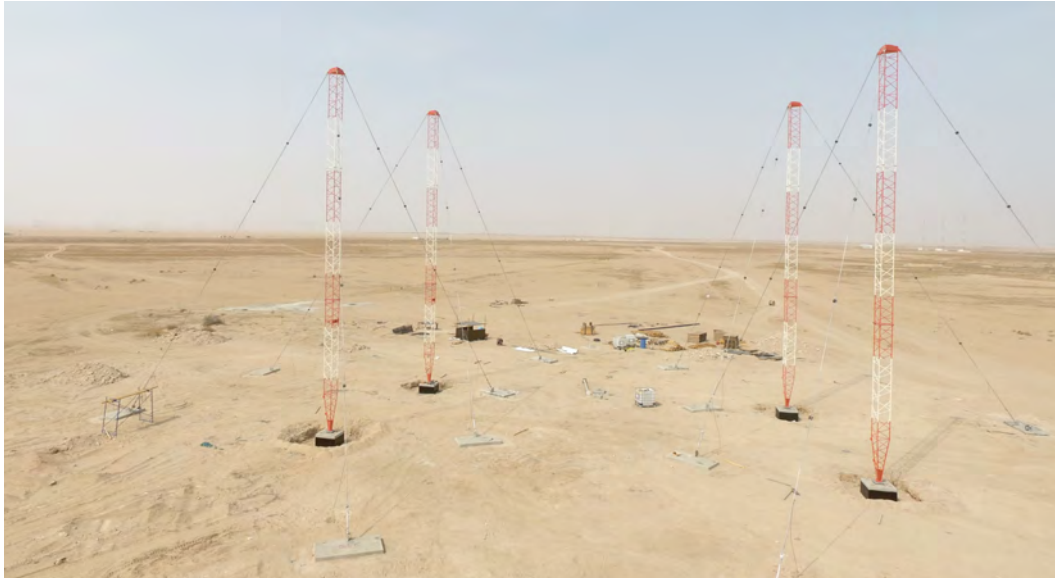
*Topics at a USAGM Venezuela affiliate conference in May included the role of international news in Venezuela, cyberattacks, training and support from VOA and USAGM to cover elections and increased collaboration between the USAGM affiliates in the region.*

#### PARTNERSHIPS AND TRAINING

In recent years, about two-thirds of the Agency's weekly audience has come to USAGM content via our extensive network of over 3,000 affiliate partners. USAGM's Office of Business Development continued to grow this extremely valuable syndication network with new digital, TV, and radio affiliates in all markets. USAGM's Training and Development Office continued its global work in training hundreds of journalists and independent media personnel in some of USAGM's most important target markets.

#### LEVERAGING RESEARCH AND DATA

USAGM's Office of Policy and Research (OPR) made several changes in FY 2018 to improve strategic decision-making and program targeting throughout the Agency. OPR developed and began deploying customized dashboards with integrated research, analytics, and impact data to the networks and language services. OPR also purchased new tools for improved targeting and analysis on digital and social media and integrated competitive landscape analysis into the annual Language Service Review process.



*New towers at the Kuwait Transmitting Station.*

#### IMPROVING CONTENT DELIVERY

USAGM made progress in improving and streamlining its transmission capability. TSI completed the first phase of expanding the Kuwait Transmitting Station, which has a strategic location and low operating costs; completed the replacement of Sao Tome’s medium wave tower; and conducted safety and reliability studies at three other transmitting stations. In FY 2018, TSI continued diligently optimizing its satellite capacity across the fleet. Optimization included digital compression rate standardization for high definition and standard definition video and audio distribution via satellite.

#### COUNTERING JAMMING

In FY 2018, USAGM remained at the forefront of the battle against satellite jamming, working closely with other international broadcasters, the Department of State, non-governmental organizations, satellite operators, and industry groups. As part of the official U.S. delegation to the World Radio Communication Conference, USAGM successfully lobbied for a proposal calling on member states to “take the necessary steps” to end jamming.

#### TRANSITION TO HD

In FY 2018, VOA and TSI continued work to upgrade all TV studios and master control facilities to high definition (HD), converted VOA London studios to HD, installed labor-saving TV production automation equipment, and began facility-wide renovation of studios and equipment in Washington, D.C. This transition will enable VOA to remain competitive by keeping up with affiliate and industry standards.

#### ENTERPRISE RISK MANAGEMENT

In FY 2018, USAGM appointed its first Chief Risk Officer to oversee all enterprise risk management efforts in order to control threats and challenges to Agency goals and objectives. This appointment will facilitate better informed and improved decision-making within USAGM and its networks.

#### INTEGRATING FINANCE AND ACQUISITION PROCESSES

The Office of the CFO and the Office of Contracts collaborated closely to address unliquidated obligations, which was a significant deficiency in the FY 2017 audit report. For example, they finalized a Standard Operating Procedure to streamline the process for identifying and mitigating invalid unliquidated obligations.

# Use of Performance Data to Promote Improved Outcomes

USAGM undertakes quantitative, qualitative, evaluative, digital, and ad hoc research projects every year to directly support decisions on programming and strategy. Since FY 2002, USAGM has used a consolidated contract to procure audience and market research for all USAGM broadcast services. The Agency maintains an extensive database of audience and market data that consolidates research results. The archive covers over 100 countries and contains socioeconomic and demographic data as well as strategically important information on local media, competition, and audience preferences and needs. The research guides USAGM strategic planning at all levels, specifically on-air program development, program reviews, and the Agency's comprehensive annual strategic review of all language services.

## LANGUAGE SERVICE REVIEW

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The Annual Language Service Review (LSR) is a Board directed, comprehensive assessment of the languages in which USAGM networks broadcast. The process fulfills the Congressional mandate in the U.S. International Broadcasting Act of 1994 to “review, evaluate, and determine, at least annually, after consultation with the Secretary of State, the addition or deletion of language services.”

USAGM analyzes data in key areas that shape priorities, including press freedom, political freedom, civil liberties, economic freedom, instability, and human development indices from nongovernmental organizations (e.g., Freedom House, Reporters Without Borders, The Heritage Foundation and The Wall Street Journal, and the United Nations Development Programme). These indicators are combined into a prioritization index that enables USAGM to evaluate changing conditions worldwide. In recent years, LSR has incorporated into this prioritization the State Department's global ranking of USAGM language services relative to U.S. foreign policy priorities.



As part of the Language Service Review, USAGM considers how the Agency's mission is carried out by the networks in each target country and region. Informed by research and analysis on competitive landscapes, USAGM language services set priority goals for the coming year.

The results of this strategy review include summaries of the political context, media environments, target audiences, foreign policy elements, and USAGM objectives in each country and region. It also includes goals and performance targets, based on the USAGM Impact Model, for each USAGM target area for FY 2019. Language and support services will be measured on progress toward these goals and targets, giving USAGM an opportunity to define success, monitor performance, and take corrective actions when goals are not met.

In addition to Language Service Review, USAGM networks conduct yearly reviews of their language services and their programming in order to maintain high quality broadcasts and to help the language services progress toward their strategic goals.

## **IMPACT MODEL**

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USAGM has developed a robust Impact Model, tied directly to its mission, which provides a comprehensive tool for measuring impact in the varied and complicated media environments in which USAGM networks operate. The model looks beyond sheer audience size to assess the concrete change that the news and information USAGM networks provided has made in the lives of audience members, in the local media sector, and among governments. USAGM has now aligned all internal and external reporting with this model. All of the indicators used in language service strategies and for Impact Objectives come from the Impact Model.

USAGM CEO John Lansing has made impact a key priority for the Agency. The IBB research staff and network research directors continue to develop and refine the Impact Model and use it as a communications tool and accountability measure.

# Independent Program Evaluations

USAGM conducts several types of annual independent evaluations to assess effectiveness and strategic priorities. The annual Language Service Review assesses the question of where USAGM should broadcast, fulfilling the congressional mandate to “review, evaluate, and determine, at least annually, after consultation with the Secretary of State, the addition and deletion of language services.” As a part of LSR, a strategy review process was implemented, beginning in FY 2014, which identifies target audiences and sets country-level goals for each of USAGM’s markets. Performance scorecards for the individual language services assess progress against these goals. The individual networks conduct regular quality reviews based on field research and expert analysis. Taken together, these review processes are a significant source of information and analysis used for managing USAGM.

The Office of the Inspector General (OIG) provides USAGM and Congress with systematic and independent evaluations of the operations of USAGM, designed to prevent and detect waste, fraud, and abuse, including: whether resources are being used and managed with maximum efficiency; whether financial transactions and accounts are properly conducted, maintained, and reported; whether the administration of activities and operations meets the requirements of laws, regulations, contracts and grant agreements; whether internal management controls have been instituted to ensure quality of performance and reduce the likelihood of mismanagement; and whether adequate steps for detection, correction, and prevention have been taken.

OIG inspections also generally review whether policy goals and objectives are being effectively achieved. However, 22 USC 6203(a)(3)(B) states that the OIG “shall respect the journalistic integrity of all the broadcasters and may not evaluate the philosophical or political perspectives reflected in the content of broadcasts.”

The Government Accountability Office (GAO) audits Agency operations to determine whether federal funds are being spent efficiently and effectively, including investigating allegations of illegal and improper activities, reporting on how well government programs and policies are meeting their objectives, and performing policy analyses and outlining options for Congressional consideration.

GAO also advises Congress and the heads of executive agencies about ways to make government more efficient, effective, ethical, equitable, and responsive.

USAGM maintains a productive relationship with the OIG and GAO. USAGM works to ensure that the inspections, audits, and reviews produce reports that are based on relevant facts with an understanding of the programs and operations involved. The resulting recommendations assist the Agency in improving administration and management of its programs and operations.

During FY 2018, the Office of Inspector General issued six final reports for USAGM; the GAO did not issue any focused exclusively on USAGM, but did mention USAGM in one report. The Agency will continue to implement and respond to the recommendations of these evaluations.

Key OIG and GAO reports issued in FY 2018 are summarized below. References to BBG reflect the name of the Agency at the time the report was issued.

#### **AUDIT OF BROADCASTING BOARD OF GOVERNORS IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DIGITAL ACCOUNTABILITY AND TRANSPARENCY ACT OF 2014**

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Through an external audit firm, the OIG conducted an audit to assess the accuracy, completeness, timeliness, and quality of the second quarter FY 2017 data submitted by the BBG for publication on USASpending.gov and the Agency's use of the Government-wide financial data standards established by OMB and Treasury.

OIG issued four recommendations for the BBG in its November 2017 report to improve the quality of the data submitted for publication on the USASpending.gov website. The Agency concurred with each recommendation and is working to enhance its quality controls to implement the requirements of the Act.

#### **INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT ON THE BROADCASTING BOARD OF GOVERNORS 2017 AND 2016 FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

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Through an external audit firm, the OIG conducted an audit of the consolidated financial statements of the BBG in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States, the standards applicable to financial audits

contained in Government Auditing Standards issued by the Comptroller General, and Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Bulletin No. 17-03. The audit firm found that the Agency's consolidated financial statements fairly present the financial position of the Agency as of September 30, 2017 and 2016, and found no material weaknesses in internal control over financial reporting. The auditors did find significant deficiencies in the areas of accuracy of unliquidated obligations, grantee monitoring, and information technology. The Agency notes that it adopted a new Grantee Monitoring Standard Operating Procedure in FY 2018 which is designed to enhance internal controls and oversight over grantee funding, has implemented new contract closeout procedures to address issues with unliquidated obligations, and taken a number of additional steps to improve the Agency information technology security program. The auditor also identified one instance of substantial noncompliance with provisions of laws, regulations, contracts, and grant agreements regarding Federal grant regulations.

#### **INFORMATION REPORT: BROADCASTING BOARD OF GOVERNORS 2017 CHARGE CARD RISK ASSESSMENT**

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As required under the Government Charge Card Abuse Prevention Act of 2012, OIG conducted a periodic assessment of the BBG's purchase and travel card programs to identify and analyze risks of illegal, improper, or erroneous purchases and payments. OIG's review concluded that the risk of illegal, improper, or erroneous use in the BBG purchase card program is "very low." On the basis of this assessment, OIG did not recommend that an audit of BBG's purchase card program be included in OIG's FY 2019 through FY 2020 work plan.

#### **MANAGEMENT ASSISTANCE REPORT: THE BROADCASTING BOARD OF GOVERNORS DID NOT FULLY ADDRESS INVALID UNLIQUIDATED OBLIGATIONS IDENTIFIED DURING THE FY 2016 FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AUDIT**

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During the annual audit of the Agency's FY 2016 financial statements, the independent auditor tested identified Unliquidated Obligations for validity by reviewing supporting documentation. The OIG conducted this audit to determine whether invalid ULOs identified during the FY 2016 financial statements audit were properly addressed. OIG found that BBG reviewed and deobligated 89 percent of its identified ULOs, but did not review and provide sufficient supporting documentation for the remaining three ULOs (11 percent). As a result

of deobligating the invalid ULOs, OIG observed improvements in the accuracy of BBG's reporting of budgetary resources in its FY 2017 financial statements audit.

#### **AUDIT OF BROADCASTING BOARD OF GOVERNORS FY 2017 COMPLIANCE WITH IMPROPER PAYMENTS REQUIREMENTS**

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The OIG conducted an annual audit to assess BBG's FY 2017 compliance with the Improper Payments Information Act (IPIA). OIG determined that USAGM was not in compliance with all improper payment requirements for FY 2017. Specifically, USAGM did not publish required information related to estimates, such as current year proper payment amount and percentage, as well as over-payment and under-payment percentages. Although this information could be discerned from the information published, noncompliance with any of the six criteria established in the OMB Circular A-123 requires OIG to conclude that USAGM is not in compliance with IPIA. USAGM was compliant with all other IPIA requirements. The OIG made one recommendation that the Agency should improve the process for reporting improper payments information. In its response to the final OIG report, the BBG concurred with the recommendation stating that it would continuously monitor changes in OMB Circulars to ensure that policies related to complying with improper payment requirements reflect any updates to the Circular.

#### **AUDIT OF THE BBG INFORMATION SECURITY PROGRAM**

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Through an external audit firm, the OIG conducted the annual evaluation of BBG's Information Security Program, to determine whether information security practices in FY 2017 complied with applicable Federal laws, regulations, and information security standards. The audit found that the BBG made progress over the past year by improving certain management practices. However, the auditors found that that Agency had not fully implemented an organization-wide information security program. The BBG concurred with the report's recommendations, and has made significant progress in implementing enterprise risk management and its information security risk management strategy.

