

From: (b) (6)
To: [Amanda Bennett](#)
Cc: (b) (6); [Kelu Chao](#); [Sandy Sugawara](#); (b) (6)
Subject: RE: Press Freedom & Tibet
Date: Friday, November 23, 2018 2:11:52 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[image002.png](#)
[image003.png](#)

Amanda,

There are essentially two ways to go to China as an accredited journalist (not including as a part of a traveling press corps): you go in either to cover an event or as a long-term correspondent.

To cover an event, one needs an invitation from a Chinese host such as a conference organizer.

To go in as a correspondent, one needs to submit an application to the Information Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs through the Chinese embassy, if the news organization already has a bureau in the Chinese city one applies to be stationed. Otherwise, the news organization needs to apply to the MOFA to establish a bureau.

If we want to highlight the lack of press freedom or reciprocity of access in Tibet, we can do both.

To apply for a short-term reporting trip, the easiest way is to have a Tibetan Service reporter apply to cover the annual NPC/PPCC (legislature) conferences in March as we are unlikely to secure an invitation from anyone in Tibet. The annual twin conferences are open to all foreign press and one can apply on-line. The Tibetan Service tried this before but did not get any response.

The Mandarin Service used to be able to get a visa for the annual twin conferences until about 7-8 years ago. We continued to submit application after that and informed the State Department of our failure to obtain a visa. The State said they would bring the issue up during their regular meetings with PRC interlocutors. But nothing changed. The Mandarin stopped the exercise 3-4 years ago.

To set up a bureau in Tibet, we need to submit an application to MOFA through the Chinese embassy.

The regulation for short-term reporting trip is [here](#) and that for setting up a bureau is [here](#).

Please let me know if you want me and/or (b) (6), who is very familiar with this issue, to brief you on this and let us know what step you would like to take next. I'd like to suggest that, to make this more than a symbolic exercise, VOA would need meaningful attention and support from the State Department and/or Congress.

Thanks,

(b) (6)

From: Amanda Bennett

Sent: Tuesday, November 13, 2018 9:21 PM

To: (b) (6)

Cc: Sandy Sugawara (b) (6); Kelu Chao (b) (6)

(b) (6)

(b) (6)

Subject: Re: Press Freedom & Tibet

This is such an original idea. But you are right, we have to be careful for their families.....

From: (b) (6)

Sent: Tuesday, November 13, 2018 3:25 PM

To: Amanda Bennett

Cc: Sandy Sugawara; Kelu Chao; (b) (6)

Subject: RE: Press Freedom & Tibet

Hi Amanda,

I have discussed this with our editors and we propose three persons who we should consider; to make the initial applications to the Chinese Embassy for a visa to visit Tibet as journalists;

(b) (6), our Kungleng TV news anchor, (b) (6), senior editor and host of

(b) (6) forum, and (b) (6) who went to the Beijing Women's Conference in 1995.

We have not chosen anyone who has family in Lhasa at this time, as it may lead to unnecessary complications on the home front. However, you should know that everyone in our service has family connections, including more than half who have close immediate family ties.

We look forward to taking the next steps.

(b) (6)

From: Amanda Bennett

Sent: Wednesday, October 31, 2018 5:03 PM

To: (b) (6)

Cc: Sandy Sugawara (b) (6); Kelu Chao (b) (6)

(b) (6)

Subject: Re: Press Freedom & Tibet

That is SUCH A GOOD IDEA. Let's do it.



Amanda Bennett, Director

330 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20237

(b) (6)

(b) (6)

www.voanews.com



Voice of America is an international broadcaster reaching 85 countries in more than 40 languages via television, radio, web and mobile. VOA has a weekly audience of nearly 237 million people and transmits programs through a global network of more than 2,400 local TV and radio affiliates.

From: (b) (6)

Date: Wednesday, October 31, 2018 at 3:16 PM

To: ME (b) (6)

Cc: Sandy Sugawara (b) (6) Kelu Chao (b) (6)
(b) (6)

Subject: Press Freedom & Tibet

Hi Amanda,

Thank you for this afternoon's managers' meeting. Apart from the updates on our logo and continuing progress on digital matters, I believe you have touched on a core issue VOA must address for all the right reasons.

Freedom House says the situation in Tibet is as bad as in North Korea which is at the very bottom of their freedom index perennially. We will be happy to write, report and promote

press freedom in all its ramifications. However, as (b) (6) said at the meeting, additional active steps should be considered. Here is just one idea for the Tibetan Service.

(b) (5)



I will share these ideas with my colleagues, and I am sure we can come up with other ideas on how to make our contribution to the promotion of press freedom.

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: (b) (6); Amanda Bennett
Cc: Kelu Chao; Sandy Sugawara; William Baum
Subject: RE: Press Freedom & Tibet
Date: Friday, November 23, 2018 3:34:48 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[image002.png](#)
[image003.png](#)

Thank you (b) (6). Each of these direction actions will certainly draw attention to the lack of press freedom in Tibet. There are other ideas I am discussing with my colleagues which I will share with you later.

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Friday, November 23, 2018 2:12 PM
To: Amanda Bennett (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6); Kelu Chao (b) (6); Sandy Sugawara (b) (6)
Subject: RE: Press Freedom & Tibet

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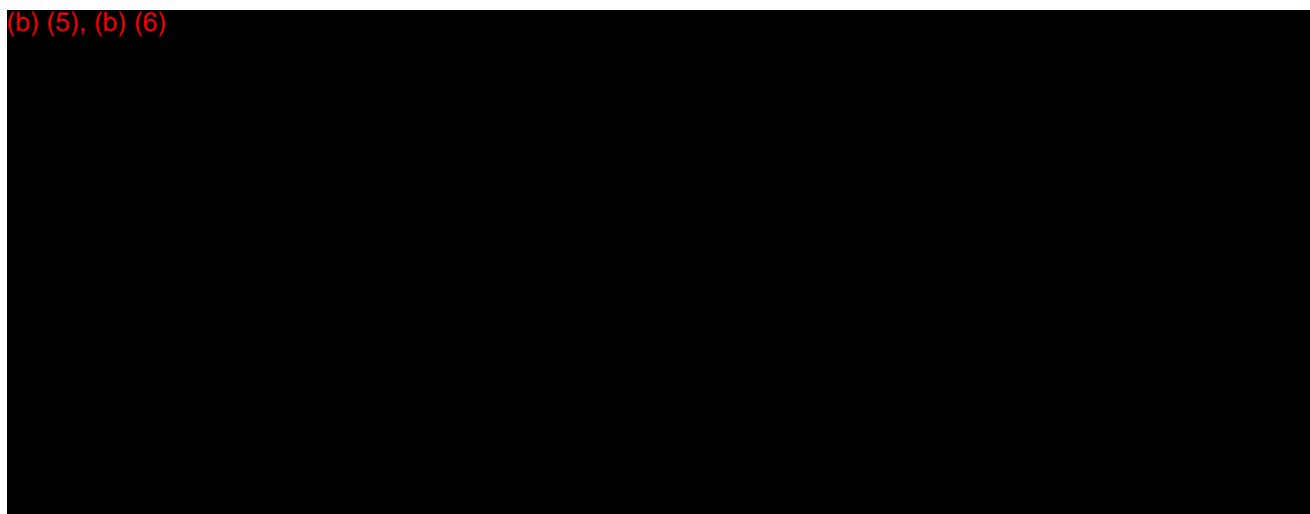
To: Amanda Bennett

Cc: Sandy Sugawara; Kelu Chao; (b) (6)

Subject: RE: Press Freedom & Tibet

Hi Amanda,

(b) (5), (b) (6)



(b) (6)

From: Amanda Bennett

Sent: Wednesday, October 31, 2018 5:03 PM

To: (b) (6)

Cc: Sandy Sugawara (b) (6); Kelu Chao (b) (6)

(b) (6)

Subject: Re: Press Freedom & Tibet

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Amanda Bennett, Director

330 Independence Avenue, SW

Washington, DC 20237

(b) (6)

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From: (b) (6)

Date: Wednesday, October 31, 2018 at 3:16 PM

To: ME (b) (6)

Cc: Sandy Sugawara (b) (6), Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Zhang (b) (6)

Subject: Press Freedom & Tibet

Hi Amanda,

Thank you for this afternoon's managers' meeting. Apart from the updates on our logo and continuing progress on digital matters, I believe you have touched on a core issue VOA must address for all the right reasons.

Freedom House says the situation in Tibet is as bad as in North Korea which is at the very bottom of their freedom index perennially. We will be happy to write, report and promote press freedom in all its ramifications. However, as (b) (6) said at the meeting, additional active steps should be considered. Here is just one idea for the Tibetan Service.

VOA Tibetan Service can assign a reporter to Tibet and make a formal visa application at the Chinese Embassy. Until a visa is granted we can keep applying every week or month, and even if we fail, we will be highlighting the issue of press freedom for all to see and understand. As far as I am aware, no Tibetan journalist, and none from VOA, has ever been granted a visa to visit Tibet or any other Tibetan area in China. Apart from some limited openness in the 1980s, these days 99% of Tibetan exiles, including Tibetans who are U.S. citizens with U.S. passports, are denied visas even to visit family.

I will share these ideas with my colleagues, and I am sure we can come up with other ideas on how to make our contribution to the promotion of press freedom.

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6); Kelu Chao; (b) (6)
Subject: RE: I was told Reuters is not Fair or balances (Persian)
Date: Wednesday, December 19, 2018 6:40:36 AM

(b) (6),

Can we discuss (b) (6)'s email either today or tomorrow? Are we having a team meeting tomorrow?

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Friday, November 23, 2018 8:48 AM
To: (b) (6)
Subject: I was told Reuters is not Fair or balances (Persian)

Hello (b) (6)

Yesterday we in The Persian Web team covered a story from Reuters: U.S. ambassador: Iran failed to declare all chemical weapons to global agency" and later we were told Reuters story is not good enough by the director.

After that we were told for the update, to follow TV and the TV story just had two extra sentences (or short paragraphs) that did not change the main story.

I got an email today that I need to explain why were slow in covering the story I replied back to them which I am happy to forward it to you.

Now, (b) (6) who was off yesterday is telling me Reuters is not a "balance story"...he told me it an "English/British agency which favor JCPOA and we should not rely on Reuters! This is the first time I hear this I just asked him to email me what he said about Reuters in his room.

I don't know if the email will be the same as his conversation or not. But we are having serious issues here. We cover Fox News but now I hear Reuters is not professional.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-chemicalweapons-iran/us-ambassador-iran-failed-to-declare-all-chemical-weapons-to-global-agency-idUSKCN1NR1ES>

Here's another email:

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Wednesday, November 28, 2018 4:00 PM
To: Ask Amanda (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: What qualifications do we need to advance in VOA?

We just had an announcement today that (b) (6) has been promoted to GS-14.

While (b) (6) was GS-12 I had the pleasure to copy-edit some of his work and fact-check his articles while I was temporarily in GS-13 to run the VOA Persian website. Now I am GS-12 and he just got promoted to GS-14. We are told that the agency has confirmed this. I don't think was any competition.

It is not clear to many of us in VOA Persian based on what qualifications people are promoted like this.

But these are the things we have witnessed from (b) (6) :

1- Telling me personally Reuters is a British Agency and since Britain is pro-JCPOA we cannot trust it for news on Iran. Of course you once emailed us and told us if we can't beat a newswire, we should just use the news wire.

2- As a colleague mentioned before: "In the live report from DNC in Philly (b) (6) mentioned #CitizensUnited " is a hashtag trended by democratic party fans to encourage unity in the verge of gap it is experiencing," while it is a Supreme Court case on campaign finance and also a conservative organization known for criticizing democratic party and its campaign expenditures."

3- On VOA Persian official Facebook page (last winter) he went live and talked about Travel Ban giving wrong information that Iranian who for example have parents that are US citizens can apply for US Visa. This was totally wrong and as I have screen shots of comments, some people mentioned that he was making a mistake. Now why he thought he is in a position to talk about such a sensitive legal matter? I don't know. But I was not able to find that video later.

4- Translations that are not accurate based on his level of English, and the result is not being able to fully fact-check or edit a translated article.

5- When he became the managing editor he was able to promote our stories on FB using payments which we only learned about them by accident, (checking facebook - no explanation in advance).

Is it possible for all of us in the Persian Service to learn what are the things that we should do to enjoy the same kind of treatment and advancement in such a period of time?

I hold a Master's degree and I just got admitted into a PhD program but for a GS-13 position I was told I don't have the experience or the minimum education while I joined VOA as a FTE before (b) (6)

Thanks

(b) (6)

(b) (6)

Editor, News Standards & Best Practices

Voice of America

www.voanews.com

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Amanda Bennett](#); (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6); [Kelu Chao](#); (b) (6); [Sandy Sugawara](#)
Subject: RE: More on visa request
Date: Thursday, April 11, 2019 4:30:20 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[image002.png](#)
[image003.png](#)

Thanks, Amanda –

I'll write back to (b) (6) to get some specifics that need to be included in such a letter...and I'll connect with (b) (6) after I have that information. I'll follow-up with you after we send the letter to

(b) (6)

– (b) (6)

From: Amanda Bennett
Sent: Thursday, April 11, 2019 4:20 PM
To: (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6); Kelu Chao; (b) (6); (b) (6); Sandy Sugawara
(b) (6)
(b) (6)
Subject: Re: More on visa request

That is such a touching story. Again, I am so sorry for your loss and for your community's loss. I am copying (b) (6) and Kelu Chao so they are aware.



Amanda Bennett, Director
330 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20237
(b) (6)
(b) (6)
www.voanews.com



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radio, web and mobile. VOA has a weekly audience of nearly 237 million people and transmits programs through a global network of more than 2,400 local TV and radio affiliates.

From: (b) (6)

Date: Wednesday, April 10, 2019 at 2:57 AM

To: ME (b) (6)

Cc: (b) (6)

Subject: Re: More on visa request

Dear Amanda,

Thank you so much for your response.

I've been in VOA Urdu service for (b) (6) years but I'd like to tell you a little more about (b) (6) and how I met (b) (6). I worked as the only (b) (6) reporter in Dawn newspaper in 1990, when (b) (6) was murdered by a Member of Parliament in Benazir Bhutto's government. (b) (6) impressed me for seeking justice through the courts instead of tribal revenge. We worked together through the media & civil society.. succeeded in putting the MP in prison... and found love and a life together. We moved to the US in 2000, where I taught Gender Studies in the Five College area & (b) (6) worked in Mental Health.

Carl Duggan, Washington Post investigative journalist has discovered my story in my book (b) (6) (b) (6); (currently on Amazon). He tells me he is fascinated how I met (b) (6) in the chapter titled (b) (6). He has uncovered the psychiatric files of our second floor neighbor and killer, (b) (6) and is deep into writing an investigative report about it for the Post.

Both of us became US citizens, paid taxes and lived in the racially segregated South East DC with excellent relations with our neighbors. The system failed us when a schizophrenic neighbor on drugs, (b) (6) began hallucinating & turned violent.

(b) (6)'s loss is a terrible blow for society at large. As a professor of Philosophy and History, (b) (6) lectures would attract thousands across Sindh. I have been speaking at condolence meetings across the country. I know that (b) (6) would have wanted justice. Not merely for (b) (6) but for all peace loving people who fall prey to the cracks in the legal system, including easy access to drugs and guns.

At this stage, the baggage left by the tragedy is overwhelming. I believe (b) (6) could intern with VOA if that would help get a short term visa. Or we could explore a human rights clause. For the record, Amnesty International nominated me Human Rights defender in (b) (6) and I represented them in eight cities in Germany that year.

I very much appreciate your support and look forward to hearing from you.

(b) (6)

-----Original Message-----

From: Amanda Bennett (b) (6)

To: (b) (6)

Cc: (b) (6)

Sent: Tue, Apr 9, 2019 4:59 pm

Subject: Re: Request

Dear (b) (6):

I've thought a lot about you since I saw you so close to that terrible tragedy that befell you.

I've passed your request around, including to the office of General Counsel and we can't figure out any way that we might be able to help you on this. I'm copying (b) (6), who is the person in the USAGM who handles visa applications. Perhaps she can think of something?

We would like to be as helpful as we can in helping you move on with your life but we can't figure out legally how we can do it. I hope (b) (6) can think of some solution.

All my best,

Amanda

From: (b) (6)

Sent: Saturday, April 6, 2019 1:53 AM

Subject: Request

To: Amanda Bennett (b) (6)

Cc: (b) (6)

Dear Ms Bennett,

I am taking the liberty to e-mail you this request from Karachi following the killing of my (b) (6) in DC on March 1. We met right after the incident in the presence of program manager, (b) (6) and Urdu service chief, (b) (6).

We have owned the SE apartment since 2003 but I can no longer live there after this heinous crime. I propose to shift to SW, close to VOA. Additionally, I am faced with multiple tasks after the tragic incident against my (b) (6).

In a nutshell, I am requesting a letter of support from VOA to get a visitor's visa for (b) (6) (b) (6) to help me straighten out sudden tasks in Washington DC. From our end, we will provide whatever documents are necessary to support (b) (6) case.

Look forward to hearing back from you.

Best regards,

(b) (6)

E-mail: (b) (6)

Phone: (b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: (b) (6)
Cc: [Kelu Chao](#)
Subject: RE: Non-Citizen Hiring
Date: Thursday, May 16, 2019 9:33:16 AM

In the second sentence, it should be (b) (5)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Thursday, May 16, 2019 9:19 AM
To: (b) (6)
Cc: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Subject: RE: Non-Citizen Hiring

(b) (6),

In general, VOA faces significant hurdles in hiring the “best qualified” candidates for positions in high priority language services, including Persian, Mandarin, Hausa, Korean, Russian, Urdu, Afghan, etc., that impacts VOA’s ability to be nimble and responsive in launching high priority programming for key target audiences around the world. These challenges include the lack of highly qualified U.S. citizens that do not possess the required language/dialect skills nor do they have the most up-to-date familiarity with the target market/region (not having lived in the region recently) or the most technically proficient skills and expertise (they tend to be translators or radio journalists only).

In order to achieve VOA’s mandate to reach audiences, particularly the younger more at-risk generation, on the platforms that they use, VOA necessarily has moved more into television, digital and social media programming. This focus requires VOA to hire journalists with the appropriate skillsets, and by and large, these prospective staff live overseas in the target region rather than in the U.S. or in VOA’s existing language services.

However, VOA is faced with extreme challenges in attracting and hiring the “best qualified” staff who possess the necessary combination of skills due to the following reasons:

1. Positions frequently have to be first advertised to U.S. citizens only in the VOA and U.S. (where they frequently do not have the necessary skills described above). Only after that and once the candidates who applied and made the cert are disqualified by the hiring manager and approved by HR (see #2 below), can the position be posted for all applicants including those most likely to possess the required skills and expertise. This process can take 6-12 months at times; even if everything works smoothly and there are qualified U.S. citizens on the cert, the hiring process frequently takes a minimum of 6-9 months.
2. In order to disqualify a U.S. citizen candidate on the cert, a justification memo for the disqualification must be drafted by the hiring office and then reviewed by HR. Frequently, this process takes so long – in at least 2 cases, 7-8 versions of a memo were drafted for HR – that VOA decides to not pursue filling the position any longer. HR reviewers of these memos do not work every day (are reemployed annuitants), nor are they clearly describing to VOA management how to draft an effective memo the first time. This process has really impeded

VOA hiring of non-citizens and drastically affected VOA's ability to launch new programs or even to maintain existing ones. Examples: Mandarin, Korean, Hausa.

3. More stringent Security requirements have added a minimum of 3-4 weeks in the effort to bring on the "best qualified" staff who live overseas and are not U.S. citizens nor green card holders. The eQip system is not user friendly for non-native English speakers. Prospective hires have to find a way to get fingerprinted for the Security clearance process, which can sometimes be done in the U.S. once they arrive, but there is always a chance that they won't pass Security clearance and would then get sent home to their country (they have to self-fund all this travel).
4. Non-citizen hires who reside overseas are required to apply for J-1 visas in their home country, which can take weeks as well.
5. Non-citizen hires have to apply for Social Security number/card upon arrival in the U.S., prior to being able to start work at the VOA, and find a place to live in the Washington DC area (that is hugely expensive) without having any pay yet from their job at the VOA.
6. J-1 Visa extensions – once these new hires are in the U.S. and working for VOA – take much longer now than previously, and are being denied, putting VOA staff and programs in jeopardy; at times, VOA staff cannot return "home," after having worked for VOA as their lives and families/relatives would be in jeopardy.

There are probably more challenges than the ones noted here but as you can see, it would be a lot easier for VOA services to hire U.S. citizens, thus eliminating most if not all of these hurdles. So, if there are "qualified" U.S. citizens on the cert, they are definitely being hired.

(b)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Wednesday, May 15, 2019 4:55 PM
To: (b) (6)
Cc:
Subject: Re: Non-Citizen Hiring

Hi (b) (6),

Since I'm pretty new to the Division, I've asked EAP's Managing Editor, (b) (6), to do the write up. Here's what he sent me:

(b) (5)

(b) (5)



Here is an email I wrote to Kelu last year:

Kelu,

A few years ago, the agency changed the standard for appointing and promoting non-citizen applicant to FTE positions. Instead of demonstrating a non-citizen applicant is “better qualified by preponderant evidence” to citizen applicants, the new guideline requires demonstration of how all non-citizen applicants are “unqualified”.

This change resulted in a tremendous hurdle in hiring the best qualified journalists for VOA. The new guideline essentially dictates, even if we have a non-citizen Walter Cronkite, we have to hire an 11pm newscaster from Channel 7 who is a citizen.

In 2015, in order to hire a GG/GS-9 entry level International Broadcaster, the Korean Service had to do a 16 page, 7000 word memo, disqualifying each of 19 citizen applicants on each of the key elements of the position. The process took more than six month.

In 2018, the EAP Division failed to get approval for hiring a GG/GS-12 VJ-qualified bridge editor, a priority of the VOA Director, because the division’s justification memo was turned down after seven revisions over a period of seven months.

(b) (6)



I've also asked (b) (6) to write up his experience in having to write a 16-page memo to demonstrate that the other 19 citizen applicants did qualify for the job, arguing the non-citizen applicant is the most qualified.

The cost of the whole process is precious time and energy in dealing with paper work. If streamlined and more time-saving, the Service would be able to start the new hire sooner and get more projects/reports/production done.

Let me know if you have any other questions.

All the best,

(b) (6)

Director - East Asia & Pacific Division
330 Independence Ave., SW (b) (6)
Washington, D.C. 20237
Tel: (b) (6)

From: (b) (6)

Sent: Monday, May 13, 2019 4:56 PM

To: VOA Division Directors

Cc: (b) (6)

Subject: Non-Citizen Hiring

All,

(b) (6) and I had a call with a Congressional office staffer today about a request that is in our FY2020 budget for legislative language that would help streamline the process for hiring non-citizen journalists (see below).

The staffer is looking for two things:

1. Examples of when VOA couldn't meet (or was delayed in meeting) its mandate/programming needs because we could not fill a position with a qualified U.S. citizen.
2. Examples of how long it has taken to bring on a non-citizen using the current process.

Please provide examples of the above by this Thursday, May 16th, and I will pass them on to Congressional. Having this legislation will only help us streamline our hiring process, so we greatly appreciate any examples you can provide.

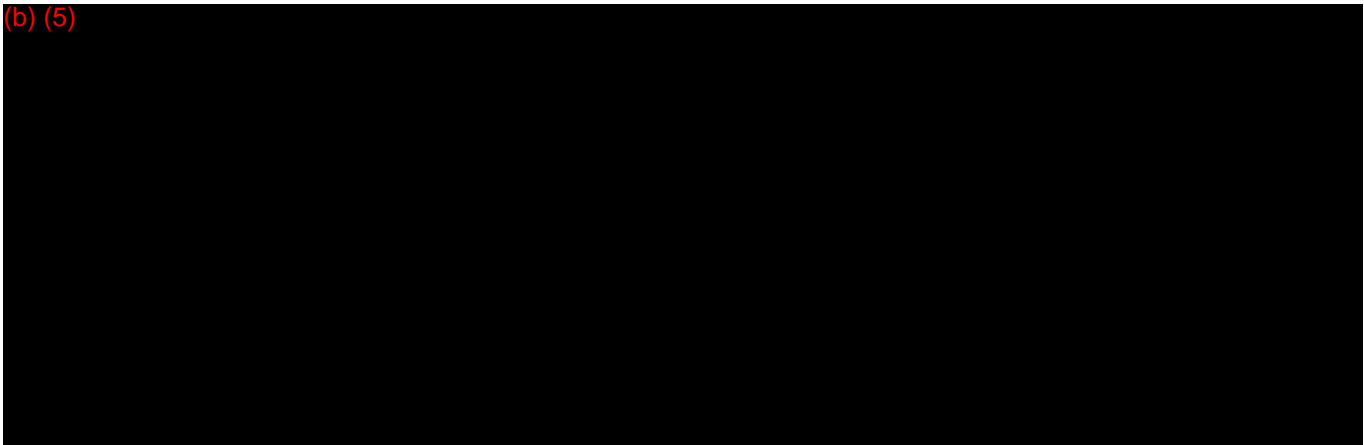
Thanks,

(b) (6)

(b) (5)



(b) (5)



From: [Amanda Bennett](#)
To: [Kelu Chao](#)
Cc: [Sandy Sugawara](#)
Subject: Re: Please read: a departing letter
Date: Friday, August 16, 2019 9:49:12 AM

Tell me when you get a second I have one additional question.

On Aug 16, 2019, at 12:44 AM, Kelu Chao (b) (6) wrote:

This is really unfortunate. According to BAM and the Agency's authority granted by Immigration services, VOA is only authorized to sponsor J1 visa to foreigners who have native fluency of VOA's foreign broadcast languages, under circumstances that no US citizens are available for that task.

