



From: Broadcasting Board of Governors
Date: April 11, 2014
Subject: **Minutes of the BBG Meeting of April 11, 2014**

The Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG) met today at BBG headquarters in Washington, D.C. The meeting was open for public attendance as seating capacity allowed and for public observation via streaming on the BBG website.

The meeting was attended by the following Board members:

Chairman Jeffrey Shell
Governor Matthew Armstrong
Governor Ryan Crocker
Governor Susan McCue
Governor Michael Meehan
Governor Kenneth Weinstein
Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs Richard Stengel (via telephone)

Other persons in attendance are listed at the end of these minutes.

The agenda of the meeting is set forth in Attachment 1.

The Chairman called the meeting to order and noted that the meeting was being held in compliance with the Government in the Sunshine Act and streamed live over the Internet at the BBG website.

Chairman Shell noted that the meeting will include a “deep dive” on a BBG network, but because Radio Free Asia’s (RFA) offices are currently being renovated, today’s “deep dive” on RFA was being held at the Cohen Building in Washington, D.C. He added that the Board hopes to visit RFA headquarters in August for a meet and greet with the network’s dedicated and hard-working employees. He also noted that today’s meeting will include two panels: The first panel discussion will provide an overview of U.S. international media response to the crisis in Ukraine; and the second panel discussion will focus on the Internet Anti-Censorship (IAC) programs at the BBG in order to inform the Board and the public about the current state of play of these important programs.

The Chairman reported on a tragic loss since the last Board meeting. He stated that, Dr. Mohammed Bdaiwi Owaid Al-Shammari, Baghdad Bureau Chief of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty’s (RFE/RL) Radio Free Iraq, was shot and killed at a security checkpoint near his office on March 22. On behalf of the Board, Chairman Shell expressed his condolences to Dr. Al-

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Shammari's family, friends and colleagues, and asked for a moment of silence in remembrance of Dr. Al-Shammari.

Chairman Shell noted that the BBG continually monitors threats to media freedom and to its journalists by making a point to recognize those threats at each of the Board meetings. He said that the BBG is becoming increasingly concerned about the situation in and around Ukraine and cited a number of incidents in which reporters from both Voice of America (VOA) and RFE/RL had faced violence and threats in the course of their work. On behalf of the Board, Chairman Shell condemned lawless acts against BBG journalists and called for the end to interference with the work of BBG journalists and for all parties involved to respect Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

The Chairman also noted troubled incidents in other countries: (1) In Russia, the Russian information agency has cut off all remaining radio transmissions by U.S. international media; (2) In South Sudan, VOA's project bureau chief was detained and released after questioning by national security officers of the South Sudan government, and another South Sudan VOA reporter was detained by security forces, questioned about his work, and told that he cannot do any additional reporting without first getting their permission; (3) In Herat, Afghanistan, a VOA stringer was detained by the campaign staff of a leading Afghan presidential candidate and later released after local journalists intervened on his behalf; (4) In the Waziristan region of Pakistan, Adnan Khan, a VOA Deewa reporter received a phone call on March 14 from someone who identified himself as a member of Pakistani Taliban, accusing Mr. Khan of working for "spy agencies" and warned him to stop reporting on the region or he should prepare to be tried by a Taliban court that would punish him for his reporting; and (5) in Baku, Azerbaijan, while covering a student demonstration, Tapdig Farhadoglu, a stringer for VOA's Azerbaijani Service, was assaulted on February 21 by the chief of the security force at Baku State University in an attempt to get him to stop recording video of security personnel attacking the demonstrators. In closing, the Chairman stated that Alhurra's correspondent Bashar Fahmi remains missing in Syria following an August 2012 reporting trip in Aleppo and called for anyone with information about Mr. Fahmi's whereabouts or well-being to come forward.

Turning to BBG business, Chairman Shell said that the Board had received by email materials for the consent agenda, and that he did not receive any comments. He described five items on the consent agenda for the Board's consideration, including two resolutions that were considered last month by the Advisory Committee that will be submitted as part of the BBG compliance response to the Office of Inspector General's 2013 inspection of the Board: (1) Draft minutes of February 25, 2014 Board meeting; (2) Resolution for David Burke Distinguished Journalism Awards; (3) Draft updated policy regarding non-disclosure of deliberative information; (4) Draft resolution for a code of conduct for the BBG Board; and (5) Draft policy statement on the prohibition of harassment. There being no comments, Governor McCue made a motion to adopt the consent agenda. Governor Armstrong seconded. The Board voted unanimously to adopt the consent agenda.

The Chairman announced that, in March, the Board established the Special Committee on Internet Anti-Censorship, which was created to establish clear program objectives, devise a

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process of utilizing IAC funds, and set up straightforward processes for oversight and evaluation of IAC activities. He noted that the IAC Committee, under the leadership of Governor Weinstein, had convened twice – April 4 and 10. At the Chairman’s invitation, Governor Weinstein reported that, on April 4, the IAC Committee reviewed the statutory requirements of the FY 2014 omnibus bill (the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2014 (the “Act”)), considered various program administration structures, and discussed the need for an appropriate oversight mechanism, and that on April 10, the Committee focused on how to spend the appropriated funds. Governor Weinstein then described the Committee’s recommendations in detail. Chairman Shell commended RFA President Libby Liu and IBB Director of Global Operations Andre Mendes for their work, and that due to their efforts, Congress had recognized the importance and impact of BBG-sponsored Internet freedom initiatives and increased funding for IAC activities. There followed a Board vote to adopt the IAC Committee’s recommendations.

At about 8:50 a.m. EST, Governor Meehan joined the meeting.

Chairman Shell stated that Iran is a strategic priority of the BBG, and the Board had asked for a comprehensive review of U.S. international media (USIM) broadcasting to Iran in order to produce recommendations about a new strategy, including content and delivery tactics and organizational structure to reach audiences in Iran. At the Chairman’s request, IBB Director of Global Strategy Robert Bole provided a report, emphasizing a single stream strategy. The Chairman said that the topic was recently added to the agenda for a discussion and consideration of two resolutions concerning USIM strategy for Iran that were sent to the Board in advance of the meeting. At the Chairman’s invitation, Governor Meehan introduced his resolution. Chairman Shell clarified that Governor Meehan’s resolution suggests that all Persian-language news and information programming activities sponsored by BBG shall be undertaken solely by RFE/RL. The Chairman then offered his resolution that suggests harmonizing the Persian-language news and information programming of VOA and RFE/RL in accordance with the guidelines presented in the final report by Messrs. Bole and Jeffrey Trimble. Upon hearing comments and suggestions from other Governors about the two resolutions, Chairman Shell offered the following: (1) Governor Meehan’s resolution should be amended to state that a transition plan shall be presented to the Board at its meeting in June 2014 instead of February 2014; and (2) Chairman Shell’s resolution should require an implementation plan to be presented to the Board at its meeting in June. There followed separate votes for Governor Meehan’s resolution (one “yes” and six “no”) and for Chairman Shell’s resolution (seven “yes”). As a result, the Board unanimously adopted the resolution offered by the Chairman. Governor Meehan commented that the Board or the Interim Management Team (IMT) may wish to consider bringing in additional resources from the outside to help with this or other important projects.

The Chairman noted the continued work of the BBG Special Committee on the Future of Shortwave Radio Broadcasting (“SW Committee”) under the leadership of Governor Armstrong. He added that the Board expects to hear a report from the SW Committee at the meeting in June. In addition, he noted that Governor Armstrong has been working with the Director of Global Strategy to update and sharpen the BBG’s strategy. At the Chairman’s invitation, Governor Armstrong reported on the progress to date on these matters, and he especially acknowledged the

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additional work load of the IMT and expressed his deep appreciation for their efforts to advance the agency in this difficult time. The Chairman added that the Board is very pleased with the work performed by the IMT and is appreciative of the hard work of the dedicated staff reporting to the IMT as well as those working across the agency.

In accordance with the Board's prior protocol for allowing members of the public to speak at meetings, the Chairman invited Ann Noonan, Executive Director of Committee for U.S. International Broadcasting, to address the Board for three minutes.

The Board took a short recess and reconvened for an overview of RFA presented by Ms. Liu and several RFA managers.

At the conclusion of the RFA overview, the Board took a brief recess and reconvened for a panel two panel discussion on USIM response to crisis in Ukraine, which followed by another panel on IAC activities at the BBG.

Upon conclusion of the panel discussions, Governor Meehan asked for a clarification pertaining to the IAC Committee's recommendations as drafted in the Record of Decisions for today's meeting, specifically that the FY 2014 IAC program funds would be distributed equally between TSI and RFA. The Board agreed that the minutes of the meeting would reflect the IAC Committee's recommendation of an allocation of half of the \$25.5 million in FY 2014 funds to TSI and the other half to RFA. Finally, in response to Governor Meehan's question on the resolution for a code of conduct for the BBG Board, Chairman Shell noted that he was not aware of any allegations of misconduct but that the resolution was proposed to address a recommendation made by the Office of Inspector General in the January 2013 inspection report on the BBG.

There being no other business, the Chairman adjourned the meeting.

The Broadcasting Board of Governors agreed to the following decision elements (all decisions were adopted by a unanimous vote unless otherwise indicated):

1. Adoption of Minutes of February 25, 2014. The Board adopted the minutes of the February 25, 2014 meeting of the plenary Board as set forth in Attachment 2.
2. Resolution for David Burke Distinguished Journalism Awards. The Board adopted the resolution for the David Burke Distinguished Journalism Awards as set forth in Attachment 3.
3. Updated Policy Regarding Non-Disclosure of Deliberative Information. The Board adopted the updated policy regarding non-disclosure of deliberative information as set forth in Attachment 4.
4. Resolution for a Code of Conduct for the BBG Board. The Board adopted the resolution for a Code of Conduct for the BBG Board as set forth in Attachment 5.