## **FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT: AGENCIES ARE IMPLEMENTING REQUIREMENTS BUT ADDITIONAL ACTIONS ARE NEEDED**

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GAO examined FOIA practices of 18 federal agencies' to: (1) determine the extent to which agencies have implemented selected FOIA requirements; (2) describe the methods established by agencies to reduce backlogged requests and the effectiveness of those methods; and (3) identify any statutory exemptions that have been used by agencies as the basis for withholding (redacting) information from requesters. GAO's report makes 24 recommendations to 16 agencies. One recommendation was made to BBG, that the CEO should update and publish comprehensive FOIA regulations to reflect updates to the law and to Department of Justice guidance. The Agency concurred with the recommendation and is in the process of implementing it.

### Section 3: Financial Information

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# Message from the Chief Financial Officer

I am proud to present the Fiscal Year 2018 (FY 2018) financial statements for the United States Agency for Global Media (USAGM). The Performance and Accountability Report (PAR) is our principal report to the President, Congress, and the American people on our stewardship of the public funds with which we have been entrusted and which are essential for achieving our important global mission to inform, engage, and connect people around the world in support of freedom and democracy.

The agency received an unmodified audit opinion on the FY 2018 and FY 2017 financial statements. Over the past year, we continued to work diligently to meet the reporting, audit, and compliance requirements that OMB, the Treasury, and Congress deploy to improve federal business practices and increase transparency. For example, in FY 2018, the agency-wide enterprise risk management program was formally launched with the appointment of Dr. Nnake Nweke as USAGM's Chief Risk Officer and the formation of USAGM's Risk Management Council by Chief Executive Officer John F. Lansing.

Additionally, through improved oversight by our dedicated staff, the agency was able to eliminate the significant deficiency determination in the area of unliquidated obligations by the financial statement auditors. And with the implementation of WebTA and other process improvements, we were able to reduce the payroll error rate to less than 1 percent in FY 2018 and FY 2017, resulting in the White House Office of Management and Budget removing USAGM's payroll processing from a Highly Susceptible Program determination.

It was through the professionalism and hard work of our staff that we completed these major accomplishments in FY 2018. We acknowledge there is additional work to be done and improvements to be made, and we look forward to partnering with the independent financial auditors and the Office of the Inspector General in the year ahead.



Grant K. Turner  
Chief Financial Officer  
November 15, 2018

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# Independent Auditor's Report



## Office of Inspector General United States Department of State

UNCLASSIFIED

November 15, 2018

Mr. John F. Lansing  
United States Agency for Global Media  
Chief Executive Officer and Director  
330 Independence Ave., SW  
Suite 3300  
Washington, DC 20237

The Honorable Kenneth Weinstein  
Governing Board  
Chairman  
330 Independence Ave., SW  
Suite 3300  
Washington, DC 20237

Dear Mr. Lansing and Mr. Weinstein:

An independent external auditor, Kearney & Company, P.C., was engaged to audit the consolidated financial statements of the United States Agency for Global Media (USAGM)<sup>1</sup> as of September 30, 2018 and 2017, and for the years then ended; to provide a report on internal control over financial reporting; and to report any reportable noncompliance with laws, regulations, contracts, and grant agreements it tested. The contract required that the audit be performed in accordance with U.S. generally accepted government auditing standards and Office of Management and Budget audit guidance. In its report *Independent Auditor's Report on the United States Agency for Global Media 2018 and 2017 Financial Statements* (AUD-FM-IB-19-06), Kearney & Company found

- the consolidated financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of USAGM as of September 30, 2018 and 2017, and its net cost of operations, changes in net position, and budgetary resources for the years then ended, in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America;
- no material weaknesses<sup>2</sup> in internal control over financial reporting;
- two significant deficiencies<sup>3</sup> in internal control over financial reporting, specifically in the areas of grantee monitoring and information technology; and
- one instance of reportable noncompliance with laws, regulations, contracts, and grant agreements, specifically Federal grant regulations.

Kearney & Company is responsible for the enclosed auditor's report, which includes the Independent Auditor's Report, the Report on Internal Control Over Financial Reporting, and the Report on Compliance With Laws, Regulations, Contracts, and Grant Agreements, dated November 13, 2018, and

<sup>1</sup> The Broadcasting Board of Governors changed its name to the United States Agency for Global Media in August 2018.

<sup>2</sup> A material weakness is a deficiency, or combination of deficiencies, in internal control, such that there is a reasonable possibility that a material misstatement of the entity's financial statements will not be prevented, or detected and corrected, on a timely basis.

<sup>3</sup> A significant deficiency is a deficiency, or combination of deficiencies, in internal control that is less severe than a material weakness yet important enough to merit attention by those charged with governance.

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[www.stateoig.gov](http://www.stateoig.gov)

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the conclusions expressed in the report. The Office of Inspector General (OIG) does not express an opinion on USAGM's consolidated financial statements or conclusions on internal control over financial reporting and compliance with laws, regulations, contracts, and grant agreements.

USAGM's comments on the auditor's report are attached to the report.

OIG appreciates the cooperation extended to it and Kearney & Company by USAGM managers and staff during this audit.

Sincerely,



Steve A. Linick  
Inspector General

Enclosure: As stated.



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## INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT AUD-FM-IB-19-06

To the United States Agency for Global Media Chief Executive Officer and Director, Governing Board, and the Inspector General

### **Report on the Financial Statements**

We have audited the accompanying consolidated financial statements of the United States Agency for Global Media (USAGM),<sup>1</sup> which comprise the consolidated balance sheets as of September 30, 2018 and 2017, the related consolidated statements of net cost and changes in net position, the combined statements of budgetary resources for the years then ended, and the related notes to the consolidated financial statements (hereinafter referred to as the "consolidated financial statements").

### ***Management's Responsibility for the Financial Statements***

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these consolidated financial statements in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America; this includes the design, implementation, and maintenance of internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of consolidated financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

### ***Auditor's Responsibility***

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these consolidated financial statements based on our audits. We conducted our audits in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America; the standards applicable to financial audits contained in *Government Auditing Standards*, issued by the Comptroller General of the United States; and Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Bulletin No. 19-01, "Audit Requirements for Federal Financial Statements." Those standards and OMB Bulletin No. 19-01 require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the consolidated financial statements are free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgment, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the entity's preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate under the circumstances but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control. Accordingly, we express no such opinion. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness

<sup>1</sup> The Broadcasting Board of Governors changed its name to the United States Agency for Global Media in August 2018.



of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial statements.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

#### ***Opinion on the Consolidated Financial Statements***

In our opinion, the consolidated financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of USAGM as of September 30, 2018 and 2017, and its net cost of operations, changes in net position, and budgetary resources for the years then ended, in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

#### ***Other Matters***

##### ***Required Supplementary Information***

Accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America require that the Management's Discussion and Analysis and Deferred Maintenance sections (hereinafter referred to as "required supplementary information") be presented to supplement the consolidated financial statements. Such information, although not a part of the consolidated financial statements, is required by OMB Circular A-136, "Financial Reporting Requirements," and the Federal Accounting Standards Advisory Board, which consider the information to be an essential part of financial reporting for placing the consolidated financial statements in an appropriate operational, economic, or historical context. We have applied certain limited procedures to the required supplementary information in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America, which consisted of inquiries of management about the methods of preparing the information and comparing it for consistency with management's responses to our inquiries, the consolidated financial statements, and other knowledge we obtained during our audits of the consolidated financial statements. We do not express an opinion or provide any assurance on the information because the limited procedures do not provide us with sufficient evidence to express an opinion or provide any assurance.

##### ***Other Information***

Our audits were conducted for the purpose of forming an opinion on the consolidated financial statements as a whole. The information in the Message from the United States Agency for Global Media [Chief Executive Officer] and Governing Board Chairman, the Introduction, the Performance Information, the Message from the Chief Financial Officer, and the Other Information sections of USAGM's Performance and Accountability Report is presented for purposes of additional analysis and is not a required part of the consolidated financial statements. Such information has not been subjected to the auditing procedures applied in the audit of the consolidated financial statements, and accordingly, we do not express an opinion or provide any assurance on it.



#### **Other Reporting Required by *Government Auditing Standards***

In accordance with *Government Auditing Standards* and OMB Bulletin No. 19-01, we have also issued reports, dated November 13, 2018, on our consideration of USAGM's internal control over financial reporting and on our tests of USAGM's compliance with provisions of applicable laws, regulations, contracts, and grant agreements for the year ended September 30, 2018. The purpose of those reports is to describe the scope of our testing of internal control over financial reporting and compliance and the results of that testing and not to provide an opinion on internal control over financial reporting or on compliance. Those reports are an integral part of an audit performed in accordance with *Government Auditing Standards* and OMB Bulletin No. 19-01 and should be considered in assessing the results of our audit.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Kearney &amp; Company". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Alexandria, Virginia  
November 13, 2018

## INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT ON INTERNAL CONTROL OVER FINANCIAL REPORTING

To the United States Agency for Global Media Chief Executive Officer and Director, Governing Board, and the Inspector General

We have audited the consolidated financial statements of the United States Agency for Global Media (USAGM)<sup>1</sup> as of and for the year ended September 30, 2018, and have issued our report thereon dated November 13, 2018. We conducted our audit in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America; the standards applicable to financial audits contained in *Government Auditing Standards*, issued by the Comptroller General of the United States; and Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Bulletin No. 19-01, "Audit Requirements for Federal Financial Statements."

### Internal Control Over Financial Reporting

In planning and performing our audit of the consolidated financial statements, we considered USAGM's internal control over financial reporting (internal control) as a basis for designing audit procedures that are appropriate under the circumstances for the purpose of expressing our opinion on the consolidated financial statements but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of USAGM's internal control. Accordingly, we do not express an opinion on the effectiveness of USAGM's internal control. We limited our internal control testing to those controls necessary to achieve the objectives described in OMB Bulletin No. 19-01. We did not test all internal controls relevant to operating objectives as broadly defined by the Federal Managers' Financial Integrity Act of 1982, such as those controls relevant to ensuring efficient operations.

A deficiency in internal control exists when the design or operation of a control does not allow management or employees, in the normal course of performing their assigned functions, to prevent, or detect and correct, misstatements on a timely basis. A material weakness is a deficiency, or a combination of deficiencies, in internal control, such that there is a reasonable possibility that a material misstatement of the entity's financial statements will not be prevented, or detected and corrected on a timely basis.

Our consideration of internal control was for the limited purpose described in the first paragraph of this section and was not designed to identify all deficiencies in internal control that might be material weaknesses. Given these limitations, during our audit we did not identify any deficiencies in internal control that we consider to be material weaknesses. However, material weaknesses may exist that have not been identified.

<sup>1</sup> The Broadcasting Board of Governors changed its name to the United States Agency for Global Media in August 2018.





Our audit was also not designed to identify deficiencies in internal control that might be significant. A significant deficiency is a deficiency, or a combination of deficiencies, in internal control that is less severe than a material weakness yet important enough to merit attention by those charged with governance. We consider the following deficiencies in USAGM's internal control to be significant deficiencies.

### Significant Deficiencies

#### I. Grantee Monitoring

USAGM has three significant grantees that it funds through annual grant agreements: Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, Radio Free Asia, and the Middle East Broadcasting Networks. The grantees are responsible for developing broadcast content (radio and television news programs), which is distributed by USAGM. In FY 2018, the three grantees collectively received over \$289 million from USAGM in Federal grant awards, which represents approximately one-third of USAGM's total funding.

USAGM is responsible for monitoring the use of those funds to ensure grantees adhere to applicable laws and regulations as well as to terms and conditions specified in the grant agreements. To aid in the grants monitoring process, USAGM approved and issued standard operating procedures (SOP) for grantee monitoring in August 2018, which present information and procedures that USAGM will use during the duration of a grant. We selected 15 control activities identified in the SOP<sup>2</sup> to test whether USAGM had effectively implemented grantee monitoring. We found that 9 of the 15 controls tested were operating effectively. The remaining six control activities were not implemented by USAGM in FY 2018. For example, USAGM had not performed risk assessments,<sup>3</sup> performed grant close-outs,<sup>4</sup> or conducted formal documented site visits<sup>5</sup> as warranted by program needs. Additionally, we noted that USAGM's SOP did not include control activities related to monitoring the allowability of grantee costs, which are defined in the Federal grant regulation.<sup>6</sup> USAGM officials noted that the SOP was approved late in the fiscal year and that new staff had not completed training courses to become certified in grants management. However, USAGM also did not perform an effective quality control review of its SOP.

Because USAGM lacked effective grantee oversight, the risk of waste, fraud, and abuse of Federal funds is increased. An organized and documented approach to oversight is needed to demonstrate accountability and mitigate the risk of waste, fraud, and abuse. We have identified

<sup>2</sup> The control activities were selected from a draft version of the grantee monitoring SOP, which USAGM operated under prior to approval of the final version in August 2018. The control activities selected for testing existed in both the draft and final versions of the SOP.

<sup>3</sup> 2 C.F.R. § 200.205.

<sup>4</sup> 2 C.F.R. § 200.303.

<sup>5</sup> 2 C.F.R. § 200.328.

<sup>6</sup> 2 C.F.R. § 200.403.



weaknesses in controls over grantee monitoring each year since our audit of USAGM's FY 2013 financial statements.

## **II. Information Technology**

USAGM's information systems and electronic data depend on the confidentiality, integrity, and availability of USAGM's comprehensive and interconnected infrastructure. Managing information security risks effectively throughout the organization is critical to achieving USAGM's mission. USAGM uses several financial management systems to compile information for financial reporting purposes. USAGM's main domestic financial management and accounting system is Momentum, which is managed by an external service provider that is also responsible for maintaining a number of IT controls. However, Momentum is accessed through USAGM's general IT support system, which is a component of USAGM's information security program. Therefore, security weaknesses noted in USAGM's information security program could potentially impact Momentum as well. For overseas accounting and budget execution, USAGM uses the Regional Financial Management System (RFMS) provided by the Department of State (Department). The Department is also responsible for maintaining an adequate information security program.