Somehow, (b) (6) sponsored (b) (6) a Missouri graduate, to work at the Newsroom two years ago, and recently extended (b) (6) J1 status. Both him and (b) (6) thought they could sponsor foreign students just like language services do. After both HR and GC said no to English and Newsroom practice, we immediately tried to address it. (b) (6) speaks fluent Mandarin, was switched to Mandarin digital this week. (b) (6) has video production and hosting experience. I asked both (b) (6) and (b) (6) to explore if either Korean or Chinese can hire (b) (6). (b) (6) said (b) (6)'s English is better than Korean (b) (6)'s from (b) (6) (b) (6). (b) (6) expressed interest first, but later said (b) (6) doesn't really speak Mandarin. (b) (6) didn't think she could write a J1 sponsorship justification to ICE for (b) (6). So, today is (b) (6)'s last day.

I've known (b) (6) for four years, (b) (6)'s our intern. I didn't know (b) (6)'s not a US citizen. (b) (6)'s very upset about all the missteps (b) (6)'s experienced re J1 sponsorship here. But, we have no options to transfer (b) (6) student visa to J1 visa.

Sent from my iPhone

On Aug 15, 2019, at 9:48 PM, Amanda Bennett (b) (6) wrote:

What is this all about?

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Thursday, August 15, 2019 7:01 PM
To: Amanda Bennett (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Please read: a departing letter

Dear Amanda,

I am not one who usually likes confrontation or to stir trouble but I have been through a lot and know I will regret it if I don't speak up. Really hoping that you will hear me out. Here I go.

I first built a connection with Voice of America early on when I was a college student at (b) (6). My first internship was with Kelu's office in language programming where I learned a little bit about PR and saw first-hand how an international journalism organization is run. I began to dream about becoming a journalist myself for the first time. I went on to do multiple different journalism internships and later attended grad school for journalism. During that time, I interned with VOA once again joining (b) (6)'s "Plugged In" show.

As a (b) (6) citizen, I knew it would be extremely hard for me to find a job here in the United States as I required sponsorship. I networked all day, every day and eventually got myself a few great job offers - one of them being with English to Asia here at VOA. In all honesty, one of the biggest reasons I chose to work with English to Asia was because I was looking for stability. A place that would allow me to invest at least a few years to grow into a solid journalist. With a one-year work visa I was able to receive from my school, how I spent that one year visa meant the world to me.

In my conversations with my supervisor, (b) (6), prior to signing my contract and accepting the offer, (b) (6) assured me repeatedly that (b) (6), the team, and the organization would be able to sponsor me a J-1 visa near the end of my student work visa. (b) (6) told me that (b) (6) also wanted to keep me around for as long as possible and I clearly remember (b) (6) mentioning a "VOA policy." (b) (6) said "we actually have a policy here against hiring non-U.S. citizens for English jobs, but don't worry about it at all. I've already talked to everyone and made sure we can make an exception for you." As a fellow (b) (6) who seemed to care about me, I gave (b) (6) my complete trust and signed with the team.

I had received my offer from VOA late August and I was still waiting for my work visa to arrive from USCIS. With the process being arbitrary, I told (b) (6) that it was unclear when my work visa would arrive and felt nervous that (b) (6) would rescind my offer. (b) (6) then pressured me to come in as an unpaid intern to get a "head start at work" while waiting for my visa to arrive. I complied and I worked for free until January when I finally received my visa. For proof, you can check my bylines with VOA before January.

In English to Asia, I had many great opportunities to grow as a reporter. I pitched and produced news packages for central news and developed my

own series called (b) (6) on American college life for (b) audiences. I built a reputation with central news and received a suggestion from (b) (6) to apply as their new VJ. I applied, thinking that it would be great for my career as I wanted to do more on-camera reporting. Late July, I received an email from the contract office asking me to resign immediately with my current PSC position to move forward with the central news offer. But before I did that, the first thing I made sure I did was approach (b) (6). I broke the news to (b) (6) that I want to move to central news (b) (6) reacted badly. At the time, (b) (6) had just turned in my paperwork to HR for my J-1 visa sponsorship.

(b) (6) accused me of betraying (b) (6) and said to me moving teams “is not allowed to my understanding.” I felt scared and intimidated that (b) (6) ’d try to block my move after our conversation and consulted (b) (6) (b) (6) told me that if I want the job with central news, I should resign immediately. I went ahead and did that, which is why today is my last day here.

While I was waiting for my transition to central news, (b) (6) asked to meet with me last Thursday. I went into (b) (6) office thinking it was an exit interview. Instead (b) (6) broke news to me that Kelu, HR (b) (6) and (b) (6) held a meeting regarding my situation and said that VOA has a policy against hiring non-U.S. citizens for English broadcasting jobs. Hence, I was not allowed to be with my current job nor my prospective job with central news. They blamed (b) (6) and said I should’ve never been hired from the beginning for my current job or at the very least not given false promises about visa sponsorship. At one point, Kelu said (b) (6) “went behind my back” for not informing her about my citizenship despite the policy.

I was heartbroken. My world turned completely upside down. Now, I have just a month until I will be deported. For VOA and some of you, it might be a minor mistake. A hiccup. But for me, it is my life and my career. I traveled far from home and made myself a home here in DC with long-term plans. All of that has changed now.

I’m writing to you not because I’m expecting anything to change. I’ve already come to terms with myself that I will be leaving VOA and either find a job with a different organization or leave the U.S. I have faith in myself that I will not let this discourage me from becoming a great journalist as my dreams are big and I feel that it’s too early to give up.

But all I know is that I did not deserve to be treated like this - no one does. If I could choose, I would sincerely hope that the world is still a fair place and that my supervisor is held accountable for (b) (6) actions. For being blatantly aware of the policy but still hiring me, giving me false information/hope, and for all the other ways I had been unfairly treated.

But I guess that is up to you and the organization to decide. But please, at the very least do NOT let this happen to someone else.

I am attaching some emails and texts I have found to show that my story is not fabricated and stands on factual grounds.

My personal email is cc'ed on this email. Please let me know if you have any questions or concerns.

I'm proud to say that I had the honor to be a part of the VOA team, and I wish everyone here all the best.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

<Screen Shot 2019-08-15 at 6.36.06 PM.png>

<Screen Shot 2019-08-15 at 6.36.40 PM.png>

<Screen Shot 2019-08-15 at 6.47.25 PM.png>

<unnamed.jpg>

From: [Amanda Bennett](#)
To: [Sandy Sugawara](#); [Kelu Chao](#)
Subject: Re: Please read: a departing letter
Date: Friday, August 16, 2019 11:51:46 AM

Ok. After 2 I'm pretty free

From: Sandy Sugawara (b) (6)
Sent: Friday, August 16, 2019 11:34:59 AM
To: Kelu Chao (b) (6); Amanda Bennett (b) (6)
Subject: Re: Please read: a departing letter

Amanda,

When you get a chance, we should talk. I need to fill you in on HR

From: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Sent: Friday, August 16, 2019 10:02 AM
To: Amanda Bennett (b) (6)
Cc: Sandy Sugawara (b) (6)
Subject: Re: Please read: a departing letter

I am available. Can call you

Sent from my iPhone

On Aug 16, 2019, at 9:49 AM, Amanda Bennett (b) (6) wrote:

Tell me when you get a second I have one additional question.

On Aug 16, 2019, at 12:44 AM, Kelu Chao (b) (6) wrote:

This is really unfortunate. According to BAM and the Agency's authority granted by Immigration services, VOA is only authorized to sponsor J1 visa to foreigners who have native fluency of VOA's foreign broadcast languages, under circumstances that no US citizens are available for that task.

Somehow, (b) (6) sponsored (b) (6), a Missouri graduate, to work at the Newsroom two years ago, and recently extended (b) (6) J1 status. Both him and (b) (6) thought they could sponsor foreign students just like language services do. After both HR and GC said no to English and Newsroom practice, we immediately tried to address it. (b) (6) speaks fluent Mandarin, was switched to Mandarin digital this week. (b) (6) has video production and hosting experience. I asked both (b) (6) and (b) (6) to explore if either Korean or Chinese can hire (b) (6) said, (b) (6)'s English is better than Korean (b) (6)'s

from (b) (6) (b) (6) expressed interest first, but later said (b) (6) doesn't really speak Mandarin. (b) (6) didn't think (b) (6) could write a J1 sponsorship justification to ICE for (b) (6). So, today is (b) (6)'s last day.

I've known (b) (6) for four years. (b) (6)'s our intern. I didn't know (b) (6)'s not a US citizen. (b) (6)'s very upset about all the missteps (b) (6)'s experienced re J1 sponsorship here. But, we have no options to transfer (b) (6) student visa to J1 visa.

Sent from my iPhone

On Aug 15, 2019, at 9:48 PM, Amanda Bennett (b) (6) wrote:

What is this all about?

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Thursday, August 15, 2019 7:01 PM
To: Amanda Bennett (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Please read: a departing letter

Dear Amanda,

I am not one who usually likes confrontation or to stir trouble but I have been through a lot and know I will regret it if I don't speak up. Really hoping that you will hear me out. Here I go.

I first built a connection with Voice of America early on when I was a college student at (b) (6). My first internship was with Kelu's office in language programming where I learned a little bit about PR and saw first-hand how an international journalism organization is run. I began to dream about becoming a journalist myself for the first time. I went on to do multiple different journalism internships and later attended grad school for journalism. During that time, I interned with VOA once again joining (b) (6)'s "Plugged In" show.

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sponsorship. I networked all day, every day and eventually got myself a few great job offers - one of them being with English to Asia here at VOA. In all honesty, one of the biggest reasons I chose to work with English to Asia was because I was looking for stability. A place that would allow me to invest at least a few years to grow into a solid journalist. With a one-year work visa I was able to receive from my school, how I spent that one year visa meant the world to me.

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I am attaching some emails and texts I have found to show that my story is not fabricated and stands on factual grounds.

My personal email is cc'ed on this email. Please let me know if you have any questions or concerns.

I'm proud to say that I had the honor to be a part of the VOA team, and I wish everyone here all the best.

Sincerely,

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<Screen Shot 2019-08-15 at 6.47.25 PM.png>

<unnamed.jpg>

From: (b) (6)
To: [Amanda Bennett](#)
Cc: [Kelu Chao](#); (b) (6); [Lillian Cheng](#); (b) (6); [Elez Biberaj](#); [David Kligerman](#)
Subject: Russia-Foreign Agents Meeting Notes
Date: Friday, December 13, 2019 2:27:29 PM
Attachments: [VOA-Russia Registration Notes-Dec-13-2019.docx](#)

Hi Amanda,

We discussed options regarding the new Russian law requiring registration of journalists as foreign agents today.

Please see the attached. Matt Walsh is putting this on the top of next Tuesday's ICC meeting.

FYI,

(b) (6)

ATTENDEES: Kelu Chao, (b) (6), Lillian Cheng, (b) (6), Elez Biberaj, (b) (6)

Overview: Russia's new regulations for registration of journalists as foreign agents targets VOA and RFE/RL and anyone who may work for a foreign news organization. Journalists may be fined up to \$78,000 and jailed if they violate the new law. VOA currently has sixteen contractors/stringers working throughout Russia and most of them are Russian citizens. How can VOA respond with the goals of maintaining VOA's presence and brand in Russia and protecting those who file stories for VOA?

(b) (5)



(b) (6)

VOA
Senior Advisor to the Director
330 Independence Ave., SW
Washington, DC 20237

(b) (6)

From: Sandy Sugawara (b) (6)

Sent: Monday, February 3, 2020 8:29 AM

To: (b) (6)

Cc: Kelu Chao <kechao@voanews.com>; (b) (6)

(b) (6) Amanda Bennett (b) (6)

(b) (6)

Subject: Re: Coronavirus

(b) (6) can loop you in to what was decided on Friday. (b) (6) represented VOA in the discussions

Sent from my iPhone

On Feb 3, 2020, at 7:27 AM, (b) (6) wrote:

Adding (b) (6). I was not at that meeting.

From the President's Executive Order Friday night, I do not see a mandatory quarantine order for everyone coming out of China, only direction for "medical screening and, where appropriate, quarantine of persons allowed to enter the United States who may have been exposed to this virus."

The restrictions below do not apply to Macau and Hong Kong.

If USAGM/VOA wants to take precautionary measures to have employees telework or stay home, that decision needs to be clearly stated quickly.

Thanks,

(b) (6)

Given the importance of protecting persons within the United States from the threat of this harmful communicable disease, I have determined that it is in the interests of the United States to take action to restrict and suspend the entry into the United States, as immigrants or nonimmigrants, of all aliens who were physically present within the People's Republic of China, excluding the Special Administrative Regions of Hong Kong and Macau, during the 14-day period preceding their entry or attempted entry into the United States. I have also determined that **the United States should take all necessary and appropriate measures to facilitate orderly medical screening and, where appropriate, quarantine of persons allowed to enter the United States who may have been exposed to this virus.**

NOW, THEREFORE, I, DONALD J. TRUMP, President of the United States, by the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, including sections 212(f) and 215(a) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA), 8 U.S.C. 1182(f) and 1185(a), and section 301 of title 3, United States

Code, hereby find that the unrestricted entry into the United States of persons described in section 1 of this proclamation would, except as provided for in section 2 of this proclamation, be detrimental to the interests of the United States, and that their entry should be subject to certain restrictions, limitations, and exceptions. I therefore hereby proclaim the following:

Section 1. Suspension and Limitation on Entry. The entry into the United States, as immigrants or nonimmigrants, of all aliens who were physically present within the People's Republic of China, excluding the Special Administrative Regions of Hong Kong and Macau, during the 14-day period preceding their entry or attempted entry into the United States is hereby suspended and limited subject to section 2 of this proclamation.

Sec. 2. Scope of Suspension and Limitation on Entry.

(a) Section 1 of this proclamation shall not apply to:

- (i) any lawful permanent resident of the United States;
- (ii) any alien who is the spouse of a U.S. citizen or lawful permanent resident;
- (iii) any alien who is the parent or legal guardian of a U.S. citizen or lawful permanent resident, provided that the U.S. citizen or lawful permanent resident is unmarried and under the age of 21;
- (iv) any alien who is the sibling of a U.S. citizen or lawful permanent resident, provided that both are unmarried and under the age of 21;
- (v) any alien who is the child, foster child, or ward of a U.S. citizen or lawful permanent resident, or who is a prospective adoptee seeking to enter the United States pursuant to the IR-4 or IH-4 visa classifications;
- (vi) any alien traveling at the invitation of the United States Government for a purpose related to containment or mitigation of the virus;
- (vii) any alien traveling as a nonimmigrant under section 101(a)(15)(C) or (D) of the INA, 8 U.S.C. 1101(a)(15)(C) or (D), as a crewmember or any alien otherwise traveling to the United States as air or sea crew;
- (viii) any alien seeking entry into or transiting the United States pursuant to an A-1, A-2, C-2, C-3 (as a foreign government official or immediate family member of an official), G-1, G-2, G-3, G-4, NATO-1 through NATO-4, or NATO-6 visa;
- (ix) any alien whose entry would not pose a significant risk of introducing, transmitting, or spreading the virus, as determined by the CDC Director, or his designee;
- (x) any alien whose entry would further important United States law enforcement objectives, as determined by the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Homeland Security, or their respective designees based on a recommendation of the Attorney General or his designee; or
- (xi) any alien whose entry would be in the national interest, as determined by the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Homeland Security, or their designees.

(b) Nothing in this proclamation shall be construed to affect any individual's eligibility for asylum, withholding of removal, or protection under the regulations issued pursuant to the legislation implementing the Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, consistent with the laws and regulations of the United States.

Sec. 3. Implementation and Enforcement. (a) The Secretary of State shall implement this proclamation as it applies to visas pursuant to such procedures as the Secretary of State, in consultation with the Secretary of Homeland Security, may establish. The Secretary of Homeland Security shall implement this proclamation as it applies to the entry of aliens pursuant to such procedures as the

Secretary of Homeland Security, in consultation with the Secretary of State, may establish.

(b) Consistent with applicable law, the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Transportation, and the Secretary of Homeland Security shall ensure that any alien subject to this proclamation does not board an aircraft traveling to the United States.

(c) The Secretary of Homeland Security may establish standards and procedures to ensure the application and implementation of this proclamation at United States seaports and in between all ports of entry.

(d) An alien who circumvents the application of this proclamation through fraud, willful misrepresentation of a material fact, or illegal entry shall be a priority for removal by the Department of Homeland Security.

Sec. 4. Orderly Medical Screening and Quarantine. The Secretary of Homeland Security shall take all necessary and appropriate steps to regulate the travel of persons and aircraft to the United States to facilitate the orderly medical screening and, where appropriate, quarantine of persons who enter the United States and who may have been exposed to the virus. Such steps may include directing air carriers to restrict and regulate the boarding of such passengers on flights to the United States.

Sec. 5. Termination. This proclamation shall remain in effect until terminated by the President. The Secretary of Health and Human Services shall, as circumstances warrant and no more than 15 days after the date of this order and every 15 days thereafter, recommend that the President continue, modify, or terminate this proclamation.

Sec. 6. Effective Date. This proclamation is effective at 5:00 p.m. eastern standard time on February 2, 2020.

From: Kelu Chao (b) (6)

Sent: Sunday, February 02, 2020 5:01 PM

To: (b) (6)

(b) (6)

Cc: Sandy Sugawara (b) (6); Amanda Bennett

(b) (6)

Subject: Fwd: Coronavirus

(b) (6) and (b) (6), probably (b) (6)

You're at the meeting last Friday. What have we decided?

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: (b) (6)

Date: February 2, 2020 at 3:24:10 PM EST

To: (b) (6) David Kotz

(b) (6)

Cc: (b) (6)

(b) (6)

(b) (6), Kelu Chao

(b) (6) Amanda Bennett

(b) (6)

Subject: Coronavirus

Hello:

Here is a list of individuals who either worked directly or indirectly with (b) (6) on Monday January 27, 2020. This information was taken from ScheduleAll.

Studio 22 After 7am: (b) (6) and (b) (6)

Studio 10 After 8am: (b) (6) followed (b) (6) directly after as (b) (6) was finishing (b) (6) Show and I was in a pretest for (b) (6) Show. Also (b) (6) and (b) (6)

Studio 13 After 9am: (b) (6) and (b) (6)

Studio 18 From 9:45am to 11am (b) (6) was the assigned Switcher Tech for (b) (6) Show and (b) (6) was the assigned Audio Tech. After this time the following techs also worked in Studio 18: (b) (6) and (b) (6) again (b) (6) Show), (b) (6) (b) (6) and (b) (6) Show)

Studio 15 After 12pm: (b) (6)

Studio 5 After 1pm: Anyone assigned to a Walk-In for Studio 5

Producers who were in same studio include Mandarin Service; Lao Service; Pashto Deewa Service; Swahili Service and Central Africa Service.

Central Intake: Technicians include (b) (6) (b) (6) and any others who may have spent time in Central Intake from various Language Services on Monday thru Wednesday (1-27-20 thru 1-29-20) and Friday (1-31-20) Saturday(2-1-20)

Local 1418 believes that these known (b) (6) and six (b) (6) should be informed that they were either working directly with an individual who had recently returned from mainland China where a highly contagious virus was spreading or they had worked in a studio where this same individual performed work. They should also be told that the Agency has no way to confirm that (b) (6) is not contagious because (b) (6) was not screened upon arrival from China, nor has (b) (6) been screened by the CDC. In fact, Local 1418 believes it is reasonable that all VOA personnel who have recently traveled in China should be cleared by the CDC before returning to work which includes a 14 day quarantine. Local 1418 asserts that USAGM/VOA would be highly irresponsible to not notify these individuals that they MAY have been

exposed to a contagious virus. If the Agency saw fit to send (b) (6) home because of (b) (6) recent travel to China and (b) (6) potentially might have exposed a significant number of others, doesn't it follow that those individuals should also go home for fourteen days administrative leave to wait out the incubation period? Can the Agency be certain that they were not exposed? What does the CDC say? Maybe these individuals should be tested as well. Please find a link to a Scientific American news story regarding asymptomatic individuals being confirmed as carriers and transmitters of the coronavirus.

<https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/study-reports-first-case-of-coronavirus-spread-by-asymptomatic-person/>

Please let Local 1418 know the outcome of our request by EOB Monday 2-3-20. In addition, we are still not clear on why (b) (6) who may or may not be contagious was called back to work after Labor Relations told (b) (6) to go home on 14 days Administrative Leave. We would like to know what the reason was.

Respectfully,

(b) (6)

Voice of America/USAGM
President AFSCME Local 1418
Cohen Building 330 Independence Avenue SW
Washington D.C. 20237

(b) (6) (mobile)
(b) (6) (office)

From: [VOA Coverage Desk](#)
To: [USAGM News Share](#)
Subject: VOA Sharing 8 TV Pieces
Date: Tuesday, February 4, 2020 3:19:26 AM

Dear Colleagues:

VOA is pleased to be sharing the following TV packages with you:

- 1-Trump Impeachment – Day 11**
- 2- Iowa Caucus Results**
- 3-Coronavirus Xenophobia**
- 4-US Coronavirus**
- 5-Iowa Hispanic Vote**
- 6-Myanmar Betel Quid Chewing**
- 7-CONNECT: Street Luge (non-narrated)**
- 8. Kenya Moi Obit**

They are being placed in the USAGM News Share FTP folder and will be available for your use shortly.

To access the material:

Using Filezilla or similar go to:

<ftp.voa.gov>

User name: (b) (6)

Password: [REDACTED]

Click on the USAGM News Share folder. You will find the pieces there.

The scripts are pasted below.

((TITLE: Trump Impeachment Day 11 (TV)
HEAD: Acquittal Expected as Trump Impeachment Trial Draws to a Close
TEASER:
TWEET:
DATE: 02/03/2020
PUBLISHED AT: Tuesday, February 4, 2020 12:10:25 AM
BYLINE: (b) (6)
DATELINE: Capitol Hill
CAMERAPERSON:
VIDEO SOURCE (S): VOA, APTN, ABC
ITEMCODE: DGV_15558328

PLATFORMS:
TRT: 3:44
VID APPROVED BY:MEM
TYPE:
UPDATE:))

((INTRO:)) [[The U.S. Senate impeachment trial of U.S. President Donald Trump draws to a close this week after months of investigation by the Democratic-majority House of Representatives. Trump is expected to be acquitted of charges he abused the power of his office and obstructed Congress' efforts to investigate him when the 100 senators acting as jurors in the trial vote Wednesday. But as VOA's congressional correspondent (b) (6) reports, those senators will first weigh in on the most consequential political decision of their careers.]]

((NARRATOR))

A closing plea from the former prosecutor who has spent months leading the case against President Trump...

((Rep. Adam Schiff, House Impeachment Manager))

"You and we represent the American people, the ones at home and at work who are hoping that their country will remain what it has always believed it to be, a beacon of hope, of democracy and of inspiration to those striving around the world to create their own more perfect unions, for those who are standing up to lawlessness and to tyranny."

((NARRATOR))

The House impeachment managers warning the Republican-majority Senate expected to vote against removing Trump from office.

((Rep. Val Demmings, House Impeachment Manager))

"You will send a terrible message to the nation that one can get away with abuse of power, obstruction, cheating, and spreading false narratives if you simply know the right people. Well today, senators, I reject that because we are a nation of laws."

((NARRATOR))

But Republicans see Democrats' impeachment efforts as the harm to America's democratic system.

((Jay Sekulow, Trump's Personal Attorney))

"What the House Democrats have done to this nation, to the Constitution, to the office of the president, to the president himself and to this body is outrageous. They have cheapened the awesome power of impeachment. And unfortunately, of course, the country is not better for that."

((NARRATOR))

The president's counsel arguing the reasons to vote against Trump's removal from office are clear.

((Mike Purpura, White House Counsel))

"There are a number of reasons why the articles of impeachment are deficient and

must fail. The president didn't condition security assistance or a meeting on anything during the July 25 call. The president sets the foreign policy. The unelected staff implements the foreign policy."

((NARRATOR))

As the impeachment trial closes, the 2020 presidential election nominating contest just getting underway Monday with the Iowa caucuses. Republicans said that process - in the hands of voters - should decide Trump's fate.

((Senator Chuck Grassley, Republican))

"The 2020 presidential election is underway, yet we all are asked to remove the incumbent from the ballot based on impeachment supported by only one party of Congress."

((NARRATOR))

Democrats have argued impeachment is an urgent effort to prevent Trump from inviting foreign election interference.

((Rep. Jason Crow, House Impeachment Manager))

"These arguments demonstrate a deeply misguided, or I think intentional effort, to mislead about the role that impeachment plays in our democracy. If you believe, as we do and as we have proven, that the president's efforts to use his official powers to cheat in the 2020 election jeopardize our national security and are antithetical to our democratic tradition, then you must come to no other conclusion that the president threatens the fairness of the next election."

((NARRATOR))

Senators now have the opportunity to take to the Senate floor to explain their vote - a decision that is coming down to the last minute for some.

((Senator Joe Manchin, Democrat))

"I am truly struggling with this decision and will come to a conclusion reluctantly as voting whether or not to remove a sitting president is the most consequential decision that I or any U.S. senator will ever face."

((NARRATOR))

Senators will continue their speeches Tuesday and will hold the final impeachment vote Wednesday - just hours after Trump visits Capitol Hill for his annual State of the Union speech.

