BBG | Broadcasting Board of Governors

VOA  RadioFreeEurope RadioLiberty  Martí  RFA  MBN  IBB

# FY 2018 CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET JUSTIFICATION

# Table of Contents

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# Executive Summary

## The Broadcasting Board of Governors
($ in thousands)

| International Broadcasting Operations | FY 2016 Enacted | FY 2017 Annualized CR | FY 2018 Request |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Federal Entities** | | | |
| Voice of America | $218,450 | $221,133 | $199,756 |
| Office of Cuba Broadcasting | $27,140 | $28,169 | $23,656 |
| International Broadcasting Bureau | $61,200 | $60,300 | $52,863 |
| *Internet Freedom; Anti-Censorship (non-add to IBB starting in FY 2017)* | *$15,000* | *$15,000* | *$10,000* |
| Office of Technology, Services, and Innovation | $181,483 | $175,752 | $166,092 |
| **Total, Federal Entities** | **$488,273** | **$485,354** | **$442,367** |
| **Non-Federal Entities** | | | |
| Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (with OCO in FY 2016) | $108,414 | $109,900 | $99,600 |
| Radio Free Asia | $38,500 | $39,846 | $35,296 |
| Middle East Broadcasting Networks (with OCO in FY 2016) | $109,600 | $108,400 | $103,100 |
| **Total, Non-Federal Entities** | **$256,514** | **$258,146** | **$237,996** |
| **Total, International Broadcasting Operations** | **$744,787** | **$743,500** | **$680,363** |
| Broadcasting Capital Improvements | $4,800 | $4,791 | $4,791 |
| **Total, Broadcasting Capital Improvements** | **$4,800** | **$4,791** | **$4,791** |
| **BBG Grand Total—Appropriation/Request** | **$749,587** | **$748,291** | **$685,154** |

**"Our foreign policy calls for a direct, robust and meaningful engagement with the world… Free nations are the best vehicle for expressing the will of the people – and America respects the right of all nations to chart their own path. My job is not to represent the world. My job is to represent the United States of America. But we know that America is better off, when there is less conflict – not more."**

*President Donald J. Trump, February 28, 2017*

For Fiscal Year (FY) 2018, the President is requesting $685.1 million for the Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG). Although the funding request represents an 8.4 percent reduction from the FY 2017 annualized CR level, the Administration has prioritized funding for countering Russian misinformation, combatting violent extremism, and

enhancing programming for North Korean audiences in this request.

BBG is the U.S. government's civilian international media agency, comprising 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). Collectively, the five networks of the BBG are known as U.S. International Media, or USIM.

One of the largest media organizations in the world, BBG provides content in 61 languages to a record measured audience of 278 million people each week in more than 100 countries on radio, television, and digital media platforms with some 4,000 employees, 1,500 stringer reporters, and 50 news bureaus. BBG's extensive network of seasoned, well-respected and well-connected journalists is particularly strong in regions where the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS), Russia, Iran, China, and other global actors that do not share American values are attempting to make further inroads.

BBG is committed to making efficient and effective use of taxpayer resources and continuing to achieve significant impact in the world by prioritizing spending in key areas; scaling back outdated transmission methods in favor of platforms more appropriate for key audiences, including digital media and television; and achieving efficiencies through improved coordination among its five broadcast networks.

In a difficult, even hostile, global political and media environment, support for U.S. international broadcasting is a critical component of American power, security, and prosperity. Consistent with America's commitment to free speech and free expression, the BBG's networks advance U.S. national interests 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. BBG's networks demonstrate to the world the values that reflect American society: freedom, openness, and democracy. Societies that embrace these values support U.S. interests because they enjoy greater stability and prosperity, engage more peacefully with their neighbors, more forcefully reject terrorism and extremism, and make better political allies and trade partners for the United States.

## GLOBAL OPERATING ENVIRONMENT: MORE MEDIA, LESS MEDIA FREEDOM

In a world awash in media, with interconnected platforms that are widely available through digital and social media, governments and non-state actors have weaponized information to generate a relentless, sophisticated stream of false narratives that often go unchallenged and therefore gain credibility, creating a false view of reality. ISIS and Boko Haram exploit modern media tools to promote extremist views, sow seeds of discontent, and subvert democratic ideals.

At the same time, the forces of democracy and free expression are also active. People around the world raise their voices and mobilize to protest abuses of authority, to curb pervasive

corruption, and hold leaders accountable. Their tools, too, are those of modern popular expression – social media, mobile phones, and software to circumvent internet censorship.

Media use and consumption patterns vary widely by market, but certain trends are clear. Television remains the dominant medium worldwide for news and entertainment. The internet now outstrips radio as a source for news in more-developed media environments, and social media show unabated, explosive growth nearly everywhere. Radio – especially on the FM band –

remains a powerful medium in much of the developing world.

Yet even as information sources and platforms proliferate, access to accurate, free, and open information is eroding. Global media freedom has steadily deteriorated over the past decade. This year, internet freedom declined for the sixth consecutive year, according to Freedom House, as more governments censor information of public interest while expanding surveillance and cracking down on privacy tools.

## MISSION AND ROLES

The BBG's founding legislation requires the agency to:

- inform people through accurate, objective, and comprehensive news;

- represent American society, culture, and thinking;

- and present and discuss U.S. policy.

BBG's mission statement reflects these statutory imperatives: "to inform, engage, and connect people around the world in support of freedom and democracy."

BBG's five networks pursue this mission through complementary, reinforcing roles and cooperate through the U.S. International Media Coordinating Committee (ICC), which is chaired by the BBG Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and meets regularly to efficiently and effectively coordinate operations and develop strategy. RFE/RL, RFA, and OCB

emphasize domestic news for their geographically-defined audiences. Covering developments specific to their target markets is their specialty, most notably in countries without a free press or in transition. At the same time, each also covers regional and international issues and events (including those in the United States, as warranted) to ensure comprehensive news coverage. VOA emphasizes international and regional news and in-depth coverage of the United States. VOA also covers local events to ensure comprehensive news coverage, especially in areas where it is the only BBG presence, such as sub-Saharan Africa. MBN provides a full range of international, regional, and local news in Arabic as well as thorough coverage of the United States.

## TRUST AND CREDIBILITY

The BBG networks accomplish their goals by building relationships of trust and credibility with global audiences. In addition to high-quality, fact-based news and information, BBG engages audiences and connects them with one another and with the wider world, including by providing technologies that circumvent Internet censorship.

BBG credibility is further bolstered and reach extended through news and information in vernacular languages as well as global languages. With the high levels of trust that audiences place in them, BBG's networks become a go-to source in times of crisis or to verify other information sources.

Discerning news-seekers shun propaganda and content that they believe is not trustworthy. A legally mandated "firewall" prohibits political interference in the agency's content, ensuring that journalists and editors can develop programming that reflects the highest professional standards of journalism.

## ELEVATED IMPACT MEASUREMENTS

While BBG's measured weekly audiences have grown by 113 million since 2010 to a record 278 million, impact is more than just reaching audiences. As part of the agency's aggressive reform efforts, BBG has developed and implemented an Impact Model to assess whether its programming makes a difference – what changes occur as a result of the agency's work – among audiences, local media, and governments. Rooted in the agency's mission statement, the model tracks progress in the areas of informing, engaging and connecting, and being influential. The Impact Model allows BBG to track, understand, and explain its accomplishments with a host of mission-relevant indicators.

## BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

BBG is committed to ongoing strategic and operational improvements. The FY 2018 Budget Request contains proposals to migrate to the most effective media platforms, respond readily to crises, keep pace with audiences in terms of their demographic composition and interests, and sharpen strategy and results measurement to drive performance.

BBG will more narrowly target resources in order to achieve operational efficiencies to effectively perform its statutory missions and support U.S. foreign policy priorities.

The FY 2018 Request is **$685.1 million, a $63.1 million decrease from the FY 2017 Annualized CR level**, which reflects:

- Proposed reductions across BBG which would likely require the prioritization of certain language services; optimization of information technology; shifting away from shortwave transmissions, where appropriate; reducing staffing through attrition and reductions-in-force, where necessary; and realizing efficiencies in support services;

- $680.4 million for International Broadcasting Operations, including Federal and non-Federal broadcasting entities of which $10.0 million shall be allocated for anti-censorship; and

- $4.7 million for Broadcasting Capital Improvements.

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## Table 1: Summary of Appropriations Chart

### The Broadcasting Board of Governors
### Summary of Appropriations | FY 2016 - FY 2018
($ in thousands)

| International Broadcasting Operations | FY 2016 Enacted | FY 2016 Actuals | FY 2017 Annualized CR | FY 2018 Request | FY 2018 Request compared to FY 2017 Annualized CR |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Federal Entities** | | | | | |
| Voice of America (with OCO in FY 2016 & 2017) | $218,450 | $218,034 | $221,133 | $199,756 | $(21,377) |
| Office of Cuba Broadcasting | $27,140 | $27,573 | $28,169 | $23,656 | $(4,513) |
| International Broadcasting Bureau | $61,200 | $59,306 | $60,300 | $52,863 | $(7,437) |
| *Internet Freedom; Anti-Censorship (non-add to IBB starting in FY 2017)* | *$15,000* | *$7,439* | *$15,000* | *$10,000* | *$(5,000)* |
| Office of Technology, Services, and Innovation | $181,483 | $171,533 | $175,752 | $166,092 | $(9,660) |
| **Total, Federal Entities** | **$488,273** | **$476,446** | **$485,354** | **$442,367** | **$(42,987)** |
| **Non-Federal Entities** | | | | | |
| Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (with OCO in FY 2016) | $108,414 | $108,904 | $109,900 | $99,600 | $(10,300) |
| Radio Free Asia | $38,500 | $51,025 | $39,846 | $35,296 | $(4,550) |
| Middle East Broadcasting Networks (with OCO in FY 2016) | $109,600 | $109,720 | $108,400 | $103,100 | $(5,300) |
| **Total, Non-Federal Entities** | **$256,514** | **$269,649** | **$258,146** | **$237,996** | **$(20,150)** |
| **Total, International Broadcasting Operations** | **$744,787** | **$746,095** | **$743,500** | **$680,363** | **$(63,137)** |
| Broadcasting Capital Improvements | $4,800 | $6,839 | $4,791 | $4,791 | - |
| **Total, Broadcasting Capital Improvements** | **$4,800** | **$6,839** | **$4,791** | **$4,791** | **-** |
| **BBG Grand Total— Appropriation/Request** | **$749,587** | **$752,934** | **$748,291** | **$685,154** | **$(63,100)** |
| **Summary of Resources** | | | | | |
| International Broadcasting Operations Account | $744,787 | $746,095 | $743,500 | $680,363 | $(63,137) |
| Appropriated | $734,087 | $735,395 | $732,800 | $680,363 | $(52,437) |
| Appropriated (Overseas Contingency Operations) | $10,700 | $10,700 | $10,700 | | $(10,700) |
| Broadcasting Capital Improvement Account | $4,800 | $6,839 | $4,791 | $4,791 | - |
| Appropriated | $4,800 | $6,839 | $4,791 | $4,791 | - |
| **BBG Grand Total— Appropriated/Request** | **$749,587** | **$752,934** | **$748,291** | **$685,154** | **$(63,137)** |

## Table 2: Summary of Positions and FTE (by PPA)

### The Broadcasting Board of Governors
### Summary of Positions and FTE | FY 2016 - FY 2018

| | FY 2016 Actuals | | FY 2017 Annualized CR | | FY 2018 Request | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | On-board Positions | Full-time Equivalent | Funded Positions | Full-time Equivalent | Funded Positions | Full-time Equivalent |
| **International Broadcasting Operations** **Federal Employees** | | | | | | |
| VOICE OF AMERICA | **1,078** | **1,074** | **1,106** | **1,096** | **1,025** | **1,011** |
| American/Domestic Employees | 1,056 | 1,055 | 1,082 | 1,082 | 1,004 | 1,004 |
| Foreign Nationals DH/Personnel Service Agreements | 22 | 19 | 24 | 14 | 21 | 7 |
| OFFICE OF CUBA BROADCASTING | **117** | **117** | **120** | **120** | **113** | **113** |
| American/Domestic Employees | 117 | 117 | 120 | 120 | 113 | 113 |
| INTERNATIONAL BROADCASTING BUREAU | **203** | **189** | **193** | **189** | **172** | **168** |
| American/Domestic Employees | 189 | 185 | 193 | 189 | 172 | 168 |
| Foreign Nationals DH/Personnel Service Agreements | 14 | 4 | NA | NA | NA | NA |
| OFFICE OF TECHNOLOGY, SERVICES, AND INNOVATION | **390** | **291** | **448** | **333** | **448** | **333** |
| American/Domestic Employees | 143 | 151 | 187 | 188 | 187 | 188 |
| Foreign Nationals DH/Personnel Service Agreements | 247 | 141 | 261 | 145 | 261 | 145 |
| **Subtotal, Federal Employees** | **1,788** | **1,671** | **1,867** | **1,738** | **1,758** | **1,625** |
| **Independent Grantee Organizations** | | | | | | |
| RADIO FREE EUROPE/RADIO LIBERTY | **623** | | **732** | | **687** | |
| American/Domestic Employees | 623 | | 732 | | 687 | |
| Foreign Nationals DH/Personnel Service Agreements | | | | | | |
| RADIO FREE ASIA | **253** | | **263** | | **220** | |
| American/Domestic Employees | 244 | | 253 | | 210 | |
| Foreign Nationals DH/Personnel Service Agreements | 9 | | 10 | | 10 | |
| MIDDLE EAST BROADCASTING NETWORKS | **869** | | **1,019** | | **975** | |
| American/Domestic Employees | 527 | | 596 | | 555 | |
| Foreign Nationals DH/Personnel Service Agreements | 342 | | 423 | | 420 | |
| **Subtotal, Grantee Employees** | **1,745** | | **2,014** | | **1,882** | |
| **BBG TOTALS** | **3,533** | **1,671** | **3,881** | **1,738** | **3,640** | **1,625** |

# Summary of Major Reduction Proposals

The BBG Budget Request for FY 2018 includes reductions and enables the agency to focus available resources on foreign policy priorities, including Russia, North Korea, and countering violent extremism. The Request permits BBG to maintain investments in modern media platforms, such as television and digital media. In FY 2018, the BBG 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 2017 and FY 2018 funding levels for each entity can be found in the Increases/Decreases charts at the end of each section.

## VOICE OF AMERICA (VOA)

**Reduce Radio Broadcasting and Programming   [$7.3M]**
VOA will reduce radio broadcasting to Afghanistan, Indonesia, Rwanda and Burundi, and Laos. Eliminate programming for Macedonia and potentially merge Latin America (Spanish) with the Office of Cuba Broadcasting.

**Rebalance Content and Programming for Asia   [$5.0M]**
VOA will consolidate its English language content, reduce programming in Thai, eliminate Cantonese programming, and maintain Mandarin as a priority for VOA by shifting resources away from radio, toward more effective investments in next generation digital/social media content and technology. For example, VOA Mandarin will launch an Internet-delivered 24/7 video news stream to China to provide a fact-based alternative to domestic media propaganda about the U.S.

**Reduce Government Staff   [$4.8M]**
VOA will reduce Government staff positions through attrition.

**Reduce Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO) Programs    [$1.8M]**
VOA OCO net reduction reflects a shift of $3 million from OCO to base funding for CVE programming. VOA will reduce OCO-funded television and radio broadcasting to the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) of Pakistan, Turkey, and the Kurdish areas of the Middle East.

### Reduce Operating Costs     [$2.0M]

VOA will reduce overall expenses through cuts in General Operating Expense (GOE), the Broadcast Operations function, the office of the VOA Director, and the London news center.

### Reduce Persian Language   [$1.0M]

VOA will reduce Persian Language broadcasts to Iran. This will not impact the number of broadcast hours as more repeat programming will be included. Work will also be redistributed for greater productivity.

## OFFICE OF CUBA BROADCASTING (OCB)

### Reduce Contractor Support   [$2.4M]

OCB will reduce the number of contractors who currently support the OCB program offices. Current federal employees will be trained to perform lost contractor functions wherever possible.

### Reduce Government Staff   [$1.3M]

OCB will eliminate vacant staff positions and reduce the number of government positions through attrition.

### Eliminate Ineffective Leased Broadcast Transmissions     [$0.5M]

OCB will eliminate ineffective leased broadcast transmissions such as commercial satellite and supplementary AM frequencies.

## INTERNATIONAL BROADCASTING BUREAU (IBB)

### Reductions in Internet Freedom Programs    [$5.0M]

IBB will reduce various Internet Freedom areas and shift focus to high interest areas. IBB will seek reductions across its portfolio, described in the Appendix, in order to identify savings. A major area of focus will be further leveraging private sector partnerships and expertise. Another is to increase cooperation and eliminate any potential duplication with other government agencies operating in this space. Reductions will balance the provision of current services with the research necessary to identify and address future threats.

## Reduce Government Staff   [$2.9M]

IBB will eliminate most of the administrative vacancies that support U.S. international broadcasting efforts. The positions that will be eliminated will come from the Office of the Chief Financial Officer, Office of Contracts, Office of Human Resources, and other support offices.

## TECHNOLOGY, SERVICES, AND INNOVATION (TSI)

### Radio Transmission Reduction   [$5.0M]

TSI will eliminate less effective shortwave and medium wave radio transmission frequencies and those that have low audience impact in order to free up resources for more effective digital and other program delivery technologies. TSI will also reduce, renegotiate, or eliminate costly leased transmission services where possible.

### Global Network Realignment    [$2.0M]

TSI will reduce global network delivery costs by adopting more flexible and effective digital distribution technologies and through consolidation of remaining satellite contracts.

### Administrative and Organizational Efficiencies   [$1.6M]

TSI will find efficiencies, streamline operations, and review contracts to reduce operational costs in order to achieve savings in FY 2018. TSI will also review employee attrition and will hold non-critical positions vacant to realize savings.

### Transmission Station Reductions   [$1.0M]

TSI will close an unused transmitting site managed by the Philippines Transmitting Station and gain operational economies at other stations as overall radio transmission usage declines. The site in the Philippines has not been used for broadcast transmissions for several years since the agency implemented a number of cost saving reductions of less effective transmissions.

## RADIO FREE EUROPE/RADIO LIBERTY (RFE/RL)

### Discontinue Pashto broadcasts to the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) in northwest Pakistan    [$2.2M]

Given that RFE/RL's Afghan Service and Radio Mashaal both broadcast in Pashto, 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. Audiences in northwest Pakistan will continue to be served by VOA Radio Deewa.

**Reduce Russian Service radio and 24/7 news operation      [$0.6M]**

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

**Localize Georgian Service operation in Tbilisi      [$0.3M]**

RFE/RL will transfer a portion of its Georgian Service operation to Tbilisi, keeping only a small group working in Prague.

**Rationalize Radio Farda, continue shift to digital      [$0.3M]**

Farda's key target audiences are increasingly turning to TV and social media for news and information. Farda's digital operations have shown growth in recent years due to a redistribution of its workforce and resources, including doubling audiences on several social media platforms. In addition to radio programming reductions, RFE/RL will reallocate current radio resources toward enhanced digital operations for Persian-speaking audiences.

**Reduce Macedonian language broadcasts      [$0.2M]**

RFE/RL will reduce Macedonian language staffing.

**Discontinue Belarus radio    [$0.2M]**

RFE/RL's Belarus Service airs radio programming on AM (medium wave). An audio stream is available on the Internet and HotBird satellite. This proposed reduction would entail discontinuing all Belarus radio operations however there will be a continuation of audio via the internet as required through podcasts and audio bits on social networks.

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## RADIO FREE ASIA (RFA)

**Focus the Mandarin Service on Social Media      [$4.7M]**

RFA will focus its Mandarin resources on social media, which is the platform the agency has determined to be most cost-effective.

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## MIDDLE EAST BROADCASTING NETWORKS, INC. (MBN)

**Reduce Salary and Support Costs      [$4.1M]**

To reduce salary and benefits costs, MBN will: continue automation efforts in television production systems and make associated staffing changes; realign certain production support functions; eliminate select support positions; and reduce employee support costs.

**Reduce Pan-Arab Live News Updates     [$1.5M]**

Radio Sawa will eliminate live Pan-Arab news updates in the overnight hours across the Middle East. While MBN will rework schedules to ensure the broadest live news availability for Radio Sawa listeners, live news will remain available via Radio Sawa for at least 18 hours per day. On the Pan-Arab Alhurra channel, television news updates will be reduced in length and potentially number to ensure staffing efficiencies. Its two, primetime, hour-long newscasts will continue to anchor the news line-up for Alhurra.

**Eliminate Afia Darfur Programming    [$0.5M]**

MBN launched the 30-minute *Afia Darfur* programming in 2008, initially through funding from the Department of State. *Afia Darfur* is broadcast into Darfur via shortwave each evening at 9:00 p.m. local time and targets all people in Darfur and eastern Chad, and it is heard in Khartoum. With a decade of tailored content already provided, coupled with no current research available to assess its effectiveness, this programming is scheduled for elimination in FY 2018.

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# Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG)

| | FY 2016<br>ACTUAL | FY 2017<br>ANNUALIZED | FY 2018<br>REQUEST | FY 2017-18<br>CHANGE |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| FUNDING<br>($ in thousands) | **$752,934** | **$748,291** | **$685,154** | **($63,137)** |

## BBG REFORM AGENDA AND PRIORITIES

BBG is committed to making efficient and effective use of taxpayer resources and continuing to achieve significant impact in the world by prioritizing spending in key areas; scaling back outdated transmission methods in favor of platforms more appropriate for key audiences, including digital media and television; and achieving efficiencies through improved coordination among its five broadcast networks. Over the past fiscal year, BBG has pushed major reforms and efficiencies across the agency, which it will build upon in FY 2018.

Key reforms were set into motion in September 2015 when the BBG Board delegated operational authorities to a CEO with day-to-day responsibilities. In the months since, BBG greatly improved internal coordination and collaboration, expanded global reach on all media platforms, with particular attention to newer digital means of distributing news, and pursuing a renewed focus on telling America's story to the world.

### Enhanced coordination

A key initial step taken by CEO John Lansing was to convene the ICC, comprised of the network heads of VOA, MBN, OCB, RFE/RL and RFA, to meet on a biweekly basis to coordinate operations, identify areas for coverage, share resources, and develop cost-cutting strategies. Through the ICC, BBG's five networks ensure a regular and open line of communication that allows them to ensure complementary, reinforcing coverage of issues of major U.S. policy import, while reinforcing the CEO's and the Board's emphasis on



The International Media Coordinating Committee (ICC), from left to right: Libby Liu, President of Radio Free Asia; Brian Conniff, President of the Middle East Broadcasting Networks; Amanda Bennett, Director of the Voice of America; John F. Lansing, CEO of the Broadcasting Board of Governors; Maria González, Director of the Office of Cuba Broadcasting; Thomas Kent, President of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty.

avoiding duplication of resources and promoting cost-sharing.

Based on this enhanced coordination and consolidation of goals, BBG achieved significant gains in its quality of content, which it seeks to build on in FY 2018. Notably, RFE/RL and VOA worked together in February 2017 to launch *Current Time*, a Russian-language news network that aims to counter Russian false news and misinformation throughout Europe and in Russia.

Enhanced collaboration is evinced in smaller, yet no less impactful, ways as well. For instance, close contact between VOA and MBN led to the translation into Arabic of stunning footage of Boko Haram's brutal regime for MBN's audience – a key step due to Boko Haram's official affiliation with ISIS. BBG continues to explore other productive collaborations between language services across networks.



BBG's research program uses in-country surveys as one tool to assess media preferences and impact of BBG programming across media.

### Expansion of Research Metrics

The CEO has identified an expansion of research metrics as a top priority, based on a private sector model that assumes robust investment into these analytics. In FY 2017, BBG launched an "impact model" that expands upon the metric of stand-alone audience numbers, and instead aims to measure the impact of BBG's programming in line with the key pillars of its mission to inform, engage, and connect the world in support of freedom and democracy. New goals include replacing "short modules" that were necessitated by lack of funding for full BBG surveys in priority markets.

## Streamlined Internet Circumvention Programs

Additionally in FY 2017, the CEO stood up an Office of Internet Freedom to streamline Federal internet circumvention programs and provide broad oversight of BBG's funding in this area. This office provides a key means of providing responsible management of BBG's work in this critical field, which can expand BBG's audience and impact in countries and regions where totalitarian regimes severely restrict access to BBG's journalism and other sources of news.



Dr. Nnake Nweke became the first Director of the Office of Internet Freedom in July 2016. He is an electrical engineer and attorney with experience in information and communications technology, cybersecurity, internet policy, engineering systems and technology policy.

## Increased Employee Engagement

At the CEO's direction, BBG is also seeking to enhance employee engagement, development, and performance, which will promote better staff productivity and morale. In FY 2018, BBG will launch "Leadership 2020," a comprehensive skills development effort that includes improved performance evaluations and sharpening managers' skills and capacity. BBG has also recently launched a 5-tier performance management system for federal staff, which will help reward strong performers and identify poor ones.

The CEO has also launched several communication platforms to enhance employee engagement directly with senior management, including a "Talk to John" online portal, a biweekly cross-BBG report for all staff on key developments and successes, and quarterly oversight meetings with all managers.

## National Defense Authorization Act

In addition to actions taken by the CEO and the Board, the FY 2017 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) made several important statutory reforms to BBG, including empowering the position of CEO to lead the agency and enhancing contracting and other management authorities.

## The Broadcasting Board of Governors
## Summary of Increases and Decreases | FY 2017-FY 2018
($ in thousands)

| Program Activity | Increases | Decreases | Budget |
|---|---|---|---|
| **FY 2017** | | | |
| **FY 2017 ANNUALIZED CR** | - | - | **$748,291** |
| **PPA Transfers** | **$38,798** | **$38,798** | |
| **REVISED FY 2017 ANNUALIZED CR** | | | **$748,291** |
| **FY 2017-2018**[1] | | | |
| FY 2018 Non-Recurs | - | $1,577 | |
| WAGES (Domestic/U.S)<br>*Salary & Benefits (S&B) for new hires, Within Grades, Pay increase, and Annualization of S&B into FY 2018.* | $7,372 | $5,120 | |
| WAGES<br>(Foreign Service Nationals - FSNs)<br>*Anticipated wage increases for overseas FSN employees.* | $325 | - | |
| CURRENT SERVICE INCREASES | $2,316 | - | |
| CURRENT SERVICES DECREASES | - | $3,921 | |
| PROGRAM INCREASES | - | - | |
| PROGRAM DECREASES | - | $62,532 | |
| **PROGRAM CHANGES TOTAL** | **$10,013** | **$73,150** | |
| **NET PROGRAM CHANGE** | | **$(63,137)** | |
| **TOTAL FY 2018 BBG PROGRAM REQUEST** | | | **$685,154** |

[1] change between "revised FY2017 annualized CR" level and FY18 Request

# Voice of America (VOA)

| | FY 2016<br>ACTUAL | FY 2017<br>ANNUALIZED | FY 2018<br>REQUEST | FY 2017-18<br>CHANGE |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| FUNDING<br>($ in thousands) | **$218,034** | **$221,133** | **$199,756** | **($21,377)** |

## NOTABLE FY 2018 PROGRAM CHANGES

In FY 2018, VOA will confront Russian disinformation by focusing on factual information and alternatives; report on threats to national security and regional stability from North Korea, China and Iran; focus on the causes of violent extremism in Iraq, Iran, Africa, Central/South Asia and Indonesia and on the fight against radical Islam; and strengthen civil society in at-risk portions of Africa, Latin America, Southeast Asia and Eurasia.