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5. Policy Statement on the Prohibition of Harassment. The Board adopted the policy statement on the prohibition of harassment as set forth in Attachment 6.
6. Adoption of Recommendations of Special Committee on Internet Anti-Censorship (IAC). The Board heard a report from Governor Weinstein regarding the IAC Committee meetings held on April 4 and 10, 2014. Chairman Shell made a motion to adopt the Committee's recommendations. Governor McCue seconded. The Board voted unanimously to adopt the following recommendations by the IAC Committee:
 - i. The current approach to allocating funds for IAC activities among BBG-sponsored entities shall remain the same, and the spend plan that is submitted to congress shall reflect an allocation of half of the \$25.5 million in FY 2014 funds to the Technology, Services and Innovation division of the International Broadcasting Bureau (TSI) and the other half (by means of a grant amendment) to Radio Free Asia, inc. (RFA). The BBG should endeavor to obligate IAC program funds provided to TSI and RFA by the end of FY 2014.
 - ii. The Interim Management Team be directed to coordinate and de-conflict the proposed spend plan, prior to its submission to congress, with the U.S. Department of State and U.S. Agency for International Development, as required by the Act.
 - iii. TSI and RFA be directed, respectively, to submit to the IAC committee and the Interim Management Team, detailed implementation plans and documentation demonstrating responsible and effective use of the IAC funds.
 - iv. IAC program funds provided to TSI and RFA should be subject to appropriate oversight protocols and procedures, in accordance with current law and regulation, to be developed henceforth by the IAC committee.
7. Resolution on the U.S. International Media Strategy in Iran. Chairman Shell made a motion to adopt the resolution on the U.S. international media strategy in Iran as set forth in Attachment 7. Governor McCue seconded. The Board unanimously adopted the resolution.

Other Attendees:

The following persons were also present during all or part of the meeting: International Broadcasting Bureau (IBB) Director of Global Strategy, Robert Bole, Director of Global Communications and BBG Executive Director Suzie Carroll, Director of Global Operations Andre Mendes, General Counsel and Board Secretary Paul Kollmer-Dorsey, Chief Financial Officer Leslie Hyland, Director of Board Operations Oanh Tran, Deputy Director Jeffrey Trimble, Director of Communications & External Affairs Lynne Weil, Director of Public Affairs Letitia King, Board Operations and Policy Adviser Ashley Lancaster, Assistant General Counsel (Ethics/FOIA/PA) Andrew Krog; David Ensor, Director of the Voice of America; Carlos Garcia-Perez, Director of the Office of Cuba Broadcasting (via telephone); John Giambalvo, Interim Manager for Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL); Nenad Pejic, RFE/RL Interim Manager (via telephone); Brian Conniff, President of the Middle East Broadcasting Networks; Libby Liu, President of Radio Free Asia (RFA); Bernadette Burns, RFA General Counsel; Alan

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Tanenbaum, RFA Director of Human Resources; and Dan Sreebny, Senior Advisor for BBG, Office of the Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy & Public Affairs.

Approved:

Jeffrey Shell
Chairman

Witnessed:

Paul Kollmer-Dorsey
Secretary

Attachments:

1. Agenda for April 11, 2014 Meeting
2. Minutes of February 25, 2014 Meeting
3. Resolution for David Burke Distinguished Journalism Awards
4. Updated Policy Regarding Non-Disclosure of Deliberative Information
5. Resolution for a Code of Conduct for the BBG Board
6. Policy Statement on the Prohibition of Harassment
7. Resolution on the U.S. International Media Strategy in Iran

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ATTACHMENT 1

BROADCASTING BOARD OF GOVERNORS April 2014 Meeting Agenda

Friday, April 11

8:30 - 12:30 Broadcasting Board of Governors' Open Meeting (BBG-IBB Conference Room)

Chairman's Remarks

A. Consent Agenda

- Minutes of February 25, 2014 Meeting
- Draft Resolution for David Burke Distinguished Journalism Awards
- Draft Updated Policy Regarding Non-Disclosure of Deliberative Information
- Draft Resolution for a Code of Conduct for the BBG Board
- Draft Policy Statement on the Prohibition of Harassment

B. Discussion Items:

- Recommendations of BBG Special Committee on Internet Anti-Censorship
- Discussion and Consideration of Two Resolutions Concerning U.S. International Media Strategy for Iran

C. Public Comments

9:00 Break

9:15 - 10:45 BBG Open Meeting Continued

D. RFA Overview

10:45 Break

11:00 – 11:30 BBG Open Meeting Continued

E. USIM Response to Crisis in Ukraine

11:30 Break

11:35 – 12:30 BBG Open Meeting Continued

F. Panel Discussion – BBG Internet Anti-Censorship Efforts

G. Other Items for Consideration at Next Board Meeting

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ATTACHMENT 2

From: Broadcasting Board of Governors
Date: February 25, 2014
Subject: **Minutes of the BBG Meeting of February 25, 2014**

The Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG) met today at the headquarters of the Middle East Broadcasting Networks (MBN) Headquarters in Springfield, VA. The meeting was open for public attendance as seating capacity allowed and for public observation via streaming on the BBG website.

The meeting was attended by the following Board members:

Chairman Jeffrey Shell
Governor Matthew Armstrong
Governor Ryan Crocker
Governor Susan McCue
Governor Michael Meehan
Governor Kenneth Weinstein
Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs Richard Stengel

Other persons in attendance are listed at the end of these minutes.

The agenda of the meeting is set forth in Attachment 1.

The Chairman called the meeting to order and noted that the meeting was being held in compliance with the Government in the Sunshine Act and streamed live over the Internet at the BBG website.

Chairman Shell noted that the meeting was being held at the headquarters of the Middle East Broadcast Networks in Springfield, Virginia. He thanked MBN President Brian Conniff for MBN's hospitality and for hosting the meeting.

The Chairman welcomed Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs Richard Stengel, who was nominated to the position in September 2013 and confirmed by the Senate on February 11. He stated that Mr. Stengel is Secretary of State John Kerry's delegated representative to the Board and invited Mr. Stengel to introduce himself.

Chairman Shell noted the presence of five or more Governors satisfies the Board's quorum requirement, and that the Board may conduct business based on majority vote, a quorum being present.

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The Chairman said that today's meeting follows the new format consisting of a session on Board business, a panel discussion on the perceptions of the United States throughout the Middle East, and a 'deep dive' on MBN.

Chairman Shell stated that the BBG has had grim reminders of the many risks its journalists face in the line of their professional duties and noted that harassment, attempted intimidation and attacks on journalists have spiked in the wake of mass protests in Ukraine. Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL) reporter Dmytro Barkar and cameraman Ihor Iskhakov were attacked by members of Ukraine's Berkut police force while reporting from Kyiv's Maidan. Other BBG journalists were also subject to attacks and smear campaigns after reporting on the Euromaidan protests. On behalf of the Board, the Chairman urged that perpetrators of these acts, as well as those who ordered such behavior, be held accountable for their actions.

At the Chairman's invitation, Governor Armstrong reported on his visit to Kyiv in late January where he and RFE/RL President Kevin Klose met brave Voice of America (VOA) and RFE/RL journalists working under the dangerous conditions. Governor Armstrong briefly described the fast-moving events in Ukraine and expressed his appreciation and respect to VOA and RFE/RL journalists for their courage and professionalism and for their collaboration and coverage of the protests and political instability, which provided a balanced look at the news of Ukraine for audiences who might not otherwise get an objective picture.

The Chairman highlighted the following threats to other BBG journalists: (1) In Cambodia, the government has restricted independent press, including denying expanded licensing for the independent Beehive Radio, which carried BBG programming, and issued a report falsely accusing Radio Free Asia and VOA of manipulating the news; (2) In Burma and in China, BBG journalists have been denied access to press briefings; (3) In the Democratic Republic of Congo, VOA stringer Austere Malivika was repeatedly harassed by a senior official of the DRC army; (4) In China, police officers pushed around VOA Mandarin correspondent Fred Wang while he was taking photos and shooting video; (5) In Azerbaijan, RFE/RL's Khadija Ismayilova is being criminally investigated on allegations of revealing state secrets in apparent retaliation for her reporting on government corruption and that ruling party members of the Azeri parliament have referred to Ismayilova and RFE/RL as a "spy network of the United States"; (6) Also in Azerbaijan, a reporter for VOA who was covering a student demonstration in Baku was attacked and beaten by a security officer; (7) In Russia, Russian State TV showed an anti-American film amidst wall-to-wall Olympics coverage that included comments that RFE/RL was created as an agreement between the U.S. Administration and former Nazi officials, and Dozhd TV, which carries some programming from VOA, has been pushed off cable and satellite TV channels; and (8) in Egypt, the government crackdown on foreign journalists continues and journalists remain under very heavy scrutiny such as four Al Jazeera staff members who were detained and three who are facing trial under terrorism-related charges. In closing, the Chairman stated that the Board is troubled over these ongoing efforts to suppress and discredit independent media.

Chairman Shell noted that, as the meeting was being held at MBN headquarters, it reminded everyone that Alhurra's Bashar Fahmi remains missing in Syria, following an August 2012

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reporting trip in Aleppo. On behalf of the Board, he called for anybody with information about Bashar's whereabouts or well-being to come forward.

Turning to BBG business, Chairman Shell described two items on the consent agenda for the Board's consideration: (1) Draft minutes of December 18, 2013 Board meeting, and (2) a resolution honoring Alhurra's 10th anniversary. There being no comments, Governor McCue made a motion to adopt the consent agenda. Governor Armstrong seconded. The Board voted unanimously to adopt the consent agenda.

The Chairman announced that Mr. Klose had informed the Board of his intention to end his term as RFE/RL President effective March 1, 2014. He thanked Mr. Klose for his service to this organization over the last year and commented that Mr. Klose's leadership has assured RFE/RL's place in the forefront of independent journalism in an area of the world where uncensored news and information is in short supply. He noted that the Board will discuss options regarding interim leadership for RFE/RL as the Board begins a search for a President, and that an announcement will be made in the near future. There followed remarks from Mr. Klose praising the staff of RFE/RL, both Prague and D.C., for their work and dedication in the mission and comments from the Governors thanking Mr. Klose for his service.

Chairman Shell recognized the attendance of two members of the public and that Ann Noonan, Executive Director of Committee for U.S. International Broadcasting, had registered to speak but was not able to attend due to a family matter. He said the Board is interested in hearing from members of the public and urged them to register to address the Board at future meetings.

In conclusion of BBG business, the Chairman said that the Board has been very pleased about the interim management structure thus far. Particularly, he noted the collaboration between the team and the various offices such as the Office of Chief Financial Officer, Office of General Counsel, and the BBG-sponsored grantees in the formulation and submission of the FY 2015 budget.

The Board took a short recess and reconvened in MBN's studio for a panel discussion on the perceptions of the United States throughout the Middle East, which was moderated by Governor Crocker. The panel included Hisham Melhem, Washington Bureau Chief of Al Arabiya News Channel, and Abderrahim Foukara, Washington Bureau Chief of Al-Jazeera International.

Upon conclusion of the panel discussion, the Board took a brief recess and reconvened in the same studio for an overview of MBN presented by Mr. Conniff and several MBN managers.

There being no other business, the Chairman adjourned the meeting.