((b) (6), VOA News, Capitol Hill))

((TITLE: Iowa Caucus Results (TV)
HEAD: Democratic Presidential Candidates Speak as Iowa Caucus Results are Delayed
TEASER:
TWEET:
DATE: 04/02/2020 00:00:00
PUBLISHED AT: Tuesday, February 4, 2020 2:37:09 AM
BYLINE: (b) (6)
DATELINE: Washington
CAMERAPERSON: (b) (6)
VIDEO SOURCE (S): APTN DIRECT
ITEMCODE: DGV_15582361
PLATFORMS:
TRT: 2:26
VID APPROVED BY:
TYPE: TVPKG
UPDATE:))

((INTRO)) Democrats in the state of Iowa began the 2020 presidential primary campaign Monday with its presidential caucus voting. But the Iowa Democratic Party said the official results were delayed for hours due to what was described as “quality checks.” The Democratic contenders did address their supporters in Iowa despite the glitch, as we hear from VOA National correspondent (b) (6).

((NARRATOR))
Among those confident in the Iowa results was a newcomer to the national political stage, former South Bend, Indiana, mayor Pete Buttigieg.

((APTN DIRECT/12AM HOUR/FROM 2-4/FROM TC 00:23:22 TO 00:23:48))

((Pete Buttigieg, Democratic Candidate))
“We know by the time it is all said and done, Iowa, you have shocked the nation because, by all indications, we are going on to New Hampshire victorious!”

((NARRATOR))
Also expecting a favorable result was Vermont Senator Bernie Sanders, who narrowly lost the Iowa vote to Hillary Clinton four years ago.

((APTN DIRECT/11PM HOUR/FROM TC 23:45:47 TO 23:45:52 AND THEN FROM 23:46:48 TO 23:46:59))

((Sen. Bernie Sanders, Democratic Candidate))
“And today marks the beginning of the end for Donald Trump. ((FLASH EDIT)) And all of that hatred, all of that divisiveness is going to end when, together, we are in the White House!”

((NARRATOR))

Former vice president Joe Biden, often seen as the national frontrunner, is already looking ahead to next week's New Hampshire primary.

((APTN DIRECT/11PM HOUR/FROM TC 23:32:16 to 23:32:27))

((Joe Biden, Democratic Candidate))

"We are going to walk out of here with our share of delegates. We don't know exactly what it is yet but we feel good about where we are. So it is on to New Hampshire!"

((NARRATOR))

Another candidate looking for momentum in New Hampshire is Massachusetts Senator Elizabeth Warren.

((APTN DIRECT/11PM HOUR/FROM TC 23:39:04 to 23:39:20))

((Sen. Elizabeth Warren, Democratic Candidate))

"That we will always be a stronger party and a stronger nation when we unite around our share of values to advance justice and expand opportunity to everyone."

((NARRATOR))

Warren, Sanders and Minnesota Senator Amy Klobuchar were limited in campaigning in recent weeks because they were attending the Senate impeachment trial of President Trump.

((APTN DIRECT/11PM HOUR/FROM TC 23:19:08 TO 23:19:27))

((Sen. Amy Klobuchar, Democratic Candidate))

"Even in a crowded field of candidates, even during the well-earned impeachment hearing of Donald J. Trump, which kept me bolted to my Senate desk for the last two weeks, we kept fighting and you kept fighting for me."

((NARRATOR))

All around Iowa, Democrats turned out in high numbers to attend local caucus meetings and line up for the candidate of their choice.

And now the contenders head to New Hampshire for the next campaign test next Tuesday.

(((b) (6) , VOA News, Washington))

((TITLE: Coronavirus Xenophobia (TV)
HEAD: Flu Scare: Chinese Americans Worry About Stereotypes and Prejudice as
Pandemic Grows
TEASER: In the jokes, online memes about the coronavirus, some Chinese
Americans see stereotypes and stigma
TWEET:
DATE: 02/03/2020
PUBLISHED AT: Tuesday, February 4, 2020 12:22:49 AM
BYLINE: (b) (6)
DATELINE: San Francisco
CAMERAPERSON: (b) (6)
VIDEO SOURCE (S): VOA, AP
COURTESIES: Twitter
ITEMCODE: DGV_15558441
PLATFORMS: TV
TRT:2:23
VID APPROVED BY: MEM
TYPE: TVPKG
UPDATE:))

((INTRO:))
[[As public health officials grapple with the coronavirus, some Chinese Americans
worry that there will be a backlash against their community as fears of the illness turn
into fear of Chinese people. From San Francisco, (b) (6) reports.]]

((NARRATOR))
In San Francisco's Chinatown, the Leung White Crane Dragon and Lion Dance group
is visiting businesses to bless them as part of the Lunar New Year celebration. It's a
joyful time of year, even though in China the coronavirus, has shut down travel in and
out of the country.

((Calvin, Leung's White Crane))
"For us, we haven't really been impacted by it. I notice some people have taken
precautions. But for the most part, all of the community of Chinatown doesn't seem to
be too worried about it."

((NARRATOR))

....there are also concerns about misinformation on social media and a backlash

against Asians. It's something Chinese Americans have faced before.

((Hoi Leung, Curator, Chinese Culture Center of San Francisco))

"We're seeing a lot of very viral materials, whether those are videos or memes or jokes and things like that. And I think it's still perpetuating stereotypes that that's been happening since the Chinese first came to America in (the) mid 1800s."

((NARRATOR))

Some of those memes and jokes may be in fun but they also can stigmatize - not just Chinese Americans but anyone perceived as Asian, Leung says.

((Hoi Leung, Curator, Chinese Culture Center of San Francisco))

"There is a tendency in our country's history to enact very racist or xenophobic policy on the basis of public health and safety. I think for our community there's a very fine line between trying to protect yourself and without antagonizing someone."

((NARRATOR))

A recent post from the University of California at Berkeley called xenophobia towards Asians "a normal reaction." The university took down the post and apologized.

But many in the Chinese community were extremely upset.

((Hong Mei Pang, Advocacy Director, Chinese for Affirmative Action))

"We urge everybody to maintain the perspective that this is a public health issue and to not use it as a way to scapegoat or make sweeping generalizations on anybody...

.... but also for institutions to remain accountable to all of their students, to the diverse populations and communities that live in California."

((Hoi Leung, Curator, Chinese Culture Center of San Francisco))

"It's really less about who is targeting who. But it's really about the fear itself and how dangerous that can be."

((NARRATOR))

For now, those fears may still seem far away. Thousands of people are expected at this Saturday's Lunar New Year parade, a chance to celebrate Chinese American culture.

(((b) (6) , VOA News, San Francisco))

((TITLE: US - CORONAVIRUS (TV)
HEAD: CDC: US Preparing For Potential Pandemic
TEASER:
TWEET:
DATE:
PUBLISHED AT: Tuesday, February 4, 2020 12:36:14 AM
BYLINE: (b) (6)
DATELINE: Washington
CAMERAPERSON:
VIDEO SOURCE (S): Reuters, ABC, CCTV
ITEMCODE: DGV_15558484
PLATFORMS: TV
TRT: 3:05
VID APPROVED BY: MEM
TYPE: TVPKG
UPDATE:))

((INTRO))

[[The United States is restricting passenger flights that include people who have recently traveled from China. Beginning late Sunday, the Department of Homeland Security said it will direct the arrival of U.S. citizens who have been in China within 14 days of their return to one of 11 designated airports to undergo enhanced screening. Meanwhile, the number of U.S. cases to has risen to at least 11. VOA correspondent (b) (6) reports.]]

((NARRATOR))

The U.S. has started a 14-day mandatory quarantine for U.S. citizens returning from China's Coronavirus hotspot, the Hubei province where the capital city of Wahun is located.

They're being flown to 11 airports where travelers are undergoing extra screening.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Nancy Messonnier:

((Nancy Messonnier – CDC))

“At those airports // they'll be screened for fever, cough and difficulty breathing. If symptomatic, American citizens and those who are exempt will be transferred for further medical evaluation // if asymptomatic American citizens and those who are exempt will be subjected to a mandatory 14 day quarantine at or near that location.”

((NARRATOR))

The U.S. has also imposed entry bans for most non-citizens who traveled to China within the past two weeks.

Messonier says America is preparing for a potential pandemic.

((Nancy Messonnier – Centers for Disease Control)) ((

“This is the first time in over 50 years that CDC has issued a quarantine order.”

((NARRATOR))

The Pentagon said Monday the CDC and Health and Human Services have requested housing for up to 2,000 individuals that may need to be quarantined.

((Jonathan Hoffman - Assistant to the Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs)) **((Mdc Hoffman's bite 3 – (00:08)))**

“The requirements were generally in blocks of rooms of 250. So that can provide some sort of not overly dispersed so that you have some continuity of having enough support staff in the area. // access to quality and hospital systems within the community that CDC and HHS have identified that can handle the potentiality of anyone who comes down with the virus and being able to be removed to an off base facility.”

((NARRATOR))

At a joint-news conference Monday with Uzbekistan's foreign minister in Tashkent, U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said the U.S. plans to have more flights heading to China to bring Americans back home from Hubei Province.

((Michael Pompeo – US Secretary of State))

“We anticipate that they will happen in the next handful of days and we'll return those American citizens. We may well end up bringing some citizens back from, from other countries as well. We're working through the details on that. We're working closely and hand-in-hand with the Chinese government to try and resolve what is now this global epidemiological challenge.”

((NARRATOR))

On Monday the Chinese foreign ministry criticized the U.S. and other countries for some of the steps being taken in response to the outbreak.

((Li Song , China's Ambassador for Disarmament (in Mandarin)))

"Some countries // have taken some travel and trade restriction measures, including preventing foreigners who visited China over the last 14 days from entering, denying entry to Chinese citizens who hold passports issued by China's Hubei province, denying visas and cancelling flights. // as mentioned by Doctor Tedros, we need facts, not fear; we need science, not rumors; we need solidarity, not stigma."

((NARRATOR))

Now more than 30 countries are restricting travel from china.

(((b) (6) VOANEWS))

((TITLE: Iowa Hispanic Vote (TV)

HEAD: Young Hispanic Voters in Iowa Ready to Vote in Caucuses

TEASER:

TWEET:

DATE: 02/03/2020

PUBLISHED AT: Tuesday, February 4, 2020 12:52:30 AM

BYLINE: (b) (6)

DATELINE: Des Moines, Iowa

CAMERAPERSON: (b) (6)

VIDEO SOURCE (S): VOA Spanish Service

ITEMCODE: DGV_15558616

PLATFORMS: TV

TRT: 1:40

VID APPROVED BY:

TYPE: TVPKG

UPDATE:))

((INTRODUCTION))

[I Hispanic voters have been playing an increasingly influential role in U.S. elections, and this trend is expected to be no less true in 2020 when an estimated 32 million Hispanics will be eligible to vote. In Iowa, where the first in the nation contest is

taking place today (Monday), just 6 percent of the population is Hispanic and some 50-thousand Latino voters are registered in the state. It remains to be seen how many Latinos turn out for Monday night's Iowa caucuses. (b) (6) of VOA's Spanish service is in Des Moines with this report narrated by (b) (6) .]]

((NARRATOR))

Young Hispanics are ready to participate in the Iowa caucuses to choose a presidential candidate. They meet at restaurants, libraries and cafes to brainstorm ideas on how to invite more people to attend these events throughout the state, where voters get together and make their choices known.

((María Teresa Cumar, "Voto Latino," Hispanic Voter Group)) ((IN SPANISH))
"Most Anglo Americans are 54 years old; most Hispanics are 19 years old and eligible to vote now."

((NARRATOR))

Democrat Maria Teresa Cumar heads "Voto Latino." Her job is to persuade more Hispanics to vote in elections.

((María Teresa Cumar, "Voto Latino," Hispanic Voter Group)) ((IN SPANISH))
"There are 4 million young voters who will be going to the polls for the first time this year; 4 million of them heard when the president said that their loved ones are criminals."

((NARRATOR))

Republicans are also courting the Hispanic vote. Omar Marquez, the son of immigrant parents, reaches out to Hispanics who may have what he calls a "misonception" about what Republicans stand for.

((Omar Márquez, Iowa Republican Party))

The things that the Republican Party stands for is life, personal liberty and economic prosperity."

((NARRATOR))

Another big task in this election process in Iowa is informing voters on how caucuses work.

((Anthony, Organizer)) "

I am encouraging people to go to the Iowa caucuses and so giving them information that they need to get to their location."

((NARRATOR))

Hispanic voters are now estimated to represent 13 percent of the American electorate, making the group the largest ethnic minority among US voters, according to the Pew Research Center. This means the two major parties will keep their focus on attracting Latino voters as the contests move on from Iowa to other states and then the general election in November.

((For (b) (6) in Des Moines, Iowa, (b) (6) VOA News))

((TITLE: Myanmar Betel Quid Chewing (TV)
HEAD: Despite Risks Betel Quid Chewing Remains Popular In Myanmar
TEASER:
TWEET:
DATE: 02/03/2020
PUBLISHED AT: Tuesday, February 4, 2020 1:01:04 AM
BYLINE: (b) (6)
DATELINE: Yangon
CAMERAPERSON: (b) (6)
VIDEO SOURCE (S): VOA, Other (see courtesy for People's Health Foundation)
ITEMCODE: DGV_15560660
PLATFORMS: TV
TRT: 2:24
VID APPROVED BY: SV
TYPE: TVPKG
UPDATE: A companion OCN and photos has been published))

((INTRO:)) [[As World Cancer Day is being observed February 4th, health authorities are warning of the dangers of betel quid chewing. It's a risky but popular habit in many Asian countries. One of them is Myanmar where more than half of the men chew it. (b) (6) has more on this tradition and its dangers.]]

((Narration))

Across Myanmar, it's easy to find road side stands selling betel quids. The signs of this habit include the red stains on teeth as well as streets and sidewalks.

((Ko Zaw Naing, Yangon resident))

"After I chew betel quids my mouth feels better and my mind feels relaxed"

((Wai Htet Aung, Yangon resident))

"I have bad breath. I want my mouth to smell better."

((Narration))

Figures from the World Health Organization show that almost 25-percent of women in Myanmar chew betel quids and more than 60-percent of the men do.

Aung Thura is 30-years old and has been chewing betel quids for eight years.

((Aung Thura, Yangon resident))

“it keeps me awake and keeps me from getting bored when I’m working.”

((Narration))

Betel quids are made from areca nuts that are placed in a betel leaf with slaked lime. In Myanmar it’s usually mixed with tobacco. Health advocates say the nicotine in the tobacco and the arecoline in the areca nuts are a bad a combination.

((Dr. Than Sein, People’s Health Foundation))

“They are addictive chemicals so by having two things together people like to chew it more and more.”

((Narration))

Dr. Than Sein is the head of the People’s Health Foundation, a health advocacy group in Myanmar that’s trying to educate the public about the risks.

((Mandatory cg: People’s Health Foundation))

Their campaigns have included television spots with betel quid chewers who are terminally ill.

((Dr. Than Sein, People’s Health Foundation))

“Betel chewing, the first major cause is mouth cancer, oral cancer, then larynx cancer, then lung cancer and also stomach cancer.”

((Narration))

According to the WHO, someone who regularly chews betel quids mixed with tobacco for a long-period of time is more than seven-times more likely to get oral cancer than someone who doesn’t chew it. But some people dismiss the risks.

((Wai Htet Aung, Yangon resident))

“I’m not worried. Nothing happens like that.”

((Aung Thura, Yangon))

“Chewing betel quid doesn’t lead to mouth cancer. The mouth cancer happens if you leave the betel quid in your mouth and sleep all night.”

((Narration))

But Doctor Than Sein says the risks are clearly there for all betel quid chewers especially anyone who chews it for more than a decade.

((Mandatory cg: People's Health Foundation))

And all too often, they find out they have cancer when it's too late to cure.

((Dr. Than Sein, People's Health Foundation))

"Cancer is caused slowly and people do not know it and once they know it they are almost dying."

((Narration))

But in Myanmar, all signs point to betel quid chewing remaining one of the country's most popular habits.

((For VOA News, (b) (6), Yangon, Myanmar))

((TITLE: CONNECT Street Luge

HEAD: Road Racing Brings Luge to New Heights

TEASER: At 55, "Mama Wilky" leads a posse of young street lugers

TWEET:

DATE:

PUBLISHED AT: Tuesday, February 4, 2020 12:59:33 AM

BYLINE: (b) (6)

DATELINE: Boise, Idaho

CAMERAPERSON: (b) (6)

VIDEO SOURCE (S): VOA

ITEMCODE: DGV_15556034

PLATFORMS:

TRT: 3:03

VID APPROVED BY: EA

TYPE: TVFTR

UPDATE:))

((INTRO)) [[Taking up a sport later in life can be a challenge. Multiply the difficulties when the sport is open-road, downhill street luge. VOA's (b) (6) introduces us to "Mama Wilky" who has found a new community of like-minded athletes in Boise, Idaho.]]

((NATS))

((CJ Wilkinson, Street Luger))

Sometimes we let our age, we let our number define us. It's like grey hair bothers so many people and it just limits happiness. I think once we can become comfortable with who we are and what we're doing, and create a life that we love, it changes everything.

My name is CJ Wilkinson and I'm a mom, a hospice nurse, but when I'm riding my street luge downhill, people know me as Mama Wilky.

((SOT))

((CJ Wilkinson, Street Luger))

All right, here we go.

((NATS))

((CJ Wilkinson, Street Luger))

People think I'm a real thrill seeker, and I find it thrilling, but it's also very peaceful. It's almost a spiritual experience for me. It's so quiet in my helmet.

((NATS))

((CJ Wilkinson, Street Luger))

Street luge helps get rid of the anxiety and the stress and depression that sometimes I'm dogged with. Working as a hospice nurse, it can be really challenging and I feel heartbroken sometimes, and it just provides a release so I can come back and be as good as ever the next day. It's almost like flying on the earth.

((NATS))

((CJ Wilkinson, Street Luger))

Next week, I'll be 55 years old and I started about three years ago

((NATS))

((CJ Wilkinson, Street Luger))

My downhill family feels like just a bouquet of wild flowers. We're all unique, but we make a beautiful thing when we come together.

((NATS))

((CJ Wilkinson, Street Luger))

So, I am the skate mom of the community

((SOT))

((Brandon Ayllon, Street Luger))

She's Mama Wilky all the way. I mean, like, every time we go down the hill, she makes sure we have everything. She's my other mother, that's all.

((Cade Keller, Street Luger))

You don't see a lot of women skating and you also don't see a lot of older women skating, so it's kind of abnormal.

((Brandon Ayllon, Street Luger))

My favourite part is that she's super-fast. She's faster than all of us.

((NATS))

((CJ Wilkinson, Street Luger))

The maximum speed that I've achieved was 70 miles an hour in a training run in Colorado. It was mind boggling. It was so fast.

((NATS))

((CJ Wilkinson, Street Luger))

Well, the dangers here on an open road where we ride are the oncoming traffic because we could be coming around a blind corner and not know they are there. My husband worries a lot. He's kind of a worrywart, actually.

((SOT))

((Dean Wilkinson, Street Luger))

Everybody in?

((CJ Wilkinson, Street Luger))

He drives for me. We have a truck that follows us down. He drives it and that prevents any traffic from coming from behind and overcoming us.

((SOT))

((CJ Wilkinson, Street Luger))

Best driver in the business.

I love you man

((NATS))

((CJ Wilkinson, Street Luger))

And they call him Papa.

((CJ Wilkinson, Street Luger))

I hope that I encourage other women. Whatever your passion is, if it lights your heart on fire, start it back up. Anything's possible at any age. Just keep doing what you love.

((NATS))

((TITLE: Kenya Moi Obit (TV)
HEAD: Former Kenyan President Moi Dies, Leaving Mixed Legacy
TEASER: Moi ruled Kenya as a dictator for 24 years but also ushered in multi-party democracy and the modern presidency
TWEET:
DATE: 02/03/2020
PUBLISHED AT: Monday, February 3, 2020 11:29:38 PM
BYLINE: (b) (6)
DATELINE: Nairobi
CAMERAPERSON: (b) (6)
VIDEO EDITOR: (b) (6)
ITEMCODE: DGV_15562637
VIDEO FROM: VOA, WIRES
COURTESIES NEEDED:
TYPE: VPKG
TRT: 303
VIDEO APPROVER'S INITIALS: JRO
UPLOADED:
UPDATE:))

((INTRO)) [[Former Kenyan President Daniel Arap Moi has died at the age of 95. Moi led Kenya for 24 years, the nation's longest-serving president, crushing dissent and arresting and torturing those who opposed his rule. But Moi is also credited with a peaceful leadership transition after his party was voted out of power in 2002. (b) (6) reports from Nairobi.]]

((NARRATOR))

Oduor Ong'wen was a student leader at the University of Nairobi in the 1980s and often clashed with the government of late President Daniel Arap Moi.

((Oduor Ong'wen, 1980s Student Leader (English))

"Again in 1986, I was arrested again on charges of sedition, I was jailed for four years, I had to serve at Kamiti maximum (security) prison. So those are the kind of prices I and many of our colleagues who were progressive student leaders had to pay for standing out to say that Kenyans deserve better."

((NARRATOR))

As vice president, Moi came to power in 1978 after the death of Kenya's first president since independence from Britain, Jomo Kenyatta.

Kenya became a de facto one-party state. Under the Kenya African National Union (KANU) party, Moi ruled from 1978 to 2002 Kenya's longest serving president.

((Lydia Wamboi, Nairobi Resident (Swahili, ?? secs))

"What I remember about him is that there was a lot of thuggeries, there were no roads, and no development. There were a lot of street children and the city was very dirty. In other words, infrastructure was very bad. But, on the positive, life was not that bad."

((NARRATOR))

Moi's foes saw him as a dictator who enriched allies and cracked down on opponents.

In the basement of government building Nyayo House, Moi's security forces detained and tortured rivals. A post-Moi government allowed reporters to tour the facility in 2011, and In 2015, then Attorney-General Githu Muigai promised to financially compensate "al Nyayo torture chamber" claimants.

But Moi's supporters saw him as a strong leader who, unlike Kenyatta, connected more directly with the people.

((Jane Komen, Kenyan (Swahili, ?? secs))

"He used to give school-going children milk and he also helped build a lot of schools across the country."

((NARRATOR))

In 1990, President Moi gave in to internal and international pressure to allow multi-party elections, which he won in 1992 and 1997.

Moi was constitutionally barred from running again in 2002 and his party's candidate Uhuru Kenyatta, the son of the first president, lost to Mwai Kibaki.

Though Kenyatta would later be elected in 2013 and 2017, Moi quietly retired from politics.

((Herman Manyora, Political Commentator, (English, ?? secs))

"He was quick to read changing times. He was quick to see the wind was so strong he could not stop it, so he quickly allowed in change. As the saying goes, don't stop

change - bring it on and manage it.' I think he did that very effectively."

((NARRATOR))

Former President Daniel Arap Moi leaves behind a mixed legacy as Kenya is still struggling to free itself from the corruption and abuses rooted in the Moi era.

But Moi can also be credited with bringing multi-party democracy to Kenya and creating the modern presidency.

(b) (6) [REDACTED], for VOA News, Nairobi))

From: [Amanda Bennett](#)
To: [Sandy Sugawara](#); [Kelu Chao](#); (b) (6)
Subject: Fwd: BACKGROUND BRIEFING: Senior State Department Officials On the Office of Foreign Mission's Designation of Chinese Media Entities as Foreign Missions
Date: Wednesday, February 19, 2020 9:26:08 PM

Fyi

From: Kenneth Weinstein (b) (6)
Sent: Wednesday, February 19, 2020 6:42 AM
To: Grant Turner; David Kligerman; Amanda Bennett; (b) (6)
Subject: FW: BACKGROUND BRIEFING: Senior State Department Officials On the Office of Foreign Mission's Designation of Chinese Media Entities as Foreign Missions

In case you missed it....

Sent from [Workspace ONE Boxer](#)



Office of the Spokesperson

For Immediate Release

BACKGROUND BRIEFING

February 18, 2020

**Senior State Department Officials
On the Office of Foreign Mission's Designation of
Chinese Media Entities as Foreign Missions**

**February 18, 2020
Press Correspondents' Room
Washington, D.C.**

MODERATOR: Okay, so we have two briefers here to talk about the Office of Foreign Missions designation of Chinese media entities as foreign missions. So we have [Senior State Department Official One] and [Senior State Department Official Two]. They'll be referred to as senior State Department officials from here on out. The briefing will be on background. They'll both have some opening remarks, and then we'll turn to your questions. Okay.

SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL ONE: So I'll talk a little bit about why we're doing what we're doing, and then [Senior State Department Official] can talk about what that actually means.

So we are designating five Chinese state-run media organizations as foreign missions. That's the Xinhua News Agency; China Global Television Network which falls under China Central Television, CCTV; China Radio International; China Daily Distribution Corporation; and Hai Tian Development USA, which is the distributor for the *People's Daily* here in the United States.

Again, I'll defer to [Senior State Department Official Two] on what this actually means in terms of what they'll be required to do, but we are – we're making this designation based on the very indisputable fact that

all five of these are subject to the control of the Chinese Government. Obviously, the Chinese Communist Party has always had a pretty tight rein on media in general and state-run media in particular, but that has only further tightened since Xi Jinping took over. Since he became general secretary, China's Communist Party has reorganized China's state news agencies and asserted even more direct control over them, both in terms of content, editorial, et cetera, et cetera.

Xi Jinping's got a number of quotes on this score that are – there's many of them. One of them is that, "Managing China's media messaging is crucial for the future and fate of the Chinese Communist Party and the state." There are many others of a similar ilk that demonstrate exactly how much of a function of the state Xi Jinping considers the media to be.

In addition to the very clear state control of these media organizations, the PRC Government has also expanded its overseas media operations in recent years, including here in the United States. I can talk a little bit briefly about each one of these organizations and how we came to make the determination that it was foreign mission.

For Xinhua, this is an institution directly reporting to China's State Council, which is the chief administrative authority of the PRC Government. China Global Television Network is part of the China Media Group, which is a media company run by the PRC Government. The same goes for China Radio International; that's also part of the China Media Group. China Daily Distribution Corporation acts on behalf of the *China Daily*, which is an English-language daily newspaper owned by the Publicity Department of the CCP. And then fifth, Hai Tian Development USA acts on behalf of the *People's Daily*, which is the official newspaper of the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party.