VOA will revamp digital operations and shift resources to enable us to increase our reach and impact with at-risk populations through improved technology, and through operations that can more quickly launch digital products and create digital content. In particular, VOA will focus on enhancing next generation digital content and technology to enhance its reach to audiences in China.

VOA will complete its two-year process consolidating administrative services and achieve additional savings through the modernization of and improved efficiency within its Broadcast Operations division. The process entails the centralization and consolidation of VOA administrative support personnel into one cohesive unit, similar to the IBB and TSI organizational structure.

VOA will prioritize funding through a combination of rebalancing its Asian broadcast resources, reducing the scope of activities previously funded by OCO resources, re-prioritizing language services, and staff attrition. VOA will allocate reductions through the following actions:

- **Reduce radio broadcasting to Afghanistan, Central Africa, Indonesia, and Laos.**
- **Eliminate programming for Macedonia and potentially merge Latin America (Spanish) with the Office of Cuba Broadcasting.**

- **Consolidate its English language content, reduce programming in Thai, eliminate Cantonese programming, and maintain Mandarin as a priority for VOA by shifting resources away from radio, toward more effective investments in next generation digital/social media content and technology.**

- **Reduce OCO-funded television and radio broadcasting to the Federally Administered Tribal Areas of Pakistan, Turkey, and the Kurdish areas of the Middle East. This includes an OCO to base shift for CVE programming.**
- **Reduce staff levels through staff attrition and reductions-in-force.**
- **Reduce Persian Language broadcasts to Iran. The result will not impact the number of broadcast**

hours as more repeat programming will be included. Work will also will be redistributed for greater productivity.
- **Apply a 1.5% reduction to General Operating Expenses (GOE) and identify savings from the Broadcast Operations function, the office of the VOA Director, and the London news center.**

## OVERVIEW

VOA focuses on five key areas:

- **Telling America's Story by Providing U.S. Perspectives and Serving as a Model of Free Expression.**
- **Enhancing Reporting on Violent Extremism.**
- **Providing Fact-Based Alternatives to Russian Propaganda.**
- **Providing Uncensored News Content to Un-Free Countries.**
- **Reporting on Democracy and Civil Society**

## FY 2017 ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND FY 2018 INITIATIVES

**Telling America's Story by Providing U.S. Perspectives and Serving as a Model of Free Expression**

FY 2017:



VOA's 47 language services provided comprehensive coverage of the 2016 Elections and the 2017 U.S. Presidential Inauguration for audiences around the world.

- Statements by American politicians are often mistranslated or misrepresented by foreign media. During the U.S. presidential election, VOA undertook an ambitious effort to put the debates between Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton out live, as they happened, in the most strategically important languages: Russian, Persian, Spanish, Chinese, and others. These feeds were unlike anything else delivered by any other

form of media, foreign or domestic, and gave overseas audiences a chance to hear American politicians, in their own words, lay out their plans to run the United States. Delivery was done on the most popular platforms, including VOA sites, Facebook Live, and YouTube Live, ensuring that anyone engaging with VOA in these languages would have seen these debates in real time in their language. In addition, President Trump's inaugural address was carried live around the world in more than a dozen languages.

■ VOA traveled throughout the U.S., from Minnesota to the Mississippi River to Silicon Valley, to tell America's stories to the world. VOA opened a Silicon Valley news bureau to cover the ongoing U.S. contributions to the world technology and innovation revolution, one story profiled a Russian-born entrepreneur who told of "the surprising kindness and support of total strangers" in Silicon Valley and of the "stark difference" between America and the environment he left in Russia.

■ VOA Russian also expanded *Lexicon*, its original, social video encyclopedia of American politics, that made phrases such as "political

correctness," "confirmation hearings," and "checks and balances" easy to understand.

■ VOA Africa sent reporters around the U.S. to tell the stories of Africans in the United States who personify America's story.



*Beyond the Unicorn* profiles African entrepreneurs navigating the unique world of Silicon Valley's tech startups as they pursue of their dreams of success.

■ VOA will premiere *Beyond the Unicorn*, an original documentary spotlighting African technology innovators in the Silicon Valley. No other facet of American culture reaches so deeply into people's lives as technology. A large number of the world's mobile devices, its social networks, its e-commerce companies were born in Silicon Valley. This is why VOA opened its first bureau there: to tell the story of the people who come from around the world to try their luck in America's innovation capital.

FY 2018:
■ VOA will expand the simultaneous translation model pioneered during last year's election. We plan to simultaneously translate major congressional hearings, key political speeches and other important

American news events, reaching global audiences on TV, radio and social media, in all of BBG's key languages.

- America's story is not limited to its big cities. That is why we are sending our reporters out to cover America's heartland, its small towns, and its out-of-the-way places. These rural regions will continue to drive American policy in ways that overseas audiences may not understand. In 2018 "Off the Highway" will explore the views of those living in rural America. This multimedia project will address key issues they face, from healthcare to immigration to America's place in the world.

- In 2018 the Silicon Valley bureau will expand to rotate reporters in from across VOA so they can cover stories important to their regions.

## Enhancing Reporting on Violent Extremism

FY 2017:
VOA provides reporting on extremism and ISIS, directly from conflict zones in Afghanistan, Pakistan, Syria, and Iraq to large audiences in all of its 47 languages.
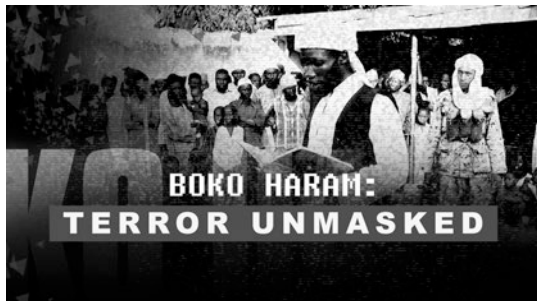


- VOA's *Terror Unmasked* used footage captured from Boko Haram to carefully expose the group's misuse of Islam and highlight the effectiveness of the African military campaign, aided by U.S. surveillance, against the terrorists.

- VOA Georgian reported on the fraudulent promises of ISIS that lured young recruits from an area of Georgia influenced by Chechen extremists.

- VOA's Extremism Watch Desk mined local coverage and social media in 10 languages, exposing narratives that promote violent religious extremism and terrorism, and distributing its reports widely on social media as well as VOA broadcasts. In a carefully crafted multipart report, *Descent into Jihad*, it chronicled the pressures that led a successful astronomer to join ISIS, and the road to his death.

FY 2018:

- VOA will produce documentaries about radical Islam in Africa that can be widely used both by local mass media and in other forums, including universities and U. S. embassies.



With a mission to news to Russian-speaking audiences everywhere, *Current Time* is engaging audiences from Lithuania to Kazakhstan and providing an alternative to Kremlin-sponsored media.

## Providing Fact-based Alternatives to Russian Propaganda

FY 2017:

- VOA expanded television and digital programming from the United States in a daily one-hour *Current Time America* TV newscast for Russia and the former Soviet Union. The broadcasts, in partnership with RFE/RL, were complemented by a robust digital component that engages and connects with global audiences via social media and other platforms, including *Briefing*, a daily digest that looks at Russian misreporting about America; *Russians in America*, a TV documentary series highlighting the lives of everyday Russian immigrants to the U.S.; and Polygraph.info, a VOA and RFE/RL fact-checking website that separates fact from fiction, adds context and debunks lies. In Eurasia, VOA expanded the number of affiliates it serves with U.S. news to more than 200, to counter Russia's increased penetration of the Balkans. VOA's Albanian, Bosnian, Macedonian, Serbian, and Ukrainian services expanded their reporting across broadcast and digital platforms with a particular focus on providing fact-based alternatives, including a hard-hitting documentary series produced by VOA Serbian about the Kremlin's influence in the country.

FY 2018:

- VOA's Russian Service will premiere additional *Current Time* programming traveling to places of significance in the U.S. to hold discussions with ordinary Americans with roots in Russia about their lives and experiences in the U.S.

## Providing Uncensored News Content to Un-Free Countries

FY 2017:

VOA used cutting-edge technologies to reach into some of the most censored nations in the world, integrating with an open source web proxy to break through Internet restrictions in places like China, Tibet, Iran, Vietnam, and the Horn of Africa, where VOA has some of its biggest audiences on mobile.

- VOA Korean produced video segments aimed at the border areas of North Korea to provide accurate world news and information about life in America.

- VOA Mandarin began a daily one-hour newscast in China, providing Chinese with news from the U.S. that they would not otherwise see.

- VOA Persian expanded live coverage of Congressional hearings on Iran.

- VOA Zimbabwe added television transmission of its radio broadcasts in response to government censorship of news.

- VOA's Horn of Africa services launched a satellite-delivered 24/7 "radio with pictures" service to Ethiopia to break through jamming of shortwave frequencies.



VOA Zimbabwe's *Studio 7 Live Talk* is a call-in show that is broadcast on television as well as radio.

FY 2018:

VOA Mandarin will launch an Internet-delivered 24/7 video news stream to China as well as enhance next generation digital/social media content and technology, to provide a fact-based alternative to domestic media propaganda about the U.S. VOA Persian will add news programming focusing on Iran's non-Persian minorities.

## Reporting on Democracy and Civil Society



Participants in a town hall hosted by VOA's Somali service conversed with Somali President Hassan Sheikh Mohamoud in both Somalia and in St. Paul, Minnesota, home to the largest Somali community in the U.S.

FY 2017:

■ VOA's coverage of the U.S. Presidential election provided worldwide audiences with a view into the U.S. system of government and its peaceful transition of power. VOA journalists provided on-the-scene correspondent reports for overseas broadcast affiliates and foreign language packages on diaspora involvement in primaries, party conventions, Election Day, and Inauguration Day. Event coverage, including Presidential debates, political convention speeches, and election night and aftermath addresses were live streamed and simultaneously translated by VOA. Political events were put in context for international audiences.

■ VOA Somali linked voters in Mogadishu with Somali-Americans in Minnesota in a first-ever, live broadcast, interactive town hall on terrorism with Somalia's president. VOA Ukrainian began a monthly live "bridge" program connecting Ukrainian lawmakers with their counterparts in the U.S. Congress to discuss challenges affecting both

countries. VOA's Deewa service launched a daily 60-minute TV and radio program monitoring reform in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas of Pakistan, an incubator of regional terrorism. Investigations by VOA Albanian into local corruption resulted in the jailing of several judges. VOA's *Straight Talk Africa* host Shaka Ssali moderated Uganda's first presidential debate in 30 years, broadcasting live from the capital, Kampala. VOA Urdu launched a nightly newscast for Pakistan – a country where democracy is fragile.

- In May 2017, VOA hosted a live global town hall from George Washington University on studying in the United States, as a part of its expanded Town Hall and live events initiative. This broadcast streamed live over Facebook, YouTube, and satellite and boasts a world-class panel of educators from Stanford University, Wellesley College, Michigan State University, American University, Johns Hopkins, and George Washington University who discussed the cultural and educational challenges facing foreign students who aspire to attend American universities.



VOA's *Education Destination USA* town hall connected with aspiring and current international students from around the world.

FY 2018:

- A degree from an American university offers the ticket to success and prestige around the world, which is why the United States hosts more international students than any other country. Covering those students has become a critical part of VOA's mission. In order to make VOA the definitive source for everything from information on how to gain a visa to admissions to paying for college, VOA will contract bloggers in FY 2018 to tell this story from the perspective of students, administrators, and citizens of other countries who aspire to study here.

- In FY 2017, VOA created a series of "bridge editor" positions, stationed across the language services. These editors are embedded with their language service counterparts and work to quickly and efficiently take reporting from across the globe and translate into English for distribution to all VOA services. In FY 2018, VOA will further expand the bridge editor concept into bridge teams, who continue to expand the model and ensure VOA gets maximum use out of its reporting.

## Monitoring and Evaluation

FY 2017:
- Using best of class research from the worldwide Gallup research organization to shape programming and measure impact, VOA realized significant audience growth, from a measured weekly audience of 187.7 million in FY 2016 to 236.6 million in FY 2017, and increased its penetration of Latin America and Indonesia on affiliated broadcast stations. VOA also achieved strong social media growth, with large gains in Facebook engagement and video viewership in virtually every one of its markets. VOA brought program evaluation and research in-house to provide more actionable information to content creators through comprehensive evaluations of each VOA program service. Additional qualitative research by Gallup enabled language services to monitor their credibility and impact. VOA systematically tracked anecdotal information, including from Thae Young-ho, the highest ranking diplomat to defect from North Korea, who stressed that the regime there "pays great attention on the contents of VOA," and Venezuela opposition leader Corina Machado, who called VOA "a voice for the people of Venezuela."

FY 2018:
- VOA research and evaluation will focus more on digital studies and advance its capacity for and the use of monitoring, evidence, and evaluation of the design, effectiveness, and efficiency of programs and projects.

- In spite of an overall downward trend in app audiences, integrated circumvention tools have delivered growing audiences in China, Tibet, Iran, Vietnam, and the Horn of Africa. In 2018 VOA will deliver an app focused on China and Iran that will deliver broadcast content with strong integrated circumvention technology from Psiphon, one of the BBG's circumvention partners. This is not just an audience play—it is a strategy for using cutting-edge technologies to reach into some of the most censored nations in the world.

## Administrative, Digital, and Technical

FY 2017:

In order to reduce expenses in non-content producing areas, VOA consolidated administrative staff to improve efficiency, standardize and streamline business processes, foster skill development, and enhance productivity. VOA implemented money-saving bonded cellular transmission technology from the scene of breaking news events, freeing the organization from expensive satellite transmission costs, and began High Definition broadcasts from its studios to match world standards.

VOA experienced its strongest audience growth ever in digital and mobile:

- Social media growth is strong, with large gains in Facebook engagement. Bosnian is up 220%, Hausa 202%, Macedonian 462%, Urdu 270%, and Shona 354% from last year.

- VOA continues to see sizable increases in Facebook video viewership. Among the highlights are Urdu at 302% yearly growth, Bosnian at 252%, and Kurdish at 119%.

- Several VOA services have seen audience surges to audio content for the first time in years. English is up 238%, averaging 196,000 audio plays per week; Amharic is up 591%, averaging 700,000 weekly play; and Vietnamese is up 1,507% with 892,000 weekly plays.

- VOA Vietnamese continues to garner large audiences in video, generating over 37 million views across platforms in FY 2017 thus far.

FY 2018:

- VOA will implement labor-saving technical initiatives in its production control rooms and master control areas. It will complete its multiyear High Definition project, achieving full end-to-end HD and IP integration to more efficiently process incoming and outgoing video content.

- VOA Operations will shift resources to enhance next generation digital/social media technology, focusing on China.

## Voice of America
## Summary of Increases and Decreases | FY 2017-FY 2018
($ in thousands)

| Program Activity | Increases | Decreases | Budget |
|---|---|---|---|
| **FY 2017** | | | |
| **FY 2017 ANNUALIZED CR** | - | - | **$218,200** |
| **PPA Transfers** | **$3,181** | **$248** | |
| a) Transfer for IBB realignment | $2,676 | | |
| b) Music Research | $150 | | |
| c) Transfer for staff realignment | $105 | | |
| d) Transfer for North Korea programming | $250 | | |
| e) J1 Visa | | $14 | |
| f) VOA Renovations | | $218 | |
| g) Teradek Modem | | $16 | |
| **REVISED FY 2017 ANNUALIZED CR** | **-** | **-** | **$221,133** |
| **FY 2017-2018[1]** | | | |
| WAGES (Domestic/U.S) *Salary & Benefits (S&B) for new hires, Within Grades, Pay increase, and Annualization of S&B into FY 2018.* | $1,800 | - | |
| WAGES (Foreign Service Nationals - FSNs) *Anticipated wage increases for overseas FSN employees.* | | - | |
| CURRENT SERVICE INCREASES *Return of Non-Base one-time Transfer in FY 2017* | $123 $123 | - | |
| CURRENT SERVICES DECREASES *Non recur of FY 17 one-time transfer* | - | $400 $400 | |
| PROGRAM INCREASES | - | - | |
| PROGRAM DECREASES | - | $22,900 | |
| *Language Service Reductions* | | $8,300 | |
| *Rebalance Content and Programming for Asia* | | $5,000 | |
| *Net OCO to base reduction[2]* | | $1,800 | |
| *Support Office and Overseas Bureau Reductions* | | $1,976 | |
| *Staffing Reduction (through attrition)* | | $4,800 | |
| *Reduce travel, training, supplies, contracts, etc.* | | $1,024 | |
| **PROGRAM CHANGES TOTAL** | **$1,923** | **$23,300** | |
| **NET PROGRAM CHANGE** | **-** | **$14,600** | |
| **TOTAL FY 2018 VOA PROGRAM REQUEST** | **-** | **-** | **$199,756** |

[1] change between "revised FY2017 annualized CR" level and FY'18 Request

[2] FY 2017 annualized CR assumes $4.8M in OCO for VOA. FY 2018 budget contains $3M for activities previously funded by OCO.

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# Office of Cuba Broadcasting (OCB)

| | FY 2016<br>ACTUAL | FY 2017<br>ANNUALIZED | FY 2018<br>REQUEST | FY 2017-18<br>CHANGE |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| FUNDING<br>($ in thousands) | $27,573 | $28,169 | $23,656 | ($4,513) |

## NOTABLE FY 2018 PROGRAM CHANGES

- **Reduce contractor support. Current federal employees will be trained to perform lost contractor functions.**
- **Eliminate most vacant staff positions and reduce other government positions through attrition.**
- **Elimination of ineffective leased broadcast transmissions, such as commercial satellite and supplementary AM frequencies.**
- **Reduce administrative costs, including travel, training, and equipment.**

BBG is exploring the possibility of finding efficiencies between BBG's two Spanish-language services - OCB and VOA's Latin American (LatAm) division. Accordingly, BBG will explore the cost-savings, benefits, and challenges of different organizational structures and, if savings and efficiencies are possible, develop a plan in FY 2017 to capitalize on them. Recognizing the complexity of this issue, BBG will consider various options and speak with stakeholders to obtain all critical information and discern all costs and benefits to changing the current structure.



Alan Gross, the American aid worker imprisoned in Cuba and released in 2015 appeared on TV Martí as an analyst during Martí's coverage of the changes in U.S./Cuba relations.

## OVERVIEW

OCB administers Radio and Television (TV) Martí programs, the *Martínoticias.com* website and its social media platforms from its headquarters in Miami, Florida to the people of Cuba. OCB also administers BBG's shortwave transmitting station in Greenville, N.C.

Working with Cuban independent journalists and encouraging citizens to create user generated content on the island for OCB's platforms continues to be a top priority. As Wi-Fi service begins to expand in Cuba and with substantial numbers of Cubans now using Facebook and other social networking sites, OCB's social media presence dramatically increased during 2016. On Facebook the number of fans reached more than 154,000 from 11,000 at the beginning of 2015. The monthly average number of Cubans on the island reached is approximately 50,000 with a relative growth of +123.52%. In YouTube, the fastest growing platform in Cuba, OCB reached a total of 17,400 subscribers from 515 in July 2016. The average increase in subscriptions is around +415 per month with a maximum increase of 1,300 during the month of April, 2016.

## CUBA TODAY

FY 2016 was a historic year for Cuba. It saw the first visit by a U.S. President in 88 years, the continued normalization of relations with the U.S., and the death of Communist leader Fidel Castro. Despite these developments, international reports showed continued violation of human rights, and journalists and activists were regularly harassed, threatened, and detained. The migration crisis continued and thousands of Cubans were left stranded in Central and Latin America, trying to reach the United States.

Throughout it all, the Martís provided in depth coverage of these stories, and others, that are important to Cuban audiences. OCB's team at the Martis and its extensive network of independent journalists on the island took considerable risk to unearth stories that Cubans would not otherwise have access to.

FY 2018 will mark another critical year in Cuba's history as Raul Castro has announced that he will be stepping down from the presidency.

## 2017 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

### Providing High Quality Local Reporting on Topics Important to Cubans

OCB'S network of independent reporters in Cuba kept growing, spurring the creation of more independent news media agencies on island and the launch of many emergent digital outlets. Radio Marti, OCB's main platform, greatly benefited from the additional independent media on the island willing to contribute to our news programs.

### Cuba Internet Freedom Conference

The Martís took the lead in Internet freedom efforts by hosting the inaugural Cuba Internet Freedom Conference (CIF), in September 2016. The widely-reported event brought together digital innovators and independent journalists from Cuba to discuss how to improve digital rights and foster uncensored access to news and information on the island. At the two-day event, developers, policy makers, nonprofit professionals, entrepreneurs, concerned citizens, and others gathered with Cuban internet innovators to exchange ideas on how to improve access to the internet on the island.

In order to increase the free flow of information among Cubans, and minimize the government's control over this information, the Martis will continue to introduce the latest anti-censorship tools available.



The Cuba Internet Freedom Conference brought Cuban digital pioneers and thought-leaders together to discuss how to improve access to the Internet in Cuba.

### Increased Collaboration with VOA Latin American Service

The Martís increased collaboration with VOA Latin America Division, resulting in financial benefits for the agency and eliminating coverage redundancy. Through their discrete and complementary missions, the Martis and VOA provided blanket coverage of key events ranging from the first U.S. Presidential visit to Cuba, to the Republican and Democratic conventions and the 2016 U.S. Elections – all were produced by combining efforts.



Young Cubans accessing internet. WiFi in Havana is only available in a handful of public locations.

### Dramatic Shift to Digital with a Social Media 1ˢᵗ Strategy

Due to Marti's web blockage on the island, OCB's digital strategy shifted into a social media first strategy consistent with the metrics that place YouTube, Google and Facebook among the most visited sites in Cuba.

With the use of AVRA technology, Radio Marti programs evolved into visual radio and were also streamed via Facebook live along with the TV Martí programming.

### Utilizing Alternate Distribution Methods to Reach the Island

In order to support the free flow of news and information to the island, OCB continued the distribution of DVD's with Marti content. This effort is expected to continue growing and is currently supported by nine copy centers, 18 reception points, and 85 distribution points on island.

## CURRENT FY 2017 AND FY 2018 INITIATIVES

### Revisit Mandates to Adjust to Cuba's Information Environment

The possibility of revisiting the mandates would allow for OCB to depart from technologies that have proven to be ineffective for the region. Also the "open and continuous content distribution" mandate imposes financial burdens and overhead that have limited OCB. Financial disadvantages of running 24/7 operations include significant excess costs due to staffing obligations required to maintain 24/7 broadcast operations.

### Fine Tune Content and Strategy Based on Findings of Research Conducted on Island

For the first time ever a content/media preference poll was conducted in Cuba, allowing for the Martís to better target its audience based on their likings and preferred distribution outlet. As part of OCB's FY 2017 revitalization plan, more synergy has been created among the platforms in order to reduce redundancy and create more efficiency. The staff has been reorganized, allowing for the creation of a new content development unit that will produce more utilitarian pieces designed for multiplatform usage. A Cuba Desk will also be implemented to centralize the communication with Cuban contacts.

### Social Media Platforms and On-Island Digital Teams

OCB will distribute more of its content through preferred channels including YouTube and Facebook. This will provide OCB with an additional efficient and cost effective distribution outlet both for its radio (visual radio) and TV content.

To encourage more engagement on Facebook, OCB will work with on island digital teams that have created local accounts which will disseminate OCB's branded and non-branded content. Native pages increase the chances of appearing on Cuban Facebook users newsfeeds.

### Internet Freedom

In FY 2018, the Martís will continue to support and maintain the Cuba Internet Freedom Conference and will open it up to journalists and democracy activists from other Latin American countries such as Venezuela, where growing government control of the internet is occurring and access to free and accurate information is increasingly limited.

## Office of Cuba Broadcasting (OCB)
## Summary of Increases and Decreases | FY 2017-FY 2018
($ in thousands)

| Program Activity | Increases | Decreases | Budget |
|---|---|---|---|
| **FY 2017** | | | |
| **FY 2017 ANNUALIZED CR** | - | - | **$27,000** |
| **PPA Transfers** | **$1,169** | - | |
| a) Digital and Research Reorg | $656 | | |
| b) Greenville | $513 | | |
| **REVISED FY 2017 ANNUALIZED CR** | - | - | **$28,169** |
| **FY 2017-2018**[1] | | | |
| WAGES (Domestic/U.S) *FY 2018 Pay raise, Within Grades, and Annualization of FY 2017 Pay Raise.* | **$337** | - | |
| WAGES (Foreign Service Nationals - FSNs) *Anticipated wage increases for overseas FSN employees.* | $337 | - | |
| CURRENT SERVICE INCREASES *Office Space Rental Increase* | **$22** $22 | - | |
| CURRENT SERVICES DECREASES *Greenville (non-base FY17 transfer)* | | **$513** $513 | |
| PROGRAM INCREASES | - | | |
| PROGRAM DECREASES | - | **$4,359** | |
| *Reduce travel, supplies, equipment* | - | $140 | |
| *Eliminate ineffective leased broadcast transmissions* | - | $450 | |
| *Reduce Contractor Support* | - | $2,428 | |
| *Reduce FTE's through attrition* | - | $1,341 | |
| **PROGRAM CHANGES TOTAL** | **$359** | **$4,872** | |
| **NET PROGRAM CHANGE** | - | **$(4,513)** | |
| **TOTAL FY 2018 OCB PROGRAM REQUEST** | - | - | **$23,656** |

[1] change between "revised FY2017 annualized CR" level and FY'18 Request

# International Broadcasting Bureau (IBB)

| | FY 2016 ACTUAL | FY 2017 ANNUALIZED | FY 2018 REQUEST | FY 2017-18 CHANGE |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| FUNDING ($ in thousands) | $59,306 | $60,300 | $52,863 | ($7,437) |

## NOTABLE FY 2018 PROGRAM CHANGES

- **Reductions in various Internet Freedom areas to shift focus to high interest areas, as well as creation of instructional materials that allow audiences to bypass internet censorship.**

- **Reductions will be made in administrative areas, including service contracts, training, and travel, and restructuring research contracts towards priority countries and regions.**

- **Reductions in staff costs through attrition and reductions-in-force in an effort to promote the Presidential Executive Order on a Comprehensive Plan for Reorganizing the Executive Branch.**

## OVERVIEW

The International Broadcasting Bureau (IBB) provides support services to the federal entities of the BBG. IBB provides oversight over all components of BBG, including non-federal grantees. IBB manages the day-to-day implementation of the CEO's strategic vision, while enabling the BBG to deliver programs to a diverse global audience. IBB handles 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 BBG operations, providing many required functions including: coordinating BBG strategic planning; researching impact of broadcast content; providing financial services; awarding and administering contracts; supporting personnel; conducting relations with Congress, the media, and other interests; and ensuring physical security.

## FY 2017 AND FY 2018 INITIATIVES

### Expansion of Research Programs

In FY 2018, the BBG proposes expansion of the impact research program. The United States Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy called the BBG "an interagency leader in measurement and evaluation" and recommended in its FY 2016 report for the BBG 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 BBG will further enhance our impact 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 BBG surveys in high priority markets. In recent years, due to acute budget limitations, the BBG was forced to replace a number of its annual full BBG 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 BBG therefore needs to conduct full BBG 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 USIM content within Russia and the former Soviet Union (FSU).