The Broadcasting Board of Governors agreed to the following decision elements (all decisions were adopted by a unanimous vote unless otherwise indicated):

1. Adoption of Minutes of December 18, 2013 Meeting. The Board adopted the minutes of the December 18, 2013 meeting of the plenary Board as set forth in Attachment 2.

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2. Resolution Honoring Alhurra's 10th Anniversary. The Board adopted the resolution honoring Alhurra's 10th anniversary as set forth in Attachment 3.

Other Attendees:

The following persons were also present during all or part of the meeting: International Broadcasting Bureau (IBB) Director of Global Strategy, Robert Bole, Director of Global Communications and BBG Executive Director Suzie Carroll, Director of Global Operations Andre Mendes, General Counsel and Board Secretary Paul Kollmer-Dorsey, Chief Financial Officer Leslie Hyland, Director of Board Operations Oanh Tran, Board Operations and Policy Adviser Ashley Lancaster; David Ensor, Director of the Voice of America; Carlos Garcia-Perez, Director of the Office of Cuba Broadcasting; Kevin Klose, President of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty; Brian Conniff, President of the Middle East Broadcasting Networks; Libby Liu, President of Radio Free Asia (RFA); Dan Sreebny, Senior Advisor for BBG, Office of the Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy & Public Affairs; Dina Badawy, NEA Bureau, U.S. Department of State; and Robert Torres, Coordinator for International Broadcasting, Office of Inspector General.

Approved:

Jeffrey Shell
Chairman

Witnessed:

Paul Kollmer-Dorsey
Secretary

Attachments:

1. Agenda for February 25, 2014 Meeting
2. Minutes of December 18, 2013 Meeting
3. Resolution Honoring Alhurra's 10th Anniversary

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ATTACHMENT 3

RESOLUTION FOR DAVID BURKE DISTINGUISHED JOURNALISM AWARDS April 11, 2014

WHEREAS, the David Burke Distinguished Journalism Award was named after David W. Burke, who was the founding chairman and leader of the Broadcasting Board of Governors for its first three years;

WHEREAS, the award recognizes courage, integrity and originality in reporting by journalists within the BBG broadcast organizations;

WHEREAS, the broadcasters' stories enlighten and inform listeners and exhibit a commitment to the free exchange of ideas; and

WHEREAS, the submissions for the David Burke Distinguished Journalism Award met the following established criteria:

- Individual performance in any area of international media: reporting, writing, editing, or production.
- An individual can be nominated for a single story, a body of work or exceptional performance, such as extreme bravery or hardship in reporting a story.
- The work must inform and enlighten listeners, affecting their lives in a meaningful way, and show a high degree of originality.
- The work should exhibit a commitment to the cause of democracy and the free exchange of ideas.
- Nominees can be permanent or contract employees working for U.S. international media.

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved that the Broadcasting Board of Governors grants an award to the following individuals who demonstrated exceptional performance:

Voice of America (VOA) -- Anne Look, Bagassi Koura and Idrissa Fall: In recognition of their outstanding contributions to VOA's coverage of violent extremism and insurgencies in Africa.

Office of Cuba Broadcasting (OCB) -- Rolando Rodriguez Lobaina: In recognition of his work inside of Cuba for OCB.

Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's Kyiv Bureau: In recognition of the team's coverage of the crisis in Ukraine, providing live-blogged coverage and dramatic video from the epicenter of the violence, in-depth analysis, eyewitness stories, and reactions from different sides, including government supporters.

Radio Free Asia (RFA) -- Moe Thu Aung: In honor of Moe Thu Aung, who tragically succumbed to massive brain injuries resulting from a traffic accident while on assignment for RFA in Mandalay, for his exemplary and courageous field reporting for the advancement of press freedom and the public interest of the Burmese people.

Middle East Broadcasting Networks' Alhurra correspondents Maitham Al-Shibani and Omar Adnan Al-Obaidi: In recognition of their outstanding bravery, integrity, and professionalism to impart information that serves the public interest.

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ATTACHMENT 4

POLICY REGARDING NON-DISCLOSURE OF DELIBERATIVE INFORMATION April 11, 2014

For the purposes of this policy:

“The Board” refers to the Members of the Broadcasting Board of Governors.

“Deliberative information” means any non-public information, either tangible records or otherwise, exchanged between two or more Board members, or between Agency staff members and Board members. Deliberative information is information pertaining to (1) budgetary matters that are determined to be pre-decisional under Office of Management and Budget guidelines; (2) legislative proposals that are developed for the consideration of the Board, as determined by the Chair or Presiding Governor, subject to the Board’s further review; and (3) such other matters as the plenary Board may determine, based on the recommendation of the Advisory Committee or any Special Committee of the Board. Purely factual information that is otherwise publicly available or an individual Board member’s own opinion that does not reflect the Board’s deliberative processes is not deliberative information.

Each member of the Board has a duty to keep deliberative information privileged and confidential. More specifically, each member of the Board is obligated not to disclose:

1. The substance of deliberative information or the status of discussions about it;
2. Positions of other Board members regarding deliberative information or their individual comments about it;
3. Documents prepared to provide the Board with deliberative information or to memorialize any aspect of such deliberative information, or any subsection of documents that contain such deliberative information; or
4. The identity of Board members or staff members who provide deliberative information to and/or prepare deliberative information for the Board.

The obligation not to disclose deliberative information continues even after a final decision is publicly announced, and such information remains protected until authorized for release by the Board.

Deliberative information should only be released after consultation with the Agency’s Office of General Counsel regarding the implications of waiving the deliberative process privilege for release and upon an official Board resolution providing the authority to do so.

Disclosure of deliberative information is a serious matter and constitutes both mismanagement and misconduct. The unauthorized disclosure of official non-public information is prohibited by 5 CFR 2635.703, and employees engaging in the unauthorized disclosure of deliberative information may be subject to punishment or discipline. Breaches of this policy by an individual Governor shall be reported by the Chair to the White House Office of Presidential Personnel, Office of Presidential Appointments. This policy does not affect (i) the Agency’s requirements to comply with the Government in the Sunshine Act and applicable exemptions thereto, as contained in 5 U.S.C. section 552b; or (ii) the rights of any individual under the Whistleblower Protection Act of 1989.

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ATTACHMENT 5

RESOLUTION FOR A CODE OF CONDUCT FOR THE BBG BOARD April 11, 2014

WHEREAS, the faith and trust of the American people in the integrity of government institutions is critical to the proper functioning of the Federal Government;

WHEREAS, the Broadcasting Board of Governors believes that a culture of ethical behavior is a necessary foundational element to a reputation for honesty, objectivity, and impartiality;

WHEREAS, the Broadcasting Board of Governors has determined that a culture of ethical behavior is of strategic importance to conducting international broadcasting in accordance with the highest professional standards of broadcast journalism; and

WHEREAS, the Broadcasting Board of Governors recognizes that both the strict observation of and adherence to Federal standards of conduct and timely submission of complete and accurate financial disclosure reports are essential to the effective maintenance of a culture of ethical behavior and the preservation of the peoples' trust in their public servants.

IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED THAT:

Members shall fully comply with all applicable Federal standards of conduct established by Executive Orders 12674 and 12731, their implementing regulations at 5 C.F.R. Part 2635, and interpretive guidance issued by the Office of Government Ethics;

Members of the Broadcasting Board of Governors shall fully comply with all applicable financial disclosure requirements contained in the Ethics in Government Act of 1978, its implementing regulations at 5 C.F.R. Part 2634, and interpretive guidance issued by the Office of Government Ethics;

Members of the Broadcasting Board of Governors will submit required financial disclosure prior to the expiration of deadlines established by regulation or the Agency's Designated Agency Ethics Official (DAEO) (or designee). If unable to meet an established deadline, Members will submit a written request for an extension of time to the DAEO (or designee) prior to the expiration of their filing deadline. Members will also promptly respond to all requests by the DAEO (or designee) for additional information needed to finalize the review of their submitted financial disclosure forms;

The Agency's DAEO shall promptly inform the Board of any Member's non-compliance with applicable Federal standards of conduct (including, without limitation, financial disclosure requirements, special government employee status, non-disclosure of confidential information, conflict of interest, decorum, ethics training, etc.), failure to attend two or more scheduled Board meetings in a calendar year, or failure to respond to requests for information in a timely manner;

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Upon receipt and evaluation of such information from the Agency's DAEO, the Chair shall address a letter to such Governor directing such Governor to bring himself or herself within a specified time-frame into compliance with the relevant standard of conduct, failing which the Chair shall provide written notice of such continuing non-compliance to the White House Office of Presidential Personnel, Office of Presidential Appointments. [In the event that the Chair is the Member whose non-compliance is at issue, then the DAEO shall inform all of the Members of the Board and the White House Office of Presidential Personnel, Office of Presidential Appointments simultaneously.]

Members shall ensure they receive at least one hour of in-person training annually from the DAEO (or designee) regarding their ethical obligations under the Standards of Ethical Conduct for Employees of the Executive Branch, and shall consult with the DAEO (or designee) for ethics guidance as needed to ensure they avoid actual or perceived infractions of those standards.

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ATTACHMENT 6

POLICY STATEMENT ON THE PROHIBITION OF HARASSMENT April 11, 2014

It is the policy of the Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG or Agency) to provide a work environment free from harassment or intimidation. Harassment is a form of employment discrimination that violates Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967 (ADEA), the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), the ADA as amended, and others.

It is unlawful to harass a person because of their membership in a protected class under the law. Harassment is unwelcome conduct that is based on race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy and gender identity), national origin, age (40 years or older), disability, or genetic information. Anti-discrimination laws also prohibit harassment against individuals in retaliation for filing a discrimination charge, testifying, or participating in any way in an investigation, proceeding, or lawsuit under these laws; or opposing employment practices that they reasonably believe discriminate against individuals, in violation of these laws.

This unwelcome conduct may include, but is not limited to offensive jokes, slurs, epithets, or name calling; physical assaults or threats; intimidation, ridicule or mockery, insults or put-downs; offensive objects or pictures. Harassment may occur in a variety of circumstances, including, but not limited to: 1) alleged harasser may be the victim's supervisor, a supervisor in another area, a co-worker, anyone considered an agent of the employer, or a non-employee; 2) victim need not be the opposite sex from the alleged harasser; 3) victim need not be the person harassed, but may be someone affected by the offensive conduct; 4) harassment may occur without economic injury to or discharge of the victim; and 5) the alleged harasser's conduct must be unwelcome.

Harassment becomes unlawful when: 1) the offensive conduct becomes a condition of continued employment; or 2) the conduct is severe or pervasive enough to create a work environment that a reasonable person would consider intimidating, hostile, or abusive.