And then just to reiterate, each one of these entities meets the definition of foreign mission under our Foreign Mission Act, which is to say they are either substantially owned or effectively controlled by a foreign government. And that's why we have now determined that we will be treating them as foreign missions.

One thing I want to clarify – I'm sure you guys all know this very well, but it's worth pointing out that some people conflate this with FARA, the Foreign Agents Registration Act. That's a separate authority, a Department of Justice authority. It's a separate regulatory or statutory regime administered by DOJ that requires agents of foreign principals, including foreign governments, that are engaged in certain activities to disclose their relationship with and conduct on behalf of the foreign principals. This is separate. That's a DOJ authority. They are the ones that implement the Foreign Agent – the FARA. This is a totally separate authority. This is under the Foreign Missions Act. And again, a foreign mission is, as defined by that law, as an entity that is substantially owned or effectively controlled by a foreign government.

I think I'll leave it at that and then ask [Senior State Department Official Two] to talk a little bit about what this designation will actually mean for those five entities.

SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL TWO: Thank you. Again, as – we have designated them as foreign missions. That does not mean that they are embassies or consulates or have traditional diplomatic privileges or immunities. What we are doing is imposing two requirements on these entities.

The first is that they will – are required to notify the Office of Foreign Missions within the State Department of their current personnel in the United States, basic information about those individuals, and then as – if there's any changes to those employment situations. So if anyone departs or new people come on, they would notify us, just like the standard requirement for an embassy or consulate.

The second is that they would need to notify us of their current real property holdings, whether they are owned or leased; and in connection with that, prior to acquiring, whether by purchase or lease any new real property, they would need to obtain prior approval from my office. Those are the only two requirements that are in place, and all of that was notified to each of these entities earlier today.

MODERATOR: Okay. Are we good?

QUESTION: You're the Office of Foreign Missions?

SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL TWO: Correct.

MODERATOR: So we'll take questions.

QUESTION: Can I --

MODERATOR: I guess we'll start with Matt.

QUESTION: Thank you. Actually, can I go second? Because I forgot what my question was. (Laughter.)

MODERATOR: Sure. Sure.

QUESTION: Could I --

MODERATOR: Shaun.

QUESTION: Sure. Could I ask you, first of all, what made you choose to do it now, and particularly to Chinese state media outlets? There are plenty of countries that have media outlets that are seen as offering propaganda for the regime. Why in particular do this with China as opposed to plenty of other countries? Why now? And do you think or fear that there'd be any repercussions for journalists from democratic countries who are working in mainland China now?

SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL ONE: I'll take a swing at those questions.

The 2017 National Security Strategy, a big part of that is great power, competition in China, obviously, looms large from -- in that lens. And obviously, I can't speak about what came before, but certainly viewing China as a competitor and one that we are going to -- we're not seeking conflict by any stretch of the imagination, but we're going to call it straight, we're going to call it the way we see it. The fact of the matter is each and every single one of these entities does, in fact, work 100 percent for the Chinese Government and the Chinese Communist Party.

This process took some time. Obviously, we considered it very carefully, but we think it's altogether appropriate that we basically call these entities what they are, which are organs of the Chinese one-party state propaganda apparatus.

I will not speculate on whether, and if so how, Beijing might choose to respond. I'm not -- we're not in any way, shape, or form constraining any of the journalistic activities these entities engage in. We're just saying we're going to treat them as a foreign mission, and as [Senior State Department Official Two] said, require that they share a little bit of information about their employees and real estate holdings.

Of course, as you know, Western journalists already suffer very severe restrictions on their ability to do their jobs inside of the People's Republic of China. So that's obviously worth keeping in mind.

QUESTION: So when you talk about them notifying you of their personal -- that would include, like, American citizen employees as well, correct?

SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL TWO: Correct.

QUESTION: But for foreigners -- for, like, Chinese nationals -- don't you guys already have access to that information? Don't they need, like, J-1 visas? Wouldn't you -- don't you already know who their foreign employees who -- at least any employee who would need a visa to come here?

And then just secondly on that, you talk about five organizations, but do you have an idea now, before they've actually registered with you, how many offices or employees they actually have? Do you have a way to crosscheck to make sure that they're telling the truth? Like, they might have a bureau in San Francisco or Seattle, or something like that, not just one in New York or Washington.

SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL TWO: So working those in reverse, so we are -- we've (inaudible) sent letters and made contact with each of the five entities today. So we will begin that process of clarifying our current understanding against what they have to share with us. And so we certainly have some information, but this is -- another aspect of this is it helps improve our understanding of how these entities do operate in the United States. And so we'll see what information we have in hand.

QUESTION: And just employees on -- don't you already have access to the --

SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL TWO: Well, the State Department is a big place, and certainly visas aren't -- certainly if somebody tracked all the visas and went down individually, yeah, they could probably put that together, but we aren't currently centrally capturing that information, at least not in my office.

MODERATOR: (Inaudible).

QUESTION: There's been a major emphasis by this administration on counterintelligence operations against China and Chinese espionage operations here in the United States. I'm wondering if this is in any way related to trying to identify Chinese espionage officers, intelligence officers, who may be working undercover at any of these entities. And will that information be passed on to counterintelligence officials here in the United States when they give you the identities and the names of their employees?

SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL ONE: Look, I mean, this is a very clear justification, right. I mean, there is no dispute that all five of these entities are part of the PRC party state propaganda news apparatus. I mean, they take their orders directly from the top, and we're merely recognizing that by placing them on our foreign missions list. Will there be more transparency when and after they share the information that [Senior State Department Official Two]'s office will get from them? Absolutely, but I – I mean, I want to make it clear: We're doing this because we actually view them as foreign missions and that's what we do with foreign missions – we put them on the foreign missions list.

QUESTION: Sure, I understand that. But could this information also be valuable to U.S. counterintelligence officials who have been pressing efforts to uncover Chinese – what have been increased Chinese intelligence operations here in the United States?

SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL ONE: I'm going to pass on that one and go to the next question.

MODERATOR: Yeah, we're not going to speculate on what the intelligence value might be here. Yeah, Nicole.

QUESTION: Yeah, [Senior State Department Official One], I just wanted to follow up on Shaun's question. When he asked you why now, you cited the 2017 NSS. That was almost three years ago.

SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL ONE: Yep.

QUESTION: So again, why now? And secondly, it does mention China, but it also mentions Russia. And outlets like RT could arguably be described in exactly the same way, so why not Russia as well, or others?

SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL ONE: I'm not going to comment on the Russia one because I'm only the [title redacted].

QUESTION: Okay. Who could speak to that?

SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL ONE: I know we have designated media organizations from other countries as foreign missions before. Why we're doing it right now – again, the process is not a super-fast one. We very carefully considered this before coming to this determination. But as I pointed out, yes, we all know these guys have been state-controlled for forever, but that control if anything has gotten more stronger over time and it's far more aggressive – their activities outside of China, including here in the United States. And so based on that, we decided it was time to act.

QUESTION: Can [Senior State Department Official Two] speak to why just the one country? Why not --

MODERATOR: Do you have anything to add?

SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL TWO: Not really.

QUESTION: Why not Russia?

SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL TWO: I mean, I – at the moment, we haven't announced any new restrictions for those types of (inaudible) or requirements.

QUESTION: Okay. It just seems like a weird – a mission, given Russian media and Russian social media.

SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL ONE: What I will say, not being a Russia expert, but I can tell you about these Chinese, and these guys are part and parcel. They're on the org chart; they fall directly under the politburo propaganda jurisdiction. So without reference to – and the way it works in any other country, it is clearly the case with the People's Republic of China that we're dealing with organs of the party state.

MODERATOR: Okay. Lara.

QUESTION: Could you talk a little bit about the discussions and the deliberations you all had about to the effect that there might be a chilling effect on journalists not just from the United States, but from other democracies or other countries that support a free press in China as a result of this?

And then also it's a little ironic that this briefing is on background if we're talking about press rights and protecting what a free press does that we don't have an on-the-record quote from a government official defending and justifying this. So I would ask if there's any part of this that we could put on the record.

SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL ONE: I'll have to get back to you on the latter one --

QUESTION: Okay.

SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL ONE: -- but for now, we're working under the ground rules. Can I --

QUESTION: Well, maybe you could give us -- we could quote from the Federal Register Notice, if you can give that to us. I mean, that's going to be --

SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL ONE: Federal Register is -- I mean, can't you guys access that?

SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL TWO: Public record?

SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL ONE: It's a public --

QUESTION: Yeah, I just tried to find it and it's not up there yet.

SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL ONE: Oh, okay.

SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL TWO: It probably will not be on there until Thursday at the earliest, just for the publication schedule. That's my -- I think they do Tuesday, Thursdays -- that --

QUESTION: Okay. Is this effective immediately?

SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL ONE: But to your first question, I mean, obviously, we're painfully aware of the very tough operating environment that U.S. and other foreign journalists operate under in China. Again, we -- this is not intended to put any sort of constraint on what the CGTN or the Xinhua people do here in the United States with regards to their journalistic operations. But obviously, it's impossible for me to speculate on how Beijing is going to react. It's already the case that freedom of the press is under severe siege in the People's Republic of China, and that was long before this announcement came about in -- earlier on this afternoon.

So I mean, we're going to have to defer to our Chinese counterparts on what they're going to do about freedom of the press in the PRC.

MODERATOR: Carol.

QUESTION: So are you saying there will be no restrictions on what they do journalistically? So they can travel if they want to cover the campaign, they can come here to the State Department as some of them have before to ask a question of Secretary Pompeo -- they don't need permission -- do they need permission to sign a lease for an apartment?

SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL TWO: For office?

QUESTION: For office.

SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL ONE: This is not for the individuals; this is for these five offices, right?

QUESTION: For the five. So -- but there are no journalistic restrictions on them?

SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL ONE: That is correct.

QUESTION: So what is the purpose of this?

SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL ONE: Well, we're going to be getting the information about their employees and their holdings, so there's going to be some transparency. And now that they are on our office – now that they're on the list of foreign missions, I think there is a – we are serving a certain purpose by making clear that these guys are part and parcel of the PRC Government. These are not independent journalistic outlets.

QUESTION: And at the moment, they are the only country in which there are news organizations on the foreign mission list?

SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL ONE: I don't know that that's the case.

SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL TWO: No, they're not the only one.

SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL ONE: I would not say --

QUESTION: What are the others?

SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL TWO: Off the top of my head, so I know that one that we recently did several years ago was the Vietnam News Agency about five years ago.

MODERATOR: Okay. Nike.

QUESTION: Yeah. Could you talk about the repercussion if the five entity and their employees choose not to comply with the requirements? And secondly, do you happen to have a number of the Chinese nationals and U.S. citizens, employees? Thank you.

SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL ONE: I don't think we have that information yet, but --

SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL TWO: Correct. We do not currently have a list of employees, but we hope to have one soon. That's one of the requirements. We don't want to speculate about what are the enforcement actions. There are some provisions in the Foreign Missions Act that talk about property acquired without obtaining our permission generically. We could – the law says that that lease could be invalidated if that's the case. But we're not – we don't expect them not to comply. These are really basic requirements and very minimal impact.

MODERATOR: Yeah, Jen.

QUESTION: You said you wouldn't speculate on what Beijing will do, but have you thought about what will happen if Beijing does retaliate against any U.S. media outlets or any other media outlets operating in China. If they try to revoke licenses for example, what will the State Department response be?

SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL ONE: Look, we have a very long track record of speaking up for freedom of the press in China and will continue to do that. If you – again, I don't want to predict what they may or may not do, but I think it would be faulty logic to attribute that to this action. But like I said, and as [Senior State Department Official Two] clarified, we're not doing anything to restrict the activities of these folks here in the United States. They're going to continue to enjoy our free and open system. And let's not forget that before today, there were already plenty of restrictions on foreign journalists operating in China, so I just want make sure that that point is highlighted and you keep that in mind.

MODERATOR: Nick.

QUESTION: Just to go back to Jonathan's question but asking it more generically, what will be done with the list of employees, especially U.S. citizens? Who will they be sent to and how will you treat them? And then per the historical question, if you – just to make sure RT, Sputnik, other Russian media are not on this list right now. Do you have any idea if Russian or Soviet media in the past have been designated on this list?

SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL TWO: So certainly maybe all of the Soviet news entities at that time were designated. I know ITAR-TASS --

SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL ONE: *Pravda* was on there.

SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL TWO: *Pravda*.

QUESTION: They were all on this --

SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL TWO: Yeah.

QUESTION: -- this same designated list?

SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL TWO: The same – same designation, the same law. There's a number of them, some I wouldn't even recognize today. And then you ended up --

QUESTION: Just generically, like --

SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL ONE: We don't have any Russia experts here, so I'm kind of – personally, I'm not comfortable talking about the Russia angle, just because that's not my brief.

QUESTION: I know. I was just asking historically.

SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL ONE: Yeah.

QUESTION: Yeah. Okay.

SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL TWO: But what was the first part of your question?

QUESTION: The first question was just what are you going to do with the list? Where does it go, especially U.S. citizens' data? What's the use for it?

SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL ONE: Oh, yeah.

SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL TWO: So I would refer you to I think it's the SORN – I think that stands for System of Records Notice. It's on the State Department website. It goes into great detail about how at least my office, Office of Foreign Missions, handles its – this type of data. And so that – it's at least a page of description there, so I would refer you there.

QUESTION: Can you give us some highlights?

QUESTION: Some of that would be?

SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL TWO: It just says it's certainly available within the – to the federal government. We are – this generic data, there had to be a reason for it. But it's available upon request from state and local governments. Again, speaking – we have lots of data about just saying that the Chinese embassy or the British embassy – the same type of information. There are some requirements of when we would share that data. Sometimes if there's a valid law enforcement reason, there's a process for that. But it's all detailed heavily on the website.

QUESTION: For personnel, does – what does that include? Age, address, visa number, Social Security number if they're Americans? Or is it just name?

SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL TWO: It does not include Social Security number. That's not something we're capturing. It would – basic data, I think date of birth, residential address, I think what is their job title, something – not much more than that.

QUESTION: Oh, sorry, is it only staff, or is it also contractors?

SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL TWO: I'd say – we don't draw that distinction if they're -

QUESTION: You don't draw a distinction. So anyone who works for the embassy.

MODERATOR: Okay. One or two more.

QUESTION: So previously when the State Department asked diplomats here from China to let them know in advance about meetings, was that done also under the Foreign Missions Act or under another authority?

SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL TWO: Yes, it was.

QUESTION: It was. Okay. We just didn't know that at the time.

QUESTION: But these don't have to do that.

SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL TWO: Correct. This group was explicitly exempted from that requirement that you mentioned.

QUESTION: Right. Okay. So basically this is like expanding that previous requirement that you made in October?

SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL TWO: Well, no, because that requirement is not applicable to this group. That – so – the --

QUESTION: I mean you're making more people disclose under this act.

SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL TWO: But that – the requirement that you're referring to – the act is – does – is a broader authority. The action in October was limited – was for --

SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL ONE: Diplomatic personnel.

SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL TWO: Correct. That's about – or Chinese Government officials visiting the U.S., whether assigned here or TDY, that they would notify us of certain types of meetings or visits with certain types of institutions. This – that was – that action was taken against Chinese foreign missions, which now these five are, but in this action, we waived that October requirement for this group.

SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL ONE: So they do not have to notify five days in advance of meetings with sub-national government officials?

SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL TWO: Right, taking into account some of the press freedoms we didn't – we're not looking to interfere with that, so we didn't want to have any challenge there.

QUESTION: Okay. I just – I didn't – I think I didn't really know the name of this act at the time when that came out and I'm just, like, putting it together.

SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL ONE: Ah, got it.

QUESTION: And then just to triple-clarify, for the real estate disclosures, that has to be made by the actual entities, not the individual personnel, right? Like, if I work for Xinhua, I don't have to tell you a house I bought?

SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL TWO: Correct. This is about – anything that those entities – the entity themselves would seek to acquire.

QUESTION: Right, right, right.

SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL TWO: Real property.

QUESTION: Okay. And then last, in terms of, like, compliance, I mean, with FARA, my understanding is that Xinhua never did register even though DOJ told them to, and even though it is, as you say, fairly basic disclosures. So I would like to know a little bit more about what type of enforcement you would look at if people don't provide this information.

SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL TWO: Well, they're required to comply with this, and I think we're not prepared to go beyond that.

QUESTION: I mean, would you be able to refer noncompliance to DOJ?

SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL ONE: That's kind of a four-fer.

QUESTION: Huh?

SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL ONE: It's kind of a four-fer here.

SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL TWO: Right.

QUESTION: Sorry. (Laughter.)

QUESTION: No, I'll back it up. I'd like to know too.

MODERATOR: So, last question. In the back.

QUESTION: You said there were no journalistic constraints on their activities. Do you have concerns about the content that they're producing, though? Do you consider it – all of it to be propaganda or disinformation?

SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL ONE: I don't know that I'd want to characterize every single thing that comes out of those five entities, but they are, in fact, part and parcel of the PRC propaganda apparatus. And I think it's – anyone that consumes news or any other content that those guys produce should keep that in the back of their mind. I'm sure if they reported $1+1=2$, I'd have to say that's actually spot on, that's pretty correct, but there's a whole range of stuff beyond that.

QUESTION: And for this record, this has nothing to do with coronavirus, does it?

SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL ONE: No.

SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL TWO: Not at all.

QUESTION: That's purely coincidental?

SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL ONE: Yes.

QUESTION: Just a technical thing. Does this change visa status?

SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL ONE: Does not, (inaudible) the answer.

MODERATOR: Okay. And that's it.

SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL ONE: There we go.

MODERATOR: Thank you.

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|

From: (b) (6)
To: [Amanda Bennett](#); [Sandy Sugawara](#); [Kelu Chao](#)
Subject: Re: (b) (6) meeting with: Beijing Diplomat Service Corp
Date: Thursday, March 19, 2020 9:49:23 AM

(b) (6) submitted (b) (6) application for renewal about a month before the visa expires. That is what we always do. Around 2 weeks.

From: Amanda Bennett (b) (6)
Sent: Thursday, March 19, 2020 9:33 AM
To: (b) (6); Sandy Sugawara (b) (6); Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Subject: Re: (b) (6) meeting with: Beijing Diplomat Service Corp

And we have sought a renewal for (b) (6)? When? How long have we been waiting, roughly?

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Thursday, March 19, 2020 9:30 AM
To: Amanda Bennett (b) (6); Sandy Sugawara (b) (6); Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Subject: Re: (b) (6) meeting with: Beijing Diplomat Service Corp

That sounds good.

(b) (6)

From: Amanda Bennett (b) (6)
Sent: Thursday, March 19, 2020 9:20 AM
To: (b) (6); Sandy Sugawara (b) (6); Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Subject: Re: (b) (6) meeting with: Beijing Diplomat Service Corp

Thanks. This is now perfectly clear.

If it's okay with you I will send this over to PR to respond to queries.

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Thursday, March 19, 2020 9:10 AM
To: Amanda Bennett (b) (6); Sandy Sugawara (b) (6); Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Subject: Re: (b) (6) meeting with: Beijing Diplomat Service Corp

Hope this helps. We were getting my visa situation and (b) (6)'s mixed up. This should be

clearer.

1. November 2018... (b) (6)'s visa was renewed for six months only instead of the year as previously. Cause: It followed reporting on the detained professor.
2. After that, (b) (6)'s visa was renewed two more times but only for six months. The first time was in May of 2019 and again in November of 2019.
3. In July of 2019 Central News' Beijing Bureau Chief (b) (6) returned to the US. VOA has not yet proposed a replacement for (b) (6), nor sought a new visa for a new permanent candidate. We have, however, tried to send a temporary replacement for (b) (6). Once in July of 2019 and again in November of 2019. Both of those requests for a temporary visa were not honored.
4. Next month on April 8th, (b) (6)'s current six-month visa will expire.
5. Each time (b) (6)'s visa has been up for renewal since (b) (6) was given a shortened visa in November of 2018, we have asked for a longer period, but that request has been denied.

From: Amanda Bennett (b) (6)
Sent: Thursday, March 19, 2020 8:53 AM
To: (b) (6); Sandy Sugawara (b) (6); Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Subject: Re: (b) (6) meeting with: Beijing Diplomat Service Corp

So timeline: Please look closely at the choices and edit as necessary and give me any additional information you think is necessary. Again -- know you gave a narrative earlier, but certain specific points are not clear and I want to get them absolutely clear.

(b) (5)



From: (b) (6)
Sent: Thursday, March 19, 2020 8:45 AM

To: Amanda Bennett (b) (6); Sandy Sugawara (b) (6); Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Subject: Re: (b) (6) meeting with: Beijing Diplomat Service Corp

No problem. I get it. If (b) (6) would've been given a year-long visa (b) (6) visa would've been up for renewal in November of this year.

From: Amanda Bennett (b) (6)
Sent: Thursday, March 19, 2020 8:43 AM
To: (b) (6); Sandy Sugawara (b) (6); Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Subject: Re: (b) (6) meeting with: Beijing Diplomat Service Corp

Got it. Under normal circumstances, when would (b) (6)'s visa have been/will be renewed?

(sorry for all these questions but I need to make sure of why we are being treated differently.... we are receiving questions)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Thursday, March 19, 2020 8:39 AM
To: Amanda Bennett (b) (6); Sandy Sugawara (b) (6); Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Subject: Re: (b) (6) meeting with: Beijing Diplomat Service Corp

Don't know what their interpretation is but (b) (6) is a US citizen and US passport holder. We don't hire non-US citizens for overseas correspondent positions.

From: Amanda Bennett (b) (6)
Sent: Thursday, March 19, 2020 8:37 AM
To: (b) (6); Sandy Sugawara (b) (6); Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Subject: Re: (b) (6) meeting with: Beijing Diplomat Service Corp

although looking closely at the chinese statement it says "journalists of us citizenship" -- so I am presuming then that our remaining visa holder does not hold US citizenship... would that be correct?

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Thursday, March 19, 2020 8:21 AM
To: Amanda Bennett (b) (6); Sandy Sugawara (b) (6); Kelu Chao (b) (6)

Subject: Re: (b) (6) meeting with: Beijing Diplomat Service Corp

Amanda,

Hi. This is the second time I've seen that incorrect statement that we have no visa holders in China. We still have a correspondent in Beijing. I left last July and we have yet to choose a replacement. We have tried to get temporary visas, to send someone there to fill in but those requests have not been honored. Sending this now to get something to you quickly.

This is something that I sent to Kelu the other day:

VOA has historically been granted two visas for reporters to work in Beijing, which have been held by the News Center and China Branch reporters. In recent years, the renewal of visas and applications for temporary visas has been increasingly challenging for our correspondents in China; VOA is not alone in facing these challenges. Presently, VOA has one Mandarin service correspondent in Beijing. The former Beijing Bureau Chief departed last July and subsequent applications to obtain a temporary visa for a temporary replacement have, to date, not been honored.

In November 2018, during the annual press credential renewal process, the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs renewed the Mandarin Service Beijing's correspondent's credentials for only six months, instead of one year as it had been in prior years. This followed an incident in August 2018 when the Mandarin Service correspondent was detained by Chinese authorities while attempting to interview Chinese professor Sun Wenguang, who had been taken away by police during a live interview with VOA.

Despite these obstacles, VOA's vital coverage of China continues to attract Chinese citizens to leap Beijing's Great Firewall and tune in and follow our social media feeds, websites and online broadcasts.

(b) (5)



From: Amanda Bennett (b) (6)

Sent: Thursday, March 19, 2020 8:02 AM

To: (b) (6); Sandy Sugawara (b) (6); Kelu Chao
(b) (6)

Subject: Re: (b) (6) meeting with: Beijing Diplomat Service Corp

(b) (6) -- we'll all have to discuss later. I am reaching out to the others (NYT, WaPo, Time) to check what they are doing.

Can you confirm that this paragraph is correct and edit it if it is not...

(b) (5)



From: (b) (6)
Sent: Thursday, March 19, 2020 7:31 AM
To: Amanda Bennett (b) (6); Sandy Sugawara (b) (6); Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Subject: Fw: (b) (6) meeting with: Beijing Diplomat Service Corp

Good morning. I received this update from (b) (6) and it looks like they are really taking the gloves off. This really puts our news assistant (b) (6) in a difficult situation. I am trying to find out a little more about the meeting and other details. I'll update you when I have a little more information.

This doesn't leave us with any real good options, but I'll try to lay out what I think those options might be in a follow-up email later.

(b) (6)



From: (b) (6)
Sent: Thursday, March 19, 2020 6:47 AM
To: (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: (b) (6) meeting with: Beijing Diplomat Service Corp

(b) (6) was summoned by two managers of Beijing Diplomat Service Corp on Mar 19. (b) (6) was asked to show (b) (6) press card, which was taken away immediately. Manager of BDSC Mr Shi was talking while another took notes.

In the beginning of the conversation Shi said that VOA was involved in illegal activities in interviews and (b) (6) should quit this job immediately to get rid of potential consequences. (b) (6) said that laying off an employee should be in accordance with the law and asked which law had been violated. Shi did not respond and said that (b) (6) is not suitable to work for the media. Shi suggested (b) (6) ask to resign from VOA (b) (6), so at the same time there will be economic compensation. Shi said that the amount of money is negotiable and he would ask his leader for this fund. Shi did not say the amount but said

that it would just take a few minutes to call his leader. Shi told (b) that if (b) was satisfied, (b) can sign the agreement immediately to take the money and BDSC would help look for a position somewhere else.

