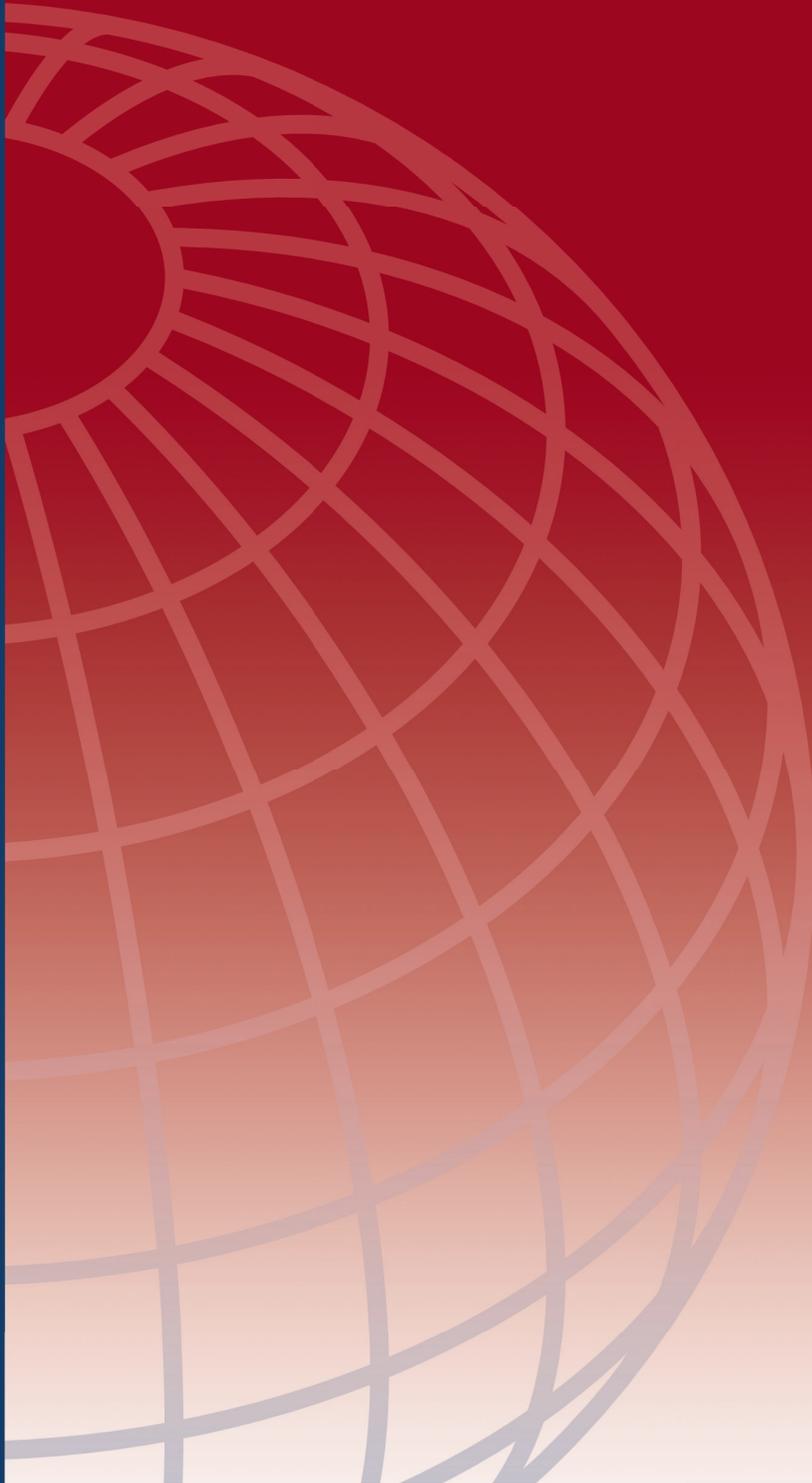


# Fiscal Year 2015 Congressional Budget Request



Broadcasting  
Board of  
Governors



**The Broadcasting Board of Governors**  
**FY 2015 Budget Request**

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## **Executive Summary**

To help U.S. international media (USIM) meet strategic priorities at a time of pressing national security challenges, dynamic global communications environments, and government-wide spending constraints, the Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG) requests funding of \$721.26 million in FY 2015 in support of our mission: **To inform, engage, and connect people around the world in support of freedom and democracy.**

The BBG, in accordance with the U.S. International Broadcasting Act of 1994 (as amended), oversees U.S. civilian international media, including the Voice of America (VOA), the Office of Cuba Broadcasting (OCB), and BBG-sponsored grantees Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, Inc. (RFE/RL), Radio Free Asia (RFA), and the Middle East Broadcasting Networks, Inc. (MBN). In addition to these five networks, the BBG also oversees the International Broadcasting Bureau (IBB), which manages program distribution and marketing for the Agency and provides administrative support for VOA and OCB.

The BBG distributes programming in 61 languages to more than 100 countries via radio (shortwave, medium wave (AM), FM and satellite), terrestrial and satellite TV, the web, live streaming, mobile devices, and social media to unprecedented global audiences of more than 206 million people in 2014.

The BBG's FY 2015 Budget Request reflects U. S. Government (USG) priorities and selectively shifts resources from more advanced media markets in Europe to Africa and Asia while continuing a focus on areas such as Ukraine and Russia where democracy and regional stability are in jeopardy. It supports program initiatives for North Africa and the Sahel and other regions affected by violent extremism. It seeks to preserve a strong global news and information capacity for the United States in the face of rising competition from nations such as China that do not share our values of free press and free expression.

Consistent with these priorities, the Budget funds key program initiatives, including new television and radio products for Africa, additional broadcast and digital content for East and Southeast Asia, and expanded English language teaching as an audience engagement tool. It also supports significant new capacity to help audiences circumvent Internet censorship.

To achieve economies necessitated by reduced overall funding in the Budget, the BBG leadership will realign or reduce administration, non-effective distribution, and selected staffing, with a focus on non-content producing staff. Notably, the BBG will continue the multi-year migration from cross-border medium wave (AM) transmissions in areas where they are no longer effective to more popular media platforms, including innovative, localized content on digital and mobile, which allow for greater interactivity and help the BBG networks reach burgeoning youth populations in priority markets.

As we wrestle with difficult budget trade-offs, excellence in journalism remains the BBG's most important objective. Hundreds of millions of people around the world count on us for accurate news and information. We stand committed to this mission.

## **Budget Highlights**

Proposed FY 2015 funding levels are as follows:

- \$721.26 million for FY 2015: \$716.46 million for International Broadcasting Operations and \$4.80 million for Broadcasting Capital Improvements. These build upon reductions and investments proposed for FY 2014.
- \$24.06 million in program increases that target high-priority global regions, including Africa and Southeast Asia.
- \$32.90 million in cuts from reducing language service overlap, streamlining central news operations, optimizing information technology, reducing ineffective cross-border transmissions, and realizing efficiencies in support services.
- \$12.50 million in Internet anti-censorship funding.

Priority FY 2015 investments include:

- **Engaging Current and Future Generations in Africa**  
In a region of increasing priority due to rising security concerns, but also audience engagement opportunities with the continent's very young population, the BBG will push forward with its FM expansion, establish a regional satellite television channel, create new video content for affiliate placement and digital distribution, and launch service in the Lingala language for the Democratic Republic of the Congo.
- **Growing U.S. Engagement in East and Southeast Asia**  
To further the President's "pivot to Asia," the BBG will expand video and digital initiatives for Burma, Cambodia, and Vietnam, also targeting youth, who are accustomed to TV and digital platforms, and expand social media outreach inside the Chinese firewall.
- **Expanding VOA Learning English Programming**  
To meet strong demand by audiences and our affiliated radio and TV stations, the BBG will increase Learning English programs, partially by reducing low-impact, long-form English language radio created for shortwave.
- **Providing Digital Media for Next Generation Audiences**  
To keep pace with strong growth in use of digital media by the BBG target audiences, we will grow and mature core digital platforms, deploy mobile and social content producers to priority markets to serve local needs, create a USIM-wide technical team to explore new content formats, and support digital services for the BBG affiliates.

Under the leadership of its new Board, the BBG advances this Budget based on three key points:

- The BBG's mission is critical to U.S. national security in the face of today's global challenges.
- The BBG is effective in its mission with increasingly precise performance metrics.
- The BBG leadership is committed to strategic and operational improvements.

## **The BBG's mission is critical to U.S. national security in the face of today's global challenges.**

Around the globe, freedom and democracy are under assault, imperiling U.S. interests. Europe is witnessing a return to Cold War tensions of state authority versus popular will. In the Middle East, the struggle continues to support even modest pluralism and regain the spirit of the Arab Spring. North Africa and the Sahel face rising extremism, from Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb to Boko Haram in Northern Nigeria, now rivaling in ferocity of the Taliban in South Asia.

Freedom House has noted that 2013 marked the eighth straight year of declines in global freedom. The Reporters Without Borders (RWB) 2014 Press Index shows worsening press freedom in all regions except Asia, which was static.

The struggles unfolding today all have significant information components. A war for influence is playing out on the stage of public opinion. Whether it's Russia Today or China Central Television (CCTV), or at an extreme, the propaganda machine of Al Qaeda, states and non-state actors alike wage non-stop appeals for hearts and minds.

Media are proliferating. But the existence of more media does not mean more media freedom. As RWB notes, states such as Russia and China are sacrificing press freedom to national security and surveillance, and non-state actors like Al Qaeda are increasingly using violence to quell independent journalism.

It is in this mix of national security challenges, rising media competition, and the presence of modern communications technologies that the BBG must operate. These are strategic factors that have shaped our FY 2015 Budget proposals.

Congress mandates the BBG to produce credible, comprehensive news, to represent American society, and to present and discuss U.S. policy – consistent with the standards of professional journalism. Doing so, as the U.S. International Broadcasting Act establishes, “contributes to international peace and stability” and serves “to support freedom and democracy – in a rapidly changing international environment.”

Buttressing the BBG's mission are two over-arching strategic goals: (1) to expand freedom of information and freedom of expression and (2) to convey the American democratic experience. The five media organizations that comprise the BBG combine to fulfill these goals, each in its own way. All produce accurate news tailored to their audiences. VOA and MBN also provide coverage of American society and policy.

The BBG thus practices objective journalism – great journalism – but not as an end in itself. Rather, there is a purpose: to support U.S. national security interests. This means freedom and democracy broadly, and more specifically, strategic goals to engage next-generation audiences, support a free and open press and provide exceptional content that helps in-country audiences understand U.S. policy, international events and the events particular to given countries and regions.

Thus, we see the BBG at work around the world:

- In Ukraine and Russia, where new challenges to stability and democracy have wracked the region, the BBG-supported journalists provide breaking news coverage, analysis, and diverse perspectives, featuring U.S. and European views to rebut heightened Russian propaganda.
- In war-torn Syria, we aid the besieged citizenry with reports on life-and-death developments, including where the regime is mounting its latest attacks.
- In Somalia, we counter violent extremist propaganda targeted to youth with frank on-air and online discussion of radicalism.
- In China, we combat censorship by tapping into internal viral networks with coverage of taboo subjects including high-level government corruption and Tibet.
- In a host of countries, from Burma to Belarus, we ease inter-ethnic and inter-religious strife with roundtable discussions that bring diverse parties together to bridge differences and model civil discourse.
- And in lands that have suffered natural as well as man-made disasters, from Haiti to the Central African Republic, we provide a humanitarian lifeline.

Telling America's story is a significant part of the BBG's mandate, as directed by Congress.

VOA and MBN, while providing comprehensive regional and world news to their audiences, cover the United States in all its complexity. They are a mirror, not a mouthpiece, showing our democratic trials and tribulations so that the countries we target, struggling to nurture or sustain their own democratic systems, might see their stories reflected in ours.

Conveying and critically assessing official U.S. policy – what it is, which parts of our government make and articulate it, and how there are at times sharp policy differences – is a key component of the BBG's mission. U.S. leadership in the world depends in part on global audiences knowing where the United States stands on the main issues of the day.

But there's more to our work. We are about engaging and connecting as well as informing, as our mission statement says.

Our means of engagement are diverse and extensive. Through all forms of digital, social, and traditional media, we seek to have conversations with our audiences, to solicit their views, to facilitate their sharing of our information, and to encourage their repackaging and redistribution of our content. In countries such as China, seeding domestic information streams with news content, analysis, and commentary to support local use and reuse before the censors can act is a major strategy.

In Africa, the Middle East, and elsewhere, we routinely reach out to our audiences in public town hall meetings on topics such as health and the environment, often involving hundreds of people. These opportunities for direct engagement with our audiences are broadcast on-air and help further develop a following for our news programs.

Some 2,400 affiliated radio and TV stations around the world carry our content on their airwaves, providing more than half of the BBG's total audience, or roughly 100 million people

weekly. Through them, we are heavily engaged in local media environments. Our content enriches their offerings for their listeners and viewers. But, just as important, our networks work hand in glove with our partners, from Colombia to Cambodia, for true two-way communication, doing live inter-actives and custom packages pegged to their needs and interests.

We train our affiliates' journalists as well as independent reporters in the countries we serve, hundreds annually, in the practices and principles of objective journalism. We offer workshops for media operators in TV and radio station management, formatting, and advertising sales. And we consult with leading national media networks, government and private, to advise on business strategies and execution.

In recent years, the BBG has developed a robust portfolio in Internet anti-censorship. Here, our focus is not just on disseminating our own content, but also on expanding access to the Internet, and offering citizen and professional journalists the tools to report safely without detection by government surveillance. This work is increasingly important in countries such as China and Cuba that are bolstering their firewalls to keep outside information from getting in and inside information from getting out.

We do all this in addition to our own journalism because we seek to support free, open, democratic societies and independent indigenous media that are the lifeblood of such societies.

Thomas Jefferson said: "Our liberty cannot be guarded but by the freedom of the press, nor that be limited without danger of losing it."

At the BBG, we manifest this message in all that we do – in our journalism and in our support for local media and information access. At a time when those who do not share our nation's commitment to freedom and democracy use their press and public diplomacy to influence global audiences, and employ every available means to deny their own citizens the truth, the BBG's media organizations are critical elements of national power to safeguard our values and advance our interests.

### **The BBG is effective in its mission with increasingly precise performance metrics.**

The BBG is meeting these global challenges with unprecedented success. With its global digital and analog transmission networks, the BBG now reaches 206 million people weekly, our highest worldwide audience measured to date and up from 175 million in 2012.

Audience penetration is especially strong in strategically vital countries such as Iran, Iraq, Afghanistan, Somalia, Mali, Somalia, Nigeria, and Burma, and in Pakistan's Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA). In most of these places and in many target countries, the BBG networks are not only market leaders in audience but also often set the news agenda.

Audience size is a key metric in meeting the Congressional mandate that our media programs "reach a significant audience." But there are many more. For years, the BBG has tracked other key indicators such as reliability and understanding. Audiences almost uniformly give high

marks to the BBG's news programs for trustworthiness and to information programs for contributing to their better understanding of American culture and policies.

The BBG is taking new steps to deepen understanding of our impact. We want to know if and to what extent our programs have made a difference in the lives of our audiences in ways that correspond to our strategic goals. We have developed a new impact model with expanded indicators to gauge our performance more completely. It is specifically tied to our mission to inform, engage, and connect our audiences in support of freedom and democracy.

Driving our improved impact assessment is the Agency's global market and audience research program. Consistent with the Congressional requirement that the BBG maintain "a reliable research capacity," we annually survey populations in target countries. In FY 2014, the BBG plans to commission approximately three dozen national surveys, and to add questions aimed at gauging weekly audience reach to around 30 of Gallup's World Poll country surveys. The BBG's research program will also continue to engage audience members in focus groups and in-depth interviews to determine who's consuming our media products, how, when, where, why, and to what effect. We have revised our questionnaires to correspond to the indicators in the new impact model. Throughout FY 2014, the BBG will be testing the model in a new effort to assess our performance in meeting our mission.

We also have united our research and data collection across all of USIM with advances in a single digital metric system for all entities for web, social, mobile and video/audio content. Coupled with traditional and innovative research, such as in-country panels and mobile phone-based research, we are consistently and frequently measuring our performance across all of our media platforms.

A related gauge of success is return on investment, or simple bang for the buck. Eighty-six percent of the BBG's language services have programming costs under \$5 million per year; and almost 60 percent have programming costs under \$2 million per year. Overall, it costs the U.S. taxpayer just \$3.50 to reach each member of the BBG's 206 million global audience.

### **The BBG is committed to ongoing strategic and operational improvements.**

Under the leadership of a revitalized Board of Governors, the Agency is poised to address pressing challenges and prepare for the eventual appointment by the Board of a Chief Executive Officer of USIM.

The FY 2015 Budget Request contains proposals to streamline the Agency, migrate to the most effective media platforms, respond readily to crises, keep pace with our audiences in terms of their demographic composition and interests, and sharpen strategy and results measurement to drive performance.

Achieving operational efficiencies is critical to the BBG's future, to save money, to allocate scarce resources to priority areas, and to improve the performance of Agency support services. The BBG leadership is reviewing key financial, administrative, procurement, and other support

functions in order to significantly restructure operations in ways that will enhance productivity, responsiveness, and overall cost-effectiveness.

The BBG is also taking steps to address overlapping language services through enhanced collaboration among the BBG networks. This does not necessarily mean eliminating one or the other service. Rather, it means clarifying their respective roles and goals, differentiating their content, and sharing media platforms where appropriate.

The FY 2015 Budget Request reflects a host of distribution changes. In the mix of technology and distribution platforms, the BBG sees clearly the global adoption of digital media. Actively underway is the migration from legacy distribution platforms such as shortwave and medium wave (AM) to the media platforms audiences are using today, including satellite TV and audio, FM radio, mobile phone technologies, and social and other digital media. In many of our markets, use of the Internet overall and as a source of news already exceeds radio, and in some cases by a wide margin. The BBG is adapting to this fundamental shift by taking, where appropriate, a digital-first approach and combining digital and traditional media into one integrated strategy.

That said, the BBG remains platform-agnostic, meaning we will use the media on which our audiences prefer to receive information, engage with media and connect with one another. Shortwave radio will still play a role in selected countries such as Nigeria, Burma, and Afghanistan, among others.

Reaching next-generation audiences is a top BBG priority, critical for our success. Demographic trends are shockingly clear. The current global youth bulge will last decades. In Africa, the median age is roughly 18, and it will be until year 2050. The BBG has seen this development coming for many years and has adapted with program initiatives such as Radio Sawa and Radio Farda in the Middle East and scores of youth-focused programs in many language services. But we must do more to align content and distribution strategies to appeal to youth and keep pace with these fundamental shifts in our target audiences.

To guide the Agency in making these and other critical changes, the BBG leadership is enhancing Agency strategic planning, implementation, and performance measurement. The BBG will continue articulating its overall Agency strategic framework and country-level planning. We will also establish clear goals, targets, and metrics (per the impact model) for every language service at the country and regional level to guide action and provide accountability. Comparable reform will take place in performance assessment, to focus on achieving of established goals. Already underway for selected crisis and priority countries, this comprehensive planning will be completed by the end of FY 2014.

**The Broadcasting Board of Governors**  
**Summary of Appropriations**  
**FY 2013 - FY 2015**  
(\$ in thousands)

	FY 2013 Actuals <sup>7</sup>	FY 2014 Enacted	FY 2014 Program Plan <sup>6</sup>	FY 2015 Request	2015 Request compared to 2013 Actual	2015 Request compared to 2014 Program Plan
<b>International Broadcasting Operations</b>						
<b>Federal Entities</b>						
Voice of America (with OCO for FY 2013 and 2014)	196,357	202,066	199,175	211,920	15,563	12,745
Office of Cuba Broadcasting <sup>1</sup>	26,293	27,043	27,043	23,130	(3,163)	(3,913)
International Broadcasting Bureau <sup>2</sup>	65,246	67,000	65,985	64,930	(316)	(1,055)
Office of Technology, Services, and Innovation	179,820	187,818	198,659	175,300	(4,520)	(23,359)
Internet Freedom; Anti-Censorship	[5,461]	[25,500]	[25,500]	[12,500]	7,039	(13,000)
<b>Total, Federal Entities</b>	<b>467,716</b>	<b>484,067</b>	<b>490,862</b>	<b>475,280</b>	<b>7,564</b>	<b>(15,582)</b>
<b>Independent Grantee Organizations</b>						
Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty <sup>3</sup> (with OCO for FY 2013 and 2014)	92,097	95,950	93,850	95,890	3,793	2,040
Radio Free Asia <sup>4</sup>	41,759	35,950	35,605	38,720	(3,039)	3,115
Middle East Broadcasting Networks <sup>5</sup>	105,699	109,513	105,163	106,570	871	1,407
<b>Total, Independent Grantee Organizations</b>	<b>239,555</b>	<b>241,413</b>	<b>234,618</b>	<b>241,180</b>	<b>1,625</b>	<b>6,562</b>
<b>Total, International Broadcasting Operations</b>	<b>707,271</b>	<b>725,480</b>	<b>725,480</b>	<b>716,460</b>	<b>9,189</b>	<b>(9,020)</b>
<b>Broadcasting Capital Improvements</b>	<b>6,008</b>	<b>8,000</b>	<b>8,000</b>	<b>4,800</b>	<b>(1,208)</b>	<b>(3,200)</b>
<b>Total, Broadcasting Capital Improvements</b>	<b>6,008</b>	<b>8,000</b>	<b>8,000</b>	<b>4,800</b>	<b>(1,208)</b>	<b>(3,200)</b>
<b>Summary Of Resources</b>						
<b>International Broadcasting Operations Account</b>	<b>706,812</b>	<b>725,480</b>	<b>725,480</b>	<b>716,460</b>	<b>9,648</b>	<b>(9,020)</b>
Appropriated P.L. 113-6; P.L. 113-76	702,632	721,080	721,080	716,460	13,828	(4,620)
Appropriated P.L. 113-6; P.L. 113-76 (Overseas Contingency Operations)	4,180	4,400	4,400	-	(4,180)	(4,400)
<b>Broadcasting Capital Improvements Account</b>	<b>6,674</b>	<b>8,000</b>	<b>8,000</b>	<b>4,800</b>	<b>(1,874)</b>	<b>(3,200)</b>
Appropriated P.L. 113-6; P.L. 113-76	6,674	8,000	8,000	4,800	(1,874)	(3,200)
<b>Grand Total, Broadcasting Board of Governors Appropriation/Request</b>	<b>713,486</b>	<b>733,480</b>	<b>733,480</b>	<b>721,260</b>	<b>7,774</b>	<b>(12,220)</b>

1 - The BBG anticipates OCB may receive up to \$5 million in transfers from the Economic Support Fund to support programs and activities allowed in accordance with the Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity (Libertad) Act of 1996.

2 - The total for IBB includes a Digital Media Investment of \$10.2 million. This will reduce the non-investment funds for IBB from the FY 2014 Program Plan level of \$66 million in 2014 to \$54.5 million in FY 2015, a reduction of approximately 17%.

3 - For 13 Actuals, includes \$900 thousand from the BBG Buying Power Maintenance (BPM) Account to offset reported RFE/RL currency losses.

4 - FY 2013 includes funding for Internet Freedom; Anti-Censorship activities.

5 - Grant agreement was for \$105,725.00 in FY 2013

6 - The Program Plan is as of a point in time and could vary as executed in FY 2014.

7 - FY 2013 Actuals include obligated and expended balances for the federal entities; and, when indicated, funds from the BBG BPM account

**The Broadcasting Board of Governors  
International Broadcasting Operations by Program, Project, Activity (PPA)**

**FY 2013 - FY 2015**

(\$ in thousands)

	FY 2013 Actuals	FY 2014 Enacted	FY 2015 Request	2015 Request compared to 2013 Actual	2015 Request compared to 2014 Enacted
<b>International Broadcasting Operations</b>	<b>467,716</b>	<b>484,067</b>	<b>475,280</b>	<b>7,564</b>	<b>(8,787)</b>
<b>Federal Entities</b>					
<b>Networks</b>					
Voice of America <sup>1</sup>	222,650	229,249	235,050	12,400	5,801
Office of Cuba Broadcasting <sup>2</sup>	196,357	202,206	211,920	15,563	9,714
<b>Transmissions; Operational Support; Cross Cutting Initiatives</b>					
International Broadcasting Bureau <sup>3</sup>	26,293	27,043	23,130	(3,163)	(3,913)
Office of Technology, Services, and Innovation (TSI)	245,066	254,818	240,230	(4,836)	(14,588)
<i>TSI (without directive for Internet Freedom / Anti-Censorship)</i>	65,246	67,000	64,930	(316)	(2,070)
<i>Internet Freedom; Anti-Censorship</i>	179,820	187,818	175,300	(4,520)	(12,518)
	174,359	162,318	162,800	(11,559)	482
	5,461	25,500	12,500	7,039	(13,000)
<b>Independent Grantee Organizations</b>	<b>239,555</b>	<b>241,413</b>	<b>241,180</b>	<b>1,625</b>	<b>(233)</b>
<b>Networks</b>					
Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty <sup>1,4</sup>	239,555	241,413	241,180	1,625	(233)
Radio Free Asia <sup>5</sup>	92,097	95,950	95,890	3,793	(60)
Middle East Broadcasting Networks <sup>6</sup>	41,759	35,950	38,720	(3,039)	2,770
	105,699	109,513	106,570	871	(2,943)

1 - Includes Overseas Contingency Operations funding for FY 2013 and FY 2014.

2 - The BBG anticipates OCB may receive up to \$5 million in transfers from the Economic Support Fund to support programs and activities allowed in accordance with the Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity (Libertad) Act of 1996.

3 - The total for IBB includes a Digital Media Investment of \$10.2 million. This will reduce the non-investment funds for IBB from the FY 2014 Program Plan level of \$66 million in 2014 to \$54.5 million in FY 2015, a reduction of approximately 17%.

4 - For FY 2013 Actuals, includes \$900 thousand from BBG Buying Power Maintenance (BPM) Account to offset reported RFE/RL currency losses.

5 - FY 2013 includes funding for Internet Freedom; Anti-Censorship activities.

6 - Grant agreement was for \$105,725.00 in FY 2013.