Petty slights, annoyances, and isolated incidents (unless extremely serious) will not rise to the level of illegality. While certain conduct may not rise to the level of illegality, all employees should be allowed to work in an environment free from intimidating and harassing conduct.

Any person who experiences harassment should inform the harasser directly that the conduct is unwelcome and must stop. Employees should also report harassment to management immediately to prevent escalation.

Managers and supervisors are responsible for promptly responding to allegations of harassment and taking appropriate action before the conduct becomes severe and pervasive. They should clearly communicate to employees that the Agency takes allegations of this nature very seriously

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and does not condone offensive behavior of any kind. They should also communicate that the Agency does not tolerate retaliation against any employee for making a good-faith report of harassing conduct; or for conducting, cooperating with, or participating in any investigation of alleged harassing conduct or any stage of any legal proceeding (administrative or judicial) that is related.

Any Agency employee found to have engaged in harassing conduct in violation of this policy may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including removal from Federal service. Managers and supervisors, who observe or are notified of any unprofessional behavior that may create an offensive work environment, have a responsibility to take appropriate and effective corrective action immediately to put an end to the harassing conduct.

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ATTACHMENT 7

RESOLUTION ON U.S. INTERNATIONAL MEDIA STRATEGY IN IRAN April 11, 2014

WHEREAS, broadcasting to Iran is a strategic priority of the United States and of the Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG);

WHEREAS, the BBG currently broadcasts to Iran Persian-language news and information programming through the Voice of America's (VOA) Persian Service and Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's (RFE/RL) Radio Farda;

WHEREAS, the Board finds that current internal challenges necessitate that the BBG develop a more nimble and streamlined organization for Persian-language broadcasting, continue to reduce unnecessary language service overlap, optimize information technology and program delivery, and seek every avenue to enhance operational efficiencies in creating, producing and distributing BBG-funded programming to Iran; and

WHEREAS, the allocation of funds among the federal and non-federal entities of United States international media (USIM) is a non-delegable authority of the Board under the International Broadcasting Act of 1994 (as amended).

NOW, THEREFORE, the Board decides as follows:

1. Harmonizing the Persian-language news and information programming of VOA and RFE/RL in accordance with the guidelines presented in the Final USIM Iran Strategy Report described in Attachment 1 (the "Iran Strategy Report") will contribute significantly to the achievement of the Board's strategic objectives for broadcasting to Iran. Such harmonization should include developing a clear, collaborative operational strategy for producing and distributing news and information for Iran that identifies new efficiencies in collaborative plans, and new opportunities to refocus scarce resources to higher impact activities and channels.
2. The Director of Global Strategy is directed to work in close cooperation with VOA and RFE/RL senior management in order to prepare a detailed written implementation plan to give effect to the objectives outlined in the Iran Strategy Report. The implementation plan should include recommendations on (i) reprogramming operational line item budgets and grant amendments, as necessary; (ii) a management structure to oversee programming activities and an operational management plan; (iii) a distribution plan and distribution channel programming plan; (iv) an implementation timeline; (v) a description of the country-level goals and performance indicators for Persian-language broadcasting by VOA and RFE/RL; and (vi) a communication plan directed at both internal and external stakeholders. The implementation plan should be presented to the Advisory Committee at its next meeting in May 2014.
3. The Director of Global Strategy is further directed to modify the implementation plan based on the results of the Advisory Committee's deliberations and to present recommendations to the Board on implementation at the next meeting of the plenary Board.

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ATTACHMENT 1

To: Board of Governors
From: Jeff Trimble
Robert Bole
Date: April 2, 2014
Subject: **Final USIM Iran Strategy Report**

In January, the Board authorized a comprehensive review of USIM broadcasting to Iran to produce recommendations about a new strategy, including content and delivery tactics and organizational structure, to reach audiences in Iran.

We have gathered and evaluated a wide variety of input and perspectives on USIM programming to Iran. We recommend Board consideration of the following charter:

U.S. International Media will make a powerful contribution to Iran's intellectual struggle for modernity and openness by informing, engaging and connecting Iranian audiences in support of a free, open, democratic society that is based on rule of law and fully integrated into the global community.

USIM will leverage the assets of VOA, RFE/RL, and IBB to create and sustain an innovative, agile, fully modern media enterprise, dedicated to reaching the rising generation and news-seekers of all ages in Iran in support of freedom, democracy and civil society.

This strategy will entail:

- A single vision and unified set of strategic country-level goals, adopted by the Board, for VOA Persian and Radio Farda that also guide TSI and IBB activities;
- A new management structure that clearly differentiates functions and roles; lead executive managers with individual responsibility for fulfilling the Congressionally-mandated content requirements of the U.S. International Broadcasting Act: high-quality news; representing America in all its diversity; and presenting and discussing U.S. policy.¹ These executive managers will have the authority to oversee strategy, resource allocations, major management decisions, and will be responsible for outcomes in their respected area;
- Fully coordinated editorial strategies and programmatic activities; and
- Clearly identified target audiences and measurable performance indicators to help gauge success.

¹ From Section 303(b) of the U.S. International Broadcasting Act :

(b) BROADCASTING PRINCIPLES.-United States international broadcasting shall include

(1) news which is consistently reliable and authoritative, accurate; objective, and comprehensive;

(2) a balanced and comprehensive projection of United States thought and institutions, reflecting the diversity of United States culture and society;

(3) clear and effective presentation of the policies, including editorials, broadcast by the Voice of America, which present the views of the United States Government and responsible discussion and opinion on those policies;"

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Under the management structure:

- 1) RFE/RL will direct news-related programming on all platforms. This includes news about Iranian domestic issues (consistent with RFE/RL's historic "surrogate" role) and regional and international news.
- 2) VOA will direct programming on all platforms that "tells America's story," providing a balanced and comprehensive projection of U.S. thought and institutions, reflecting the diversity of American culture and society.
- 3) VOA will direct programming on all platforms that clearly and effectively presents the policies of the U.S. Government and responsible discussion and opinion on these policies. This will include editorials that are produced by the IBB.

This structure will require close working relationships and collaboration among the executive managers, one from RFE/RL (for news) and one from VOA (for representing American thought and institutions, and presenting and discussing U.S. policy).

The new Persian-language multi-platform network will offer:

Single Television & Radio Streams: A single satellite television stream featuring a mix of VOA and RFE/RL content, and acquired video content; a single radio and audio stream featuring a mix of RFE/RL and VOA content.

Single Digital Strategy: A single digital strategy on the web, mobile and social platforms, managed by RFE/RL and staffed by VOA and RFE/RL digital producers featuring branded VOA and RFE/RL content.

Reduced Radio Distribution: RFE/RL will reassess resource allocation among its products to emphasize video and digital, and reduce radio to address shifting audience platform priorities. This will require upgraded television production facilities in Prague to produce original video content.

Improved Breaking News Capabilities: USIM television to Iran will expand capabilities to go live 24/7 as dictated by breaking news and other events, with production responsibilities shared between VOA in Washington and RFE/RL in Prague.

Editorial Coordination & Content Sharing: RFE/RL and VOA will establish technical and organizational mechanisms to seamlessly share Persian-language news and features; pending assignments (for coordination); and other programming activities and planning functions.

Opportunity for New Brands: While retaining existing VOA and RFE/RL brands – each of which has strong equities in Iran and among stakeholders – the new structure will include flexibility to launch additional brands and content targeted at niche audiences, particularly youth audiences, with special emphasis on engagement.

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Expanded Regional Reporting: VOA and RFE/RL will work together to expand reporting and program production from the region, and to the extent possible, within Iran. They will expand collaboration with MBN to cover MENA.

Improved U.S. Policy Presentation: While strictly respecting the journalistic firewall, USIM will communicate more effectively with U.S. policymakers, Congress and other stakeholders to ensure appropriate cooperation in support of broad U.S. foreign policy interests – and thereby build greater credibility and support for USIM programming to Iran.

Expanded Anti-Censorship Support: USIM will continue to work to defeat Iranian government censorship, including satellite and radio jamming and blocking of online content.

As a result, USIM will:

- 1) Retain and improve high-quality reporting and analysis – the key to credibility and mission success among influential change agents across Iranian society.
- 2) Instill greater agility and creative energy into the journalism, programming, production and delivery of content.
- 3) Leverage assets much more effectively in an environment of shrinking budgets and increasing competition.
- 4) Decisively rectify long-standing management and operational issues at VOA that have contributed to strongly held perceptions among outside stakeholders that USIM programming to Iran is a failure.

An accompanying strategy map (see Appendix 4) to this memo supports this strategy with initial implementation tactics, as well as contextual information about the Iranian political and media environment, U.S. foreign policy goals, and the respective roles of RFE/RL's Radio Farda and VOA's Persian Service.

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We do not recommend shifting the assets and overall responsibility for Iran programming to a single USIM network at this time. Among reasons for this:

VOA, under new leadership, has begun to put in place reforms and programming and production improvements. The Service has been restructured and now includes dedicated news and planning and research units. Staff training has been enhanced; some moderators and other staff members have been reassigned; programs are monitored daily for quality and other factors; and production values and graphics have been improved. The Service's webpage has been redesigned and now is staffed 24/7. A variety of new programs is planned for introduction in coming months.

The Service recently was given the first opportunity to interview Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs Wendy Sherman at a crucial moment in ongoing nuclear talks with Iran; and was granted an exclusive interview with Secretary of State John Kerry for the Persian Nowruz holiday – possible indications that the State Department is taking a more positive view of VOA. Much more work needs to be done – and VOA acknowledges this – but these improvements are significant.



Old VOA Persian Studio Set



New VOA Persian Studio Set

New research shows that VOA is in a statistical tie with BBC as the leading international broadcaster in Iran. VOA's weekly audience on television is 24 percent, up from 21 percent in 2012. BBC weekly viewership is 21.4 percent, slightly down since 2012. While there are causes for concern that require further consideration (please see Appendix 2 for more about latest research), these audiences are among the largest for USIM anywhere in the world.

VOA has made progress toward reducing employees and contractors. Full-time staff is down to 71 at the end of 2013, from 85 in 2010. The enactment of the FY 2014 budget and recent buyouts will further reduce full-time staff to around 65. The number of contractors is down from 124 in 2011 to 107, and also set to go lower by the end of the fiscal year.

Content analysis of translated programming shows overall good to high quality of VOA programming, with content and presentation for the most part on par with the BBC's Persian Service (please see Appendix 3).