(b) stated that VOA should be informed in advance of laying off a staff. Shi said that it was not necessary as (b) is an outsourced staff member. Shi said that resignation is the best option that maximizes (b)'s interests because there is compensation. Shi threatened that if (b) does not follow his instruction, he did not know what would happen, maybe "relative departments" would involve and (b) would get nothing at all. Shi said that it was urgent and (b) must make a decision immediately (b) replied that it was such a sudden note to know that (b) is unemployed so (b) need time to think about it. (b) also said that the epidemic is serious, and no companies are recruiting right now.

(b) agreed that (b) would respond to them next Tuesday. (b) asked to take (b) press card back. But Shi refused to return it. He told (b) not to let others know the content of the conversation. Meanwhile, Chinese news assistants of New York Times and other media bureaus received calls from BDSC for similar cases.

From: [Kelu Chao](#)
To: (b) (6)
Cc: [Kelu Chao](#)
Subject: Re: (b) (6) meeting with: Beijing Diplomat Service Corp
Date: Thursday, March 19, 2020 12:18:21 PM

Please go to the very end of this long stream of emails, interview note by VOA Beijing local hire (b) (6) also provided a good timeline to clarify the situation.

We will keep you posted.

Thanks,
Kelu

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Thursday, March 19, 2020 9:10 AM
To: Amanda Bennett (b) (6); Sandy Sugawara (b) (6); Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Subject: Re: (b) (6) meeting with: Beijing Diplomat Service Corp

Hope this helps. We were getting my visa situation and (b) (6)'s mixed up. This should be clearer.

1. November 2018... (b) (6)'s visa was renewed for six months only instead of the year as previously. Cause: It followed reporting on the detained professor.
2. After that, (b) (6)'s visa was renewed two more times but only for six months. The first time was in May of 2019 and again in November of 2019.
3. In July of 2019 Central News' Beijing Bureau Chief (b) (6) returned to the US. VOA has not yet proposed a replacement for (b) (6), nor sought a new visa for a new permanent candidate. We have, however, tried to send a temporary replacement for (b) (6) Once in July of 2019 and again in November of 2019. Both of those requests for a temporary visa were not honored.
4. Next month on April 8th, (b) (6)'s current six-month visa will expire.
5. Each time (b) (6)'s visa has been up for renewal since (b) (6) was given a shortened visa in November of 2018, we have asked for a longer period, but that request has been denied.

From: Amanda Bennett (b) (6)
Sent: Thursday, March 19, 2020 8:53 AM
To: (b) (6); Sandy Sugawara (b) (6); Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Subject: Re: (b) (6) meeting with: Beijing Diplomat Service Corp

So timeline: Please look closely at the choices and edit as necessary and give me any additional information you think is necessary. Again -- know you gave a narrative earlier, but certain specific points are not clear and I want to get them absolutely clear.

(b) (5)



From: (b) (6)
Sent: Thursday, March 19, 2020 8:45 AM
To: Amanda Bennett (b) (6); Sandy Sugawara (b) (6); Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Subject: Re: (b) (6) meeting with: Beijing Diplomat Service Corp

No problem. I get it. If (b) (6) would've been given a year-long visa, (b) (6) visa would've been up for renewal in November of this year.

From: Amanda Bennett (b) (6)
Sent: Thursday, March 19, 2020 8:43 AM
To: (b) (6); Sandy Sugawara (b) (6); Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Subject: Re: (b) (6) meeting with: Beijing Diplomat Service Corp

Got it. Under normal circumstances, when would (b) (6)'s visa have been/will be renewed?

(sorry for all these questions but I need to make sure of why we are being treated differently.... we are receiving questions)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Thursday, March 19, 2020 8:39 AM
To: Amanda Bennett (b) (6); Sandy Sugawara

(b) (6); Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Subject: Re (b) (6) meeting with: Beijing Diplomat Service Corp

Don't know what their interpretation is but (b) (6) is a US citizen and US passport holder. We don't hire non-US citizens for overseas correspondent positions.

From: Amanda Bennett (b) (6)
Sent: Thursday, March 19, 2020 8:37 AM
To: (b) (6); Sandy Sugawara (b) (6); Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Subject: Re: (b) (6) meeting with: Beijing Diplomat Service Corp

although looking closely at the chinese statement it says "journalists of us citizenship" -- so I am presuming then that our remaining visa holder does not hold US citizenship... would that be correct?

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Thursday, March 19, 2020 8:21 AM
To: Amanda Bennett (b) (6); Sandy Sugawara (b) (6); Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Subject: Re (b) (6) meeting with: Beijing Diplomat Service Corp

Amanda,

Hi. This is the second time I've seen that incorrect statement that we have no visa holders in China. We still have a correspondent in Beijing. I left last July and we have yet to choose a replacement. We have tried to get temporary visas, to send someone there to fill in but those requests have not been honored. Sending this now to get something to you quickly.

This is something that I sent to Kelu the other day:

VOA has historically been granted two visas for reporters to work in Beijing, which have been held by the News Center and China Branch reporters. In recent years, the renewal of visas and applications for temporary visas has been increasingly challenging for our correspondents in China; VOA is not alone in facing these challenges. Presently, VOA has one Mandarin service correspondent in Beijing. The former Beijing Bureau Chief departed last July and subsequent applications to obtain a temporary visa for a temporary replacement have, to date, not been honored.

In November 2018, during the annual press credential renewal process, the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs renewed the Mandarin Service Beijing's correspondent's credentials for only six months, instead of one year as it had been in prior years. This followed an incident in August 2018 when the Mandarin Service correspondent was detained by Chinese authorities while attempting to interview Chinese professor Sun Wenguang, who had been taken away by police

during a live interview with VOA.

Despite these obstacles, VOA's vital coverage of China continues to attract Chinese citizens to leap Beijing's Great Firewall and tune in and follow our social media feeds, websites and online broadcasts.

(b) (5)

From: Amanda Bennett (b) (6)
Sent: Thursday, March 19, 2020 8:02 AM
To: (b) (6); Sandy Sugawara (b) (6); Kelu Chao <kechao@voanews.com>
Subject: Re: (b) (6) meeting with: Beijing Diplomat Service Corp

(b) (6) -- we'll all have to discuss later. I am reaching out to the others (NYT, WaPo, Time) to check what they are doing.

Can you confirm that this paragraph is correct and edit it if it is not...

(b) (5)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Thursday, March 19, 2020 7:31 AM
To: Amanda Bennett (b) (6); Sandy Sugawara (b) (6); Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Subject: Fw: (b) (6) meeting with: Beijing Diplomat Service Corp

Good morning. I received this update from (b) (6) and it looks like they are really taking the gloves off. This really puts our news assistant (b) (6) in a difficult situation. I am trying to find out a little more about the meeting and other details. I'll update you when I have a little more information.

This doesn't leave us with any real good options, but I'll try to lay out what I think those options might be in a follow-up email later.

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Thursday, March 19, 2020 6:47 AM
To: (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: (b) (6) meeting with: Beijing Diplomat Service Corp

(b) (6) was summoned by two managers of Beijing Diplomat Service Corp on Mar 19. (b) (6) was asked to show (b) (6) press card, which was taken away immediately. Manager of BDSC Mr Shi was talking while another took notes.

In the beginning of the conversation Shi said that VOA was involved in illegal activities in interviews and (b) (6) should quit this job immediately to get rid of potential consequences. (b) (6) said that laying off an employee should be in accordance with the law and asked which law had been violated. Shi did not respond and said that (b) (6) is not suitable to work for the media. Shi suggested (b) (6) ask to resign from VOA (b) (6), so at the same time there will be economic compensation. Shi said that the amount of money is negotiable and he would ask his leader for this fund. Shi did not say the amount but said that it would just take a few minutes to call his leader. Shi told (b) (6) that if (b) (6) was satisfied, (b) (6) can sign the agreement immediately to take the money and BDSC would help look for a position somewhere else.

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(b) (6) agreed that he would respond to them next Tuesday. (b) (6) asked to take (b) (6) press card back. But Shi refused to return it. He told (b) (6) not to let others know the content of the conversation. Meanwhile, Chinese news assistants of New York Times and other media bureaus received calls from BDSC for similar cases.

From: [Amanda Bennett](#)
To: (b) (6); [Sandy Sugawara](#); [Kelu Chao](#)
Subject: Re: (b) (6) meeting with: Beijing Diplomat Service Corp
Date: Thursday, March 19, 2020 9:53:20 AM

OK. I'll send everything to PR and to (b) (6), copying you.

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Thursday, March 19, 2020 9:49 AM
To: Amanda Bennett (b) (6); Sandy Sugawara (b) (6); Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Subject: Re: (b) (6) meeting with: Beijing Diplomat Service Corp

(b) (6) submitted (b) (6) application for renewal about a month before the visa expires. That is what we always do. Around 2 weeks.

From: Amanda Bennett (b) (6)
Sent: Thursday, March 19, 2020 9:33 AM
To: (b) (6); Sandy Sugawara (b) (6); Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Subject: Re: (b) (6) meeting with: Beijing Diplomat Service Corp

And we have sought a renewal for (b) (6)? When? How long have we been waiting, roughly?

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Thursday, March 19, 2020 9:30 AM
To: Amanda Bennett (b) (6); Sandy Sugawara (b) (6); Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Subject: Re: (b) (6) meeting with: Beijing Diplomat Service Corp

That sounds good.

(b) (6)

From: Amanda Bennett (b) (6)
Sent: Thursday, March 19, 2020 9:20 AM
To: (b) (6); Sandy Sugawara (b) (6); Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Subject: Re: (b) (6) meeting with: Beijing Diplomat Service Corp

Thanks. This is now perfectly clear.

If it's okay with you I will send this over to PR to respond to queries.

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Thursday, March 19, 2020 9:10 AM
To: Amanda Bennett (b) (6); Sandy Sugawara (b) (6); Kelu Chao <kechao@voanews.com>
Subject: Re: Ai Lun meeting with: Beijing Diplomat Service Corp

Hope this helps. We were getting my visa situation and Yibing's mixed up. This should be clearer.

1. November 2018... (b) (6)'s visa was renewed for six months only instead of the year as previously. Cause: It followed reporting on the detained professor.
2. After that, (b) (6)'s visa was renewed two more times but only for six months. The first time was in May of 2019 and again in November of 2019.
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To: (b) (6); Sandy Sugawara (b) (6); Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Subject: Re (b) (6) meeting with: Beijing Diplomat Service Corp

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(b) (5)



(b) (5)

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Sent: Thursday, March 19, 2020 8:45 AM
To: Amanda Bennett (b) (6); Sandy Sugawara (b) (6); Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Subject: Re: (b) (6) meeting with: Beijing Diplomat Service Corp

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(b) (5)



From: Amanda Bennett (b) (6)

Sent: Thursday, March 19, 2020 8:02 AM

To: (b) (6); Sandy Sugawara (b) (6); Kelu Chao (b) (6)

Subject: Re (b) (6) meeting with: Beijing Diplomat Service Corp

(b) (6) -- we'll all have to discuss later. I am reaching out to the others (NYT, WaPo, Time) to check what they are doing.

Can you confirm that this paragraph is correct and edit it if it is not...

(b) (5)

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Sent: Thursday, March 19, 2020 7:31 AM

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Subject: Fw: (b) (6) meeting with: Beijing Diplomat Service Corp

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To: (b) (6)

Cc: (b) (6)

Subject: (b) (6) meeting with: Beijing Diplomat Service Corp

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From: [Amanda Bennett](#)
To: (b) (6); Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6); Sandy Sugawara (b) (6)
Subject: Re: China's media directive
Date: Friday, March 20, 2020 12:52:34 PM

so no real clues there as to why they picked the ones they did....?

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Friday, March 20, 2020 12:50 PM
To: Kelu Chao (b) (6); Amanda Bennett (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6); Sandy Sugawara (b) (6)
Subject: Re: China's media directive

Yes NYT and WSJ have Chinese edition But so do Reuters, CNBC and Bloomberg/BusinessWeek

From: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Sent: Friday, March 20, 2020 12:41 PM
To: Amanda Bennett (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6); Sandy Sugawara (b) (6); Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Subject: Re: China's media directive

I thought NYT has a Chinese version, they have good Chinese commentators. I sometimes read WSJ report in Chinese, too. (b) (6) and (b) (6)?

From: Amanda Bennett (b) (6)
Sent: Friday, March 20, 2020 12:36 PM
To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6); Sandy Sugawara (b) (6)
Subject: Re: China's media directive

but can wsj, wapo and nyt be easily accessed in china for regular people? don't think they have mandarin programming???

From: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Sent: Friday, March 20, 2020 12:34 PM
To: (b) (6)
Cc: Amanda Bennett (b) (6); Sandy Sugawara (b) (6)
Subject: Re: China's media directive

On (b) (6), is (b) (6) a PRC citizen? You mentioned (b) (6)'s really good, and can be recruited to DC as our PSC (b) (6)'s in a difficult position, as China could try to block (b) (6) passport Re: CNN, it's not included in their popular satellites, no Mandarin version, it's much harder to follow English TV among regular Chinese

Sent from my iPhone

On Mar 20, 2020, at 12:26 PM, (b) (6) wrote:

Thanks for passing this along Amanda. Regarding AP and CNN. 1) perhaps they don't feel as threatened by either organization, but both do great work! 2) perhaps to limit backlash 3) as far as I know AP only has 1 or 2 US citizens who are current visa holders, not sure about CNN.

On a follow-up note, (b) (6) received an official letter from the Diplomatic Services Bureau terminating his employment. In the letter (b) (6) was asked to report to their office in five days to handle details related to (b) (6) layoff. (b) (6) and I will be discussing this in a few minutes.

Not much we can do to stop that train, but I wanted to talk with them about what we might be able to do for (b) (6).

(b) (6)

From: Amanda Bennett (b) (6)
Sent: Friday, March 20, 2020 12:13 PM
To: (b) (6); Sandy Sugawara (b) (6)
Subject: Fw: China's media directive

FYI - see the State Department note below, and my response. I think, thanks to (b) (6)'s timeline, I got the response correct. BTW, I just heard second hand that the reason Time is in a different position is that their correspondent is not a US Citizen. Don't know if that is true. Also on one of my calls, one person questioned why exactly these five organizations and not AP? Or CNN?

From: Shawn Powers (b) (6) >
Sent: Friday, March 20, 2020 11:26 AM

To: Amanda Bennett (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6); Kelu Chao (b) (6); Sandy Sugawara (b) (6); (b) (6); Grant Turner (b) (6); Matthew Walsh (b) (6); Stephen Capus (b) (6)
Subject: Re: China's media directive

Thanks, Amanda Very helpful Will share with DOS and I'm always happy to help If your team could share the fax when ready, that would be great All the best,

sp

On Mar 20, 2020, at 11:23 AM, Amanda Bennett (b) (6) wrote:

You should correct them. The expulsion almost certainly DOES apply to VOA it's just that we don't need to hand in our press passes because one of them expires in two weeks -- and they haven't responded to our requests for renewals nor do we expect them to -- and as for the other one they have ignored two requests for visas to fill in for the vacancy created when the reporter came home. We will also be without correspondents there.

As for the requests for information, they are in the fax sent to our bureau and we are considering whether/how we should answer. A little more subtle than the Russia situation. We are in contact with WSJ, NYT and WaPo and have a call to Time -- would also like your input.

From: Shawn Powers (b) (6)
Sent: Friday, March 20, 2020 11:06 AM
To: (b) (6); Amanda Bennett (b) (6)
Cc: Kelu Chao (b) (6); Sandy Sugawara (b) (6); Grant Turner (b) (6); Matthew Walsh (b) (6); Stephen Capus (b) (6)
Subject: Fwd: China's media directive

(b) Amanda,

Please see some additional information below re: China's recent media directive. Based on the language the State Department received from China's MFA, it is unclear what the implications are for our operations in Hong Kong.

Happy to discuss. All the best,

sp

Begin forwarded message:

From: (b) (6)
Subject: FW: Note: VOA reference
Date: March 19, 2020 at 9:34:47 AM EDT
To: Shawn Powers (b) (6) >
Cc: (b) (6)

Shawn:

Flagging for you input from EAP/CM re: VOA/RFA reporters in HK in response to your email.

Any update on your end?

Thanks,

(b)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Wednesday, March 18, 2020 6:57 PM
To: (b) (6); (b) (6)

Subject: Re: Note: VOA reference

For folks' reference, I've included the MFA statement below and highlighted relevant parts. One thing is, the expulsion doesn't apply to VOA or Time. It only applies to the NYT, Wall Street Journal, and Washington Post. And, our read is that only mainland-based reporters at those three outlets would be affected as they are the only ones with PRC MFA press cards that would need to be turned in within ten days.

This said, all five outlets in mainland China (we presume only mainland and not HK, although the statement is not clear), including VOA, would need to "*declare in written form information about their staff, finance, operation and real estate in China.*"

(b)

China Takes Countermeasures Against Restrictive Measures on Chinese Media Agencies in the US

2020/03/18

In recent years, the US government has placed unwarranted restrictions on Chinese media agencies and personnel in the US, purposely made things difficult for their normal reporting assignments, and subjected them to growing discrimination and politically-motivated oppression. For instance, in December 2018, the US ordered certain Chinese media organizations in the US to register as "foreign agents"; in February 2020, it designated five Chinese media entities in the US as "foreign missions" and imposed a cap on the number of their employees, in effect expelling Chinese journalists from the US. Such outrageous treatment prompted strong representations from China, in which China firmly objected to and strongly condemned the US move, and stressed its reserved right to respond and take actions.

China hereby announces the following measures, effective immediately:

First, in response to the US designation of five Chinese media agencies as "foreign missions", China demands, in the spirit of reciprocity, that the China-based branches of Voice of America, the New York Times, the Wall Street Journal, the Washington Post and Time declare in written form information about their staff, finance, operation and real estate in China.

Second, in response to the US slashing the staff size of Chinese media outlets in the US, which is expulsion in all but name, China demands that journalists of US citizenship working with the New York Times, the Wall Street Journal and the Washington Post whose press credentials are due to expire before the end of 2020 notify the Department of Information of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs within four calendar days starting from today and hand back their press cards within ten calendar days. They will not be allowed to continue working as journalists in the People's Republic of China, including its Hong Kong and Macao Special Administrative Regions.

Third, in response to the discriminatory restrictions the US has imposed on Chinese journalists with regard to visa, administrative review and reporting, China will take reciprocal measures against American journalists.

The above-mentioned measures are entirely necessary and reciprocal countermeasures that China is compelled to take in response to the unreasonable oppression the Chinese media organizations experience in the US. They are legitimate and justified self-defense in every sense. What the US has done is exclusively targeting Chinese media organizations, and hence driven by a Cold War mentality and ideological bias. It has seriously tarnished the reputation and image of Chinese media organizations, seriously affected their normal operation in the US, and seriously disrupted people-to-people and cultural exchanges between the two countries. It has therefore exposed the hypocrisy of the self-styled advocate of press freedom. China urges the US to immediately change course, undo the damage, and stop its political oppression and arbitrary restrictions on Chinese media organizations. Should the US choose to go further down the wrong path, it could expect more countermeasures from China.

China's fundamental state policy of opening-up has not changed and will not change. Foreign media organizations and journalists who cover stories in accordance with laws and regulations are always welcome in China, and will get continued assistance from our side. What we reject is ideological bias against China, fake news made in the name of press freedom, and breaches of ethics in journalism. We call on foreign media outlets and journalists to play a positive role in advancing the mutual understanding between China and the rest of the world.

(b)

From (b) (6)
Sent: Wednesday, March 18, 2020 6:36 PM

To: (b) (6)
(b) (6)

Subject: RE: Note: VOA reference

Hi all,

I could be wrong, but RFA is not in mainland but VOA is and has both and American reporter and local staff

My read of the below is that this doesn't apply to folks currently in hk who wouldn't have a press card from prc mfa

Perhaps we can refer them to the full MFA statement?

(b)

From: Amanda Bennett
To: (b) (6); Kelu Chao
Cc: (b) (6); Sandy Sugawara
Subject: Re: China's media directive
Date: Friday, March 20, 2020 1:27:45 PM

could you all begin whatever parts of the process need to be done and then tell me what specifically you need Matt to do... Since this is going to be a complex situation, I think, I want a clearcut ask for what we really need. The rest I think we can do by ourselves, right?

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Friday, March 20, 2020 1:21 PM
To: Amanda Bennett (b) (6); Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6); Sandy Sugawara (b) (6)
Subject: Re: China's media directive

I would appreciate it if (b) (6) could help out. I have not done this yet, but my understanding is that I create a request to hire someone in Paycom. A background review process is initiated. Once the background review is complete, the individual is asked to go to the Embassy in their home country and apply for a visa.

(b) (6)

From: Amanda Bennett (b) (6)
Sent: Friday, March 20, 2020 1:15 PM
To: (b) (6); Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6); Sandy Sugawara (b) (6)
Subject: Re: China's media directive

totally willing to do that... first can you tell me what is the normal process for bringing in a non-us citizen PSC? I just need to know the normal steps..

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Friday, March 20, 2020 12:58 PM
To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: Amanda Bennett (b) (6); Sandy Sugawara (b) (6)
Subject: Re: China's media directive

Amanda,

I have some more to add about the other topic - Chinese language websites - but I wanted to first ask if there is anything we can do to help bring (b) (6) to the US.

Given what's going on right now and visa offices being closed in Beijing. Could you speak with Matt Walsh and see what we can be done to bring (b) (6) to the US to work as a PSC in the China Branch.

(b) (6) has faced a tremendous amount of harassment for us over the past few years. (b) (6) started out with me as an intern and then went to working full time with the Mandarin service. Authorities have put pressure on (b) (6) personally as well (b) (6) family. I think that if there is anyone worth making an effort to bring in, (b) (6) is that type of journalist.

Over the years, (b) (6) has done work not only for the Mandarin service but for central news as well (b) (6) is multimedia savvy and has great news sense and solid English language skills as well. I am not quite sure how that could work, but given the threats that (b) (6) 's faced already, I was curious what can be done.

(b) (6)

From: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Sent: Friday, March 20, 2020 12:34 PM
To: (b) (6)
Cc: Amanda Bennett (b) (6); Sandy Sugawara (b) (6)
Subject: Re: China's media directive

On (b) (6), is (b) (6) a PRC citizen? You mentioned (b) (6) 's really good, and can be recruited to DC as our PSC (b) (6) 's in a difficult position, as China could try to block (b) (6) passport Re: CNN, it's not included in their popular satellites, no Mandarin version, it's much harder to follow English TV among regular Chinese

Sent from my iPhone

On Mar 20, 2020, at 12:26 PM, (b) (6) wrote:

Thanks for passing this along Amanda. Regarding AP and CNN. 1) perhaps they don't feel as threatened by either organization, but both do great work! 2) perhaps to limit backlash 3) as far as I know AP only has 1 or 2 US citizens who are current visa holders, not sure about CNN.

On a follow-up note (b) (6) received an official letter from the Diplomatic Services Bureau terminating (b) (6) employment. In the letter (b) (6) was asked to report to their office in five days to handle details related to (b) (6) layoff. (b) (6) and I will be discussing this in a few minutes.

Not much we can do to stop that train, but I wanted to talk with them about what we might be able to do for (b) (6).

(b) (6)

From: Amanda Bennett (b) (6)
Sent: Friday, March 20, 2020 12:13 PM
To: (b) (6); Sandy Sugawara
(b) (6) Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Subject: Fw: China's media directive

FYI - see the State Department note below, and my response. I think, thanks to (b) (6)'s timeline, I got the response correct. BTW, I just heard second hand that the reason Time is in a different position is that their correspondent is not a US Citizen. Don't know if that is true. Also on one of my calls, one person questioned why exactly these five organizations and not AP? Or CNN?

From: Shawn Powers (b) (6)
Sent: Friday, March 20, 2020 11:26 AM
To: Amanda Bennett (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6) Kelu Chao (b) (6); Sandy Sugawara (b) (6)
(b) (6) Grant Turner (b) (6); Matthew Walsh (b) (6); Stephen Capus (b) (6)
Subject: Re: China's media directive

Thanks, Amanda Very helpful Will share with DOS and I'm always happy to help If your team could share the fax when ready, that would be great All the best,

sp

On Mar 20, 2020, at 11:23 AM, Amanda Bennett (b) (6) wrote:

You should correct them. The expulsion almost certainly DOES apply to VOA it's just that we don't need to hand in our press passes because one of them expires in two weeks -- and they haven't responded to our requests for renewals nor do we expect them to -- and as for the other one they have ignored two requests for visas to fill in for the vacancy created when the reporter came home. We will also be without correspondents there.

As for the requests for information, they are in the fax sent to our bureau and we are considering whether/how we should answer. A little more subtle than the Russia situation. We are in contact with WSJ, NYT and WaPo and have a call to Time -- would also like your input.

From: Shawn Powers (b) (6)
Sent: Friday, March 20, 2020 11:06 AM
To: (b) (6) Amanda Bennett (b) (6)
Cc: Kelu Chao (b) (6); Sandy Sugawara (b) (6) Grant
Turner (b) (6) Matthew Walsh (b) (6); Stephen Capus (b) (6)
Subject: Fwd: China's media directive

(b) (6) Amanda,

Please see some additional information below re: China's recent media directive. Based on the language the State Department received from China's MFA, it is unclear what the implications are for our operations in Hong Kong.

Happy to discuss. All the best,

sp

Begin forwarded message:

From: (b) (6) >
Subject: FW: Note: VOA reference
Date: March 19, 2020 at 9:34:47 AM EDT
To: Shawn Powers (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)

Shawn:

Flagging for you input from EAP/CM re: VOA/RFA reporters in HK in response to your email.

Any update on your end?

Thanks,

(b)

From (b) (6)
Sent: Wednesday, March 18, 2020 6:57 PM
To: (b) (6)
(b) (6)

Subject: Re: Note: VOA reference

For folks' reference, I've included the MFA statement below and highlighted relevant parts. One thing is, the expulsion doesn't apply to VOA or Time. It only applies to the NYT, Wall Street Journal, and Washington Post. And, our read is that only mainland-based reporters at those three outlets would be affected as they are the only ones with PRC MFA press cards that would need to be turned in within ten days.