■ 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 CMS and mobile application platforms).

## Federal Employee Enhancement Efforts

IBB is in the midst of a multi-year effort to improve BBG employee engagement and satisfaction, as well as the quality of leadership provided by agency managers. Current efforts center on improving the skillsets of supervisors and managers at the agency. BBG is launching Leadership 2020 as a comprehensive leadership development effort that will require:

■ 360 assessments;

■ leadership development plans (LDP's);

■ annual learning hour requirements; and

■ support mechanisms such as coaching, mentoring, and peer groups to assist managers in their development efforts.

The goals are to provide BBG supervisors and managers with the necessary tools to manage a modern, generationally and ethnically diverse workforce in a rapidly changing media industry.

A second effort is to improve internal communications both enterprise wide and in individual work groups. Research and discussions with agencies who have significantly improved or ranked highly on the annual Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey (FEVS) have indicated that a robust internal communications effort is key to improving employee engagement and satisfaction.

BBG has identified a dedicated internal communications staff and is co-opting associates from around the agency to assist in the effort. This group is currently evaluating communication tools that can inform employees, increase awareness of opportunities, and foster discussions around key issues. The internal communications team will work to assure clear and transparent communication of agency strategies and goals and to provide mechanisms that facilitate feedback and collaboration.

## Internet Freedom Program

Since 2012, BBG has been involved in activities to circumvent Internet censorship by foreign governments in order to distribute news content and better provide a forum for free expression in closed countries. In 2016, BBG established the Office of Internet Freedom (OIF) to conduct governance and oversight of BBG Internet freedom activities.

More information on the Internet Freedom Program and initiatives are contained in Appendix A of this document.

## International Broadcasting Bureau (IBB)
## Summary of Increases and Decreases | FY 2017-FY 2018

($ in thousands)

| Program Activity | Increases | Decreases | Budget |
|---|---|---|---|
| **FY 2017** | | | |
| **FY 2017 ANNUALIZED CR** | - | - | **$61,100** |
| **PPA Transfers** | **$17,375** | - | |
| a) J1 Visas | $14 | | |
| b) Iraq licensing services | $60 | | |
| c) Momentum Costs | $2,000 | | |
| d) Internet Freedom | $15,301 | | |
| e) OSD/ODDI/OPR Reorg | | $16,328 | |
| f) Turnstiles for Cohen Bldg | | $700 | |
| g) Music Research | | $150 | |
| h) Mail Ops | | $834 | |
| i) OpenNet | | $10 | |
| j) Other Salary Transfers | | $153 | |
| **REVISED FY 2017 ANNUALIZED CR** | - | - | **$60,300** |
| **FY 2017-2018[1]** | | | |
| WAGES (Domestic/U.S) <br> *Salary & Benefits (S&B) for new hires, Within Grades, Pay increase, and Annualization of S&B into FY 2018.* | **$328** | - | |
| WAGES (Foreign Service Nationals - FSNs) <br> *Anticipated wage increases for overseas FSN employees.* | - | - | |
| CURRENT SERVICE INCREASES <br> *Restoration of one-time PPA transfers* | **$860** | - | |
| CURRENT SERVICES DECREASES <br> *Non-recur of one-time PPA transfers* | | **$60** | |
| PROGRAM INCREASES | - | | |
| PROGRAM DECREASES | - | **$8,565** | |
| *Internet Freedom* | - | $5,000 | |
| *Contracts* | - | $598 | |
| *Salaries* | - | $2,967 | |
| **PROGRAM CHANGES TOTAL** | **$1,188** | **$8,625** | |
| **NET PROGRAM CHANGE** | - | **$(7,437)** | |
| **TOTAL FY 2018 OCB PROGRAM REQUEST** | - | - | **$52,863** |

[1] change between "revised FY2017 annualized CR" level and FY'18 Request

# Office of Technology, Services, & Innovation (TSI)

|  | FY 2016<br>ACTUAL | FY 2017<br>ANNUALIZED | FY 2018<br>REQUEST | FY 2017-18<br>CHANGE |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| FUNDING<br>($ in thousands) | **$171,533** | **$175,752** | **$166,092** | **($9,660)** |

## NOTABLE FY 2018 PROGRAM CHANGES

■ **Reduce less effective legacy shortwave and medium wave transmissions. Move toward other technologies to reach larger and younger audiences on new media.**

■ **Provide enhanced video and audio production and distribution capabilities, including upgraded digital television production and global HD distribution, to ensure the development and dissemination of competitive program material to affiliates and directly to consumers.**

■ **Savings will be realized due to network realignment to satisfy evolving media preferences in key target audience areas, including the elimination of ineffective shortwave transmissions and further development of key affiliate relationships and owned and operated 24/7 FM stations in important markets.**

■ **Savings will be realized due to activities to modernize and streamline agency operations that will continue to leverage BBG's cloud services leadership in the Federal arena. In addition to the use of government- and private-sector technology tools and resources such as virtualization platforms, to lower costs, improve effectiveness and boost security.**

■ **Continued consolidation and streamlining of the BBG's global digital distribution network to maximize efficiencies, while maintaining high reliability.**

## OVERVIEW

The International Broadcasting Bureau's (IBB) TSI office oversees and manages a broad array of technical and infrastructure functions, primarily delivering program content for all BBG networks and providing information technology support to many offices throughout the agency. TSI will continue its support of essential agency technical operations in FY 2018 through carefully focused initiatives, prudent but aggressive reductions, and maintenance of ongoing efforts in key areas. TSI will continue the agency's critical delivery network realignment to ensure that programs are available to target audiences utilizing the most appropriate technologies in the most cost effective manner while not abandoning sizable and valuable audiences on legacy platforms.

TSI continues to move the agency from traditional broadcasting technologies, such as cross border radio transmissions (SW and AM) to regions where the medium is no longer popular, to other delivery systems that are growing in effectiveness and are often much less expensive to operate (e.g., FM, satellite, Internet streaming, mobile, and social media). Some of these new platforms are also helping BBG to deliver programming to affiliate and partner stations.

The infrastructure required to produce and retain programs is also being enhanced, and High Definition (HD) audio and video capabilities are being expanded to the greatest extent possible in order to ensure that agency programs remain competitive in target markets. Efforts to electronically jam or otherwise block agency programs will continue to be monitored and effectively combatted.

TSI will continue to pursue modernization and business improvements through process streamlining and technical upgrades. Risk Management and IT security efforts, already robust relative to the size of the agency and having successfully kept at bay some of the most sophisticated, state-sponsored cyber warfare teams in the world, are being further bolstered.

About two-thirds of the agency's 278 million weekly audience consume BBG's content via more than 3,000 affiliates. TSI's Office of Business Development will continue to grow this syndication network to provide more opportunities for the strategic placement of BBG programming while TSI's Training component continues its stellar global work in training thousands of journalists and independent media personnel in some of BBG's most strategic target markets.

## FY 2017 AND FY 2018 INITIATIVES

TSI will continue its support of essential agency operations in FY 2017 and FY 2018 through network realignment; enhanced program production, retention, and distribution infrastructure; High Definition (HD) program production and delivery capability; business process streamlining; and modernization in critical areas.

### Transition to High-Definition (HD)

TSI is supporting the on-going effort to upgrade VOA video programming to HD, requiring upgraded digital production and storage infrastructure, as well as expanded global HD distribution capability. Moving to HD enables VOA to remain competitive by attracting and maintaining audiences and affiliates as they migrate to HD and as direct-to-home satellite providers and users deploy new HD equipment. To accomplish this, BBG is upgrading components of both its program production and delivery system. In FY 2017 core TV studios will be fully HD capable and a raw automated HD TV channel will be available for testing. As this and additional automated HD TV channels of VOA content are developed in FY 2018, upgrades to the distribution network will permit delivery of HD content to affiliates and direct-to-home.

In FY 2017 and FY 2018, TSI will leverage a variety of technology improvements to ameliorate the high costs of satellite delivery wherever feasible and appropriate. In addition, TSI continues to implement a Wide Area Network (WAN) migration initiative to upgrade the primary means of communication at transmitting stations from satellites to more flexible and economical local Internet providers and terrestrial circuits.

The DaletPlus video production system will also be upgraded as part of the HD transition. An upgrade called "Galaxy" which will be implemented in FY 2017 and FY 2018, will enable full access to online archives in HD, greater versatility in the production of original HD content, easy posting of content to web and social media, and seamless archiving of all VOA content. With Galaxy, audio production will also be handled within the same user interface, eliminating the need for two versions (one for audio, one for video) of the application.

As HD video files are double the size of standard definition files, TSI will also need to expand and upgrade its onsite volume storage capacity. This upgraded storage will be optimized to handle the high-traffic volume and file size of HD media.

## BBG's Global Network Realignment
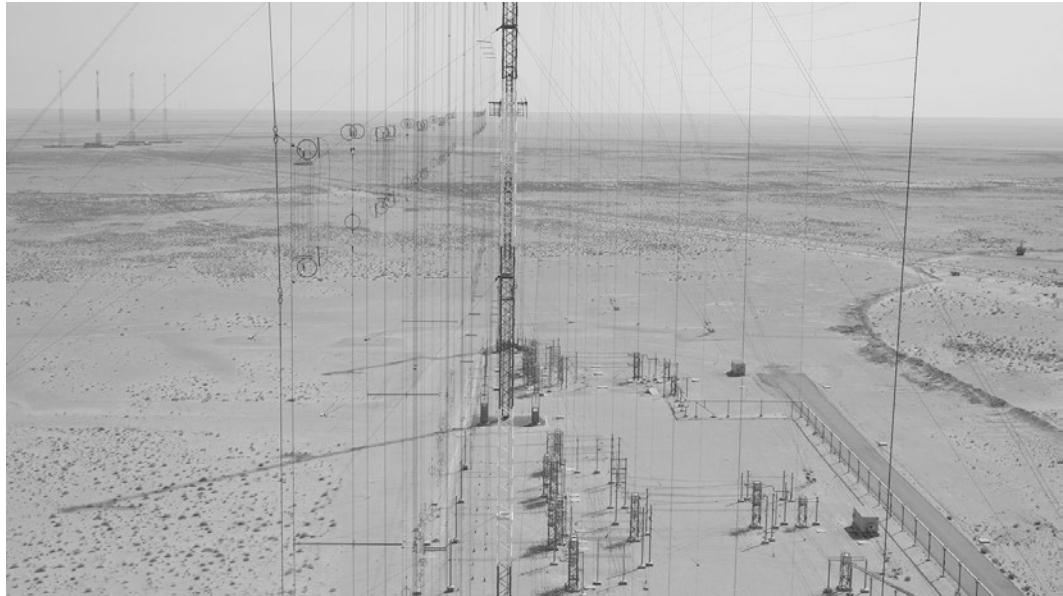


BBG's Kuwait transmitting station.

### LEVERAGING STRATEGIC LOCATION AND LOW COSTS OF KUWAIT STATION:

Because of the superior strategic location and extremely low operating costs of the Kuwait Transmitting Station, in FY 2016 TSI began expanding that facility to provide transmission to places where shortwave remains important. Installation of one additional antenna began in FY 2017. Installation of three other transmitters and procurement of required antennas will continue in FY 2017 into FY 2018. This will complete the build out of the station to the full transmitter capacity allowed by the current agreement with the Government of Kuwait, allowing BBG to serve virtually all legacy SW audiences in the most cost-effective manner possible.

### CONTENT DELIVERY MIGRATION:

As explained in the Transition to HD section above, TSI is migrating to an outsourced, managed MPLS and raw Internet Wide Area Network (WAN) to upgrade the primary means of communication at transmitting stations from satellites to local Internet providers and terrestrial circuits. Migrating administrative services (telephone, satellite monitoring, and email) will be completed at all transmitting stations and news bureaus in FY 2017. The migration to content delivery to stations over digital terrestrial circuits is projected to be also complete for most program feeds in FY 2017. Since 2017,

and with over 90% of BBG's content being distributed via satellite, the combination of audience growth (165 to 278 million weekly consumers) and satellite cost reductions ($26 million to $19 million) have reduced per consumer distribution costs from $0.17 to $0.06, a significant increase in price/performance ratio.

## SATELLITE DELIVERY TO CHINA AND ELSEWHERE:

TSI will continue to utilize leased capacity on popular regional satellites to deliver HD television channels to affiliates and audiences. In China, including Tibet, TSI will continue to provide satellite TV and radio service for only a fraction of the cost of shortwave or medium wave transmissions to the region. This allows TSI to leverage the widespread use of satellite receiver dishes across the country and provide accessible programming where local cable and Internet access is restricted. In addition, TSI is initiating the procurement of additional satellite capacity on the most popular satellite in China (Telstar 18). This will enable simultaneous distribution of HD and Standard Definition (SD) TV programming and mirror the Chinese audience migration to HDTV while not stranding legacy SD users.

To counter the ongoing threat of intentional interference (i.e., jamming) of its broadcasts in any media, to China or elsewhere, the BBG will remain diligent in pursuing regulatory, technical, political, and public communication avenues to address the issue. BBG has 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, BBG successfully lobbied for a proposal calling on member states to "take the necessary steps" to end jamming.

## EXPANDING FMS IN AFRICA:

Radio remains a strong, growing platform in many BBG markets, particularly Africa. BBG global weekly radio audiences increased by a stunning 28 million in 2016 alone and by 35 million since 2012. In FY 2017 new FM transmission systems will be installed in several important markets, to include Brazzaville and Pointe Noire, Congo; Mogadishu, Somalia; and Mbuji-Mayi and Katanga, DRC. BBG-owned and operated 24/7 FMs also help to ensure that BBG remains on the air, when affiliates may feel pressured to remove or limit their carriage of BBG programming.

## Business Process and Technology Modernization

### TRANSFORMING AGENCY BUSINESS SYSTEMS:

TSI is leading the BBG's transformation of business process systems. Following successful rollouts in FY 2016 and early FY 2017 of a learning management system to track training and employee development (Aglearn+), an upgraded electronic travel system (E2), an electronic time and attendance system (webTA), and an improved procurement and financial management system (Momentum) and an electronic performance management system (ePerformance).

### RISK MANAGEMENT (RM) AND CAPITAL PLANNING AND INVESTMENT CONTROL (CPIC):

In FY 2017 the agency created a RM division in the Office of the CIO. This unit has been developing policies and procedures to establish IT risk management evaluation processes for capital planning and investment control and agency enterprise risk management. TSI is developing a CPIC program that will be fully implemented in FY 2018.

### CONTINUED FOCUS ON CYBERSECURITY:

FY 2017 and FY 2018 will see TSI's Information Security Division continue to leverage offerings from the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and key vendors to reposition BBG resources to fill key cybersecurity monitoring and defense gaps, in keeping with best practices and efforts to ameliorate Federal Information Security Management Act (FISMA) audit findings. Together with the Justice Department, Social Security Administration, and Pension Benefits Guaranty Corporation, the BBG is one of only four Agencies government wide piloting DHS's Privileged Account Management and Usage Monitoring Program.

### LEVERAGING CLOUD SERVICES AND OTHER TECHNOLOGIES TO BOOST WORKFORCE EFFECTIVENESS AND EFFICIENCY:

 The agency's onsite digital archive system is nearing 70 percent capacity with current technology approaching its end-life and no built-in disaster recovery. With an eye to aid emergency and business continuity efforts, TSI has created an archive in a private cloud with recovery capability. Storage is being proactively migrated from agency headquarters directly to the cloud, eliminating significant maintenance concerns. In FY 2017 TSI also completed its migration of intranet content to the cloud-based SharePoint Online platform that features robust collaboration tools to increase efficiencies and improve workflows.

TSI also continues to upgrade BBG's IT network infrastructure in its Washington headquarters, providing a ten-fold increase in bandwidth, more storage capacity to enable users to more effectively edit and distribute video, and more than sextupled broadband wireless connectivity throughout the Cohen building. The upgrades include security enhancements to safeguard the agency's network.

Consolidating a variety of Technology Support Services into an integrated team, TSI is handling user support with the latest technologies (SharePoint and social media resources) with the goal of a one-stop shop for digital and facilities support. FY 2017 will also see further upgrades to the new state-of-the-art Network Control Center, which will provide expanded control and monitoring of remote program feeds leveraging economies of scale and enabling further cost reductions.

In FY 2017, TSI completed the closure of the station in Sri Lanka and will continue to move towards closure of the BBG facility in Poro, Philippines. TSI's systematic and thorough review of all transmission leases will continue, identifying further opportunities for savings.



BBG Affiliate conference in Zambia.

**Continue Leveraging Affiliates and Partners to Further BBG Mission:**

The latest Gallup audience figures indicate the BBG has a combined audience of 278 million in FY 2016. Of that audience, two-thirds (or approximately 185 million) view BBG programs on at least one of the BBG's 3,000+ affiliates. TSI's Business Development and Distribution team is focusing on several initiatives, including:
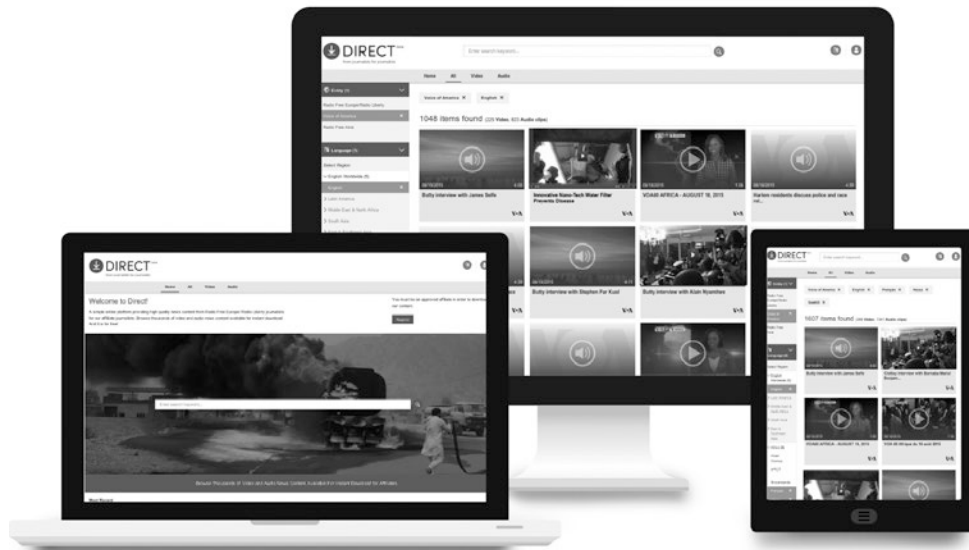
**CONTINUED ENHANCEMENT AND PROMOTION OF "DIRECT":**

BBG Direct is BBG's open digital content service that provides BBG content to affiliates for radio, TV, and digital use.

**THE "WASHINGTON BUREAU" CONCEPT:**

A service to affiliates in which BBG networks contribute reports about and from the United States for use in affiliate networks' regular programing, with branding built into the reports (i.e., mention of the BBG entity name). This initiative has been hugely successful with national TV affiliates in Indonesia, Nigeria, and Latin America.

## CONTINUED PLACEMENT OF *CURRENT TIME* PROGRAMMING ON AFFILIATE NETWORKS:

Current Time, produced by Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL) in cooperation with the Voice of America (VOA), builds on the success of and is named after BBG's daily Russian-language news program called *Current Time*. *Current Time* fact checks false narratives and offers a rich mix of feature and entertainment programming that underscores the values of free and open societies.



BBG training session on reporting on polio in Islamabad, Pakistan.

## TRAINING:

The Office of Business Development also focuses on three areas in support of BBG's mission: training international journalists, negotiating interagency agreements with U.S. federal agencies and forging public-private partnerships with non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Using BBG's funds, the office conducts training programs that benefit BBG's affiliate stations.

BBG expects to train about 1,000 independent journalists annually in FY 2017 and FY 2018. The training includes a range of subjects such as journalism, digital, television and radio production, new tools for journalists and sales and management operations.

## Technology, Services, and Innovation (TSI)
## Summary of Increases and Decreases | FY 2017-FY 2018
($ in thousands)

| Program Activity | Increases | Decreases | Budget |
|---|---|---|---|
| **FY 2017** | | | |
| **FY 2017 ANNUALIZED CR** | - | - | **$181,200** |
| **PPA Transfers** | **$13,427** | **$18,875** | |
| a) OSD/ODDI/OPR Reorg | $11,649 | | |
| b) Turnstiles for Cohen Bldg | $700 | | |
| c) VOA Renovations | $218 | | |
| d) OpenNet | $10 | | |
| e) Teradek Modems | $16 | | |
| f) Mail Ops | $834 | | |
| g) Ukraine ICTV | | $200 | |
| h) Momentum Costs | | $2,000 | |
| i) Internet Freedom | | $15,301 | |
| j) Other Salary Transfers | | $105 | |
| k) Iraq licensing services | | $60 | |
| l) Greenville | | $513 | |
| m) Transmissions | | $99 | |
| n) Sounds of Hope | | $347 | |
| o) Seagull | | $250 | |
| **REVISED FY 2017 ANNUALIZED CR** | - | - | **$175,752** |
| **FY 2017-2018**[1] | | | |
| WAGES (Domestic/U.S) *Salary & Benefits (S&B) for new hires, Within Grades, Pay increase, and Annualization of S&B into FY 2018.* | **$381** | - | |
| WAGES (Foreign Service Nationals - FSNs) *Anticipated wage increases for overseas FSN employees.* | - | - | |
| CURRENT SERVICE INCREASES | **$773** | - | |
| *Greenville (non-base FY17 transfer)* | $513 | | |
| *Licensing Services Iraq (non-base FY17 transfer)* | $60 | | |
| *Ukraine ICTV effort to RFE/RL (non-base FY17 transfer)* | $200 | | |
| CURRENT SERVICES DECREASES | | **$1,214** | |
| *Travel* | | $48 | |
| *Technology Efficiencies* | | $333 | |
| *Turnstiles(non-base FY17 transfer)* | | $700 | |
| *Open Net Licenses (non-base FY17 transfer)* | | $10 | |
| *VOA Renovations (non-base FY17 transfer)* | | $123 | |
| PROGRAM INCREASES | - | - | |
| PROGRAM DECREASES | - | **$9,600** | |
| *Radio Transmission Reductions* | - | $5,000 | |
| *Global Network Realignment* | - | $2,000 | |
| *Transmission Station Reductions* | | $1,000 | |
| *Administrative and Organizational Efficiencies* | | $1,600 | |
| **PROGRAM CHANGES TOTAL** | **$1,154** | **$10,814** | |
| **NET PROGRAM CHANGE** | - | **$(9,660)** | |
| **TOTAL FY 2018 OCB PROGRAM REQUEST** | - | - | **$166,092** |

[1] change between "revised FY2017 annualized CR" level and FY'18 Request

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

| | FY 2016 ACTUAL | FY 2017 ANNUALIZED | FY 2018 REQUEST | FY 2017-18 CHANGE |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| FUNDING ($ in thousands) | $108,904 | $109,900 | $99,600 | ($10,300) |

## NOTABLE FY 2018 PROGRAM CHANGES

- **Discontinue OCO-funded Pashto broadcasts to the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) in northwest Pakistan.**

- **Develop a plan to reduce administrative costs, leverage technology, restructure contractual agreements, eliminate support services, and take a closer look at the proper role and size of RFE/RL in order to prioritize programs that provide the best return for taxpayers, as well as those that serve the most critical functions, while consolidating or eliminating less effective or less critical programs and support services.**

- **Reduce the costs of Russian Service radio and 24/7 news operation by finding efficiencies, streamlining operations, and reducing operating expenses.**

- **Reduce Azerbaijani service; discontinue Macedonian language broadcasts; discontinue Belarus radio; localize Georgia operations in Tbilisi; rationalize Radio Farda in order to continue shift to digital; restructure Crimean, Tatar, and Ukrainian languages for Crimea website.**

## OVERVIEW

Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL) is a private, nonprofit, multimedia broadcasting corporation that serves as a surrogate media source in 26 languages and in 23 countries, including Afghanistan, Iran, Pakistan, Russia, and Ukraine. With headquarters in Prague, 17 local bureaus (including Kabul, Islamabad, Moscow, and Kyiv), and more than 1,000 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 nearly 27 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.

The basis for RFE/RL's operations is 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 makes a contribution to long-term development and stability in the regions it covers.

## FY 2017 ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND FY 2018 INITIATIVES

RFE/RL is pursuing a comprehensive multimedia strategy for refuting aggressive Russian pressure and disinformation by engaging Russian-speaking audiences both within Russia and around the world via its Current Time television and digital network, its Russian Service, (Radio Svoboda), and other initiatives. RFE/RL also engages in impactful journalism across its target region, allowing for coverage of issues not routinely publicized in regional media. Across the organization, RFE/RL continues to achieve great success with digital engagement.



*Current Time* correspondent reports from the field.

### Current Time Network

FY 2017:
In February, in partnership with VOA, RFE/RL formally launched the *Current Time* network, providing Russian speakers globally with access to balanced, accurate, topical, and trustworthy information, and serving as a reality check on disinformation that's

driving conflict in the region. Led by RFE/RL in cooperation with VOA, *Current Time* provides viewers with informed and up-close TV coverage of major news and events that are not reported, or are misreported, elsewhere. The network focuses foremost on news, but also offers a rich mix of feature and entertainment programming that underscores the values of free and open societies.

The *Current Time* network is available to nearly 10 million households in 12 countries on over 40 subscription satellite, cable and IPTV services. The entire live stream is also available globally to another 75 million monthly unique users on FilmOn.tv and regionally to another 32 million monthly unique users on MeGoGo. The stream also goes out across Eurasia on the free to air Eutelsat HOTBIRD satellite which is

received in 135 million homes. A 12-hour block is available on Astra 5B daily and channel content is also available on the website currenttime.tv.

The *Current Time* digital team's social media videos on news and current affairs issues, a new product for RFE/RL's broadcast region, were viewed more than 125 million times in the first six months of FY 2017 on Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, and Russian social networks. Last year, one video about Russian President Vladimir Putin's unfulfilled election promises of five years ago became the top trending video on the popular Odnoklassniki social network, receiving more than 5.4 million views across social networks.

**FY 2018:**
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. Toward this end, RFE/RL will work within available resources to maintain the recently launched Russian-language *Current Time* television and digital network, gathering qualitative

research and feedback as feasible, cultivating local reporting from its freelance network and affiliate partners, increasing collaboration with its digital media arm to expand online audiences and reach of content, and developing expanded media partnerships and encouraging local filmmakers across the region.