The Office of Inspector General (OIG) is responsible for the annual audits of USAGM and Department information security programs' compliance with IT provisions as required by the Federal Information Security Modernization Act of 2014 (FISMA).<sup>7</sup> In the FY 2018 FISMA report for USAGM,<sup>8</sup> OIG reported security weaknesses that had a significant impact on USAGM's information security program. Specifically, OIG reported control weaknesses in all eight key FY 2018 Inspector General FISMA metric domains, which consist of risk management, configuration management, identity and access management, data protection and privacy, security training, information security continuous monitoring, incident response, and contingency planning.

OIG's FY 2018 FISMA report for the Department<sup>9</sup> identified information security program weaknesses that are similar to the weaknesses identified at USAGM. OIG reported that the Department lacked a fully implemented organization-wide information security program as evidenced by security weaknesses in all eight metric domains. As noted, RFMS is hosted on the Department's general support system and is a component of the Department's information security program. Because of the security weaknesses noted with the information security program at the Department, USAGM should implement additional controls to ensure that financial information is being processed accurately and completely by the Department.

Without an effective information security program, USAGM is vulnerable to IT-centered attacks and threats. Information security program weaknesses can affect the integrity of financial

<sup>7</sup> Federal Information Security Modernization Act of 2014, Public L. No. 113-283, 128 STAT. 3079-3080 (December 18, 2014).

<sup>8</sup> OIG, *Audit of the United States Agency for Global Media Information Security Program* (AUD-IT-IB-19-09, October 2018).

<sup>9</sup> OIG, *Audit of the Department of State Information Security Program* (AUD-IT-19-08, October 2018).



applications, which increases the risk that sensitive financial information could be accessed by unauthorized individuals or that financial transactions could be altered either accidentally or intentionally. Information security program weaknesses increase the risk that USAGM will be unable to report financial data accurately. We have reported weaknesses in IT security controls each year since our audit of USAGM's FY 2013 financial statements.

During the audit, we noted an additional matter involving internal control over financial reporting that we will report to USAGM management in a separate letter.

#### **Status of Prior Year Findings**

In the Independent Auditor's Report on Internal Control Over Financial Reporting, included in the audit report on USAGM's FY 2017 financial statements,<sup>10</sup> we noted several issues that were related to internal control over financial reporting. The status of these issues is summarized in Table 1.

**Table 1. Status of Prior Year Findings**

Control Deficiency	FY 2017 Status	FY 2018 Status
<b>Validity and Accuracy of Unliquidated Obligations</b>	Significant Deficiency	Management Letter
<b>Grantee Monitoring</b>	Significant Deficiency	Significant Deficiency
<b>Information Technology</b>	Significant Deficiency	Significant Deficiency

#### **USAGM's Response to Findings**

USAGM management has provided its response to our findings in a separate letter included in this report as Appendix A. We did not audit management's response, and accordingly, we express no opinion on it.

#### **Purpose of This Report**

The purpose of this report is solely to describe the scope of our testing of internal control over financial reporting and the results of that testing and not to provide an opinion on the effectiveness of USAGM's internal control. This report is an integral part of an audit performed in accordance with *Government Auditing Standards* and OMB Bulletin No. 19-01 in considering

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<sup>10</sup> OIG, *Independent Auditor's Report on the Broadcasting Board of Governors 2017 and 2016 Financial Statements* (AUD-FM-IB-18-10, November 2017).



USAGM's internal control over financial reporting. Accordingly, this report is not suitable for any other purpose.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Kearney &amp; Company". The signature is stylized and cursive.

Alexandria, Virginia  
November 13, 2018

## INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT ON COMPLIANCE WITH LAWS, REGULATIONS, CONTRACTS, AND GRANT AGREEMENTS

To the United States Agency for Global Media Chief Executive Officer and Director, Governing Board, and the Inspector General

We have audited the consolidated financial statements of the United States Agency for Global Media (USAGM)<sup>1</sup> as of and for the year ended September 30, 2018, and have issued our report thereon dated November 13, 2018. We conducted our audit in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America; the standards applicable to financial audits contained in *Government Auditing Standards*, issued by the Comptroller General of the United States; and Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Bulletin No. 19-01, "Audit Requirements for Federal Financial Statements."

### Compliance

As part of obtaining reasonable assurance about whether USAGM's consolidated financial statements are free from material misstatement, we performed tests of USAGM's compliance with provisions of applicable laws, regulations, contracts, and grant agreements, noncompliance with which could have a direct and material impact on the determination of financial statement amounts. We limited our tests of compliance to these provisions and did not test compliance with all laws, regulations, contracts, and grant agreements applicable to USAGM. However, providing an opinion on compliance with those provisions was not an objective of our audit, and accordingly, we do not express such an opinion.

The results of our tests disclosed an instance of noncompliance that is required to be reported under *Government Auditing Standards* and OMB Bulletin No. 19-01. Each year since our FY 2013 financial statement audit, we have identified substantial noncompliance with Federal grant regulations. USAGM is responsible for monitoring the use of funds provided to its grantees to ensure that they adhere to relevant laws and regulations. As noted in our Independent Auditor's Report on Internal Control Over Financial Reporting, USAGM has not fully implemented many of its designed grantee monitoring controls. In addition, its standard operating procedures include control activities related to monitoring the allowability of grantee costs, as required by Federal grant regulations. As a result, USAGM continued to be in substantial noncompliance with the Code of Federal Regulations, Title 2, Subtitle A, Chapter II, Part 200 – "Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards," which provides guidance to agencies for grant oversight.

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<sup>1</sup> The Broadcasting Board of Governors changed its name to the United States Agency for Global Media in August 2018.



#### **USAGM's Response to Findings**

USAGM management has provided its response to our findings in a separate letter included in this report as Appendix A. We did not audit management's response, and accordingly, we express no opinion on it.

#### **Purpose of This Report**

The purpose of this report is solely to describe the scope of our testing of compliance and the results of that testing and not to provide an opinion on the effectiveness of USAGM's compliance. This report is an integral part of an audit performed in accordance with *Government Auditing Standards* and OMB Bulletin No. 19-01 in considering USAGM's compliance. Accordingly, this report is not suitable for any other purpose.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Kearney &amp; Company".

Alexandria, Virginia  
November 13, 2018

# Response to the Audit



U.S. AGENCY FOR  
GLOBAL MEDIA

UNITED STATES  
BROADCASTING  
BOARD OF  
GOVERNORS

330 Independence Avenue SW | Washington, DC 20237 | [usagm.gov](http://usagm.gov)

November 15, 2018

The Honorable Steve A. Linick  
Inspector General  
U.S. Department of State

Dear Mr. Linick:

The United States Agency for Global Media (USAGM) is committed to transparency and accountability of the taxpayer funds entrusted by Congress to pursue its vital mission of informing, engaging, and connecting people around the world in support of freedom and democracy. The Performance and Accountability Report is an integral part of providing a comprehensive account of the USAGM's financial activities and accomplishments across the agency.

I am pleased to report that the USAGM has once again received an unmodified opinion for this fiscal year's financial audit. Our continued hard work and efforts have resulted in the removal of a significant deficiency in the area of Validity and Accuracy of Unliquidated Obligations.

In the year ahead, we are committed to continuing the hard work necessary to resolve the two significant deficiencies that the audit identified. We will build on last year's progress in strengthening the staffing, policies, and procedures for grantee monitoring, and we will sharpen our focus on ensuring the security of our financial management and other information technology systems.

We thank Kearney & Company for their continued efforts and dedication in working through the complex issues associated with the global nature of USAGM's financial processes.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Grant K. Turner".

Grant K. Turner  
Chief Financial Officer

Voice of America | Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty | Office of Cuba Broadcasting | Radio Free Asia | Middle East Broadcasting Networks

# Financial Statements

**U.S. Agency for Global Media  
Consolidated Balance Sheet  
As of September 30, 2018 and 2017**  
*(in thousands)*

	FY 2018	FY 2017
<b>Assets (Note 2):</b>		
<b>Intragovernmental:</b>		
Fund Balance with Treasury (Note 3)	\$ 253,742	\$ 222,120
Accounts Receivable (Note 5)	41	46
Total Intragovernmental	<u>253,783</u>	<u>222,166</u>
Cash and Other Monetary Assets (Note 4)	3	3
Accounts Receivable, Net (Note 5)	130	158
Advances to Surrogate Broadcasters (Note 6)	72,000	71,000
General Property, Plant and Equipment, Net (Note 7)	79,783	89,111
Other (Note 8)	874	1,668
Total Assets	<u>\$ 406,573</u>	<u>\$ 384,106</u>
<b>Liabilities (Note 9):</b>		
<b>Intragovernmental:</b>		
Accounts Payable	\$ 2,947	\$ 3,745
Accrued FECA Liability (Note 9)	1,524	1,638
Other (Note 12)	1,878	2,489
Total Intragovernmental	<u>6,349</u>	<u>7,872</u>
Accounts Payable	21,960	25,908
Actuarial FECA Liabilities (Note 9)	8,718	9,000
Accrued Payroll and Benefits	9,954	9,162
Foreign Service Nationals After-Employment Benefits (Note 9 and 10)	6,461	6,656
Environmental and Disposal Liabilities (Note 9 and 11)	887	636
Accrued Annual and Compensatory Leave (Note 9)	15,527	15,545
Contingent Liabilities (Note 9 and 14)	618	364
Other (Note 12)	2,117	-
Total Liabilities	<u>\$ 72,591</u>	<u>\$ 75,143</u>
<b>Net position:</b>		
Unexpended Appropriations	\$ 266,944	\$ 232,094
Cumulative Results of Operations	67,038	76,869
Total Net Position	<u>\$ 333,982</u>	<u>\$ 308,963</u>
 Total Liabilities and Net Position	 <u>\$ 406,573</u>	 <u>\$ 384,106</u>

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these statements.



**U.S. Agency for Global Media**  
**Consolidated Statement of Net Cost**  
**For the Years Ended September 30, 2018 and 2017**  
*(in thousands)*

	FY 2018	FY 2017
<b>Voice of America (VOA) (Note 19)</b>		
Gross Costs	\$ 383,771	\$ 384,873
Less: Earned Revenues	<u>(1,572)</u>	<u>(2,303)</u>
Net Program Costs	382,199	382,570
<b>Office of Cuba Broadcasting (OCB) (Note 19)</b>		
Gross Costs	40,181	39,532
Less: Earned Revenues	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
Net Program Costs	40,181	39,532
<b>Surrogate Broadcasters (Note 19)</b>		
Gross Costs	374,179	359,700
Less: Earned Revenues	<u>(2,149)</u>	<u>(2,537)</u>
Net Program Costs	372,030	357,163
Total Gross Costs	798,131	784,105
Less: Total Earned Revenues	<u>(3,721)</u>	<u>(4,840)</u>
Net Cost of Operations	<u>\$ 794,410</u>	<u>\$ 779,265</u>

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these statements.

**U.S. Agency for Global Media**  
**Consolidated Statement of Changes in Net Position**  
**For the Years Ended September 30, 2018 and 2017**  
*(in thousands)*

	<b>Consolidated Total FY 2018</b>	<b>Consolidated Total FY 2017</b>
<b>Unexpended Appropriations:</b>		
Beginning Balance	\$ 232,094	\$ 203,567
Adjustments (+/-)		
Corrections of Errors (+/-)	-	-
Beginning Balance as Adjusted	<u>232,094</u>	<u>203,567</u>
<b>Budgetary Financing Sources:</b>		
Appropriations Received	807,686	786,608
Appropriations Transferred In/Out (+/-)	-	6,000
Other Adjustments (+/-)	(1,377)	(7,156)
Appropriations Used	<u>(771,459)</u>	<u>(756,925)</u>
Total Budgetary Financing Sources	<u>34,850</u>	<u>28,527</u>
<b>Total Unexpended Appropriations</b>	<b><u>266,944</u></b>	<b><u>232,094</u></b>
<b>Cumulative Results from Operations:</b>		
Beginning Balances	\$ 76,869	\$ 89,978
Adjustments: (+/-)		
Corrections of Errors (+/-)	-	-
Beginning Balance as Adjusted	<u>76,869</u>	<u>89,978</u>
<b>Budgetary Financing Sources:</b>		
Appropriations Used	771,459	756,925
Other (+/-)	-	-
<b>Other Financing Sources (Nonexchange):</b>		
Imputed Financing	13,124	9,217
Other (+/-)	(4)	14
<b>Total Financing Sources</b>	<u>784,579</u>	<u>766,156</u>
Net Cost of Operations (+/-)	<u>794,410</u>	<u>779,265</u>
Net Change	<u>(9,831)</u>	<u>(13,109)</u>
<b>Cumulative Results of Operations</b>	<b><u>67,038</u></b>	<b><u>76,869</u></b>
<b>Net Position</b>	<b><u>\$ 333,982</u></b>	<b><u>\$ 308,963</u></b>

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these statements.

**U.S. Agency for Global Media**  
**Combined Statement of Budgetary Resources**  
**For the Years Ended September 30, 2018 and 2017**  
*(in thousands)*

	FY 2018	FY 2017
<b>Budgetary Resources:</b>		
Unobligated Balance from Prior Year Budget Authority, Net	\$ 78,691	\$ 61,143
Appropriations (Discretionary and Mandatory)	808,154	793,076
Spending Authority from Offsetting Collections (Discretionary and Mandatory)	4,878	3,389
Total Budgetary Resources	<u>\$ 891,723</u>	<u>\$ 857,608</u>
<b>Status of Budgetary Resources:</b>		
New Obligations and Upward Adjustments (Total)	\$ 816,963	\$ 793,668
Unobligated Balance, End of Year:		
Apportioned, Unexpired Accounts	33,355	34,819
Unapportioned, Unexpired Accounts	14,769	2,744
Unexpired Unobligated Balance, End of Year	48,124	37,563
Expired Unobligated Balance, End of Year	26,636	26,377
Unobligated Balance, End of Year (Total)	74,760	63,940
Total Budgetary Resources	<u>\$ 891,723</u>	<u>\$ 857,608</u>
<b>Outlays, Net:</b>		
Outlays, Net (Total) (Discretionary and Mandatory)	777,294	772,020
Distributed Offsetting Receipts	-	-
Agency Outlays, Net (Discretionary and Mandatory)	<u>\$ 777,294</u>	<u>\$ 772,020</u>

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these statements.