This said, all five outlets in mainland China (we presume only mainland and not HK, although the statement is not clear), including VOA, would need to "*declare in written form information about their staff, finance, operation and real estate in China.*"

(b)

*China Takes Countermeasures Against Restrictive Measures on Chinese Media Agencies in the US
2020/03/18*

In recent years, the US government has placed unwarranted restrictions on Chinese media agencies and personnel in the US, purposely made things difficult for their normal reporting assignments, and subjected them to growing discrimination and politically-motivated oppression. For instance, in December 2018, the US ordered certain Chinese media organizations in the US to register as "foreign agents"; in February 2020, it designated five Chinese media entities in the US as "foreign missions" and imposed a cap on the number of their employees, in effect expelling Chinese journalists from the US. Such outrageous treatment prompted strong representations from China, in which China firmly objected to and strongly condemned the US move, and stressed its reserved right to respond and take actions.

China hereby announces the following measures, effective immediately:

First, in response to the US designation of five Chinese media agencies as "foreign missions", China demands, in the spirit of reciprocity, that the China-based branches of Voice of America, the New York Times, the Wall Street Journal, the Washington Post and Time declare in written form information about their staff, finance, operation and real estate in China.

Second, in response to the US slashing the staff size of Chinese media outlets in the US, which is expulsion in all but name, China demands that journalists of US citizenship working with the New York Times, the Wall Street Journal and the Washington Post whose press credentials are due to expire before the end of 2020 notify the Department of Information of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs within four calendar days starting from today and hand back their press cards within ten calendar days. They will not be allowed to continue working as journalists in the People's Republic of China, including its Hong Kong and Macao Special Administrative Regions.

Third, in response to the discriminatory restrictions the US has imposed on Chinese journalists with regard to visa, administrative review and reporting, China will take reciprocal measures against American journalists.

The above-mentioned measures are entirely necessary and reciprocal countermeasures that China is compelled to take in response to the unreasonable oppression the Chinese media organizations experience in the US. They are legitimate and justified self-defense in every sense. What the US has done is exclusively targeting Chinese media organizations, and hence driven by a Cold War mentality and ideological bias. It has seriously tarnished the reputation and image of Chinese media organizations, seriously affected their normal operation in the US, and seriously disrupted people-to-people and cultural exchanges between the two countries. It has therefore exposed the hypocrisy of the self-styled advocate of press freedom. China urges the US to immediately change course, undo the damage, and stop its political oppression and arbitrary restrictions on Chinese media organizations. Should the US choose to go further down the wrong path, it could expect more countermeasures from China.

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We call on foreign media outlets and journalists to play a positive role in advancing the mutual understanding between China and the rest of the world.

(b)

From (b) (6)

Sent: Wednesday, March 18, 2020 6:36 PM

To: (b) (6)

(b) (6)

Subject: RE: Note: VOA reference

Hi all,

I could be wrong, but RFA is not in mainland but VOA is and has both an American reporter and local staff

My read of the below is that this doesn't apply to folks currently in hk who wouldn't have a press card from prc mfa

Perhaps we can refer them to the full MFA statement?

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Amanda Bennett](#)
Cc: [Kelu Chao](#); [Sandy Sugawara](#)
Subject: Re: EVACUATION PROCEDURES AS OF MARCH 20, 2020
Date: Sunday, March 22, 2020 5:21:53 PM

I actually just called David Kotz because I want him to review it too.

Sent from my iPhone

On Mar 22, 2020, at 17:08, Amanda Bennett (b) (6) wrote:

good idea.

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Sunday, March 22, 2020 5:05 PM
To: Amanda Bennett (b) (6)
Cc: Kelu Chao (b) (6); Sandy Sugawara (b) (6)
Subject: Re: EVACUATION PROCEDURES AS OF MARCH 20, 2020

Yeah, actually (b) (6) is clarifying to me that (b) (6) stayed in post but (b) (6) family evacuated. They never came back. They were in Abidjan .

With your green light I'm going to send this to the correspondents and will copy you. It will also give you an opportunity to follow up with them (I know sandy has been in touch with gallo) they really appreciate the attention, the flow of information and support we are providing them. I'm sure they will love hearing from you.

Sent from my iPhone

On Mar 22, 2020, at 16:48, Amanda Bennett (b) (6) wrote:

that is REALLY amazing We are learning so much about the capabilities of people....

From: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Sent: Sunday, March 22, 2020 4:07 PM
To: (b) (6)

Cc: Amanda Bennett (b) (6); Sandy Sugawara
(b) (6)

Subject: Re: EVACUATION PROCEDURES AS OF MARCH 20, 2020

Wow, it's like a book (b) (6) and (b) (6) did amazing work. I don't have anything to add.

Thanks,
Kelu

Sent from my iPhone

On Mar 22, 2020, at 3:36 PM, (b) (6)
(b) (6) wrote:

Hi,

Here is the contingency plan (b) (6) and (b) (6) have prepared in case of an emergency evacuation. We have consulted with HR, the travel office, and the State Department's website. Before we send it to the correspondents in the bureaus, I want you to review it in case you have any concerns/questions.

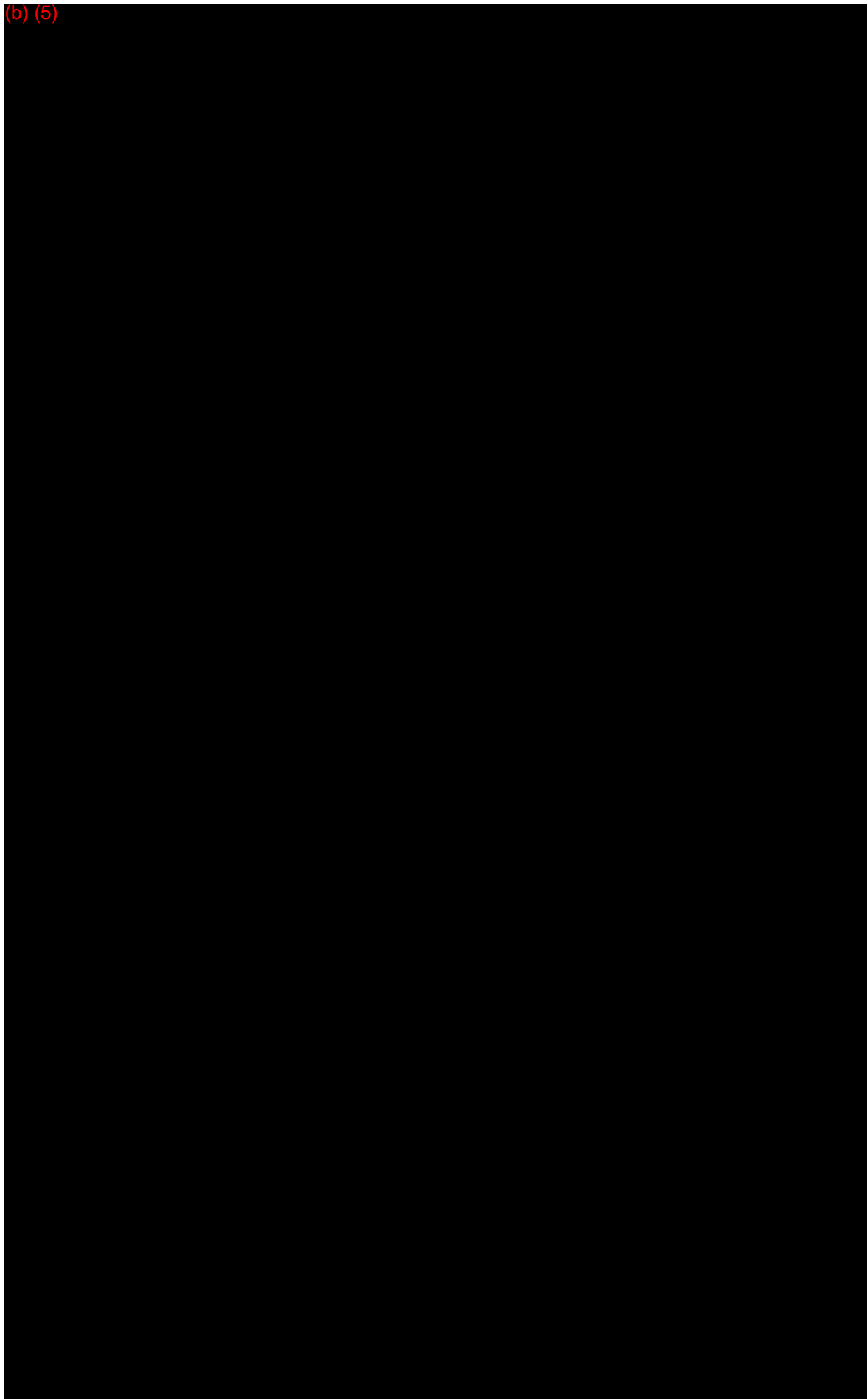
As stated several times, we have been in contact with the correspondents ON A DAILY BASIS. All of them want to stay where they are (b) (6) is reconsidering because of the latest developments (b) (6) hasn't decided yet). But because the current situation is changing so dramatically fast, we thought it would be better to have this plan in place, just in case.

BEGIN DRAFT - EVACUATION PROCEDURES AS
OF MARCH 22, 2020

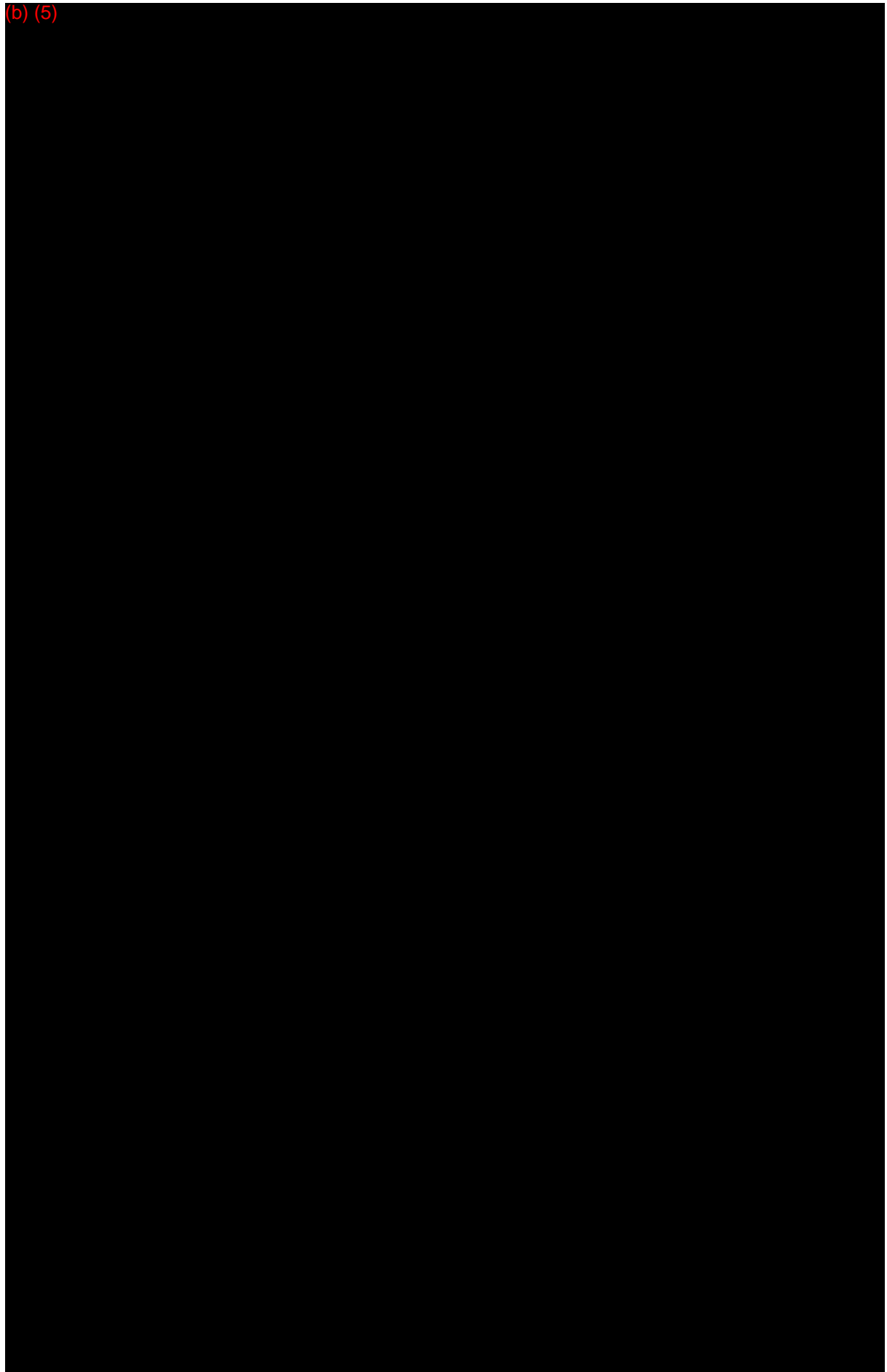
(b) (5)



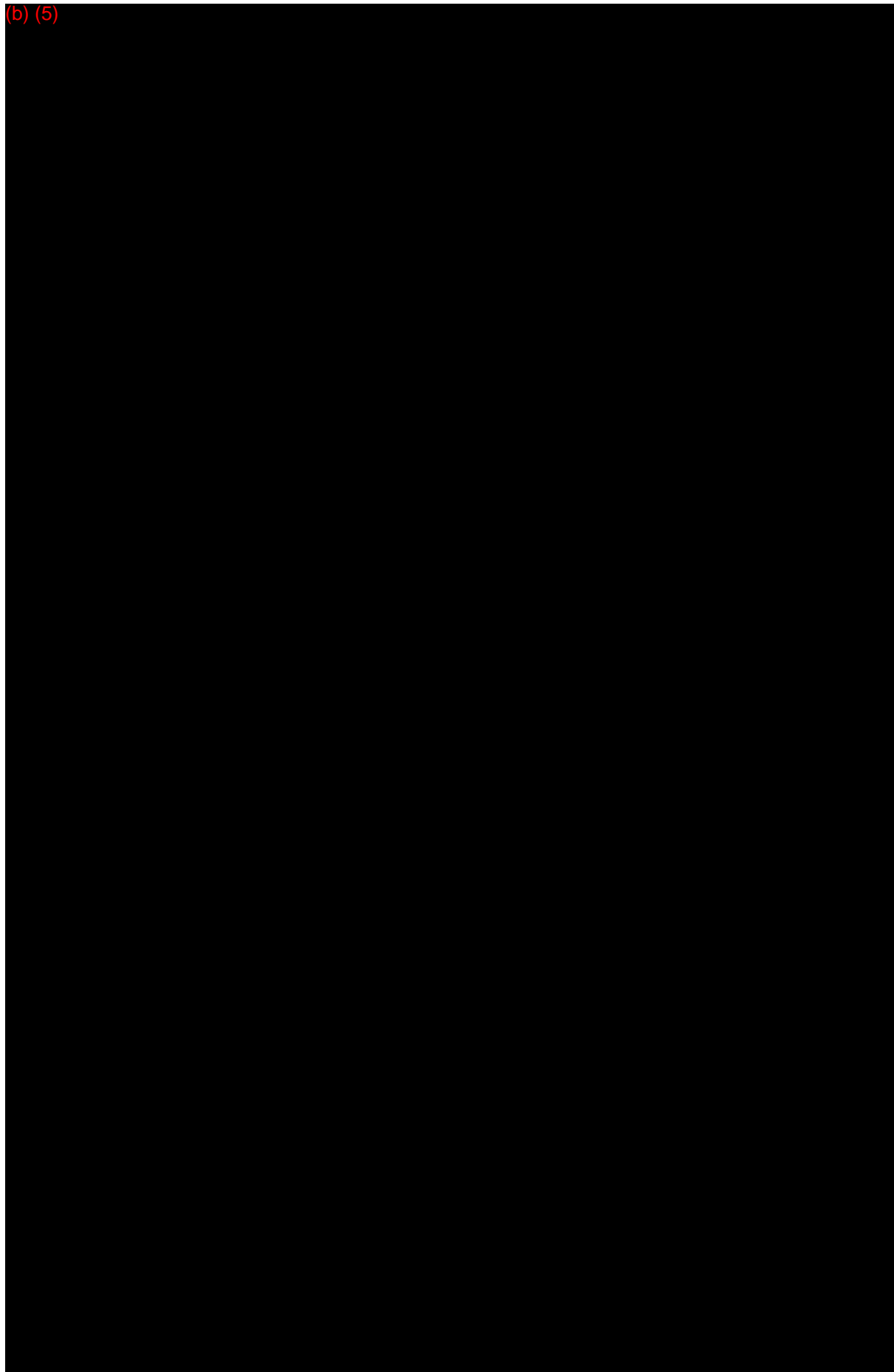
(b) (5)



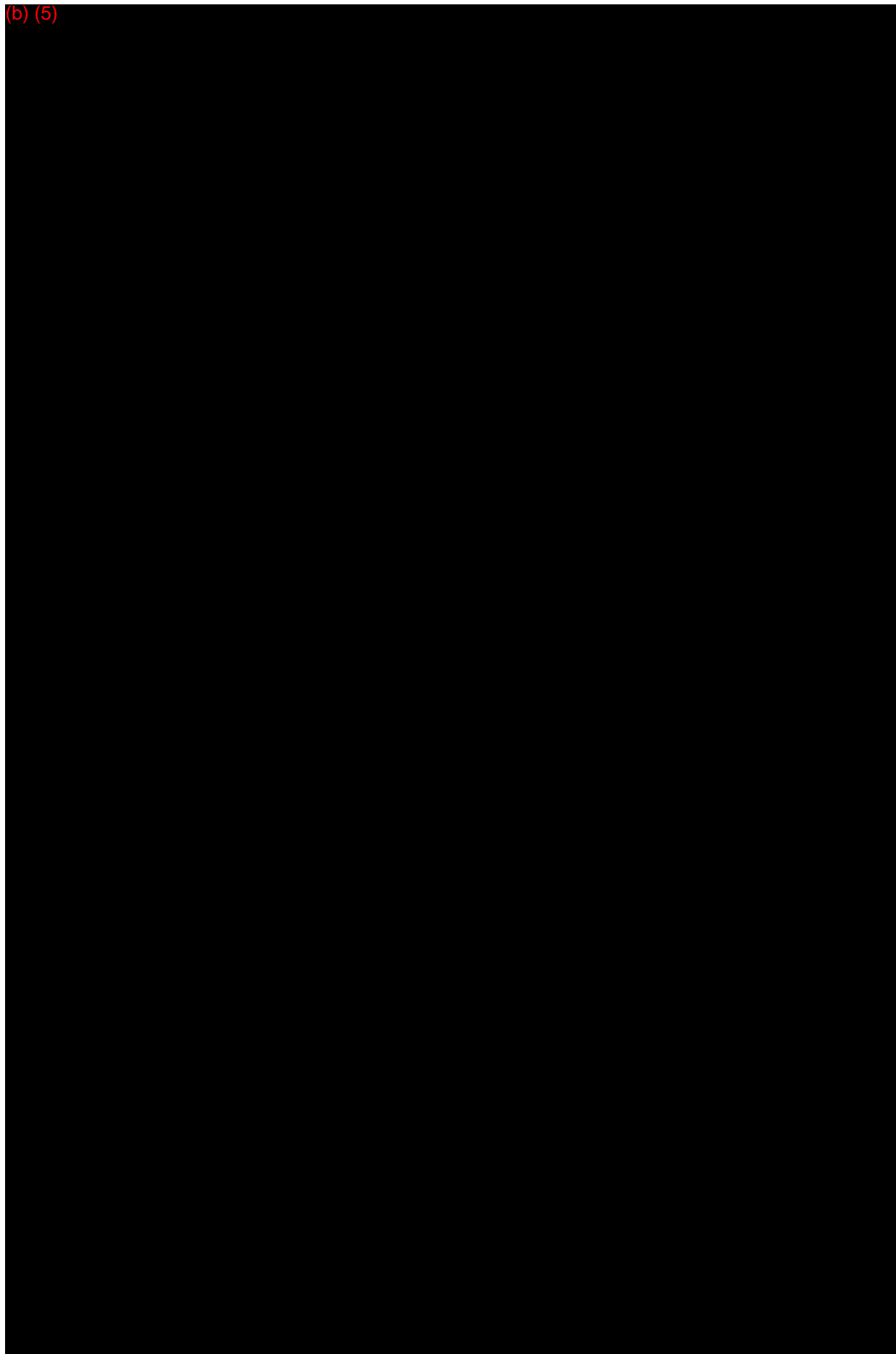
(b) (5)



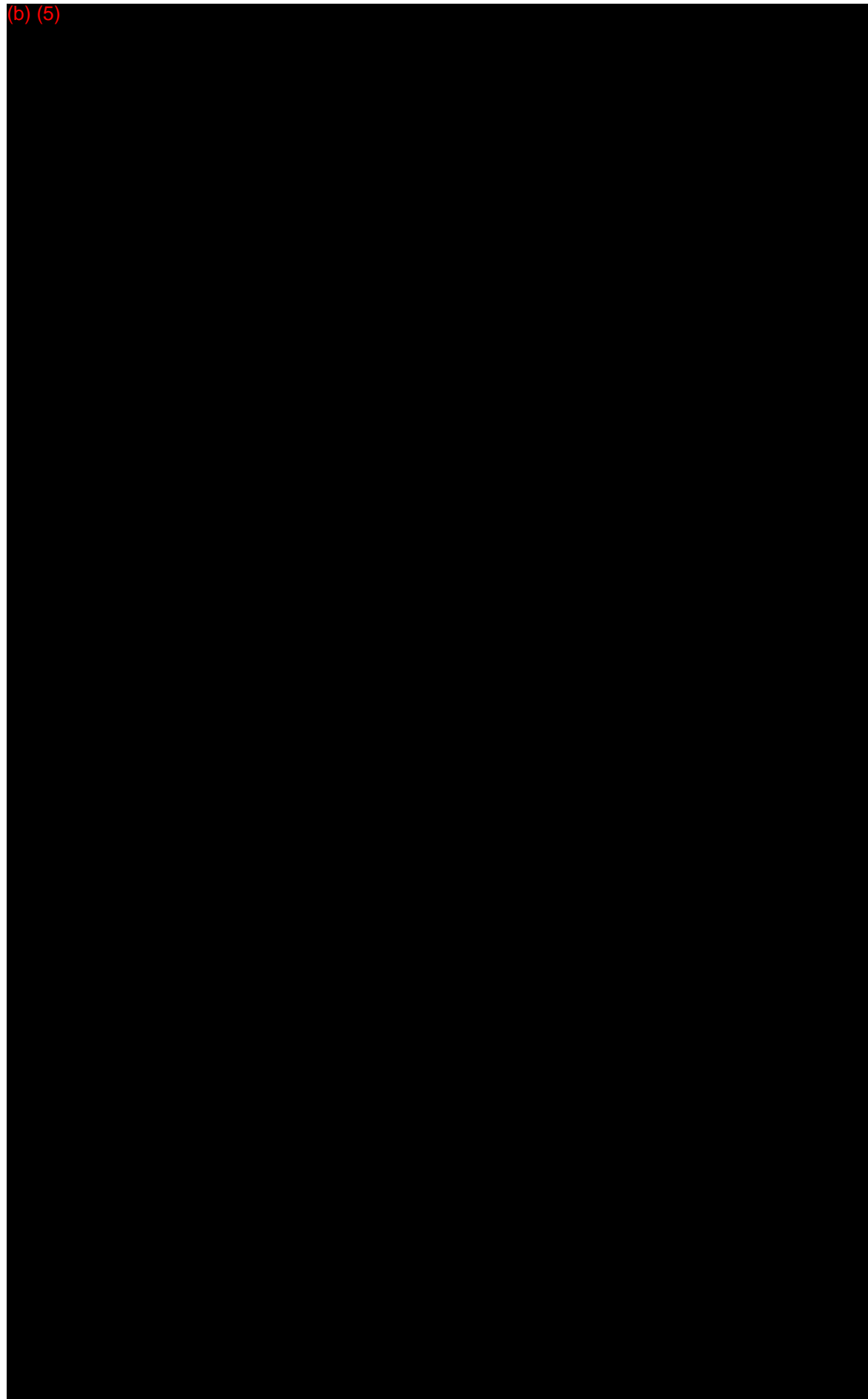
(b) (5)



(b) (5)