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Removing Persian broadcasting from VOA would be expensive and take well over a year to achieve. It would require approval from the Administration and Congress. The costs of eliminating VOA's Persian Service likely would be between \$3 and \$7.5 million in personnel and other expenses. This figure does not include – if the center of gravity of the service was moved to RFE/RL in Prague – the costs of relocation and other support for any current VOA employees who could be hired by RFE/RL and would move to the Czech Republic.

This process also would disrupt Iranian programming at a complex and unpredictable stage of U.S.-Iranian relations, including the fate of Iran's nuclear program. This study did not systematically consider the consequences of such a move on VOA employee morale, or its effect on perceptions of outside stakeholders. There likely would be implications in both areas.

There is considerable support from outside stakeholders, including State Department officials and Iran experts, to retain a distinct brand – VOA or something else – that is clearly understood by audiences to be associated with the United States, as well as for a strong surrogate brand.

Our observations revealed that VOA relies heavily on the resources of the Persian Service to provide coverage for all VOA language services. Removing these assets from VOA would therefore have wider consequences for content creation throughout VOA.

However, there still remains important work to be done to ensure that VOA meets its full potential as a high-quality, television and digital news service for Iran.

There remains much work to be done to bring VOA's Persian Service to the level of professionalism, agility and creativity that is needed to fully succeed in the increasingly competitive Iranian media market. We believe that the proposed harmonization plan under a clearly defined executive management structure and backed by strong and continued commitment from VOA management and IBB support offices offers the best opportunity to strengthen VOA's contribution to USIM broadcasting to Iran.

RFE/RL's Radio Farda generally draws praise from experts and outside stakeholders. While its audiences are much smaller than VOA's – in part at least because its main delivery platform is radio, which is much less popular than satellite television or the Internet as a sources for news – Radio Farda clearly has established itself as an authoritative, trustworthy source of news and information in Iran. In the latest BBG-commissioned research, 89 percent of Radio Farda's audience rated programming as “very” or “somewhat” trustworthy.

There is room for improvement at RFE/RL as well. Research clearly indicates that RFE/RL must build on the success of its lone television program by adding more original television content for inclusion in the VOA shared stream and/or other streams. This will require upgraded and new television production facilities in Prague. RFE/RL must therefore reassess resource allocation among its radio, web and television products to address shifting audience platform priorities. The optimal structure at RFE/RL – and VOA – should be a more integrated news operation producing content for all platforms.

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RFE/RL's Radio Farda "Breakfast With News" program

Finally, content analysis of VOA and RFE/RL programming revealed that, while their roles are distinct and each network emphasizes different stories, there is overlap in news coverage and other content – which presents potential for efficiencies in content creation and production that could produce savings (please see detailed analysis in Appendix 3).

We are confident that the strength and success of a restructured, better coordinated USIM effort for Iran, operating against a unified strategy, will be greater than the sum of its current parts.

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Proposed BBG Country-Level Goals & Performance Indicators

Strategic Goal #1 – USIM will play a key role in expanding the freedom of speech and press in Iran using our broadcast and digital platforms that enable Iranians to receive and discuss censored local, regional and international news within the country. (U.S. State, Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights & Labor, Human Rights Practices for 2013, Iran, Section 2, Respect for Civil Liberties.) We will engage young people (ages 15-24) and young professionals (ages 25-34) in accessing our content via traditional broadcast, digital and Internet anti-censorship platforms and enabling them to comment, discuss and contribute news and information

Performance Indicator(s) – Relevant and engaging streams of original and user-generated content provided on multiple platforms, including video, audio, mobile and social media, will attract young audiences. Performance targets will be set for weekly audiences of young people (ages 15-24) and young professionals (ages 25-34). Our content will engage the target audiences by encouraging them to share, comment and contribute content on digital, as well as in offline conversations. Performance targets will be set for social engagement scores, sharing of news on the part of the USIM audience, and percentage of the weekly target audiences that rank USIM content entities as one of their three most important sources for news and information.

Strategic Goal #2 – USIM will utilize its content to help support the understanding of civil society and human rights. (U.S. State, Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights & Labor, Human Rights Practices for 2013, Iran, Section 1, Respect for the Integrity of the Person.) We will produce content that attracts and engages Iranians towards an increased understanding of American society, U.S. foreign policies and of democracy. We will engage the range of Iranian citizenry to support their ability to discuss and express their views on these issues.

Performance Indicator(s) – A performance target will be set for the percentage of the weekly audience that reports that USIM content increased their understanding of current events. The performance of USIM content will also be ascertained through collected credible impact stories. A performance target will also be set for the percentage of the weekly audience who “agree strongly” or “agree slightly” that public officials in Iran seem to pay attention to the broadcaster. Anecdotal evidence will also be collected showing that USIM content has an influence on media operators and government officials through their reactions.

Strategic Goal #3 – USIM will provide the exceptional quality news and information in the Iranian media environment as compared to other domestic and international media entities.

Performance Indicator(s) – Performance targets will be set for the percentage of weekly audience that reports USIM presents news and information that they can’t get from other sources; percentage of the weekly audience that reports they trust USIM’s content “a great deal” or “somewhat;” and percentage of weekly audience that finds news and information provided by USIM to be “very” or “somewhat” interesting. Program quality will also be tracked and reported by the Office of Performance Review.

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Appendix 1: Brief History of U.S. International Broadcasting to Iran

VOA's radio broadcasts to Iran began in 1942 and were discontinued in 1960. VOA resumed Persian-language radio broadcasts in 1979 after the Iranian Revolution. In 1996, VOA launched "Roundtable With You," a weekly radio/satellite television simulcast call-in program. In 2002, VOA began dedicated satellite TV programming.

RFE/RL's Persian Service (radio and Internet streaming) went on the air in October 1998, following a mandate from Congress.

At the direction of the Board, RFE/RL and VOA created Radio Farda in 2002. The new service featured a youth-oriented mix of news, information and entertainment programming. Radio Farda subsumed RFE/RL's Persian Service, and utilized VOA personnel to staff one of three daily news shifts.

In July 2008, Radio Farda moved to RFE/RL exclusively. At that time, VOA was focused on expanding its television content, and RFE/RL management persuaded the Board that Radio Farda would be more successful if it was under RFE/RL's direction, which was focused solely on Radio Farda programming. Radio Farda broadcasts 24 hours a day to Iran from by AM, shortwave, digital audio satellite, and by Internet. In 2013, Radio Farda launched a one-hour daily television program that is carried on the VOA Persian satellite stream as well as on the Radio Farda satellite stream, and on the Internet.

BBG Persian programming expanded rapidly from FY 2006-2008 after Congress appropriated \$36.1 million to BBG in the Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act for Defense, the Global War on Terror, and Hurricane Recovery in 2006. Most of this funding went to VOA to greatly increase the amount of satellite television programming to Iran. In 2008, the number of VOA Persian staff jumped from about 30 full-time employees in 2007 to 83 full-time employees, plus over 120 contractors. Television programming was increased from one hour daily to six original hours daily, plus an hour daily of translated acquired programming. Programming was repeated to create a 24/7 channel. The expanded VOA operation was renamed Persian News Network (PNN), to acknowledge the breadth of the operation.

In 2009, Congress authorized RFE/RL to broadcast Azerbaijani-language programming to Iran, but due to resource constraints, these broadcasts never were realized.

A March 2009 Office of the Inspector General inspection (OIG Report No. ISP-IB-09-27) of VOA Persian broadcasting found that "PNN's extraordinary and unusually rapid growth represented a huge challenge to management. The FTE staff was greatly increased, and a large number of POVs were also brought on board; at present, there are more POVs working in PNN than FTEs. While VOA is to be commended for successfully meeting the expansion challenge, the scale and rapidity of growth have been accompanied by a number of problems inside PNN." These "problems," according to the OIG, included an "atmosphere of discontent... perceptions of unfairness, charges of political bias, the operation of cliques, and the hiring and rewarding of unqualified people. Some more experienced staff members associated with the service's

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declining radio operations are critical of newer staff members hired for the expanding television programming. The issue of Persian-language competency is also a point of contention, as well as the issue of cultural norms and expectations. Some Persian-speaking and Iranian-born employees find American management insensitive to Iranian ways; conversely, some American managers believe that Iranian and Iranian-American employees have not adapted to the expectations and atmosphere of an American workplace.”

Since 2009, VOA management has changed PNN management a number of times and taken other steps to try to address these problems. A new team, headed by 20-year service veteran Setareh Derakhshesh, was put in place earlier this year. VOA has dropped the name Persian News Network and again refers to the service as the VOA Persian Service.

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Appendix 2: Recent BBG Research in Iran

Background:

Several audience research projects have recently been carried out on behalf of BBG's Persian language services. These were:

- 1) A national telephone survey of 2000 Iranian adults conducted from December 2013 through January 2014, using an Istanbul-based contractor that specializes in such work and has conducted a number of similar projects for us in the past.
- 2) Qualitative research in the form of in-depth interviews with Iranian travelers visiting Istanbul over the same time period. Two qualitative projects were conducted for VOA:
 - (a) a study of overall media consumption patterns, the role of satellite TV, attitudes towards international TV stations in general, and reactions to specific VOA TV products;
 - (b) an explicit comparative study of VOA and BBC TV services.
- 3) A qualitative study on behalf of Radio Farda, again using in-depth interviews with Iranian travelers, carried out by the same firm as the other projects in November, 2013.

Main findings:

The survey indicates that VOA's weekly audience has at least been steady and possibly increased since the last research in 2012. The past week audience for PNN (VOA's Persian television programs) stands at 24 percent, vs. 21.4 percent in 2012.² Virtually all of VOA's audience is attributable to television; its "all-platform" audience is 24.2 percent.

Radio Farda's Persian language weekly audience on radio is 4.7 percent, almost identical to their 2012 figure of 4.5 percent. However, some additional audience to RFE/RL Azerbaijani, plus – more important – Radio Farda's new "Breakfast with News" TV program on the BBG satellite channel, has boosted their weekly audience to 9 percent.

BBC's Persian audience (all-platform) is 21.4 percent weekly, close to the 23 percent found in 2012.

Weekly audiences for each service expressed a significant degree of confidence in the broadcasts: 71 percent of VOA's weekly viewers considered the news to be "very" or "somewhat" trustworthy, while comparable figures for Radio Farda and BBC were 89 percent and 73 percent, respectively.

These large audiences for international broadcasting are occurring in spite of what appears to be the ongoing jamming by the Iranian government. Despite reports from some quarters that jamming has ceased or diminished, almost all of the interviewees in the qualitative research reported at least occasional "noise" problems while trying to watch both VOA and BBC.