# United States Agency for Global Media

## Notes to Principal Financial Statements

**For the Years Ended September 30, 2018 and 2017**

### **NOTE 1: SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES**

#### **A. Reporting Entity**

On October 1, 1999, the Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG) became the independent, autonomous entity responsible for all U.S. Government and government-sponsored, non-military, international broadcasting. This was the result of the 1998 Foreign Affairs Reform and Restructuring Act (Public Law 105-277). The Fiscal Year 2017 National Defense Authorization Act made several significant reforms to the Agency's management structure. Some of these took immediate effect, others will come into force at a future date. Primarily, the act authorized the position of Chief Executive Officer (CEO). Under the new statutory structure, the CEO will serve as agency head, assuming all leadership, management, and operational authorities, including the key duty of acting as the firewall against political interference in the networks' journalism, ensuring the independence and integrity of BBG broadcasters. Currently, the Agency's Governing Board remains in place. On August 22, 2018, the name of the agency was changed to the United States Agency for Global Media (USAGM). The mission of USAGM is to inform, engage, and connect people around the world in support of freedom and democracy. The federal agency is composed of three components:

- International Broadcasting Bureau (IBB)
- Voice of America (VOA)
- Office of Cuba Broadcasting (OCB)

The Board and the IBB do not engage in the development of news content. The Board provides overall governance for USAGM and has authority to make grants to carry out its statutorily defined broadcasting mission. The IBB maintains the global distribution network over which all USAGM-funded news and information programming is distributed. The IBB also provides administrative functions which are governed by federal laws and regulations. The VOA and OCB are the components of the agency that develop news content along with three grantee

broadcasters: Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL), Radio Free Asia (RFA), and the Middle East Broadcasting Networks (MBN). Every week, over 345 million listeners, viewers, and Internet users in 100 countries and 58 languages around the world turn on, tune in, and log on to U.S. international broadcasting programs.

The grantee broadcasters – RFE/RL, RFA, and MBN – are independent organizations who receive the majority of their funding from USAGM. They are organized and managed as private, independent, non-profit corporations. Further information on these grantees can be found at:

- Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty – [www.rferl.org](http://www.rferl.org)
- Radio Free Asia – [www.rfa.org](http://www.rfa.org)
- Middle East Broadcasting Networks – [www.alhurra.com](http://www.alhurra.com)

## **B. Basis of Presentation and Accounting**

These financial statements have been prepared to report the financial position, net cost, changes in net position, and budgetary resources of USAGM, consistent with the Chief Financial Officers' Act of 1990 and the Government Management Reform Act of 1994. These financial statements have been prepared from the books and records of USAGM in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP) and Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circular No. A-136, *Financial Reporting Requirements*. GAAP for federal entities are the standards issued by the Federal Accounting Standards Advisory Board (FASAB) which is the designated standard-setting body for the Federal Government.

Financial transactions are recorded in the financial system, using both an accrual and a budgetary basis of accounting. Under the accrual method, revenues are recognized when earned, and expenses are recognized when a liability is incurred, without regard to the receipt or payment of cash. Budgetary accounting facilitates compliance with legal requirements and mandated controls over the use of federal funds. It generally differs from the accrual basis of accounting in that obligations are recognized when new orders are placed or contracts awarded.

## **C. Assets and Liabilities**

Assets and liabilities presented on USAGM's balance sheet includes both entity and non-entity balances. Entity assets are assets that USAGM has authority to

use in its operations. Non-entity assets are held and managed by USAGM, but are not available for use in operations.

Intragovernmental assets and liabilities arise from transactions between USAGM and other federal entities. All other assets and liabilities result from activity with non-federal entities. Liabilities covered by budgetary or other resources are those liabilities of USAGM for which Congress has appropriated funds or funding is otherwise available to pay amounts due. Liabilities not covered by budgetary or other resources represent amounts owed in excess of available congressionally appropriated funds or other amounts. The liquidation of liabilities not covered by budgetary or other resources is dependent on future congressional appropriations or other funding.

#### **D. Fund Balance with Treasury**

Fund Balance with Treasury (FBWT) includes several types of funds available to pay current liabilities and finance authorized purchases.

##### **General Funds**

These consist of expenditure accounts used to record financial transactions arising from congressional appropriations, as well as receipt accounts.

##### **Trust Funds**

These are used for the acceptance and administration of funds contributed from public and private sources and programs.

##### **Other Fund Types**

These include miscellaneous receipt accounts, deposit and clearing accounts maintained to track receipts and disbursements awaiting proper classification.

USAGM does not maintain cash in commercial bank accounts for the funds reported in the balance sheet, except for Imprest Funds under section E.

Treasury processes domestic receipts and disbursements. Two Department of State financial service centers, located in Bangkok, Thailand and Charleston, South Carolina, provide financial support for USAGM operations overseas. The U.S. disbursing officer at each center has the delegated authority to disburse funds on behalf of the Treasury.

### **E. Imprest Fund**

USAGM operates an imprest fund in the amount of \$3,000 at USAGM Robert E. Kamosa Transmitting Station in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. Due to the remote location and 24-hour continuous operation of the mission, these funds are necessary and used to pay for time sensitive expenditures required to be paid in cash to local vendors. USAGM has Treasury approved delegation of disbursing authority for the establishment and operation of the imprest fund.

### **F. Accounts Receivable**

Accounts receivable consists of amounts owed to USAGM by other federal agencies and the public. Intragovernmental accounts receivable represents amounts due from other federal agencies for reimbursable activities. Accounts receivable from the public represent amounts due from common carriers for unused airline tickets, and from vendors for erroneous or duplicate payments. These receivables are stated net of any allowances for estimated uncollectible amounts. The allowance, if any, is determined by the nature of the receivable and an analysis of aged receivable activity. Aged receivables more than 120 days without payment arrangements in place are sent to Treasury for collection through the Treasury Offset Program (TOP).

### **G. Advances and Prepayments**

Payments made in advance of the receipt of goods and services are recorded as advances or prepayments, and recognized as expenses when the related goods and services are received. Advances are made principally for: official travel to some USAGM employees; salary advances to some USAGM employees, often for employees transferring to overseas assignments; advance payments to other Federal entities as part of a reimbursable agreement; prepaid leases; and miscellaneous prepayments and advances to surrogate broadcasters for future services. Advances to surrogate broadcasters are described further in Note 6.

### **H. Personnel Compensation and Benefits**

#### **Annual, Sick and Other Leave Program**

Annual, sick and other leave time are accrued when earned, reduced when taken, and adjusted for changes in compensation rates. An unfunded liability is recognized for earned but unused annual leave as these balances will be funded from future

appropriations in the year that leave is taken. Sick leave is expensed when taken, and no liability is recognized as employees are not vested in unused sick leave.

### Retirement Plans

Civil Service employees participate in either the Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS) or the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS). Employees covered under CSRS contribute 7 percent of their salary; USAGM contributes 7 percent. Employees covered under CSRS also contribute 1.45 percent of their salary to Medicare insurance; USAGM makes a matching contribution. On January 1, 1987, FERS went into effect pursuant to Public Law 99-335. Most employees hired after December 31, 1983, are automatically covered by FERS and Social Security. Employees hired prior to January 1, 1984, were allowed to join FERS or remain in CSRS. Employees participating in FERS contribute 0.80 percent of their salary, with USAGM making contributions of 13.7 percent. FERS employees also contribute 6.20 percent to Old Age Survivor and Disability Insurance (OASDI) and 1.45 percent to Medicare insurance. USAGM makes matching contributions to both.

Effective January 1, 2013, pursuant to Public Law 112-96, Section 5001, new employees (as designated in the statute) pay higher FERS employee contributions (3.1 percent instead of 0.80 percent) with USAGM making contributions of 11.9 percent. These employees are covered under the FERS as Revised Annuity Employees (RAE), FERS-RAE. Effective January 1, 2014, Section 401 of the “Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013,” signed into law by the President on December 26, 2013, made another change to the Federal Employees’ Retirement System (FERS). New employees (as designated by that statute) pay higher FERS employee contributions (4.4 percent instead of 0.80 percent) with USAGM making contributions of 11.9 percent. These employees are covered under the FERS as Further Revised Annuity Employees (FRAE), FERS-FRAE.

Employees covered by CSRS and FERS are eligible to contribute to the U.S. Government’s Thrift Savings Plan (TSP), administered by the Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board. USAGM makes a mandatory contribution of 1 percent of basic pay for FERS-covered employees. In addition, USAGM makes matching contributions, of up to 5 percent of basic pay, for FERS employees who contribute to the Thrift Savings Plan. Contributions are matched dollar for dollar for the first 3 percent of pay contributed each pay period and 50 cents on the dollar for the next 2 percent of pay. For CSRS participants, there is no governmental matching



contribution. The maximum amounts that either FERS or CSRS employees may contribute to the plan in calendar year 2018 is \$18,500. Those who are of age fifty and older may contribute an additional \$6,000 in catch-up contributions.

Foreign Service employees participate in either the Foreign Service Retirement and Disability System (FSRDS) or the Foreign Service Pension System (FSPS). The FSRDS is the Foreign Service equivalent of CSRS as described in chapter 83 of Title 5, U.S.C. Employees covered under FSRDS contribute 7.25 percent of their salary; USAGM contributes 7.25 percent. Employees covered under FSRDS also contribute 1.45 percent of their salary to Medicare insurance; USAGM makes a matching contribution. The FSPS is the Foreign Service equivalent of the FERS, as described in chapter 84 of Title 5, U.S.C. In general, all Foreign Service eligible participants hired after December 31, 1983, participate in the FSPS. Most employees hired after December 31, 1983, are automatically covered by FSPS and Social Security. Employees hired prior to January 1, 1984, were allowed to join FSPS or remain in FSRDS. Employees participating in FSPS contribute 1.35 percent of their salary, with USAGM making contributions of 20.22 percent. FSPS employees also contribute 6.20 percent to OASDI and 1.45 percent to Medicare insurance. USAGM makes matching contributions to both. A primary feature of FSPS is that it offers a TSP into which USAGM automatically contributes 1 percent of pay and matches employee contributions up to an additional 4 percent. FSRDS-covered employees may make voluntary contributions to the TSP, but without the employer 1 percent contribution or employer-matching contributions. Effective January 1, 2013, pursuant to Public Law 112-96, Section 5001, new employees (as designated in the statute) pay higher FSPS employee contributions (3.65 percent instead of 1.35 percent) with USAGM making contributions of 17.92 percent. These employees are covered under FSPS as Revised Annuity Employees (RAE), FSPS-RAE. The Department of State manages the FSRDS and FSPS plans.

### Health Insurance

Most of USAGM's employees participate in the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program (FEHB), a voluntary program that provides protection for enrollees and eligible family members in case of illness, accident, or both. Under FEHB, USAGM contributes the employer's share of the premium as determined by the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM).

### Life Insurance

Unless specifically waived, employees are covered by the Federal Employees Group Life Insurance Program (FEGLI). FEGLI automatically covers eligible employees for basic life insurance in amounts equivalent to an employee's annual pay. Enrollees and their family members are eligible for additional insurance coverage, but the enrollee is responsible for the cost of the additional coverage. Under FEGLI, USAGM contributes the employer's share of the premium, as determined by OPM.

### Workers' Compensation

The Federal Employees' Compensation Act (FECA) provides income and medical cost protection to covered federal civilian employees injured on the job, to employees who have incurred work-related occupational diseases, and to beneficiaries of employees whose deaths are attributable to job-related injuries or occupational diseases. The FECA program is administered by the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL), which initially pays valid claims.

The FECA liability consists of two components. First is a current liability amount based on actual claims paid by DOL but not yet reimbursed by USAGM. Timing of USAGM's reimbursement to DOL is dependent on appropriated funds made available for this purpose and generally occurs two to three years after actual claims had been paid.

The second FECA component is the actuarial estimate of future benefit payments for death, disability, medical, and miscellaneous costs. This estimate is determined using a method that analyzes historical benefit payment patterns related to a specific period in order to predict the ultimate payments related to the current period. The estimated liability is not covered by budgetary resources and will require future funding.

### Federal Employees Post-Employment Benefits

USAGM does not report CSRS, FERS, FEHB or FEGLI assets, accumulated plan benefits, or unfunded liabilities applicable to its employees; OPM reports this information. As required by Statements of Federal Financial Accounting Standards (SFFAS) No.5, *Accounting for Liabilities of the Federal Government*, USAGM reports the full cost of employee benefits for the programs that OPM administers. USAGM recognizes an expense and imputed financing source for the annualized unfunded portion of CSRS, post-retirement health benefits, and life

insurance for employees covered by these programs. The additional costs are not actually owed or paid to OPM, and thus are not reported as liabilities on the balance sheet. For each fiscal year the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) calculates the U.S. Government's service costs for covered employees, which is an estimate of the amount of funds that, if accumulated annually and invested over an employee's career, would be enough to pay that employee's future benefits. Since the U.S. Government's estimated FY 2018 service cost exceeds contributions made by employer agencies and covered employees, the plan is not fully funded by USAGM and its employees. For FY 2018 USAGM recognized \$13.1 million as an imputed cost and as an imputed financing source for the difference between the estimated service cost and the contributions made by USAGM and its employees.

#### **Foreign Service Nationals (FSN) After-Employment Benefits**

USAGM employs approximately 280 FSN employees at 26 overseas posts. Many of these posts offer after-employment benefits that are based on the employment laws and prevailing wage practices in that host country. These benefits may include annuity-based defined benefit plans, defined contribution plans, and lump sum voluntary severance and retirement benefits. Descriptions of these after-employment benefits and projected plan benefits are presented in fuller details in Note 10.

#### **I. Contingent Liabilities**

Contingencies are accrued in the financial statements for claims where potential losses are probable and the cost is measurable. Cases for which the likelihood of an unfavorable outcome is less than probable but more than remote, the estimated range of loss is disclosed but not accrued, as presented in Note 14.

## **J. Revenues and Financing Sources**

USAGM operations are financed through congressional appropriations, reimbursement for the provision of goods or services to other federal agencies and the public, transfers and donations. Financing sources are received in direct annual and no-year appropriations; these appropriations may be used, within statutory limits, for operating and capital expenditures.

Work performed for other federal agencies under reimbursable agreements is initially financed through either an advance of funds received or the Bureau providing the service and subsequently reimbursed. Reimbursements are recognized as revenue when earned, i.e., goods have been delivered or services rendered, and the associated costs have been incurred.