**The Broadcasting Board of Governors**  
**Broadcasting Capital Improvements by Program, Project, Activity (PPA)**  
**FY 2013 - FY 2015**  
(\$ in thousands)

	<b>FY 2013 Actuals</b>	<b>FY 2014 Enacted</b>	<b>FY 2015 Request</b>	<b>2015 Request compared to 2013 Actual</b>	<b>2015 Request compared to 2014 Enacted</b>
<b>Broadcasting Capital Improvements</b>	<b>6,008</b>	<b>8,000</b>	<b>4,800</b>	<b>(1,208)</b>	<b>(3,200)</b>
Maintenance, Improvements, Replace and Repair (MIRR)	5,127	4,695	3,831	(1,296)	(864)
Upgrade of Existing Facilities Projects	138	2,000	-	(138)	(2,000)
Satellite & Terrestrial Program Feeds	743	1,305	969	226	(336)

**The Broadcasting Board of Governors  
Summary of Positions and FTE  
FY 2013 - FY 2015**

	FY 2013		FY 2014 Program Plan <sup>6</sup>		FY 2015 Request	
	On-board Positions	Full-time Equivalent	Funded Positions	Full-time Equivalent	Funded Positions	Full-time Equivalent
<b>International Broadcasting Operations</b>						
<b>Federal Employees</b>						
<b>Voice of America</b>	<b>1,121</b>	<b>1,117</b>	<b>1,171</b>	<b>1,142</b>	<b>1,194</b>	<b>1,190</b>
American/Domestic Employees	1,093	1,101	1,143	1,126	1,168	1,176
Foreign Nationals DH/Personnel Service Agreements	28	16	28	16	26	14
<b>Office of Cuba Broadcasting<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>116</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>124</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>97</b>
American/Domestic Employees	116	117	130	124	96	97
<b>International Broadcasting Bureau<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>241</b>	<b>238</b>	<b>245</b>	<b>240</b>	<b>309</b>	<b>306</b>
American/Domestic Employees	229	231	233	233	297	299
Foreign Nationals DH/Personnel Service Agreements	12	7	12	7	12	7
<b>Office of Technology, Services, and Innovation</b>	<b>433</b>	<b>328</b>	<b>425</b>	<b>324</b>	<b>460</b>	<b>355</b>
American/Domestic Employees	178	179	169	175	169	170
Foreign Nationals DH/Personnel Service Agreements	255	149	256	149	291	185
<b>Subtotal, Federal Employees</b>	<b>1,911</b>	<b>1,800</b>	<b>1,971</b>	<b>1,830</b>	<b>2,059</b>	<b>1,948</b>
<b>Independent Grantee Organizations</b>						
<b>Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty<sup>3</sup></b>	<b>487</b>		<b>531</b>		<b>530</b>	
Employees	487		531		530	
<b>Radio Free Asia<sup>4</sup></b>	<b>253</b>		<b>248</b>		<b>261</b>	
Employees	253		248		261	
<b>Middle East Broadcasting Networks<sup>5</sup></b>	<b>771</b>		<b>885</b>		<b>884</b>	
Employees	771		885		884	
<b>Subtotal, Grantee Employees</b>	<b>1,511</b>		<b>1,664</b>		<b>1,675</b>	
<b>Total, Broadcasting Board of Governors</b>	<b>3,422</b>	<b>1,800</b>	<b>3,635</b>	<b>1,830</b>	<b>3,734</b>	<b>1,948</b>

1 - Office of Cuba Broadcasting FY 2013 numbers do not include staff at the Greenville Transmitting Station. The BBG anticipates OCB may receive up to \$5 million in transfers from the Economic Support Fund to support programs and activities allowed in accordance with the Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity (Libertad) Act of 1996.

2 - The International Broadcasting Bureau FY 2015 numbers are provided as rough estimates. The total for the IBB includes a Digital Media Investment of 65 new positions in FY 2015. To accommodate this investment, the IBB will be required to restructure its operations and eliminate approximately 40 positions. The IBB anticipates that the total reduction in positions in FY 2015 could vary as much as 15 positions. More detailed information about the IBB restructuring will be forthcoming in the third quarter of FY 2014.

3 - RFE/RL position figures include staff based in the U.S. and Prague, but do not include contractors, freelancers, or overseas bureau staff.

4 - Radio Free Asia's total includes funded positions for US and local hires.

5 - Middle East Broadcasting Networks includes all full-time employees and overseas contract staff.

6 - The Program Plan is as of a point in time and could vary as executed in FY 2014.

**The Broadcasting Board of Governors  
Voice of America  
Summary of Appropriated Funds  
FY 2013 - FY 2015**

(\$ in thousands)

Voice of America <sup>1</sup>	FY 2013 Actuals	FY 2014 Program Plan <sup>2</sup>	FY 2015 Request
<b><u>VOA Director</u></b>			
Director	6,744	7,572	9,893
<b><u>Associate Director, Operations</u></b>			
Associate Director of Operations	1,530	1,645	3,421
Central Production Services Division	14,421	14,539	11,800
Radio and Multimedia Operations	-	1,741	2,565
Operations Support Division	20,607	19,531	20,708
Technical Support Division	9,362	8,644	8,986
<b>Total, Associate Director, Operations</b>	<b>45,920</b>	<b>46,100</b>	<b>47,480</b>
<b><u>Associate Director, Language Programming</u></b>	<b>5,014</b>	<b>5,835</b>	<b>10,698</b>
<b><u>Africa Division</u></b>			
Division Chief	1,061	2,590	2,724
Bambara Service	131	223	374
Central Africa (Kinyarwanda, Kirundi)	942	1,003	1,097
French To Africa Service	1,891	2,054	2,266
French to Trans Sahel / Central African Republic	-	528	690
Hausa Service	1,464	2,018	2,203
Horn Of Africa (Amharic, Tigrigna, Afaan Oromoo)	2,122	2,195	2,422
Lingala Service	-	-	335
Portuguese Service	1,085	1,085	1,246
Somali Service	1,344	1,167	1,518
Swahili Service	981	920	1,491
Zimbabwe/Shona/Ndebele/English	807	677	985
<b>Total, Africa Division</b>	<b>11,828</b>	<b>14,460</b>	<b>17,351</b>
<b><u>East Asia &amp; Pacific Division</u></b>			
Division Chief	1,815	1,719	1,934
Burmese Service	2,189	2,477	2,885
Cantonese Service	1,025	962	1,224
Indonesian Service	5,486	5,385	5,511
Khmer Service	1,872	1,848	2,459
Korean Service	2,667	2,723	2,879
Lao Service	654	672	766
Mandarin Service	10,934	11,444	11,916
Thai Service	639	698	800
Tibetan Service	3,315	3,273	3,601
Vietnamese Service	1,599	1,597	2,153
<b>Total, East Asia &amp; Pacific Division</b>	<b>32,195</b>	<b>32,798</b>	<b>36,128</b>
<b><u>Eurasia Division</u></b>			
Division Chief	1,092	880	1,674
Albanian Service	1,738	1,873	730

**The Broadcasting Board of Governors**  
**Voice of America**  
**Summary of Appropriated Funds**  
**FY 2013 - FY 2015**

(\$ in thousands)

<b>Voice of America<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>FY 2013 Actuals</b>	<b>FY 2014 Program Plan<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>FY 2015 Request</b>
Armenian Service	400	400	414
Bosnian Service	810	825	414
Georgian Service	704	478	577
Greek Service	458	382	-
Macedonian Service	480	460	229
Russian Service	3,039	3,076	2,895
Serbian Service	1,522	1,296	788
Ukrainian Service	1,421	1,385	1,438
<b>Total, Eurasia Division</b>	<b>11,664</b>	<b>11,055</b>	<b>9,158</b>
<b><u>Latin America Division</u></b>			
Division Chief	676	482	671
Creole Service	1,171	1,258	1,373
Spanish Service	2,757	2,958	1,782
Production Unit	594	415	609
<b>Total, Latin America Division</b>	<b>5,198</b>	<b>5,113</b>	<b>4,435</b>
<b><u>South Asia Division</u></b>			
Division Chief (South Asia + NECA)	1,685	1,385	1,030
Afghanistan Service	1,773	1,780	1,613
Dari	2,106	2,317	1,848
Pashto	2,239	2,260	2,000
VOA Radio Deewa (Pashto)	2,648	2,661	3,015
Azerbaijani Service	550	472	445
Bangla Service	953	1,110	969
Kurdish Service	1,549	1,651	1,571
Turkish Service	1,024	1,203	1,088
Urdu Service	4,847	4,853	4,789
Uzbek Service	628	681	548
<b>Total, South Asia Division</b>	<b>20,002</b>	<b>20,373</b>	<b>18,916</b>
<b><u>VOA Persian</u></b>	<b>16,858</b>	<b>16,046</b>	<b>13,675</b>
<b><u>English Division</u></b>			
Division Chief	-	-	-
English To Africa Service	3,590	3,583	4,085
All other programs	12,195	11,273	13,630
<b>Total, English Division</b>	<b>15,785</b>	<b>14,856</b>	<b>17,715</b>
<b><u>Central News</u></b>			
VOA Central News	16,255	15,706	17,764
Home Leave & Transfer (HLT)	14	36	134
<b>Total, Central News</b>	<b>16,269</b>	<b>15,742</b>	<b>17,898</b>
<b><u>Domestic Bureaus</u></b>			
Houston	191	193	45

**The Broadcasting Board of Governors  
Voice of America  
Summary of Appropriated Funds  
FY 2013 - FY 2015**

(\$ in thousands)

<b>Voice of America<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>FY 2013 Actuals</b>	<b>FY 2014 Program Plan<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>FY 2015 Request</b>
Los Angeles	229	302	237
Miami	-	-	24
New York	788	821	814
<b>Total, Domestic Bureaus</b>	<b>1,208</b>	<b>1,316</b>	<b>1,120</b>
<b><u>Overseas Bureaus and News Centers</u></b>			
Bangkok	842	767	857
Beijing	725	784	801
Cairo	475	520	501
Dakar	360	367	362
Hong Kong	273	278	297
Islamabad	370	434	438
Jakarta	360	316	295
Jerusalem	484	493	233
Johannesburg	424	514	527
London	1,731	1,869	1,877
Moscow	400	405	401
Nairobi	290	346	375
New Delhi	426	326	-
Seoul	512	490	489
<b>Total, Overseas Bureaus</b>	<b>7,672</b>	<b>7,909</b>	<b>7,453</b>
<b>Total, Voice of America</b>	<b>196,357</b>	<b>199,175</b>	<b>211,920</b>

1 - VOA's FY 2015 totals include both the proposed investments and reductions.

2 - The Program Plan is as of a point in time and could vary as executed in FY 2014.

**The Broadcasting Board of Governors  
Office of Cuba Broadcasting  
Summary of Appropriated Funds  
FY 2013 - FY 2015**

(\$ in thousands)

Office of Cuba Broadcasting <sup>1,2</sup>	FY 2013 Actuals	FY 2014 Program Plan <sup>3</sup>	FY 2015 Request
OCB Directorate and Advisory Board	774	892	1,171
Administration	3,689	3,735	3,647
Radio Marti	5,295	5,322	3,509
New Media	1,001	1,333	1,199
Central News	4,881	4,509	3,754
TV Marti	4,780	4,591	3,899
Technical Operations	4,466	3,205	2,925
Greenville Transmitting Station <sup>2</sup>	-	2,447	2,360
Computer Services	1,407	1,009	666
<b>Total, Office of Cuba Broadcasting</b>	<b>26,293</b>	<b>27,043</b>	<b>23,130</b>

1 - The BBG anticipates OCB may receive up to \$5 million in transfers from the Economic Support Fund to support programs and activities allowed in accordance with the Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity (Libertad) Act of 1996.

2 - In FY 2013 the Greenville Transmitting Station was reported under the Office of Technology, Services, and Innovation.

3 - The Program Plan is as of a point in time and could vary as executed in FY 2014.

**The Broadcasting Board of Governors  
International Broadcasting Bureau  
Summary of Appropriated Funds  
FY 2013 - FY 2015**

(\$ in thousands)

International Broadcasting Bureau <sup>1</sup>	FY 2013 Actuals <sup>2</sup>	FY 2014 Program Plan <sup>3,4</sup>	FY 2015 Request
<b>Total, International Broadcasting Bureau</b>	<b>65,246</b>	<b>65,985</b>	<b>64,930</b>

1 - The total for IBB includes a Digital Media Investment of \$10.2 million. This will reduce the non-investment funds for IBB from \$66 million in FY 2014 to \$54.5 million in FY 2015, a reduction of almost 17%.

2 - Includes \$6 thousand for representation.

3 - Excludes an estimated \$800 thousand from proceeds of sales.

4 - The Program Plan is as of a point in time and could vary as executed in FY 2014.

**The Broadcasting Board of Governors  
Office of Technology, Services, and Innovation  
Summary of Appropriated Funds  
FY 2013 - FY 2015**

(\$ in thousands)

Office of Technology, Services, and Innovation <sup>1,2</sup>	FY 2013 Actuals	FY 2014 Program Plan <sup>4</sup>	FY 2015 Request
<b><u>Technology, Services, and Innovation Director</u></b>			
Director	211	217	215
Home Leave & Transfer (HLT)	269	375	375
<b>Total, Technology Services and Innovation Director</b>	<b>480</b>	<b>592</b>	<b>590</b>
<b><u>Office of the CIO</u></b>	7,594	10,436	9,644
Internet Freedom; Anti-Censorship	5,461	25,500	12,500
Global Networks Division	-	-	7,059
Satellites	-	-	14,025
<b>Total, Office of the CIO</b>	<b>13,055</b>	<b>35,936</b>	<b>43,228</b>
<b><u>Resource Directorate</u></b>	2,946	3,279	3,271
Facilities Management	-	-	35,217
<b>Total, Resource Directorate</b>	<b>2,946</b>	<b>3,279</b>	<b>38,488</b>
Information Technology Directorate	19,026	14,625	11,386
Technology Support Directorate	-	5,076	8,488
Engineering and Transmission Directorate	177	181	180
Satellite Division	29,634	24,004	-
Broadcast Technologies Division	1,434	2,247	2,567
<b><u>Operations Division</u></b>	2,662	2,158	2,200
Facilities Management	35,648	39,915	-
Leased Transmissions	12,456	11,077	9,160
FM Transmissions	522	958	9,112
Host Government Transmissions	491	386	544
Worldwide Procurement (WWP)	3,504	4,000	4,633
<b>Total, Operations Division</b>	<b>55,283</b>	<b>58,494</b>	<b>25,649</b>
<b><u>Stations Division</u></b>			
<b>Domestic Transmitting Stations</b>			
Greenville <sup>3</sup>	3,114	-	-
Tinian	7,306	6,478	6,710
<b>Total, Domestic Stations</b>	<b>10,420</b>	<b>6,478</b>	<b>6,710</b>
<b>Overseas Transmitting Stations</b>			
Afghanistan	3,547	3,602	2,478
Botswana	1,954	2,029	2,021
Germany	11,538	11,188	11,181
Kuwait	11,651	11,920	3,107
Philippines	6,918	6,515	6,658
Sao Tome	4,225	5,188	5,115
Sri Lanka	2,962	2,964	3,043
Thailand	3,570	3,288	3,350
<b>Total, Overseas Stations</b>	<b>46,365</b>	<b>46,694</b>	<b>36,953</b>

**The Broadcasting Board of Governors  
Office of Technology, Services, and Innovation  
Summary of Appropriated Funds  
FY 2013 - FY 2015**

(\$ in thousands)

Office of Technology, Services, and Innovation <sup>1,2</sup>	FY 2013 Actuals	FY 2014 Program Plan <sup>4</sup>	FY 2015 Request
Monitoring Offices	1,000	1,053	1,061
<b>Total, Office of Technology, Services, and Innovation</b>	<b>179,820</b>	<b>198,659</b>	<b>175,300</b>

1 - In FY 2014, TSI underwent a reorganization that shifted a variety of functions between line items, including Satellites, Information Technology, the Office of the CIO, and Facilities Management. The FY 2015 budget fully reflects all of these changes in both salary and GOE.

2 - TSI's FY 2015 totals include the proposed reductions.

3 - In FY 2014 and FY 2015 the Greenville Transmitting Station is reported under the Office of Cuba Broadcasting.

4 - The Program Plan is as of a point in time and could vary as executed in FY 2014.

**The Broadcasting Board of Governors  
Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty  
Summary of Appropriated Funds  
FY 2013 - FY 2015**

(\$ in thousands)

<b>Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL)<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>FY 2013 Actuals<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>FY 2014 Program Plan<sup>3</sup></b>	<b>FY 2015 Request</b>
<b>Programming Division</b>			
Director	2,071	1,883	2,263
Multimedia Strategy, Development and Training	1,662	1,608	1,571
Marketing & Affiliates	459	720	1,459
<b>Language Services</b>			
Armenian	1,776	1,621	1,489
Azerbaijani	1,821	2,064	2,050
Balkans (Bosnian, Macedonian, Serbian, Albanian, Montenegrin, Croatian)	4,296	4,231	-
Belarusian	2,409	2,380	2,838
Georgian	2,353	2,458	2,455
Kazakh	1,602	1,537	2,073
Kyrgyz	1,660	1,670	2,063
Radio Farda (Persian)	7,046	6,970	7,393
Radio Free Afghanistan (Dari and Pashto)	5,017	5,039	5,406
Radio Free Iraq (Arabic)	2,255	2,197	-
Radio Mashaal (Pashto)	3,056	3,100	3,246
Romanian to Moldova	1,054	1,204	1,288
Russian	8,114	7,320	9,096
North Caucasus Unit (Avar, Chechen and Circassian)	1,259	1,346	1,446
Tajik	1,520	1,478	1,700
Tatar-Bashkir	885	885	1,033
Turkmen	763	927	1,226
Ukrainian	2,045	2,492	2,452
Uzbek	1,501	1,550	1,569
News and Current Affairs	5,869	5,353	5,949
<b>Total, Programming Division</b>	<b>60,493</b>	<b>60,033</b>	<b>60,065</b>
Office of President	4,565	4,349	4,587
Technology Division	21,171	22,370	22,634
Administration Division	-	-	-
Finance Division	5,868	7,098	8,604
<b>Total, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL)</b>	<b>92,097</b>	<b>93,850</b>	<b>95,890</b>

1 - RFE/RL's FY 2015 totals include the proposed reductions.

2 - Includes \$11.5 thousand for representation.

3 - The Program Plan is as of a point in time and could vary as executed in FY 2014.

**The Broadcasting Board of Governors  
Radio Free Asia  
Summary of Appropriated Funds  
FY 2013 - FY 2015**

(\$ in thousands)

Radio Free Asia <sup>1</sup>	FY 2013 Actuals	FY 2014 Program Plan <sup>2</sup>	FY 2015 Request
<b>Programming Division</b>			
Executive Editor	2,760	2,786	2,744
<b>Program Services</b>			
Burmese Service	2,046	1,677	2,030
Cambodian Service	1,044	791	915
Cantonese Service	989	1,015	1,134
Korean Service	2,150	2,216	2,256
Laotian Service	1,362	1,188	1,148
Mandarin Service	4,543	4,492	4,975
Tibetan Service	3,752	3,874	4,151
Uyghur Service	1,154	1,226	1,400
Vietnamese Service	1,683	1,596	2,005
<b>Program Offices</b>			
Ankara Office	29	-	-
Bangkok Office	259	260	268
Dharamsala Office	14	15	15
Hong Kong Office	523	482	542
Phnom Penh Office	527	467	567
Rangoon Office	-	329	477
Seoul Office	429	438	432
Taipei Office	125	129	133
Yangon	489	-	-
<b>Total, Programming Division</b>	<b>23,878</b>	<b>22,981</b>	<b>25,192</b>
Office of the President	1,127	576	577
Research, Training, and Evaluation	439	483	508
China Research Project	300	-	-
Open Technology Fund	4,156	-	-
Technical Operations	5,852	5,739	6,402
HQ Facilities	3,598	3,579	3,758
Communications	300	266	278
Finance	1,705	1,567	1,591
Human Resources	404	414	414
<b>Total, Radio Free Asia</b>	<b>41,759</b>	<b>35,605</b>	<b>38,720</b>

1 - RFA's 2015 totals include the proposed investments.

2 - The Program Plan is as of a point in time and could vary as executed in FY 2014.

**The Broadcasting Board of Governors  
Middle East Broadcasting Networks, Inc.  
Summary of Appropriated Funds  
FY 2013 - FY 2015**

(\$ in thousands)

Middle East Broadcasting Networks, Inc.	FY 2013 Actuals	FY 2014 Program Plan <sup>1</sup>	FY 2015 Request
<b>Programming</b>			
Alhurra	27,509	28,935	29,526
Alhurra Iraq	4,482	4,440	4,342
Radio Sawa	9,403	9,735	9,250
MBN Digital	2,994	3,088	3,378
Afia Darfur	495	531	570
<b>Total, Programming</b>	<b>44,883</b>	<b>46,729</b>	<b>47,066</b>
<b>Overseas Offices</b>			
Baghdad Bureau	5,115	4,502	4,255
Beirut Production Center	4,229	4,531	4,470
Cairo Bureau	3,405	3,336	3,317
Dubai Production Center	4,719	6,370	6,493
Jerusalem Production Center	1,997	1,226	444
Rabat	-	587	917
Tunis	-	529	680
Tripoli	-	-	869
Benghazi	-	-	869
<b>Total, Overseas Offices</b>	<b>19,465</b>	<b>21,081</b>	<b>22,314</b>
Technical Operations	24,090	22,038	22,127
Administration	14,693	12,646	12,327
Creative Services	2,170	2,288	2,368
Communications	398	381	368
<b>Total, Middle East Broadcasting Networks, Inc.</b>	<b>105,699</b>	<b>105,163</b>	<b>106,570</b>

1 - The Program Plan is as of a point in time and could vary as executed in FY 2014.

**The Broadcasting Board of Governors  
Broadcasting Capital Improvements  
Summary of Appropriated Funds  
FY 2013 - FY 2015**

(\$ in thousands)

Broadcasting Capital Improvements	FY 2013 Actuals	FY 2014 Program Plan <sup>1</sup>	FY 2015 Request
<b>Maintenance, Improvements, Replace and Repair (MIRR)</b>			
Continuing M&R	3,302	2,850	2,068
VOA TV M&R	458	693	573
Security M&R	812	323	542
HVAC System M&R	363	669	515
Office of Cuba Broadcasting	192	160	133
<b>Upgrade of Existing Facilities Projects</b>	138	-	-
Cohen Bldg. Upgrade/Renovation and consolidation-phase II	-	1,000	-
Realigning Shortwave Transmission Assets	-	1,000	-
<b>Satellites</b>			
Satellite & Terrestrial Program Feeds	743	1,305	969
<b>Broadcasting Capital Improvements</b>	<b>6,008</b>	<b>8,000</b>	<b>4,800</b>

1 - The Program Plan is as of a point in time and could vary as executed in FY 2014.

## Summary of Investment Proposals

The FY 2015 Budget builds upon the work done to implement the BBG's 2012-2016 Strategic Plan, *Impact through Innovation and Integration* and advances the new 2014-18 Strategic Plan. This request builds upon resource realignments proposed for FY 2014, and reflects the critical role of the BBG broadcasts in support of U.S. national interests. Funding decisions in this Budget reflect a concerted effort to reprioritize, increase collaboration, and reduce overlap among the BBG funded activities. The Budget Request was informed by the strategic and management objectives contained in the strategic plan. These steps are designed to expand reach and impact in support of the BBG mission.

The FY 2015 Budget Request would enable the Agency to support its most critical base operations and capital requirements as well as provide additional funds to support several important new initiatives. These investments focus on high-priority global regions and help build the organization and infrastructure best suited for the fast-paced future of media. They will enable the BBG to work nimbly and adapt quickly to evolving circumstances, thanks to state-of-the-art infrastructure and techniques.

The BBG understands the difficult financial environment, and the proposed investments are offset by significant reductions in other areas, particularly in non-content producing, administrative and support offices. These efforts are predicated on the Board's strategy of fiscal and structural reform coupled with assertive audience growth and mission fulfillment.

FY 2015 Investment	Funding (in thousands)
Engaging Current and Future Generations in Africa Africa Satellite Television Local Content for VOA FM Stations Lingala Service for the Democratic Republic of the Congo	\$8,000
Growing U.S. Engagement in East and Southeast Asia	\$5,000
Expanding VOA Learning English Programming	\$900
Providing Digital Media for Next Generation Audiences	\$10,160
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$24,060</b>

In addition to these investments, the BBG request reflects an increase of \$9.5 million above the 2014 level in order to maintain current services into FY 2015. This amount for base adjustments is the result of significant mandatory increases; it covers salary and benefit increases, as well as inflation, rent, contractual services, and other operating expenses.

## **1. Engaging Current and Future Generations in Africa: \$8.0 million**

This investment establishes regional video channels (satellite & digital) and creates video and audio content for affiliate placement. It significantly increases local content for the BBG owned and operated FM stations and targets the launch of targeted new language services in Central Africa, with a Lingala Service in FY 2015 to reach the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), a large and unstable country in the heart of the continent.

Even with significant investments for Africa in the FY 2014 budget, current allocations do not allow the BBG to fully capitalize on opportunities for growth and impact on the continent.

While parts of Africa have consolidated democracy and are beginning to thrive, with vibrant entrepreneurial cultures that are helping to pull large segments of their populations out of poverty, other areas have seen the rise of extremist insurgencies and other existential threats. As the U.S. Strategy for Sub-Saharan Africa released by the White House in 2012 notes, “it is clear that Africa is more important than ever to the security and prosperity of the international community, and to the United States in particular.”

Media markets are also shifting rapidly. Though radio is still the dominant medium for news throughout sub-Saharan Africa, television is making strong inroads, and mobile phone ownership is widespread. African markets have been able to “leap-frog” the technology infrastructure of the West, jumping directly to mobile technologies, including an increasing number developed on the continent to meet local needs.

Competition is rising in the media sector, with most major cities hosting multiple television and radio stations and new international players emerging, including Al Jazeera and China Radio International. However, many media environments on the continent, particularly in countries threatened by conflict, lack credible, professional, indigenous information alternatives, making the area an especially good fit for content from international broadcasters.