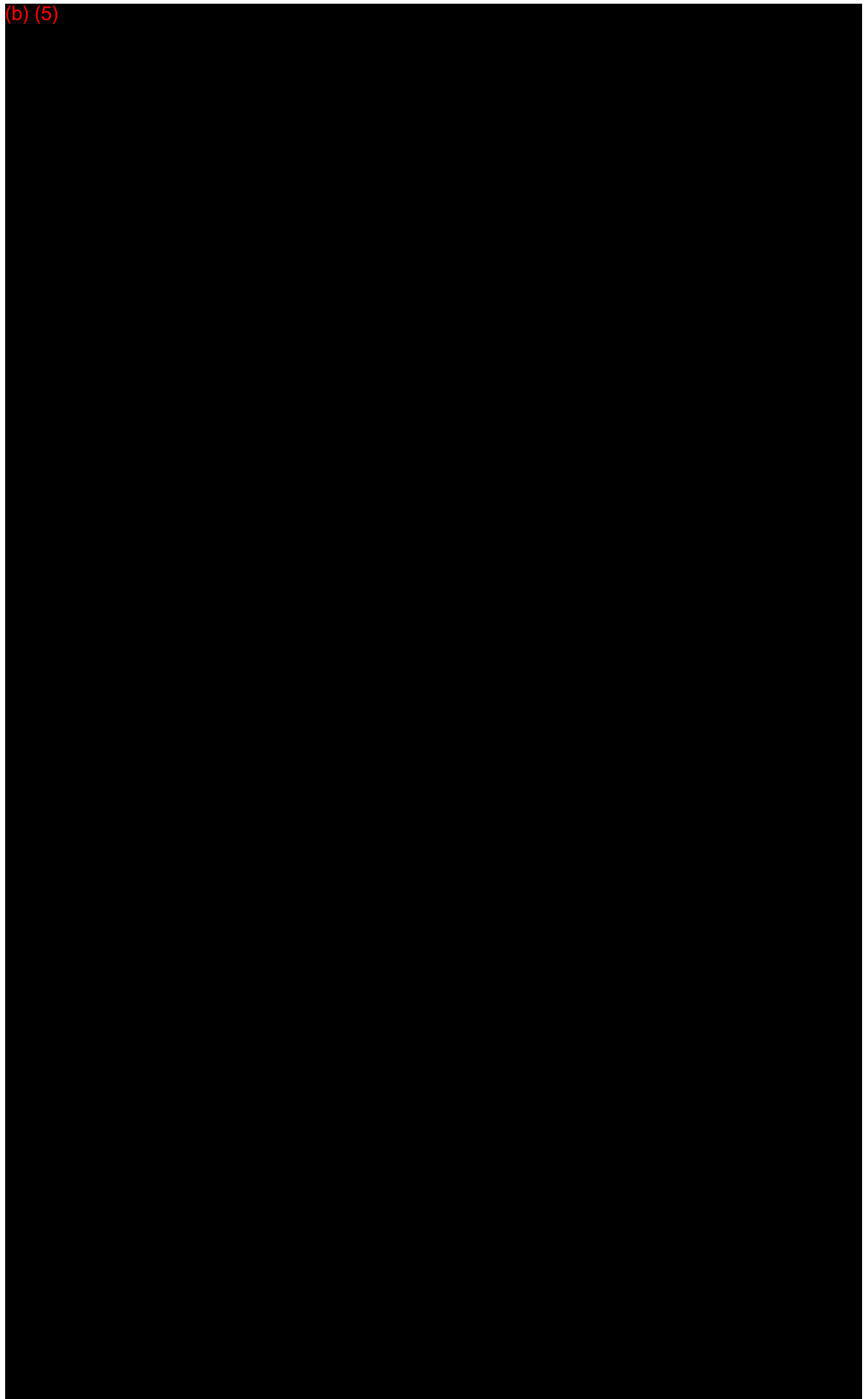
(b) (5)



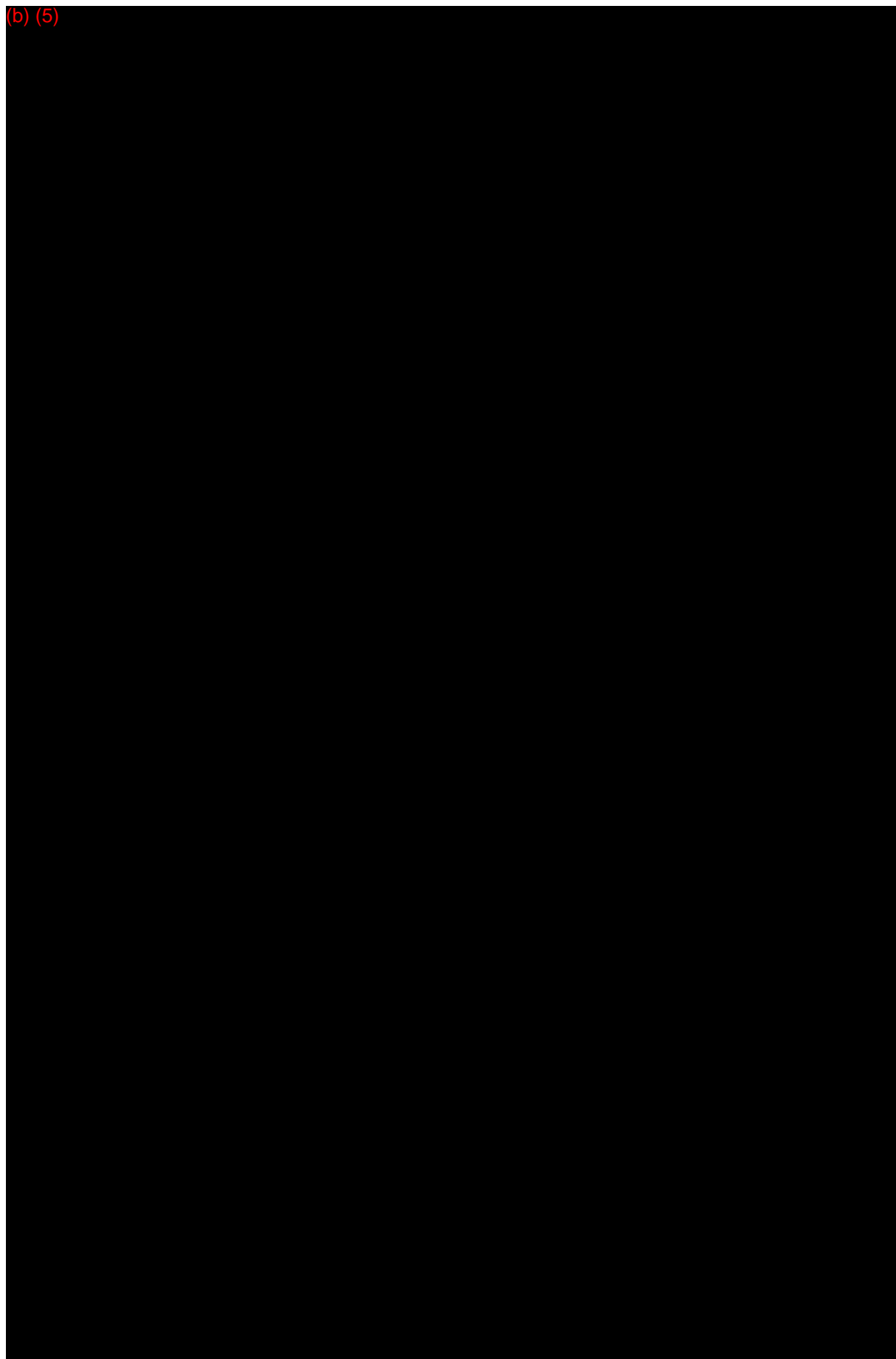
(b) (5)



(b) (5)



(b) (5)



(b) (6)



Phone: (b) (6)



From: [Amanda Bennett](#)
To: [Jehl, Douglas](#)
Cc: [Amanda Bennett](#); [Sandy Sugawara](#); [Kelu Chao](#)
Subject: Re: Hey Doug
Date: Sunday, March 29, 2020 9:02:34 AM

We're rooting for you to get as many people in as possible.... Good luck.

On Fri, Mar 27, 2020 at 4:38 PM Jehl, Douglas <douglas.jehl@washpost.com> wrote:

Hi Amanda,

Thanks very much for letting me know of your decision. I understand your rationale, and recognize why it makes sense for VOA given the circumstances.

We did answer the questions posed by the Chinese government. The information we provided had all been provided before. Our correspondent Gerry Shih surrendered his press accreditation today; our bureau chief, Anna Fifield, is a New Zealand citizen and so wasn't affected by the order. (Though she was affected by China's current, temporary policy to bar entry to foreigners.)

A small group of bureau chiefs heard from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Beijing today that they would definitely consider new applicants for journalistic visas as long as they were not U.S. citizens, and that they might also consider U.S. citizens, including a new correspondent we had designated before the ceiling fell in. We'll see.

I appreciate your transparency as we all have worked through these challenges, and I'm confident that – as you have said – VOA will continue to deliver distinguished coverage of China, despite the increased obstacles.

All the best,

Doug

From: Amanda Bennett (b) (6)
Sent: Friday, March 27, 2020 3:47 PM
To: Jehl, Douglas <douglas.jehl@washpost.com>
Cc: Amanda Bennett (b) (6); Sandy Sugawara (b) (6); Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Subject: Re: Hey Doug

Dear Doug:

Thank you for being so available last week when I wanted to talk through our response to

China's recent directive.

I just wanted to let you know that we have decided not to comply with China's request for information.

Our reasoning is this: The first and third elements of their directive are involuntary. As for the first, we have no control over visas nor press cards. As for the third, we expect China's recent moves -- refusing to renew our two visa requests and firing our news assistant -- will leave us totally without reporting staff in China, so restrictions on movement and operations won't affect us either.

Responding to the information request is, however, voluntary. The information itself is not the issue: Our analysis shows that we have already given them much of that information in the normal course of business. Rather, we do not see that there is anything to gain from complying. More important, however, we totally reject any demands based on an assertion of "reciprocity." We believe that there is no comparison between China's state-run media and our state-funded media that is independent both by law and by the culture of passion for a free press that animates our journalists just as it does yours. We prefer not to take any steps that suggest we believe otherwise. Like your publisher, we think curtailing a free press is unacceptable.

Luckily, we have all lived through periods like this before, so we will not allow China's actions to curtail our reporting. Our extensive network of contacts inside China along with the brave work of China's citizen journalists who are in regular touch with us will keep us continuing to do the same work that we have done for the past 75+ years.

My best,

Amanda

On Thu, Dec 19, 2019 at 10:53 AM Jehl, Douglas <douglas.jehl@washpost.com> wrote:

Calling back now.

-----Original Message-----

From: Amanda Bennett (b) (6)
Sent: Thursday, December 19, 2019 10:53 AM
To: Jehl, Douglas <douglas.jehl@washpost.com>
Subject: Re: Hey Doug

Hi there just tried if you're still free. My cell is (b) (6)

> On Dec 19, 2019, at 10:46 AM, Jehl, Douglas <douglas.jehl@washpost.com> wrote:

>

> Hi Amanda,

> Sure. I'm free between now and 1115, and then from 1 to 2. If you want to call (b) (6)

(b) (6) Otherwise happy to address by email.

> Best, doug

>

> -----Original Message-----

> From: Amanda Bennett (b) (6)
> Sent: Thursday, December 19, 2019 10:43 AM
> To: Jehl, Douglas <douglas.jehl@washpost.com>
> Subject: Hey Doug

>

> CAUTION: EXTERNAL SENDER

>

> Amanda Bennett here — from VOA. Could you spare a minute for a question on Russia?

From: (b) (6)
To: Kelu Chao
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: FYI: We are asking for Burmese FTE to Return
Date: Wednesday, April 1, 2020 10:20:38 AM

Hi Kelu,

FYI, the U.S. Embassy in Yangon has released an alert on the repatriation of U.S. citizens in Myanmar. We are coordinating with Travel and Security Offices to arrange for (b) (6)'s early return from (b) (6) rotation.

We will update you.

Thank you,

(b) (6)
Director - East Asia & Pacific Division
330 Independence Ave., SW (b) (6)
Washington, D.C. 20237
Tel: (b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Wednesday, April 1, 2020 9:58 AM
To: (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Re: Alert: Repatriation Flight for U.S. Citizens

Yes, I was thinking in that way too.

Also, the US embassy announcement today seems the last call to me.

I'll ask (b) (6) to get in touch with the embassy. Is there anyway we should involve VOA security for this evacuation? I think they should at least be informed.

(b) (6)

Chief, Burmese Service
Voice Of America

(b) (6)

Sent from my iPhone

On Apr 1, 2020, at 9:23 AM, (b) (6) wrote:

I think it is prudent to bring (b) (6) home. Right now Myanmar has a much lower level of infection as compared to the US. But we need to consider two factors: 1)

If (b) (6) gets infected, (b) (6) may not be able to get proper care over there; 2) if and when (b) (6) wants to fly back when the situation in Myanmar deteriorates, there might not be flights available as most international flights have been cut by as much as 95% now.

One lesson from this outbreak is: things can change drastically and quickly. People tend to be behind the curve.

(b) (6)

On Apr 1, 2020, at 09:09, (b) (6) wrote:

I talked to (b) (6) yesterday. (b) (6) said (b) (6) did not need to come back and was ok. I am okay too, but seeking a clear agency guidance on this if any. Have emailed (b) (6) yesterday.

(b) (6)

Chief, Burmese Service
Voice Of America

(b) (6)

Sent from my iPhone

On Apr 1, 2020, at 8:54 AM, (b) (6) wrote:

Are you flying the rotational correspondent back?

From: (b) (6)

Sent: Wednesday, April 1, 2020 8:53 AM

To: (b) (6)

(b) (6)

Subject: Fwd: Alert: Repatriation Flight for U.S. Citizens

Fyi

(b) (6)

Chief, Burmese Service
Voice Of America

(b) (6)

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: (b) (6)
(b) (6)
Date: April 1, 2020 at 5:04:23 AM EDT
To: VOA Burmese Service (b) (6)
(b) (6)
(b) (6)
**Subject: Fw: Alert: Repatriation Flight
for U.S. Citizens**

+++++

(b) (6)

Editor | Burmese Service | Voice of America

(b) (6)

330 Independence Ave SW, Washington, DC 20237

<Outlook-ztgvzutq.png>

From: (b) (6)
(b) (6)
Sent: Wednesday, April 1, 2020 4:58 AM
Subject: Alert: Repatriation Flight for U.S.
Citizens

Alert – U.S. Embassy Rangoon, Burma
(1 April 2020)

Location: Burma

Event: The U.S. Embassy is attempting to coordinate a repatriation flight for U.S. citizens with valid U.S. passports leaving from Yangon within the next week and returning to the United States.

The date of the flight is not set, however we anticipate the flight will be from Yangon

International Airport only.

The destination will be in the United States, but the exact location is not yet determined. Travelers will have to arrange and pay for their onward domestic travel to their final destination.

The flight will not be free, and U.S. citizens who join the flight must reimburse the U.S. government for the cost of the flight. We expect the cost of the flight will be comparable to commercial flights returning to the United States from Burma. You will be informed of the total cost before the date of the flight.

A limited number of pets **may** be permitted on the flight; more details on pets will be forthcoming.

If you are a U.S. citizen who wants to join this flight, please fill out this link (<http://tinyurl.com/srly386>) and submit one form per traveler, even when traveling in a group. We will use this information to accurately prepare for the evacuation flight. If you have already filled out this form, you do not need to fill it again.

There may be a limited number of seats, so if you have already submitted a form to us but decide not to avail yourself of this opportunity please let us know by sending an email to ACSRangoon@state.gov. This will allow us to allocate seats to those who want to depart.

We anticipate arranging only one evacuation flight from Burma. Given the lack of other flight options in the near future, U.S. citizens who choose not to join this flight should be prepared to remain in Burma indefinitely.

There may be limited seats on the flight. If demand exceeds the number of seats, repatriations will be prioritized in the following manner:

- 1) U.S. citizens at higher risk from

- COVID-19, along with their immediate family members.
- 2) U.S. citizen minors and their U.S. citizen parent(s)/legal guardian(s) or one foreign national parent/legal guardian or escort.
 - 3) All other U.S. citizens on a first-come, first-served basis.

Upon entry in the United States, passengers on this flight may be subject to U.S. CDC screening, health observation, monitoring requirements and existing Department of Homeland Security entry requirements. Visit the [Department of Homeland Security's website](#) on the latest travel restrictions to the United States.

Who is eligible to be included in a repatriation flight?

U.S. citizens are eligible. One parent or guardian escorting a U.S. citizen minor is eligible, provided they have a valid U.S. visa. The Embassy will not adjudicate visa applications in support of evacuation operations.

Others who *may* be eligible: Foreign spouses or children of U.S. citizens and U.S. Legal Permanent Residents. Listed below are minimum requirements for those categories. Even if you meet the criteria we cannot guarantee you will receive a seat.

Foreign Spouse:

- Valid visa for entry to the United States
- Valid foreign Passport
- Original evidence of qualifying relationship to U.S. citizen on the flight (e.g. original marriage certificate)

Child of a U.S. citizen:

- Original birth certificate clearly indicating the parent's U.S. citizenship.

Valid visa for entry to the United States

U.S. Legal Permanent Resident (LPR):

- I-551 U.S. permanent resident card, foreign passport, and evidence of residency in the United States in the past 12 months.
- If you have not been physically present in the United States in the past 12 months, you do not qualify for repatriation as an LPR.
- An LPR's family members who have not obtained I-551 U.S. permanent resident cards are not eligible for evacuation assistance.

Actions to Take:

- **If you are a U.S. citizen who wants to join the repatriation flight, please fill out this [link](#) and submit one form per traveler.**
- Consult the [CDC website](#) for the most up-to-date information.
- For the most recent information on what you can do to reduce your risk of contracting COVID-19, please see the [CDC's latest recommendations](#).
- Visit the [COVID-19 crisis page on travel.state.gov](#) for the latest information.
- Visit our [Embassy webpage on COVID-19](#) for information on conditions in Burma.
- Visit the [Department of Homeland Security's website](#) on the latest travel restrictions to the United States.
- Read information for U.S. citizens about a [U.S. government-assisted evacuation](#).
- Read [what the Department of State can and can't do in a crisis](#).

Assistance:

U.S. Embassy Rangoon, Burma

110 University Ave
Kamayut Township, Rangoon, Burma
Phone: +95-1-7536-509
Email: acsrangeon@state.gov
Website: <https://mm.usembassy.gov>

State Department - Consular Affairs
888-407-4747 or 202-501-4444

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From: (b) (6)
To: [Kelu Chao](#)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Re: Situational Telework - April 2
Date: Thursday, April 2, 2020 6:12:13 PM

Signing out.

- Morning editorial meetings
- Coordinated with (b) (6) about VOA backdrop
- Coordinated with (b) (6) on VPN and whether Help Desk can physically reboot a work station. (b) (6) answer: yes, if (1) it's not in a locked room; (2) they know the specific work station number. But (b) (6) also noted that more and more people in the Help Desk are working remotely, and maybe one person is in the building. This can be a problem during weekends.
- Discussed with LER about (b) (6)
- (over night) Coordinated the early return of VOA Burmese FTE. The latest update is that he will be on a commercial plane, but the U.S. Embassy knows about the FTE's situation. The FTE will be on an ANA flight on Sunday, April 5th.

Thank you,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Thursday, April 2, 2020 8:26 AM
To: Kelu Chao <kechao@voanews.com>
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Situational Telework - April 2

Signing in.

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Wednesday, April 1, 2020 6:30 PM
To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Re: Situational Telework - April 1

Sign out.

- Morning AM editorial meetings
- Discussed with (b) (6) and (b) (6) about Paycom position to bring in our Beijing news assistant, (b) (6)
- Coordinated early return of VOA Burmese FTE on rotation in Yangon after the U.S. Embassy alerted a "last call" for repatriation of U.S. citizens in Myanmar. Looped in Travel and Security offices. (b) (6) from Security is reaching out to the PAO and RSO to see if our FTE can secure a seat on the chartered plane.
- Coordinated VOA backdrop with (b) (6). Looped in (b) (6) and (b) (6). This backdrop will help strengthen our brand as our reporters provide live reports. Clara and I think this could be a bigger ask, but we are only starting with EAP and Latam requests. (b) (6) and (b) (6) are communicating about the design.
- Discussed Lao recruit with Kelu

Thank you,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Wednesday, April 1, 2020 8:16 AM
To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Situational Telework - April 1

Signing in.

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Tuesday, March 31, 2020 4:54 PM
To: Kelu Chao <kechao@voanews.com>
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Re: Situational Telework - March 31

Signing out:

AM Meetings

11am Chiefs weekly meeting:

-shared VOA Vietnamese achieving 1 MILLION subscribers on YouTube

- shared VOA Thai's innovative use of Teams conference into a program
- announced the parking pass extension; the access letter
- talked about OT/CT projection, asked to be conservative but realistic, that is must reflect the assignments necessary to fulfill our mission

Meeting with LER and (b) (6)

Meeting with Tibetan Chief about (b) (6)

Put together VOA Lao cert documents.

Provided memo for VOA Thai re-filing for PSC Green Card application

Checked up on a couple of staff, brief chats.

Thank you,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)

Sent: Tuesday, March 31, 2020 8:18 AM

To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)

Cc: (b) (6)

Subject: Situational Telework - March 31

Signing in.

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)

Sent: Monday, March 30, 2020 5:27 PM

To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)

Cc: (b) (6)

Subject: Situational Telework - March 30

Hello,

I apologize I forgot to send a sign in email (at 8:45am) this morning because there was a lot to take care of immediately.

Now signing out (at 5:15pm):

- Morning editorial meetings

- Budget meeting with VOA Khmer

- Coordinating with LER on response to (b) (6)
- Checking up on the 2nd week at 100% remote for all language services in EAP
- Testing out the town hall with Amanda
- Coordinate equipment with (b) (6)

FYI, VOA Thai took the Teams meeting to another level: turning their radio into a multi-media show! They recorded the show as a Teams meeting in mp4 and posted that version to Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/105929502780726/videos/624692758092069/>

And then stripped the mp3 file from that and put it on satellite via the standard Dalet placeholder workflow.

<https://www.voathai.com/a/5328429.html>

Thank you,

(b) (6)

Director - East Asia & Pacific Division
330 Independence Ave., SW (b) (6)
Washington, D.C. 20237
Tel: (b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Friday, March 27, 2020 5:16 PM
To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Re: Situational Telework - March 27

Signing out.

AM editorial meetings.

Coordinated with Operations (b) (6) on their need for VPNs, inserting the priority list from (b) (6)'s team. Also communicated with (b) (6) about giving (b) (6) access to the rundown from home, to prepare the Town Hall, so (b) (6) can create Chyrons. Spoke to (b) (6) about (b) (6) content editor for PNN to get a VPN.

Coordinated with (b) (6) on the article about the disinformation effort and finger-pointing between China and the U.S., using (b) (6)'s interview with sources from (b) (6) program (b) (6). This article should go out tonight, if not tomorrow (Saturday). It was a priority on (b) (6)'s list.

Dealt with LER follow ups.

Dealt with small equipment requests and VOA backdrop with (b) (6). This is to ensure branding on our shows and reporter standups to affiliates. So far, Mandarins and Indonesians requested.

I believe those are the milestones today. Have a great weekend!

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Friday, March 27, 2020 8:13 AM
To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Situational Telework - March 27

Signing in.

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Thursday, March 26, 2020 6:00 PM
To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Re: Situational Telework - March 26

Signing out.

Morning filled with VPN coordination as Operations step up to get more people out of Cohen building. Most language services have their VPNs.

Multiple meetings about the Beijing bureau, re bringing in the news assistant; what to do with the leases; how (b) (6) should respond to questions during (b) (6) meeting with officials tonight, DC time.

Took care of Lao and Korean certs packets.

Coordinated with (b) (6) about a couple of LER issues.

Evaluated phase 3.5 and 4 with (b) (6) and friends.

Thank you,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Thursday, March 26, 2020 9:12 AM
To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Situational Telework - March 26

Signing in at 8:45am. (Sorry, I forgot to sign in because of urgent VPN requests and brief discussion with (b) (6) .)

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Wednesday, March 25, 2020 4:12 PM
To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Re: Situational Telework - March 25

Signing out.

AM editorial meetings.

11am budget meeting for English to Asia.

12:30p meeting with Lao Chief about certs for Multimedia IB

Meeting with Amanda, Sandy and Kelu about Beijing bureau and VOA's response to China's request

Meeting with (b) (6) about resuming live satellite broadcast from remote locations.

Managed more VPNs as Operations staff are under pressure to start working outside the Cohen building.

Thank you,

(b) (6)

Director - East Asia & Pacific Division
330 Independence Ave., SW (b) (6)
Washington, D.C. 20237
Tel: (b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Wednesday, March 25, 2020 8:15 AM
To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Situational Telework - March 25

Signing in.

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Tuesday, March 24, 2020 4:44 PM
To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Re: Situational Telework - March 24

Signing out.

AM editorial Meetings

11am EAP Chiefs weekly meeting:

-reminding all of the telework protocol to send email at start and end of the day to supervisor and timekeeper. For PSCs, to supervisor and (b) (6). (I noticed only 2 Chiefs were doing this regularly, the others have not.)

-the need for emergency employees, if/when there's a shelter in place

(b) (6) from BD joined. Asked that (b) (6) be looped in if there's any change in programming, but also pointing out that there is an increase demand for VOA contents as more and more affiliates curb their production.

-VOA Burmese will be joining the "100% club" in EAP starting tomorrow

Put together paper work for (b) (6) (Beijing news assistant) to be recruited to DC. Also, checked with (b) (6) about a J1 sponsorship for a current contractor and how to process in this situation. (b) (6) and David Kotz will let us know.

Big news: Azure will take a lot of the burden of upload shows into Dalet without a VPN, albeit fulfilling placeholders still need a VPN.

Thank you,

(b) (6)

Director - East Asia & Pacific Division
330 Independence Ave., SW (b) (6)
Washington, D.C. 20237
Tel: (b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Tuesday, March 24, 2020 8:06 AM
To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Situational Telework - March 24

Signing in.

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Monday, March 23, 2020 4:34 PM
To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Re: Situational Telework - March 23

Signing out.

8a sent list of names for VPNs to (b) (6) (coordinating with (b) (6) and (b) (6) (b) (6) throughout the day). Note: I think I see the end of the tunnel, we're about 60% done with VPN. Maybe 10 more days.

9a-11a morning meetings

Worked with EAP Chiefs to streamline their production workflow. Found out some still need satellite feeds because they are transmitting to SW and MW. Luckily, VOA Indonesian is willing to forgo satellite for 41 out of their 44 news programs. They have been distributing them on 2 fronts: satellite and digital (USAGM Direct and Whatsapp).