² The margin of error around these estimates is just under +/- 2%, so a difference of less than 4 percentage points is not statistically significant.

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Some cautionary notes:

While all the findings to date suggest that VOA has a large and loyal audience in Iran, there are indications of potential problems that may affect VOA's position in the future if they are not quickly addressed. Survey respondents were more willing to explicitly admit watching BBC than VOA and overall awareness of BBC was considerably higher; in addition, respondents were more likely to cite BBC as a top news source than VOA.

Moreover, findings from both the qualitative and the survey research suggest that VOA's audience is older than that of BBC, that some viewers have concerns about the credibility and impartiality of VOA's broadcasts (and especially about the propensity of certain on-air personalities to telegraph their views), and that VOA's production values are lower than those of BBC. Finally, BBC wins praise for the comparatively greater variety of its programming, with many viewers citing the Farsi-versioned shows from the BBC archives like *Sherlock* and *Dr. Who*. VOA in contrast is widely perceived (whether positively or negatively) as essentially a news-oriented station.

On the other hand, the qualitative research findings also show very positive views of a number of individual VOA programs and personalities, suggesting that the station may be in a transitional phase: if VOA can shed those aspects of the broadcasts that threaten to turn it into a "legacy" station and capitalize on those with more appeal to younger audiences, the future may be bright.

Media environment:

Reported ownership of satellite dishes and usage of satellite TV continues to grow. Twenty nine percent of survey respondents said they had a satellite dish in their household (vs. 26 percent in 2012); 37 percent said they had watched satellite TV, whether at home or elsewhere, in the previous week (vs 32 percent in 2012). A full 61 percent of respondents admitted to having watched satellite TV at least once in the previous year, suggesting that discussion of this topic is no longer taboo.

Internet usage continues to expand as well. In spite of all the obstacles the authorities have imposed, Internet is now the second most important source of news in Iran: 27 percent of survey respondents said they use the Internet daily for news (vs. 96 percent for TV, 25 percent for radio, and 15 percent for the printed press). Among younger Iranians, the trend is much more dramatic: 46 percent of those between the ages of 15 and 24 use Internet daily for news, vs. 18 percent who use radio. Shortwave radio use is uncommon: only 6 percent of adults (and 3 percent of those under age 25) report using shortwave radio in the previous week.

It's also important to note that VOA is no longer broadcasting in a vacuum; nor is BBC the only competition. Several commercial Persian-language broadcasters are aggressively competing for audiences with a wide range of mostly entertainment-oriented programming: Manoto 1 TV with a weekly audience of 21 percent, GEM TV with 15 percent, and Farsi 1 with 5 percent. While more sophisticated, news-oriented viewers will undoubtedly continue to use VOA and BBC, the growth of other networks with sophisticated entertainment products (and pressure from other

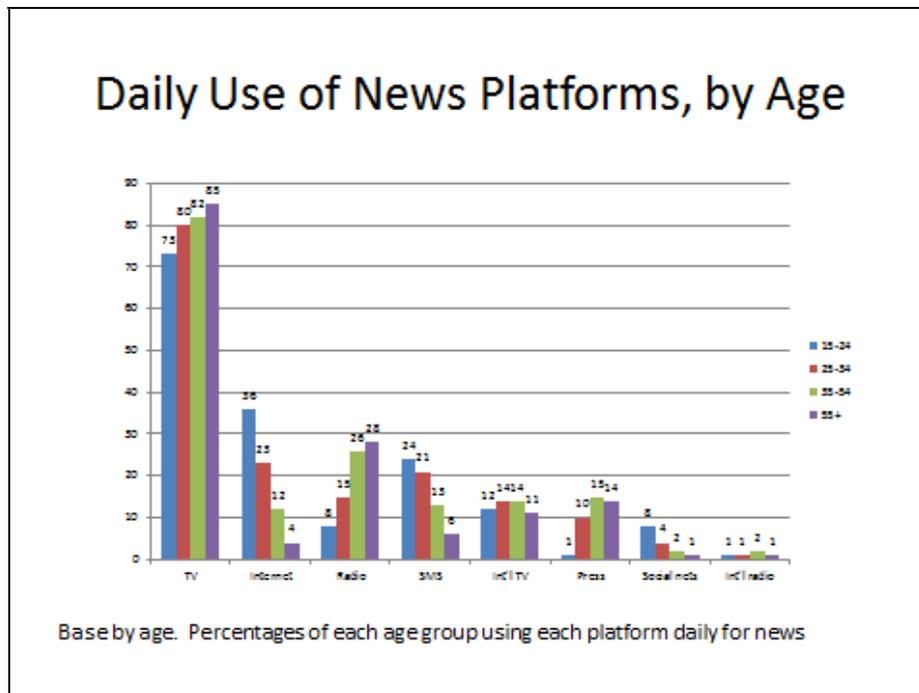
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family members in what is still largely a communal TV-watching environment) may cut into the time available for more news-oriented fare.

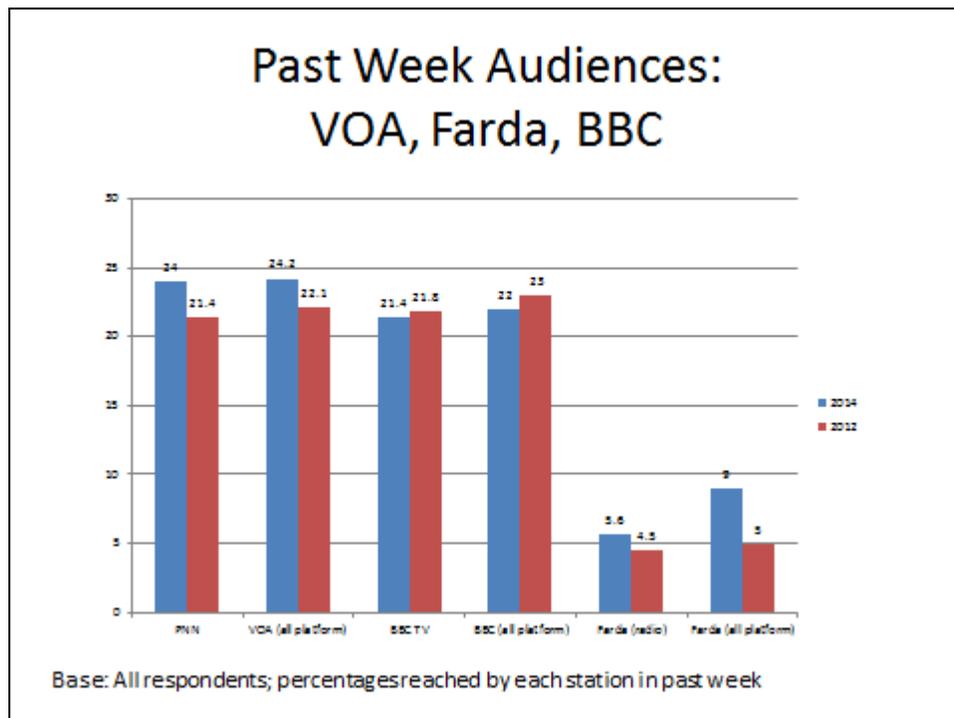
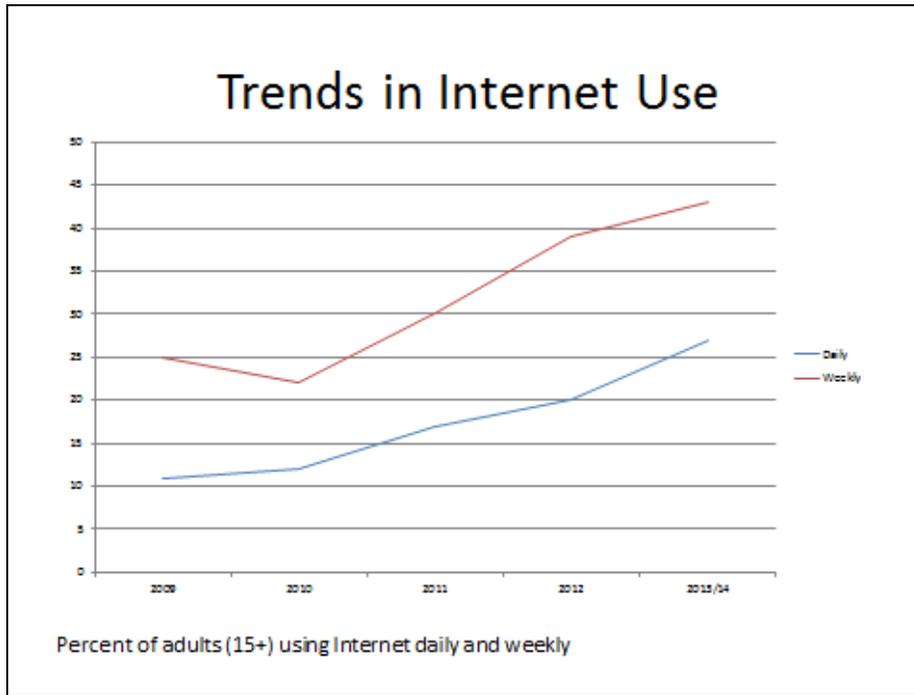
BBC Persian went on the air in January, 2009, and broadcasts from London eight hours daily (3.5 hours of news and information programming, and 4.5 hours of dubbed documentaries and entertainment programs). The eight-hour block is repeated once, and during the other eight hours of the day there is an informational programming loop giving frequencies and programming schedules. The annual service budget is about \$25 million. In addition to satellite television, the service broadcasts one hour daily via shortwave radio and maintains a robust web/digital presence.

Manoto 1 TV is a private broadcaster operating from London. Manoto 1 broadcasts 24/7 via satellite. Daily offerings include 1.5 hours of original news and information programming, which is repeated three times with updates as needed. The rest of the schedule consists of original documentaries, entertainment (such as a talent show and cooking program), and dubbed acquired entertainment and feature programming. The overall quality and standards of news content are not as professional as USIM or BBC, but the station draws similar-sized audiences to BBC and VOA.