In response to the growing national security imperative to address Africa, as well as the enormous opportunity the continent presents for VOA broadcasts and digital content, the BBG has made a multi-year effort to increase Agency emphasis on Africa, building additional FM stations, signing high-value affiliates, and launching broadcasts in new languages, notably a targeted service in Bambara to Mali. The FY 2014 the BBG is making a significant investment for expanding content creation and distribution to the Sahel, as well as new editorial collaboration between VOA Africa and the MBN Maghreb bureaus in combatting violent extremism media by attracting and directing young people towards opportunities to positively enhance and support their own lives, as well as their community.

The establishment of targeted languages for Central Africa starting with a Lingala service in FY 2015 is in support of a number of foreign policy objectives in this troubled region. In 2010 the Administration signed into law the Lord’s Resistance (LRA) Disarmament and Northern Uganda Recovery Act. This comprehensive, multiyear strategy seeks to help the Governments of Uganda, Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and South Sudan as well as the

African Union and United Nations to mitigate and end the threat posed to civilians and regional stability by the LRA, In addition, the US is party to the UN Peace, Security, and Cooperation Framework Agreement for the development and implementation of a comprehensive strategy to stop human suffering and violence in the region, by promoting political, economic and social reconciliation. The media, specifically news and information in both combatting violent extremism and supporting the development of a robust civil society is central to the support of a democratic process in the troubled Great Lakes region of Central Africa.

Capitalizing on the progress already made and the significant additional opportunities created by major shifts in African media and political environments will require further investment in VOA's capacity to serve African markets. Younger generations, who make up the bulk of the population across the continent, increasingly access information via television, FM radio, and mobile devices rather than the shortwave radios used by their parents. This investment enables VOA to take a flexible approach that mirrors the transitions and needs of these audiences – and ensures a relevant role for U.S. International Media (USIM) in areas with a critical need for credible news and information.

- **Africa Video & Television** **\$5.0 million**
  - Video consumption via both broadcast and digital channels is growing in prominence as a primary source for news in African countries, particularly in urban areas. There are increasing opportunities for placement of VOA content with cable, satellite, and online providers. Building on the expansion of VOA Hausa and French video/television capacity in the 2014 Africa investment, VOA will develop more original programs and purchase acquired programming appropriate for younger African demographics. These programs will be placed with affiliates and contribute to building a competitive 24/7 news and popular content channel. The new content stream as planned will include English, French, Hausa, Swahili and Somali TV programs.
  - Failure to invest in a competitive TV satellite channel and digital platforms will cede the territory to other international broadcasters. Al Jazeera, for example, is in the planning stages of creating a Swahili TV channel, and CCTV, backed by a multi-billion dollar budget, is buying time and building channels across Africa. This is the time for VOA to get a foothold in a growing market and build on an already successful brand.
  
- **Local Content for Africa FM Network/Mobile Audio Streams** **\$2.0 million**
  - VOA will increase the amount of local content on the burgeoning network of the BBG-owned 24/7 FMs, as well as mobile audio streams in Africa to build a framework for long-term success. By hiring local reporters to create content that engages audiences and focuses on issues of local interest, VOA will be able to more effectively expand reach.
  - FM is by its nature a local broadcast medium. To be more competitive and maintain relevance, VOA needs personality-driven programming and the ability to make direct connections with listeners in a given market. It needs to strengthen its corps of local reporters and provide common local features such as weather and sports. Markets are becoming more crowded and competitive – FM stations in key markets will only be effective if they are programmed with locally relevant content.

- **VOA Lingala to the Democratic Republic of the Congo** **\$1.0 million**
  - VOA will create a Lingala service for the DRC. The BBG has secured new FM licenses in DRC and is pursuing development of multiple FMs in the country.
  - Lingala is the most widely understood language in the DRC. Three-quarters of DRC adults report that they would understand all or most of a broadcast in Lingala, while less than 40 percent understand a broadcast in French and around 30 percent understand one in Swahili. Not broadcasting in Lingala is a missed opportunity to reach an untapped audience in a populous, mineral-rich, war-torn country.

<b>Performance Goal</b>	<b>FY 2015 Target</b>	<b>FY 2016 Target</b>	<b>FY 2017 Target</b>
Increase reach in Francophone Africa	2% additional weekly reach in countries surveyed (over FY13/14 levels)	4% additional weekly reach in countries surveyed (over FY13/14 levels)	5% additional weekly reach in countries surveyed (over FY13/14 levels)
Increase reach in Anglophone Africa	2% additional weekly reach in countries surveyed (over FY13/14 levels)	4% additional weekly reach in countries surveyed (over FY13/14 levels)	5% additional weekly reach in countries surveyed (over FY13/14 levels)
Increase weekly reach in Kenya	2% additional weekly reach (over FY13/14 levels)	4% additional weekly reach (over FY13/14 levels)	5% additional weekly reach (over FY13/14 levels)
Increase weekly reach in Tanzania	1% additional weekly reach (over FY13/14 levels)	3% additional weekly reach (over FY13/14 levels)	4% additional weekly reach (over FY13/14 levels)
Increase weekly reach in Nigeria	1% additional weekly reach (over FY13/14 levels)	2% additional weekly reach (over FY13/14 levels)	3% additional weekly reach (over FY13/14 levels)
Increase weekly reach in Niger	2% additional weekly reach (over FY13/14 levels)	4% additional weekly reach (over FY13/14 levels)	5% additional weekly reach (over FY13/14 levels)
Achieve significant impact in markets where the BBG operates an FM transmitter	7% weekly reach in each city with a BBG FM transmitter	12% weekly reach in each city with a BBG FM transmitter	15% weekly reach in each city with a BBG FM transmitter
Increase weekly audience reach in DRC (beyond reach of VOA French and Swahili)	7% weekly reach for Lingala Service	12% weekly reach for Lingala Service	15% weekly reach for Lingala Service

<b>Entity</b>	<b>FY 2015 Investment Funding (in thousands)</b>
VOA	\$8,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$8,000</b>

## **2. Growing U.S. Engagement in East and Southeast Asia: \$5.0 million**

This investment launches video, mobile and digital initiatives for Burma, Cambodia, and Vietnam targeting the region's youth, who are accustomed to TV and digital platforms, and it expands social media outreach inside the Chinese firewall.

Voice of America and Radio Free Asia will build and engage audiences in China and Southeast Asia with content that is unavailable or under-reported in the domestic media via television and digital platforms. Southeast Asia is at a pivotal point in relations with China. Chinese trade and influence have traditionally dominated and continue to expand in Southeast Asia and Burma, where Chinese state-run media have rapidly expanded. Cambodia, Burma, and Vietnam are now seeking more diversification in trade, investment, and information and experiencing rapidly changing social and political developments.

US foreign policy has focused on supporting political and economic reforms; building government transparency, and accountability and institutions; promoting human rights and empowering local communities and civil society. In the region countries like Vietnam, Cambodia and Burma are going through rapid economic transformation and global integration which is lifting millions out of poverty and is propelling people into the ranks of lower-middle-income status. Among the most important changes is the growth of a media, technology and fact-based journalism that supports the growth a strong civil society.

This initiative, which will enhance broadcasting to China and the surrounding area, is in line with the U.S. government's strategic pivot towards Asia, where Beijing asserts its influence from North Korea to Burma.

### **VOA**

Regional security dynamics uniquely position VOA as a credible source of news and information on U.S. policies and perspectives.

Failure to invest in VOA programming would be a lost opportunity to build a dialogue with leaders of the future. As the media markets in these countries grow and liberalize with new technology, VOA must build its capacity to fill the gaps in local media. As the media markets in these countries grow and liberalize with new technology, VOA must build its capacity to meet the increasing demands in markets in Burma and Cambodia.

Voice of America will increase video production focusing on US policy, international news, Learning English and targeted local content for distribution to Burma, Cambodia and Vietnam. In Burma and Cambodia, VOA will provide more video packages for placement with local television affiliates; each Service will also produce a weekly magazine program. For Vietnam, VOA will design a weekly web-based, interactive television program appealing to the large, young and connected online audiences.

Regarding China, one of the most effective means for facilitating dialogue with younger and activist Chinese audiences is through social media. VOA Chinese news reports had 2.5 million views and 376,794 “fans” on Chinese Weibo (micro blogging sites) in one week in August. But the potential for extensive outreach is much greater than current resources can exploit. Being part of the conversation inside the Chinese firewall requires a 7 day/week effort by a small corps of tech savvy and social media friendly journalists.

VOA intends to increase efforts to connect with Chinese audiences inside the firewall. Working with the Internet circumvention program at the IBB, as well as the Open Technology Foundation tech savvy journalists will utilize Internet circumvention tools to participate in discussions, facilitate dialogue and syndicate the best of VOA Mandarin video, audio and text content across the social media sites most frequently used by Chinese netizens.

Across the region, VOA has a unique set of products that are in great demand by both commercial and state-operated media entities, including Learning English, the view from Washington, and coverage of international news and Americana. However, VOA also recognizes the need to increasingly collaborate and coordinate its work with other BBG entities, most notably RFA. Each entity brings a unique editorial perspective and a different set of strengths and perspectives. The BBG leadership is working with VOA and RFA to ensure that we bring the best of US international media to expand our growing coverage and presence in Southeast Asia.

## **RFA**

RFA will build on its current countrywide strategies in Burma, Cambodia and Vietnam, expanding its exclusive coverage of events on the ground in those countries, not just in the capitals, but throughout the provinces, and significantly increasing video content from those areas. In China, RFA will increase its presence in the digital space, especially on social media where some of the country’s most important civic conversations now take place. VOA and RFA will increasingly work together to coordinate their editorial focus, share content and wherever possible collaborate on big stories from their differentiated set of strengths.

Burma, Cambodia and Vietnam: RFA will use this funding to put more local journalists in the hinterlands, expanding the capacity for investigative journalism in areas particularly prone to official corruption and malfeasance. Exposing issues that affect the daily lives of ordinary citizens, this effort will include a significant expansion of local videos and photos from stringers, staff and citizen journalists, which will enhance the credibility and appeal of the reporting. This initiative provides for the equipment and editorial staff (“Visual Content SWAT Teams”) to make maximum use of new video content.

Increasing unique local coverage, RFA will provide the types of programs and multimedia that have been particularly well-received by audiences in Southeast Asia. Investing in quality visual content also allows these attractive materials to be shared online, through mobile networks, via satellite and via portable digital files.

RFA's localization and capacity-building strategy addresses issues desperately sought after by our audiences in Burma, Vietnam and Cambodia – domestic political, environmental, health, education, and labor issues, and cross-ethnic relations.

RFA helps connect disparate communities across closed societies and throughout the region through local reporting on stories common to all. RFA's reporters form deep relationships in the provinces they cover and create both access to and a capacity for local uncensored news and information. We will need to better connect with our assets on the ground – especially those inside closed societies – as providing local news for local people is exactly what the ruling governments in these nations strive to silence. Reporters in the field will need to make use of technologies that allow information to be collected and conveyed safely.

China: The focus of RFA's efforts in China is on digital outreach, especially to social media within the Firewall. RFA produces a high volume of audio, video, print and graphic materials for the Chinese market in Mandarin, Cantonese, Tibetan and Uyghur. This content exposes the information that ordinary Chinese citizens otherwise would not have access to, including important cross-ethnic dialogue and perspectives from its Southeast Asian neighbors. This new initiative brings this rich content to the ears, hands, phones, tablets and computers of more Chinese citizens.

This initiative would expand RFA's "Digital Rapid Response Unit", which pursues technical avenues to break through host governments' aggressive internet blocking quickly, provide a forum for free discussion within these "firewalls" and solicit citizen participation in RFA's news-gathering.

Fortunately, one of the strengths of digital content is its portability, so reaching the largest direct audiences is less important than 1) reaching the people inside internet firewalls who spread content, and 2) providing content that will attract them. An important component of this initiative includes outreach to digital opinion leaders – those celebrity blogger and microblogger "Networking Nodes" who share information with others.

RFA's East and Southeast Asia initiative seizes the opportunity to support news and information "disseminators" in each of our target markets and ensure that content can be received behind China's Firewall and inside each of the SE Asian markets. Digital content and technical field teams working together within the networks of RFA's in-country sources enrich the connection and give lasting substance to the engagement citizens need in these closed societies.

In both developed digital markets and emerging digital markets, RFA must employ Digital Rapid Response Units, Visual Content SWAT teams, and Networking Nodes to expand our footprint commensurate with the growth of digital communication behaviors. RFA's unique placement, product, and networks of in-country human information nodes are ideally situated to maximize these opportunities.

<b>Performance Goal</b>	<b>FY 2015 Target</b>	<b>FY 2016 Target</b>	<b>FY 2017 Target</b>
Expand weekly audience reach in Burma	+2%	+2%	+2%
Expand weekly audience reach in Cambodia	+2%	+2%	+2%
Expand weekly audience reach in Vietnam	+2%	+2%	+2%
Expand digital audience reach in China	+2%	+2%	+2%

<b>Entity</b>	<b>FY 2015 Investment Funding (in thousands)</b>
VOA	\$2,500
RFA	\$2,500
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$5,000</b>

### **3. Expanding VOA Learning English Programming: \$0.9 million**

This investment increases popular Learning English programs and audience engagement. It is partially funded by a reduction in low-impact long-form English language radio. In a realignment within the English Division that will have no impact on the Division's total budget, thirteen positions and \$99,000 in GOE will move from English programs into Learning English. The cost of this investment represents the remaining funding needed to add the additional programming described here.

VOA will realign English radio resources to put more emphasis on developing Learning English products and engaging with the students, business, and government leaders of tomorrow, for whom knowledge of English opens new pathways to success. Research indicates a growing appetite for products to help young people learn American English, and VOA affiliates and potential affiliates routinely request off-the-shelf or custom English teaching products for placement. Meanwhile, a precipitous decline in shortwave use among English speakers worldwide means that long-form programming once distributed on that platform has little reach or impact in 2013. In this realignment, VOA will significantly expand Learning English content while continuing to serve traditional English-language audiences, with initiatives to include:

- Diversifying and creating more video-based learning products that allow users to learn American English through popular topics such as business, journalism, technology, and American society
- Expanding Learning English's mobile presence and website
- Partnering with the U.S. Department of State on Learning English outreach
- Developing e-books based on Learning English content and revising current printed materials for audience distribution
- Increasing social media outreach, targeting development of Learning English communities and increasing Learning English audiences on Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube by sponsoring Learning English events
- Eliminating long-form English radio programs broadcast on shortwave
- Continuing hourly 5-minute English newscasts and short reports for FM streams and placement with affiliates
- Continuing interactive reports for high-value affiliates on topics of mutual interest
- Distributing VOA English reports on VOA Direct, the Agency's online system for simple dissemination of broadcast-quality media content

VOA is uniquely positioned to fill a niche in teaching American English, but VOA Learning English resources are stretched thin at this point, offering little potential for innovation or growth. Without a shift in resources and strategy, audiences are likely to decline as users migrate away from shortwave radio to online platforms, particularly mobile phones and tablets.

Realigning resources to invest more in VOA Learning English will allow for development of new content for younger audiences, including creation of mobile products. The result will be growth in the BBG audiences in critical areas, such as Iran, Afghanistan, China, SE Asia, Burma, and Africa, and the opportunity to explain American values and institutions through a form of English

that emerging generations can easily understand. VOA Learning English also teaches journalistic best practices in societies where a free press is struggling and builds capacity and skill sets, spurring development. Failure to do more in this area would be a lost opportunity for the BBG.

<b>Performance Goal</b>	<b>FY 2015 Target</b>	<b>FY 2016 Target</b>	<b>FY 2017 Target</b>
Expand VOA Learning English weekly audience reach	10 million worldwide audience	12 million worldwide audience	15 million worldwide audience

<b>Entity</b>	<b>FY 2015 Investment Funding (in thousands)</b>
VOA	\$900
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$900</b>

#### **4. Providing Digital Media for Next Generation Audiences: \$10.16 million**

This investment deploys mobile and social content producers to priority markets to serve local needs. It creates an innovative, USIM-wide technical and intelligence team to explore new content formats, grow and mature core digital platforms, and support technical services for affiliates.

USIM's future audience growth and competitiveness in crowded global media markets depends on its capacity to innovate. The next generation news audience (15-30) is being courted aggressively by both new and old competitors aiming to claim this audience for the future.

Large-scale media competitors such as China's CCTV, Russia's RT, and Al Jazeera have heavily invested in mobile, social and direct engagement formats in order not only to capture "eyeballs," but to develop early habits that lead to strong future loyalties with young audiences. In addition, the rise of networked society and the lowering of barriers to access have led to a flood of new entrants into the markets; as in the Western news environments, fast and agile competitors in developing media markets are building large audiences through blogs and blog networks, all-digital news portals, targeted mobile applications, and strong social media campaigns.

If USIM is to be relevant to this next generation audience which is starting to consume news on a regular basis, it must accelerate the realignment towards new social and mobile platforms. Social and mobile channels have come to define how these new audiences express themselves, which has networked this generation into a powerful force that will continue to transform political, economic and civil society.

This proposal would create a strong digital capacity in or near strategic countries to build new mobile and social audiences, and extend the BBG reach through a network of new and traditional affiliates building their own digital audiences. Targeted regions include African Sahel, Iran, Southeast Asia, Russia, the Middle East/North Africa and Pakistan/Afghanistan.

Under this investment the BBG networks will deploy a team of mobile/social content producers and technical support staff into (or in close proximity depending on security) targeted countries. The content teams will create original content targeted to emerging news audiences that is digital-first and on mobile and social channels. This content strategy differs from traditional broadcasting in that it: a) responds to a broader array of interests of the target audience, such as health, education, job, and religion/societal issues; b) puts a premium on collaboration with the audience in its programming; and c) creates content in formats that are native for mobile phones and social media, thereby enabling the audience to submit and interact with content.

The content teams will be deployed with small technical teams to work directly with journalists in the field to create locally-relevant applications and customize core enterprise platforms to the local market. The field technical teams would consist of one to three staffers, ideally a programmer, a user experience designer, and a digital metrics analyst.

These teams will be supported by an enterprise-wide back-office technical and "consumer intelligence" function based in Washington that will help explore new content formats, grow and

mature core mobile/social application platforms, and support technical services for USIM digital affiliates. The role of the central technical team is the building, upgrading, and management of core technical resources, such as a mobile application code base or cloud-based Interactive Voice Response (IVR) services. The expanded intelligence function will provide a range of research and analytical services, including observational studies of social and mobile users, user testing, and comprehensive analysis of social/mobile metrics. They will use these tools to help evaluate performance, provide predictive analysis for new products and services and help shape future social and mobile services.

The current BBG affiliate network is an extensive driver of audience growth. As these affiliates begin to engage with a growing digital audience base, the BBG has the opportunity to partner with them to accelerate their ability to serve digital audiences, and thereby extend the reach of USIM content. Beyond the traditional broadcasters there are new classes of media makers moving directly to digital and mobile channels, which presents a “first mover” opportunity to engage with and build a new type of “digital affiliate” base. The Affiliate Digital Services (ADS) program provides broadcast affiliates and digital affiliates with products and services that help them build audiences on enhanced digital channels while building opportunities for USIM to integrate content to reach their growing digital audience bases. This investment would enable the BBG to support five to six hundred affiliates serving millions of new audience members.

The final element of the investment is a set of internal design and technical services to give producers the time and support to create the next generation of programming. USIM must innovate continuously to grow audiences in our rapidly-changing target markets. Without moving flexibly and quickly we will be left behind as more agile competitors will outpace our ability to build and keep new audiences. The Studio/Lab will provide USIM producers an opportunity to work with a team of digital technologists and designers to research, create and launch pilots and build early traction with an audience before we spend core programming money on creating untested products.

Performance Goal	FY 2015 Target	FY 2016 Target	FY 2017 Target
Increase weekly reach of audiences on Mobile/Social channels	+25% of FY 14 levels	+85% of FY 14 levels	+120% of FY14 levels
Increase frequency of usage (% of users using at least twice per week) of audience	25% of audience	35% of audience	45% of audience
Increase Engagement Impact Indicators of audience (% increase of interactions)	+45% of FY 14 levels	+75% of FY 14 levels	+100% of FY 14 levels
Increase understanding of current events by audience (% increase)	+20% of FY 14 levels	+ 35% of FY 14 levels	+50% of FY 14 levels

Entity	FY 2015 Investment Funding (in thousands)
IBB	\$10,160
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$10,160</b>

**Note:** This investment includes funding for both content and technology teams to work together in the target language services. The technology teams, approximately 30 percent of the digital investment budget will be managed by ODDI, which has the expertise to provide oversight and

ensure operational efficiencies. The remaining funds, approximately 70 percent support digital, mobile and social content editors and producers. This investment includes funding for 65 new positions for technology and content teams. These teams will be funded out of IBB salary dollars, but the staff members will work under the editorial control of the participating entities to ensure compliance with the editorial firewall.

This investment will reduce the non-investment funds for IBB from \$66 million in FY 2014 to \$54.5M in FY 2015, a reduction of approximately 17 percent. The IBB budget is composed primarily by salaries and as such will require substantial analysis in order to determine the most cost effective manner to achieve the required savings while preserving the ability of the IBB to continue its mission critical support of the entire Federal entity including the Offices of the Voice of America (VOA), Technology, Services and Innovation (TSI) and the Office of Cuba Broadcasting (OCB). At present, the BBG has engaged the assistance of the Office of Personnel Management via its Human Resources Solutions division and expects to have completed its analysis within the third quarter of FY 2014. Upon completion of this analysis, the BBG will submit additional detail the IBB component that is compliant with its budgetary targets.

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## Summary of Reduction Proposals

The President's Budget Request for the BBG for FY 2015 includes substantial reductions and investments that rebalance resources away from legacy markets (Europe) and platforms (medium wave) and toward current foreign policy priorities (Africa, Asia, and the Middle East) and modern media platforms (FM radio, television, and digital). In keeping with this strategy, the BBG proposes to make targeted reductions aimed at minimizing unnecessary administrative costs and scaling back less effective transmissions. The BBG also seeks to reduce language service overlap in some markets, increasing efficiency and boosting impact, by ensuring coordinated complementary operations and content where two BBG broadcasters co-exist.

### Administrative Reductions

#### VOA

##### **Reduce Management Positions and Language Programming Support** [-\$0.37M]

In an effort to minimize cuts to broadcasting by finding increasing productivity, the BBG proposes to eliminate two positions from VOA's senior management chain and one position from VOA's Language Programming Directorate front office, which provides support to language services throughout VOA.

#### TSI

##### **Switzer Building Rent Savings** [-\$2.60M]

The BBG currently has offices in two buildings in downtown Washington, the Switzer and Cohen buildings. At GSA's request, the BBG is consolidating all its office space into the Cohen building. This reduction represents the annual rent savings based on all personnel moving out of the Switzer building and into the Cohen Building.

##### **Eliminate Vacant Positions** [-\$0.33M]

The BBG will achieve savings by reducing 3 positions that are no longer needed in TSI.

### Transmission Reductions

#### TSI

##### **Satellite Savings** [-\$2.50M]

Technical upgrades to the BBG MPLS network will allow the Agency to reduce satellite costs with no reduction of transmissions and no impact on programming.

**Close Poro Transmitting Station** **[-\$0.30M]**

As a result of previous transmission cuts and restructuring, no transmissions are originating from the Poro transmitting station. All needed transmissions in FY 2015 can be accommodated at other facilities.

**Reduce Expensive Medium Wave Lease Costs** **[-\$1.50M]**

The BBG proposes to end an expensive medium wave transmission lease to reach North Korea. By FY 2015 a new, superior BBG medium wave transmission facility will be on the air in South Korea, eliminating the need for more costly leased facilities.

**Transmission Reductions** **[-\$0.33M]**

Following its strategic plan to optimize its program delivery by market, the BBG proposes to end the following medium wave transmissions:

- **Reduce RFA Vietnamese Medium Wave**

Medium wave is used by just 2.7 percent of Vietnamese adults weekly, while Internet is used by more than a quarter (and growing). This Budget proposal includes an investment in additional RFA content for Vietnam, with a focus on multimedia for digital platforms. RFA already maintains multimedia web, mobile, and social media sites (with circumvention tools deployed), which include webcasts and other videos. Some medium wave will be maintained to reach legacy audiences.

- **Eliminate RFE/RL Belarusian Medium Wave**

Medium wave radio is little-used in Belarus, at just 3 percent weekly; RFE/RL Belarusian reaches 1.7 percent of adults weekly on radio. The medium wave signal is spotty and reaches only a third of the country, with poor reception in the capital. The service has launched a satellite television program with Poland-based affiliate station Belsat to capitalize on Belarus's 11 percent satellite dish ownership. Weekly Internet use in Belarus is 38 percent and growing, and the service provides multimedia web and mobile sites, mobile apps, and social media content to reach audiences online.

- **Eliminate VOA Bangla Medium Wave**

Weekly use of medium wave radio in Laos is just 3 percent. VOA's total weekly reach on radio is 1.8 percent, more than half of which comes from FM placements with popular local stations. In addition to radio affiliates, the service partners with local television stations, and provides web, mobile, and social media content for digital audiences.

- **Eliminate VOA English to Asia and Learning English Medium Wave**

English speakers outside of Africa are rarely users of medium wave radio. They are more likely to be educated and affluent, and to have access to a broad range of media. VOA will continue to serve sophisticated English-speakers in Asia through its robust web and mobile sites and apps, as well as through content on social media. Learning English programs will continue to be placed with affiliates and on VOA satellite streams, and the service will expand its digital offerings, including special interactive teaching products.

- **Eliminate VOA Lao Medium Wave**

Weekly use of medium wave in Laos is 6.7 percent. Two-thirds of the VOA Lao audience is coming from cross-border affiliates located in Thailand. The service has also recently launched an English-teaching affiliation with the Lao national radio station, and maintains a multimedia, multi-channel online presence.

## **Language Service and Newsgathering Reductions**

### **VOA**

#### **Reduce Central News Positions**

**[-\$2.19M]**

This proposal involves streamlining and restructuring English language newsgathering at VOA. VOA Central News will accelerate its transition to multimedia production of original news content while reducing its output of blended news wires for language service translation. Central News will also act as a clearinghouse for original content produced by VOA language service journalists. The strengths of VOA, RFE/RL Central News, and the other BBG broadcast networks will be leveraged to enhance global newsgathering for all U.S. international media networks. This inter-network coordination is already underway, with significant sharing of original content, coverage, and feeds of major news events between the USIM networks.