## Social Media

Across RFE/RL language services, there were 135 million engaged users on Facebook in the first half of FY 2017, which represents a 33 percent increase from the previous year. RFE/RL also garnered nearly 208 million views on YouTube in the first 6 months of FY 2017, which represents a

77% increase from the corresponding period of FY 2016. RFE/RL's Afghan Service has the highest level of engagement on Facebook, with a monthly average of 4.5 million engaged users, followed by *Current Time* at 3.3 million engaged users per month.
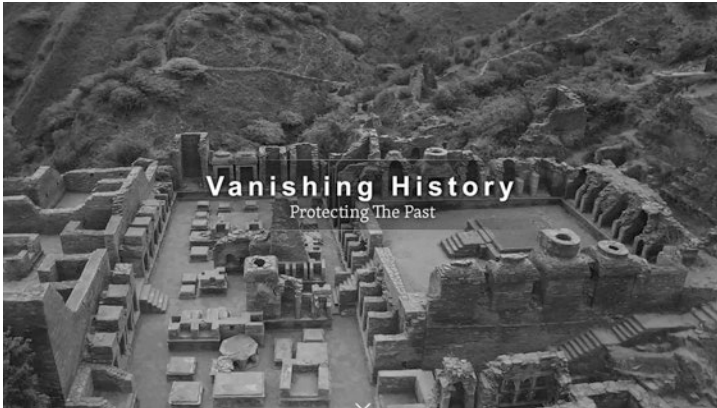
In February 2017, Radio Mashaal, which provides an alternative to extremist propaganda in Pakistan's tribal regions through its reporting, produced a new documentary project, "Vanishing History." The project highlights the rich cultural heritage of Pakistan's northwestern region that has come under threat as Taliban and other groups destroy or neglect the rich pre-Islamic heritage sites in the area. In Pakistan, this kind of reporting is almost non-existent, and the project has received more than 500,000 views and a high level of engagement online. In the first six months of FY 2017, nearly 12 million users on Facebook engaged with Radio Mashaal content. Due to the elimination of OCO funding, RFE/RL will eliminate Radio Mashaal in FY 2018.

## Content for Russia

RFE/RL's Tatar-Bashkir and North Caucasus Services launched hyperlocal websites for Russian speakers in their regions, providing relevant local reporting in Russian and bringing scrutiny to actions of local authorities that had previously gone unchecked and are not reported by state and other media. The sites target areas particularly vulnerable to disinformation and extremism and complement the Services' continuing reporting in the Chechen, Tatar and Bashkir languages while extending their reach to new audiences.

Radio Svoboda is on the forefront of reporting on discontent and the political environment inside of Russia. When anti-corruption protesters took to the streets in 99 cities across Russia on March 26 in the largest anti-government demonstrations seen since 2012, Svoboda live streamed the opposition event in Moscow for four hours, and also worked with *Current Time* to offer live coverage with commentary of the protests for regional audiences. Overall, RFE/RL video coverage of the Moscow protests was viewed more than two million times across platforms. To further reach its audience inside of Russia, nearly 50% of whom are under 35-years-old, Svoboda offered comprehensive live blogging and social media reporting of the protests, including video reporting from more than five other Russian cities.

## Other Initiatives

RFE/RL's Belarus Service boldly covered the crackdown on civil society and human rights in Belarus. In March 2017, the Service covered extensive antigovernment protests across Minsk and other cities, which culminated on Freedom Day on March 25. Demonstrators built on discontent that has been growing in Belarus since President Lukashenka's government attempted to implement a tax against people who don't have full-time employment. In its coverage, the Service received 1.3 million views of its live streaming on YouTube in just one week, and reporting was picked up by foreign news outlets such as Reuters, Euronews, BBC, Polish TV, as well as by Belarusian State TV.

RFE/RL, in conjunction with VOA, launched a new project, Polygraph.info, to serve as a resource for verifying the increasing volume of disinformation and misinformation being distributed and shared globally.

News is highly manipulated and controlled in Iran. RFE/RL's Persian Service, known locally as Radio Farda, has built a formidable audience and credibility in the Iran. Farda's focus on digital initiatives is paying dividends with Facebook followers numbering over 1.7 million and the average number of engaged users monthly reaching 2.5 million users last year. The Service also introduced a new weekly program called "Taboo," which discusses forbidden subjects inside Iran with social scientists, political scientists, and psychologists. Each edition of the program receives hundreds of website comments and thousands of Facebook reactions, allowing the Service to facilitate interaction among the people of Iran.



Polygraph.info provides reliable fact-checking to combat misinformation.

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, warlordism, gender issues, human rights, and other pressing topics that are under-reported or misreported by other media. Azadi is closely following a serious Taliban-led insurgency throughout the country and reporting on the atrocities committed by ISIS. Azadi has also become a leader in online video journalism, documenting major events in the lives of the country's women, youth, and internally displaced people. Azadi's Facebook video views in January 2017 numbered 6.2 million, with one of the most popular videos telling the story of a young man's capture and escape from the Taliban.

Security, corruption, extremism, terrorism, political and economic stability are issues of importance spanning Central Asia and a common reporting focus of RFE/RL's language services to the region. In 2017, RFE/RL's Kyrgyz Service opened a new regional reporting hub with TV production facilities in Bishkek. RFE/RL's Kyrgyz Service now produces three TV programs on news and human interest issues from its new studio.

RFE/RL's news wire service for Central Asia provides alternative sources of information in Kazakh, Kyrgyz, Russian, Tajik, and Uzbek languages to more than 1100 subscribers, including over 700 media outlets (TV, radio, print, and online) and media professionals. In FY 2017, RFE/RL added media partners in

Uzbekistan for the very first time. Each week, RFE/RL produced content is republished or quoted across all languages and media formats about 1,400 times.



Iva Martinovic, Balkan Service Belgrade correspondent, covering protests in Belgrade.

As tensions simmer in the Western Balkans, RFE/RL's Balkan Service is one of the only news media in the region that engages all sides in its coverage and debate in Bosnia, Serbia, Montenegro, Macedonia, and Kosovo. The Balkans Service has provided comprehensive coverage of the immigration crisis, political crises between Serbia and Kosovo, Macedonia, the influence of Russia in the region, and the recruitment of foreign fighters to Syria and Iraq from Bosnia and Kosovo. The Service's Kosovo Unit posted an in-depth story of Kosovan authorities trying to root out radical Islamist movements from the prison system that was quoted widely by media in Kosovo and elsewhere in the region.

RFE/RL's services report on the corruption rampant across its target region, including in Ukraine and Azerbaijan where RFE/RL investigations frequently reveal corruption at the highest levels of government.

In March 2017, RFE/RL's Ukrainian Service covered the dramatic events surrounding the filing of corruption charges against Ukraine's top tax collector, Roman Nasirov, who has been suspended amid a USD 75 million graft investigation. Nosirov, 38, was hospitalized shortly after being served with charging papers with what was said to be a heart attack, although some observers doubt this was truly the case. The Service's live coverage was used by Ukrainian TV channel 112, News Channel 24, Kanal 5, and many other media outlets cited the reporting including Reuters and Rossiya-24.



Roman Nosirov appears in court for a hearing on corruption charges. RFE/RL covered his arrest and the protests surrounding his possible release by anti-corruption activists when a judge could not be found for his hearing.

In Azerbaijan, where RFE/RL's news bureau remains forcibly closed since December 2014, an investigation conducted by RFE/RL's Azerbaijani Service, about oligarchs' secret business holdings revealed that more than two dozen companies with ties to the family of Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev or to other government officials do not appear on the Azerbaijani Tax Ministry's public registry.

Across its target areas, RFE/RL will also continue to pursue investigative journalism and uncover corruption; bring to light the struggles of civil society and issues pertinent to women and youth audiences; dedicate substantial coverage to the impact of radical Islamic extremist forces on people in Southwest and Central Asia, the Balkans and North Caucasus regions; and report on stories that would otherwise not be covered by local media outlets.

In addition, RFE/RL will continue to boost digital engagement efforts across its regions, with special emphasis on the Russian-speaking world and Iran.

## Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL)
## Summary of Increases and Decreases | FY 2017 - FY 2018

($ in thousands)

| Program Activity | Increases | Decreases | Budget |
|---|---|---|---|
| **FY 2017** | | | |
| **FY 2017 Annualized CR** | | | **$108,200** |
| **PPA Transfers** | **$1,700** | | |
| a) Base Transfer from BBG - ODDI Restructure | $500 | | |
| b) One-time Transfer of funds by BBG | $1,000 | | |
| c) One-time transfer for Ukraine TV | $200 | | |
| **Revised FY 2017 Annualized CR** | | | **$109,900** |
| **FY 2017-2018[1]** | | | |
| **FY 2018 Non-Recurs** | | **$1,200** | |
| a) One-time transfer of fund by BBG | | $1,000 | |
| b) One-time transfer for Ukraine TV | | $200 | |
| **Wages** | | **$5,120** | |
| Locally Employed Staff Reduction[2] | | $4,000 | |
| Implement administrative, technological, and operational improvements | | $1,120 | |
| **Wages (Foreign Service Nationals - FSNs)** | | | |
| *Anticipated wage increases for overseas FSN employees.* | | | |
| **Current Service Increases** | | | |
| *N/A* | | | |
| **Current Services Decreases** | | | |
| *N/A* | | | |
| **Program Increases** | | | |
| *N/A* | | | |
| **Program Decreases** | | **$3,980** | |
| Reduce Macedonian Language Broadcasts | | $200 | |
| Discontinue Pashto Broadcasts to FATA | | $2,200 | |
| Reduce Russian Service Radio and 24/7 News Operation | | $600 | |
| Discontinue Belarus Radio | | $200 | |
| Rationalize Radio Farda, Continue Shift to Digital | | $250 | |
| Reduce Azerbaijani Service | | $120 | |
| Localize Georgian Service Operation in Tbilisi | | $310 | |
| Restructure Crimean, Tatar, and Ukrainian Languages for Crimea Website | | $100 | |
| **PROGRAM CHANGES TOTAL** | | **$10,300** | |
| **NET PROGRAM CHANGE** | | **$(10,300)** | |
| **TOTAL FY 2018 RFE/RL PROGRAM REQUEST** | | | **$99,600** |

1/ - change between "revised FY2017 annualized CR" level and FY'18 Request

2/ - This decrease will attempt to be an offset with better management of currency fluctuations, currency gains, and operational efficiencies.

# Radio Free Asia (RFA)

| | FY 2016<br>ACTUAL | FY 2017<br>ANNUALIZED | FY 2018<br>REQUEST | FY 2017-18<br>CHANGE |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| FUNDING<br>($ in thousands) | **$51,025** | **$39,846** | **$35,296** | **($4,550)** |

## NOTABLE FY 2018 PROGRAM CHANGES

- **Focus its Mandarin resources on social media, which is the platform the agency has determined to be most cost-effective.**

- **Reduce five support staff and travel expenses.**

## OVERVIEW

RFA is a private, nonprofit, multimedia corporation that serves as a surrogate broadcaster, 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 the BBG. RFA broadcasts in Burmese, Cantonese, Khmer, Korean, Lao, Mandarin, Tibetan, Uyghur, and Vietnamese on shortwave (SW), medium wave (MW), satellite, television, and the Internet. RFA delivers accurate and timely local news, information, 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 regional outlets and global publications. This includes RFA-generated content that is re-published on well-trafficked global and regional blogs. These media pickups, particularly by large syndicates and wire services, amplify RFA's reach into its target countries.

As part of BBG's Internet Freedom efforts, 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. RFA's efforts help expand the knowledge base for the Internet freedom community, improve the effectiveness of anti-censorship efforts and meet the needs of at-risk human rights, democracy and free speech defenders globally. OTF supports the development of software to secure communications in countries where governments engage in internet censorship, online repression and

offline reprisals for online speech. These tools provide individuals with the capabilities to protect their

communications from repressive regimes and offer more secure access to censored content.



RFA reporters cover topics and events not covered by local media in target regions.

## FY 2017 AND FY 2018 INITIATIVES

### RFA KOREAN:

RFA Korean will provide television programming for the DPRK.  RFA brings to this effort strong credibility and brand recognition, and proposes to tap into its extensive network of North Korean defectors to create an appealing mix of documentaries and informative and entertaining reality TV programs catering to North Koreans

with a thirst for different perspectives. These new and original television programs will be produced both in Seoul and Washington DC. RFA Korean started the production of "My New Day," the first program that highlights a defector's life changing experience in Seoul.

### XINJIANG UYGHUR AUTONOMOUS REGION (XUAR):

RFA is the only international broadcaster providing news programming in the Uyghur language to the XUAR. The predominantly Muslim Turkic minority group, which has faced extreme repression by Beijing, is a target for radicalization. RFA Uyghur will produce more web TV

programs covering daily news and new analysis. The Service will also produce a TV program to promote Uyghur's culture and history. The Service's stringers in Turkey and Central Asia will further expand the pool of interviewees to include more expert opinions and perspectives.

## RFA BURMESE:

RFA Burmese will participate in a data journalism project to produce in-depth reporting on Myanmar's deforestation, which is intended to increase audience by utilizing engaging multimedia and graphics to present the information. The project is supported with aid funds from the French government.

With most Burmese media unwilling or afraid to report on the Rohingyas

(most won't even use the name, calling them Bengalis instead), RFA will increase its reporting of this oppressed group – to the extent it can – by producing reports that can bring greater knowledge and acknowledgement of their plight and a deeper understanding of inalienable human rights of all people in the country

## RFA KHMER:

RFA Khmer will produce extended coverage of the 2018 national elections in Cambodia. The authoritarian Prime Minister and his ruling Cambodian People's Party are extremely threatened by the growing dissatisfaction with their three decades

of rule, and have made thinly veiled threats of civil war if they are not returned to power. The opposition has been hobbled by the arrest of numerous members but is gearing up for its strongest challenge yet.

## RFA TIBETAN:

RFA Tibetan will expand its television production from 30 minutes to 60 minutes. The program will include updated news with a special focus on the stories from inside Tibet and in the exile communities. Moreover, the Service will produce news analysis and talk shows to further interpret the news events that concern the Tibetan community.

In other services, RFA will produce fewer discrete TV programs instead focusing on production of video and digital media for social media to break through government censorship with content that is most appealing and accessible on smartphones and tablets. This content is particularly targeted to youth who use this media heavily and will become decision makers in the future.

## FY 2017 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Continuing the advancements that were made possible with FY 2015 investment funding, RFA accelerated its move into television to meet the growing demand and preference for TV as a source of news throughout its target countries. This meant putting more resources into developing high quality video content, whether created or curated, which can live on both TV and other digital platforms. RFA prioritized resources to expand its network of video content providers and the production staff in Washington to shape this content into engaging programs that will appeal to younger audiences on television as well as on a variety of online media.

- **RFA BURMESE TV** the vanguard of RFA's TV production efforts, developed additional reporting to track developments in Burmese society, especially those that relate to role of youth, who have always played an influential role in social and political issues in the country.

- **RFA'S MANDARIN TV** programming provided higher-quality content and video on satellite TV as well as on social media. The daily 30-minute "Asia Pacific Report" covers updated news stories and in-depth analysis on major issues. Starting from 2017, Mandarin television programs are also produced in portable digital formats to be consumed using mobile devices on the go. They include visuals sourced from citizen journalists in target areas, as well as the Service's stringers across the Asia-Pacific region.

- **RFA'S CANTONESE SERVICE** now pushing the envelope of broadcasting daily radio live show to social media. Their weekly satellite television program is highlighting human rights violations in target areas. The Cantonese Service played a vital role in covering the Hong Kong Chief Executive election by providing timely live feeds and in-depth analysis over social media platforms. The Service has also formed partnerships with Hong Kong Web radio stations IBHK and Peanut, which now carry RFA Cantonese programming. In addition, Hong Kong-based website *New School for Democracy* has entered into an agreement with RFA to re-publish RFA Cantonese news.

- **RFA TIBETAN** produced a series of TV documentaries featuring events and historical figures that have had a major impact on Tibetan society and culture, such as the life and times of poet and writer Gedun Chophel and expanded its satellite TV transmission from three to five 30-minute original programs per week. This built on the Service's launch, in FY 2015, of satellite television featuring visuals sourced from citizen journalists inside Tibet. More interviews and news analysis programs are being conducted in the daily TV program.

- **RFA KHMER** producing and broadcasting a 30-60 minute daily news magazine program on its website and Facebook that was originally intended for broadcast on Sun TV, a new independent station scheduled to begin broadcasting in 2016. However, because Cambodia's authoritarian government has become increasingly repressive and prevented the station from being built, RFA Khmer has focused its video efforts on Facebook.

## Additional Accomplishments:

As audiences move to mobile devices, RFA continues to make its content more appealing, accessible, and available on smartphones and tablets. Understanding the mobile markets of each target country positions RFA to capture greater viewership with compelling, salient, visual content. The exponential growth in digital technology and penetration in most of RFA's markets offer RFA extraordinary opportunities to reach young, engaged audiences that offer the greatest hope for change in some of the least free places on Earth.

In Tibet, mobile phone ownership is growing and an increasing number of people turn to portable digital devices for news. Even in North Korea, the rise in domestic mobile phones has brought surprising growth in the use of Bluetooth technologies as well as texting. North Koreans also increasingly use USBs and describe USBs and DVDs as important information sources, which presents new opportunities for information dissemination.

RFA provides election coverage focusing on the hallmarks of free and fair elections in democratic countries. RFA coverage of the 2017 Cambodian Communal Elections is currently underway with a focus on citizen participation and government transparency. Another emphasis of RFA's election work has been training for RFA journalists and scores of other Cambodian journalists in all facets of multimedia news production and highlighting the role of independent media to inform the public so that they can make better decisions and hold elected officials accountable.

In Myanmar, the ongoing anti-Rohingya activities in Myanmar provided fodder for extremism. RFA Burmese continued its reporting on the conditions of Rohingyas especially after a militant attack in Rakhine State that led to a military "clearance operation." As government forces moved in, hundreds of Rohingyas were murdered and raped, villages were set on fire, and some 75,000 people fled to neighboring Bangladesh to escape the violence.

# Radio Free Asia (RFA)
## Summary of Increases and Decreases | FY 2017 - FY 2018

($ in thousands)

| Program Activity | Increases | Decreases | Budget |
|---|---|---|---|
| **FY 2017** | | | |
| **FY 2017 Annualized CR** | | | **$38,400** |
| **PPA Transfers** | **$1,446** | | |
| a) Base Transfer from BBG - ODDI Restructure | $500 | | |
| b) Base Transfer from TSI: Seagull Transmitter & Sound of Hope | $597 | | |
| c) Base Transfer from TSI: Digital Mobile Platforms (social media & video) | $99 | | |
| d) One-time transfer of funds by BBG | $250 | | |
| **Revised FY 2017 Annualized CR** | | | **$39,846** |
| **FY 2017-2018[1]** | | | |
| **FY 2018 Non-Recurs** | | **$250** | |
| One-time transfer of funds by BBG | | $250 | |
| **Wages (Domestic/U.S.)** | **$1,533** | | |
| Salary & Benefits (S&B) for new hires, Within Grades, Pay increase, and Annualization of S&B into FY 2018. | $1,533 | | |
| **Wages (Foreign Service Nationals - FSNs)** | | | |
| Anticipated wage increases for overseas FSN employees. | | | |
| **Current Service Increases** | **$195** | | |
| a) Office Space | $120 | | |
| b) Newswires; General Insurance, ISP | $75 | | |
| **Current Services Decreases** | | | |
| **Program Increases** | | | |
| **Program Decreases** | | **$6,028** | |
| a) Reduce Mandarin Service | | $4668 | |
| b) Reduce 5 Support Positions | | $841 | |
| c) Reduced Travel | | $80 | |
| d) Reduce Other Programatic and Operational Costs | | $439 | |
| **PROGRAM CHANGES TOTAL** | **$1,728** | **$6,278** | |
| **NET PROGRAM CHANGE** | | **$(4,550)** | |
| **TOTAL FY 2018 RFA PROGRAM REQUEST** | | | **$35,296** |

1/ - change between "revised FY2017 annualized CR" level and FY'18 Request

# Middle East Broadcasting Networks, Inc. (MBN)

|  | FY 2016<br>ACTUAL | FY 2017<br>ANNUALIZED | FY 2018<br>REQUEST | FY 2017-18<br>CHANGE |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| FUNDING<br>($ in thousands) | $109,720 | $108,400 | $103,100 | ($5,300) |

## NOTABLE FY 2018 PROGRAM CHANGE

■ **Eliminate Afia Darfur Programming. MBN will eliminate a daily 30 minute news and information program currently broadcast via shortwave to Darfur and eastern Chad. MBN launched the 30-minute *Afia Darfur* programming in 2008, initially through funding from the Department of State. Afia Darfur is broadcast into Darfur via shortwave each evening at 9:00 p.m. local time and targets all people in Darfur and eastern Chad, and it is heard in Khartoum. With a decade of tailored content already provided, coupled with no current research available to assess its effectiveness, this programming is scheduled for elimination in FY 2018.**

■ **Reduce Pan-Arab Live News Updates. Radio Sawa will eliminate live, Pan-Arab news updates in the overnight hours across the Middle East. On the Pan-Arab Alhurra channel, television news updates will**
be reduced in length and potentially number to ensure staffing efficiencies. Its two, primetime, hour-long newscasts will continue to anchor the news line-up for Alhurra.

■ **Reduce Salary and Support Costs. To reduce salary and benefits costs, MBN will: continue automation efforts in television production systems and make associated staffing changes; realign certain production support functions; eliminate select support positions; and reduce employee support costs.**

■ **Offset Funding Requirements. MBN will review contracts and address funding cycles to achieve a one-time savings of $1.7 million in FY 2018. MBN also proposes to offset FY 2018 operational costs through use of $2.5 million from recoveries of prior year obligations.**

## OVERVIEW

Middle East Broadcasting Networks, Inc. (MBN) is a private, non-profit multi-media broadcasting corporation providing the United States with a direct line of communication with Arabic-speaking people of the Middle East. MBN is funded exclusively through a grant from the BBG. MBN's mission is to inform and engage the people of the Middle East and provide objective, accurate, and relevant news and information about America, the region, and the world. MBN works to counter violent extremism across the Middle East through its multi-media programming, and supports democratic values by expanding the spectrum of ideas, opinions, and perspectives available in the region's media.

MBN's principal brands include Alhurra and Radio Sawa. BBG research estimates Alhurra and Radio Sawa have an unduplicated weekly audience of more than 26 million across the region.  Over the past few years, there has been a measurable shift in the media habits and preferences of the target audience as digital use across the region increases. MBN has identified and seized opportunities presented by the new media landscape, accelerating efforts to engage directly with its target audience through new digital platforms and initiatives.

MBN produces its multimedia programming at its headquarters in Northern Virginia and production outlets in Washington, D.C., Iraq, UAE, Lebanon, Egypt, Israel, and Morocco. Satellite and terrestrial television broadcasts and medium wave (AM) and FM radio broadcasts are transmitted via the IBB's global transmission network. MBN engages with audiences across digital platforms, including its Alhurra and Radio Sawa websites, Radio Sawa and Alhurra apps, Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube.

With its established footprint across the region, MBN is well placed to cover events and issues critical to understanding the fight against Islamic extremism.  MBN ensures rich content is available to its audience, and regularly shares content with the broader US foreign policy community for its use. Alhurra's coverage of the battle for Mosul, for example, has included regular updates from the battlefield as well as humanitarian stories related to the ISIS invasion.

## MBN PROGRAMMING

### Alhurra

Alhurra's 24/7 Pan-Arab news and information television channel was launched in February 2004 to provide a reliable source of objective news and information across the Middle East and North Africa. Alhurra-Iraq television 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. Its news and information programming provides its audience unique content on social, cultural, and political issues as well as a forum for objective discussion and the introduction of viewpoints not routinely found on local media.

Alhurra television airs on direct SD and HD satellite across the region as well as via terrestrial transmitters throughout Iraq. Beyond the 24/7 television channels, Alhurra content is distributed through an array of digital platforms, including its website, YouTube channels, Facebook pages, Twitter and mobile app.

### Radio Sawa

Radio Sawa was launched in 2002 and broadcasts 24/7 on eight programming streams targeted to the sub-regions of the Middle East. Radio Sawa's pioneering format is designed to attract listeners from the overwhelmingly young Middle Eastern population. Research consistently demonstrates the effectiveness of Radio Sawa in reaching listeners and commanding their attention to Radio Sawa's news and information programming.

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). Radio Sawa is also streamed on its news and information website and through a dedicated audio streaming mobile app.

## FY 2017 ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND FY 2018 INITIATIVES

### Expanding MBN's Digital Reach

While research continues to show that television is the most popular media for news and information in the Middle East and North Africa, more and more countries rank digital media among their most important sources of information. In Iraq, Egypt, and Morocco—the source of more than half of MBN's measured audience in the region—an average of 48% of adults have used digital media in the past week. In Iraq, the percentage of the population using internet in the past week rose to 58 percent in 2016, versus just 40 percent a year before. Digital media users in Morocco and Egypt are now just as likely to mention websites or Facebook as TV stations when asked to name their most important information sources. The use of digital media remains high in the Gulf States -- an average of 75 percent of Arab adults in the UAE, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Bahrain use the internet weekly, according to BBG surveys.

The rapidly expanding digital environment across the region provides a solid stage from which to launch audience-specific channels on digital, rather than more expensive traditional media platforms. Moreover, the digital environment allows for two-way communication with the target audience; something not afforded by traditional media but at the core of our mission. MBN is strategically managing available resources to seize new opportunities for digital programming as they develop. MBN has judiciously reallocated resources to improve its digital presence and establish a revamped digital department. Within the expanded department, digital content is coordinated across all platforms, including social media platforms.

Reflecting regional trends, beyond web engagement platforms, Facebook has been the primary focus of MBN's social media outreach. Total video views across all MBN Facebook pages over the last 12 months (April 2016 – March 2017) was 1.67 billion views.

**MAGHREB VOICES:**



Launching in the spring of 2017, *Maghreb Voices* is a new MBN digital platform targeted to inform and engage the people of the Maghreb region. The new initiative provides objective coverage of social, political, and cultural issues impacting the region, including those which have the potential to fuel radicalization. It expands the spectrum of ideas, opinions, and perspectives available in the region's media, and provides a trustworthy source of balanced coverage on issues that influence the lives of the region's people and their future.

As an engagement platform, *Maghreb Voices* takes advantage of digital media's two-way communication potential to connect with its audience and provide a discussion forum for all voices. *Maghreb Voices* website and social media properties provide opportunities 24/7 for the audience to engage directly on topics of concern. Daily on the website, audiences will find a steady stream of new video content; polls and questions of the day; citizen journalist content; and articles. *Maghreb Voices* is staffed around the clock to facilitate related conversations via Facebook, the website, WhatsApp and other social media properties.

*Maghreb Voices* will foster freedom of expression throughout the North Africa region. Beyond freedom of expression, the platform will communicate broader American values and provide context for American policy affecting the region.

## Countering ISIS Narrative

MBN's Raise Your Voice–Iraq digital platform counters false ISIS narratives and provides a forum for discussion of issues at the root cause of extremism. Established in late 2015, the platform continues to evolve to invigorate content and conversation around the root causes of violent extremism. Daily, the content includes coverage of ISIS victims, ISIS losses, education, children's rights, economic issues and other related topics. In FY 2017, the platform is increasing video content and adding a landing page specifically to further engage Syrians. Traffic to the site has increased over 20 percent in the past year.

While the digital properties are the keystone of the Raise Your Voice-Iraq engagement initiative, call-in radio and television programming shore up MBN's efforts to provide forums for community leaders, youth and others to share their ideas on topics such as sectarian relationships, religious freedom, and



Those people who justify acts of violence using the name of religion

Alhurra's documentary "Invisible Enemy" is a three-part documentary series that takes an in-depth look at what Moroccan citizens are doing to counter violent extremism.

freedom of expression. In FY 2017, new television documentary programming will provide more powerful personal testimonies that reveal the realities of life in ISIS territory and the pain and suffering ISIS inflicts on families and communities.