An imputed financing source is recognized to offset costs incurred by USAGM and funded by another federal source, in the period in which the cost was incurred. The types of costs offset by imputed financing are employees' pension benefits, health insurance, life insurance, and other post-retirement benefits for employees. Funding from other federal agencies is recorded as an imputed financing source.

## **K. Net Position**

USAGM's net position contains the following components:

### **Unexpended Appropriations**

This is the sum of undelivered orders and unobligated balances. Undelivered orders represent the amount of obligations incurred for goods or services ordered, but not yet received. An unobligated balance is the amount available after deducting cumulative obligations from total budgetary resources. As obligations for goods or services are incurred, the available balance is reduced.

### **Cumulative Results of Operations**

These include (1) the accumulated difference between revenues and financing sources less expenses since inception; (2) USAGM's investment in capitalized assets financed by appropriation; (3) donations; and (4) unfunded liabilities, for which liquidation may require future congressional appropriations or other budgetary resources.

## L. Management's Use of Estimates

The preparation of financial statements requires management to make estimates and assumptions affecting the reported amounts of assets, liabilities, revenues, expenses, and the disclosure of contingent liabilities. Actual results could differ from these estimates.

## M. Statement of Net Cost Presentation

The cost and revenue information presented in the Statement of Net Cost is aligned to the two federal entities, displayed separately, and the three grantees, or surrogate broadcasters, displayed in the aggregate. The two overarching strategic goals outlined in the Strategic Plan are (1) Expand freedom of information and expression, and (2) Communicate America's democratic experience. Both federal entities and all three grantees carry out activities to achieve both goals. However, because VOA's mission aligns directly with USAGM's second goal, its efforts are largely focused on achieving this goal and the other entities are primarily focused on achieving the first goal.

## NOTE 2: ENTITY / NON-ENTITY ASSETS

Entity and Non-Entity assets of USAGM have been combined on the balance sheet. Non-entity assets relate primarily to state and local taxes and other employee payroll withholdings included under FBWT deposit accounts and are currently held by but not available to USAGM. The funds are restricted by nature and will be forwarded to Treasury or other entities at a future date.

Non-entity assets as of September 30, 2018 and 2017 are summarized as follows:

<b>Non-Entity Assets (in thousands)</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2017</b>
Intragovernmental:		
Fund Balance with Treasury	\$ 2,899	\$ 793
Total Intragovernmental	2,899	793
Total Non-Entity Assets	2,899	793
Total Entity Assets	403,674	383,313
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>\$ 406,573</b>	<b>\$ 384,106</b>

**NOTE 3: FUND BALANCE WITH TREASURY**

Treasury performs cash management activities for all federal agencies. The Fund Balance with Treasury (FBWT) represents the right of USAGM to draw down funds from Treasury for expenses and liabilities. The balances in Note 3 are reconciled to Treasury and primarily consist of appropriated, trust, deposit and clearing funds.

Appropriated funds are general fund expenditure accounts established to record amounts appropriated by law for the general support of Federal Government activities and the subsequent expenditure of these funds. It includes spending from both annual and permanent appropriations.

Trust fund balances consist primarily of (1) Foreign Service National Separation Liability Trust; and (2) Miscellaneous Trust.

Other Fund types consist of Deposit and Clearing accounts with balances held but not available by USAGM. Deposit fund examples are: Withheld State and Local Taxes (payroll); Other Federal Payroll Withholdings; Collections of receivables from Canceled Accounts; and General Funds Proprietary Receipts, Not Otherwise Classified. Clearing fund examples are: Proceeds of Sales, Personal Property; and Budget Clearing Account (Suspense).

The Status of Fund Balance with Treasury as of September 30, 2018 and 2017, consists of the following:

<b>Status of Fund Balance with Treasury (in thousands)</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2017</b>
Unobligated Balance		
Available	\$ 48,124	\$ 37,560
Unavailable	26,636	26,377
Obligated Balance Not Yet Disbursed	176,010	157,350
Non-Budgetary Fund Balance with Treasury	2,972	833
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 253,742</b>	<b>\$ 222,120</b>

The status of the fund balance may be classified as unobligated available, unobligated unavailable, obligated balance not yet disbursed, and non-budgetary Fund Balance with Treasury. Unobligated available funds, depending on budget authority, are generally available for new obligations in the current fiscal year. The unobligated unavailable amounts are those appropriated in prior fiscal years but not available to fund new obligations; however they are available to increase

existing prior year obligations. The obligated but not yet disbursed balance represents amounts designated for payment of goods and services ordered but not yet received, or goods and services received but for which payment has not yet been made.

Canceled funds returned to Treasury as of September 30, 2018 and 2017 totaled \$1.4 million and \$7.2 million, respectively.

#### **NOTE 4: CASH AND OTHER MONETARY ASSETS**

Cash consists of funds held outside of Treasury and the Federal Reserve by authorized fiscal officers or agents. Cash includes all monetary resources on hand or on deposit with a financial institution, including coins, paper currency, and readily negotiable instruments such as checks and money orders. USAGM's use of unrestricted cash consists of funds on deposit with a Treasury designated financial institution, for use by the transmitting stations of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, as delegated by Treasury.

Cash and Other Monetary Assets as of September 30, 2018 and 2017 consists of the following:

<b>Cash and Other Monetary Assets (<i>in thousands</i>)</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2017</b>
Cash	\$ 3	\$ 3
<b>Total Cash and Other Monetary Assets</b>	<b>\$ 3</b>	<b>\$ 3</b>

#### **NOTE 5: ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLE, NET**

Accounts receivable as of September 30, 2018 and 2017, are as follows:

<b>Accounts Receivable (<i>in thousands</i>)</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2017</b>
Intragovernmental	\$ 41	\$ 46
Public	135	163
Allowance for Uncollectable Accounts	(5)	(5)
<b>Total Accounts Receivable, Net</b>	<b>\$ 171</b>	<b>\$ 204</b>

**NOTE 6: ADVANCES TO SURROGATE BROADCASTERS**

The advance to surrogate broadcasters (or grantees) represents an amount in which USAGM has disbursed funds but for which goods and services have not been delivered or performed. Grant funds are issued periodically throughout the year on an advance basis and liquidated based on actual expenses incurred by the grantee. The grant advance liquidation approach utilizes expenses as recorded in the grantee's preliminary unaudited Trial Balances through September of the year being audited. In some instances, grantees provided estimates for expenses and year-end adjustments for activity incurred but not recorded in the preliminary trial balance due to timing and availability. The grantee advance accrual does not account for grantee executed vendor contracts awarded where services have not been received by the grantee as of year-end.

Advances to surrogate broadcasters for the years ended September 30, 2018 and 2017 are \$72 million and \$71 million, respectively.



**NOTE 7: PROPERTY, PLANT, AND EQUIPMENT, NET**

Property, plant, and equipment (PP&E) consist of equipment, buildings, vehicles, and land. There are no restrictions on the use of property, plant, and equipment. USAGM capitalizes property, plant, and equipment with a useful life of two years or more that meet the established capitalization thresholds. In FY 2017, USAGM updated the PP&E policy for capitalization. The thresholds for capitalization are as follows for property acquired on or after October 1, 2017: equipment costing \$75,000 or more, buildings and capital leases costing \$100,000 or more, and other structures and facilities costing \$100,000 or more. In addition, ADP software costing \$250,000 or more, and all land, land rights, and vehicles are capitalized, regardless of cost.

The thresholds for capitalization are as follows for property acquired before October 1, 2017: equipment costing \$25,000 or more, buildings and capital leases costing \$100,000 or more, and other structures and facilities costing \$50,000 or more. In addition, ADP software costing \$250,000 or more, and all land, land rights, and vehicles are capitalized, regardless of cost.

Expenditures for normal repairs and maintenance are expended unless the expenditure is equal to or greater than \$75,000 and the improvement increases the asset's useful life by two years or more, in which case the amounts are capitalized.

Depreciation or amortization is computed using the straight-line methodology over the assets' useful lives ranging from three to thirty years. Amortization of capitalized software begins on the date it is put in service, if purchased, or when the module or component has been successfully tested if developed internally. Amortization of capital leases is over the term of the lease.

Property, plant, and equipment consists of property used in operations and consumed over time. The following table summarizes cost and accumulated depreciation/amortization of property, plant, and equipment as of September 30, 2018 and 2017.

<b>PP&amp;E (in thousands)</b>			<b>2018</b>			<b>2017</b>		
<b>Property Category</b>	<b>Useful Life (Years)</b>	<b>Cost</b>	<b>Accumulated Depreciation</b>	<b>Net Book Value</b>	<b>Cost</b>	<b>Accumulated Depreciation</b>	<b>Net Book Value</b>	
Land	N/A	\$ 3,416	\$ -	\$ 3,416	\$ 3,416	\$ -	\$ 3,416	
Construction-in-Progress	N/A	2,346	-	2,346	1,625	-	1,625	
Building	30	25,169	(19,899)	5,270	25,169	(19,278)	5,891	
Other Structures	20	7,946	(7,030)	916	7,946	(6,910)	1,036	
Equipment	6-30	299,350	(239,747)	59,603	300,364	(231,790)	68,574	
Vehicles	6	5,804	(4,204)	1,600	5,615	(3,902)	1,713	
Leasehold Improvements	10-20	7,472	(1,399)	6,073	6,661	(876)	5,785	
Software	3-6	5,148	(4,589)	559	5,149	(4,078)	1,071	
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$ 356,651</b>	<b>\$ (276,868)</b>	<b>\$ 79,783</b>	<b>\$ 355,945</b>	<b>\$ (266,834)</b>	<b>\$ 89,111</b>	

Depreciation and amortization expense as of September 30, 2018 and 2017 is \$12.5 million and \$12.4 million, respectively.

On October 24 & 25, 2018, Super Typhoon Yutu devastated the islands of Tinian and Saipan in the Northern Mariana Islands (NMI) and displaced hundreds of residents, damaged buildings, businesses and other infrastructure, and caused massive power and water outages. USAGM operates a shortwave radio transmission facility in the NMI, the Robert E. Kamosa Transmitting Station (REKTS), which consists of transmitter sites on Tinian and Saipan that broadcast programs for VOA and RFA. USAGM is still assessing damages to assets located in the Northern Marianas. The assets in total have an approximate book value of \$7.6 million.

#### **NOTE 8: OTHER ASSETS**

Other assets consist of (a) leases that are paid in advance; and, (b) advances and prepayments to USAGM employees for official travel, miscellaneous prepayments, and salary advances to USAGM employees transferring to overseas assignments. Other assets consist of the following as of September 30, 2018 and 2017:

<b>Other Assets (in thousands)</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2017</b>
Prepaid Leases	640	1,462
Travel & Salary Advances	234	206
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 874</b>	<b>\$ 1,668</b>

**NOTE 9: LIABILITIES COVERED / NOT COVERED BY BUDGETARY RESOURCES**

USAGM's liabilities are classified as covered or not covered by budgetary resources. Liabilities not covered by budgetary resources are liabilities for which Congressional action is needed before budgetary resources can be provided. They include the annual leave, workers compensation, pensions and other retirement benefits, and certain environmental matters as described in Note 11 – Environmental and Disposal Liabilities.

<b>Liabilities Covered / Not Covered by Budgetary Resources (in thousands)</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2017</b>
<b>Intragovernmental</b>		
Accrued FECA Liability	\$ 1,524	\$ 1,638
Total Intragovernmental	1,524	1,638
<b>Public</b>		
Actuarial FECA Liability	8,718	9,000
Accrued Annual and Compensatory Leave	15,527	15,545
Contingent Liabilities	618	364
Foreign Service National After-Employment Benefits	6,461	6,656
Environmental and Disposal Liabilities	887	636
Total Liabilities Not Covered by Budgetary Resources	33,735	33,839
Total Liabilities Covered by Budgetary Resources	36,739	41,304
Total Liabilities Not Requiring Budgetary Resources	2,117	-
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>\$ 72,591</b>	<b>\$ 75,143</b>

**NOTE 10: FOREIGN SERVICE NATIONALS (FSN) AFTER-EMPLOYMENT BENEFITS**

USAGM operates overseas in 26 countries and employs approximately 280 local nationals known as Foreign Service Nationals (FSNs). FSNs do not qualify for federal civilian benefits, and therefore cannot participate in any of the federal civilian retirement plans. Instead, FSN employees participate in a variety of plans established by the Department of State based upon prevailing wage and compensation practices in the host country, unless the Department of State makes a public interest determination to do otherwise. In general, USAGM follows host country (i.e., local) practices and conventions in compensating FSNs. The end result is that compensation for FSNs is often not in accordance with what would otherwise be offered or required by statute and regulations for federal civilian employees.

FSN after-employment benefits are included in the Post's Local Compensation Plan (LCP). The LCP may include defined benefit plans, defined contribution plans, and retirement and voluntary severance lump sum payment plans. These plans are typically in addition to or in lieu of participating in the host country's local social security system. These benefits form an important part of USAGM's total compensation and benefits program that is designed to attract and retain highly skilled and talented FSN employees. USAGM has implemented various local arrangements with third party providers for defined contribution plans for the benefit of FSNs.

### Defined Benefit Plans

USAGM has implemented various arrangements for defined benefit pension plans for the benefit of FSNs in four countries. Some of these plans supplement the host country's equivalent to U.S. social security and others do not. While none of these supplemental plans are mandated by the host country, some are substitutes for optional tiers of a host country's social security system. Such arrangements include (but are not limited to) conventional defined benefit plans with assets held in the name of trustees of the plan who engage plan administrators, investment advisors and actuaries, and plans offered by insurance companies at predetermined rates or with annual adjustments to premiums. USAGM deposits funds under various fiduciary-type arrangements, purchases annuities under group insurance contracts or provides reserves to these plans. Benefits under the defined benefit plans are typically based either on years of service and/or the employee's compensation (generally during a fixed number of years immediately before retirement). The range of assumptions that are used for the defined benefit plans reflects the different economic and regulatory environments within the various countries. The net defined benefit liability is comprised of the present value of the defined benefit obligation less the fair value of plan assets.

### Retirement and Voluntary Severance Lump Sum Payments

In 11 countries, FSN employees are provided a lump-sum separation payment when they resign, retire, or otherwise separate through no fault of their own. The amount of the payment is generally based on length of service, rate of pay at the time of separation, and the type of separation.