Due to retirements and other separations in the past several years, and the Agency's efforts to avoid filling vacancies wherever possible under sequestration, cuts to Central News will be largely or entirely limited to vacant positions, not to staff currently on board. Nineteen positions will be eliminated in VOA Central News under this proposal.

#### **Close Jerusalem News Bureau**

**[-\$0.29M]**

VOA will close its bureau in Jerusalem, but will continue to have a free-lance reporter there. One position will be eliminated under this reduction.

#### **Reduce Domestic Bureaus**

**[-\$.25M]**

VOA will obtain coverage of events in Miami by using VOA Latin America Division staffers working out of OCB headquarters, by contracting as necessary with local stringers, and through additional cooperation with OCB. VOA does not have an office in Houston; this reduction will eliminate VOA's Houston correspondent. One vacant position in Miami and one position in Houston will be eliminated under this reduction.

#### **Realign English Radio**

**[-\$0.55M]**

Long-form English radio products for regions other than Africa have little measured audience and very little placement with affiliates. These legacy programs will be ended in favor of new Learning English content, as well as short-form reports and other content for placement with affiliates plus on VOA's growing network of FM transmitters in Africa. This realignment will involve an internal transfer of positions and GOE within the English Division as well as a reduction. The internal realignment will move 13 positions and \$99,000 in GOE to Learning English with a net \$0 impact to the English Division. Additionally, five vacant positions in English will be eliminated.

**Reduce VOA Persian** **[-\$2.3M]**

VOA Persian will streamline its program mix to focus efforts on a core set of programs, scale back talk show programming which requires elaborate booking, and add more news about and from America. VOA Persian will continue to produce 18.25 weekly hours of original TV, in addition to content for its multimedia web and mobile sites and apps. Five positions will be eliminated in PNN under this proposal.

**Reduce Latin America Division** **[-\$0.68M]**

The Latin America Division will reduce its long form television programs and focus on its effective US Bureau strategy of interactives with stations across the region, and further targeted limited radio programming. This change reduces two positions and some contract staff.

**Eliminate VOA Albanian, Bosnian, Macedonian, and Serbian Services** **[-\$2.25M]**

Media environments in the Balkans are increasingly diverse, sophisticated, and crowded. Abundant indigenous channels provide continuous local and national coverage. Other Western broadcasters, such as the BBC, have already withdrawn. Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Serbia, and Albania all improved their standing in the latest Reporters Without Borders World Press Freedom Index, and the Balkan countries are undertaking the reforms necessary to gain membership in the European Union and NATO.

While VOA has been extremely successful in the Balkans over the course of many years, in a difficult budget environment, the BBG can no longer sustain broadcasting to this region while also adequately funding broadcasting to regions of growing importance to U.S. national security, such as Asia and Africa.

This reduction will eliminate the following VOA Balkan services: Serbian (eight positions, \$0.5 million), Albanian (nine positions, \$1.14 million), Bosnian (five positions, \$0.41 million), and Macedonian (two positions, \$0.2 million).

**Reduce Indonesian Radio** **[-\$0.30M]**

VOA reaches very large audiences in Indonesia, but almost all of that comes from TV; radio contributes only a percentage point or two to overall reach. This reduction continues to scale back radio broadcasting by 7 hours, ending a daily 60-minute show that includes news, editorials, correspondent reports, features about America, personal development, and infotainment. Almost 50 weekly hours of radio will continue after this reduction, as will the high-reach television programs. Three positions in Washington and one FSN in Indonesia will be eliminated under this reduction.

**Reduce Georgian Service** **[-\$0.14M]**

The BBG has two Georgian services, leading to a total expenditure that is out of proportion to the priority level of the country for broadcasting. VOA will collaborate with RFE/RL Georgian to maintain an adequate level of service to Georgian audiences at reduced expenditure. One position will be eliminated under this reduction.

**Reduce Uzbek Service** **[-\$0.12M]**

The BBG has two Uzbek services, both of which struggle to reach audiences due to extreme restrictions on access to local media in this closed society. Uzbekistan is an important target for BBG broadcasts, and the BBG can improve efficiency through VOA-RFE/RL coordination. This reduction through efficiency will lead to a similar level of service for audiences at a lower total cost. One position will be eliminated under this reduction.

**Reduce Azerbaijani Service** **[-\$0.14M]**

The BBG has two Azerbaijani services. VOA Azerbaijani will work with RFE/RL Azerbaijani on joint programs, with VOA acting as the “U.S. Bureau” in an integrated broadcast, while RFE/RL focuses primarily on local news. This cooperation will allow VOA to reduce costs by concentrating on its reporting only on U.S. issues. One position will be eliminated under this reduction.

**Office of Cuba Broadcasting** **[-\$3.91M]**

In FY 2015, the BBG anticipates that OCB may receive up to a \$5 million transfer from the Economic Support Fund to support programs and activities allowed in accordance with the Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity (Libertad) Act of 1996. This will leverage the well-established relationships on the island maintained by OCB to conduct activities in accordance with the Libertad Act. At the FY 2015 Budget Request funding level, OCB may be required to reduce the number of positions.

**RFE/RL**

**Reduce Armenian Service** **[-\$0.38M]**

The BBG has two Armenian services, leading to a total expenditure that is out of proportion to the priority level of the country for broadcasting. RFE/RL will scale back its extensive radio programming slightly, with little anticipated reduction to overall audience in Armenia. One position will be eliminated under this reduction.

**Reduce Belarusian Radio** **[-\$0.25M]**

In conjunction with the medium wave transmission reductions proposed in this Budget Request, RFE/RL’s Belarus Service will reduce its expenses in order to focus on platforms that have more potential for growth. These include satellite-based audio, a satellite television program broadcast via Belsat, a Poland-based channel targeting the country, and multimedia web and mobile sites and apps.

**Additional Reductions**

**International Broadcasting Bureau** **[-\$11.22M]**

The 2015 the BBG Budget submission contains a substantial reduction to the operating budget of its International Broadcasting Bureau (IBB). The total for IBB includes a Digital Media Investment

of \$10.2 million. This reduces the non-investment funds available to the IBB from \$66 million in FY 2014 to \$54.5 million in FY 2015. This is an almost 17% reduction in operational funds.

The IBB budget is composed primarily by salaries and as such will require substantial analysis in order to determine the most cost effective manner to achieve the required savings while preserving the ability of the IBB to continue its mission critical support of the entire Federal entity including the Offices of the Voice of America (VOA), Technology, Services and Innovation (TSI) and the Office of Cuba Broadcasting (OCB).

At present, the BBG has engaged the assistance of the Office of Personnel Management via its Human Resources Solutions division and expects to have completed its analysis within the third quarter of FY 2014.

Upon completion of this analysis, the BBG will submit additional detail the IBB component that is compliant with its budgetary targets.

### **Annualization of Additional FY 2014 Reductions**

As part of the FY 2014 Operating Plan, the Agency identified additional reductions. The reductions with ongoing savings in FY 2015 have been factored into the FY 2015 Budget.

## Voice of America

	2013 Actuals	2014 Enacted	2014 Program Plan	2015 Request
<b>Funding</b> (\$ in thousands)	\$196,357	\$202,206	\$199,175	\$211,920

Voice of America is the largest U.S. international broadcaster, providing news and information in 45 languages and reaching nearly 165 million people weekly. Through innovative programming and diverse delivery platforms, VOA is attracting new and younger audiences in crowded and competitive markets. Television programming, whether distributed via local affiliates or direct-to-home-satellite, now attracts a larger audience for VOA than radio programming. Audiences accessing VOA using mobile devices and social media grew exponentially in the past year; and VOA has a global network of FM affiliate partners as well as wholly owned FMs. Meanwhile, VOA's long-standing role as a shortwave broadcaster remains at the forefront in markets where shortwave is still viable, including the Sahel, where Islamist extremists have carried out terrorist attacks in the past year, and in information-deprived societies such as North Korea and Tibet.

VOA is widely viewed by its audiences as a trusted source for credible and comprehensive news and analysis. Through its global network of reporters, sound journalistic practices, and support of free speech, VOA engages audiences in discussion about the United States and world events.

### **FY 2013 Accomplishments**

#### **Prioritizing Support for Democracy and Countering Pockets of Extremism**

In response to the surge in Islamist extremism in Mali and Northern Nigeria, VOA created new Bambara language radio programs and developed new Hausa content for radio and for mobile devices. VOA is the only international news provider to broadcast in Bambara, a language spoken by about half the population in Mali. The Bambara broadcasts were an immediate hit, with listeners praising VOA's extensive coverage of local news. VOA covered the July elections with reports from polling stations around the country and analysis from studio guests.

In strife-torn northern Nigeria, where the terrorist group Boko Haram has a foothold, VOA has in the past year added weekend programming and new SMS services to provide breaking headlines and news updates. Recent research shows that VOA reaches 36 percent of Hausa speakers in the region. VOA Hausa also held a series of town hall meetings, facilitating dialogue among families, local businesses, and government officials on such major challenges as healthcare, unemployment and religious extremism.

In Somalia, another fragile country where terrorists and criminals have exploited the lack of a strong government, more than half of adults listen to VOA weekly. VOA has partnered with Google Ideas in a project to involve Somalis in the drafting of a new constitution. Audiences, including members of the Somali government, expressed gratitude to VOA for providing citizens with information not otherwise available.

## Targeting Key Markets on the Most Effective Platforms

VOA's Persian Service offers an example of the benefits of VOA's multi-platform strategy. According to a BBG-commissioned national telephone survey of Iranian adults, conducted from December 2013 through January 2014, VOA television programs to Iran are watched by 24 percent of the adult population, making VOA Persian the most popular international broadcasters in the country. Programs are available on direct-to-home satellite television, as well as online and on mobile phones 24 hours a day. Programming includes two 30-minute news bulletins daily, news-talk and audience participation programs, along with cultural and entertainment programs, including the satirical show *OnTen*. VOA covered the June elections in Iran with special programming that featured a live television broadcast with interviews with members of the U.S. Congress, comments from voters, and segments from polling stations in Dubai, London, Paris, New York, and Los Angeles; a web page dedicated to the election; and breaking developments reported through live Twitter feeds and Facebook. In addition, Iranians shared video, photos and voice messages with Persian Service programs.

VOA undertook a major new initiative for Mandarin speakers in the past year, re-formatting and re-branding an existing satellite television channel to target China. VOA Wei Shei ("Satellite TV" in Mandarin) includes two original hours of Mandarin news and information programming daily. Satellite television is the only media distribution path Chinese censors do not block. Though Beijing takes vigorous steps to block the Internet, VOA Mandarin also found new ways to circumvent censors by using Chinese social media sites including Weibo (the Chinese version of Twitter). A VOA Mandarin report on the dangerously polluted underground aquifers in northern China was viewed tens of thousands of times and reposted by thousands of viewers. The report, with full VOA branding, was viewed by more than 1.3 million people.

VOA's Urdu Service employed a new approach in Pakistan in the past year in an effort to reach new and younger audiences. VOA Urdu places fast-paced television programs that provide insight into American values and daily life on competitive cable networks that appeal to Pakistani youth and women. The Service diversified its product set and delivery platforms, resulting in a doubling of its television audience. VOA also provides comprehensive news and analysis in its radio broadcasts as well as in popular new web-TV programs. Fostering cross-cultural understanding and engagement with the audience is a major objective of Urdu programming. By telling the stories of Americans and Pakistanis, the Urdu Service has garnered an audience of 13 million in Pakistan.

VOA's Spanish Service to Latin America is also producing extraordinary results after a successful shift in strategy. VOA Spanish now markets itself to Latin American radio and TV stations as the go-to-source for news about the United States and major events in Latin America and around the world, such as, most recently, the crises in Venezuela and Ukraine. The latest research shows a measured audience of 26 million adults, up from just a few million several years ago. Last year VOA extensively covered the U.S. elections, and this year the Service has closely followed another issue of great interest to Latin Americans, the immigration debate in the United States. Service programming covers the news while providing insight into U.S. democracy at work.

In Russia, VOA's approach continues to evolve based on market opportunities. When the government forced VOA off terrestrial affiliate stations several years ago, VOA put its emphasis on digital, creating a dynamic website and a cutting edge web-TV show that allows for live interaction with the audience via social media. Since 2008, visits to the VOA Russian website have doubled every year. Traffic to the VOA Russian YouTube channel is up, with as many as a million views a month. In the past year, VOA also partnered with domestic television channels, including the Russian Business Channel, which has an estimated audience of 11% in Russia. VOA provides interactives several times a week on politics, business, and other issues. VOA will continue to pursue television placement opportunities when and where possible in a bid to reach broader audiences.

### **Providing In-Depth Coverage of Important Issues**

In Tibet, where self-immolations as a form of protest against the Chinese government continue to mount, VOA provided detailed coverage of the situation on the ground to both Tibetan and Chinese citizens. VOA's Tibetan Service produced an acclaimed documentary, *Fire in the Land of Snow: Self-Immolations in Tibet*, examining the wave of self-immolations that have taken place since 2009. Much of the footage in the documentary was made by citizen journalists who risked imprisonment or worse to record what was happening in their land and then to smuggle the recordings to VOA. The one-hour documentary was broadcast in Tibetan, Mandarin, Vietnamese, and English on direct-to-home satellite, affiliate stations, VOA websites, and social media.

### **FY 2014 – FY 2015 Initiatives**

- VOA is preparing to address several challenges in the coming year, including strengthening its technical infrastructure and making significant administrative improvements.
- As part of VOA's enhanced efforts to counter violent extremism overseas, the FY 2014 Budget includes an investment in broadcasting to the Sahel region of Northern Africa. VOA increased its presence in Mali and northern Nigeria in 2013 and will build on that effort with this new investment. VOA will increase its reporting from the Sahel region, and localize FM radio stations owned and operated by VOA, especially in response to conflicts and humanitarian crises such those in South Sudan and the Central African Republic. VOA plans to launch a 24/7 Hausa mobile stream to get around restrictive media laws in Nigeria, creating a platform that provides breaking news any time of day and reaching a new generation of Nigerians who are avid users of mobile phones. Similar mobile streams are planned in French and Bambara. VOA challenges the ideology of extremist groups with alternate narratives, strengthens democratic institutions, opens a space for public civic participation, and addresses quality of life concerns that fuel insurgencies.
- Another strategic challenge for the United States that has direct impact on VOA is the planned withdrawal of NATO forces from Afghanistan. This change creates an environment in which VOA's highly successful radio and television programming can help to explain the steps necessary for the development of a democratic society and rule of law. VOA programs currently air on Afghan state television. While retaining this relationship, VOA will also

explore new affiliates in the private sector as a means of diversifying outlets and supporting capacity-building on the ground. VOA is also exploring co-productions with local Afghan channels.

- VOA intends to capitalize on new opportunities in Burma, where authorities are showing willingness to allow Burmese broadcasters to work closely with VOA. Working with the International Broadcasting Bureau (IBB), VOA has signed an agreement with Burmese State Radio to carry VOA English language learning programs, and SkyNet, a direct-to-home satellite TV provider in Burma, carries three hours a day of VOA programming, including the daily Burmese-language newscast. Other TV and radio networks in the country are expressing an interest in carrying blocks of VOA programming. VOA seeks to build on what it has done and expand its presence in a market that has been information deprived for many years.
- Internet freedom will also be a priority. Of the 19 countries listed by Freedom House as engaging in Internet censorship, VOA serves 10. The BBG works with software vendors to reach audiences in countries where access to information is restricted. However, there are other methods of combating circumvention. VOA intends to strengthen its social media teams to get around the censors by disseminating VOA content into the social media streams most actively used by target audiences. VOA will also be stepping up its news coverage of how countries censor the Internet and ways to get around their firewalls, developing programming for radio and television platforms to get the word out.
- VOA will re-program existing satellite channels for Africa, making them more competitive and ready for syndication and placement on local channels. VOA has already done this with satellite feeds in China and Southeast Asia. Rebranding these feeds as VOA channels offers new opportunities for placement on cable systems and for use online.
- It is imperative that VOA/IBB enable production and distribution of High Definition (HD) television content which utilizes the 16 x 9 aspect ratio. HD is becoming standard in all but the most closed and poor societies. Currently, all BBG television programs are distributed in Standard Definition (SD) TV. VOA affiliates in multiple countries are now demanding content in HD, and as Direct-to-Home satellite providers and users deploy new equipment, they increasingly do so in HD. For those target broadcast areas that would still be predominately SD, the BBG can easily “down-convert” the HD signal until such time as those markets advance. Failure by the BBG to migrate quickly to HD Television will, in short order, disrupt the BBG’s ability to sign up and maintain affiliates and attract audiences.
- VOA has traditionally relied on the use of contract and other short term staff, including independent contractors, to support a number of Agency operations. Contractors are now approximately 35 percent of the VOA workforce. VOA expects to need contractors over the long-term, as part of its staffing model to provide the type of flexibility required for an Agency engaged in the production and dissemination of news, including surge to respond to world events. Working closely with the IBB, VOA has developed a proposed multi-pronged approach to continue to maintain this flexible part of the workforce going forward. Specifically, this approach includes 1) increased personal services (PSC) authority for unique contract staff; 2) term appointments where appropriate, including J-1 visa holders in language services; and 3)

a pilot project to use a staffing agency to hire contract talent for projects and requirements that vary over time. The latter pilot project would grow as additional funds become available. These changes will support improved workforce operations and support the overall VOA mission.

### **Notable FY 2015 Program Changes**

- The FY 2015 Budget proposes investments in VOA to engage current and future generations in Africa through satellite TV, local content for FMs, and adding Lingala language programming; to grow U.S. engagement in East and Southeast Asia; and to expand Learning English programming.
- The FY 2015 Budget for VOA proposes administrative cuts to management and language programming support; transmission reductions (Bangla medium wave, Lao medium wave, and English medium wave); and language service and newsgathering reductions (reducing Central News; closing news bureaus in Jerusalem, Miami, and Houston); realigning English radio; reducing VOA Persian, the Latin American Division; Indonesian radio, Georgian, Uzbek, and Azerbaijani; and closing the Serbian, Bosnian, Macedonian and Albanian Services.

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## Office of Cuba Broadcasting

	2013 Actuals	2014 Enacted	2014 Program Plan	2015 Request
<b>Funding</b> (\$ in thousands)	\$26,293	\$27,043	\$27,043	\$23,130

The Office of Cuba Broadcasting (OCB) broadcasts Radio and Television (TV) Martí programs from its headquarters in Miami, Florida. Starting in FY 2014, OCB will assume responsibility for the Transmitting Station in Greenville, NC.

The Martí's inform and engage the people of Cuba by providing a reliable and credible source of news and information. The Martí's use a mix of media, including shortwave, medium wave, direct-to-home satellite, Internet, flash drives, and DVDs to help reach audiences in Cuba.

Radio and TV Martí and *martinoticias.com* encourage freedom and democracy in Cuba through programs that focus on human rights and individual freedoms. Primary areas of coverage include news relating to independent human rights and dissident movements, the Cuban economy, U.S.-Cuban relations, and international stories, such as elections. The Martí's also provide significant coverage of Latin American news events to keep Cuban audiences informed of regional developments. The Martí's programming contributes to civil society, the development of democratic institutions in Cuba, and freedom of the press.

The Martí's website, *martinoticias.com*, now streams all broadcasts – radio and TV – 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Social media engagement and a network of Cuban journalists on the island allow the Martí's to respond immediately to breaking news. The site regularly adds up-to-the-minute information on the repression of bloggers in Cuba. The Martí's have also launched a YouTube Channel, Facebook page, and Twitter feed. We have also expanded the number of Internet domain extensions for *martinoticias.com* to make it more difficult for the Cuban government to block access to the website.

In combination with *martinoticias.com*, the Martí's use anti-censorship tools such as web-based proxies to reach Internet users in Cuba. These proxy sites enable unobstructed delivery of emails containing news, information, and instructions for circumventing government Internet filters. These efforts have resulted in the doubling of daily traffic into *martinoticias.com* since February 2011. In addition, SMS messaging is a promising new solution for communicating with audiences in Cuba; it allows the Martí's to distribute information to most mobile phone users in a manner that is difficult to filter. The Martí's also provide an SMS-based social network where Cubans can communicate with each other free from government control.

Cuba is one of the most politically and geographically isolated societies in the world. It is not possible for the BBG to conduct nationally representative audience surveys in Cuba due to the highly restrictive political and media environment, though the Agency is able to conduct some focus groups with recent immigrants from the island. Given these circumstances, OCB measures performance based on daily interaction with the audience and a host of impact criteria, including jamming and government responses to news coverage.

## **FY 2013 Accomplishments**

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

OCB has doubled the number of news reports it produces on the island, providing audiences with more in-depth local coverage—something that is of maximum interest to Cuban audiences. The Martís have assembled the largest network of independent journalists working inside Cuba. These journalists send reports (which include audio, text, video, and photos) from multiple sites around the island via telephone, SMS, and Internet. Thanks to an OFAC license granted in late 2012, the Martís are now able to hire Cuban nationals working inside Cuba as multimedia journalists and producers, and OCB has created a small network of Cuban journalists working in various parts of the island exclusively for the Martís. The reports they produce directly from the island are used on a daily basis in our newscasts and compiled in a monthly TV Marti special program called *Desde Adentro* – “From Inside” (Cuba). The reports are also cached on *martinoticias.com* and distributed on the island on flash drives and DVDs.

TV Martí increased its original programming, including information and analysis, interviews, documentaries, series, music, and live coverage of news and events, while diversifying content with social, economic, sports and technological topics. TV Martí launched the special program series ... *en sus propias palabras* (“...in their own words”) which includes one-on-one interviews with the most important leaders of the dissident movement on the island, such as Yoani Sánchez, Berta Soler, Antonio Rodiles, Eliecer Avila, Guillermo Fariñas, and others.

OCB’s popular series, *Avanza Cuba* (Cuba Forward), is broadcast live across all platforms, including social media. Two of the programs took place in academic settings with audience participation including one at Miami Dade College and another at the School of Communication at the University of Miami. Topics included using the Internet in business promotion, exploring freedom of information in Cuba and Latin America, accessing the Internet in Cuba, as well as information on such topics as the law and rights, medicine, and religion in Cuban society.

TV Marti’s flagship programs *Antena Live* and *7N30* have continued to offer our audience news and information on current issues, including special coverage of international news events such as the crisis in Venezuela, and special live coverage of events such as President Obama’s meeting with Cuban dissident leaders in Miami, Florida, which was also covered live on Radio Marti and *martinoticias.com*.

TV Martí’s productions have received several local Emmy Award nominations in the last several years. In 2013 TV Martí received three local Emmy nominations for its special programs *La Nueva Cuba de Las Damas de Blanco* (The New Cuba of the Ladies in White), *La Caridad Nos Une* (The Virgin Unites Us), and *Sueno Olimpico* (Olympic Dream).

### **Reaching Audiences via Digital and Social Media**

The Martís reach out to nearly one million Cubans each week via email and SMS initiatives, providing news and information that would otherwise not be available to them. Their SMS initiatives also allow for Cubans to send news tips and alerts that the Martís curate and develop into news stories when appropriate. In 2013, OCB deployed its SMS-based social network, Piramideo,

which allows Cubans to communicate with each other free from government control. OCB also launched a *martinoticias.com* app for Android and iOS. In FY 2013 web traffic on *martinoticias.com* averaged between 180,000 and 200,000 visitors per month, and produced almost 3 million total visits (2,953,649), an increase of 73% over 2012. OCB continued to grow its social media integration across all platforms to engage in news-gathering and audience engagement around Martí content.

In addition, OCB launched an English version of its website that collects and translates the Martí's most compelling content from Spanish into English.

### **Utilizing Alternate Distribution Methods to Reach the Island**

OCB continued to use alternative means of distribution for Martí original content across the island. This includes paper and plastic flash drives which are easy to distribute and hard to detect or censor. This cutting-edge technology allows users to store data in plain paper, which is mailed directly to Cuban homes and businesses. Content saved into the paper flash drive can be read off-line, or if the user is connected to the Internet, it can provide OCB with statistics of web traffic and usage. The Martí's have been able to acquire more than 1.5 million contacts on the island that can potentially receive this new means of distribution.

OCB developed an alternative network for the delivery and distribution of Television Martí programs on the island that extends across the country, including the 15 provinces and the municipality "Isla de la Juventud." This network includes six copy centers, 15 points of reception, and 24 distribution points in the island. OCB has sent thousands of DVDs and hundreds of flash drives to the island with TV Martí programs. To increase delivery and enable faster turnaround of our content, we have also initiated digital sharing of programs such as *Antena Live* and *7N30* via email as soon as they are recorded.

### **Providing Programming about America**

OCB issued a Special Public Service Announcement recorded with officials from the State Department updating Cuban audiences on travel policies and legal immigration to the United States.

For the first time, Radio Martí offered Cuban audiences live, play-by-play coverage of the NBA playoffs and finals. This was in addition to the broadcast of Major League Baseball regular and post season games.

### **FY 2014-2015 Initiatives**

- OCB will continue to increase the number of reporters and producers in Cuba and the volume of programming originating from its network of journalists operating inside Cuba. In addition, it will continue to develop strategies to multiply, diversify and improve the connection with audiences, increasing the delivery of free and objective information to the island and integrating new technologies and ways of communication.
- OCB will continue to develop a one-of-a-kind multimedia hub page devoted to providing information and training on online security and censorship circumvention as well as

information on how to connect with other Cubans within the island. As proposed in the FY 2014 Budget Request, while maintaining the journalistic firewall, OCB will work with the Department of State and the U.S. Agency for International Development to utilize existing unobligated resources allocated for democracy, human rights, and entrepreneurship programming specifically to Cuba. This whole-of-government approach will increase communication among agencies implementing activities at and within Cuba, and help spend down the backlog of funds. To implement this approach the BBG will seek to execute Inter-Agency Agreements with the State Department and USAID to fund OCB's special TV programming, including programs dealing with transition to democracy, human rights, and entrepreneurship, and to maintain a 24-hour-per-day broadcast schedule.