Key Data Points from the 2013/2014 National Telephone Survey of Iranians

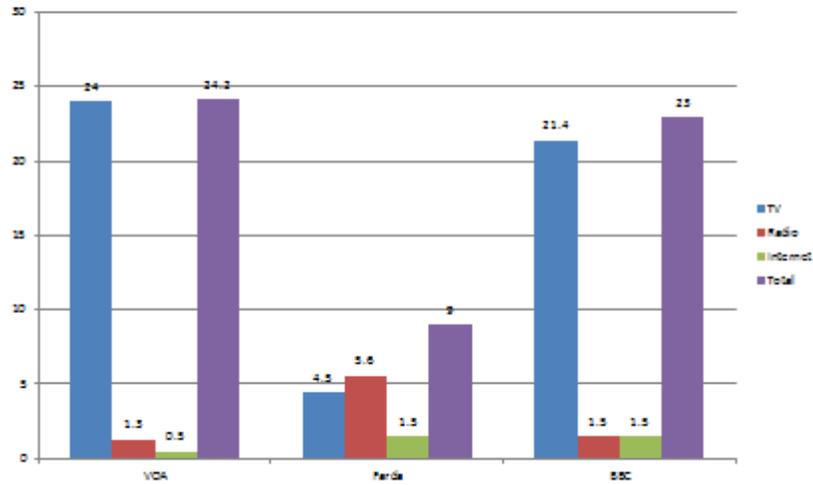


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Audiences by Platform



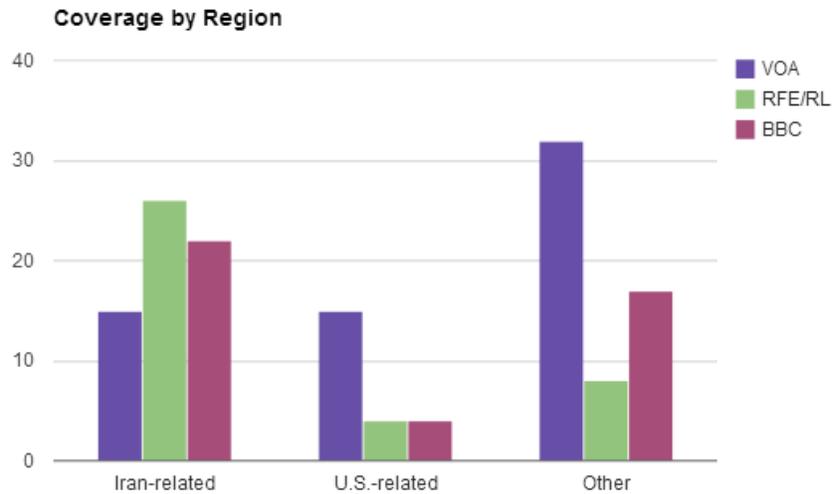
Base: All respondents. Percentages accessing each station by each platform

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Appendix 3: Content Analysis

This analysis looks at programs from VOA Persian, RFE/RL Radio Farda, and BBC Persian on February 15, February 18, and February 19 (2014), and breaks down the news coverage in terms of regional focus, topical focus, and uniqueness of stories from each of the three networks studied.

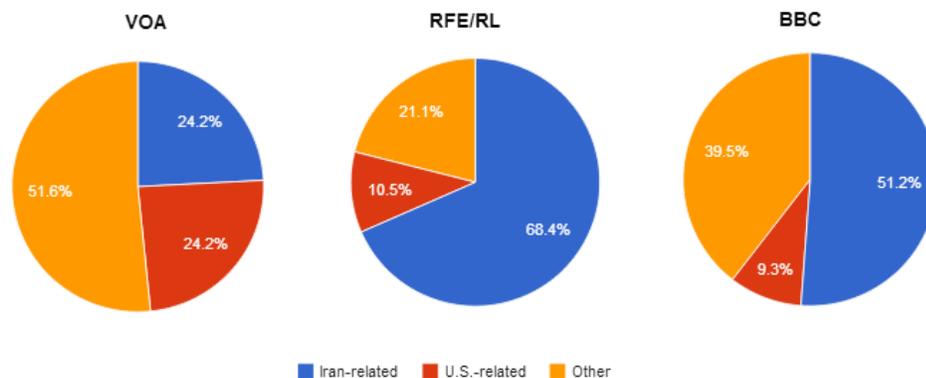
Is there a difference in regional focus within the coverage?



The majority of VOA's coverage was focused on world news (51.6 percent), followed by an even split of focus on the U.S. (24.2 percent) and on Iran (24.2 percent).

The majority of RFE/RL's coverage was focused on Iran (68.4 percent), followed by world news (21.1 percent) and then news about the U.S. (10.5 percent).

The majority of the BBC's coverage was on Iran (51.2 percent), followed by world news (39.5 percent). 9.3 percent of BBC broadcasts mentioned the U.S., but those mentions were only in the context of U.S.-Iran in relation to each other.

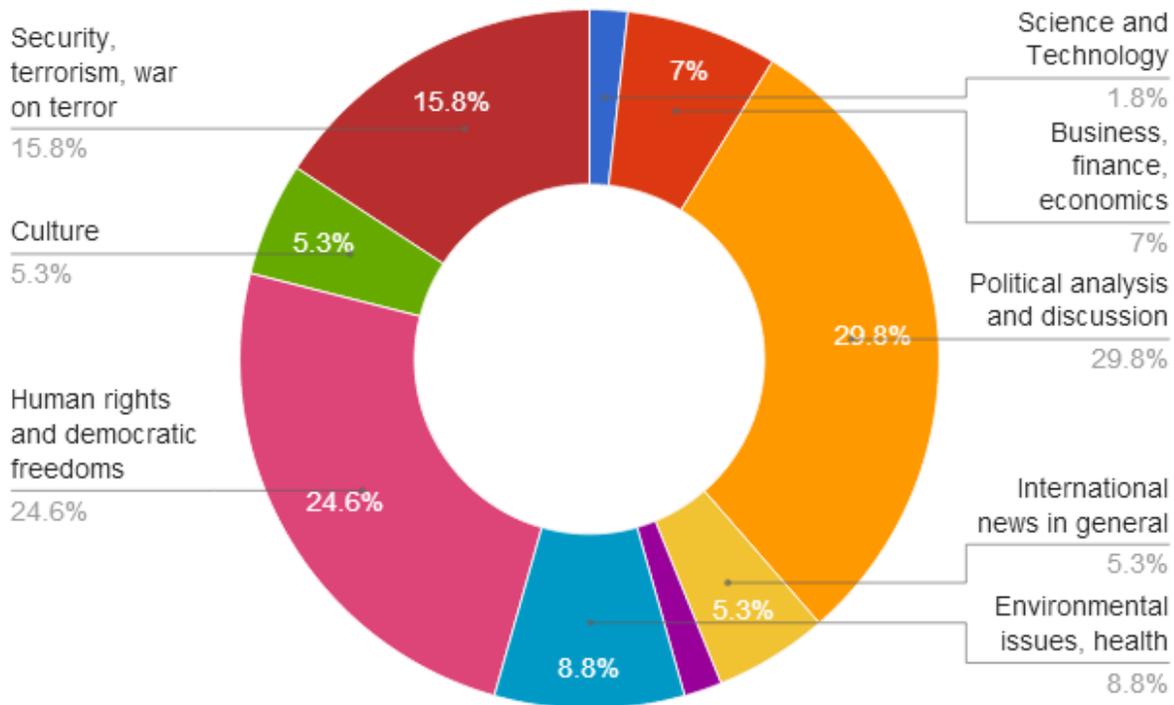


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Is there a difference in topical focus within the coverage?

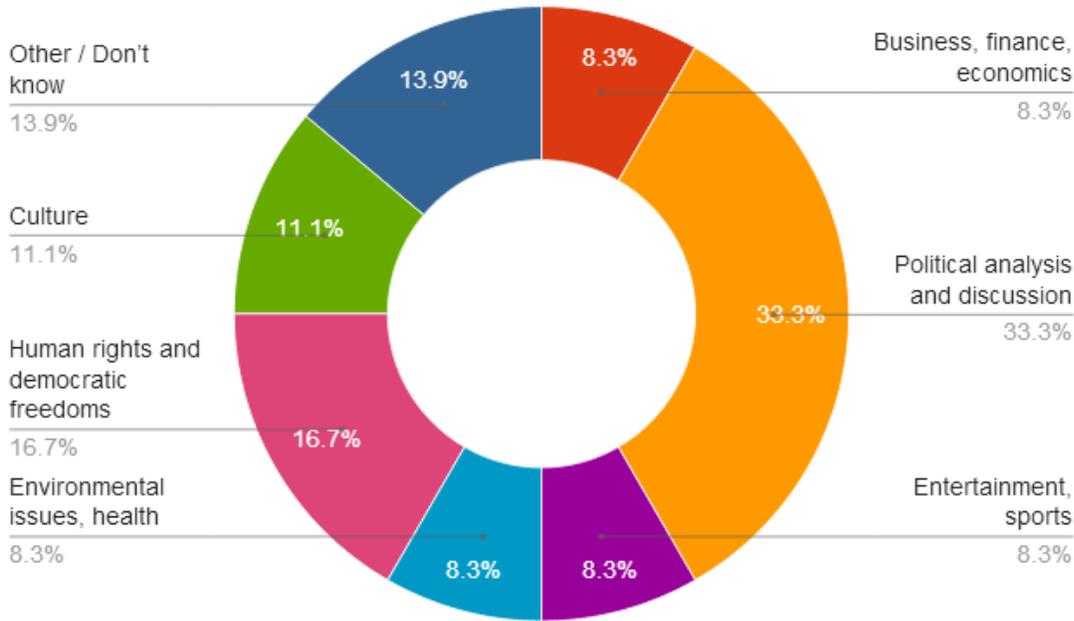
All three networks provided comprehensive news and information on a wide variety of topics. Political analysis and coverage of human rights and democratic freedoms were most prevalent in news coverage by each network.