## Providing Unique Programming

### BROADENING PERSPECTIVES:

The media landscape of the Middle East and North Africa is filled with broadcasters affiliated with political, social, and religious organizations inside and outside official governments. The multimedia content produced by Alhurra, Alhurra-Iraq, and Radio Sawa provide audiences news and information free of sensationalism, political influence, and religious underpinnings. MBN brands include information and perspectives that local

broadcasters would never provide on issues and matters critical to the region and its future. For example:

- A significant majority of Alhurra's Iranian talk show guests are not invited into discussions on Arab news networks. Recently on Gulf Talks, Alhurra hosted Iranian and Bahraini guests together, unique to Gulf-oriented shows;

- Arab liberals have found voice through Alhurra roundtables;
- Muslim moderate clerics and scholars have chosen Alhurra's shows to send their moderate anti-ISIS, anti-terror message – finding it a "comfort zone" as stated by a prominent Islamic scholar who appeared on Alhurra's *Special Report* program;
- Well-respected Arab scholars seek to appear on Alhurra to discuss American foreign policy with U.S. scholars, an opportunity other Pan-Arab stations do not regularly provide.

MBN continues to create and provide audiences a richer, substantive discussion of the political, social, and cultural issues across the region through its news coverage and information programming.

**TELLING AMERICA'S STORY:**

MBN consistently provides the people of the Middle East unfiltered information about America, American policies and its people without the distortion or filters imposed by the majority of the region's media. With so many broadcasters primed to pervert American intentions and values, MBN programming assures an accurate reflection. Robust coverage of the historic election cycle is but one shining example. Beyond news and its correspondents at the White House, Congress, Pentagon, and State Department, MBN informational programming continues to provide clear insight into America's culture and values. In addition to scores of interviews with Members of Congress, Administration policy officials, and a wide spectrum of think tank commentators, MBN programs also reflect the actions and values of American citizens. Examples include:

- A report on Dr. Azedine Stambuli, President of the Maghreb-USA Medical Association, and his team who go to Tunisia, Algeria and Morocco offering free medical care saving the lives of hundreds of children;
- A Detroit Iraqi family, who started an Adopt-a-Refugee foundation that has helped over 2,000 refugees in Jordan, Lebanon, Iraq, and Turkey;
- Coverage of how communities of diverse religious, racial, and ethnic backgrounds in the United States have become united in times of crisis;
- Features related to Arab-American Heritage Month, including a profile of Dina Habib Powell, an Egyptian-American who currently serves as U.S. Deputy National Security Advisor for Strategy to President Trump, and an interview with Arab-American Mona Simpson, a novelist and sister of Apple's founder Steve Jobs;

- Reports on Muslim communities in New York working side by side with the NY Police Department fighting extremism and terror; bridging the gap with local communicates through intercultural and interreligious dialogue;

- A report series on US Muslims fighting terror, which included interviews with 8 American Imams

who encourage peace and co-existence.

MBN programming works to expand and inform the Middle East's understanding of America and its policies. Several new series that delve deeper into the Arab American experience will launch in FY 2017 with broadcasts continuing in FY 2018.

## Recalibrating Digital

As the prevalence of digital media use across the region increases, how audiences access information and what content audiences are seeking continues to evolve. Through research and analytics, MBN will step-up monitoring of the new media landscape to ensure the most effective means to reach audiences are employed to the extent practicable. Beyond Facebook, new tools and formats are being explored and MBN's digital focus will continue to evaluate and react accordingly to significant trends to stay current. Websites are

being evaluated to ensure formats and focus target audiences effectively.

While mindful of increasing mobile consumption patterns, developing strategies to increase engagements through mobile and other means will continue in FY 2018. As MBN explores and reveals opportunities, resources and level of effort will be reallocated as necessary to meet new challenges. Furthering engagement will remain a high priority to exploit the power of digital media.

## Rebalancing Television and Radio Programming Priorities

Newscasts have been the traditional backbone of all U.S.-funded international broadcasting. Likewise, Alhurra and Radio Sawa's accurate, credible, comprehensive, and carefully balanced news reporting instills confidence in MBN brands. The credibility established through news products allows for deeper discussion and exchange on critical issues through its variety of information programming.

Parlaying the trust we have garnered over the past decade, a review of the level of news programming and the mix of information programming on television and radio is being evaluated. To make the best use of taxpayer funding, a reassessment of the programming mix will continue into FY 2018 as will strategic adjustments. Planned changes include a realignment of television information programming, development of radio podcasts, and a new Pan-Arab radio call-in show.

**Engaging in Syria**

In FY 2018, MBN looks forward to ground truth that will allow for greater access to content inside Syria. While more Syrian reporters are being engaged now as access allows, MBN looks forward to developing content specific to the information needs of the people of Syria in and outside the country as they look towards their future.

## Middle East Broadcasting Network, Inc. (MBN)
## Summary of Increases and Decreases | FY 2017 - FY 2018

($ in thousands)

| Program Activity | Increases | Decreases | Budget |
|---|---|---|---|
| **FY 2017** | | | |
| **FY 2017 Annualized CR** | | | **$109,400** |
| **PPA Transfers** | **$500** | **$1,500** | |
| a) Base Transfer from BBG - ODDI Restructure | $500 | | |
| b) One-time Transfer of funds by BBG due to MBN efficiencies | | $1,500 | |
| **Revised FY 2017 Annualized CR** | | | **$108,400** |
| **FY 2017-2018¹** | | | |
| **FY 2018 Non-Recurs** | | **$127** | |
| a) Non Recur U.S. Election Coverage Costs | | $127 | |
| **Wages (Domestic/U.S.)** | **$2,993** | | |
| a) Projected Pay Increases and Net Salary Annualization | $2,720 | | |
| b) Projected Health Insurance Increase | $273 | | |
| **Wages (Foreign Service Nationals - FSNs)** | **$325** | | |
| a) Projected Pay Increases | $286 | | |
| b) Projected Health Insurance Increase | $39 | | |
| **Current Service Increases** | **$343** | | |
| a) Mandatory Contractual Increases | $343 | | |
| **Current Services Decreases** | | **$1,734** | |
| a) Offsets due to Contract Realignments | | $1,734 | |
| **Program Increases** | - | | |
| **Program Decreases** | | **$7,100** | |
| a) Eliminate Aria Darfur Programming | | $500 | |
| b) Reduction of Pan-Arab Live News Updates | | $1,500 | |
| c) Reduction of Support Positions and Salary Costs | | $4,100 | |
| d) Change in Use of Offsets from Recoveries of Prior Year Obligations² | | $1,000 | |
| **PROGRAM CHANGES TOTAL** | **$3,661** | **$8,961** | |
| **NET PROGRAM CHANGE** | | **$(5,300)** | |
| **TOTAL FY 2018 MBN PROGRAM REQUEST** | | | **$103,100** |

1/ - change between "revised FY2017 annualized CR" level and FY'18 Request

2/ - In FY 2017, MBN used $1.5 million of recoveries from prior year obligations to offset operational costs. In FY 2018, MBN will use $2.5 million in recoveries from prior year obligations to offset operational costs and reduce the requirement for new grant funds.

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# Broadcasting Capital Improvements

|  | FY 2016<br>ACTUAL | FY 2017<br>ANNUALIZED | FY 2018<br>REQUEST | FY 2017-18<br>CHANGE |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| FUNDING<br>($ in thousands) | **$6,839** | **$4,791** | **$4,791** | **$0** |

## NOTABLE FY 2018 PROGRAM CHANGES

- **Continued high-priority Maintenance and Repair projects for TSI's global network of transmitting stations.**

- **Critical Cohen building headquarters HVAC and electrical system upgrades.**

- **Consolidation of VOA Master Control facilities for improved workflows and operational efficiencies.**

## OVERVIEW

Broadcasting Capital Improvements (BCI) provides funding for large-scale capital projects and for improvements and maintenance of BBG's global transmission network and digital multimedia infrastructure.  The Office of Technology, Services, and Innovation (TSI) manages many of the BCI projects for International Broadcasting Bureau (IBB).  The BCI account also supports capital projects managed by Voice of America (VOA), the Office of Cuba Broadcasting (OCB), and the IBB Office of Security.  These BBG offices will continue support of essential agency technical operations in FY 2017 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.

## FY 2016 AND 2017 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

### HD Television Initiative

VOA made significant progress on the essential HD television initiative in the Washington DC broadcast facility including:

- Launching the first daily HD live show, Current Time, in October 2016.

- Completing conversion of television studious to High Definition (HD).

- Making the first two channels of HD Master Control are operational.

**Consolidating TV and Radio Master Control**

VOA installed first phase (of two) consolidating TV and Radio Master Control areas for improved workflows and operational efficiencies.

**Upgrading Miami Broadcast Facility**

OCB improved several areas within the Miami broadcast facility and the Marathon medium wave transmitter site

- Upgraded laptop edit stations used for editing out in the field, replacing end of life laptops that no longer functioned properly.

- Improved radio production with the introduction of the AVRA production system.  AVRA allows for radio programs to be streamed with both video/audio and incorporates elements such as pictures, videos, etc.

- Replaced the one big satellite dish with two smaller ones at OCB's Miami headquarters.  One of the dishes is on line and we are awaiting the engineering designs and permits for the second dish.

- Completed the resurfacing of the access roads, installation of the remote control system, and the tower guide wire foundation grounding.

## FY 2017 AND FY 2018 INITIATIVES

BCI investment funds will be used to continue the planned reconfiguration and expansion of the shortwave broadcast infrastructure at the Kuwait Transmitting Station.  This will allow BBG to enhance transmission to multiple regions, including Africa, and achieve cost savings for shortwave broadcasts. Because of the very low cost of electrical power in Kuwait, the Kuwait

Transmitting Station is the least expensive IBB station to operate. This project will allow the agency to shift mission-critical but higher cost transmissions from other stations in the IBB network to Kuwait.

**TSI will fund:**

- Maintenance and repair of deteriorating antenna structures in corrosive environments, including addressing antenna maintenance concerns in Cyprus, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI), Greenville, and Kuwait.

- Replacement of Sao Tome medium wave (MW) Tower due to weather related failure.

- Refurbishing the agency's transmission infrastructure at key locations, including routine building maintenance, roofing repairs and replacement, water line and septic systems maintenance, heating and cooling equipment maintenance and replacement, power plant maintenance, generator maintenance, building facilities and antenna structures painting, and roads and grounds maintenance.

- Network wide update of short circuit coordination and arc flash studies to ensure a safe and reliable electrical system.

- Facilities condition surveys for the agency's most critical sites.

- Replacement of HVAC system in Greenville.

- Replacement of Fire Alarm system in Tinang, Philippines.

- Maintenance and repair on agency's mission-critical emergency power and equipment to support broadcasting at Wilbur J. Cohen building.

- Replacement of power supplies and capacitor to the uninterruptible power supply (UPS).

- Upgrades and repairs to the agency's 1.5 megawatt emergency generator.

**VOA will fund:**

- Complete conversion to end-to-end High Definition television project with the installation of an HD television routing system, expanding the use of Internet Protocol signal handling to save costs and more efficiently process incoming and outgoing video content.

- Initial installation of consolidated Master Control facilities, co-locating radio and television master controls to save money.

- Reconfigure existing studios to improve operational efficiencies.

**OCB will fund:**

- OCB has an imminent need to replace the video server system, as the current Imagine Software Nexio system is past its end of life.

- Replacing Radio Marti's audio router and studio audio boards which are outdated.

**IBB (Office of Security) will fund:**

Continuing security assessments and projects that are vital to the protection of life and safety of BBG personnel at headquarters in Washington, D.C., VOA overseas news bureaus, and TSI overseas transmitting stations. Projects will include:

■   Life-Cycle upgrade of fence protection system (FPS), upgrade/replacement of Selectone (imminent danger notification system) and anti-ram barriers, FEBR Doors/Windows, and Closed-circuit television (CCTV). Maintenance and repair of security systems and emergency radio systems and expansion of access control/alarm systems.

■   Cohen Headquarters full upgrade to Physical Access Control Systems (PACS) to meet HSPD-12 PIV cards requirements and ID Management systems.

■   Tinang, Philippines life-cycle Armor Vehicle, CCTV, and Selectone replacement.

■   Kuwait life cycle Vehicle Barrier, CCTV, Selectone, and Forced Entry/Ballistic Resistant (FEBR) replacement.

■   Sao Tome' life cycle CCTV, FEBR, and Selectone replacement.

■   Marianas Islands Access Control and gates, CCTV, and Selectone replacement.

## Broadcasting Capital Improvements (BCI)
## Summary of Increases and Decreases | FY 2017 - FY 2018

($ in thousands)

| Program Activity | Increases | Decreases | Budget |
|---|---|---|---|
| **FY 2017** | | | |
| **FY 2017 Annualized CR** | | | $4,791 |
| PPA Transfers | - | - | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| **Revised FY 2017 Annualized CR** | | | $4,791 |
| **FY 2017-2018**[1] | | | |
| **Wages (Domestic/U.S.)** | | | |
| | | | |
| **Wages (Foreign Service Nationals - FSNs)** | | | |
| | | | |
| **Current Service Increases** | | | |
| **Current Services Decreases** | | | |
| **Program Increases** | | | |
| **Program Decreases** | | | |
| | | | |
| **PROGRAM CHANGES TOTAL** | - | - | |
| **NET PROGRAM CHANGE** | | | |
| **TOTAL FY 2018 BCI PROGRAM REQUEST** | | | $4,791 |

1/ - change between "revised FY2017 annualized CR" level and FY'18 Request

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# Performance Budget Information

## INTRODUCTION

This Performance Budget includes a summary of the Broadcasting Board of Governors 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 BBG 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. BBG's annual Performance and Accountability Report (PAR) provides detailed performance information and can be found on the agency website, bbg.gov.

## SUMMARY OF THE 2014-2018 BBG STRATEGIC PLAN

BBG's 2014-2018 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 the FY 2018 budget request and continues the integration of performance, budget planning and management of BBG.

The mission of the Broadcasting Board of Governors 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**

These goals further BBG's mission of supporting freedom and democracy. The purpose of communicating America's democratic experience is not merely public diplomacy. By presenting a case study in the American experience, BBG also seeks to help other countries navigate their governance challenges.

## CURRENT CONTEXT OF BBG

The key environmental factors facing BBG are: 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. A war for influence is playing out on the stage of public opinion. Non-democratic forces run increasingly sophisticated information campaigns.

Consumers of news and information have an unprecedented array of options from which to choose. For example, citizen journalism and social media provide broadcasters with opportunities to collect and disseminate information, while interacting with audiences. In many regions, BBG 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 driving transmitting and receiving broadcast signals is constantly improving and changing. BBG has kept up with these developments, which offer extraordinary opportunities for unfiltered, direct dialogue with audiences around the world. BBG transmits programs through radio (shortwave, medium wave, FM, and satellite), terrestrial and satellite television, the Internet (websites with streaming audio and video as well as social media, such as Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube), and numerous mobile technologies, including SMS, apps, and mobile Web.

To serve audiences in less developed areas of the world, BBG must continue to broadcast via traditional technologies such as shortwave and maintain capability on these platforms by replacing antiquated equipment. But to stay relevant in competitive news markets and serve current and future audiences, BBG must 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 shortwave. BBG has closed transmission stations, repurposed equipment and invested these savings in platforms that the audience has shifted to, primarily in digital media technology and other high-priority programming.

BBG 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, BBG 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 BBG to be forward-thinking and strategically positioned to fulfill its mission. BBG undertakes a comprehensive assessment of the languages in which agency networks broadcast during its 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 broadcasts.

BBG's Strategic Plan gives highest priority to setting the program mix and delivery platforms to meet market demand. This is critical to ensure that BBG 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 by communicating standards for human rights, civil society, religious tolerance, and transparency of government via the most effective delivery systems.

## IMPACT MODEL

In recognition that impact is about more than only audience reach, BBG's previous strategic plan set the goal of developing a multi-factor model to define impact. In 2014, BBG began implementing the model. It ties to BBG'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 BBG's strategic objectives. During the past two years, the model has formed the basis of BBG'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.

# STRATEGIC AND MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND PERFORMANCE GOALS

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

**Strategic Goals:**
Expand freedom of information and expression
Communicate America's democratic experience

**Strategic Objectives**

Produce journalism of exceptional value that responds to the mission, meets audience interests, and expands alternatives in the marketplace

Reach the information-denied, underserved, and targets of extremist rhetoric and violence

Overcome censorship

Optimize the media mix and program delivery by market

Serve as a robust U.S. news bureau and cultural bridge

Empower citizen information gathering and exchange

**Management Objectives**

Transform the BBG into an agile and cost-effective enterprise, responsive to rapid geopolitical change and ongoing fiscal constraints

Leverage and harmonize Agency assets and brands

Enhance employee engagement, development, and productivity

BBG's two strategic goals are supported by six strategic objectives and three management objectives, each of which has supporting performance goals. These objectives and goals map out Agency priorities for the next two years.

## STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1: PRODUCE JOURNALISM OF EXCEPTIONAL VALUE THAT RESPONDS TO THE MISSION, MEETS AUDIENCE INTERESTS, AND EXPANDS ALTERNATIVES IN THE MARKETPLACE

Journalism is the daily work of the BBG broadcasters, and producing fact-based, verifiable news and information must be preeminent in agency strategy. To have impact, BBG journalism must reach audiences, meet their interests along the breadth of subjects that matter to their lives and, at the same time, must add value in expanding the range of media alternatives. BBG's aim is not just to follow the 24-hour news cycle but to drive the news agenda through original reporting, in-depth analysis,

and a unique cross-cultural perspective that helps the audiences become sophisticated consumers of news and media.

■ As Congressionally mandated, provide news and other programming that is accurate, objective, and comprehensive and in accordance with the highest professional standards of broadcast 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 are 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 BBG targets.

■ Co-create content with reputable partners, as appropriate and consistent with broadcasting standards and editorial guidelines.

BBG tracks its progress in achieving Strategic Objective 1 with the following performance goals:

## PERFORMANCE GOAL 1: REACH SIGNIFICANT AUDIENCES

| Measured Weekly Audiences (in millions)[1] | FY 2014 Actual | FY 2015 Actual | FY 2016 Target | FY 2016 Actual | FY 2017 Target | FY 2018 Target[6] |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| BBG[2] | 215 | 226 | 230 | 278 | 278 | 179 |
| VOA | 171.6 | 187.7 | 188.0 | 236.6 | 237.0 | 141.0 |
| RFE/RL | 23.3 | 23.6 | 27.4 | 26.9 | 25.9 | 23.6 |
| RFA[3] | 7.8 | 7.5 | 8.0 | 6.4 | 6.4 | 6.4 |
| MBN[4] | 29.3 | 25.7 | 27.0 | 27.5 | 28.0 | 28.0 |
| Radio Sawa[4] | 11.3 | 10.9 | | | | |
| Alhurra[4] | 20.9 | 17.6 | | | | |
| OCB[5] | NA | NA | NA | NA | NA | TBD |

[1] Measured weekly audience is the number of people in target areas listening to or viewing BBG programming or online materials in the past week. 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.

[2] The BBG 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.

[3] RFA figure include audiences for six of their nine language services. BBG is not able to conduct representative quantitative audience research for Korean, Tibetan, and Uyghur.

[4] Since the FY 2015 PAR, BBG is 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 and allows inclusion of MBN's Afia Darfur audiences.

[5] Because of the historical limitations of reliable survey data in Cuba, it has not been possible to reliably measure weekly audience for OCB. BBG conducted a survey in February and March 2017 and expects results in May 2017 and will set future targets at that time.

[6] Assumes a reduction in audience reach based on FY 2018 budget level. Audience losses are anticipated related to reductions in Spanish, Central Africa, Cantonese, Indonesian, Mandarin, Thai, Lao, Macedonian, Belarusian, Dari and Pashto, Kurdish, and Persian, as well as reductions in transmission and general operating expenses.

## Indicator:

**Measured Weekly Audience:** This indicator measures the number of people in target areas listening to or viewing BBG programming or online materials in the past week. The measure is obtained for each language service (except Spanish-to-Cuba, Korean, Uyghur, and Tibetan) and for the countries served by the BBG 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 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. BBG 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. Additionally, political volatility in certain markets may prevent the measurement of current reach for services broadcasting to these areas.

**PERFORMANCE GOAL 2: PROVIDE PROGRAMMING THAT AUDIENCES FIND TRUSTWORTHY**

| Program Credibility<br><br>Percent of weekly audience who consider information to be very or somewhat trustworthy | FY 2014 Actual | FY 2015 Actual | FY 2016 Target | FY 2016 Actual | FY 2017 Target | FY 2018 Target |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| VOA | 89 | 86 | 86 | 86 | 87 | 87 |
| RFE/RL | 92 | 88 | 92 | 87 | 82 | 84 |
| RFA | 87 | 84 | 87 | 86 | 85 | 85 |
| MBN[1] | | 86 | 86 | 82 | 86 | 86 |
| Radio Sawa[1] | 83 | | | | | |
| Alhurra[1] | 84 | | | | | |
| OCB[2] | NA | NA | NA | NA | NA | TBD |

[1] Since the FY 2015 PAR, BBG is 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 and allows inclusion of MBN's Afia Darfur audiences.

[2] Due to historical limitations of reliable survey data in Cuba, it has not been possible to reliably measure credibility for OCB. BBG conducted a survey in February and March 2017 and expects results in May 2017 and will set future targets at that time.

## 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 a great deal, Trust it somewhat, Do not trust it very much, Do not trust it at all. The credibility index is the percent 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.

**PERFORMANCE GOAL 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 Target** | **FY 2016 Actual** | **FY 2017 Target** | **FY 2018 Target** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| VOA | 90 | 85 | 85 | 86 | 86 | 86 |
| RFE/RL | 86 | 84 | 88 | 81 | 82 | 83 |
| RFA | 88 | 80 | 85 | NA | 85 | 85 |
| MBN[1] | | 81 | 81 | 80 | 81 | 81 |
| Radio Sawa[1] | 77 | | | | | |
| Alhurra[1] | 77 | | | | | |
| OCB2 | NA | NA | NA | NA | NA | TBD |

[1]Historically, RFA's understanding scores have been based on data from Burma and Cambodia, where audiences have been robust. In FY 2016, BBG had no new data for Cambodia. In Burma, the understanding question was not asked using the standard language from previous years, meaning answers were not comparable with past data or with those used for other broadcasters.

[2] Since the FY 2015 PAR, BBG is 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 and allows inclusion of MBN's Afia Darfur audiences.

[3] Due to historical limitations of reliable survey data in Cuba, it has not been possible to reliably measure understanding for OCB. BBG conducted a survey in February and March 2017 and expects results in May 2017 and will set future targets at that time.

### 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 measures 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."

**PERFORMANCE GOAL 4: PROVIDE EXCEPTIONAL NEWS AND INFORMATION**

| Uniqueness[1] Percent of weekly audience reporting that broadcaster presents information they cannot get from other media | FY 2014 Actual | FY 2015 Actual | FY 2016 Target | FY 2016 Actual | FY 2017 Target | FY 2018 Target[2] |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| VOA | Question has been incorporated into core questionnaire | 25 | 25 | 25 | 25 | 20 |
| RFE/RL | | 32 | 34 | 25 | 27 | 29 |
| RFA | | No data yet | NA | NA | NA | 25 |
| MBN | | No data yet | NA | NA | NA | 48 |
| OCB | | NA | NA | NA | NA | NA |

[1]This was a new measure in FY 2015. Baselines are based on a small subset of countries, those surveyed since 2013 through BBG surveys and with a sufficient sample size of weekly users to allow analysis. There was insufficient data to report FY16 uniqueness scores for RFA, MBN, and OCB.

[2] VOA assumes FY18 Budget levels may likely result in diminution of journalistic resources, leading to less unique coverage and programming.

## Indicator:

**Uniqueness:** This indicator is determined by the survey question asking weekly 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 measures the percent of those answering the question in the survey who chose "very little" or "none."

## STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2: REACH THE INFORMATION-DENIED, UNDERSERVED, AND TARGETS OF EXTREMIST RHETORIC AND VIOLENCE

In deciding where to broadcast, BBG considers the local media situation and prioritizes countries that lack a free or developed press. Special consideration is given to populations at risk of violence due to extremist rhetoric. In all target countries, BBG broadcasters seek to grow their audience base and reach those traditionally underserved by its broadcasts. Populations in the target countries are overwhelmingly young – a challenge but also a chance for us to connect with a demographic that in the main has never even heard of us. BBG's current audiences are approximately 60 percent male and 40 percent female – an imbalance ripe for correcting. BBG 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. BBG pays special attention to audiences in areas plagued by extremism, as extremist forces espouse a violent ideology and execute campaigns of terror that threaten U.S. and regional security and stymie free, open, democratic societies. Support for programming to these audiences is in the interests of U.S. national security.

- Prioritize countries lacking freedom and democracy or faced with 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 important countries where BBG's products are urgently needed.

- Reach out to women and youth with the kinds of content and conversation they wish to have beyond traditional news and information paradigms.

- Sharpen audience segmentation and targeting to drive content strategies and better address gender and age demographics, as well as psychographic segments.

- Create country-specific content streams in existing languages to augment news and information for priority countries, e.g., Egypt, Mali.

- Serve as a conduit for the transmission of reporting from inside closed societies 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.

The BBG tracks its progress in achieving Strategic Objective 2 with the following performance goals:

**PERFORMANCE GOAL 1: ACHIEVE SIGNIFICANT AUDIENCE REACH IN ENVIRONMENTS SUBJECT TO EXTREMIST VIOLENCE**

| | FY 2014 Baseline[1] | FY 2015 Actual | FY 2016 Target | FY 2016 Actual | FY 2017 Target | FY 2018 Target |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Maintain significant reach in Iraq[2] | 35.5% | 42.4% | 43.5% | 42.6% | 43.5% | 42% |
| Maintain significant reach in the Persian Gulf[3] | 3.9 million | 4.0 million | 4.0 million | 6.8 million | 5.0 million | 5.0 million |
| Increase reach in Francophone Sub-Saharan Africa[4] | 8.9 million | 8.9 million | 10.0 million | 12.9 million | 13.0 million | 10.4 million |
| Increase reach in Anglophone Sub-Saharan Africa[5] | 33.0 million | 34.6 million | 35.0 million | 47.2 million | 46.5 million | 37.2 million |
| Increase weekly reach in Kenya | 6.0% (Oct 2013) | 12.1% (Aug 2015) | 1 percentage point additional weekly reach (over FY 2015 levels) | No new data available | 15.0% | 12.0% |
| Increase weekly reach in Tanzania | 20.3% (Sep 2012) | 17.8% (Jun 2015) | 1 percentage point additional weekly reach (over FY 2015 levels) | 31.0% (Feb 2016) | 31.0% | 24.8% |
| Increase weekly reach in Nigeria | 16.9% (Mar 2014) | 18.1% (Jun 2015) | 1 percentage point additional weekly reach (over FY 2015 levels) | 21.0% (Feb 2016) | 21.0% | 21.0% |
| Increase weekly reach in Niger | 16.0% (Dec 2013) | 16.0% (Dec 2013) | 1 percentage points additional weekly reach (over FY 2015 levels) | No new data available | 20.0% | 20.0% |

[1] Multi-country estimates are presented in real numbers, rather than percentages, because of the potential high variations in percentages across covered countries.