### **Notable FY 2015 Program Changes**

In FY 2015, the BBG anticipates that OCB may receive up to a \$5 million transfer from the Economic Support Fund to support programs and activities allowed in accordance with the Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity (Libertad) Act of 1996. This will leverage the well-established relationships on the island maintained by OCB to conduct activities in accordance with the Libertad Act. At the FY 2015 Budget Request funding level, OCB may be required to reduce the number of positions.

## International Broadcasting Bureau

	2013 Actuals	2014 Enacted	2014 Program Plan	2015 Request
<b>Funding</b> (\$ in thousands)	\$65,246	\$67,000	\$65,985	\$64,930

The International Broadcasting Bureau (IBB) provides support services to the federal portions of the Agency, oversight over grantee operations, and transmission and distribution services to all components of United States International Media (USIM). The IBB manages the day-to-day implementation of the Board’s strategic vision while enabling the BBG to deliver programs to a diverse global audience. The IBB handles an array of programming support, including transmissions networks, digital media outreach, marketing and program placement, and a robust Internet anti-censorship program that links network content to audiences in restricted media environments.

The IBB is comprised of Offices of the General Counsel, Chief Financial Officer, Communications and External Affairs, Strategy and Development, Digital and Design Innovation, Performance Review, Contracts, Human Resources, Civil Rights, Policy, Security, and Technology, Services, and Innovation.<sup>1</sup> These offices are vital to the BBG operations, providing the following functions: researching the reach of broadcast content; creating digital media platforms and undertaking other digital media initiatives; providing financial services, *e.g.* payroll and invoice payment; awarding and administering contracts; supporting personnel; conducting relations with Congress, the media, and other interests; and ensuring physical security.

The FY 2015 Budget total for IBB includes a Digital Media Investment of \$10.2 million. This will reduce the non-investment funds for IBB from \$66 million in FY 2014 to \$54.5M in FY 2015, a reduction of almost 17%.

### **FY 2013 Accomplishments**

The IBB Director’s Office spearheaded an effort to improve workplace engagement at the BBG. In collaboration with the Partnership for Public Service, the IBB, VOA, and OCB Directors developed an action plan to improve communication, accountability, and fairness. This long-term effort kicked off with multiple workshops to gather staff feedback on specific solutions. Some areas are already seeing improvements: a recent renovation and promotion of the Agency fitness center has seen usage double in a few short months, and the Agency is identifying strategic improvements to refine contracting processes.

The Offices of the General Counsel and Communications and External Affairs worked with the White House and Congress to draft legislation that would create the position of a Chief Executive Officer overseeing all of USIM and, in keeping with the directives of the Board and the formal recommendation of the Office of the Inspector General, would empower this position with operational authorities that currently can be exercised only by the Board.

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<sup>1</sup> Information on TSI can be found in a separate section of this budget request document.

The Office of Strategy and Development (OSD) spearheaded the initial phase of the BBG's multi-year Sahel initiative in support of U.S. national security interests to counter the spread of extremism in sub-Saharan Africa. The Agency acquired FM broadcast licenses for Bamako (Mali), N'djamena (Chad), Nouakchott (Mauritania), Dakar (Senegal), Bujumbura (Burundi), and a nationwide FM license for the Democratic Republic of the Congo for 24/7 VOA and MBN (Radio Sawa) service; expanded major affiliations across the region to broaden distribution of VOA programs; secured funding through the Department of Defense for VOA's Bambara-language programming for Mali; and engineered the launch of VOA FM broadcasting in Bamako in January 2013. This was tactically timed to provide critical coverage of the continuing violence in Mali's north and the run-up to Malian elections in July (elections praised by President Obama as "peaceful" and "credible" with "extraordinary turnout") and paired with the launch in of VOA FM broadcasting in Juba (South Sudan) in December 2012.

OSD deepened the BBG's engagement in Southeast Asia in support of the Administration's "pivot toward Asia" with expansion of radio and TV affiliates in Cambodia ahead of national elections there in September 2013. In the context of notable progress in Burma to advance that country's progressive democratization and opening to the world, OSD signed major affiliations with Burmese state media for English learning programs and with the country's leading satellite TV service SkyNet for VOA Burmese- and English-language news and information programs. OSD-provided training for Burmese journalists, part of the global training initiative noted below, further enhanced the BBG's growing engagement of media inside Burma.

OSD achieved breakthrough affiliations in the critical Russian media market, all but closed to distribution of VOA and RFE/RL programs since 2007, with new Internet and TV partnerships for VOA content focused on U.S. news and perspectives, including daily reporting from Wall Street for the Russian Business Channel.

OSD, in support of overall marketing efforts and the BBG's objective of leveraging its global reporting, migrated its old affiliates database onto a more powerful platform, an industry-standard customer relationship management program (CRM). This reflects a strategic shift in direction away from simply tracking affiliations as an accounting tool to interacting with and marketing programs to affiliates as a mission-critical, market-savvy activity. OSD's support of VOA's coverage of President Obama's June 2013 trip to Africa marked the system's debut and connected multiple VOA journalists to major affiliates across Africa, enabling unprecedented, live interactive reporting, reporting that, not coincidentally, countered negative coverage of the President's trip by Chinese broadcasters CCTV and CRI.

OSD led efforts to partner with USAID, the Departments of State, Defense and Health and Human Services and private organizations such as the National Endowment for Democracy (NED) to bring in more than \$4 million for international media training and broadcasting projects. OSD trained more 350 journalists worldwide on Avian Influenza, polio, maternal and child health, immigration, broadcasting techniques, investigative reporting, citizen journalism and ethics.

The Office of Digital & Design Innovation (ODDI) launched a series of new digital products and services that expand the capabilities of our networks to reach and engage with global audiences. First among those is the launch of new mobile applications in over 43 languages (the largest number of languages for any mobile application in the world) and improvements to the mobile websites that added up to ten million page views per month to the BBG's total. Other services include award-winning websites built for mobile devices in the Middle East, new syndication relationships that grew our digital audience by over three million and a host of new story-telling tools, including U.S. international media's first interactive tablet book.

Following the passage of the Smith-Mundt Modernization Act in January, an effort spearheaded by the Office of Communications and External Affairs, IBB staff led an Agency-wide team in the development of policies and implementation plans related to domestic distribution of the BBG content. In July the Agency began acting upon requests for programming.

The Office of Communications and External Affairs coordinated an Innovation Showcase on Capitol Hill in June. All of the BBG networks showcased their digital media products and efforts to combat anti-censorship in the event, which was well attended by Congressional staff, reporters, technology experts and members of the general public. The event promoted the Agency's efforts to reach people on increasingly popular digital platforms and identified opportunities for potential partnerships with various media and technology developers.

The Office of Performance Review (OPR) serves the agency by focusing on quality control and management effectiveness. The office performed more than 30 assessments of agency programming in FY 2013. OPR also reviews performance of key administrative and support offices within the IBB with the goal of identifying management and workforce efficiencies. In FY 2013, OPR completed six of these reviews.

OPR acts as liaison to the Office of Inspector General (OIG) of the Department of State and the Broadcasting Board of Governors, and to the Government Accountability Office (GAO). As such, OPR manages agency communications with OIG and GAO, and agency responses to inspections, audits, and compliance activities. OPR managed more than 20 separate OIG and GAO engagements and associated compliance reviews during FY 2013.

### **FY 2014 – 2015 Initiatives**

- ODDI, in partnership with all of the BBG networks, is launching expanded data-driven analysis tools and dashboards to provide real-time or nearly real-time statistics on digital performance. This builds on FY 2013 launches of analytics platforms that will be enhanced by tying together web, mobile, video/audio and social analytics into one data warehouse, feeding new internal customer-facing dashboards.
- ODDI is launching a range of new digital products to help language services become more agile and better engage audiences. The new products include upgraded mobile applications, a social-audio mobile application and web presence, interactive video/audio storytelling tools, and an enterprise-class interactive voice response (IVR) system to help audience members with feature phones listen to news and interact with the BBG media programs.

- The Office of the Chief Financial Officer (OCFO) will begin deploying an electronic invoicing system that will make invoice processing more efficient for staff and more transparent for vendors.
- OSD will launch journalism training programs on sensitive issues such as conflict on the Nile, focus on training that supports affiliates, work cooperatively with other international broadcasters, and obtain training funds through inter-agency agreements. Efforts are also under way to secure more outside funding for broadcast programs through underwriting and sponsorship by private corporations.
- OSD will continue to extend the “U.S. Bureau” and global news concepts: VOA reporters in Washington and other global hotspots act as a “bureau” for international broadcast organizations, providing live reports on news of the day, acting as or supplementing those outlets’ own resources. In Mexico alone, one such affiliate now brings an additional weekly audience of 14 million viewers to VOA’s Spanish-Language content. In Nigeria, a similar partnership focused on world news has VOA overseas correspondents providing live updates to a major television channel, a breakthrough in a market that is somewhat restrictive toward foreign content.
- ODDI is collaborating with OSD to launch a new range of technical services to traditional broadcast and a new class of digital affiliates. The goal is to utilize the BBG innovation and enterprise infrastructure to assist them in building digital audiences, which will help expand the distribution of USIM content onto new local channels.
- The Office of Performance Review (OPR) launched BBG surveys in Nigeria and Pakistan that, for the first time, used mobile web to administer questionnaires. The project gained important new information about the mobile web audience in these countries. The use of mobile and online measurement as a possible adjunct to or replacement for conventional survey methods could potentially reduce the cost and speed of conducting research.
- IBB will continue to implement the workplace engagement action plan and address challenges identified in the annual Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey. Using new data the BBG received in October, the leadership team for this initiative will ensure that action items align with survey results, and check in with staff regularly to gauge the effectiveness of actions taken so far.

### **Notable FY 2015 Program Changes**

- The FY 2015 Budget proposes investments in IBB to provide digital media for next generation audiences.
- The FY 2015 BBG budget submission contains a substantial reduction to the operating budget of its International Broadcasting Bureau (IBB). The total for IBB includes a Digital Media Investment of \$10.2 million. This reduces the non-investment funds available to the IBB from

\$66 million in FY 2014 to \$54.5 million in FY 2015. This is an almost 17 percent reduction in operational funds. The IBB budget is composed primarily by salaries and as such will require substantial analysis in order to determine the most cost effective manner to achieve the required savings while preserving the ability of the IBB to continue its mission critical support of the entire Federal entity including the Offices of the Voice of America (VOA), Technology, Services and Innovation (TSI) and the Office of Cuba Broadcasting (OCB). At present, the BBG has engaged the assistance of the Office of Personnel Management via its Human Resources Solutions division and expects to have completed its analysis within the third quarter of FY 2014. Upon completion of this analysis, the BBG will submit additional detail for the IBB component that is compliant with its budgetary targets.

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## Office of Technology, Services, and Innovation

	2013 Actuals	2014 Enacted	2014 Program Plan	2015 Request
<b>Funding</b> (\$ in thousands)	\$179,820	\$187,818	\$198,659	\$175,300

The IBB’s Office of Technology, Services, and Innovation (TSI) manages a broad range of technical and infrastructure functions, including delivering program content for all BBG networks and providing information technology support to many offices throughout the Agency. TSI strives to distribute BBG content in the most cost-effective and efficient manner possible. It manages more than 90 transmitting sites worldwide that deliver shortwave, medium wave, FM, and TV broadcasts. TSI also leases broadcast time at 17 transmitting sites in 12 countries.

In addition to traditional radio and television transmissions, TSI maintains, operates, and supports multiple delivery platforms that include a far-reaching satellite network, Internet capability, and mobile devices, all of which are directed to seize upon new opportunities for delivering programming, interacting with audiences, and countering jamming. Satellite radio is now among the most cost-effective ways to reach many millions of satellite dish owners in China and elsewhere, at just a fraction of the cost of shortwave or medium wave broadcasting. To assess the technical effectiveness of radio and Internet transmissions at distant stations, TSI uses satellite, telephone, and Internet-based monitoring systems that provide more than 50,000 observations of BBG broadcasts weekly.

Through the Network Control Center (NCC), the Agency’s 24/7 operations hub and central distribution point for all BBG transmission systems, TSI manages the flow of electronic signals from various broadcasters to their intended audiences. TSI schedules and switches hundreds of separate satellite and digital circuits carrying BBG programming. The NCC also connects broadcast content to digital platforms, allowing for live streams, podcasts, and on-demand video and audio on BBG websites.

TSI also oversees the Agency’s virtual and physical infrastructure. Information technology, cyber-security, telecommunications, onsite facility management in Washington, D.C., and continuity of BBG broadcast operations are critical TSI responsibilities. TSI works to maintain multiple layers of security for the BBG’s information systems and improve the Agency’s overall cyber security posture.

TSI works with the BBG networks to provide program production and technical support for innovative delivery formats such as podcasts, text messages, online chats, and other multimedia applications. In line with the BBG’s strategic plan, TSI is moving the Agency from traditional broadcasting (such as medium wave in regions where that mode of delivery no longer remains a critical platform) to less expensive digital delivery platforms that are growing in effectiveness, such as satellite and Internet radio, mobile phone technologies, and social media.

## **FY 2013 Accomplishments**

### **Expanding and Upgrading the Agency's Content Production and Distribution System**

TSI expanded the BBG's broadcast reach by installing FM transmitters in strategically important locations in Africa (N'djamena, Chad; Misrata, Libya; Bamako, Mali; Juba, South Sudan) and Afghanistan (Mehtar Lam and Sharan). Successful upgrades to FM transmitters and equipment in Afghanistan and Djibouti also improved broadcast coverage and availability.

To reduce costs and move toward a more flexible and advanced global delivery data network, TSI is migrating from expensive satellite and dedicated fiber circuits to more flexible and less expensive digital Multi-Protocol Label Switching (MPLS) circuits for program delivery where appropriate. To enhance security of federal data, TSI is creating secure data tunnels over the MPLS infrastructure to ensure data separation between federal and non-federal entities.

TSI's IT Directorate completed VOA's migration to the DaletPlus platform, providing users with a fully digital ingest, production, playback, and archiving solution for video production. In a first step towards High Definition (HD) production and distribution, TSI has converted the DaletPlus system to work with widescreen Standard Definition (SD) video. For archival purposes, TSI now uses the DaletPlus system to retain full copies of VOA-produced programs and has opened up the archiving system to in-house viewing and restoral.

TSI's IT Directorate has completed the hardware, software, and data migration to an updated radio production system named Dalet Radio Suite HD. To date, about 30 percent of VOA's content producers have been migrated to the new production system, and various gateways have been built to ensure data integrity between the new and old systems.

### **Modernizing Information Technology and Communication Tools**

TSI completed a multiyear project to migrate all BBG federal users to a cloud-based Microsoft email system, which allows Agency users to have 24/7 worldwide email connectivity and provides a built-in disaster recovery and business continuity capability. TSI also rolled out a global audio, text, and video communications mechanism that enables all users to communicate from their computers to any other user on the system regardless of geographic location. Work continues on the migration of the Agency's SharePoint system into a cloud-based environment.

The successful award of a new Content Distribution Network contract and the expansion of the global MPLS network permitted TSI's Enterprise Telecommunications Division to significantly increase Agency connectivity around the world. The Division also upgraded the Agency's outdated telephone system. This upgrade has improved reliability and enabled the introduction of unified communications and VoIP (Voice over Internet Protocol) services. The Division has also initiated a cost-savings program in which VOA broadcasters are increasingly using Skype instead of other, more expensive long distance services.

TSI continued upgrading the BBG's IT network infrastructure in its Washington headquarters and completed work on an essential ten-fold increase in bandwidth to enable users to reach the speeds needed to edit and distribute video to internal and external destinations. TSI also doubled the additional storage capabilities needed to expand High Definition TV (HDTV) by replacing the primary platform used by the video content management and distribution system and by upgrading numerous production-related storage systems. In addition, TSI implemented numerous security enhancements to identify system and application vulnerabilities and safeguard the Agency's network. IT management improvements also included the introduction of enterprise-level asset management and change management processes and procedures.

### **Countering Internet Censorship and Jamming of Broadcast Signals**

In FY 2013, the Internet Anti-Censorship (IAC) team countered Internet censorship in 12 countries and supported 20 BBG language services. The team deployed a mobile application for Android devices incorporating a social news reader, social reporter to accept user-generated content, and real-time chat functionality targeted at users in Iran. And, in coordination with the BBG's Office of Digital and Design Innovation, the IAC team integrated censorship circumvention technologies directly into mobile applications used by BBG networks. Working with TSI's frequency monitoring staff, the IAC team also deployed hardware and software capable of monitoring in-country Internet censorship in over 70 locations worldwide.

For the past several years, the BBG has been at the forefront of the battle against satellite jamming, working closely with other international broadcasters, the Department of State, non-government organizations, and satellite operators and industry groups. Press releases and public statements have highlighted Iranian satellite jamming. BBG participation in public forums and meetings, including gatherings of the World Broadcasting Union (WBU), focused global attention on the serious threat of jamming. And, as part of the official U.S. delegation to the World Radio Communication Conference (WRC), the BBG successfully lobbied for a proposal adopted by the WRC calling on member states to "take the necessary steps" to end jamming. BBG and other broadcasters also pressed the ITU for standards in "geolocating" the sources of harmful interference. In addition, the BBG worked closely with EUTELSAT, the primary satellite carrier for reaching Iranian audiences, to make jamming by the Iranians more difficult. As a testament to these many efforts, no confirmed jamming of BBG signals occurred during the June 2013 presidential elections in Iran. Furthermore, sanctions enacted by Congress and the Administration affected Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting, resulting in the removal of Iran's external TV service, *Press TV*, from many of the world's satellites, in part because of Iran's jamming activities.

### **FY 2014-FY 2015 Initiatives**

- TSI will continue to expand the DaletPlus system in FY 2014 to provide VOA with full access to online archives to enable the system to handle HD content and to archive all VOA television programming. In addition, efforts begun in FY 2013 to upgrade the outdated audio production system to Dalet Radio Suite HD are well underway, with plans to have full migration

completed in FY 2014. The Dalet Radio Suite HD will allow for tighter integration between audio and video production systems.

- TSI will continue to implement the BBG global MPLS cloud to be leveraged by all BBG networks, both federal and grantee. Once all initial circuits have been brought online to enable BBG networks to interconnect for file and content sharing, TSI will upgrade the circuits in Washington headquarters and divide the MPLS network into federal and non-federal segments to allow the federal BBG entities to maintain separation of networks as required by the Federal Information Systems Management Act (FISMA).
- Capitalizing on current research on audience media habits, TSI will continue taking steps in FY 2014 to move away from less effective legacy distribution systems, such as shortwave and medium wave transmission, toward use of more modern technologies, where appropriate, to reach larger and younger audiences. Where shortwave remains important, TSI is building a more cost-effective transmission infrastructure to support continuing broadcast requirements. In addition, where available, transmitting stations will receive their broadcast content through lower cost digital services, instead of the more expensive satellite distribution. TSI also is using satellite radio in China, including in Tibet, – for just a fraction of the cost of shortwave or medium wave transmissions to that country – as a means of leveraging the widespread use of satellite receive dishes in remote locations or where local cable and Internet access is restricted.
- In FY 2014 the BBG’s IAC team plans to expand its successful FY 2013 programs across all platforms—desktop computers, mobile devices, and satellite. Efforts will continue in FY 2014 to provide web-based proxies and client software tools to circumvent foreign Internet censorship. With additional ongoing funding provided in FY 2014, the IAC team is investigating and evaluating the funding of several new potential censorship circumvention projects and is planning to execute the most promising new efforts in the second half of FY 2014 and in FY 2015.
- To counter the ongoing threat of intentional interference (i.e., jamming) of its broadcasts, the BBG intends to continue to pursue regulatory, technical, political, and public communication avenues to address the issue.
- The BBG is coming under increased pressure to move its current Standard Definition (SD) television format to High Definition (HD) as affiliates complete their migration to HD and as direct-to-home satellite providers and users deploy new HD equipment. Failure to migrate quickly to HDTV will disrupt the BBG’s ability to attract and maintain affiliates and audiences worldwide where HD technology is becoming increasingly available, thereby decreasing the Agency’s ability to remain competitive in this critical broadcast platform. To achieve this important goal, the BBG must continue to upgrade many components of its program production and delivery systems.
- To allow for greater workforce flexibility and enhanced telework capability, TSI will establish a Virtual Desktop Interface (VDI) for remote users to access. The VDI will give users access

to a full desktop suite of tools including the Dalet Video and Audio clients and Microsoft Office when they make a remote connection to the Agency's network.

- As the Agency's central programming distribution hub for the past 20 years, the NCC has experienced unprecedented and unplanned growth to meet evolving broadcast platforms and demands. To address growing physical and functional requirements, an extensive refurbishment began in 2013 with an anticipated project completion date by the end of FY 2014.
- TSI is leveraging a forced move of about sixty staff members from the Mary A. Switzer Building to significantly consolidate and modernize workspace in Cohen Building Headquarters. When Health and Human Services asked GSA to consolidate staff in the Mary A. Switzer Building, GSA offered to fund moving costs for BBG staff to a third federal facility. BBG counteroffered by proposing to use that funding to transform 35,000 square feet of space of the fourth floor of the Cohen Building from small, inefficient private offices to a more modern, collaborative open space plan. By significantly reducing space requirements, this project will reduce the Agency's rent costs.

#### **Notable FY 2015 Program Changes**

- The FY 2015 Budget for TSI proposes administrative reductions (savings from the, Switzer Building rent, satellite, and salary) and transmission reductions (from closing Poro Transmitting Station, termination of leased transmissions, and scaling back medium wave transmissions).
- The FY 2015 TSI Budget would also achieve long-term savings in satellite transmission costs through a two-part proposal. First, the migration of funding for satellite contracts to no-year funding that was initiated in FY 2014 will continue. This enables the Agency to negotiate significantly less expensive, multi-year contracts with major satellite providers. Second, BBG's FY 2015 Opportunity, Growth, and Security Initiative proposal would provide the additional first-year funding necessary to pay the up-front costs for such multi-year contracts. The projected savings are only achievable if sufficient funds are available to pay for multiple years at once.

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## Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty

	2013 Actuals	2014 Enacted	2014 Program Plan	2015 Request
<b>Funding</b> (\$ in thousands)	\$92,097	\$95,950	\$93,850	\$95,890

Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL) is a private, nonprofit, multimedia broadcasting company that serves as a surrogate media source in 28 languages and in 21 countries, including Afghanistan, Iran, Iraq, Pakistan, and Russia. Reaching more than 18 million people each week, RFE/RL provides what many people cannot get locally: uncensored news and analysis, context and perspective, responsible discussion, and open debate. Its programming focuses on local and regional developments in places where the media are not free or are engaged in a transition from totalitarian control, and where government intimidation, censorship, economic hardship, ethnic and religious intolerance, violent extremism, and other threats to civil society and democracy remain.

RFE/RL is funded through, and operates under, a grant agreement with the BBG. Headquartered in Prague, RFE/RL has 19 bureaus across its broadcast region, including in Moscow, Kabul, and Islamabad. RFE/RL's proximity to its audiences facilitates the production of exclusive, relevant, locally-oriented programming in a cost-effective manner.

In March 2013, RFE/RL marked the 60th anniversary of the start of broadcasts in Armenian, Avar, Azeri, Chechen, Georgian, Kazakh, Kyrgyz, Russian, Tajik, Turkmen, and Uzbek. Since their founding, these services have brought the liberating values of independent journalism to millions of listeners. RFE/RL journalists today continue this important work in lands where they often face profound risks. In 2012, authorities in Tajikistan, Russia, Iran and Azerbaijan intensified their efforts to intimidate independent media, and non-state actors in Afghanistan and Pakistan threatened reprisals against RFE/RL journalists for their coverage. In 2013 and 2014, as the anti-government protests in Kyiv gathered steam, Ukrainian authorities repeatedly demanded copies of RFE/RL's footage of the clashes between protesters and police.

The late Czech President and playwright Vaclav Havel expressed hope that "RFE/RL will continue to pursue in the postmodern and politically unstable world the same goals for which it was established...defense of human rights, civic rights, and human dignity." Because access to independent media continues to face severe restrictions in RFE/RL's broadcast region, its mission to provide uncensored, fact-based "surrogate" news to inform and engage audiences in countries without free media remains as important as ever.

### **FY 2013 Accomplishments**

#### **Unifying the Agency into One Organization, Many Brands**

In December 2012, in coordination with the BBG and VOA's Persian Service, Radio Farda launched its first TV program, *Breakfast with News*, on VOA's and Radio Farda's satellite channels. The show is a daily 60-minute news and information program, with two newscasts and

a number of reports on a wide range of subjects including politics, economics, culture, and sports. The addition of *Breakfast with News* to the VOA Persian Service's morning line-up has been welcomed by audiences who previously lacked options for live TV news in the morning. This major initiative required training for most of Farda's radio broadcasters in video editing, video interviewing, and other related skills, and was accomplished through the efficient use of existing staff and financial resources, and through close cooperation between VOA and RFE/RL staff.

### **Reaching Audiences on the Most Effective Delivery Platforms**

Although radio is still the delivery platform of choice in some of RFE/RL's markets, most target audiences are increasingly moving to television and digital media for information and engagement. Accordingly, RFE/RL has shifted its focus in many markets to providing more and enhanced digital content via online and mobile web, SMS, mobile apps, social networks and, in some markets, local and satellite TV.

Using similar video technology, RFE/RL's Russian Service provided exclusive live video coverage of opposition leader Aleksei Navalny's trial in the northern Russian city of Kirov on April 24 and 25, 2013, and the announcement of his guilty verdict on July 18, 2013. RFE/RL was the only source of live video coverage from Kirov. An RFE/RL segment airing Navalny's wife's statement minutes after the verdict was picked up by several media outlets in Russia with full on-air credit to RFE/RL. More than a dozen other RFE/RL language services and VOA used the live feed on their websites, expanding the audience for the exclusive coverage. With all RFE/RL language services and most other BBG networks now using RFE/RL's Pangea content management system, content can be easily shared across websites.

In Uzbekistan, where RFE/RL's news bureau was shut down by the government in December 2005, RFE/RL's Uzbek Service has used Skype to create a strong network of thousands of contacts, mostly inside the country, and it has developed a highly popular interactive Facebook + Skype show that allows users to call in using Skype or to connect via Facebook. The Service has seen extraordinary usage of its mobile site, surpassing that of its desktop version, and is increasingly using digital tools such as WhatsApp to engage with listeners, web users, and journalists. Growing popularity and extensive usage of RFE/RL mobile websites can be observed in nearly all Central Asian media markets.