The cost method used for the valuation of the liabilities associated with these plans is the Projected Unit Credit actuarial cost method. The participant's benefit is first determined using both their projected service and salary at the retirement date. The projected benefit is then multiplied by the ratio of current service to projected service at retirement in order to determine an allocated benefit. The Projected Benefit Obligation (PBO) for the entire plan is calculated as the sum of the individual PBO amounts for each active member. Further, this calculation requires certain actuarial assumptions be made, such as voluntary withdrawals, assumed retirement age, death and disability, as well as economic assumptions. These are done by the Department of State and its actuaries whose results are provided to the federal agencies for their use. USAGM relies on the actuarial reports to obtain required financial information.

The economic assumptions used for the Retirement and Voluntary Severance Lump Sum Payment Liability as of September 30, 2018 and 2017 are:

<b>Economic Assumptions</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2017</b>
Discount Rate	2.82%	2.99%
Rate of Inflation	1.42%	1.63%
Salary Increase	4.76%	3.19%

The total liabilities reported for the FSN After-employment Benefits as of September 30, 2018 and 2017, are as follows:

<b>After-Employment Benefit Liability (in thousands)</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2017</b>
Defined Benefits Plans	\$ 1,090	\$ 1,897
Voluntary Severance	2,042	1,922
Supplemental Retirement Lump Sum	3,329	2,837
<b>Total After-Employment Benefit Liability</b>	<b>\$ 6,461</b>	<b>\$ 6,656</b>

**NOTE 11: ENVIRONMENTAL AND DISPOSAL LIABILITIES**

Environmental and disposal liabilities result from hazardous and potentially hazardous materials at current operating locations and abandoned facilities that create a public health or environmental risk. The related cleanup cost to remove, contain or dispose of any hazardous materials or properties is recognized as an environmental and disposal liability until the end of the useful life of the PP&E or until the operations at the PP&E locations cease either permanently, temporarily, or until a voluntary remediation approach is adopted.

Federal, state, and local statutes and regulations require environmental cleanup. Some of these statutes include the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act; The Resource Conservation and Recovery Act; as well as State and Local laws.

Through an internal survey to comply with SFFAS 5, *Accounting for Liabilities of the Federal Government*, SFFAS 6, *Accounting for Property, Plant and Equipment*, FASAB Technical Bulletin 2006-1, *Recognition and Measurement of Asbestos-related Cleanup Costs* and Federal Financial Accounting and Auditing (FFAA) Technical Release 2, *Determining Probable and Reasonably Estimable for Environmental Liabilities in the Federal Government*, Technical Release 10, *Implementation Guidance on Asbestos*.

USAGM recognizes an estimated \$215 thousand in cleanup cost to remove hazardous materials from a transmitter facility. The estimate was received in previous years and the facility disposition has not changed.

Cleanup Costs Associated with Facilities and Installed Equipment, and Technical Release 11, *Implementation Guidance on Cleanup Costs Associated with Equipment*, USAGM in FY 2013 identified offices and building facilities that contained non-friable and friable asbestos. Based on this survey, USAGM has recognized an estimated asbestos cleanup liability in the amount of \$672 thousand for four of its overseas facilities. The total estimate is based on the vendor quotes provided for asbestos cleanup-efforts adjusted for September 30, 2018 currency exchange rates.

The total environmental liability including removal of hazardous materials and asbestos for USAGM in FY 2018 is \$887 thousand.

**NOTE 12: OTHER LIABILITIES**

Other liabilities consist of the following as of September 30, 2018:

<b>Other Liabilities (in thousands)</b>	<b>Non-Current</b>	<b>Current</b>	<b>2018 Total</b>
<b>Intragovernmental</b>			
Advances and Prepayments	\$ -	\$ 185	\$ 185
Employer Contribution/Payroll Taxes	-	1,693	1,693
<b>Public</b>			
Deposit and Suspense Liabilities	-	2,117	2,117
<b>Total Other Liabilities</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ 3,995</b>	<b>\$ 3,995</b>

**NOTE 13: OPERATING LEASE LIABILITY**

USAGM leases real property in overseas and domestic locations under operating leases that expire in various years. The threshold for operating lease review and disclosure is \$50,000. Minimum future lease payments under noncancellable operating leases having remaining terms in excess of one year as of September 30, 2018 for each of the next five years and in aggregate follows:

<b>Operating Leases (in thousands)</b>	
<b>Fiscal Year</b>	<b>Total</b>
2019	\$ 20,589
2020	1,430
2021	792
2022	725
2023	549
2024 and there after	1,182
<b>Total Future Lease Payments</b>	<b>\$ 25,267</b>

**NOTE 14: CONTINGENT LIABILITIES**

USAGM is a party in various administrative proceedings, legal actions, and tort claims that may ultimately result in settlements or decisions adverse to the Federal Government. These include legal cases that have been settled but not yet paid, and claims where the amount of potential loss is probable and estimable. No amounts have been accrued in the financial records for claims where the amount of potential loss cannot be estimated or the likelihood of an unfavorable outcome is less than probable. The accrued and potential contingent liabilities as of September 30, 2018 and 2017 are as follows:

Contingent Liabilities (in thousands)					
		FY 2018	Accrued Liabilities	Estimated Range of Loss	
				Lower End of Range	Upper End of Range
Probable			\$ 618	\$ 618	\$ 618
Reasonably Possible			-	-	98
		FY 2017	Accrued Liabilities	Estimated Range of Loss	
				Lower End of Range	Upper End of Range
Probable			\$ 364	\$ 364	\$ 364
Reasonably Possible			-	-	155



**NOTE 15: APPORTIONMENT CATEGORIES OF OBLIGATIONS INCURRED - DIRECT VS. REIMBURSABLE OBLIGATIONS**

USAGM incurs obligations directly in support of its own programs as well as reimbursable obligations in support of other federal agencies' program initiatives. The reimbursable obligations incurred by USAGM mainly support programs of the U.S. Agency for International Development and the Department of State.

Direct and reimbursable obligations for the years ended September 30, 2018 and 2017 are as follows:

<b>Obligation Incurred (<i>in thousands</i>)</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2017</b>
<b>Direct Obligations Incurred</b>		
CAT A	\$ 488,462	\$ 464,931
CAT B	318,115	324,917
<b>Total Direct Obligations Incurred</b>	<b>\$ 806,577</b>	<b>\$ 789,848</b>
<b>Reimbursable Obligations Incurred</b>		
CAT B	3,486	3,820
<b>Total Reimbursable Obligations Incurred</b>	<b>\$ 3,486</b>	<b>\$ 3,820</b>

**NOTE 16: UNDELIVERED ORDERS AT THE END OF THE PERIOD**

Budgetary resources obligated for undelivered orders for the years ended September 30, 2018 and 2017 are \$217.9 million and \$193.4 million, respectively.

<b>Undelivered Orders at the End of the Period (<i>in thousands</i>)</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2017</b>
<b>Federal</b>		
Paid	\$ -	
Unpaid	2,251	
<b>Total Federal Undelivered Orders at the end of the period</b>	<b>\$ 2,251</b>	
Paid	\$ 72,877	
Unpaid	142,802	
<b>Total Public Undelivered Orders at the end of the period</b>	<b>\$ 215,679</b>	
<b>Undelivered Orders at the end of the period</b>	<b>\$ 217,930</b>	<b>\$ 193,363</b>

**NOTE 17: EXPLANATION OF DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE SBR AND THE BUDGET OF THE US GOVERNMENT**

A comparison between the FY 2018 Statement of Budgetary Resources and the FY 2018 actual numbers presented in the FY 2020 Budget cannot be performed as the FY 2020 Budget is not yet available. The FY 2020 Budget is due to be published in February 2019 and will be available at:

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/budget/>

USAGM reconciled the amounts of the FY 2017 column on the statement of Budgetary Resources (SBR) to the actual amounts for FY 2017 in the FY 2019 President's Budget for budgetary resources, obligations incurred, distributed offsetting receipts and net outlays published in February 2018, as presented below.

<b>For the Fiscal Year Ended September 30, 2017 (in thousands)</b>	<b>Budgetary Resources</b>	<b>Obligations Incurred</b>	<b>Distributed Offsetting Receipts</b>	<b>Net Outlays</b>
Combined Statement of Budgetary Resources	\$ 859,208	\$ 793,668	\$ -	\$ 772,020
Expired Accounts	(27,977)	(3,864)	-	-
Undelivered Orders	(6,900)	-	-	-
<b>Budget of the United States Government</b>	<b>\$ 824,331</b>	<b>\$ 789,804</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ 772,020</b>

**NOTE 18: RECONCILIATION OF NET COST OF OPERATIONS TO BUDGET**

There are inherent differences in timing and recognition between the accrual proprietary accounting method used to calculate net cost and the budgetary accounting method used to report budgetary resources and obligations. The reconciliation of net cost to budgetary resources as of September 30, 2018 and 2017 is as follows:

<b>Reconciliation of Net Cost of Operations to Budget</b>		<b>FY 2018</b>	<b>FY 2017</b>
<b>Resources Used to Finance Activities:</b>			
Budgetary Resources Obligated			
Obligations incurred	\$	816,963	\$ 793,668
Less: Spending Authority from Offsetting			
Collections and Recoveries		21,007	13,810
Obligations Net of Offsetting Collections and Recoveries		795,956	779,858
Less: Offsetting Receipts		-	-
Net Obligations		795,956	779,858
Other Resources			
Donations and Forfeitures of Property		-	-
Transfers in/out Without Reimbursement		-	-
Imputed Financing from costs Absorbed by Others		13,124	9,217
Other		(4)	14
Net Other Resources Used to Finance Activities		13,120	9,231
<b>Total Resources Used to Finance Activities</b>		<b>809,076</b>	<b>789,089</b>
<b>Resources Used to Finance Items not Part of the Net Cost of Operations:</b>			
Change in Budgetary Resources Obligated for Goods, Services and Benefits Ordered but Not Yet Provided		23,417	23,759
Resources that Fund Expenses Recognized in Prior Periods		608	4,099
Budgetary Offsetting Collections and Receipts That do not Affect Net Cost of Operations		-	-
Resources That Finance the Acquisition of Assets		3,771	3,426
Other Resources or Adjustments to Net Obligated Resources That do not Affect Net Cost of Operations		-	-
<b>Total Resources Used to Finance Items not Part of the Net Cost of Operations</b>		<b>27,796</b>	<b>31,284</b>
<b>Total Resources Used to Finance the Net Cost of Operations</b>		<b>781,280</b>	<b>757,805</b>
<b>Components of Net cost of Operations That Will not Require or Generate Resources in the Current Period:</b>			
Components Requiring or Generating Resources in Future Periods:			
Increase in Annual Leave Liability		-	-
Increase in Environmental and Disposal Liability		-	-
Increase in Exchange Revenue Receivable From the Public		-	-
Increase in FECA Actuarial Liability		-	1,483
Total Components of Net Cost of Operations Requiring or Generating Resources in Future Periods		-	1,483
Components not Requiring or Generating Resources:			
Depreciation and Amortization		12,541	12,373
Loss on Disposal of Assets		584	7,536
Other		5	68
<b>Total Components of Net Cost of Operations not Requiring or Generating Resources</b>		<b>13,130</b>	<b>19,977</b>
<b>Total Components of Net Cost of Operations That Will not Require or Generate Resources in the Current Period</b>		<b>13,130</b>	<b>21,460</b>
<b>Net Cost of Operations</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>794,410</b>	<b>\$ 779,265</b>

**NOTE 19: STATEMENT OF NET COST**

The Consolidated Schedule of Net Cost categorizes costs and revenues by significant components that carry out USAGM's mission and whose managers communicate directly to top management.

<b>Statement of Net Cost (in thousands)</b>	<b>FY 2018</b>	<b>VOA</b>	<b>OCB</b>	<b>TSI</b>	<b>IBB</b>	<b>RFA</b>	<b>RFE/RL</b>	<b>MBN</b>
<b>Voice of America (VOA)</b>								
Gross Costs	\$ 383,771	\$ 302,255	\$ -	\$ 43,111	\$ 38,405	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Less: Earned Revenues	(1,572)	(1,572)	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Net Program Costs</b>	<b>382,199</b>	<b>300,683</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>43,111</b>	<b>38,405</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Office of Cuba Broadcasting (OCB)</b>								
Gross Costs	40,181	-	30,307	4,929	4,945	-	-	-
Less: Earned Revenues	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Net Program Costs</b>	<b>40,181</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>30,307</b>	<b>4,929</b>	<b>4,945</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Surrogate Broadcasters</b>								
Gross Costs	374,179	-	-	70,182	13,965	51,983	129,694	108,355
Less: Earned Revenues	(2,149)	-	-	-	-	(1,740)	(409)	-
<b>Net Program Costs</b>	<b>372,030</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>70,182</b>	<b>13,965</b>	<b>50,243</b>	<b>129,285</b>	<b>108,355</b>
<b>Total Gross Costs</b>	<b>798,131</b>	<b>302,255</b>	<b>30,307</b>	<b>118,222</b>	<b>57,315</b>	<b>51,983</b>	<b>129,694</b>	<b>108,355</b>
<b>Less: Total Earned Revenues</b>	<b>(3,721)</b>	<b>(1,572)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>(1,740)</b>	<b>(409)</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Net Cost of Operations</b>	<b>\$794,410</b>	<b>\$300,683</b>	<b>\$30,307</b>	<b>\$118,222</b>	<b>\$ 57,315</b>	<b>\$50,243</b>	<b>\$129,285</b>	<b>\$108,355</b>

The Schedule of Net Cost is presented by major broadcaster (VOA and OCB), Technology, Services and Innovation program office (TSI), bureau (IBB) or grantee (RFA, RFE/RL, and MBN). USAGM believes this is consistent and transparent with its Congressional Budget submissions. The net cost of operations is the gross (i.e. total) cost incurred by the previously mentioned significant components less any exchange (i.e., earned) revenue. These significant components fully support the two overarching strategic goals outlined in the Strategic Plan in execution of the mission. The Agency's strategic goals were updated in 2015 and are outlined in the Management's Discussion and Analysis section.

**NOTE 20: DISCLOSURE ENTITIES AND RELATED PARTIES**

Under SFFAS 47, for FY 2018, agencies must disclose certain information for entities that must be included, but not consolidated, in their financial statements referred to as “disclosure entities” or related parties. USAGM has three such disclosure entities.