### Indicator:

Measured weekly audience is explained above under Strategic Objective 1, Performance Goal 1. For individual countries, the measured weekly audience is expressed as a percentage of the adult population covered by the survey.

### PERFORMANCE GOAL 2: INCREASE AUDIENCE REACH IN ENVIRONMENTS LACKING INFORMATION

| | FY 2014 Baseline | FY 2015 Actual | FY 2016 Target | FY 2016 Actual | FY 2017 Target | FY 2018 Target |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Expand weekly audience reach in Burma | 11.2% (Mar 2014) | 11.2% (Mar 2014) | +2 percentage points | 7.1% (Dec 2015) | 9.1% | 9.1% |
| Expand weekly audience reach in Cambodia | 30.8% (Jun 2014) | 39.5% (May 2015) | +2 percentage points | No new data available | 29.5% | 25.0% |
| Expand weekly audience reach in Vietnam | 1.9% (Mar 2013) | 3.6% (Mar 2015) | +0.5 percentage point | No new data available | 4.1% | 4.1% |
| Expand digital audience reach in China | 0.03% (Nov 2009) | 0.25% (Jun 2014) | +0.25 percentage points | No new data available | 0.5% | 0.5% |

### Indicator:

Measured weekly audience is explained above under Strategic Objective 1, Performance Goal 1. For individual countries, the measured weekly audience is expressed as a percentage of the adult population covered by the survey.

**PERFORMANCE GOAL 3: REACH AUDIENCES WITH FACT-BASED, CREDIBLE INFORMATION IN ENVIRONMENTS TARGETED BY STATE-SPONSORED MISINFORMATION CAMPAIGNS**

|  | FY 15 Actual | FY 2016 Target | FY 2016 Actual | FY 2017 Target | FY 2018 Target |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Increase reach in the Russian Federation | 2.7% (Dec 2013) | Increase weekly reach by 1 percentage point over current level | 4.9% (Jun 2016) | Maintain FY 16 audience reach | Reach 6% of adults on all platforms |
| Increase reach in Ukraine | 20.8% (Apr 2014) | Reach 24% of adults on all platforms | 18.0% (Jun 2016) | Reach 20% of adults on all platforms | Reach 20% of adults on all platforms |
| Increase reach in Moldova | 8.3% (Oct 2010) | Reach 14% of adults on all platforms | 32.1% (Feb 2016) | Maintain FY16 audience reach | Maintain FY17 audience reach |
| Increase reach in Kazakhstan | 0.9% (Jan 2011) | Reach 1.5% of adults on all platforms | No new data available | Reach 9% of adults on all platforms | Maintain FY17 audience reach |
| Increase reach in Tajikistan | 6.8% (Nov 2014) | Reach 10% of adults on all platforms | 11.4% (Jun 2016) | Reach 11% of adults on all platforms | Maintain FY17 audience reach |
| Attract audiences in Estonia | 5.2% (Aug 2015) | Reach 6% of adults on all platforms | No new data available | Reach 6% of adults on all platforms | Reach 7% of adults on all platforms |
| Attract audiences in Latvia | No data | Reach 3% of adults on all platforms | 7.2% (Aug 2015) | Reach 6% of adults on all platforms | Reach 7% of adults on all platforms |

(continued on next page)

**PERFORMANCE GOAL 3: REACH AUDIENCES WITH FACT-BASED, CREDIBLE INFORMATION IN ENVIRONMENTS TARGETED BY STATE-SPONSORED MISINFORMATION CAMPAIGNS** (continued)

| Attract audiences in Lithuania | No data | Reach 3% of adults on all platforms | 10.0% (Aug 2016) | Maintain FY16 audience reach | Reach 11% of adults on all platforms |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Provide programming that audiences find trustworthy | Russia: 91.9% (Dec 2013) Ukraine: 93.4% (Apr 2014) Moldova: 88.8% (Oct 2010) Kazakhstan: no data Tajikistan: 87.8% (Nov 2014) Estonia: no data Latvia: no data Lithuania: no data | 80% of weekly audience in each market consider information to be very or somewhat trustworthy | Russia: 67.2%[1] (Jun 2016) Ukraine: 68.4% (June 2016) Moldova: 90.4% (Feb 2016) Kazakhstan: no data Tajikistan: 87.8% (Nov 2014)—no new data Estonia: no data Latvia: no data Lithuania: 71.7% (for Current Time, Aug 2016) | 80% of weekly audience in each market consider information to be very or somewhat trustworthy | 80% of weekly audience in each market consider information to be very or somewhat trustworthy |

[1] VOA only; both RFE/RL and Current Time do not have a sufficiently large regular audience sample for analysis.

**Indicators:**

Measured weekly audience is explained above under Strategic Objective 1, Performance Goal 1. For individual countries, the measured weekly audience is expressed as a percentage of the adult population covered by the survey.

Program credibility (trustworthiness) is explained under Strategic Objective 1, Performance Goal 2.

**CONTEXTUAL INDICATORS:**

| 2017 Freedom House Rankings | # of BBG target countries ranked as: | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | **Not Free** | **Partly Free** | **Free** |
| Freedom of the Press | 61 | 53 | 10 |
| Freedom in the World (political) | 61 | 53 | 10 |

## STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3: OVERCOME CENSORSHIP

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 the BBG'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.  The agency upholds the universal right of citizens everywhere to receive and impart information without restriction. BBG 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.

- 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.

- 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.

The BBG tracks its progress in achieving Strategic Objective 3 with the following performance goal:

### PERFORMANCE GOAL 1: INCREASE TRAFFIC THROUGH INTERNET ANTI-CENSORSHIP PRODUCTS

|  | FY 2014 Actual | FY 2015 Actual | FY 2016 Target | FY 2016 Actual | FY 2017 Target | FY 2018 Target |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Increase proxy traffic through Ultrasurf | 21,900 TB | 18,250 TB | 23,000 TB | 21,900 TB | 23,000 TB | 23,000 TB |
| Increase proxy traffic through Psiphon | 4,125 TB | 8,900 TB | 9,000 TB | 11,048 TB | 12,000 TB | 13,000 TB |
| Number of messages sent via Piramideo[1] | 3.1 million | 6.9 million | 8 million | 8.2 million | NA | NA |

[1] OCB has discontinued deployment of Piramideo due to inappropriate usage.

**Indicator:**

**Proxy traffic:** Proxy traffic through Ultrasurf measures the volume of Internet traffic through the Ultrasurf, a BBG-supported proxy tool for circumventing Internet censorship. Proxy traffic through Psiphon measures the volume of Internet traffic through the Psiphon, a BBG-supported proxy tool for circumventing Internet censorship. Number of messages sent via Piramideo measure traffic through OCB's social networking tool, Piramideo, which has now been discontinued

**CONTEXTUAL INDICATOR:**

| 2016 Freedom House Rankings | # of BBG target countries ranked as: | |
|---|---|---|
| | Not Free | Partly Free |
| Freedom on the Net | 10 | 2 |

## STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 4: OPTIMIZE THE MEDIA MIX AND PROGRAM DELIVERY BY MARKET

It is essential that BBG reaches audiences on their preferred media platforms. Yet the agency's distribution methods and means have lagged shifts in media use. BBG must therefore align how it delivers content with how consumers now access it now and in the future. The BBG must accelerate investment into growing and enhancing new distribution methods, with specific attention to social and mobile platforms. For traditional media, BBG must migrate to the most effective broadcast channels, including satellite TV and FM radio. Considering the BBG has one of the world's largest affiliate networks, the agency must aggressively expand and improve its affiliations and syndication of content in effective formats. Ultimately, the agency is platform-agnostic. The BBG seeks to do what works best for the market at hand to get content to as many users as possible.

■ Increase distribution on platforms that BBG knows audiences are using – FM, satellite TV, and mobile devices – migrating away from legacy platforms where they do not reach audiences.

■ 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, 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 BBG broadcasting facilities to support growing audience appetite for TV and video.  Support audience's growing appetite for social media, TV, and video by purchasing equipment and rebuilding aging infrastructure and broadcasting facilities.

- Integrate and digitize all content – e.g. text, audio, photos, graphics, and video – on a common content management system to facilitate use across platforms, support on-demand needs of the audience, and increase use via syndication.

The BBG tracks its progress in achieving Strategic Objective 4 with the following performance goals:

**PERFORMANCE GOAL 1: INCREASE WEB AND MOBILE TRAFFIC[1]**

| Average weekly visits to web and mobile sites[1] | FY 2014 Actual[2] | FY 2015 Actual[3] | FY 2016 Target (increase in visits over FY15 levels) | FY 2016 Actual | FY 2017 Target | FY 2018 Target (increase in visits over FY17 levels) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| VOA | 4,948,200 | 5,990,400 | 10% | 6,957,800 | 8,700,000 | 10% |
| RFE/RL | 5,911,900 | 7,890,400 | Maintain | 7,500,200 | 8,250,220 | 5% |
| RFA | 922,700 | 764,700 | Maintain | 848,700 | 933,570 | 10% |
| MBN[3] | | 249,400 | 10% | 490,300 | 539,330 | 10% |
| Alhurra[3] | 147,200[2] | | | | | |
| Sawa[3] | 243,000[2] | | | | | |
| OCB | 75,000 | 119,200 | 10% | 162,800 | 179,080 | 10% |

[1] 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. Numbers do not include some proxy visits. Traffic to apps is not included because it was not available for the full fiscal year for all broadcasters.  Traffic to social media sites (Facebook, Twitter, etc.) is also not included here.

[2] In FY 2014, the BBG made an investment in enterprise-quality digital analytical systems to provide digital measurement and insights across all of its websites and mobile applications.  This switch resulted in a data discontinuity that required rebaselining in FY 2014. For FY 2014, VOA, RFE/RL, RFA, and OCB numbers were based on the initial configuration of the new analytics tool; FY 2014 actuals and FY 2015 targets for MBN were based on the legacy analytics tool.  FY 2015 actuals are based on the new analytics tool.

[3] Since the FY 2015 PAR, BBG is 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.

## Indicator:

**Average weekly visits:** This indicator measures the number of visits to BBG 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.

## PERFORMANCE GOAL 2: BUILD STRONG AFFILIATE RELATIONSHIPS

| Number of affiliations (broadcast, online, and mobile) | FY 2014 Actual | FY 2015 Actual | FY 2016 Target | FY 2016 Actual | FY 2017 Target | FY 2018 Target[1] |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| VOA | 1,838 | 2,088 | 2,192 | 2,265 | 2,302 | 1,626 |
| RFE/RL | 528 | 577 | 606 | 761 | 636 | 530 |
| RFA | 23 | 30 | 35 | 35 | 40 | 35 |

[1] Anticipated losses are due to FY18 reductions to services with large affiliate networks in both VOA and RFE/RL. VOA affiliates are expected to decline mainly due to elimination of Spanish and Macedonian and reductions to Indonesian. RFE/RL affiliates are expected to decline mainly due to reductions in the Balkans Service and Russian radio.

## Indicator:

**Affiliations:** Affiliates are a primary gatekeeper between the BBG networks and their end users – the audiences that listen, watch, and read their content online, on mobile and by broadcast outlets. Counting the number of affiliates, then, offers a measure of the appeal of the programming to these vital gatekeepers and distributors of the BBG 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. In FY 2013, the BBG changed its methodology for counting affiliates. This stemmed, in part, from an upgrade to its affiliate database to promote better communication with affiliates, as well as the growing importance of digital outlets. Where previously only high impact, high quality radio and TV affiliates with signed contracts were tallied, the affiliation indicator now counts all stations or outlets that regularly retransmit content from BBG networks.

## STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 5: SERVE AS A ROBUST U.S. NEWS BUREAU AND CULTURAL BRIDGE

Representing American society and presenting and discussing U.S. policy are legislated mandates for the agency and thus constitute mission imperatives. BBG'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 BBG's target countries and resonate with the agency's audiences in practical, meaningful ways. Carrying them out 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.

■ 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, Turkey, Latin America, Nigeria, Indonesia, and others.

■ 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 posted on the Web.

The BBG tracks its progress in achieving Strategic Objective 5 with the following performance goal:

**PERFORMANCE GOAL 1: PROVIDE PROGRAMMING THAT INCREASES AUDIENCES' UNDERSTANDING OF THE UNITED STATES**

| Understanding of U.S. society Percent of weekly audience who report that the broadcasts have increased their understanding of U.S. society somewhat or a great deal | FY 2014 Actual | FY 2015 Actual | FY 2016 Target | FY 2016 Actual | FY 2017 Target | FY 2018 Target |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| VOA | 66 | 60 | 62 | 62 | 62 | 62 |

### Indicator:

**Understanding of American Society:**

This indicator is determined by the survey question asking weekly listeners/viewers/online users of a BBG 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 measures 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 Percent of weekly audience who report that the broadcasts have increased their understanding of U.S. foreign policy somewhat or a great deal | FY 2014 Actual | FY 2015 Actual | FY 2016 Target | FY 2016 Actual | FY 2017 Target | FY 2018 Target |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| VOA | 64 | 61 | 62 | 60 | 61 | 61 |

**Understanding of U.S. Foreign Policy:**

This indicator is determined by the survey question asking weekly listeners/ viewers/online users of a BBG 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 measures 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."

## STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 6: EMPOWER CITIZEN INFORMATION GATHERING AND EXCHANGE

New and powerful web, mobile, and social media tools are enabling increasingly diverse voices to be heard around the world.  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.  Social media is also changing the way news is gathered and distributed, requiring news organizations to adopt new work flows that allow them to use multiple platforms to deliver content to a global audience.  The Agency must aggressively pursue an innovation agenda that develops the next generation of content, tools, and distribution platforms.

- Nurture citizen journalism and channel user-generated content from inside repressive states.

- Link citizens within repressive societies and to external audiences through social media networks.

- Facilitate dialogue across religious, national and ethnic groups.

- Enter into a "global conversation" with BBG 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.

- Build new partnerships to create tools that help us more efficiently and effectively translate content for a global audience around high-quality news and information.

- Pursue partnerships with technologists around the globe who are building the next generation of digital media technology through mobile and social media.

- Develop a suite of new media products that can be easily deployed by language services based on market consumption data, with an eye toward maximizing opportunities for user generated content, peer-to-peer sharing, and audience interactivity.

The BBG tracks its progress in achieving Strategic Objective 6 with the following performance goals:

**PERFORMANCE GOAL 1: INCREASE AUDIENCE INTERACTION VIA SOCIAL MEDIA**

| Digital Engagement Actions | FY 2014 Actual | FY 2015 Actual | FY 2016 Target | FY 2016 Actual | FY 2017 Target | FY 2018 Target |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| VOA | System for automated collection of social media data rolled out in Q4 FY 2014. | Not reported this year due to a required reconfig. of data collection tool. | Establish baselines. | Baselines not established. | Establish baselines. | Set targets during FY 2019 budget formulation. |
| RFE/RL | | | | | | |
| RFA | | | | | | |
| MBN | | | | | | |
| OCB | | | | | | |

**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 BBG post, commenting on a BBG post, sharing/retweeting a BBG post, liking or following a BBG account or profile for the first time (i.e. this is counted only once, during the first week someone follows a BBG account.) These actions are tracked by a third party vendor (Socialbakers) and will be reported after a full year of tracking and monitoring.

**PERFORMANCE GOAL 2: INCREASE SHARING OF BBG PROGRAMMING**

| Percent of weekly audience who shares news heard/read/seen on broadcaster at least once a week | FY 2014 Actual | FY 2015 Actual | FY 2016 Target | FY 2016 Actual | FY 2017 Target | FY 2018 Target |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| VOA | 54 | 52 | 53 | 55 | 55 | 60 |
| RFE/RL | 48 | 54 | 56 | 44 | 50 | 52 |
| RFA | 55 | 56 | 57 | 64 | 60 | 60 |
| MBN | NA | NA | Set baseline | 52 | 52 | 53 |
| OCB | NA | NA | NA | NA | NA | NA |

## 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 BBG 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 measures the percent of those answering the question in the survey who chose "Daily or most days per week" or "At least once a week."

## MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVE 1: TRANSFORM THE BBG INTO AN AGILE AND COST-EFFECTIVE ENTERPRISE, RESPONSIVE TO RAPID GEOPOLITICAL CHANGE AND ONGOING FISCAL CONSTRAINTS

By virtual of historical circumstance, todays BBG is a complex amalgam of diverse media outlets and respective support organizations, operating under different legal and administrative frameworks. The result is an organization lacking the agility essential to operate in a rapidly evolving global media environment and the standardization that enables rational resource allocations. Going forward, the agency must undergo rapid and fundamental transformation in order to appropriately fulfill its charter amidst growing geo-political instability and substantial budgetary challenges.

■ Enhance the agency's technological platforms and workflows enabling it to continually adapt to global standards in content acquisition, manipulation, distribution, and audience consumption behaviors.

■ Transform the workplace and increase collaboration by leveraging open space concepts.

- Make innovation a core value of how BBG works and interfaces with audiences and other stakeholders.

- Automate and streamline business processes and work flows.

The BBG tracks its progress in achieving Management Objective 1 with the following performance goals:

**PERFORMANCE GOAL 1: ENHANCE THE AGENCY'S TECHNOLOGICAL POSTURE**

| | FY 2014 Actual | FY 2015 Actual | FY 2016 Target | FY 2016 Actual | FY 2017 Target | FY 2018 Target |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Execute seamless transition to Internet and fiber optic content distribution to stations and uplinks | Multi-Protocol Linked Switches (MPLS) infrastructure put in place to facilitate satellite optimization. MPLS has replaced leased fiber optic cables. 80% of owned uplink facilities have MPLS connectivity. | 80% of BBG 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. | OCB, PNN and VOA China TV (approx. 13%) of satellite-based distribution feeds transferred to terrestrial circuits (by end of 1Q). 40% of satellite-based distribution feeds transferred to terrestrial circuits. | 100% of BBG owned/ operated uplink facilities have MPLS or internet connectivity for content distribution. 40% of satellite-based distribution feeds (including OCB, PNN, and VOA China TV) have been transferred to terrestrial circuits. | 50% of satellite-based distribution feeds transferred to terrestrial circuits. | 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 Internet circuits. |

**PERFORMANCE GOAL 2: TRANSFORM WORKPLACE AND INCREASE COLLABORATION**

| | FY 2014 Actual | FY 2015 Actual | FY 2016 Target | FY 2016 Actual | FY 2017 Target | FY 2018 Target |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Leverage open space concepts | 41% of total footprint | 42% of total footprint | 61% of total footprint | 59% of total footprint | 62% of total footprint, pending funding. | 64% of total footprint |

Note: 33% of the total footprint is technical space not suitable for open space concepts, e.g., conference rooms, data rooms, and broadcasting studios.

**PERFORMANCE GOAL 3: AUTOMATE AND STREAMLINE KEY BUSINESS PROCESSES**

| | FY 2014 Actual | FY 2015 Actual | FY 2016 Target | FY 2016 Actual | FY 2017 Target | FY 2018 Target |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Complete business process reengineering and automation of business and media workflows | Automated time and attendance system has been delayed due to unavailability of funds; Analysis of financial, HR and payroll systems substantially underway in FY 2014 and completed in Q1 FY 2015. | 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. | Automated Time and Attendance System rolled out to all federal entities and incorporated into existing payroll (DFAS) system; Completion of Procure to Pay analysis; Begin integration of financial, HR, payroll, and time and attendance systems. | 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. | Complete integration of payroll, and time and attendance systems Integration financial and HR systems put on hold due to lack of funding; Implement electronic performance management system. | Complete integration of financial and HR systems. |

## MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVE 2: LEVERAGE AND HARMONIZE AGENCY ASSETS AND BRANDS

The BBG is one of the world's largest news-gathering and reporting enterprises with more than 80 language services, 50 overseas news bureaus, 4,000 employees, and 1,500 stringer reporters.  Each of the agency's five broadcasters generates original reporting every day from and around the world's hotspots – the Sahel and Central Africa, 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 the BBG to augment international news coverage for other BBG vernacular services or made available to other global audiences in English.  BBG will remedy this by facilitating coordination between broadcast entities through the International Media Coordinating Council (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.

- ■ Ensure coordinated and complementary mission-driven operations and content served by two BBG media entities.

- ■ Build the internal content-sharing network, aligning internal editorial support and coordination, as needed.

- ■ Channel original reporting from the language services to the central newsrooms and across the BBG to get maximum mileage out of the content it currently produces.

- ■ Harmonize news gathering, including stringer and correspondent networks, across the BBG to ensure required editorial coordination and avoid redundancy.

- ■ Use BBG's coordinated news gathering and reporting structures as assets to provide affiliates with greater value, through interactive segments and other special offerings.

- ■ Complement original BBG reporting through curation, commissioning, and acquisition of external content.

The BBG tracks its progress in achieving Management Objective 2 with the following performance goals:

**PERFORMANCE GOAL 1:  DEVELOP COORDINATED STRATEGIES, OPERATIONAL PLANS, AND BUDGETS FOR BBG LANGUAGE SERVICES IN COUNTRIES/REGIONS SERVED BY MORE THAN ONE NETWORK**

| | FY 2014 Actual | FY 2015 Actual | FY 2016 Target | FY 2016 Actual | FY 2017 Target | FY 2018 Target |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Establish coordinated goals and strategies for each target country/region | Launched BBG-wide Strategy Review, developing goals and targets for each country/ region | Refined Strategy Review process with goals and targets tied to BBG Impact Model | Continue and refine Strategy Review process, aligning to agency priorities and impact | Integrated Strategy Review with annual Language Service Review and budget formulation | Continue and refine Strategy Review process, further aligning to agency priorities and impact | Continue and refine Strategy Review process, further aligning to agency priorities and impact |

**PERFORMANCE GOAL 2:  INCREASE THE QUANTITY OF ORIGINAL REPORTING SHARED ACROSS LANGUAGE SERVICES**

| | FY 2014 Actual | FY 2015 Actual | FY 2016 Target | FY 2016 Actual | FY 2017 Target | FY 2018 Target |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Share content across language services | Various systems in place for sharing among language services and entities (e.g., News Share, VOA Insights, RFE/RL Editorial Agenda) | Tracking mechanisms have not been established | Increase coordination and content sharing as assessed by the Office of Performance Review, in key areas:<br>▪ Reporting on Russia<br>▪ Covering Violent Extremism<br>▪ Influence of Iran<br>▪ China and South China Sea<br>▪ Cuba | IBB performance analysts monitored the BBG networks and found growing coordination in all five areas | Increase coordination and content sharing as assessed by the Office of Performance Review, in key areas:<br>▪ Reporting on Russia<br>▪ Covering Violent Extremism<br>▪ Influence of Iran<br>▪ China and South China Sea<br>▪ Cuba | Increase coordination and content sharing as assessed by the Office of Performance Review, in key areas:<br>▪ Reporting on Russia<br>▪ Covering Violent Extremism<br>▪ Influence of Iran<br>▪ China and South China Sea<br>▪ Cuba |

BBG'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. BBG employees are most effective when they are well motivated, trained, and led. Continued efforts to equip and energize the entire BBG workforce are critical as the agency confronts mounting competitive pressures worldwide.

■ 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.

The BBG tracks its progress in achieving Management Objective 3 with the following performance goals:

**PERFORMANCE GOAL 1: IMPROVE PERFORMANCE CULTURE OF AGENCY**

| Results-oriented performance culture index (from Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey) | FY 2014 Actual | FY 2015 Actual | FY 2016 Target | FY 2016 Actual | FY 2017 Target | FY 2018 Target |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| BBG | 44 | 47 | 48 | 47 | 50 | 55 |
| Government-wide (for comparison) | 51 | 52 | | 53 | | |

**PERFORMANCE GOAL 2: IMPROVE EMPLOYEE TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT**

| Percentage of employees who believe that the workforce 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 Target | FY 2016 Actual | FY 2017 Target | FY 2018 Target |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| BBG | 53 | 55 | 57 | 53 | 57 | 59 |
| Government-wide (for comparison) | 69 | 69 | | 69 | | |

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

## REGIONAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS

BBG has established long-term performance objectives based on regional priorities. The following highlights each of the performance objectives, recent accomplishments, proposed program changes and FY 2017 annual performance objectives.[3]

## PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVE: REACH CRITICAL AUDIENCES IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA

| | FY 2016 (Actual) | FY 2017 (Target) | FY 2018 (Target) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Measured Weekly Audience (in millions)* | 27.4 | 28.0 | 28.0 |

*In Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Palestinian Territories, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Tunisia, UAE, Yemen.

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[3] For more information on the accomplishments of each BBG broadcast network, please see the individual narratives in the preceding sections of this document.

## Program Accomplishments

- MBN's Raise Your Voice developed new television and digital programming encouraging Iraqis and Syrians to share their thoughts and opinions on extremism and the underlying causes of terrorism. This programming provides firsthand accounts of the realities of life under ISIS, including the pain and suffering of families and communities.

- Launching in spring 2017, Maghreb Voices is a new MBN digital platform targeted to inform and engage the people of the Maghreb region. The new initiative provides objective coverage of social, political, and cultural issues impacting the region, including those which have the potential to fuel radicalization.

- VOA Kurdish developed new television programming focused on US policies toward the region and addressing ISIS disinformation for key affiliates in northern Iraq and Turkey, as well as expanded Kurdish social media content for its web and Facebook sites. As a result, VOA Kurdish has seen more than 600

percent growth in Facebook "likes" in FY 2016, and growth in audience share in Iraqi Kurdistan.

- MBN provides the people of the Middle East unfiltered information about America, American policies and its people without the distortion or filters imposed by the majority of the region's media. Robust coverage of the historic election cycle is but one shining example. Beyond news and its correspondents at the White House, Congress, Pentagon, and State Department, MBN informational programming provides clear insight into America's culture and values.

- MBN regularly shows the challenges that women face in the region, as well as Arab women who are fulfilling their dreams. In FY 2016, Alhurra launched a new reality program that followed four successful Egyptian women as they worked in traditionally male dominated jobs.

## Notable Program Changes

- Proposes elimination of shortwave radio programming targeted to the Darfur region of Sudan.

- Proposes reductions in live radio and television Pan-Arab news updates.

- Proposes reductions to the VOA Kurdish Service.

### FY 2018 Performance Objectives

- Produce engaging programming to serve as a platform for moderate voices in the Middle East and North Africa, countering extremist narratives.

- Continue building digital and social media audiences in the region by producing original content targeted to emerging news audiences.

## PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVE: EXPAND AUDIENCE REACH IN STRATEGIC LOCATIONS IN THE NEAR EAST, SOUTH ASIA, CENTRAL ASIA AND EURASIA

|  | FY 2016 (Actual) | FY 2017 (Target) | FY 2018 (Target)[1] |
|---|---|---|---|
| Measured Weekly Audience (in millions)* | 54.3 | 53.0 | 40.5 |

*In Abkhazia, Afghanistan, Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Belarus, Bosnia, Chechnya, Dagestan, Estonia, Georgia, Iran, Kosovo, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Pakistan, Pakistan FATA, Russia, Serbia, South Ossetia, Sri Lanka, Tajikistan, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan.

[1] Assumes FY 18 Budget levels may likely result in audience losses related to reductions in Dari and Pashto, Persian, Belarusian, and Balkan languages, as well as reductions to transmissions and general operating expenses.