### **Elevating and Expanding Digital and Social Media Innovation**

Several RFE/RL language services use SoundCloud to interact with their audiences. SoundCloud allows audio products to be embedded on websites and shared easily through social networks—and it appears to be free from censorship in several countries that block RFE/RL's websites. By enabling RFE/RL journalists to record and send audio clips from their mobile phones, SoundCloud provides a crucial alternative source of news in these repressive nations.

Thanks to the PangeaGO App, which was designed by RFE/RL's Internet Technology team for Samsung Galaxy S2 and S3 phones, RFE/RL journalists can stream live video from their smartphones directly to the web. In addition, RFE/RL released new iPhone and Android apps, providing rich multimedia news to audiences in 17 different languages. Through the apps, users

can share breaking news (including videos, photos, and audio) directly with RFE/RL. They can also listen to audio and podcasts on demand and stream and download video. Content can be shared on social networks including Twitter, Facebook, and VKontakte, the Russian social network with nearly 200 million users. After the launch of RFE/RL's Android and iOS apps in late 2012, use of the apps surged in most RFE/RL markets, particularly in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan.

### **Enhancing Video Production and Bureaus**

RFE/RL has introduced TriCasters – advanced video-switching and production machines – for enhanced video-production purposes. Currently, the Prague temporary studio, the Radio Farda studio, and the Moscow, Tbilisi, and Yerevan bureaus are equipped with TriCasters, which allow cost-effective modern video production and distribution. RFE/RL will further expand the ability of major regional bureaus to collaborate on interactive video programming for the web and satellite TV.

RFE/RL recently moved into new and improved premises in Moscow, Tbilisi, and Yerevan. These were the first RFE/RL bureaus to be built with simultaneous video and radio operations in mind; they also include significant multimedia and infrastructure upgrades.

### **Producing High-Quality Journalism**

In 2012 and 2013, RFE/RL journalists received numerous accolades and awards. Radio Farda received a Silver Medal at the 2013 New York Festival's International Radio Programs and Promos Awards for its series, *Solitary Confinement*. RFE/RL's Afghan Service's video, *In Kabul, the Displaced Find Security but Little Help*, was honored in the annual Webby Awards in the news & politics: individual episode category, and, for the second consecutive year, RFE/RL's website won high praise in the radio/podcasts category. Khadija Ismayilova, investigative journalist for RFE/RL's Azerbaijani Service, was one of three recipients of the International Women's Media Foundation's *Courage in Journalism* award for her unflinching reporting in the face of continued harassment, blackmail, and threats for her exposés of corruption within the Azerbaijani government. RFE/RL Turkmen Service freelancer Dovletmyrat Yazkuliyeu was awarded a 2012 Hellman/Hammett grant by Human Rights Watch for his reporting, in defiance of an official information blackout, on a 2011 explosion at a munitions depot in Abadan and its aftermath, including the government's failure to provide assistance to victims.

### **FY 2014 – FY 2015 Initiatives**

- In November 2013, when the Ukrainian government suddenly announced it would not move forward with signing a landmark agreement with the European Union and massive pro-EU demonstrations erupted, RFE/RL's Ukrainian Service was at the forefront of coverage. The Service provided live streamed video from Kyiv's Maidan Square of the initially peaceful and then deadly protests in addition to producing a constantly updated, live blog of unfolding events and offering timely in-depth analysis. The Service's live streaming, dramatic video, interviews, analytical round tables, photo galleries, and effective usage of social networks provided viewers a comprehensive overview of the crisis. This coverage was used and cited

by an unprecedented number of Ukrainian and international media as well as by other RFE/RL language services. These new media efforts also resulted in unparalleled web traffic. On February 18, 2014, visits to the Ukrainian Service's website spiked to an all-time high of over 1.2 million, with visits on February 19 again over 1 million.

- In the run-up to Afghanistan's 2014 presidential election, Radio Free Afghanistan joined with state broadcaster RTA to sponsor two well-received televised presidential candidate debates on February 15 and 16, 2014, in Kabul. Eight of the eleven registered candidates took part in the debates, which were moderated by RFE/RL Regional Director Akbar Ayazi. The debates aired live on RTA television and Radio Free Afghanistan.
- RFE/RL has started a multi-hour, daily video stream for Russia in order to compensate for the loss of affiliates and medium wave as delivery platforms. Content consists of daily coverage of the most important events with reactions from Russian citizens as well as opinions from the West, including live video streaming of roundtable discussions and expert interviews on Russia.
- RFE/RL has launched live video streams for Georgia, Ukraine, and Azerbaijan. Together with the already existing live stream for Armenia and Russia, RFE/RL will have live streams in five countries. RFE/RL will continue to improve video capability throughout the company.
- RFE/RL will continue efforts to support further content-sharing and distribution across RFE/RL's 19 language services as well as with its sister BBG networks. The Pangea team, which built and controls the content management system behind the websites of four of the five BBG broadcasters, is moving to Responsive Design, *i.e.*, the development of one code that is optimized for any device – mobile, tablet, or desktop – for future website designs.
- RFE/RL will continue to deepen relationships with external media and human rights organizations as well as with programs such as the RFE/RL Vaclav Havel Journalism Fellowship, now in its third year of bringing well-qualified early-career journalists to RFE/RL from its broadcast area.

### **Notable FY 2015 Program Changes**

- The FY 2015 Budget for RFE/RL proposes eliminating medium wave transmissions to Belarus, and language service reductions to the Armenian and Belarus Services.

## Radio Free Asia

	2013 Actuals	2014 Enacted	2014 Program Plan	2015 Request
<b>Funding</b> (\$ in thousands)	\$41,759	\$35,950	\$35,605	\$38,720

Radio Free Asia (RFA) is a private, nonprofit, multimedia corporation that acts as a surrogate broadcaster, substituting for domestic media in countries that prevent or restrict freedom of the press. RFA is funded through, and operates under, a grant agreement with the BBG. RFA's purpose is to deliver accurate and timely local news, information, and commentary, and to provide a forum for a variety of opinions and voices from within the Asian countries it serves. Through shortwave, medium wave, satellite, television and Internet broadcasting, RFA delivers on its mission in nine languages and several dialects, bringing news to communities whose knowledge of local events is otherwise blocked by governments that control information. RFA's broadcast languages include: Burmese, Cantonese, Khmer, Korean, Lao, Mandarin, Tibetan, Uyghur and Vietnamese.

RFA continues to solidify its position as an authoritative source of East Asian news. On a monthly basis, Radio Free Asia averages 500 pickups of its exclusive news coverage in major global news publications and sources, as well as regional outlets within its broadcast region. This includes RFA-generated content from its nine language services that is republished and linked-to on well-trafficked global and regional Asian blogs. Media pickups, especially those by large media syndicates and wire services, further serve to amplify RFA's reach into its target countries.

As part of the BBG's anti-censorship efforts, RFA manages the Open Technology Fund, which supports research to better understand the types of censorship occurring across the globe and the effectiveness of tools meant to combat that censorship. RFA's efforts help grow the knowledge base for the entire Internet freedom community and improve the effectiveness of future work. OTF also supports the new and continued development of software built with the purpose of securing citizens' communications in countries engaged in active online repression. These tools provide individuals on the ground with the capabilities they need to protect their communication from the prying eyes of repressive regimes and offer secure access to censored content.

### **FY 2013 Accomplishments**

#### **Providing Local Reporting**

In early FY 2013, RFA began to realign resources and operational initiatives in the Burmese, Cambodian, and Lao services, in an effort to increase localized reporting. As opportunities increase for RFA to gather content closer to its target markets, these Southeast Asia services are shifting resources from the DC headquarters to the field and are increasing their digital content production. This restructuring has allowed RFA Burmese to recruit and train 30 new journalists inside the country, including nine in states and divisions outside of Yangon. RFA Burmese TV offers a new dimension to the coverage of stories such as the brutal crackdown on protestors at the

Letpadaung copper mines, the incitement of deadly attacks against the Muslim minority, and the struggles of farmers to retain their land and of factory workers to earn a living wage.

Reallocating resources from DC to an RFA bureau in Phnom Penh allowed the Khmer service to provide in-depth coverage of the political, social and economic problems facing Cambodia; and special coverage of its fifth national elections, with news and perspectives not available on government affiliated broadcast stations. This coverage has continued in the aftermath of the election results, which are still in dispute, and which have spawned numerous mass demonstrations including one in which five people were killed. The coverage also resulted in a 400% increase in traffic on RFA's Khmer website and Facebook page. The resource reallocation also gave RFA an opportunity to conduct training for 160 journalism students in how to cover the election campaign.

RFA's Korean Service expanded its coverage of North Korea. It launched a new feature entitled *What's Happening Now in North Korea?* The program explores the wide range of problems within the Hermit Kingdom, and features, in addition to valuable firsthand information, rare photos and exclusive audio/video clips provided to RFA by in-country sources. The service has enhanced the quality of its existing programs by significantly diversifying its pool of participating expert commentators.

### **Reaching Audiences through New Technology**

RFA's Vietnamese Service increased traffic to its website by expanding the variety and scope of reporting, publishing new bloggers, and producing and acquiring more video from inside the country.

*RFA.org* rolled out a major website redesign, with a new look and organization of content. The new layout allows RFA to compete with other online news sources and enhances the RFA brand. Monthly visits to the sites grew by 27 percent in June 2013 compared to June 2012.

In the spring of 2013, RFA produced an iBook on the 1989 Tiananmen unrest and repression in Mandarin and English. This kind of coverage is banned inside China and younger generations are not informed about this chapter of Chinese history. In November 2013, the iBook won a top prize in the category of innovative production technology at the International Media Excellence Awards, held by the Association of International Broadcasters (AIB) in London. This is one in a series of e-books RFA is publishing which can circumvent censorship, since it can be easily downloaded and shared via email or on thumb drives.

### **Producing In-Depth Investigative Journalism**

A year-long undercover investigation into food safety concerns in China culminated in a four-part multimedia series exposing health hazards faced by tens of millions of Chinese citizens. The series, reported by RFA's Cantonese Service, was subsequently republished by some of the most active China-based bloggers, and has had significant impact in supporting the efforts of many in China who are calling for institutional reforms to improve regulation of the country's food-delivery system. One of the videos in the series, which features exclusive footage on the use of gutter oil, has gone viral, with over two million views to date.

As part of the fifth-anniversary look back at the devastating effects and aftermath of the 2008 Sichuan earthquake, RFA's Mandarin Service acquired exclusive rights to never-before-seen quake-zone footage that had been smuggled out of China. RFA's multi-media production provided strong evidence of the shoddy quality of building construction as a main contributor to the disproportionate death of school-age children during the quake.

Four years after the ethnic clashes between Han Chinese and Uyghur residents of Urumqi, RFA's Uyghur Service continues its groundbreaking investigative reporting. The Chinese government has not given a full accounting of the hundreds of Uyghurs who disappeared during and just after these disturbances, but RFA Uyghur recently obtained the names of 32 of the still-missing persons, along with details of the circumstances leading to their disappearance. The impact of this series has been considerable. RFA won a silver medal at the 2013 New York Festivals, and RFA's investigation prompted Amnesty International to publicly urge China to be more forthcoming in disclosing all relevant information.

In early 2013, RFA introduced *The Water Project – An Investigation of Drinking Water in Asia*, an online, multilingual project on the quality and availability of clean drinking water in RFA's target countries. Many of RFA's broadcast countries suffer from water scarcity and mismanagement. A special hub page was designed and produced in all RFA languages, aggregating coverage on the topics of drinking water, sanitation, industrial pollution, floods and droughts, dam building, the role of NGOs, and life of rivers.

### **Promoting Cross Ethnic Dialogue**

RFA launched its first-ever inter-service bilingual program in Tibetan and Mandarin entitled *Tibet-China Dialogue*. This bi-weekly show focuses on promoting cross-ethnic understanding between Tibetans and the majority Han people of China. The program explores a wide range of topics of concern to the Chinese people in general, and to the country's restive ethnic minorities in particular.

### **FY 2014-FY 2015 Initiatives**

- In the coming year, RFA's Cantonese Service plans to conduct an undercover investigation of operational safety in the nuclear power plants in Guangdong, China's most populous province, located near the Asian financial hub of Hong Kong.
- On the heels of its award-winning Tiananmen iBook, RFA's Mandarin Service will launch in FY2014 a new iBook in cooperation with the Laogai Research Foundation. Titled *Cannibalism in China during the Cultural Revolution*, the joint project features newly acquired documents demonstrating that the atrocities were in fact organized by Communist Party officials motivated by ideology.
- *Letters from Prison* is a new Mandarin weekly feature slated to launch in FY2014. Working with the Independent Chinese PEN Center, RFA's Mandarin Service will be granted exclusive broadcast and Web-posting rights to letters written by political prisoners in China.

- Beginning in FY 2014, to help monitor and combat Internet censorship in Chinese cyberspace, RFA's Mandarin Service will feature some of China's best-known celebrity bloggers. The blog will be a daily compilation of blog posts deleted by Chinese state censors. By integrating RFA's social media strategy with its core editorial objective of surrogacy, the Mandarin Service will build around its brand a community made up of some of Beijing's most irreverent and perceptive critics, who have been influencing government policies in a subtle but persistent manner.
- RFA's Burmese Service is preparing for comprehensive radio and TV coverage of the 2015 national elections, Burma's first opportunity for truly free and fair elections. At the same time, RFA is reporting on the numerous domestic problems which could derail the move to democratization, especially the need for constitutional reform prior to the elections. RFA provides a platform for civil, civic dialogue where the people of Burma can express opinions on their problems and possible solutions. RFA will also address religious and ethnic divides, and more programming will be targeted toward Burma's rural population, providing basic education in areas such as health, agriculture and basic human rights. Shortwave radio, which still dominates in rural areas where most of the population lives, is the best medium to present such programs.
- To mark the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the 1989 Tiananmen crackdown on pro-democracy protesters, RFA's Mandarin Service will launch a series of initiatives targeted at Chinese youth who lack knowledge of this subject. Maximizing the engagement potential of China's tech-savvy post-90s generation, the Mandarin service will use social media and other web-based tools to reach the youth population. RFA is uniquely suited to undertake this project as many of the former leaders of the Tiananmen student protests have been serving as regular contributors since the inception of RFA.
- RFA will redouble its efforts to establish cooperative relationships with China-based NGOs to promote rights consciousness in an emerging civil society. Addressing a broad spectrum of subjects, including environmental protection, public health, and women's rights, these grassroots outfits fill a social space that neither the government nor the business sector can fill.
- In FY 2014, RFA will complete construction of its second, and larger, video studio. This space is needed to keep up with the demand for additional TV and webcast programming.
- In FY 2015, RFA will fully utilize and institutionalize the Pangea content management system.

### **Notable FY 2015 Program Changes**

- The FY 2015 Budget proposes investments in RFA to grow U.S. engagement in East and Southeast Asia.

## Middle East Broadcasting Networks, Inc.

	2013 Actuals	2014 Enacted	2014 Program Plan	2015 Request
<b>Funding</b> (\$ in thousands)	\$105,699	\$109,513	\$105,163	\$106,570

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 the United States, the region, and the world. MBN supports democratic values by expanding the spectrum of ideas, opinions, and perspectives available in the region's media. MBN brands include Alhurra, Radio Sawa, and Afia Darfur. The BBG research estimates Alhurra and Radio Sawa have an unduplicated weekly audience of nearly 30 million across the region.

MBN produces programming at its headquarters in Northern Virginia and production outlets in Washington, D.C., Baghdad, Dubai, Beirut, Cairo, and Jerusalem. Satellite and terrestrial television broadcasts and medium wave (AM) and FM radio broadcasts are transmitted via the IBB's global transmission network. Beyond traditional media, MBN engages heavily with audiences across the spectrum of available digital platforms, including its Alhurra and Radio Sawa websites, Facebook, and YouTube.

### **MBN Programming**

**Alhurra** – Alhurra's Pan-Arab news and information channel was launched in February 2004 to provide a reliable source of objective television news and information across the Middle East. Alhurra-Iraq was launched in April 2004 to provide targeted local news and programming to the people of Iraq. Alhurra is unique within the Middle East satellite television market in its ability to provide audiences the American perspective, giving context to the Administration's policies as well as insight from diverse voices throughout the broad U.S. public policy community and the people of the United States. Its news and information programming provides a platform for engagement with the audience on social, cultural, and political issues as well as a forum for objective discussion and the introduction of viewpoints not routinely found on media in the region.

Alhurra broadcasts live newscasts throughout the day with breaking news, as events warrant, including coverage of major U.S. foreign policy speeches as well as press conferences and relevant Congressional hearings. Its informational programming seeks to expand the range of ideas and perspectives presented in the Middle East media, particularly on issues such as human rights, religious freedom, and the rights of women. Alhurra's signature show, *Al Youm* (translated *Today*), is unique in the region, presenting a cross section of perspectives on issues from the Middle East as well as news and information about America. *Al Youm* is broadcast live, three hours per day, five days per week from four cities across the Middle East (Dubai, Beirut, Cairo and Jerusalem) and from the U.S., and rebroadcast with updated news inserts the morning following the live broadcast.

Alhurra is distributed on satellite via Arabsat and Nilesat as well as via terrestrial transmitters in Baghdad, Mosul, Basra, Tikrit, Al Nasiriyah and Al Hilla. Alhurra is streamed on its news and information website, *Alhurra.com*, and content is distributed through digital platforms, including YouTube and mobile apps.

**Radio Sawa** – Radio Sawa was launched in 2002 and broadcasts 24/7 on seven 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 (under 35) Middle Eastern population. Its blend of music and information programming was unique at the time of its launch—a carefully crafted blend of Western and Middle Eastern music that successfully attracts listeners to stay tuned for substantive news and information programming. 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 broadcasts nearly six hours of news and current affairs programming per day, including newscasts at 15 and 45 minutes past each hour throughout the day. Daily 30-minute news magazines provide listeners with in-depth reporting and news analysis. Radio Sawa also broadcasts live simultaneous translations of major speeches on Middle East issues by senior U.S. officials, as well as important UN debates and press conferences on important issues affecting U.S. policy in the region. Radio Sawa clearly and effectively presents U.S. policies through a range of targeted programming that includes its weekly signature current affairs discussion, *Free Zone*. Radio Sawa also broadcasts localized newscasts to Egypt and Iraq as well as feature stories to Iraq that focus on rule of law, democratic political debate, and citizen concerns.

Radio Sawa can be heard throughout the Middle East through FM and medium wave (AM) transmissions on seven streams including:

- (1) Iraq (FM and AM);
- (2) Levant (including Jordan and the West Bank) (FM);
- (3) the Gulf (FM and AM);
- (4) Egypt (AM);
- (5) Morocco (FM);
- (6) Sudan, Libya, Djibouti and Yemen (FM and AM); and
- (7) Lebanon and Syria (FM).

Radio Sawa is also streamed on its news and information website *radiosawa.com*.

**Afia Darfur** – MBN launched the Afia Darfur program in 2008—initially through funding from the Department of State. The all-news and information radio program features news about Darfur and the world that is not otherwise accessible through the official media. The program features interviews with American officials, human rights experts, Sudanese professionals, activists, government officials, and citizens, as well as NGO representatives. The program further provides information on refugee and internally displaced persons issues, health issues and features about the culture, history and heritage of the diverse ethnic groups of Darfur. Relevant information gathered from daily White House, State Department and Pentagon briefings is included in the program.

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. The 30-minute program is rebroadcast two additional times, once in the evening (10:00 p.m. local time) and again the following morning (6:00 a.m. local time).

## **FY 2013 Accomplishments**

### **Providing Unique Insight into Democratic Transitions**

In Egypt, from Constitutional referendum to the unseating of the President, Alhurra and Radio Sawa provided wall-to-wall coverage with balanced news and objective current affairs shows. From the organization of the march on Tahrir Square on June 30, 2013, through the formulation of an interim government in July, Alhurra provided extensive coverage and reports clearly and purposefully addressing all sides of the crisis. Such comprehensive and balanced coverage was not available on other Arabic channels. *Al Youm* correspondent Osama Youssef was the first Egyptian journalist to report live as the Egyptian army helicopters dropped flags on the pro-reform demonstrators in Tahrir Square on June 30. *Free Hour* addressed the issue of military intervention, its effect on democracy, and the challenges facing Egypt. Alhurra's weekly talk show from Cairo, *Hiwar Cairo*, regularly brings together members of various Egyptian political parties, expert analysts, and leading journalists.

In Iraq, Alhurra-Iraq and Radio Sawa provided extensive coverage of the Iraqi provincial elections held in April 2013, the first elections held after the American troop withdrawal. The coverage included reaction from voters throughout Iraq to capture and give voice to the range of perspectives in the local political spectrum. Alhurra-Iraq provided 14 hours of live continuous coverage beginning as soon as the polls opened; reporters filed stories from Baghdad and seven other major provincial cities.

### **Ensuring Objective Reporting on Civil Unrest**

In Syria, despite the significant obstacles inherent in reporting from a war zone, MBN has ensured balanced, responsible coverage of events surrounding the war in its daily newscasts and talk shows. To move beyond the headlines of ballooning death tolls and graphic videos of destruction, MBN created an online documentary project that focused on six individual Syrians to provide context for the ongoing conflict. MBN's digital team sought out people living inside and around Syria willing to share personal stories with the world. On *SyriaStories.com*, they blogged about the challenges and triumphs of living in Syria and watching their homeland be torn apart.

Alhurra and Radio Sawa reported on international reaction to the crisis in Syria including extensive coverage of the Arab League Summit held in Doha and G8 Summit talks on Syria. Coverage remains consistent and robust despite the dangerous environment for journalists and newsgathering. MBN continues to search for answers on its correspondent who went missing in Aleppo over 18 months ago.

## **Reflecting America’s Policies and Actions Accurately**

In its daily coverage—with correspondents working full-time from the White House, Congress, Pentagon, and State Department—MBN works to ensure America and its policies are accurately reflected to the people of the Middle East. Alhurra’s coverage of reaction to the Egyptian crisis from the U.S. included translated excerpts of President Obama and Secretary Kerry’s comments on Egypt, as well as the State Department briefings regarding Egypt. Alhurra provided live coverage of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee Hearing on Egypt, as well as reaction from the Egyptian-American community in Washington, D.C. Alhurra’s talk show *Free Hour* expanded to two hours on key days to provide in-depth discussion on U.S. foreign policy towards Egypt.

MBN has provided in-depth coverage of the U.S. reaction to the crisis in Syria from the State Department, White House, Congress and the Pentagon, including the debate over providing arms to the Syrian rebels with interviews including Sen. Robert Menendez (D-NJ) and Sen. John McCain (R-AZ).

## **Targeting Programming to Expanding Critical Audiences**

The number of people using digital media as their primary source for news and information is growing exponentially throughout the region. Arabic speakers now have another way to get the latest news and information, with the launch of *Alhurra.com* and *RadioSawa.com* mobile sites. The new sites are more accessible and make information easier to share among mobile users. Alhurra marked another significant digital milestone when, in February 2014, its Facebook page surpassed 3.5 million “likes.” Radio Sawa’s Facebook page closes in on 3 million “likes.”

Reallocating within available resources, Alhurra is working to produce a weekly show to engage Arab youth in social dialogue about subjects that shape their lives and explore the challenges that they face every day: social, cultural, educational, philosophical, and religious. The show will include a virtual global community of socially-driven “influencers”—individuals with large numbers of followers and connection to a digital device. Through the use of technology and social media, the show’s viewers will drive the conversation by commenting in real time on its content. The new show intends to inform and empower youth.

## **Building Bridges**

In April, MBN celebrated Arab-American Heritage Month by highlighting the achievements and contributions of Arab-Americans in fields of politics, art, science and technology. *Al Youm* presented stories of a group of leading Arab NASA scientists and a successful Arab-American business woman leading humanitarian efforts to help Syrian children in refugee camps. Alhurra news covered a number of Arab-American heritage events in Washington and across the U.S. Alhurra aired a series of original and acquired documentaries featuring the stories of Arab-Americans. Alhurra’s weekly magazine on American lifestyles, *Almajalla*, featured influential Arab-Americans in the film and fashion industries.

## **Enlarging Traditional Broadcast Platforms**

One of the most popular entertainment/news channels in Egypt, Al Hayat-1, began prime time broadcasting of Alhurra's critically acclaimed *Rayheen ala Fain?* ("Where Are We Going?") in February 2013. The MBN program follows the lives of five young Egyptians as they adjust to a post-revolution Egypt. The series premiered on Alhurra in September 2012, and its second season premiered in December 2013. Its rebroadcast on Al Hayat exposes millions of additional Egyptian viewers to Alhurra's high quality programming. Through February 2014, *Rayheen ala Fain?*'s Facebook page has garnered over 443,000 "likes."

Utilizing existing BBG satellite bandwidth and the new BBG MPLS Wide Area Data Network, MBN is working to revamp its technical specs to launch an HD channel in the next fiscal year. Over the past three years, as MBN replaced equipment in its scheduled replacement cycle, the network purchased equipment that is multi-format capable at no additional cost. The result of this planning has yielded a broadcast network facility capable of accepting and producing Standard Definition widescreen format content (16:9), narrow screen format content (4:3), plus High Definition (HD) video content. The existing Alhurra-Pan Arab and Alhurra-Iraq channels will continue in their current Standard Definition channels via ArabSat and NileSat satellites, with the Alhurra-Pan Arab HD channel broadcast via Hotbird 13.

## **FY 2014 – FY 2015 Initiatives**

In FY 2014, MBN plans to strategically cut operating costs to fund the following priority initiatives, among others:

- MBN will begin establishing small bureaus in the Maghreb region to increase local production and expand Maghreb-centric news and information programming on Alhurra TV and Radio Sawa. In FY 2014, MBN will open new bureaus in Tunis and Rabat. In FY 2015, MBN will open two additional bureaus in Tripoli and Benghazi.
- MBN will complete the relocation of its Iraq bureau that will lower recurring operational costs while enhancing its security profile. The new bureau will house Alhurra and Radio Sawa, which will be the only Arabic language radio service of U.S. international media in FY 2014 upon elimination of a separate RFE/RL Radio Free Iraq service.
- State Department funding will be used in FY 2014 for a Radio Sawa programming stream for broadcast on the new FM transmitter in Nouakchott, Mauritania.