USAGM broadcast services include three USAGM-sponsored grantees: Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL), Radio Free Asia (RFA), and the Middle East Broadcasting Networks (MBN). RFE/RL, RFA, and MBN are surrogate networks that receive the majority of their funding from USAGM, but are organized and managed as private non-profit corporations. The grantees are also responsible for developing broadcast content (radio and television news programs), which is distributed by USAGM. The grantees are funded through annual grant agreements. In FY 2018, the three grantees combined received \$287 million.

Grantee	Grant Funding FY 2018	Grant Expenses (Unaudited) FY 2018 <sup>(1)</sup>	Grant Advances as of September 30, 2018 <sup>(1)</sup>
RFE Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL)	\$ 123,284,549	\$ 128,137,851	\$ 10,000,000
RFA Radio Free Asia (RFA)	53,473,572	49,126,011	18,000,000
MBN Middle East Broadcasting Networks (MBN)	109,714,461	103,264,282	44,000,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 286,472,582</b>	<b>\$ 280,528,144</b>	<b>\$ 72,000,000</b>

<sup>(1)</sup> FY 2018 information reported by the grantee is estimated because audited information will not be available until June 2019

RFE/RL, Inc. is a private, nonprofit, multimedia broadcasting corporation that serves as a surrogate media source in 25 languages and in 20 countries, including Afghanistan, Iran, Pakistan, Russia, and Ukraine.

With its broadcasting headquarters in Prague, 18 local bureaus (including Moscow, Kabul, Kyiv, and Islamabad), and 750 journalists throughout its broadcast region, RFE/RL’s proximity to its audiences facilitates the production of compelling, locally-oriented programming in a cost-effective manner.

Reaching more than 25.8 million people each week, RFE/RL provides what many people cannot get locally: uncensored local and regional news, responsible discussion, and open debate via radio, television, and digital media. In addition to traditional radio reporting, RFE/RL is expanding its TV and video operations to compete successfully in the rapidly-changing media realm, broadening its best-in-class digital journalism operations, and providing live cross-platform coverage

of political protests and other newsworthy events, to ensure that RFE/RL journalism is accessible to audiences on the platforms of their choice. RFE/RL's mission is to promote democratic values and institutions by reporting the news in countries where a free press is banned by the government or not fully established.

Radio Free Asia (RFA) is headquartered in Washington, D.C., with eight bureaus and offices overseas. RFA is a private, nonprofit, multimedia news corporation with approximately 253 employees. RFA has an estimated audience of 6.9 million people and supports nine languages.

RFA brings award-winning, domestic journalism and uncensored content to people in six Asian countries that restrict free speech, freedom of the press, and access to reliable information beyond their borders. RFA also provides educational and cultural programming, as well as forums for audiences to engage in open dialogue and freely express opinions.

Working in some of the world's harshest media environments, RFA utilizes on-the-ground reporters and "stringers," as well as vast networks of cultivated in-country sources, citizen journalists, and eyewitnesses who provide leads, tips, images, and video—often at great personal risk—to ensure that their fellow countrymen and women get accurate, timely news and information about what's happening in their communities and neighborhoods. Radio Free Asia's mission is to provide accurate and timely news and information to Asian countries whose governments prohibit access to a free press.

Middle East Broadcasting Network (MBN) is an Arabic-language news organization with a weekly audience of more than 25.7 million people in 22 countries in the Middle East and North Africa, countries Freedom House deemed "not free" or "partly free" in 2017. MBN networks support democratic values by expanding the spectrum of ideas in the region and engaging audiences to share perspectives.

MBN consists of two television networks (Alhurra and Alhurra-Iraq); Radio Sawa; Afia Darfur; Alhurra.com; RadioSawa.com; Irfaasawtak.com; Maghreb Voices and various social media platforms. The networks broadcast news and information from their headquarters in Northern Virginia, along with bureaus in Cairo, Dubai, Jerusalem, Beirut, Erbil, Rabat, Baghdad, and Washington, D.C. MBN has an

estimated 869 employees including correspondents throughout the Middle East and North Africa. MBN's networks provide an undistorted line of communication with the people of the Middle East and North Africa.

The mission of the Middle East Broadcasting Networks is to provide objective, accurate, and relevant news and information to the people of the Middle East about the region, the world, and the United States. MBN supports democratic values by expanding the spectrum of ideas, opinions, and perspectives available in the region's media.

USAGM is party to some grantee lease commitments for land and buildings, and may have a financial commitment in the event of lease termination. However, for most ongoing grantee lease and employee benefit commitments, USAGM and the US Government do not have an explicit agreement to support or commitment to fund upon any termination of the current relationship.

The risks resulting from USAGM involvement with the grantee entities during the period include:

- The financial commitment made each year through the current grant agreement
- Potential termination costs resulting from the termination of certain grantee leases

The USAGM's benefits resulting from USAGM's involvement with include:

- Support in development of common content and delivery
- Access to office space in certain markets

The primary financial asset existing between grantees and USAGM is the grant advance.

Approximately 99% of the grantees' revenue for the years ended September 30, 2018 and 2017 was derived from grants from USAGM through federal appropriations. USAGM has no contractual or statutory provisions requiring future support, however there is no reason to believe that the relationships with these grantees will be discontinued in the foreseeable future. However, any interruption of these relationships (i.e., the failure to renew grant agreements or

withholding of funds) would adversely affect the grantees' ability to finance ongoing operations.

USAGM does not believe there is any material financial exposure to gain or loss resulting from its involvement with the grantees.

Each of the grantee's annual financial reports can be obtained from the Federal Audit Clearinghouse which operates on behalf of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) to maintain a public database of completed audits. The website can be located at: <https://harvester.census.gov/facweb/>

USAGM has no related party entity information to disclose.



# Required Supplementary Information

## Deferred Maintenance

Deferred maintenance is maintenance that was not performed when it should have been, that was scheduled and not performed, or that was delayed for a future period. Maintenance is the act of keeping property, plant, and equipment (PP&E) in acceptable operating condition and includes preventive maintenance, normal repairs, replacement of parts and structural components, and other activities needed to preserve the asset so that it can deliver acceptable performance and achieve its expected life. Maintenance excludes activities aimed at expanding the capacity of an asset or otherwise upgrading it to serve needs different from or significantly greater than those needs originally intended to be met by the asset.

USAGM has an ongoing maintenance and repair plan for its PP&E that allows it to prioritize required maintenance on its assets and schedule that maintenance appropriately. The maintenance plan is developed and updated by an inspection of its assets to determine current conditions and to estimate costs to correct any deficiencies. It is the policy of USAGM to maintain and preserve all PP&E regardless of recorded values and it does not differentiate between PP&E that is capitalized versus those that are expensed.

USAGM reviewed its FY 2018 maintenance and repair plan and identified those projects where maintenance or repair had been planned and/or required but nevertheless was not performed in 2018. For those projects where maintenance was not performed and where the current condition level required maintenance to return them to an acceptable level, in accordance with the amended SFFAS Deferred Maintenance Repairs No. 42, USAGM estimates and discloses deferred maintenance cost.

<b>Deferred Maintenance (in thousands)</b>		
<b>PP&amp;E Category</b>	<b>FY 2018 Estimated Cost to Return to Acceptable Condition</b>	<b>FY 2017 Estimated Cost to Return to Acceptable Condition</b>
Equipment	\$ 380	\$ 380
Other Structures & Facilities	175	155
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 555</b>	<b>\$ 535</b>

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## Section 4: Other Information

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# Inspector General's Statement on Management and Performance Challenges



**OFFICE OF  
INSPECTOR GENERAL**  
U.S. Department of State

## Inspector General Statement on the U.S. Agency for Global Media's Major Management and Performance Challenges

FISCAL YEAR 2018

## INTRODUCTION

Each year, in accordance with the Reports Consolidation Act of 2000,<sup>1</sup> the Office of Inspector General (OIG) for the U.S. Agency for Global Media (USAGM), formerly known as the Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG),<sup>2</sup> identifies the most serious management and performance challenges facing the agency and briefly assesses progress in addressing those challenges. The resulting report is included in the agency's annual performance and accountability report.

Our oversight work gives us unique visibility into the most significant challenges facing BBG, and OIG concludes that the following were the most important challenges BBG faced in FY 2018:

- Information security and management
- Financial and property management
- Grant management

These issues go to the core of BBG's programs and operations and have been crucial challenges for the past three years. Continued attention to these concerns will improve BBG's operations and, accordingly, its ability to fulfill its underlying mission. We hope that this report, read together with the work OIG produces throughout the year, assists BBG in its efforts.

## INFORMATION SECURITY AND MANAGEMENT

BBG depends on information systems and electronic data to carry out essential mission-related functions. These information systems are subject to serious threats that may exploit vulnerabilities to compromise the information those systems process, store, and transmit. This, in turn, can lead to adverse effects on operations, organizational assets, and personnel.

In the FY 2018 Federal Information Security Modernization Act of 2014 (FISMA) audit, OIG reported information security program weaknesses in all seven key metric domains, which consist of risk management, configuration management, identity and access management, security training, information security continuous monitoring, incident response,

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<sup>1</sup> The Reports Consolidation Act of 2000, § 3, Pub. L. 106-531 (amending 31 U.S.C. § 3516).

<sup>2</sup> This report references "BBG" throughout because all of the cited work pre-dates the agency's name change.

and contingency planning.<sup>3</sup> In addition, an independent auditor working on OIG's behalf and under OIG's direction noted that weaknesses in BBG's own IT systems may affect its primary domestic financial management and accounting system. Even though that system is supplied by an external service provider, it is accessed through BBG's general IT support system. Accordingly, security weaknesses noted in BBG's information security program may affect that external system.<sup>4</sup> Without an effective information security program, BBG is vulnerable to IT-centered attacks and threats. As noted above, information security program weaknesses can affect the integrity of financial applications, which increases the risk that sensitive financial information could be accessed by unauthorized individuals or that financial transactions could be altered either accidentally or intentionally. Similarly, information security program weaknesses increase the risk that BBG will be unable to report financial data accurately.

## FINANCIAL AND PROPERTY MANAGEMENT

OIG observed improvements in the accuracy of BBG's reporting of budgetary resources in its FY 2017 financial statements.<sup>5</sup> Financial management, however, continues to be a challenge for BBG. For example, OIG described deficiencies in BBG's efforts to fully address unliquidated obligations (ULO) identified during an audit of FY 2016 financial statements. In its follow-up work, OIG found that BBG reviewed and deobligated 14 of 27 ULOs, totaling \$311,963, only after OIG began its audit—10 months after the concerns were identified. BBG did not review and provide sufficient supporting documentation for the three ULOs totaling \$34,202 that were not deobligated.<sup>6</sup> OIG found that one factor contributing to this delay was a lack of responsiveness by BBG personnel to the Office of the Chief Financial Officer (OCFO) when it requested that invalid ULOs be researched, reviewed, and deobligated, if

<sup>3</sup> OIG, *Audit of the Broadcasting Board of Governors Information Security Program* (AUD-IT-IB-18-13, October 2017).

<sup>4</sup> OIG, *Independent Auditor's Report on the Broadcasting Board of Governors 2017 and 2016 Financial Statements* (AUD-FM-IB-18-10, November 2017).

<sup>5</sup> OIG, *Management Assistance Report: BBG Did Not Fully Address Invalid Unliquidated Obligations Identified During the FY 2016 Financial Statements Audit* (AUD-FM-IB-18-28, February 2018).

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*

appropriate. In addition, although BBG had drafted standard operating procedures for monitoring ULOs, the procedures had not been approved and issued by BBG management.<sup>7</sup>

Separately, OIG found that BBG had not complied with all of the requirements of the Improper Payments Information Act of 2002.<sup>8</sup> In particular, BBG did not publish all required information relating to improper payment estimates for programs and activities identified as susceptible to significant improper payments under its risk assessment. BBG also failed to comply completely with the requirements of the Digital Accountability and Transparency Act of 2014, which mandates the submission of data for inclusion on USASpending.gov. OIG found that although two subsets of data were accurate, complete, timely, and of acceptable quality, approximately 70 percent of the certified transactions tested in the remaining subsets did not meet quality requirements.<sup>9</sup>

## GRANT MANAGEMENT

BBG has three grantees that it funds through annual grant agreements: Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, Radio Free Asia, and the Middle East Broadcasting Networks. In FY 2017, the three grantees received \$292 million, which is approximately one-third of BBG's total funding. Because the grantees perform significant operational activities for BBG, weaknesses in grant management can have a substantial effect on BBG's overall operations. Without effective oversight of grantees, the risk of waste, fraud, and abuse of Federal funds increases.

To aid its grant oversight efforts, BBG drafted a grantee monitoring standard operating procedure (SOP) detailing procedures to be used during the life of a grant. An independent auditor acting on OIG's behalf and under OIG's direction selected 15 control activities from the draft SOP to test whether BBG had effectively implemented grantee monitoring; the auditor found that only 9 of those 15 controls were implemented during FY 2017.<sup>10</sup> For example, BBG had not performed risk assessments to finalize the scope and frequency of grantee site visits, issued site visit reports to communicate findings and needed

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>8</sup> OIG, *Audit of Broadcasting Board of Governors FY 2017 Compliance With Improper Payments Requirements* (AUD-FM-IB-18-39, May 2018). Noncompliance with any of the criteria established in Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circular A-123 requires OIG to conclude that BBG is not in overall compliance.

<sup>9</sup> OIG, *Audit of the Broadcasting Board of Governors Implementation of the Digital Accountability and Transparency Act of 2014* (AUD-FM-IB-18-04, November 2017).

<sup>10</sup> AUD-FM-IB-18-10, November 2017.



improvements to its grantees, or obtained Performance Project Reports from its grantees. BBG officials stated that many oversight activities would not be initiated until the draft SOP was fully approved and finalized, which occurred in August 2018.

# Agency Response to the Management and Performance Challenges

October 22, 2018

Mr. Steve A. Linick  
Inspector General  
Office of Inspector General  
U.S. Department of State

Dear Mr. Linick:

The U.S. Agency for Global Media (USAGM) has reviewed the Office of Inspector General's Fiscal Year 2018 Statement on the USAGM's Major Management and Performance Challenges. We appreciate the OIG's work in identifying the core challenges to agency operations, and we are making progress in addressing the OIG's findings and recommendations.

The agency continues to implement OIG recommendations across the spectrum of grants monitoring, financial and property management, and information security management. We understand that how well we manage these functions affects the technical, administrative, personnel, and media assets that underpin our mission, and thus, we are building the infrastructure to support these functions as resources permit.