### Program Accomplishments

- In February 2017, RFE/RL and VOA jointly launched their *Current Time* 24/7 digital and cable network, providing Russian-speaking audiences with accurate and independent local, regional, and international news. The Current Time network is available to nearly 10 million households in 12 countries on over 40 subscription satellite, cable and IPTV services.

- In December 2016, VOA and RFE/RL launched Polygraph.info, an English-language fact-checking website that serves as a resource for verifying the increasing volume of disinformation and misinformation being distributed and shared globally. Initially focused on statements involving relations between Russia and the West, its analysis will be expanded to other areas of the world.

- VOA and RFE/RL have expanded their collaboration on Afghan and Pakistan coverage with a joint seminar on the current and future status of media in Afghanistan; extensive shared coverage of key events; close coordination on the shared Kabul bureau; and joint journalism trainings and exchange fellowships.

- RFE/RL Ukrainian's flagship investigative TV program, *Schemes*, has become one of the leading

media platforms in Ukraine for holding public officials to account.

■ RFE/RL's news wire service for Central Asia provides alternative sources of information in Kazakh, Kyrgyz, Russian, Tajik, and Uzbek to more than 1,100 subscribers, including over 700 media outlets and media professionals. Each week

RFE/RL-produced content is republished or quoted across all languages and media formats about 1,400 times.

■ VOA Persian launched *Tablet*, a new, edgy weekly current affairs talk show, hosted by Masih Alinejad, an award-winning investigative journalist.

## Notable Program Changes

■ Proposes reductions to VOA Persian language broadcasts to Iran, and rationalization of RFE/RL's Persian-language Radio Farda in order to continue shift to digital.

■ Proposes reductions to VOA programming to the Federally Administered Tribal Areas of Pakistan (FATA) and elimination of RFE/RL programming to FATA.

■ Proposes reductions to RFE/RL Macedonian staffing and elimination of VOA Macedonian.

■ Proposes reductions to VOA radio broadcasting to Afghanistan, and reductions to VOA programming in Turkish.

■ Proposes reductions to RFE/RL's Russian and Azeri Services, localization of RFE/RL Georgia operations, and restructuring of the Krim.Realii website targeting Crimea.

## FY 2018 Performance Objectives

■ Provide solid journalism on television and social media to refute propaganda in Russia and the surrounding regions.

■ Leverage the newsgathering assets of VOA and RFE/RL and increase coordination in countries where both entities broadcast.

## PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVE: FOCUS BROADCASTING TO AUDIENCES OF STRATEGIC PRIORITY IN EAST AND SOUTHEAST ASIA

|  | FY 2016 (Actual) | FY 2017 (Target) | FY 2018 (Target)[1] |
|---|---|---|---|
| Measured Weekly Audience (in millions)* | 66.2 | 66.2 | 54.0 |

*In Burma, Cambodia, China, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Laos, Mongolia, Philippines, Taiwan, Thailand, Vietnam.

[1] Assumes FY 18 Budget levels may likely result in audience losses related to reductions in Cantonese, Indonesian, Mandarin, Thai, and Lao, as well as reductions to transmissions and general operating expenses.

### Program Accomplishments

■ As the Chinese government tightened censorship of the web and social media, VOA and RFA used domestic social media connections, including the public WeChat messaging service, to get reporting tips, ask questions, and provide content links.

■ VOA Tibetan capitalized on the growing use of VPNs and other circumvention tools that allow digital distribution of information to reach audiences within Tibet. RFA's Tibetan team has been particularly active in sharing unblocked SoundCloud links and RFA Tibetan TV programming within multiple WeChat groups.

■ The VOA Khmer Facebook page has maintained its position in the top two Facebook pages in Cambodia since October 2014, according to Socialbakers. While the RFA Cambodian Service has not been able to get terrestrial TV broadcast rights in the country, its regular Cambodian TV program has solid viewership on Facebook Live.

### Notable Program Changes

■ Proposes elimination of the VOA Cantonese Service and shifting VOA Mandarin resources away from radio to more effective digital platforms, and a focus of the RFA Mandarin Service to more social media platforms.

■ Proposes reductions to the VOA Lao and Thai Services and VOA radio broadcasting to Indonesia.

■ Proposes consolidation of VOA English language content.

## FY 2018 Performance Objectives

- Engage with and produce new video content for social/digital audiences in East Asia, especially in Burma, Cambodia, China, and Vietnam.

- Leverage the newsgathering assets of VOA and RFA, and increase coordination in countries where both networks broadcast.

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## PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVE: REACH NEW AUDIENCES WITH INCREASED ENGAGEMENT IN AFRICA

|  | FY 2016 (Actual) | FY 2017 (Target) | FY 2018 (Target)[1] |
|---|---|---|---|
| Measured Weekly Audience (in millions)* | 68.4 | 68.4 | 56.7 |

*In Angola, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo Brazzaville, Cote d'Ivoire, DR 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.

[1] Assumes FY 18 Budget levels may likely result in audience losses related to reductions in the Central Africa Service, as well as reductions to transmissions and general operating expenses.

## Program Accomplishments

- Somali President Hassan Sheikh Mohamoud participated in a live VOA town hall, connecting the president in Mogadishu with Somali diaspora in Minnesota. The program aired on Somali National Television and was streamed on the VOA Somali webpage as well as on the service's Facebook, where it received 300,000 views and over 18,000 engagement actions.

- VOA's *Straight Talk Africa* host Shaka Ssali moderated Uganda's first presidential debate in 30 years, broadcasting live from the Ugandan capital, Kampala.

- When violence from a counter-coup in Burkina Faso closed private radio stations, VOA's Ouagadougou FM stayed on the air with live reports

from correspondents under fire and an on-air surrender from the mutinous presidential guard surrounded by loyalist troops.

- BBG continued to expand program availability on FM by establishing several new FM stations in Africa in FY 2016, including new BBG FM stations in: Niamey, Niger; and Lubumbashi, Bukavu, Goma, and Kisangani, Democratic Republic of Congo. VOA developed new content appropriate for these FM streams in French, Hausa, Swahili and English. In FY 2017 new FM transmission systems will be installed in several important markets, including Brazzaville and Pointe Noire, Congo; Mogadishu, Somalia; and Mbuji-Mayi and Katanga, DRC.

## Notable Program Changes

- Proposes reductions to the VOA Central Africa Service (Kinyarwanda/Kirundi to Rwanda and Burundi).

- Proposes consolidation of VOA English language content.

## FY 2018 Performance Objective

- Provide strong coverage of violent extremism in Africa, including documentaries for use and sharing on all platforms.

- Reach and engage young people and women, who are underrepresented among BBG audiences in Africa and especially vulnerable to extremist recruitment and violence.

## PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVE: EXPAND AUDIENCE REACH IN STRATEGIC LOCATIONS OF LATIN AMERICA.

|  | FY 2016 (Actual) | FY 2017 (Target) | FY 2018 (Target)[1] |
|---|---|---|---|
| Measured Weekly Audience (in millions)* | 61.8 | 61.8 | 2.0 |

*In Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay, Venezuela.

[1] Assumes significant audience losses due to FY18 budget reductions, which would eliminate most broadcasting to the region. Broadcasts to Haiti in Creole would continue.

## Program Accomplishments

- VOA provided on-the-ground reporting from demonstrations in Venezuela. As police stopped demonstrators from reaching downtown Caracas, VOA Spanish reports from the scene soared in popularity on the service's Facebook page. One report reached more than a half million people, and generated more than 6,000 reactions. VOA's Spanish-language audience reached a record high of 59.4 million weekly users, through affiliations with top radio and television stations throughout the region.

- OCB's network of independent reporters in Cuba kept growing, spurring the creation of more independent news media agencies on island and the launch of many emergent digital outlets.

- The Martís took the lead in Internet freedom efforts by hosting the inaugural Cuba Internet Freedom Conference (CIF), in September 2016. The widely-reported event

brought together digital innovators and independent journalists from Cuba to discuss how to improve digital rights and foster uncensored access to news and information on the island.

■ OCB and VOA's Latin America Division increased collaboration, resulting in financial benefits for the agency and eliminating coverage redundancy. OCB and VOA LatAm collaboratively provided blanket coverage of key events ranging from the first U.S. Presidential visit to Cuba, to the Republican and Democratic conventions and the 2016 U.S. Elections.

**Notable Program Change**

■ Proposes elimination of VOA programming in LatAm (Spanish).

■ Proposes that BBG develop a plan to create a new Spanish-language grantee to target Cuba and/or merging with VOA's Spanish language service. The new organization would perform the functions of the current Office of Cuba Broadcasting and incorporate VOA's Latin America language service functions, if such a merger was approved.

■ Proposes elimination of ineffective leased broadcast transmissions to Cuba, such as commercial satellite and supplementary AM frequencies, and substantial reduction to OCB FTE positions and contractor support.

**FY 2018 Performance Objectives**

■ Explore merging OCB and VOA Spanish into a Spanish-language surrogate network.

## PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVE: ALIGN ESSENTIAL SUPPORT FUNCTIONS WITH BROADCASTING IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND PERFORMANCE GOALS

### Program Accomplishments

- VOA launched the Extremism Watch Desk in early FY 2016 to develop content that dispels the myths associated with ISIS. The desk is staffed with writers proficient in thirteen languages and produces content across all three platforms – radio, television and online. Content from the Desk is shared across BBG language services and videos have been published with attribution by independent and state media outlets in over a dozen countries. In a carefully crafted multipart report, "Descent into Jihad," the Watch Desk chronicled the pressures that led a successful architect to join ISIS, and the road to his death.

- In 2017 VOA created a series of "bridge editor" positions, stationed not in the English newsroom but across the language services. These editors are embedded with their language service counterparts and work to quickly and efficiently take reporting from across the globe and version it back into English for distribution to all VOA services.

- In July 2016, the BBG named Dr. Nnake Nweke as the first Director of the newly created Office of Internet Freedom. This office will strengthen BBG's efforts to counter censorship of BBG-funded, affiliated, or supported content, and other credible, independent news and information.

- The BBG made progress in improving its transmission capability. Major improvements to the shortwave transmission capability of the Kuwait Transmitting Station are in process, which will provide increased transmission capability to Iran, Central Asia, and Africa at very economical cost. These areas are of strategic importance and still have notable shortwave audiences. BBG ceased all transmissions from the Sri Lanka station in June 2016 and optimized the remaining network to focus shortwave transmissions where they are still effective.

- BBG's Office of Research and Assessment, now integrated into the Office of Policy and Research, working with Research Directors from each BBG network, designed and commissioned approximately 75 audience research studies during FY 2016. Survey data is used to provide strategic audience and platform use data for key markets.

- The BBG conducted over 30 media training programs for more than 700 people in FY 2016, including a water-focused seminar for journalists from across the Middle East; research-focused training for Russian-language partner stations; a polio-focused health journalism training in Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Ukraine; social media training in Cambodia; and TV production training in Burma.

### Notable Program Changes

■ Proposes enhanced video and audio production and distribution capabilities, including upgraded digital television production and global HD distribution, to ensure the development and dissemination of competitive program material to affiliates and directly to consumers.

■ Proposes continued transmission network realignment to satisfy evolving media preferences in key target audience areas, including the elimination of ineffective shortwave transmissions and further development of key affiliate relationships and owned and operated 24/7 FM stations in important markets.

■ Proposes continued consolidation and streamlining of the BBG's global digital distribution network to maximize efficiencies, while maintaining high reliability.

■ Proposes programs to assist content producers in the creation of instructional materials that allow audiences to bypass internet censorship.

■ Proposes initiatives for increasing research for critical areas such as Russian digital and video content; interactive media for regions impacted by ISIS and violent extremism.

■ Proposes reductions in administrative areas, including service contracts, training, and travel, and restructuring research contracts towards priority countries and regions.

■ Proposes activities to modernize and streamline agency operations through improvements in use of cloud services and other technology tools and resources.

■ Proposes reductions in staff costs in an effort to promote the executive order intended to improve the efficiency, effectiveness, and accountability of the executive branch.

### FY 2018 Performance Objectives

■ 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 BBG programming.

■ Realign BBG transmissions to maximize the effectiveness of program delivery resources.

■ Provide cutting-edge circumvention tools to audiences and independent media outlets in countries that restrict and censor Internet access.

■ Provide enterprise-wide technical support for digital and social media innovation.

■ Build strong and collaborative relationships with affiliate partners in target markets.

■ Maintain the firewall and continuously monitor programming quality in line with modern

broadcast journalism principles through annual performance reviews of all broadcast services.

■ Support initiatives to improve financial, performance and budget integration as well as financial and acquisition processes.

■ Carry out BBG's mission and goals with a workforce that is agile, skilled, diverse, well-led and motivated.

■ Address BBG's most critical infrastructure maintenance and repair requirements.

## PERFORMANCE BUDGET APPENDIX: INFORMATION ON KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

The impact indicators that BBG uses to measure performance are explained above, following each performance goal. Most of these indicators are drawn from BBG 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 a contract with an outside research organization. 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%). The BBG has included non-response bias testing as part of its research plan for FY 2017. Further information on the BBG research program and methodology can be found on the BBG website at: https://www.bbg.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, 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 BBG buys space on third party surveys, and in some instances where BBG needs uses phone rather than face-to-face interviews (the former require a shorter questionnaire.)

■ In some markets where data is between 3 and 5 years old, the question may not have yet been part of the standard questionnaire.

Furthermore, the scores presented in this section are simple averages of all such scores obtained by an entity.

## 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 IBB and performed by outside contractors. VOA, OCB, RFE/RL, RFA and MBN audience research is carried out by an outside research contractor, in recent years Gallup. The IBB 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.

# Appendix A

INTERNATIONAL BROADCASTING BUREAU

# Office of Internet Freedom (OIF) and Open Technology Fund (OTF)

| | FY 2016 ACTUAL | FY 2017 ANNUALIZED | FY 2018 REQUEST | FY 2017-18 CHANGE |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| FUNDING ($ in thousands) | **$15,000** | **$15,000** | **$10,000** | **($5,000)** |

## MAJOR FY 2018 PROGRAM CHANGES

Prioritize anti-censorship investments within FY 2018 budget levels to:

■ Reach a wider mass-market audience;

■ Encourage and promote ongoing use of anti-censorship tools, including by focusing investments on content that users will find compelling;

■ Support tools that support access to BBG content, or that support the practice of journalism in closed or repressive societies, or that support open and uncensored access to information, in closed or repressive societies; and

■ Assist broadcasters in the creation of instructional materials and training on bypassing Internet censorship and digital safety.

## OVERVIEW

Since 2002, BBG 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, BBG established OIF to conduct governance and oversight of BBG-funded Internet Freedom activities, on behalf of the CEO and Board.

In FY 2018, consistent with the agency's Internet Freedom strategic planning, and consultation with Congress and other U.S. agencies, BBG will invest in the initiatives below and in the Open Technology Fund section

on the next page. BBG will prioritize funding based on a number of factors, including each initiative's ability to expand Internet Freedom across desktop and mobile platforms and avoiding duplication of any other existing Federal efforts.

BBG will keep congressional stakeholders updated as it makes the difficult trade-offs to select its Internet Freedom investments.

### Increase Capacity and Reach of Internet Circumvention Efforts

OIF is identifying opportunities to expand the capacity and reach of its successful FY 2016 online circumvention programs across desktop computers and mobile devices to allow citizens and journalists across BBG broadcasting regions to safely access and share information without fear of repression.

### Internet Freedom Tool Publication Initiatives

OIF is reviewing new 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 and other promotions.

### Conduct Education and Training

OIF will educate and train BBG's broadcasting and network services, and target audiences, 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

### Research and Studies

OIF is exploring working with vendors, as needed, to conduct research and studies in support of BBG's Internet Freedom activities.

### Anti-Censorship Analytics Tool

OIF plans to work with a vendor to maintain and leverage its anti-censorship analytics tool to aggregate online data consumption and other analytics from multiple BBG-funded censorship circumvention technologies into a unified view for enhanced monitoring and tracking of the online data.

### Supplement Existing Anti-Censorship Tools and Develop New Tools

OIF is considering working with vendors to test and deploy technologies, such as web mirroring technologies, that will supplement existing circumvention tools and to build new circumvention tools. Web mirroring technologies allow a mirrored copy of censored web sites to be made available on shared web infrastructure that repressive governments are hesitant to block.

# Open Technology Fund (OTF)

## OVERVIEW

The Open Technology Fund (OTF) is the BBG-supported private global internet freedom program fighting online censorship by providing internet freedom tools, techniques and technology for BBG 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 human rights defenders, journalists, political dissidents, and others among the world's most vulnerable and oppressed living in unfree societies, often under authoritarian rule. Each OTF project is subjected to a rigorous multi-disciplinary review process. OTF supports a diverse range of projects in various life stages - such as proof-of-concepts, on-the-ground rapid deployments, and multi-year efforts. When possible, OTF seeks to act as an incubator for fresh approaches and new ways of thinking. This 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.

With the rapid expansion of everyday digital usage, the BBG's ability to " Inform, Engage and Connect" people around the world in support of freedom and democracy is dependent on our ability to have unrestricted access to a free and open internet. At the close of 2016, the program received the highest level of support requests to date. Combined with budget declines this resulted in an acceptance rate of less than 2 percent despite viable solutions being proposed for various threats to Internet freedom. These efforts significantly increased internet freedom globally, as measured by the number of people able to experience a more open, secure internet, and by advancing emerging technologies and techniques. They did so in the face of more sophisticated online censorship than ever seen before. The year began with millions of people utilizing OTF supported technologies, and ended with over a billion.

Despite these gains, global internet freedom remains under threat. There is a large and widening gap in resources between those supporting free and safe access to the internet and the exorbitant amounts spent by repressive regimes to prevent access or otherwise threaten internet freedom. Sophisticated attacks continue to increase on those who seek to exercise their basic rights in repressive environments. In 2016 there was a tightening of censorship in countries such as Russia, China, Turkey, Cambodia, Ecuador, Bangladesh, Uganda, Colombia, and Libya, as instances of internet censorship rose globally for the sixth year in a row.[5] In response, OTF has continued its support of technology-centric efforts that increase global internet freedom.

OTF projects have made notable technological advances that ensure a resilient open internet, including identifying and addressing emerging threats to internet freedom, exposing platform based censorship, mitigating the use of social media sock-puppets, and hardening key technologies to protect users from digital attacks. The OTF team reviewed and responded to more 650 requests for funding totaling more than $85 million in 2016 alone, and expended 85 percent of our

program budget on direct and indirect support for well over 100 projects.[6]

We listened to the field and communities most at risk, leveraging their collective knowledge and capacities to change with their needs. OTF Labs -- our in-kind, and technical assistance programs -- were adjusted and expanded as required. Our fellowship evolved to focus on the hyper-local needs of communities under threat, to harness their collective knowledge and capacity, and to promote the research, collaboration and development potential of individuals.

Finally, pursuant to OTF's congressional mandate to leverage government funds to the greater internet freedom effort globally, it continues to help other donors in unlocking more than 100 million dollars of private funds to support these efforts since its creation five years ago.[7] OTF also increased

[6] This number encompasses all directly funded projects including general internet freedom projects, all fellowships, and rapid response support, as well as indirectly supported projects through OTF Labs.

[7] S.2130 - An Act Making Appropriations for National Security and for Other Purposes, Fiscal Year 2016

114th Congress (2015-2016), Global internet freedom Sec. 7078. (a) https://www.congress.gov/bill/114th-congress/senate-bill/2130/text "[...] That funds made available pursuant to this section shall be matched, to the maximum extent practicable, by sources other than the United States Government, including from the private sector."

[5] Freedom House. "Privatizing Censorship, Eroding Privacy: Freedom on the Net 2016." December 2016. https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-net/freedom-net-2016

engagement 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, 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.

**"China and Russia have industrialized the process of censorship. We have the Open Technology Fund. It's sad how different the level of resources are."**
– Matthew Green, Expert Cryptographer, Johns Hopkins University

## FY 2016 AND 2017 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

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

- Nearly 2 billion people regularly use OTF-supported technology to circumvent restricted internet connections, strengthen their online security, and enhance their digital privacy.

- OTF's Localization Lab enabled translations of internet freedom tools and ensured their accessibility to a global audience; The Lab now supports 61 tools with over 5,400 participating volunteers contributing to the submission and verification of more than half a million translated words into over 240 languages and dialects.

- Numerous circumvention tools supported by OTF integrated and built upon the "collateral freedom" approach noted in our 2014 and 2015 annual report by taking advantage of widely used cloud servers to overcome internet censorship.

- Open Whisper System Signal Protocol was integrated into WhatsApp, Facebook Messenger, Google's Allo, Silent Circle, ChatSecure, Riot, Cryptocat and others resulting in nearly 2 billion adopting secure messaging, most without needing to install an app or adopt a new platform.

- OTF has supported The Onion Router (Tor) and a number of related efforts.  Tor remains one of the most secure and widely used tools people in repressive political environments rely on to keep themselves safe online. From well-known Chinese bloggers to Egyptian activists, with applications ranging from protecting victims of sexual violence to providing access to the internet around government imposed outages, to anonymity of US law enforcement professionals conducting investigations, Tor is a vital tool for privacy and security. Recently, with OTF support

through Orbot app, Facebook extended its own support for Tor users to Android devices.

■ OTF supported security audits of 12 internet freedom projects, identifying in total 171 privacy and security vulnerabilities in 2016; to date, OTF has supported 77 audits identifying and patching a total of 1,870 security vulnerabilities.

■ To meet the expanding need for individuals to work on internet freedom technology, OTF offered numerous fellowship programs receiving more than 100 applications for support to improve individual research, analysis, and development work that is critical to the future growth and capacity of the internet freedom community;

■ OONIProbe is a censorship detection platform that has performed hundreds of thousands of tests in more than 100 countries in 2016. Censorship was confirmed in many countries offering some of the only verified confirmations of the scope of government blocking;

■ OTF expanded collaboration on capacity building in the realms of research and development through fellowships hosted at premier organizations and research institutions including Princeton University, Electronic Frontier Foundation, University of California - Berkeley, Harvard University, Oxford University, Centre for Intellectual Property and Information Technology Law at Strathmore University Law School,

University College London, and Simply Secure.

■ OTF's Information Controls Fellowship Program (ICFP) was jointly established in 2014 with Citizen Lab at the Munk School of Global Affairs at the University of Toronto to cultivate research, programs, and creative collaboration focusing on information controls - specifically repressive internet censorship and surveillance. The ICFP supports fellows to work within host organizations that are established centers of expertise by offering competitively paid fellowships. Fellows have performed novel research on Internet censorship in understudied regions; built new tools to bolster existing circumvention and IF tools; and investigated security vulnerabilities in popular communication applications.

■ OTF's Digital Integrity Fellowship Program was established in 2015 to simultaneously support local technical expertise to keep front-line organizations safe from digital attacks and to inform the broader internet freedom field of the types of threats at organizations working in some of the most high-risk environments are experiencing, ultimately ensuring that existing and emerging internet freedom tools most accurately meet their needs. The first round of fellows are working in: Central America, South Asia, Southeast Asia, and Sub-Saharan Africa

## 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 numerous individuals and organizations producing ground-breaking analytical and research reports, including Baidu's and Don'ts: Privacy and Security Issues in Baidu Browser, The Crime of Speech: How Arab Governments Use the Law to Silence Expression Online, Every Rose Has Its Thorn: Censorship and Surveillance on Social Video Platforms in China, Pay No Attention to the Server Behind the Proxy: Mapping FinFisher's Continuing Proliferation, No Encore for Encore? Ethical Questions for Web-Based Censorship Measurement, Forgive Us our SYNs: Technical and Ethical Considerations for Measuring Internet Filtering, Politics, Rumors, and Ambiguity: Tracking Censorship on WeChat's Public Accounts Platform, Ethical Concerns for Censorship Measurement, Understanding Internet Freedom: Tunisia's

Journalists and Bloggers, Detecting DNS Root Manipulation, Zambia: Internet censorship during the 2016 general elections?, The State of Internet Censorship in Thailand, Kenya: Censorship-free internet?, The State of Internet Censorship in Malaysia, Ethiopia: Evidence of social media blocking and internet censorship, The Gambia: Internet Shutdown during 2016 Presidential Election, Tor's Usability for Censorship Circumvention, SNI proxies, A Tough Nut to Crack: A Further Look at Privacy and Security Issues in UC Browser, Privacy and Security Issues in BAT Web Browsers, Harmonized Histories? A year of fragmented censorship across Chinese live streaming applications, An uneven balance: Analysis of Internet Censorship in Zimbabwe, Zambia, and Swaziland, and Journalists in Distress: Assessing the Digital Viability of a Global Emergency Assistance Network.

■ OTF worked with internet freedom technologists, researchers, policymakers as well as users (independent journalists, investigation teams, civil society and other content sources) while participating in key conferences, including the Internet Freedom Festival, RightsCon, Hackers on Planet Earth (HOPE), Freedom Online Coalition, Mekong ICT, Privacy Enhancing Technologies Symposium (PETS), Chaos Communication Congress, Stockholm Internet Forum, Forum

on Internet Freedom in East Africa, Arab Internet Governance Forum, and the DG7 internet freedom working group.

■ OTF co-hosted the Internet Freedom Festival (IFF), one of the largest gatherings in the world that brings together journalists, researchers, activists, developers, humanitarian workers and others working on Internet freedom, privacy and security, and freedom of expression.[8] Using a un-conference format, the event is focused on hands-on creation and collaboration. In addition, the event puts a huge emphasis on empowering individuals from the Global South and other communities that are not yet well represented in the IF community. The 2016 IFF had over 160 sessions, and brought together more than 800 people from 74 countries.

■ 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, EFF, and the UN, among others.

■ In addition to security-focused tools, OTF has also supported technologies that help journalists do their jobs better when reporting in difficult environments or on complex topics. Examples include the Transparency Toolkit, which is an open source software that lets journalists, activists, and human rights workers chain together tools to collect, combine, visualize, and analyze documents and data; GlobaLeaks, which enables media organizations and activist groups to set-up and maintain secure submissions platforms; and SourcesDB and open-source annotation and database tool which seeks to help journalists establish the credibility of online sources through metadata on those sources.

■ Multiple OTF funded tools including Freewechat, Turkeyblocks, HikingGFW, OONIProbe, and others help journalists identify and verify censorship activities so that they can then report on those activities for the public.

■ A study by The Journalists in Distress network, a group of free expression organizations that operate emergency response programs to assist at-risk journalists and human rights defenders globally, found that journalists in distress tend not to adequately prioritize digital security, despite recognition of the risks involved.

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[8] See https://www.opentech.fund/project/internet-freedom-festival.

## Funding Collaboration

- OTF advanced efforts to diversify support for internet freedom beyond U.S. government funding programs by engaging with private foundations, tech companies, startup incubators, foreign like-minded government funders, and venture capitalists.

- OTF raised awareness of the need for internet freedom funding around the world and helped increase globally available funding by unlocking over 100 million dollars of private funds set aside for internet freedom related efforts since 2012.

- Through active coordination with other donors, OTF more than quadrupled the impact of 4 million dollars in public funding through collaborative joint funding, expanding the amount of funds for these projects to more than 30 million dollars.

- 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, Linux Foundation's Core Infrastructure Initiative, Access Now, Media Democracy Fund, Ford Foundation, Open Society Foundations, MacArthur Foundation, Knight Foundation, Mozilla Foundation, British Broadcasting Corporation, Deutsche Welle, Swedish International Development Agency, German Federal Foreign Office, and many others.