## **Notable FY 2015 Program Changes**

In FY 2015, MBN will continue to reallocate base funds to advance priority initiatives:

- Due to a lack of FM transmission capability in Egypt which limits the potential impact of localized radio programming, Radio Sawa will discontinue targeted newsgathering and production of local radio news content for its Egypt programming stream.

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## Broadcasting Capital Improvements

	2013 Actuals	2014 Enacted	2014 Program Plan	2015 Request
<b>Funding</b> (\$ in thousands)	\$6,674	\$8,000	\$8,000	\$4,800

Broadcasting Capital Improvements (BCI) provides funding for large-scale capital projects and for improvements and maintenance of the BBG’s global transmission network and digital multimedia infrastructure. The Office of Technology, Services, and Innovation (TSI) manages many of the BCI projects in the IBB. The BCI account also supports capital projects managed by the IBB Office of Security, VOA Television, and the Office of Cuba Broadcasting.

TSI regularly assesses the effectiveness of its transmission resources to better serve priority audiences, respond to evolving media preferences and meet new programming requirements. The rapid pace of change in audience media preferences and broadcast technology requires the BBG to provide critical capital upgrades to its operations.

### **Maintenance and Repair of the Global Network Infrastructure**

The BCI annual maintenance and repair program addresses essential requirements to maintain the reliability and availability of a worldwide network of transmitting stations that carry the bulk of the BBG programming to intended audiences. As the BBG has consolidated and reduced its radio transmitting facilities worldwide, preventive and programmed maintenance to keep the remaining network in an acceptable operating condition has become more important.

Critical broadcasting equipment and structures at remote locations, often exposed to extreme and corrosive environments, require regular upkeep and maintenance to prevent catastrophic breakdowns. The Agency’s structural engineer has identified the transmission facilities in Saipan, Tinian, Cyprus, Djibouti, Sao Tome, and Sri Lanka as particularly vulnerable to corrosion because of their proximity to salt and moisture from the seas and prevailing winds. Similarly, in Botswana exposure to industrial pollution from smelting plants produces a corrosive environment. These sites require periodic inspection and a routine preventive antenna maintenance program.

For example, in FY 2013 in Sri Lanka, two storms with only moderate winds damaged many of the Marconi-built antenna structures. Inspection of the antenna system indicated that badly corroded bridle cables and spreader bars were so structurally weakened that even a moderate storm was sufficient to cause a major antenna collapse. Even with the use of in-house resources and local contracting to the extent feasible, funding between \$2.5 million to \$3.0 million is needed to rebuild the damaged Sri Lanka antenna systems.

In addition, Typhoon Santi hit the Philippines’ Tinang transmitting site in early FY 2014. This major storm, with winds that reportedly peaked at over 110 mph, caused significant damage to the transmitter site, especially to antennas and roofs of buildings. The maintenance and repair program has budgeted over \$250,000 to allow the station to make roof and antenna repairs at Tinang in FY 2014.

## **FY 2014-FY 2015 Major Initiatives**

- A routine, periodic maintenance plan for the BBG's antenna structures in corrosive atmospheres must be established and funded to protect the transmission network infrastructure.
- Eight of IBB's network of stations use more than 20-year-old Rolm Redwood PBX switches. Replacing them with Internet protocol-based communications systems will enable the BBG to migrate from a voice-only system to one that supports voice, data, and video over the existing IBB satellite network or future Multiprotocol Label Switching (MPLS) circuits. Work is in progress on a multi-year installation effort.
- BCI funds will be used to reconfigure the shortwave broadcast infrastructure at the Kuwait transmitting station to enhance coverage of Iran and achieve cost savings for shortwave broadcasts. Because of the very low cost of electrical power in Kuwait, the IBB Kuwait Transmitting Station is the least expensive station to operation in the IBB global network. This project will allow the Agency to shift scheduled transmissions from other stations in the IBB network to Kuwait, especially those transmissions from high cost leased facilities wherever possible.
- BCI funds will be used to refurbish the Agency's transmission infrastructure, including building maintenance; roofing; water line and septic systems; maintenance and replacement of heating and cooling equipment; power plant maintenance; generator maintenance; painting of building facilities and antenna structures; and roads and grounds maintenance. TSI plans to restart the facilities condition surveys for the Agency's most critical sites, as these surveys have provided very useful guidance in the past.
- Decisions on equipment replacements consider energy efficiency as a factor. Use of more efficient light fixtures is planned as replacements become due for all IBB facilities.
- The Office of Security will continue security assessments and projects at the BBG facilities both domestically and overseas, including: replacement of an armored vehicle and anti-ram barrier, maintenance and repair of security systems and emergency radio systems, and expansion of access control/alarm systems. These services are vital to the protection of life and safety of the BBG personnel at headquarters in Washington, DC, VOA overseas news bureaus, and TSI overseas transmitting stations.
- The Office of Cuba Broadcasting plans to build an earthen levee to protect the medium wave antenna field in Marathon, Florida, from increasingly frequent tidal flooding. They will repair an antenna monitoring system used to ensure the strength of the broadcast signal that reaches Havana, Cuba, and its surrounding area. In addition, OCB will begin to upgrade master control video switching and monitoring equipment to support formatting for modern, digital television receivers.
- BCI funds are also supporting major construction costs to expand Open Space in the Cohen Building beyond the fourth floor consolidation prompted by the forced move of the BBG staff in the Switzer Building into Cohen Building Headquarters. Following that transformation of

35,000 square feet on the fourth floor from small, inefficient, private offices, to a more modern and collaborative open space work plan, the BBG is creating similar open areas in other parts of the Agency. These projects will reduce the Agency's rental costs as they facilitate the greater use of wireless office technology and create an office environment that encourages telework.

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## **Opportunity, Growth, and Security Initiative**

The Budget also includes a separate, fully paid for \$56 billion Opportunity, Growth, and Security Initiative. The Opportunity, Growth, and Security Initiative, which will be split evenly between defense and non-defense funding, shows how additional discretionary investments in 2015 can spur economic progress, promote opportunity, and strengthen national security.

Moreover, the Opportunity, Growth, and Security Initiative is fully paid for with a balanced package of spending cuts and tax loophole closers, showing that additional pro-growth investments are easily affordable without increasing the deficit if Congress will enact common-sense spending and tax reforms.

At the BBG, the Opportunity, Growth, and Security Initiative will support progress in the area of national security by allowing the Agency to reach audiences in high-priority areas, such as Iran, in a significantly more cost-effective manner through the use of multi-year satellite contracts. The BBG's satellite television broadcasts reach approximately 13 million Iranians weekly, delivering vital information about Iran's internal politics, U.S. policy, and the broader world during a period in which Iran's leaders and its citizens are making pivotal decisions about the future of the country's nuclear program.

As part of a longer-term strategy to realize efficiencies and cost savings in its satellite transmission program, the BBG is including a \$29.0 million funding request through the Opportunity, Growth and Security Initiative. By providing this funding, the BBG estimates savings of as much as 20% in satellite transmission costs. (This estimate updates the savings potential mentioned in the President's Budget released on March 4, 2014. Between initial budget preparations and the publication of the Congressional Budget Justification, the BBG successfully completed an extended effort to procure international satellite transmission capacity through the GSA schedule. The completion of the GSA procurement has already facilitated savings from the amount that had been initially committed for this purpose. If the Opportunity, Growth and Security Initiative enables the BBG to negotiate even more favorable multi-year pricing, we expect as much as 20% in additional savings.)

This two-part proposal would achieve savings over the course of several years. First, the migration of funding for satellite contracts to no-year funding that was initiated in FY 2014 will continue. This enables the Agency to negotiate significantly less expensive, multi-year contracts with major satellite providers. Second, this Opportunity, Growth, and Security Initiative proposal would provide the additional first-year funding necessary to pay the up-front costs for such multi-year contracts. The projected savings are only achievable if sufficient funds are available to pay for multiple years at once.

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## **Performance Budget Information**

### **Introduction**

This Performance Budget includes a summary of the BBG strategic plan, a summary of the status of the Agency's current 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. The Agency's annual Performance and Accountability Report (PAR) provides detailed performance information and can be found on the BBG website, *bbg.gov*.

### **Summary of the 2014-2018 BBG Strategic Plan**

The 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 U.S. strategic interests. The plan informs the FY 2015 budget request and continues the integration of performance, budget planning, and management of the BBG.

The mission of the Broadcasting Board of Governors remains to inform, engage, and connect people around the world in support of freedom and democracy.

This mission is achieved through two strategic goals:

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

Both of these strategic goals serve to further the BBG mission of supporting freedom and democracy. The purpose of communicating America's democratic experience is not merely public diplomacy or "moving the needle"; rather, by presenting a case study in the American experience, we seek 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.

U.S. values of freedom and democracy are under assault today. Resurgent authoritarianism and spreading extremism imperil U.S. interests. Europe witnesses a return to Cold War tensions of state authority versus popular will. The Middle East labors to support even modest pluralism and regain the democratic spirit of the Arab Spring. Syria is in utter chaos; Iraq shows signs of heading there. North Africa and the Sahel face rising extremism, from Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb to Boko Haram, now rivaling in ferocity the Taliban in South Asia.

The struggles unfolding today all have significant information or propaganda components. A war for influence is playing out on the stage of public opinion. Every non-democratic force now runs increasingly sophisticated information campaigns.

Consumers of news and information now have an unprecedented array of options from which to choose. For example, citizen journalism provides 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 trends in recent years have actually been toward *less* press freedom and growing Internet censorship in key markets. Freedom House and Reporters Without Borders have noted declines in world freedom and press freedom in their most recent reports.

When U.S. international broadcasting began in 1942, programs were broadcast via shortwave. Over time, 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. The BBG has kept up with these technological developments, which offer extraordinary new opportunities for unfiltered, direct dialogue with audiences around the world. Today, the BBG transmits programs through radio (shortwave, medium wave, FM, and satellite), terrestrial and satellite television, the Internet (web pages with streaming audio and video, as well as social media such as Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube), and numerous types of mobile technology including SMS, apps, and mobile web.

In order to serve audiences in less developed areas of the world, the 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 both current and future audiences, the BBG must also invest in new cutting-edge technology. In areas where the BBG has ceased to broadcast, or where ownership and usage of shortwave radio has declined significantly, the BBG has closed transmission stations, repurposed equipment, and invested these savings in digital media technology and new high-priority programming.

The BBG relies on extensive market research to identify audience preferences and the most appropriate programming mix and delivery options for specific target audiences. In addition to research about the effectiveness of current programming, the 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 BBG network will need to remain competitive. As new technologies emerge and in some instances become dominant, quality market research enables the BBG to be forward-thinking and strategically positioned to fulfill its mission. The Board undertakes a comprehensive assessment of the languages in which the BBG networks broadcast each year during its Language Service Review. This review examines qualitative and quantitative research on the performance of programming, audience reach and impact, and 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.

The BBG's Strategic Plan gives highest priority to setting the program mix and delivery platforms in order to meet market demand. This is critical to ensure that the 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.

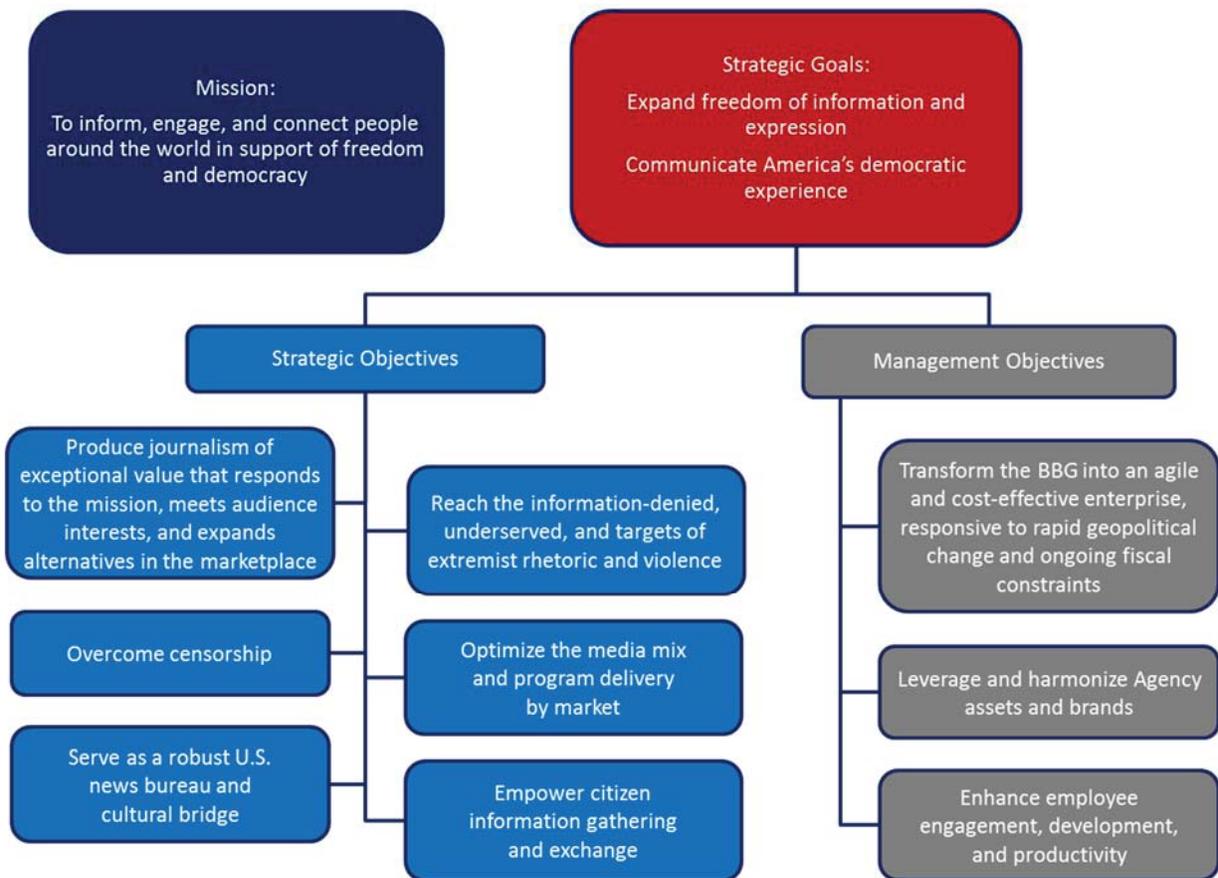
## **Impact Model**

In recognition that impact is about more than just audience reach, the FY 2012-2016 Strategic Plan set a goal of developing a multi-factor model to describe impact. Over the past two years, the BBG has developed this impact model and is now beginning to implement it. The model ties to the BBG mission statement and examines impact in the areas of informing, engaging and connecting, and creating change. 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 current strategic plan and particularly the performance goals that support the strategic objectives. The impact model will also inform a strategic review process over the coming months, in which the Board sets clear goals for the Agency and selects performance indicators that define success in specific markets. The BBG will implement a country-by-country review that serves to carry out the BBG mission and Strategic Plan.

## **Strategic and Management Objectives and Performance Goals**

The 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 over 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 meet audiences’ 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. Our 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 our 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 we target.
- Co-create content with reputable partners, as appropriate and consistent with broadcasting standards and editorial guidelines.

**Performance Goal 1: Reach significant audiences.**

Weekly Listening/Viewing Audiences (in millions)	FY 2011 Actual	FY 2012 Actual	FY 2013 Target	FY 2013 Actual	FY 2014 Target	FY 2015 Target
VOA	141.1	134.2	145.0	164.6	167.5	168.0
MBN (Radio Sawa)	14.9	13.4	15.0	11.1	11.5	11.5
MBN (Alhurra)	26.7	22.9	27.0	21.9	23.0	25.0
RFE/RL	24.3	23.4	19.6	17.9	20.2	21.1
RFA	11.9	10.7	10.7	10.8	11.0	11.2
OCB	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA

Because of the limitations of reliable survey data in Cuba, it is not possible to reliably measure understanding for OCB.

**Performance Goal 2: Maintain good or excellent program quality ratings for all broadcast services.**

Program Quality – percent of services whose programs are rated “good or better”	FY 2011 Actual	FY 2012 Actual	FY 2013 Target	FY 2013 Actual	FY 2014 Target	FY 2015 Target
VOA	100	100	100	100	100	100
MBN (Radio Sawa)	NA	NA	100	NA	100	100
MBN (Alhurra)	NA	NA	100	NA	100	100
RFE/RL	96	100	100	96	100	100
RFA	100	100	100	100	100	100
OCB	100	100	100	100	100	100

**Performance Goal 3: Provide programming that audiences find trustworthy.**

Program Credibility – percent of weekly audience who consider information to be very or somewhat trustworthy	FY 2011 Actual	FY 2012 Actual	FY 2013 Target	FY 2013 Actual	FY 2014 Target	FY 2015 Target
VOA	93	92	95	89	90	91
MBN (Radio Sawa)	92	89	92	85	86	86
MBN (Alhurra)	88	84	90	84	86	86
RFE/RL	93	93	94	92	93	94
RFA	92	92	92	89	91	92
OCB	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA

Because of the limitations of reliable survey data in Cuba, it is not possible to reliably measure understanding for OCB.

**Performance Goal 4: 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 2011 Actual	FY 2012 Actual	FY 2013 Target	FY 2013 Actual	FY 2014 Target	FY 2015 Target
VOA	88	88	86	90	91	92
MBN (Radio Sawa)	70	70	75	80	81	81
MBN (Alhurra)	70	72	75	79	81	81
RFE/RL	91	91	90	90	91	92
RFA	83	92	92	97	91	92
OCB	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA

Because of the limitations of reliable survey data in Cuba, it is not possible to reliably measure understanding for OCB.

**Performance Goal 5: Provide exceptional news and information.**

Uniqueness – percent of weekly audience reporting that broadcaster presents information they cannot get from other broadcasters	FY 2014 Target	FY 2015 Target
Milestones	Incorporate into core questionnaire	Establish baselines and set targets during FY 2016 budget formulation

**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 our broadcasts. Populations in our 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. Our current audiences are 62 percent male and 38 percent female – an imbalance ripe for correcting. We understand that to reach and be relevant with these audiences we need 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 our 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.

**Performance Goal 1: Increase audience reach in environments subject to extremist violence.**

	FY 2015 Target
Increase reach in Francophone Africa	2% additional weekly reach in countries surveyed (over FY13/14 levels)
Increase reach in Anglophone Africa	2% additional weekly reach in countries surveyed (over FY13/14 levels)
Increase weekly reach in Kenya	2% additional weekly reach (over FY13/14 levels)
Increase weekly reach in Tanzania	1% additional weekly reach (over FY13/14 levels)
Increase weekly reach in Nigeria	1% additional weekly reach (over FY13/14 levels)
Increase weekly reach in Niger	2% additional weekly reach (over FY13/14 levels)
Achieve significant impact in markets where BBG operates an FM transmitter	7% weekly reach in each city with a BBG FM transmitter
Increase weekly audience reach in DRC (beyond reach of VOA French and Swahili)	7% weekly reach for Lingala Service

**Performance Goal 2: Increase audience reach in environments lacking information.**

	FY 2015 Target
Expand weekly audience reach in Burma	+2%
Expand weekly audience reach in Cambodia	+2%
Expand weekly audience reach in Vietnam	+2%
Expand digital audience reach in China	+2%

**Contextual Indicators:**

2013 Freedom House Rankings	# of BBG target countries ranked		
	Not Free	Partly Free	Free
Freedom of the Press	67	53	6
Freedom in the World (political)	55	49	22

**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 our own, 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. We work on many fronts to make news and information accessible to our global audiences with the aim of enabling not only unfettered access to our own 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.

**Performance Goal 1: Increase traffic through Internet Anti-Censorship products**

	FY 2011 Actual	FY 2012 Actual	FY 2013 Actual	FY 2014 Target	FY 2015 Target
Increase proxy traffic through Ultrasurf	17,643 TB	19,210 TB	20,000 TB	21,000 TB	22,000 TB
Increase proxy traffic through Psiphon	290 TB	420 TB	1961 TB	3000 TB	4000 TB
Increase Satellite Internet traffic to Cuba	N/A	24 GB	138 GB	180 GB	240 GB

**Contextual Indicator:**

2013 Freedom House Rankings	# of BBG target countries ranked	
	Not Free	Partly Free
Freedom on the Net	8	3

**Strategic Objective 4: Optimize the media mix and program delivery by market**

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

- Increase distribution on platforms that we know 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 our 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 to affiliates.

**Performance Goal 1: Increase web and mobile traffic.**

Total weekly visitors to web and mobile sites	FY 2014 Target	FY 2015 Target
VOA	Roll out new analytics tool and establish baselines	Achieve 10% increase in weekly visitors over FY 2014 baselines
MBN		
RFE/RL		
RFA		
OCB		

Note: In FY 2014, the BBG switched analytics platforms, resulting in data discontinuity that requires rebaselining in FY 2014.

**Performance Goal 2: Build strong affiliate relationships.**

Number of affiliations (broadcast, online, and mobile)	FY 2011 Actual	FY 2012 Actual	FY 2013 Target	FY 2013 Actual	FY 2014 Target	FY 2015 Target
VOA	370	383	390	2,252	2,400	2,285
RFE/RL	68	81	85	759	287	307
RFA	9	14	15	29	30	30

Note: 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 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 like us; it is about helping them see how we manage the challenges of our democratic society – from economic growth to fiscal crises to race relations to educating our youth to addressing environmental change. These topic areas find ready comparisons in our target countries and resonate with our 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 on our part 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 our country a focal point of international attention, and our 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 our 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 Armenia, Bolivia, Turkey, et al.
- 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.

**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 Target	FY 2015 Target
VOA	Establish baselines	Set targets during FY 2016 budget formulation
MBN (Radio Sawa)		
MBN (Alhurra)		

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 Target	FY 2015 Target
VOA	Establish baselines	Set targets during FY 2016 budget formulation
MBN (Radio Sawa)		
MBN (Alhurra)		

**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 are 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. Our 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 our 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.

**Performance Goal 1: Increase audience interaction via social media.**

Digital Engagement Impact Index	FY 2014 Target	FY 2015 Target
VOA	Systematic, automated collection of social media data to establish baselines	Set targets during FY 2016 budget formulation
MBN		
RFE/RL		
RFA		
OCB		

**Performance Goal 2: Increase sharing of BBG programming.**

Percent of weekly audience who shared something heard/read/seen on broadcaster weekly	FY 2014 Target	FY 2015 Target
VOA	Establish baselines	Set targets during FY 2016 budget formulation
MBN (Radio Sawa)		
MBN (Alhurra)		
RFE/RL		
RFA		
OCB		

**Management Objective 1: Transform the BBG into an agile and cost-effective enterprise, responsive to rapid geopolitical change and ongoing fiscal constraints**

By virtue of historical circumstance, today’s 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.

- Restructure Agency management by appointing an Agency-wide CEO to manage the Agency’s day-to-day operations, with a part-time board of directors focused on strategy, budget, and public outreach.
- 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 workplace and increase collaboration by leveraging open space concepts.
- Make innovation a core value of how we work and interface with audiences and other stakeholders.
- Automate and streamline business processes and work flows.

**Performance Goal 1: Restructure Agency management**

	FY 2014 Target	FY 2015 Target
Pursue CEO appointment	Engage CEO search firm	Identify CEO candidates

**Performance Goal 2: Enhance the Agency’s technological posture**

	FY 2014 Target	FY 2015 Target
Execute seamless transition to Internet and fiber optic content distribution to stations and uplinks	All owned satellite uplinks fed via global MPLS network	All leased uplinks fed via Internet distribution

**Performance Goal 3: Transform workplace and increase collaboration**

	FY 2014 Target	FY 2015 Target
Leverage open space concepts	15% of total footprint	30% of total footprint

**Performance Goal 4: Make innovation a core value**

	FY 2014 Target	FY 2015 Target
Ensure managers undertake innovative projects (measured by prototype or proof of concept projects for improving internal management, communication, or media strategy)	15% of supervisory positions undertake and report on new innovative activities	25% of supervisory positions undertake and report on new innovative activities

**Performance Goal 5: Automate and streamline key business processes**

	FY 2014 Target	FY 2015 Target
Complete business process reengineering and automation of business and media workflows	Automate Time and Attendance system; Complete analysis of Financial, HR and Payroll systems integration	Integrate Financial, HR, Payroll, and Time and Attendance systems; Automate invoice submission and processing

**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 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 we currently produce.
- Harmonize news gathering, including stringer and correspondent networks, across the BBG to ensure required editorial coordination and avoid redundancy.
- Use our coordinated news gathering and reporting structures as assets to provide affiliates with greater value, through interactive segments and other special offerings.
- Research and develop translation capacities, partnering, as appropriate, with outside organizations to access expertise and resources, as needed.

**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 Target	FY 2015 Target
Establish shared strategies, operational plans, and budgets; enter evidence into SMART (Strategic Management and Audience Research Tool)	Eurasian markets served by VOA and RFE/RL	Asian markets served by VOA and RFA

**Performance Goal 2: Increase the quantity of original reporting shared across language services**

	FY 2014 Target	FY 2015 Target
Share content across language services	Establish baseline for shared content on common systems (Pangea, Direct, Dalet, and News Share)	Increase sharing of content

**Management Objective 3: Enhance employee engagement, development, and productivity**

Our 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 our target countries consistent with emerging priorities, programming formats, and advances in technology. Enhanced skill sets are required to program for and transmit via multiple media platforms – radio, TV, Internet, mobile, and through social media. Our 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 we confront 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.

**Performance Goal 1: Improve performance culture of agency.**

Results-oriented performance culture index (from Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey)	FY 2011 Actual	FY 2012 Actual	FY 2013 Actual	FY 2014 Target	FY 2015 Target
BBG	48	46	46	46	48
Government-wide (for comparison)	54	52	51		

**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 2011 Actual	FY 2012 Actual	FY 2013 Actual	FY 2014 Target	FY 2015 Target
BBG	59	53	55	55	57
Government-wide (for comparison)	73	72	70		

**Performance Goal 3: Increase participation in Health and Wellness Program.**

Percentage of employees participating in Health and Wellness program (from Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey)	FY 2011 Actual	FY 2012 Actual	FY 2013 Actual	FY 2014 Target	FY 2015 Target
BBG	10	11	26	30	35

**Regional Accomplishments**

The 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 2015 annual performance objectives. For more information on accomplishments of each broadcast network, see the individual narratives in the preceding sections of this document.