VOA News Coverage by Topic



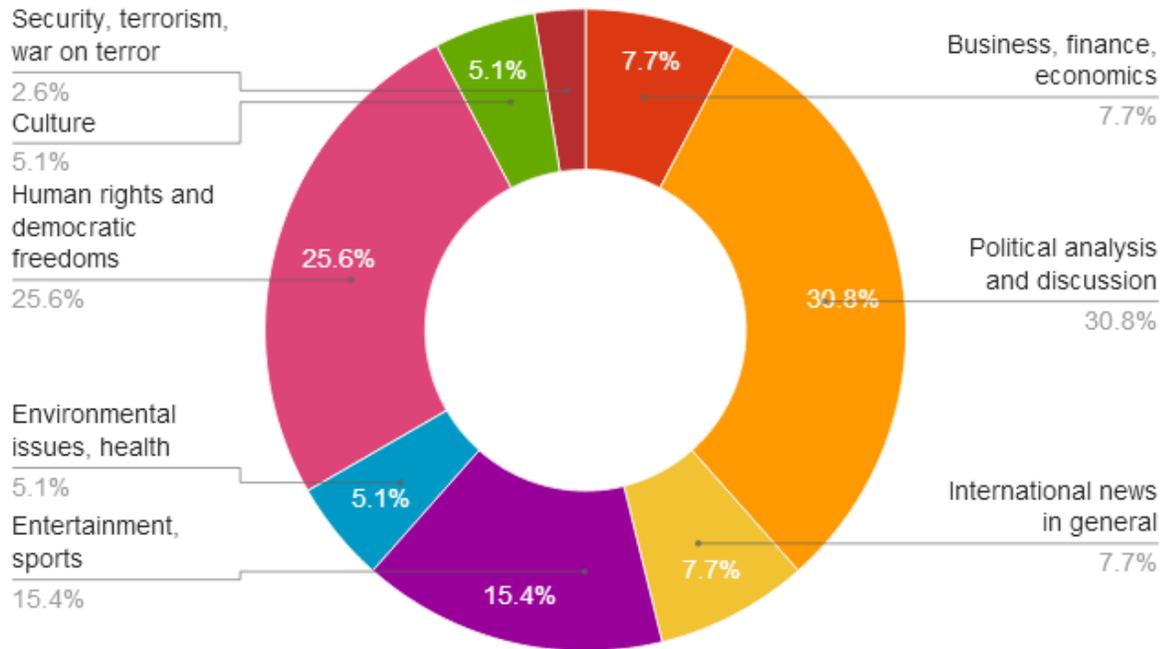
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RFE/RL News Coverage by Topic



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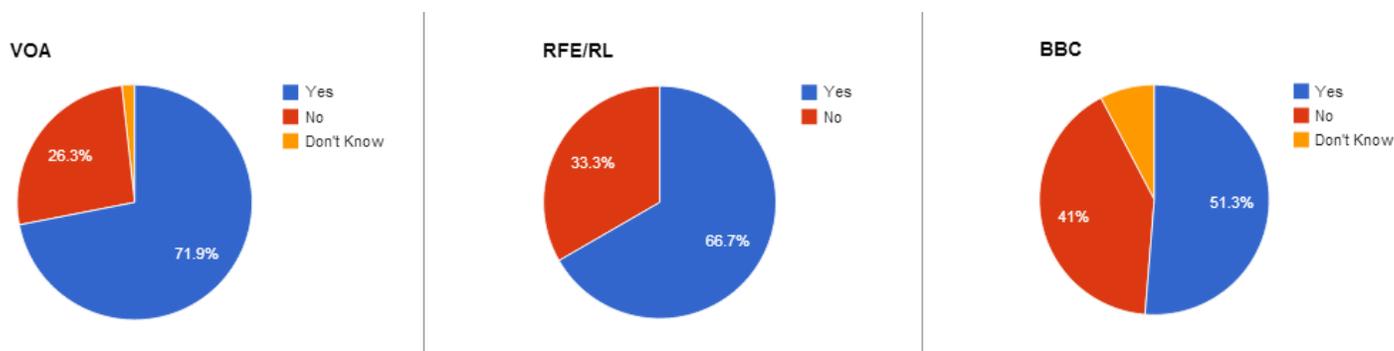
BBC News Coverage by Topic



³ The stories that fell into the “Other / Don’t know” category for RFE/RL Radio Farda, were reviews of front-page and inside-page news stories on Iranian newspaper stands and a call-in show. These stories covered a wide range of Iran-related topics, but were not long enough individually to count as stand-alone stories.

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What percentage of each broadcaster's programming is unique?



A content analysis of three days of VOA, RFE/RL, and BBC broadcasting shows that though there is overlap, the majority of VOA and RFE/RL programming is relatively unique across the time period studied.

VOA had the most unique programming (71.9 percent), presumably due to the network's role as a global news agency. RFE/RL had a significant amount (66.7 percent) of unique programming as well. BBC was the least unique, with only 51.3 percent of topics covered being unique to the broadcaster when compared to VOA and RFE/RL.

Notes and Analysis

A cautionary note is that only nine programs were analyzed – three per broadcasting network – and at most provide a snapshot of news coverage from the time period studied. It is likely that news focus shifts depending on the news agenda and geopolitics of any given week. With that in mind, the following observations can be made:

- Overall, USIM networks provide a lively blend of news spanning a wide range of topics. VOA provides a comprehensive look at global news, while RFE/RL successfully focuses on more local and regional news about Iran.
- Within USIM, RFE/RL's Radio Farda is successfully acting as a surrogate broadcaster for Iranians, with 68.4 percent of its coverage being focused on Iran. Radio Farda covers a broad range of topics from culture to politics to human rights. Further, Radio Farda successfully engages its audience with call-in components to its shows. What Radio Farda could do better is to give more context in some of its reporting. For example, in its round-up on front-page news in local Iranian papers, Radio Farda could provide additional balance/analysis rather than just listing the top stories of each paper.
- Voice of America's Persian Service is successful at reporting a comprehensive mix of unique world news and information with 71.9 percent of programs being unique from those covered by RFE/RL or BBC. VOA coverage is to a large extent in line with U.S. foreign policy goals, in that the Service provided the most coverage of all three networks on security, terrorism, and the war on terror (15.8 percent of all stories analyzed), included a high level of coverage on issues of human rights and democratic freedoms (24.6 percent), and across the programs analyzed had seven stories focused on Iran

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nuclear issues.⁴ However, in the content studied, VOA did not focus heavily on news about the United States. Also, though VOA had the greatest number of stories in the coverage studied (57, while RFE/RL had 37, and BBC had 39), the reporting at times did not go sufficiently in-depth on issues of importance and the programming decisions occasionally seemed disjointed.

- The BBC provides news coverage spanning a range of topics, but emphasizing political discussion, and news on human rights and democratic freedoms. The network's coverage is almost evenly divided between news about Iran and world news. Notable about BBC news coverage is the level to which the BBC goes in-depth on some stories. For example, on February 18, both VOA and BBC covered news of a passenger bus in Iran falling off cliff. The VOA coverage of the incident was the equivalent of a paragraph, stating just the facts. The BBC coverage was the equivalent of 1.5 pages, and included commentary and analysis of the broader subject of road accidents in Iran.
- In some stories during the time period analyzed, there is room for concern about how USIM is doing at reporting on U.S. values. On February 18, Radio Farda reported on a form of satirical comedy in Iran called "black plays," but did not mention the possible racist nature of this form of entertainment. Similarly, on February 15, VOA cited a report by Chinese state media, Xinhua News, which referred to Uyghurs as terrorists, but did not give the background on the human rights situation in China's Xinjiang province. Due to the fact that this content analysis was done from translated materials, it is possible that something got lost in translation.

⁴ Not reflected in these charts, but noted.

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Appendix 4: Future Strategy and Implementation Tactics

With Board guidance, the USIM will formulate and propose a plan to restructure and harmonize VOA and RFE/RL Persian media. This plan will greatly enhance and improve collaboration in editorial operations, eliminate needless overlap, and achieve other efficiencies where possible – while respecting the distinct, established and valued brands and roles of each network. The result will be an innovative, agile, fully modern media enterprise, dedicated to reaching the rising generation and news-seekers of all ages in Iran in support of freedom, democracy and civil society.

This plan will feature:

- A single vision and unified set of strategic goals, determined by the Board, for both VOA Persian and RFE/RL Radio Farda that also will guide distribution and support services from TSI and IBB;
- A new management structure that clearly differentiates functions and roles; lead executive managers with individual responsibility for fulfilling the Congressionally-mandated content requirements of the U.S. International Broadcasting Act: high-quality news; representing America in all its diversity; and presenting and discussing U.S. policy. These executive managers will have the authority to oversee strategy, resource allocations, major management decisions, and will be responsible for outcomes in their respected area;
- Coordinated editorial strategies and programmatic activities; and
- Measurable performance indicators to help gauge success.

The harmonized Iran effort will:

1. Retain and improve high-quality reporting and analysis, the key to credibility and mission success among influential change agents across Iranian society.
2. Instill greater agility and creative energy into the journalism, programming, production and delivery of content.
3. Leverage assets much more effectively in an environment of shrinking budgets and increasing competition.
4. Decisively rectify long-standing management and operational issues at VOA that have contributed to strongly held perceptions among outside stakeholders that USIM programming to Iran is a failure.
5. Successfully define a coordinated, but unique editorial focus for VOA Persian and Radio Farda.

Other implementation tactics:

- **Single Television & Radio Streams:** A single satellite television stream featuring a mix of VOA and RFE/RL content, and acquired video content; a single radio and audio stream featuring a mix of RFE/RL and VOA content.
- **Single Digital Strategy:** A single digital strategy on the web, mobile and social platforms, managed by RFE/RL and staffed by VOA and RFE/RL digital producers featuring branded VOA and RFE/RL content.
- **Reduced Radio Distribution:** RFE/RL will reassess resource allocation among its products to emphasize video and digital, and reduce radio to address shifting audience

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platform priorities. This will require upgraded television production facilities in Prague to produce original video content.

- **Improved Breaking News Capabilities:** USIM television to Iran will expand capabilities to go live 24/7 as dictated by breaking news and other events, with production responsibilities shared between VOA in Washington and RFE/RL in Prague.
- **Editorial Coordination & Content Sharing:** RFE/RL and VOA will establish technical and organizational mechanisms to seamlessly share Persian-language news and features; pending assignments (for coordination); and other programming activities and planning functions.
- **Opportunity for New Brands:** While retaining existing VOA and RFE/RL brands – each of which has strong equities in Iran and among stakeholders – the new structure will include flexibility to launch additional brands and content targeted at niche audiences, particularly youth audiences, with special emphasis on engagement.
- **Expanded Regional Reporting:** VOA and RFE/RL will work together to expand reporting and program production from the region, and to the extent possible, within Iran. They will expand collaboration with MBN to cover MENA.
- **Improved U.S. Policy Presentation:** While strictly respecting the journalistic firewall, USIM will communicate more effectively with U.S. policymakers, Congress and other stakeholders to ensure appropriate cooperation in support of broad U.S. foreign policy interests – and thereby build greater credibility and support for USIM programming to Iran.
- **Expanded Anti-Censorship Support:** USIM will continue to work to defeat Iranian government censorship, including satellite and radio jamming and blocking of online content.
- Per its own action plan, VOA will: introduce relevant new programs and diversify program formats to respond to audience needs; expand coverage of U.S. culture, society, and institutions including from New York, Los Angeles, Houston and other cities; create a multimedia stream of programming with special emphasis on new media as well as the full integration of the web and TV; and encourage more active viewer engagement.