## **Information Security and Management**

Over the past year, USAGM has taken a number of actions to enhance our information security and risk management posture, and to lay the framework for an effective Enterprise Risk Management Program. I have appointed a Chief Risk Officer (CRO) to lead the design, development, and implementation of the agency's Enterprise Risk Management Program. The CRO has led the agency through a risk identification process and is assessing identified risks, the results of which will be submitted to USAGM's new Risk Management Council. This process will set a standard and an awareness at senior levels – and agency-wide – of the range of risks affecting USAGM, and how risk to any segment of the agency affects all of its parts. In particular, the CRO is working closely with the agency's Chief Information Officer (CIO) and Chief

Information Security Officer to ensure that information security risks are embedded in USAGM's overall risk profile.

Other initiatives include the establishment of a CIO Council, chaired by the CIO and attended by CIOs or equivalent representatives from USAGM's broadcast networks, including its grantees. The CIO Council aims to better assess IT risks and coordinate across broadcast networks. The CIO Council adopted, and I approved, the CIO Council Charter, which establishes a framework under which the CIO Council members can work collaboratively to safeguard federal and non-federal information assets that support the USAGM mission. The delegation to the CIO was updated to include enhanced authorities of a cabinet-level CIO under the Federal Information Technology Acquisition Reform Act ("FITARA"), even though USAGM is not required to delegate these authorities.

In addition, I created a Digital Governance Council and a new stand-alone Chief Technology Officer position to ensure increased awareness and discussion of information management and security issues.

### **Financial and Property Management**

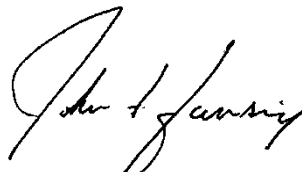
Improvements to the agency's financial and property management continued in Fiscal Year 2018, with strengthened processes for financial management, financial audits, budgetary transactions, procurement transactions, and internal control systems. In particular, the agency has worked to address unliquidated obligations (ULOs) identified by OIG in its Financial Statements Audit. In August 2018, the agency's Chief Financial Officer approved a new Standard Operating Procedure for Reconciliation of Unliquidated Obligations, establishing procedures for the review, analysis, monitoring, processing, and reconciliation of the agency's ULOs.

### **Grants Management**

The agency continues to work with its grantees to ensure compliance with its grant agreements. In 2018, USAGM's Office of the Chief Financial Officer issued a new Grants Management Standard Operating Procedure that should address OIG concerns regarding the agency's processes to exercise financial and other management controls in overseeing the agency's three corporate grantees.

Let me take this opportunity to commend you and your staff for the professionalism and cooperation in working with USAGM to address its unique challenges. We are committed to working with you to resolve the issues highlighted in your Management Challenges Statement, as well as other issues that the OIG might identify.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John F. Lansing". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "John" and last name "Lansing" clearly distinguishable.

John F. Lansing  
Chief Executive Officer and Director

# Summary of Financial Statement Audit and Management Assurances

TABLE 1

## Summary of Financial Statement Audit

Audit Opinion	Unmodified				
Restatement	No				
Material Weaknesses	Beginning Balance	New	Resolved	Consolidated	Ending Balance
<i>Validity and Accuracy of Obligations</i>	<i>0</i>				<i>0</i>
<i>Total Material Weaknesses</i>	<i>0</i>				<i>0</i>

TABLE 2

**Summary of Management Assurances**

Effectiveness of Internal Control over Financial Reporting (FMFIA § 2)						
Statement of Assurance	Statement of Limited Assurance					
Material Weaknesses	Beginning Balance	New	Resolved	Consolidated	Reassessed	Ending Balance
Total Material Weaknesses	N/A					
Effectiveness of Internal Control over Operations (FMFIA § 2)						
Statement of Assurance	Statement of Limited Assurance					
Material Weaknesses	Beginning Balance	New	Resolved	Consolidated	Reassessed	Ending Balance
Total Material Weaknesses	N/A					
Conformance with financial management system requirements (FMFIA § 4)						
Statement of Assurance	Statement of Limited Assurance					
Non-Conformances	Beginning Balance	New	Resolved	Consolidated	Reassessed	Ending Balance
Total Non-Conformances	N/A					

# Reporting on Payment Integrity

Improper payments are payments that should not have been made or were made in the incorrect amount, which can include duplicate payments, payments to ineligible recipients, payments made for goods or services not received, or payments made without sufficient supporting documentation to discern whether the payment was proper. To improve the integrity and accuracy of the federal Government's payments, Congress initially enacted the Improper Payments Information Act (IPIA) of 2002 (P.L. 107-300). IPIA requires federal agencies to:

- Review their programs and activities annually;
- Identify programs that may be susceptible to significant improper payments;
- Estimate amounts improperly paid; and
- Report improper payment amounts and the actions taken to reduce them.

In July 2010, Congress passed the *Improper Payments Elimination and Recovery Act* (IPERA) which amended IPIA and Section 831 of the Defense Authorization Act of 2002, also known as the Recovery Auditing Act. IPERA strengthened IPIA by increasing management accountability and requiring additional efforts to recover improper payments.

There have been numerous updates and changes with the most recent being in June 2018, the Office of Management and Budget released a revised Circular A-123, Appendix C, *Requirements for Payment Integrity Improvement*, M-18-20. The revised Appendix C is a critical piece of the guidance needed to improve the prevention of improper payments under the Getting Payments Right Cross Agency Priority Goal.

The USAGM is dedicated to maintaining the strength of our improper payments program to ensure payments are legitimate, processed correctly and efficiently. The Office of Chief Financial Officer (OCFO) is responsible for reviewing and reporting the USAGM's improper payments annually. They perform the processes and procedures to comply with the requirements of OMB Circular A-123 Appendix C.

More detailed information on improper payments and all of the information previously reported that is not included in the FY 2018 PAR is available at <https://paymentaccuracy.gov>.

## **IMPROPER PAYMENT REPORTING**

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On May 30, 2018 OMB reviewed and approved the request for relief thereby allowing USAGM to remove Domestic Payroll as a highly susceptible program. USAGM requested relief on the basis that in FY 2017, in the area of Domestic Payroll, the improper payment estimated results were below the thresholds set for IPERA for the second consecutive year.

USAGM performs a quantitative risk assessment on all of its major programs and activities on a three-year rotational cycle. The major risk factors considered were validity of obligation, confirmation of receipt of services or goods, correct vendor issuance and correct amount paid. In FY 2018, International Broadcasting Bureau (IBB) disbursements were randomly sample tested, along with all disbursements made to grantees, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL) and Middle East Broadcasting Network (MBN). As a result of quantitative risk assessment testing, none of the programs were determined to be susceptible to significant improper payments. Significant improper payments are defined as gross annual improper payments in a program exceeding both 1.5 percent of program outlays and \$10,000,000 of all program or activity made during the fiscal year or \$100,000,000 regardless of the improper payment percentage of total program outlays.

USAGM has no programs that are deemed susceptible to significant improper payments, therefore we perform a risk assessment every three years.

## **RECAPTURE OF IMPROPER PAYMENTS REPORTING**

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IPERA requires agencies to conduct payment recapture audits for each program and activity that expends \$1 million or more annually, unless the agency determines that a payment recapture audit program would not be cost-effective. Based on the results of the USAGM's qualitative and quantitative risk assessments, data mining efforts, and the USAGM's payment composition (large volume, low dollar payments), the USAGM determined that it would not be cost-



effective to pursue a recapture audit program. With the concurrence of the Department of State Office of Inspector General, OMB granted a recapture audit waiver on June 2, 2015, which remains in effect unless circumstances change.

The USAGM has a process in place to identify and recapture improper payments during the normal course of its invoice processing and funds monitoring. In FY 2018, the USAGM identified \$59,340 of erroneous trade payments. Through vendor notification we recovered or resolved \$59,333, which includes one overpayment from the prior fiscal year. The percentage of recovered overpayments identified in FY 2018 is 99.99%. Recovered funds are returned to the original obligation. The amounts identified and recovered in FY 2018 are shown in Table 1.

<b>Table 1</b> <b>Overpayments Recaptured Outside of Payment Recapture Audits</b> (\$ in millions)		
<b>Program or Activity</b>	<b>Amount Identified in FY 2018</b>	<b>Amount Recaptured in FY 2018</b>
Voice of America (VOA)	\$ 0.03	\$ 0.03
International Broadcasting Bureau (IBB)	0.02	0.02
Technology, Services and Innovation (TSI)	0.01	0.01
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 0.06</b>	<b>\$ 0.06</b>

## AGENCY IMPROVEMENT OF PAYMENT ACCURACY WITH THE DO NOT PAY INITIATIVE

Do Not Pay is a Department of Treasury initiative that offers a centralized system for agencies to use to identify ineligible recipients and potential improper payments. Currently the USAGM submits to Treasury batch files of vendor payments after processing for review and analysis. In FY 2018, three payments totaling \$106,144 were made to a vendor on GSA's Excluded Parties List as part of a GSA wide contract for utility power in an area with no utility power vendor alternative. The vendor was removed from the GSA Excluded Parties Listing later in FY 2018.

Disbursements involving payroll, intragovernmental transactions, and Department of State overseas processed transactions are not included in the batch files submitted by USAGM. USAGM did not perform reviews with any other databases not listed in IPERIA.

## **FRAUD REDUCTION REPORT**

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USAGM is committed to implementing financial and administrative controls by combating fraud and fosters an atmosphere of ethical integrity and accountability. The agency has clearly defined areas of authority and responsibility and holds employees accountable for their internal control responsibilities. USAGM performs routine background checks on all employees and contractors with system accesses.

USAGM has designed and implemented the fraud risk principle in the Standards for internal controls over major processes to identify and mitigate fraud risk and implemented the OMB Circular A-123 for managing fraud risk. These processes include payroll, grants, large contracts, and purchase and travel cards. Some of the major efforts to heighten awareness and reduce the risk of fraud include training, oversight efforts, and automated system controls. Our financial management and timekeeping system controls are designed to prevent unauthorized access, maintain segregation of duties, and set appropriate authorization levels using automated workflows. In fiscal year 2018, we continued to address and strengthen our transactions processing to implement the DATA Act reporting and established an enterprise risk management (ERM) program to identify and prioritize fraud risks.

In FY 2018, USAGM received an OIG report of investigation for grantee Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL) on financial irregularities occurring between 2012 and 2015. RFE/RL had previously reported litigation involving a property management arrangement where RFE/RL had prepaid for services they failed to receive and therefore had an accounts receivable recorded in their financial records. In addition to receiving the OIG report, in FY 2018 RFE/RL reported that it was unlikely they would recoup the funds, therefore a determination was made that the accounts receivable was required to be removed from their financial records. USAGM recouped \$800,000 of the \$1.97M in FY 2018 and the remainder will be recouped in FY 2019 and FY 2020.

USAGM fully implemented an automated employee self-entry payroll system in FY 2017 which greatly increased the transparency of payroll activity across the agency. A variety of payroll information is distributed each pay period to senior management of the major program area so there is increased visibility on payroll activity for their programs.

USAGM addresses the fraud risk related to its procurement of large contracts by requiring the authorization of purchases by someone other than the requester, awarding contracts through a competitive and transparent process, by removing employees with conflicts of interest from the procurement process, and by requiring the USAGM acquisition workforce to undergo procurement-related ethics training on an annual basis. This includes contract specialists, contracting officers and contracting officer's representatives. USAGM addresses fraud risk related to its payment of invoices by maintaining segregation of duties in the receipt, authorization, and payment of invoices received for goods or services. Additionally, in the accounts payable process the financial processing system automatically verifies that the vendor paid is the contracted vendor, that funds are available on the obligation and that the billing period is within the period of performance. USAGM also submits the payment batch files to the Treasury's Do Not Pay database to identify ineligible recipients.

For travel and credit card purchases, a variety of reports are available to supervisors and managers to assist in performing oversight, increasing activity awareness and detecting fraud. USAGM reviews the Merchant Category Codes and places appropriate restrictions to prevent and deter unauthorized purchases on both the purchase and travel card. Routine reviews of travel card activity is done to determine if charges are occurring outside of the travel period dates. Additionally, travel voucher reviews are performed to ensure travel expenses are allowable and in accordance with the Federal Travel Regulation.

Another way the agency detects improper payments, including fraudulent payments, is through improper payment reviews which are systematically conducted on all of USAGM's programs on a rotating basis. These reviews verify that payments were for authorized purchases and processed for correct amounts. USAGM has an OIG hotline for individuals to report suspected irregularities and fraud for further evaluation and action.

Regardless of the detection method, improper payments are recovered whenever feasible and evaluated for root cause to adapt control activities, including improving fraud risk management. Any suspected fraud is addressed through disciplinary actions such as demotions, pay decreases, suspension or termination of employment; debarment of contractors; and/or referral to the OIG for further investigation.

# Report on Grants Oversight & New Efficiency (GONE) Act Requirements

Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL), Radio Free Asia (RFA), and Middle East Broadcasting Networks (MBN) are surrogate networks that receive legislatively mandated grantee funding from USAGM each fiscal year.

The grantees are organized and managed as private, independent, non-profit corporations. Grant funds are issued periodically throughout the year on an advance basis and liquidated based on actual expenses incurred by the grantee. The chart below denotes the number of open grants related to the three designated grantees.

CATEGORY	2-3 Years	>3-5 Years	>5 Years
Number of Grants/Cooperative Agreements with Zero Dollar Balances	6	3	41
Number of Grants/Cooperative Agreements with Undisbursed Balances	-0-	-0-	-0-
Total Amount of Undisbursed Balances	-0-	-0-	-0-

If the grantee has carryover funds, they request approval from USAGM to retain the funds. USAGM reviews the request and makes a determination on the request. Because the nature of the grant is continuous, both for funding and execution of the mission, USAGM does not close out these grant agreements even though there are no undisbursed balances to the grantee remaining.

*On cover: Current Time's reporters cover Russia and provide an alternative to Kremlin-controlled news; RFE/RL's Radio Farda and VOA Persian provided round-the-clock coverage of protests in Iran in December 2017 and January 2018 (AP Photo, File); Reporter Linord Moudou covers health issues for VOA's Africa 54; VOA and RFA reach a combined weekly audience of 65 million in China — the largest portion of this audience from online platforms, including web and social media. (REUTERS/Thomas Peter)*



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