## FY 2017 AND 2018 INITIATIVES

### 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. Individual projects will be competitively determined which previously have included China Digital Times

### Evolving Established Circumvention Tools with New Features

Supporting the continued development of those mature and established circumvention tools used by journalists, their sources, researchers and activists every day to overcome censorship with modern-day features known to meet the threats of the day. Individual projects will be competitively determined which previously have included Tor and Lantern.

### 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. Individual projects will be competitively determined which previously have included Tor, BSD Diversity and Subgraph.

### Prioritizing Mobile Apps and Browser Extensions that Increase Access and Security

Mobile apps and browser extensions have become an important vehicle for overcoming internet interference for journalists, activists, researchers and content consumers. Projects will focus on fostering circumvention for third parties such as media outlets, thwarting malicious attacks, overcoming internet shutdowns and increasing communication security. Individual projects will be competitively determined which previously have included Mailvelope and Open Whisper Systems.

### 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. Individual projects will be competitively determined which previously have included Citizen Lab, Greatfire, NetBlocks, and OONIProbe.

### Capacity Building through OTF Fellowships

Building capacity by supporting fellows through the information controls (ICFP) and digital integrity fellowship (DIFP) programs. ICFP supports individuals performing research and development to monitor or mitigate information controls in repressive environments and disseminate findings to relevant actors. DIFP supports individuals to enhance the digital safety of organizations subject to repressive government surveillance and attacks. Individual fellowships will be competitively awarded.  In FY 2016, OTF provided 26 fellowships for a total of $687,200.  Fellowships for FY 2017 are currently under review.

### Internet Freedom Convenings

OTF partners with the State Department to support the Internet Freedom Festival, an annual global convening of the Internet freedom community. Since its inception, OTF has invited independent journalists, netizens, researchers, projects, fellows, advisory council members and other experts in the field (including public and private funders) to an annual event focused on strengthening collaboration and growing the impact of the Internet freedom community. Events include the Internet Freedom Festival and OTF Summit

### Expanding the Robustness of Core Infrastructure

This program 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. Individual projects will be competitively determined which previously have included EFF and Trevor Perrin.

### Improving Usability, Accessibility, and Localization

Tools and information focused on Internet freedom need to be accessible if they are to be effective. These projects and labs will focus on improving the usability of IF tools and expanding the audiences of relevant research to those directly impacted. This focus area also manages and grows OTF's Localization Lab (more than 60 Internet freedom projects and nearly 6,000 volunteer translators in 240 languages). Individual projects will be competitively determined which previously have included Transifex and Localization Lab.

### Analyzing the Security of Widely Used Internet Freedom Technology

This includes projects and services that reverse engineering widely used communication tools and performing security audits of IF tools and foundational internet security protocols. Individual projects will be competitively determined which previously have included Citizen Lab, Cure53 and iSec.

### Speeding Up the Transition From Idea to Implementation

Support engineering services making it easier for good ideas to quickly prototype and/or deploy. A primary service is the secure cloud, geographically dispersed microclouds, within beachhead countries, offering Virtual Private Servers (VPS) to OTF projects and other related circumvention, security and human rights tools used by journalists and democracy supporters. Due to the threat of take-down and seizure, the infrastructure provides more data security protection than traditional cloud services. Individual projects will be competitively determined which previously have included Greenhost

### Increasing Digital Security Capacity, Assistance, Needs-finding

Supporting projects strengthening the safety of at risk journalists and human rights defenders and their organizations in repressive environments through trainings, internal support and help desks. This support provides OTF an on-the-ground views of how Internet Freedom technology is doing in the field. Individual projects will be competitively determined which previously have included ASL19, Viet Tan Belarusian Human Rights House and Tibet Action.

### Rapidly Responding to Urgent Digital 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. Individual projects will be competitively determined which previously have included Qurium and Greenhost.

### 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. We will improve knowledge share, collaboration, diversity, and ultimately resiliency and effectiveness within the next generation of Internet Freedom leaders. Individual projects will be competitively determined.

# Appendix B

# Budget Charts

# The Broadcasting Board of Governors
## Voice of America (VOA)
## Summary of Appropriated Funds | FY2016-FY2018
($ in thousands)

| Voice of America (VOA) | FY 2016 Actuals | FY 2017 Annualized CR | FY 2018 Request |
|---|---|---|---|
| **VOA Director** | **$8,840** | **$10,886** | **$10,334** |
| **Associate Director, Operations** | | | |
| Associate Director of Operations | $2,180 | $2,971 | $2,607 |
| Central Production Services Division | $11,854 | $9,593 | $8,919 |
| Radio and Multimedia Operations | - | - | - |
| Operations Support Division | $21,850 | $20,749 | $20,325 |
| Technical Support Division | $14,015 | $11,311 | $10,108 |
| **Total, Associate Director, Operations** | **$49,899** | **$44,624** | **$41,959** |
| | | | |
| **Associate Director, Language Programming** | **$4,961** | **$5,674** | **$5,574** |
| ***Africa Division*** | | | |
| Division Chief | $3,111 | $3,967 | $3,857 |
| Bambara Service | - | $132 | $129 |
| Central Africa (Kinyarwanda, Kirundi) | $1,251 | $1,284 | $507 |
| French To Africa Service | $3,463 | $3,840 | $3,763 |
| French to Trans Sahel /Central African Republic | - | $370 | $363 |
| Hausa Service | $2,851 | $3,279 | $3,224 |
| Horn Of Africa (Amharic, Tigrigna, Afaan Oromoo) | $2,453 | $2,422 | $2,373 |
| Portuguese Service | $1,221 | $1,619 | $1,586 |
| Somali Service | $1,652 | $2,032 | $1,992 |
| Swahili Service | $1,550 | $1,599 | $1,567 |
| Zimbabwe/Shona/Ndebele/English | $1,043 | $355 | $348 |
| **Total, Africa Division** | **$18,595** | **$20,899** | **$19,709** |
| | | | |
| ***East Asia & Pacific Division*** | | | |
| Division Chief | $2,051 | $1,493 | $1,383 |
| Burmese Service | $2,933 | $2,848 | $2,791 |
| Cantonese Service | $1,015 | $1,114 | - |
| Indonesian Service | $5,595 | $5,562 | $4,470 |
| Khmer Service | $1,920 | $2,226 | $2,181 |
| Korean Service | $2,734 | $3,096 | $2,789 |
| Lao Service | $634 | $737 | $428 |
| Mandarin Service | $11,675 | $12,396 | $10,804 |
| Thai Service | $774 | $914 | $339 |
| Tibetan Service | $3,299 | $3,327 | $3,260 |
| Vietnamese Service | $1,782 | $2,045 | $2,004 |
| **Total, East Asia & Pacific Division** | **$34,412** | **$35,758** | **$30,449** |
| | | | |
| ***Eurasia Division*** | | | |
| Division Chief | $1,151 | $1,042 | $1,019 |
| Albanian Service | $1,504 | $1,288 | $1,262 |
| Armenian Service | $504 | $524 | $514 |
| Bosnian Service | $937 | $771 | $756 |
| Georgian Services | $654 | $568 | $557 |
| Macedonian Service | $605 | $306 | - |
| Russian Service | $7,075 | $7,048 | $6,911 |
| Serbian Service | $1,388 | $1,125 | $1,102 |
| Ukrainian Service | $1,832 | $1,683 | $1,649 |
| **Total, Eurasia Division** | **$15,650** | **$14,355** | **$13,770** |

## The Broadcasting Board of Governors
## Voice of America (VOA) *continued*
## Summary of Appropriated Funds | FY2016-FY2018
($ in thousands)

| Voice of America (VOA) | FY 2016 Actuals | FY 2017 Annualized CR | FY 2018 Request |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Latin America Division** | | | |
| Division Chief | $655 | $562 | $551 |
| Creole Service | $1,260 | $1,225 | $1,200 |
| Spanish Service | $2,695 | $2,865 | - |
| Production Unit | $455 | $425 | - |
| **Total, Latin America Division** | **$5,065** | **$5,077** | **$1,751** |
| | | | |
| **South Asia Division** | | | |
| Division Chief (South Asia + NECA) | $1,517 | $2,608 | $2,557 |
| Afghanistan Service | $2,240 | $1,852 | $1,816 |
| Dari | $2,352 | $2,272 | $1,393 |
| Pashto | $2,559 | $2,308 | $1,428 |
| VOA Radio Deewa (Pashto) | $3,295 | $4,842 | $3,769 |
| Azerbaijani Service | $697 | $650 | $637 |
| Bangla Service | $1,263 | $1,159 | $1,136 |
| Kurdish Service | $3,317 | $3,465 | $2,809 |
| Turkish Service | $1,742 | $2,938 | $2,685 |
| Urdu Service | $4,537 | $4,382 | $4,296 |
| Uzbek Service | $750 | $680 | $666 |
| **Total, South Asia Division** | **$24,269** | **$27,156** | **$23,192** |
| | | | |
| **VOA Persian** | **$14,416** | **$13,511** | **$12,264** |
| | | | |
| **English Division** | - | - | - |
| Division Chief | $1,020 | $759 | $744 |
| English To Africa Service | $4,612 | $4,409 | $4,320 |
| All other programs | $8,315 | $8,548 | $7,396 |
| **Total, English Division** | **$13,947** | **$13,716** | **$12,460** |
| | | | |
| **Central News** | | | |
| VOA Central News | $19,938 | $21,271 | $20,847 |
| Home Leave & Transfer (HLT) | $122 | $212 | $208 |
| **Total, Central News** | **$20,060** | **$21,483** | **$21,055** |
| | | | |
| **Domestic Bureaus** | | | |
| Houston | $196 | $182 | $179 |
| Los Angeles | $260 | $292 | $286 |
| New York | $930 | $816 | $799 |
| **Total, Domestic Bureaus** | **$1,386** | **$1,290** | **$1,264** |
| | | | |
| **Overseas Bureaus and News Centers** | - | - | - |
| Bangkok | $758 | $1,028 | $1,014 |
| Beijing | $806 | $671 | $660 |
| Cairo | $315 | $333 | $328 |
| Dakar | $399 | $151 | $149 |
| Hong Kong | $246 | $73 | $72 |
| Islamabad | $504 | $362 | $356 |
| Jakarta | $342 | $295 | $292 |
| Johannesburg | $173 | $706 | $694 |
| London | $1,748 | $1,770 | $1,116 |
| Moscow | $375 | $357 | $351 |
| Nairobi | $357 | $404 | $398 |
| Seoul | $511 | $554 | $545 |
| **Total, Overseas Bureaus** | **$6,534** | **$6,704** | **$5,975** |
| **TOTAL, Voice of America** | **$218,034** | **$221,133** | **$199,756** |

## The Broadcasting Board of Governors

### Office of Cuba Broadcasting (OCB)
### Summary of Appropriated Funds | FY2016-FY2018

($ in thousands)

| Office of Cuba Broadcasting | FY 2016 Actuals | FY 2017 Annualized CR | FY 2018 Request |
|---|---|---|---|
| OCB Directorate and Advisory Board | $1,088 | $878 | $878 |
| Administration | $3,766 | $3,819 | $3,819 |
| Radio Marti | $3,714 | $5,160 | $4,203 |
| New Media | $1,487 | $2,458 | $2,034 |
| Central News | $4,311 | $4,565 | $3,844 |
| TV Marti | $7,938 | $5,489 | $4,331 |
| Technical Operations | $1,325 | $2,009 | $1,269 |
| Greenville Transmitting Station | $2,933 | $2,911 | $2,398 |
| Computer Services | $1,011 | $880 | $880 |
| **OCB Totals** | **$27,573** | **$28,169** | **$23,656** |

# The Broadcasting Board of Governors
## International Broadcasting Bureau (IBB)
## Summary of Appropriated Funds | FY2016-FY2018

($ in thousands)

| International Broadcasting Bureau | FY 2016 Actuals | FY 2017 Annualized CR | FY 2018 Request |
|---|---|---|---|
| Total, Director, International Broadcasting Bureau | $7,134 | $1,805 | $1,575 |
| Total, Office of Management Services | - | $4,155 | $2,601 |
| Total, Office of Chief Financial Officer | $11,237 | $12,686 | $12,396 |
| Office of Policy and Research[1] | - | $8,194 | $8,377 |
| **Total, Office of Strategy and Development[1]** | **$11,861** | | |
| Office of Communications and External Affairs | $1,360 | $1,516 | $1,268 |
| Office of General Counsel | $1,559 | $1,727 | $1,603 |
| Office of Digital and Design Innovation[2] | $4,564 | - | - |
| Office of Performance Review[1] | $1,356 | - | - |
| Office of Research and Assessment[1] | $5,609 | - | - |
| Office of Contracting and Procurement | $3,151 | $3,464 | $3,411 |
| Office of Human Resources | $5,972 | $5,679 | $5,497 |
| Office of Workforce Support and Development | $1,725 | $1,728 | $1,814 |
| Office of Civil Rights | $746 | $1,041 | $829 |
| Office of Policy | $818 | $741 | $826 |
| Office of Security | $2,214 | $1,913 | $1,998 |
| Office of Internet Freedom | - | $15,651 | $10,668 |
| **IBB Totals** | **$59,306** | **$60,300** | **$52,863** |

[1] In FY2016 the BBG created the IBB Office of Policy & Research in order to streamline Global Strategy functions. The new office consolidated three IBB offices (the Office of Strategy and Development, Office of Research and Assessment, and Office of Performance Review) into a single office. Also note a portion of OSD's funding was transferred into TSI's newly created Office of Business Development.

[2] The IBB Office of Digital and Design Innovation (ODDI) will be eliminated and its assets will be distributed to TSI, VOA, OCB, RFE/RL, RFA, and MBN to support the BBG's aggressive shift to digital and mobile platforms.

# The Broadcasting Board of Governors

## Office of Technology, Services, and Innovation (TSI)
## Summary of Appropriated Funds | FY2016-FY2018

($ in thousands)

| Office of Technology, Services, and Innovation (TSI) | FY 2016 Actuals | FY 2017 Annualized CR | FY 2018 Request |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Technology, Services, and Innovation Director** | - | - | - |
| Director | $231 | $222 | $225 |
| Home Leave & Transfer (HLT) | $462 | $539 | $ 539 |
| **Subtotal, TSI Director** | **$693** | **$761** | **$764** |
| | | | |
| **Office of the CIO** | **$8,252** | **$8,218** | **$8,237** |
| Internet Freedom; Anti-Censorship | $7,439 | - | - |
| Global Networks Division | $5,703 | $5,716 | $5,742 |
| Satellites | $20,176 | $18,630 | $18,630 |
| **Subtotal, Office of the CIO** | **$41,570** | **$32,564** | **$32,609** |
| | | | |
| Information Technology Directorate | $13,520 | $14,177 | $14,115 |
| Technology Support Directorate | $9,566 | $9,079 | $9,160 |
| **Office of Business Development** | - | $2,135 | $2,149 |
| Regional Marketing Offices | - | $8,497 | $8,707 |
| **Subtotal, Office of Business Development** | **-** | **$10,632** | **$10,856** |
| | | | |
| **Resource and Project Management Directorate** | $2,522 | $2,785 | $2,822 |
| Project Management | $1,082 | $1,072 | $1,087 |
| Facilities Management | $36,837 | $36,942 | $36,137 |
| **Subtotal, Resource and Project Management Directorate** | **$40,441** | **$40,799** | **$40,046** |
| | | | |
| Engineering and Transmission Directorate | $189 | $183 | $186 |
| | | | |
| **Broadcast Technologies Division** | **$2,201** | **$2,043** | **$2,065** |
| Leased Transmissions | $6,361 | $7,527 | $7,527 |
| FM Transmissions | $604 | $1,010 | $1,010 |
| **Subtotal, Broadcast Technologies Division** | **$9,166** | **$10,580** | **$10,602** |

## The Broadcasting Board of Governors

## Office of Technology, Services, and Innovation (TSI) *continued*
## Summary of Appropriated Funds | FY2016-FY2018

($ in thousands)

| Office of Technology, Services, and Innovation (TSI) | FY 2016 Actuals | FY 2017 Annualized CR | FY 2018 Request |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Operations Division** | $1,943 | $1,707 | $2,244 |
| Worldwide Procurement (WWP) | $3,603 | $2,908 | $2,908 |
| **Subtotal, Operations Division** | **$5,546** | **$4,615** | **$5,152** |
| **Stations Division** | - | - | - |
| Domestic Transmitting Stations | - | - | - |
| Tinian | $5,273 | $5,771 | $5,777 |
| **Subtotal, Domestic Stations** | **$5,273** | **$5,771** | **$5,777** |
| **Overseas Transmitting Stations** | - | - | - |
| Afghanistan | $3,522 | $3,573 | $3,573 |
| Botswana | $2,193 | $2,498 | $2,501 |
| Germany | $11,183 | $11,911 | $11,912 |
| Kuwait | $11,758 | $12,406 | $12,590 |
| Philippines | $6,535 | $6,823 | $5,828 |
| Sao Tome | $4,328 | $4,259 | $4,262 |
| Sri Lanka | $1,745 | $367 | - |
| Thailand | $3,408 | $3,856 | $3,861 |
| **Subtotal, Overseas Stations** | **$44,672** | **$45,693** | **$44,527** |
| **Monitoring Offices** | **$897** | **$898** | **$898** |
| **Program Decreases** | - | - | - |
| Radio Transmission Reductions | - | - | ($5,000) |
| Global Network Realignment | - | - | ($2,000) |
| Administrative and Organizational Efficiencies | - | - | ($1,600) |
| **TSI Totals** | **$171,533** | **$175,752** | **$166,092** |

# The Broadcasting Board of Governors
## Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL)
## Summary of Appropriated Funds | FY2016-FY2018

($ in thousands)

| Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL) | FY 2016 Actuals | FY 2017 Annualized CR | FY 2018 Request |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Programming Division** | | | |
| Director | $2,872 | $2,279 | $2,099 |
| Multimedia Strategy, Development and Training | $1,164 | $1,697 | $1,573 |
| Marketing & Affiliates | $1,243 | $932 | $770 |
| **Language Services** | | | |
| Armenian | $1,741 | $1,662 | $1,662 |
| Azerbaijani | $2,057 | $2,063 | $1,943 |
| Balkans (Bosnian, Macedonian, Serbian, Albanian, Montenegrin, Croatian) | $4,538 | $4,351 | $4,116 |
| Belarusian | $2,478 | $2,463 | $2,173 |
| Georgian | $2,203 | $2,251 | $1,941 |
| Kazakh | $1,603 | $1,579 | $1,570 |
| Kyrgyz | $1,911 | $1,898 | $1,898 |
| Radio Farda (Persian) | $8,231 | $8,301 | $7,089 |
| Radio Free Afghanistan (Dari and Pashto) | $5,163 | $5,009 | $5,009 |
| Radio Mashaal (Pashto) | $3,165 | $3,091 | $805 |
| Regional Programming/DIGIM | $4,837 | $7,033 | $6,090 |
| Romanian to Moldova | $1,788 | $1,856 | $1,766 |
| Russian | $7,455 | $7,649 | $6,688 |
| North Caucasus Unit (Avar, Chechen and Circassian) | $1,356 | $1,366 | $1,366 |
| Tajik | $1,740 | $1,692 | $1,668 |
| Tatar-Bashkir | $962 | $1,205 | $1,055 |
| Turkmen | $660 | $733 | $713 |
| Ukrainian | $4,041 | $4,863 | $4,031 |
| Uzbek | $1,587 | $1,589 | $1,566 |
| News and Current Affairs | $6,431 | $6,803 | $6,651 |
| **Subtotal, Programming Division** | **$69,226** | **$72,365** | **$64,242** |
| Office of President | $5,330 | $5,061 | $4,684 |
| Technology Division | $27,442 | $32,206 | $24,202 |
| Finance Division | $1,028 | $4,242 | $4,196 |
| Human Resources Division | $2,350 | $2,641 | $2,276 |
| **Subtotal, Admin, Mgt & Finance** | **$36,150** | **$44,150** | **$35,358** |
| (+) Currency Gains Withheld by BBG | $1,646 | - | - |
| (+) FY 2016 Balances Out | $1,392 | - | - |
| (-) Prior Year Balances In/Recoveries | $ (6,541) | $ (6,615) | - |
| (+) Prior Year Balances Expended | $1,808 | - | - |
| (+) Prior Year Balances Out | $5,223 | - | - |
| (-) Other Transfers | - | - | - |
| **RFE/RL Grand Totals** | **$108,904** | **$109,900** | **$99,600** |

# The Broadcasting Board of Governors
## Radio Free Asia (RFA)
## Summary of Appropriated Funds | FY2016 - FY2018
($ in thousands)

| Radio Free Asia (RFA) | FY 2016 Actuals[1] | FY 2017 Annualized CR | FY 2018 Request |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Programming Division** | | | |
| Executive Editor | $3,078 | $2,666 | $2,520 |
| **Program Services** | | | |
| Burmese Service | $1,970 | $1,882 | $1,925 |
| Cambodian Service | $1,078 | $1,007 | $1,028 |
| Cantonese Service | $1,085 | $1,064 | $1,080 |
| Korean Service | $2,512 | $2,483 | $2,544 |
| Laotian Service | $1,175 | $1,199 | $1,229 |
| Mandarin Service | $4,838 | $4,968 | $300 |
| Tibetan Service | $4,353 | $4,280 | $4,373 |
| Uyghur Service | $1,321 | $1,333 | $1,372 |
| Vietnamese Service | $1,608 | $1,595 | $1,632 |
| **Program Offices** | | | |
| Bangkok Office | $127 | $102 | $103 |
| Dharamsala Office | $30 | $29 | $18 |
| Hong Kong Office | $546 | $528 | $535 |
| Phnom Penh Office | $612 | $643 | $525 |
| Rangoon Office | - | $396 | $410 |
| Seoul Office | $487 | $934 | $543 |
| Taipei Office | $151 | $252 | $208 |
| Yangon Office | $485 | - | - |
| **Subtotal, Programming Division** | **$25,456** | **$25,361** | **$20,346** |
| Office of President | $797 | $646 | $660 |
| Open Technology Fund (OTF) | $8,349 | - | - |
| Research, Training, and Evaluation | $674 | $459 | $474 |
| Technical Operations | $7,098 | $7,322 | $7,248 |
| HQ Facilities | $3,596 | $4,108 | $4,003 |
| Communications | $329 | $478 | $491 |
| Finance | $1,594 | $1,731 | $1,790 |
| Human Resources | $259 | $278 | $284 |
| **Subtotal, Admin, Mgt & Finance** | **$22,696** | **$15,022** | **$14,950** |
| (-) Balances In FY2015 RFA Carryover | $(550) | $(287) | - |
| (-) Balances In - Additional Funds | - | $(750) | - |
| (-) Balances In OTF Funds | $3,136 | - | - |
| (+) Balances Out | $287 | $1,196 | - |
| (-) Balances In - Research | - | - | - |
| (-) Prior Year Recovery | - | - | - |
| (-) Balances In - SW Strategy | - | $(696) | - |
| (-) Balances In - Internet Freedom Funds | - | - | - |
| **RFA TOTALS** | **$51,025** | **$39,846** | **$35,296** |

[1] Includes $11.5M in Internet Freedom Funds

## The Broadcasting Board of Governors
## Middle East Broadcasting Networks, Inc. (MBN)
## Summary of Appropriated Funds | FY 2016 - FY 2018

($ in thousands)

| Middle East Broadcasting Networks Programming | FY 2016 Actual | FY 2017 Plan | FY 2018 CBJ |
|---|---|---|---|
| Alhurra | $27,934 | $29,420 | $25,911 |
| Alhurra Iraq | $4,391 | $4,543 | $4,443 |
| Radio Sawa | $8,678 | $8,681 | $7,332 |
| Afia Darfur | $557 | $554 | - |
| MBN Digital | $4,539 | $12,324 | $11,938 |
| **Subtotal, Programming** | **$46,099** | **$55,522** | **$49,624** |
| Overseas Offices | | | |
| **Iraq** | $5,589 | $5,332 | $5,503 |
| Baghdad | $5,088 | $4,693 | $4,807 |
| Erbil | $501 | $639 | $696 |
| **Pan Arab** | $17,167 | $17,617 | $16,881 |
| Beirut | $3,950 | $4,200 | $4,303 |
| Cairo | $3,574 | $3,801 | $2,772 |
| Dubai | $7,112 | $7,050 | $7,178 |
| Jerusalem | $2,531 | $2,566 | $2,628 |
| **Maghreb** | $889 | $873 | $1,032 |
| Rabat | $867 | $649 | $689 |
| Tunis | $22 | $224 | $343 |
| **Subtotal, Overseas Offices** | **$23,645** | **$23,822** | **$23,416** |
| Technical Operations | $23,097 | $22,932 | $18,768 |
| Administration | $12,557 | $13,139 | $12,282 |
| Creative Services | $2,404 | $2,439 | $2,397 |
| **Subtotal, Admin, Mgt & Finance** | **$38,058** | **$38,510** | **$33,447** |
| Balances In - Recoveries | $(2,130) | $(1,500) | $(2,500) |
| Balances In - Base | $(2,738) | $(6,720) | - |
| Balances In - OCO | $(2,055) | $(2,121) | $(887) |
| Balances Out - Base | $6,720 | - | - |
| Balances Out - OCO | $2,121 | $887 | - |
| One-time Transfer to BBG | - | - | - |
| **MBN TOTALS** | **$109,720** | **$108,400** | **$103,100** |

## The Broadcasting Board of Governors
## Broadcasting Capital Improvements (BCI)
## Summary of Appropriated Funds | FY 2016 - FY 2018

($ in thousands)

| Broadcasting Capital Improvements | FY 2016 Actuals | FY 2017 Annualized CR | FY 2018 Request |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Maintenance, Improvements, Replace and Repair (MIRR)** | | | |
| Continuing M&R | $3,048 | $2,068 | $2,068 |
| VOA TV M&R | - | $572 | $572 |
| Security M&R | $1,621 | $541 | $541 |
| HVAC System M&R | $691 | $515 | $515 |
| Office of Cuba Broadcasting | $161 | $133 | $133 |
| **Upgrade of Existing Facilities Projects** | $603 | - | - |
| **Satellites** | | | |
| Satellite & Terrestrial Program Feeds | $715 | $962 | $962 |
| **BCI TOTALS** | **$6,839** | **$4,791** | **$4,791** |

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## The Broadcasting Board of Governors
## Funding from Outside Sources | FY 2016 - FY 2018
(In Whole Dollars)

| Funds Source | FY 2015/16 Actuals | FY 2016 Actuals | FY 2016/17 Carryover Funds | FY 2016/17 Funds (estimated) | FY 2017 Funds (estimated) | FY 2017/18 Funds (estimated) | Totals |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| USAID | $956,796 | - | $315,000 | - | - | $713,000 | $1,984,796 |
| Department of State | $2,288,661 | $268,800 | $319,000 | $639,120 | $78,080 | $3,735,000 | $7,328,661 |
| Centers for Disease Control (CDC) | - | $432,410 | - | - | | $287,000 | $719,410 |
| DoD/Pacific Command | - | $1,453,952 | - | - | - | $350,000 | $1,803,952 |
| **BBG TOTAL** | **$3,245,457** | **$2,155,162** | **$634,000** | **$639,120** | **$78,080** | **$5,085,000** | **$11,836,819** |