**Performance Objective: Reach critical audiences in the Middle East and North Africa.**

	FY 2013 (Estimate)	FY 2014 (Target)	FY 2015 (Target)
Audience (in millions)	30.1	31.1	32.8

**Program Accomplishments**

- MBN provided unique insight into democratic transitions in Egypt and Iraq. From the Constitutional referendum to the unseating of President Morsi, Alhurra and Radio Sawa provided wall-to-wall coverage through balanced news and objective current affairs shows. Alhurra provided nonstop coverage and reports clearly and purposefully addressing all sides of the crisis from the organization of the march on Tahrir Square on June 30, 2013, through the formulation of an interim government in July. Alhurra-Iraq and Radio Sawa provided extensive coverage of the Iraqi provincial elections held in April 2013, the first elections held after the American troop withdrawal. Alhurra-Iraq provided 14 hours of live continuous coverage from the opening of the polls; reporters filed stories from Baghdad and seven other major provincial cities.
- Despite the significant obstacles to newsgathering inherent in reporting from a war zone, MBN has ensured balanced, responsible coverage of events surrounding the war in Syria in its daily newscasts and talk shows. Beyond the headlines of ballooning death tolls and graphic video of destruction, MBN created a website that focuses on six individual Syrians to provide context for the ongoing conflict through first-person stories. These Syrians blog about the challenges and triumphs of living in and watching their homeland be torn apart on a new website, *SyriaStories.com*. MBN has provided in-depth coverage of the U.S.'s reaction

to the crisis in Syria from the State Department, White House, Congress, and the Pentagon, including the debate over providing arms to the Syrian rebels featuring interviews with, among others, Sen. Robert Menendez (D-NJ) and Sen. John McCain (R-AZ).

- MBN launched new mobile websites for Alhurra and Radio Sawa. The new sites are more accessible and make information easier to share among mobile users. Alhurra marked another significant digital milestone when in June 2013 its Facebook page surpassed 2.5 million “likes.”
- One of the most popular entertainment/news channels in Egypt, Al Hayat-1, began prime time broadcasting of Alhurra’s critically acclaimed *Rayheen ala Feen?* (Arabic for “Where are we going?”) in February. The MBN program follows the lives of five young Egyptians as they adjust to a post-revolution Egypt. The series premiered on Alhurra in September 2012 and its rebroadcast on Al Hayat exposes millions of additional Egyptian viewers to Alhurra’s high quality programming.

Notable Program Changes

- The FY 2015 Budget proposes an investment to provide digital media for next generation audiences, with emphasis on the Middle East and North Africa.

FY 2015 Performance Objectives

- Build mobile and social audiences in the Middle East and North Africa 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.**

	<b>FY 2013 (Estimate)</b>	<b>FY 2014 (Target)</b>	<b>FY 2015 (Target)</b>
Audience (in millions)	49.5	50.1	46.8

Program Accomplishments

- BBG achieved success with a multi-platform, multi-network model in Iran. According to a December 2013/January 2014 BBG-commissioned national telephone survey of Iranian adults, VOA television programs to Iran are watched by more than 24 percent of the adult population, making VOA Persian the most popular international broadcasters in the country. Programs are available on direct-to-home satellite television, as well as online and on mobile phones, 24 hours a day. In December 2012, in coordination with the BBG and VOA Persian, RFE/RL’s Radio Farda launched its first TV program, *Breakfast with News*, on VOA’s and Radio Farda’s satellite channels. The daily 60-minute news and information program has been welcomed by audiences who previously lacked options for live TV news in the morning.
- VOA’s Urdu Service employed a new approach in Pakistan in the past year in an effort to reach new and younger audiences. VOA Urdu places fast-paced television programs that provide insight into American values and daily life on competitive cable networks that appeal to Pakistani youth and women. The Service diversified its product set and delivery platforms, resulting in a doubling of its television audience. By telling the stories of

Americans and Pakistanis, the Urdu Service has garnered an audience of 13 million in Pakistan.

- In 2013 RFE/RL’s Russian Service provided exclusive live video coverage of opposition leader Aleksei Navalny’s trial and verdict. RFE/RL’s Russian Service was the only source of live video coverage from Kirov, the site of the trial. More than a dozen other RFE/RL and VOA language services used the live feed on their websites, expanding the audience for the exclusive coverage. VOA’s approach in Russia continues to evolve based on market opportunities, with an emphasis on digital media and TV affiliates. Since 2008, visits to the VOA Russian website have doubled every year. Traffic to the VOA Russian YouTube channel is up, with as many as a million views a month. In the past year, VOA also partnered with domestic television channels, including the Russian Business Channel, which has an estimated audience of 11 percent in Russia.

Notable Program Changes

- The FY 2015 Budget includes an investment for providing digital media for next generation audiences, with emphasis on Iran, Russia, and Pakistan/Afghanistan.
- The FY 2015 Budget proposes reducing transmission (for VOA Bangla and RFE/RL Belarusian) and language services (VOA Albanian, Bosnian, Macedonian, Serbian, Persian, Georgian, Uzbek, and Azerbaijani and RFE/RL Armenian and Belarusian).

FY 2015 Performance Objectives

- Build mobile and social audiences in Iran, Russia, Pakistan, and Afghanistan by producing original content targeted to emerging news audiences.
- Leverage the newsgathering assets of VOA and RFE/RL and increase coordination in countries where both networks broadcast.

**Performance Objective: Focus broadcasting to audiences of strategic priority in East and Southeast Asia.**

	FY 2013 (Estimate)	FY 2014 (Target)	FY 2015 (Target)
Audience (in millions)	40.0	40.2	41.4

Program Accomplishments

- VOA undertook a major new initiative for Mandarin speakers in the past year, re-formatting and re-branding an existing satellite television channel to target China. Satellite television is the only media distribution path Chinese censors do not block. *VOA Wei Shei* includes two original hours of Mandarin news and information programming daily. Though Beijing takes vigorous steps to block the Internet, VOA Mandarin found new ways to circumvent censors by using Chinese social media sites including Weibo (the Chinese version of Twitter).
- In the spring of 2013, RFA produced an iBook on the 1989 Tiananmen unrest and repression in Mandarin and English. This is one in a series of e-books RFA is publishing which can circumvent censorship, since it can be easily downloaded and shared via email or on thumb drives.

- RFA launched its first-ever inter-service bilingual program in Tibetan and Mandarin entitled *Tibet-China Dialogue*. This bi-weekly show focuses on promoting cross-ethnic understanding between Tibetans and the majority Han people of China. VOA and RFA also provided detailed coverage of the situation on the ground in Tibet. VOA’s Tibetan Service produced an acclaimed documentary, *Fire in the Land of Snow: Self-Immolations in Tibet*, examining the wave of self-immolations that have taken place since 2009. The one-hour documentary was broadcast in Tibetan, Mandarin, Vietnamese, and English on direct-to-home satellite, affiliate stations, VOA websites, and social media.
- RFA realigned resources and operational initiatives in the Burmese, Cambodian, and Lao Services, in an effort to increase localized reporting. This restructuring has allowed RFA Burmese to recruit and train 30 new journalists inside the country, including nine in states and divisions outside of Yangon.
- RFA’s Korean Service expanded its coverage of North Korea. It launched a new feature entitled *What’s Happening Now in North Korea?*, which explores the wide range of problems within the Hermit Kingdom.
- In early 2013, RFA introduced *The Water Project – An Investigation of Drinking Water in Asia*, an online, multilingual project on the quality and availability of clean drinking water in RFA’s target countries.

Notable Program Changes

- The FY 2015 Budget includes investments for growing U.S. engagement in East and Southeast Asia and providing digital media for next generation audiences, with emphasis on Southeast Asia.
- The FY 2015 Budget proposes reducing transmission (for VOA Lao and English to Asia and RFA Vietnamese) and language services (VOA Indonesian radio).

FY 2015 Performance Objectives

- Launch video and digital initiatives for Burma, Cambodia, and Vietnam targeting the region’s youth.
- Expand social media outreach inside the Chinese firewall.
- Leverage the newsgathering assets of VOA and RFA and increase coordination in countries where both networks broadcast.

**Performance Objective: Reach new audiences with increased engagement in Africa.**

	<b>FY 2013 (Estimate)</b>	<b>FY 2014 (Target)</b>	<b>FY 2015 (Target)</b>
Audience (in millions)	57.9	60.8	63.3

Program Accomplishments

- In response to the surge in Islamist extremism in Mali and Northern Nigeria, VOA created new Bambara language radio programs and developed new Hausa content for radio and for mobile devices. VOA is the only international news provider to broadcast in Bambara, a

language spoken by about half the population in Mali. VOA’s Bambara’s broadcasts were an immediate hit, with listeners praising VOA’s extensive coverage of local news. VOA covered the July elections with reports from polling stations around the country and analysis from studio guests.

- In strife-torn northern Nigeria, where the terrorist group Boko Haram has a foothold, VOA added weekend programming and new SMS services in the past year to provide breaking headlines and news updates. Recent research shows that VOA reaches 36 percent of Hausa speakers in the region. VOA Hausa also held a series of town hall meetings, facilitating dialogue among families, local businesses, and government officials on such major challenges as healthcare, unemployment, and religious extremism.
- In Somalia, another fragile country where terrorists and criminals have exploited the lack of a strong government, more than half of adults listen to VOA weekly. VOA partnered this year with Google Ideas in a project to involve Somalis in the drafting of a new constitution. Audiences, including the Somali government, expressed gratitude to VOA for providing citizens with information not otherwise available.
- The BBG expanded its broadcast reach in Africa by installing FM transmitters in Bamako, Mali; Juba, South Sudan; and N’Djamena, Chad.

Notable Program Changes

- The FY 2015 Budget includes investments for engaging current and future generations in Africa (through satellite television, local content on FM stations, and Lingala language programming) and providing digital media for next generation audiences, with emphasis on the Sahel.

FY 2015 Performance Objectives

- Launch a 24/7 satellite television stream for Africa with programming in English, French, Hausa, Swahili, and Somali.
- Provide compelling local content for FM audiences in Africa.
- Begin Lingala language broadcasts providing critical news and information to audiences in the DRC.

**Performance Objective: Expand audience reach in strategic locations of Latin America.**

	<b>FY 2013 (Estimate)</b>	<b>FY 2014 (Target)</b>	<b>FY 2015 (Target)</b>
Audience (in millions)	28.3	28.3	28.3

Program Accomplishments

- VOA’s Spanish Service to Latin America produced extraordinary results after a successful shift in strategy. VOA Spanish now markets itself to Latin American radio and TV stations as the go-to source for news about the United States and major global events. The latest research shows a measured audience of 26 million adults, up from just a few million several years ago. Last year VOA extensively covered the U.S. elections, and this year the Service has closely followed another issue of great interest to Latin Americans, the immigration

debate in the United States. Service programming does not only cover the news; it also provides insight into U.S. democracy at work.

- OCB has doubled the number of news reports it produces in Cuba, providing audiences with more in-depth local coverage—something that is of maximum interest to Cuban audiences. The Martí have assembled the largest network of independent journalists working inside Cuba. These journalists send reports (which include audio, text, video, and photos) from multiple sites around the island via telephone or SMS. The Martí are now also able to hire Cuban nationals working inside Cuba as television journalists and producers, and OCB has created a small network of Cuban TV journalists working in various parts of the island exclusively for the Martí.
- TV Martí increased its original programming, including information and analysis, interviews, documentaries, series, music, and live coverage of news and events, while diversifying content with social, economic, sports and technological topics. TV Martí launched the special programs series “... en sus propias palabras” (“...in their own words”) which includes one-on-one interviews with the most important leaders of the dissident movement on the island such as Yoani Sánchez, Berta Soler, Antonio Rodiles, Eliecer Avila, Guillermo Fariñas, and others.
- The Martí reach out to nearly one million Cubans each week via email and SMS initiatives, providing news and information that would otherwise not be available to them. In 2013, OCB deployed its SMS-based social network, Piramideo, which allows Cubans to communicate with each other free from government control. OCB also launched a *martinoticias.com* app for Android and iOS. OCB grew its social media integration across all platforms to engage in news-gathering and content engagement. OCB continued to use alternative means of distribution for Martí original content across the island, including DVDs and paper flash drives, which are easy to distribute and hard to detect or censor.

#### Notable Program Changes

- The FY 2015 Budget proposes reducing VOA Spanish long-form television programs in order to focus on the effective U.S. Bureau strategy of interactives with stations across the region.

#### FY 2015 Performance Objectives

- Continue to build upon VOA’s success as a U.S. bureau and global news provider for affiliates throughout Latin America.
- Increase newsgathering and production coordination between VOA Spanish and OCB.

**Performance Objective: Align essential support functions with broadcasting implementation strategies and performance goals.**

#### Program Accomplishments

- In FY 2013, the Internet Anti-Censorship (IAC) team countered Internet censorship in 12 countries and supported 20 BBG language services. The team deployed a mobile application for Android devices incorporating a social news reader, social reporter to accept user-generated content, and real-time chat functionality targeted at users in Iran. And, in coordination with the BBG’s Office of Digital and Design Innovation (ODDI), the IAC team integrated censorship circumvention technologies directly into mobile applications used by

BBG broadcasters. Working with the Office of Technology, Services, and Innovation's frequency monitoring staff, the IAC team also deployed hardware and software capable of monitoring in-country Internet censorship in over 70 locations worldwide.

- ODDI launched a series of new digital products and services that expand the capabilities of BBG networks to reach and engage with global audiences. First among those is the launch of new mobile applications in over 43 languages (the largest number of languages in any mobile application in the world) and improvements to the mobile websites that added an additional ten million page views per month to the BBG's total. Other services include award-winning websites built for mobile devices in the Middle East, new syndication relationships that grew the BBG digital audience by over three million and a host of new story-telling tools, including U.S. international media's first interactive tablet book.
- The Office of Strategy and Development launched the Strategic Management and Audience Research Tool (SMART), a country-based knowledge management system. The web-based SMART system includes up-to-date information on country strategies, target audiences and their demographics, media habits and preferences, political and media environments, location of local BBG broadcast affiliates and transmitters, as well as links to other publically available information supportive to decision-making, such as various press freedom indices. The system gives broadcasters, managers, and support offices one-stop access to this critical research data and ensures that everyone is working from the same strategy.
- IBB spearheaded an effort to improve workplace engagement at the BBG. After collaborating with the Partnership for Public Service, IBB, along with VOA and OCB, launched a multiyear effort to change the Agency culture by developing an action plan to improve communication, transparency, accountability and fairness.

#### Notable Program Changes

- The FY 2015 Budget includes investments for providing digital media for next generation audiences.
- The FY 2015 Budget includes substantial cuts associated with realignment of the transmission network and administrative reductions across the Agency.

#### FY 2015 Performance Objectives

- Realign BBG transmissions to maximize the effectiveness of program delivery resources.
- Provide cutting-edge circumvention tools to audiences in countries that restrict and censor Internet access.
- Provide enterprise-wide technical support for digital and social media innovation.
- Increase awareness of BBG programs in high priority markets through advertising and promotion.
- Use research to identify appropriate target audiences and their preferred media, with the formats and content that would appeal to them.
- 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 improve 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.

## **Digital Media Metrics**

The Internet and other forms of digital media have become key delivery platforms for BBG broadcasts in many media markets. The BBG collects and analyzes various metrics to understand how audiences use these platforms to access and share news and information. While Internet access varies widely across the BBG broadcast regions, the digital media metrics presented on the following pages give some indication of the impact of digital media efforts by showing the average number of weekly visits, average numbers of pages per visit, and average number of weekly visitors to the BBG language service websites during fiscal year 2013. These numbers do not count most traffic to proxy servers, which can be significant in areas where Internet access is censored or restricted. These numbers also do not capture the further distribution of digital content through online social networks or informal word-of-mouth.

**Broadcasting Board of Governors  
Digital Media Metrics**

Language Service	Average Weekly Visits FY 2013	Average Pages/Visit FY 2013	Average Weekly Visitors FY 2013
<b>Voice of America</b>			
<b>Africa Division</b>			
Central Africa (Kinyarwanda, Kirundi)	11,100	2.6	2,700
French To Africa Service	15,000	1.9	4,900
Hausa Service	180,700	2.1	13,500
Horn of Africa (Amharic, Tigrigna, Afaan Oromoo)			
Amharic	141,700	2.6	29,100
Tigrigna	50,300	2.6	18,800
Afaan Oromoo	9,600	2.5	4,700
Portuguese Service	40,700	2.6	10,800
Somali Service	177,400	2.3	44,200
Swahili Service	2,200	2.5	1,400
Zimbabwe/Shona/Ndebele/English			
Zimbabwe	18,300	1.8	2,700
Shona	10,300	2.1	800
Ndebele	4,700	2.1	200
<b>East Asia &amp; Pacific Division</b>			
Burmese Service	244,200	2.8	56,400
Cantonese Service	18,900	2.1	2,700
Indonesian Service	123,500	1.9	26,500
Khmer Service	70,600	2.6	19,100
Khmer English	30,700	2.5	8,300
Korean Service	78,200	2.3	16,700
Lao Service	20,200	4.2	5,200
Mandarin Service	288,700	3.1	76,800
Thai Service	19,900	1.7	6,400
Tibetan Service	21,800	2.8	4,400
Tibetan English	17,500	2.1	4,500
Vietnamese Service	717,700	3.3	266,200
<b>Eurasia Division</b>			
Albanian Service	36,400	2.5	10,800
Armenian Service	6,500	2.2	1,500
Bosnian Service	6,000	2.0	2,100
Georgian Service	12,900	2.0	3,300
Greek Service	5,000	1.8	1,400
Macedonian Service	7,000	1.6	3,200
Russian Service	314,700	2.3	157,400
Serbian Service	18,500	2.2	5,400
Ukrainian Service	37,900	1.5	23,600
<b>Latin America Division</b>			
Creole Service	6,000	2.9	700
Spanish Service	321,500	1.6	47,100
<b>South Asia Division</b>			
Afghanistan Service			
Dari	26,600	2.5	7,100
Pashto	20,100	2.4	5,100
VOA Radio Deewa (Pashto)	17,800	2.6	1,900
Azerbaijani Service	18,900	2.1	4,400
Bangla Service	10,200	2.2	2,500
Kurdish Service	10,700	2.4	2,100
Kurdi	1,500	2.3	900
Turkish Service	26,800	1.9	2,000
Urdu Service	64,000	2.8	16,500
Uzbek Service	23,300	2.6	1,900

Note: Numbers do not include some proxy visits. Average weekly visitors and pages/visit include only desktop sites. Average weekly visits includes mobile and desktop. Data presented here reflect the first 48 weeks of FY 2013; data for the final four weeks of the fiscal year is not available due to a change in analytics tools used.

Broadcasting Board of Governors Digital Media Metrics			
Language Service	Average Weekly Visits FY 2013	Average Pages/Visit FY 2013	Average Weekly Visitors FY 2013
<b>VOA Persian</b>	720,400	2.4	210,400
<b>English Division</b>	1,402,700	1.8	450,300
<b>Special English</b>	275,000	3.4	116,300
<b>Office of Cuba Broadcasting</b>			
Radio & TV Marti	76,700	2.5	29,100
<b>Radio Free Europe Radio Liberty</b>			
Armenian	129,200	3.1	37,000
Armenian Russian	16,300	2.3	6,200
Azerbaijani	133,200	2.9	57,700
Azerbaijani Russian	31,000	2.8	8,200
Balkans (Bosnian, Macedonian, Serbian, Montenegrin, Albanian, Croatian)	68,700	2.5	43,300
Kosovo	56,600	2.2	17,300
Macedonia	49,600	1.5	24,200
Belarusian	83,100	3.2	18,100
Georgian	60,900	2.1	25,300
Ekho Kavkaza (Russian to the Caucasus)	40,100	2.7	16,900
Kazakh	124,800	2.5	60,500
Kazakh Russian	38,100	2.0	8,900
Kyrgyz	108,100	3.8	20,200
Kyrgyz Russian	30,600	2.0	12,200
Moldovan	35,800	2.1	12,600
North Caucasus (Avar, Chechen and Circassian)			
Avar	3,100	3.7	200
Chechen	6,000	3.1	900
Radio Farda (Persian)	1,413,000	2.4	365,700
Radio Free Afghanistan (Dari and Pashto)			
Dari	46,000	3.0	12,400
Pashto	43,600	3.3	8,900
Radio Mashaal (Pashto to FATA)	12,300	2.9	2,400
Radio Free Iraq (Arabic)	40,100	1.7	15,300
Russian	488,500	2.0	260,300
Tajik	134,300	3.9	22,700
Tajik Russian	29,300	2.5	9,600
Tatar-Bashkir	23,600	3.3	3,800
Turkmen	29,200	2.8	6,300
Ukrainian	238,900	1.7	141,500
Uzbek	320,300	3.3	41,000
<b>Radio Free Asia</b>			
Burmese Service	109,900	2.3	1,000
Cambodian Service	172,200	2.9	1,300
Cantonese Service	9,900	1.8	200
Korean Service	13,500	3.2	9,100
Laotian Service	13,600	3.8	6,800
Mandarin Service	50,500	2.7	32,300
Tibetan Service	14,100	2.4	5,600
Uyghur Service	12,900	4.4	5,400
Vietnamese Service	394,700	2.5	182,800
<b>Middle East Broadcasting Networks</b>			
Alhurra	123,764	1.6	70,091
Radio Sawa	108,464	1.9	56,332

Note: Numbers do not include some proxy visits. Average weekly visitors and pages/visit include only desktop sites. Average weekly visits includes mobile and desktop. Data presented here reflect the first 48 weeks of FY 2013; data for the final four weeks of the fiscal year is not available due to a change in analytics tools used.

## Performance Budget Appendix: Information on Key Performance Indicators

This section contains explanatory text on the main performance indicators that the BBG has used historically, as well as information on the verification and validation of these indicators. The performance goals contained in this annual performance plan use these indicators, along with new milestones and indicators. The BBG will continue to refine the definitions of these indicators and develop appropriate verification and validation procedures for them.

**Overall Weekly Audiences:** This indicator measures the number of people in target areas listening to or viewing BBG programming on a weekly basis. The measure is obtained for each language service and for the countries served by the BBG. 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.

Depending on the political, social, and media conditions in each country, measurement of audience size may be easily attained, attained with difficulty, or impossible. For both financial and logistical considerations, the most statistically robust research is not always possible for all areas. Where full probability surveys cannot be done, the best feasible sampling method is used. These may cause some estimates to have a somewhat wider margin of error, and the BBG seeks to accurately identify the margin of error for each survey, taking into account effects of different sample designs. Technical reports for each survey contain these details.

In certain countries, however, political conditions or funding constraints may preclude any research from taking place in a given year. Therefore, performance values for the BBG as a whole and for each BBG broadcast network include the most recent survey data from each country, most of which is from the current or prior year, although it may go back as far as five years.

Internationally accepted statistical methods are used to estimate audience size from sample survey data. In rare cases when the BBG is only able to sample particular regions or urban areas, data is projected on the sample population not the national population.

The increasing reliance on local rebroadcasts via affiliate radio and television stations and the addition of various digital outlets to the broadcast distribution scheme further complicate measurement in many countries. Another factor that complicates the measurement and reporting of audiences for U.S. international media is that estimates must be unduplicated as they are aggregated. Inevitably there is a certain amount of overlap in listeners among international broadcasters and among platforms (radio, television, and Internet). The BBG’s methodology avoids counting the same listener or viewer twice when consolidating country, region, or worldwide audience figures.

**Program Quality:** This indicator presents the percentage of a network’s language services whose programming is assessed as being of good-or-better quality. Ratings are based upon two broad criteria: (1) content and (2) presentation. The content and presentation criteria include evaluations of accuracy, reliability, authoritativeness, objectivity, comprehensiveness, and other variables reflecting distinct statutory, policy, and mission mandates for the different stations and

separate sub-criteria for each production unit unique to its media and the program. These are averaged and summarized on a scale from 1-4, where 1.0-1.3 = poor; 1.4-1.6 = poor to fair; 1.7-2.3 = fair; 2.4-2.6 = fair to good; 2.7-3.3 = good; 3.4-3.6 = good to excellent; 3.7-4.0 = excellent.

Measuring program quality requires developing standardized criteria applicable to very different media and methods of delivery while minimizing subjective judgments on content and presentation. Historically, this measure has combined scores of external monitoring panels with the analysis of in-house analysts. The BBG is evaluating and restructuring how it conducts external quality analysis. Scores for FY 2012 and 2013 are based exclusively on in-house ratings.

**Program Credibility:** This indicator is determined by the survey question about “trustworthiness of news and information” of those sampled respondents who listened at least once a week to each station. The answers are registered on a five-point scale—very trustworthy, somewhat trustworthy, neither trustworthy nor untrustworthy, somewhat untrustworthy, or very untrustworthy. 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 very or somewhat trustworthy.

The mix of target countries underlying a credibility estimate for a BBG broadcaster as a whole is held constant so that changes in the value are attributable to survey data only, and not to a changing mix of countries surveyed from year to year. As local conditions under which surveys are conducted often change dramatically, the ability to re-survey is occasionally restricted or inhibited. As with the audience estimate, if a survey was not performed in a country in the current year, the most current value was used up to five years prior. Also, credibility estimates are not included for countries where the number of regular listeners is so small ( $n < 50$ ) that the estimate is unreliable. Typically, because the audience is so small, these exclusions do not affect the overall credibility rating of a BBG broadcast network as a whole.

**Understanding:** This indicator is determined by the survey question asking weekly listeners/viewers 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.”

**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.

### **Verification and Validation of Indicators**

The performance indicators are a best effort to measure each broadcast network's level of performance now, and to project how effective they will be in FY 2014 and FY 2015. To achieve maximum objectivity, measurements are performed independently of the elements being evaluated. VOA, OCB, RFE/RL, RFA, and MBN audience research is carried out by an outside research contractor, currently Gallup. The appropriate network research director computes network-wide performance values, and sends them to the BBG research manager 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, and these are being improved to allow computation of margins of error that include design effects where feasible.



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