Other meetings throughout the day (with (b) (6), for example) regarding phase 4.

Thank you,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Monday, March 23, 2020 8:01 AM
To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Situational Telework - March 23

Signing in.

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Friday, March 20, 2020 5:56 PM
To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Re: Situational Telework - March 20

Signing out.

7a send name list for VPN to TSI

8:30a meeting with (b) (6) about (b) (6) and (b) (6)

9-10a regular meetings, and coordinating on VPNs

11a budget meeting with Vietnamese

11:30a budget meeting with Lao

Discussed about Beijing bureau with (b) (6) and (b) (6), following development of (b) (6) being harassed by Chinese officials (b) (6) followed up with a letter to Amanda asking if she would reach out to Matt Walsh. Amanda responded to say that Matt is on board. Then (b) (6) and I got to work on the paper work. (b) (6) and I also touched base on hiring (b) (6) as a PSC for Mandarin Service.

More coordination with (b) (6) about VPNs and bandwidth. Shared knowledge with (b) (6) about recording on Teams. I also guided (b) (6) to ask (b) (6) to install "Tape-a-Call" app on agency phones as alternative to record audio interviews on phones.

Will send a much shorter list for VPNs to Help Desk over the weekend.

Have a great weekend!

(b) (6)

Director - East Asia & Pacific Division
330 Independence Ave., SW (b) (6)
Washington, D.C. 20237
Tel: (b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Friday, March 20, 2020 8:23 AM
To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Situational Telework - March 20

Signing in.

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Thursday, March 19, 2020 4:25 PM
To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Re: Situational Telework - March 19

Signing out.

8:30-10:30a regular meetings

11:30a meeting with LER and (b) (6) and return of (b) (6)
(March 23).

12p Division Director meeting

1:30p meeting with (b) (6) and (b) (6) from CON on the "new" procurement process -- with Chiefs
and reps

2:30p meeting with Amanda, (b) (6) Kelu, Sandy on response to China expelling VOA
journalists

Throughout the day, coordinating VPNs for Kurdish, Urdu, Creole, with (b) (6) (b) (6) and (b) (6).

Reached out to (b) (6) and (b) (6) to push forward their plans to reduce more staff work in Cohen.

Reached out to some staff to see how they're doing.

Thank you,

(b) (6)
Director - East Asia & Pacific Division
330 Independence Ave., SW (b) (6)
Washington, D.C. 20237
Tel: (b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Thursday, March 19, 2020 8:08 AM
To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Situational Telework - March 19

Signing in.

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Wednesday, March 18, 2020 6:06 PM
To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Re: Situational Telework - March 18

Signing off.

8:30-10a -- morning meetings

10:30a -- EAP workflow sharing meeting where representatives of language services talk about what works, what hasn't. This can be a daily meeting or not, it is open to the Division and anyone can initiate. One result of the meeting: create a Division teams group where everyone can share, and can address me directly. Me and (b) (6) have shared some updates regarding News Center's use of AP playbook, and frame.io issues.

Throughout the day, (b) (6) and I talked: about the need for people to wait for instructions to come up to pick up VPNs, about the importance of not being on VPN too long. I've also forwarded the message from (b) (6) about fulfilling TV shows' placeholders - how they are limited the number of shows to do this at one time, to avoid system sluggishness.

I had to step in and support VOA Khmer deal with a coordination issue. I looped in (b) (6) and (b) (6) together and asked them to step up as leaders and fill the "leadership vacuum" that I think created the miscommunication or miscoordination that was brought to my attention.

Talked to Kelu, (b) (6) and (b) (6) about how best to respond to China's request for information about our Beijing operation. (b) (6) will try to draft the answers. (b) (6) will draft the final version of the letter for (b) (6).

Let me know if you have any questions.

Thank you,

(b) (6)
Director - East Asia & Pacific Division
330 Independence Ave., SW (b) (6)
Washington, D.C. 20237
Tel: (b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Wednesday, March 18, 2020 8:33 AM
To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Situational Telework - March 18

Signing in.

(b) (6)
Director - East Asia & Pacific Division
330 Independence Ave., SW (b) (6)
Washington, D.C. 20237
Tel: (b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Tuesday, March 17, 2020 4:58 PM
To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Re: Situational Telework - March 17

Signing off.

8:30am prep for meetings

9am-11:45am back to back meetings

12:30pm budget talk with Burmese Service

1:15pm daily check in on contingency

2pm call with (b) (6) and (b) (6) on the future of digital infrastructure:

- (b) (6) explained that currently our Microsoft software, the emails, Teams, OneDrive, Sharepoint are already on the Azure cloud network that allows about 10GB of power. (Don't ask me what that means.)
- One application for production: use Teams Video conferencing to record video interviews. This will not need a calling plan, nor will it crowd the agency's network because it's on Azure. (b) (6) and (b) (6) asked me to appoint a few people who can advocate this method of interviewing.
- According to (b) (6), Azure has a "media service" where we can deliver content which provides a lot of potential.
- (b) (6) also asks to have a couple of names to experiment fulfilling placeholders (TV) remotely using Dalet Galaxy, which allows both radio and TV contents to be uploaded remotely.

3pm call with (b) (6) -- various China Branch stuff

4pm checking in with (b) (6)

(throughout the day, I send names to (b) (6)'s team on Teams for urgent VPNs.)

Thank you,

(b) (6)
Director - East Asia & Pacific Division
330 Independence Ave., SW (b) (6)
Washington, D.C. 20237
Tel: (b) (6)

From: (b) (6)

Sent: Tuesday, March 17, 2020 8:10 AM

To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)

Cc: (b) (6)

Subject: Situational Telework - March 17

Signing in.

Nadia

From: [Sandy Sugawara](#)
To: (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6); [Amanda Bennett](#); [Kelu Chao](#)
Subject: Re: VOA Coverage on Coronavirus - Thursday, 4/2/2020
Date: Thursday, April 2, 2020 10:32:02 PM

great. when i saw (b) (6)'s piece on lack of knowledge about coronavirus in refugee camps, I realized what kind of basic knowledge was missing.

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Thursday, April 2, 2020 8:33 PM
To: (b) (6); Sandy Sugawara (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6); Amanda Bennett
(b) (6); Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Subject: Re: VOA Coverage on Coronavirus - Thursday, 4/2/2020

FYI, we do a Covid PSA every day on "Lifeline." Thanks for asking. We can rotate some others in, too. - (b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Thursday, April 2, 2020 5:19 PM
To: Sandy Sugawara (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
Amanda Bennett (b) (6); Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Subject: Re: VOA Coverage on Coronavirus - Thursday, 4/2/2020

Will check asap

(b) (6)

Director of Partnerships
Latin America Broadcasting
Voice of America

On Apr 2, 2020, at 5:17 PM, Sandy Sugawara (b) (6) wrote:

Are we able to get the PSA to our refugee populations? There seems to be so little information about cv in Cox Bazar and other refugee camps

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Thursday, April 2, 2020 4:35 PM
To: (b) (6)
(b) (6)

Subject: FW: VOA Coverage on Coronavirus - Thursday, 4/2/2020

Hi,

Below please find the coverage plans of the entire agency. Let me know if you see anything of interest.

(b) (6) will answer you after. (b) usually signs in around 7:30pm our time. I'll flag your email to (b) soonest I see (b) logging in.

VOA Coverage on Coronavirus

Thursday, April 2, 2020

News Center

Expected Today

- **COVID - DRC Epidemics (Radio) by (b) (6)**
The UN children's fund warns thousands of children in Democratic Republic of Congo are at risk of dying from epidemics other than coronavirus – a situation that will likely worsen as the spread of COVID-19 threatens to divert scarce prevention resources. DRC authorities have confirmed 98 cases, including eight deaths since the start of the coronavirus.
- **COVID - Europe - Immigrants (Radio) by (b) (6)**
Missing out on information on how to stop the spread of the coronavirus can have tragic consequences. That is exactly what many immigrant communities across Europe face as prevention messages on mainstream media fail to reach those who have not yet learned the language of the countries where they now live. (b) (6) reports from Amsterdam.
- **COVID - Government - Business (Web) by (b) (6)**
Are Western governments turning to the private sector enough in the battle against Coronavirus? In Britain, private British labs say they could increase testing, if asked. And in many Western countries, including the US, businesses complain regulations are getting in the way of them doing more to assist in the crisis.
- **OVID - Greece Refugee Camps (Radio) by (b) (6)**
Greek refugee camp north of Athens becomes first of dozens scattered across the country to be struck by the coronavirus, forcing authorities to quarantine the facility. At least 20 refugees at the Ritsona camp have tested positive since a female resident was found to be a carrier last week, when she was rushed to a hospital in Athens to give birth. The camp holds 2000 migrants but Greece altogether hosts more than 100,000 asylum seekers, largely living in filthy and overcrowded facilities that aid agencies have billed as health hazards, especially in the wake of the coronavirus.
- **COVID - Iran US (Radio) by (b) (6)**
Iran is reporting that the number of deaths from the corona virus has gone above 3000. President Hassan Rouhani is also saying that the US missed the opportunity to improve relations with Iran by lifting economic sanctions during the virus crisis.
- **COVID - Israel Religion (TV) by (b) (6)**
Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, the head of the Mossad security force, and most senior health officials entered home quarantine

after Israel's Health Minister Yakov Litzman was diagnosed with the coronavirus. Litzman is a member of Israel's ultra-Orthodox community, which has emerged as the epicenter of the virus. Police are now strictly enforcing the social distancing laws in the ultra-Orthodox communities, amidst fears that the skyrocketing infection rate there could overwhelm the Israeli health system.

- **COVID - New York (Web) by (b) (6)**
(b) (6) monitors NY briefing for possible file
- **COVID - Trump (Web) by (b) (6)**
(b) (6) will monitor 5pm WH covid briefing for possible file
- **COVID - US Political Campaigns (Web) by (b) (6)**
COVID-POLITICAL CAMPAIGNS (WEB) by (b) (6) Coronavirus quarantines and self-isolating measures are forcing candidates across the country to adapt to a new style of political campaigning - Tweets and Zoom meetings are replacing door to door knocking and rallies. VOA's Congressional Correspondent (b) (6) looks at the changing nature of reaching out to voters in a major election year.
- **COVID Mask Price Gouging (Web) by (b) (6)**
The critical shortage of face masks is likely to grow in the coming days, leading to a surge in price gouging despite efforts by law enforcement and retailers to crack down.
- **COVID NORTH KOREA – US (Web/Radio) by (b) (6)**
The top U.S. general in South Korea says he does not accept North Korea's claim that it has no coronavirus cases.
- **SU Online Learning Overseas (TV) by (b) (6)**
In an effort to quell the spread of the novel coronavirus, most American universities and colleges have shifted to online learning. But for many international students who have returned to their home countries, that could mean going to class in the middle of the night. (b) (6) has more.
- **COVID US Immigrant Doctors by (TV/Web) (b) (6)**
Immigrant doctors on J1 visa H1B visa want to help the U.S. in the fight against COVID19, but are stuck due to visa restrictions.
- **COVID-AFRICA US EFFORTS (Radio/Web) by (b) (6)**
The U.S. is working with African governments to help them contain the spread of coronavirus in their countries. VOA's (b) (6) hears that top US and African officials have to say.
- **COVID-SOUTH AFRICA VULNERABLE (TV/Radio) by (b) (6)**
Even before South Africa's Gauteng province had the country's most coronavirus cases the population of nearly 13 million was struggling with a battered healthcare system and a vulnerable population in poor townships and slums.
- **China Layoffs Unemployment (Web) by (b) (6)**
China's hope for a quick economic rebound from COVID-19 is now put on hold as the global pandemic is taking another toll on its export-oriented manufacturers.
- **Diary Ridgwell London (TV/Web) by (b) (6)**
Living during the COVID 19 Lockdown can feel stifling to put it mildly. But so far, most people are abiding by the rules for everyone's sake. But as VOA's

(b) (6) discovered, it is stifling, especially for people used to living in a free and open society like the UK.

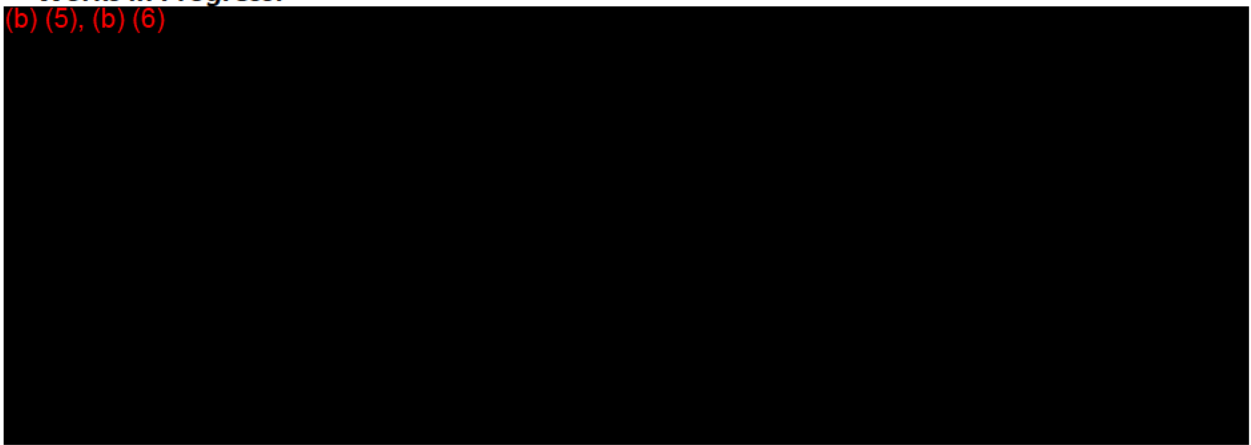
- **Syria - Prisons (TV/Photo/Web) by (b) (6)**
Tensions are soaring in Syrian prisons as trials for accused Islamic State militants are put on hold indefinitely due to the coronavirus threat. Officials say a prison riot over the weekend was contained and prisoners attempting escape were captured. But they warn that without international support, the thousands of prisoners from dozens of countries held in Syria without trials or even formal charges are like "a ticking bomb."

Graphics:

- Covid and refugees (Dense populations put refugee camps at high risk) –
- Covid-19: New digital tools could speed up Covid-19 contact tracing
- Graphics PSA about COVID 19 prevention for social media (also adapted it for TV). You can find all the elements here:
<https://app.frame.io/projects/107d8a33-963a-48f0-9001-585725df7d34/9eb68062-c196-4513-9716-753f14c19c03>

Works in Progress:

(b) (5), (b) (6)



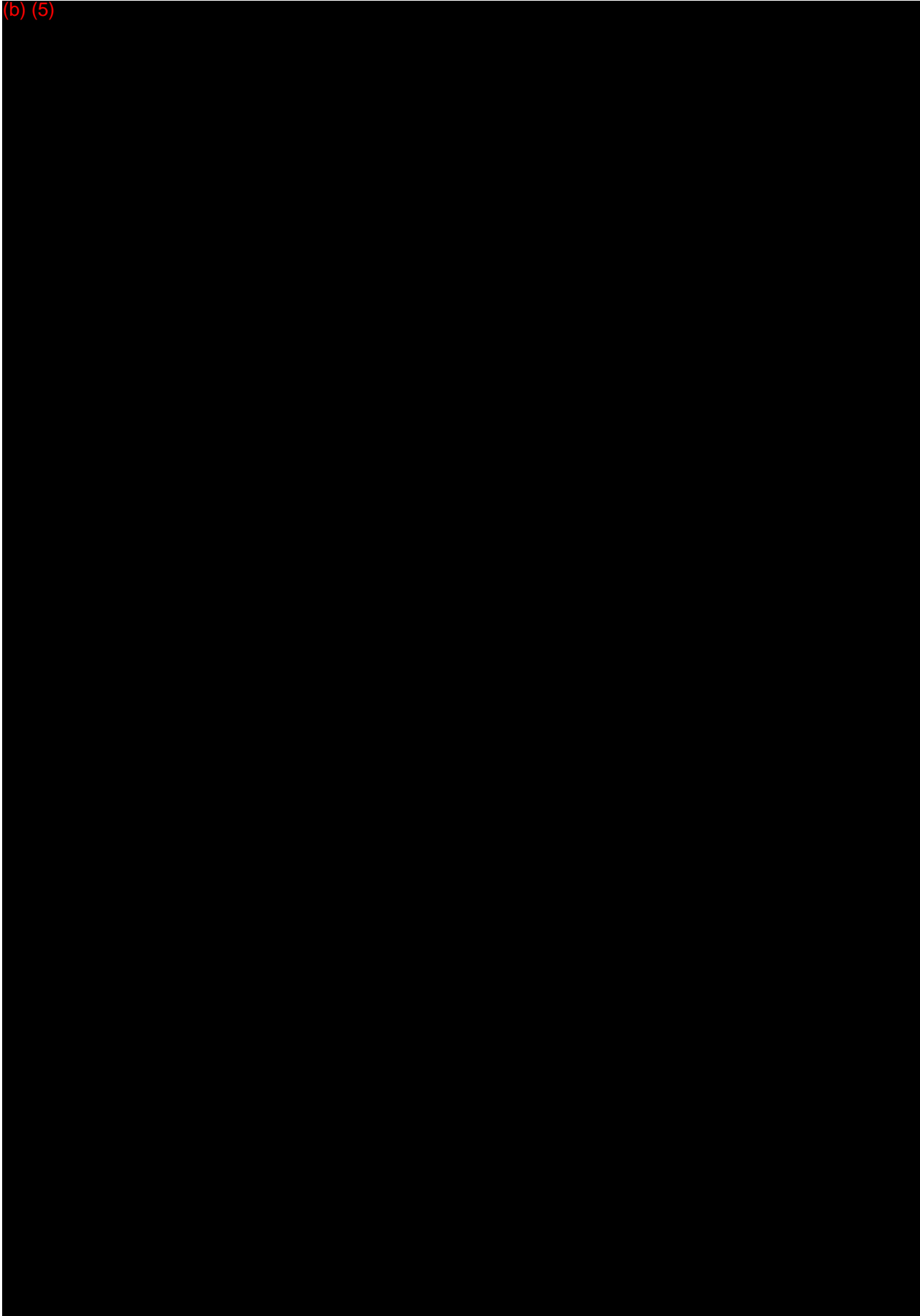
(b) (5)



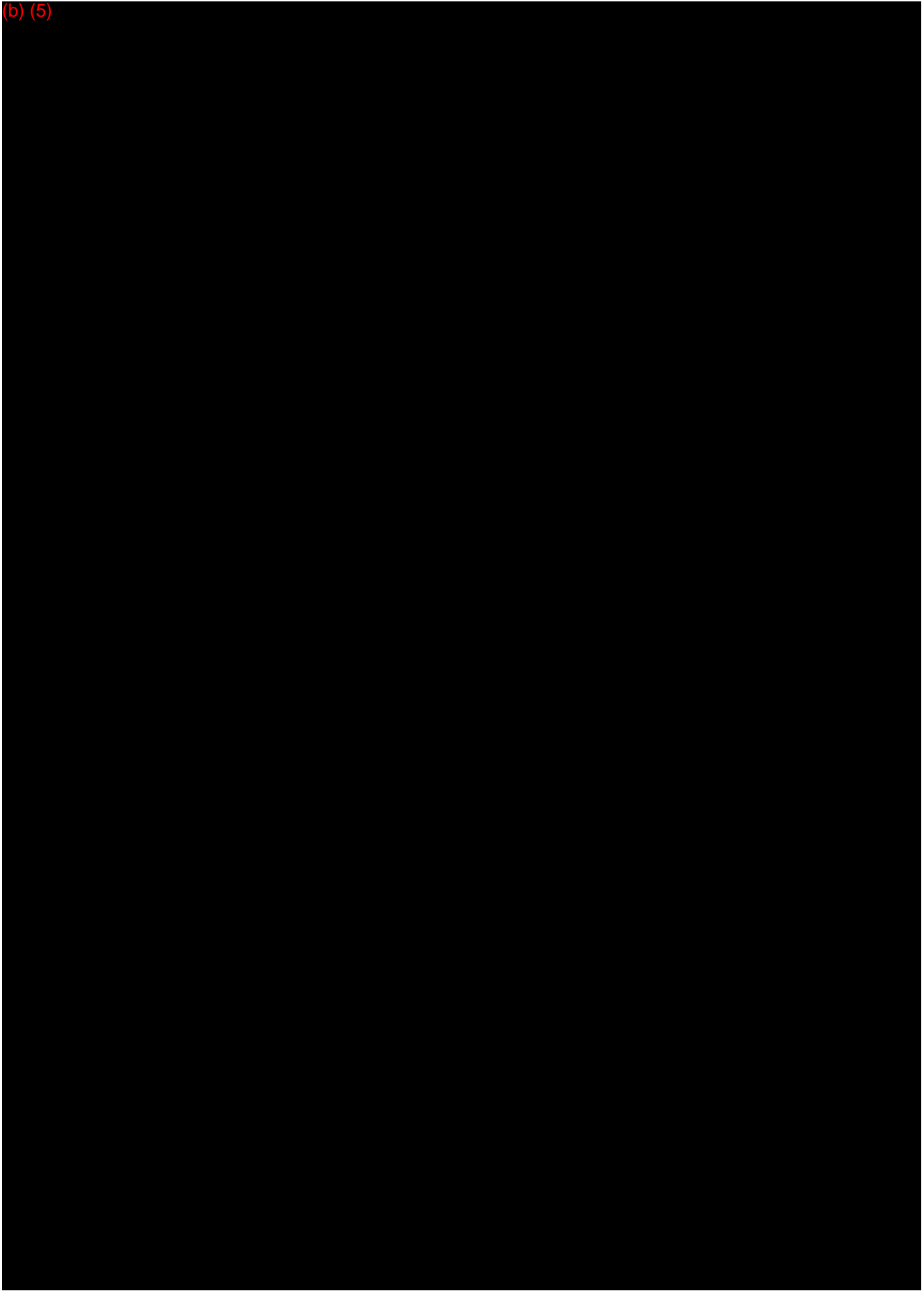
(b) (5)



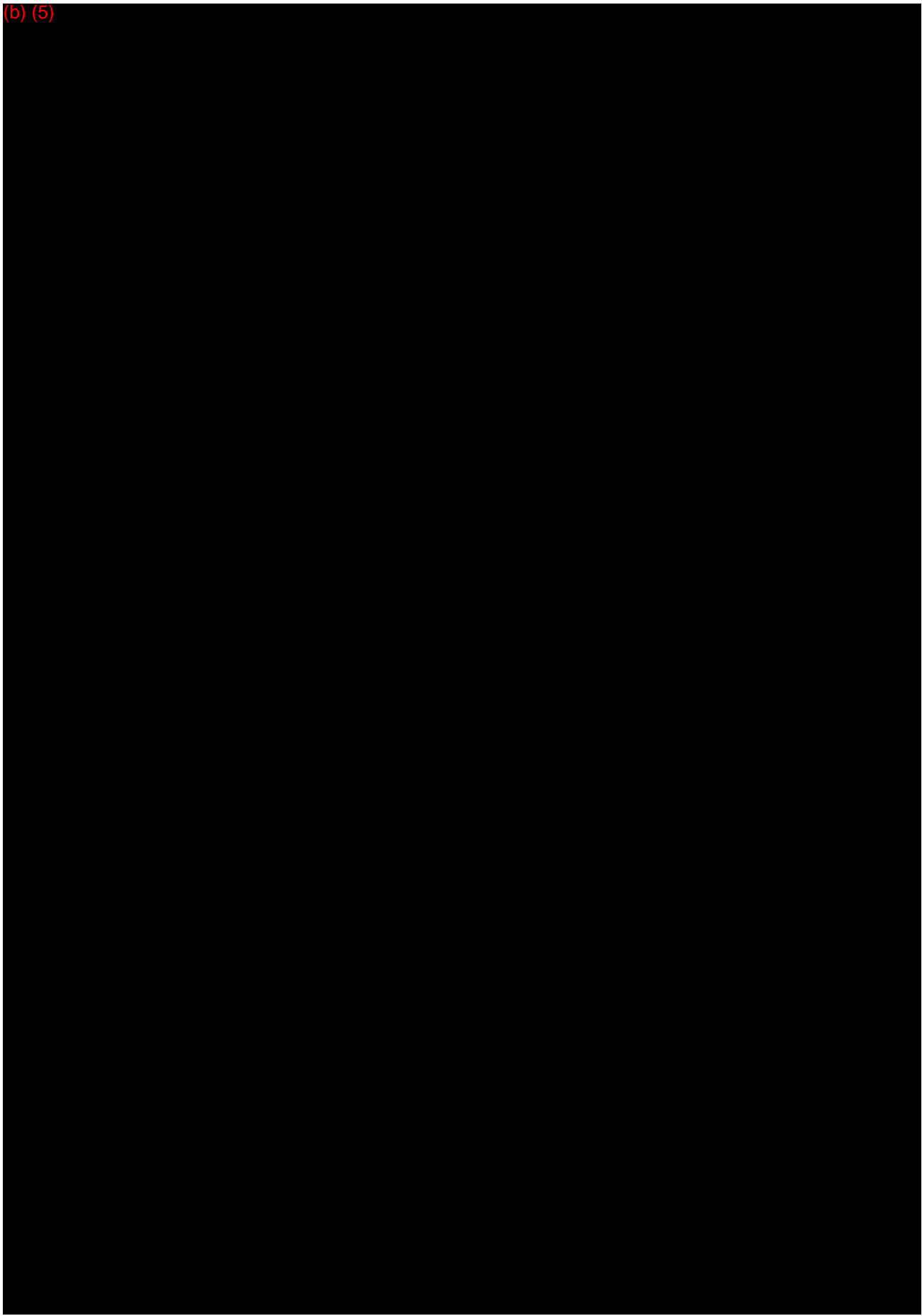
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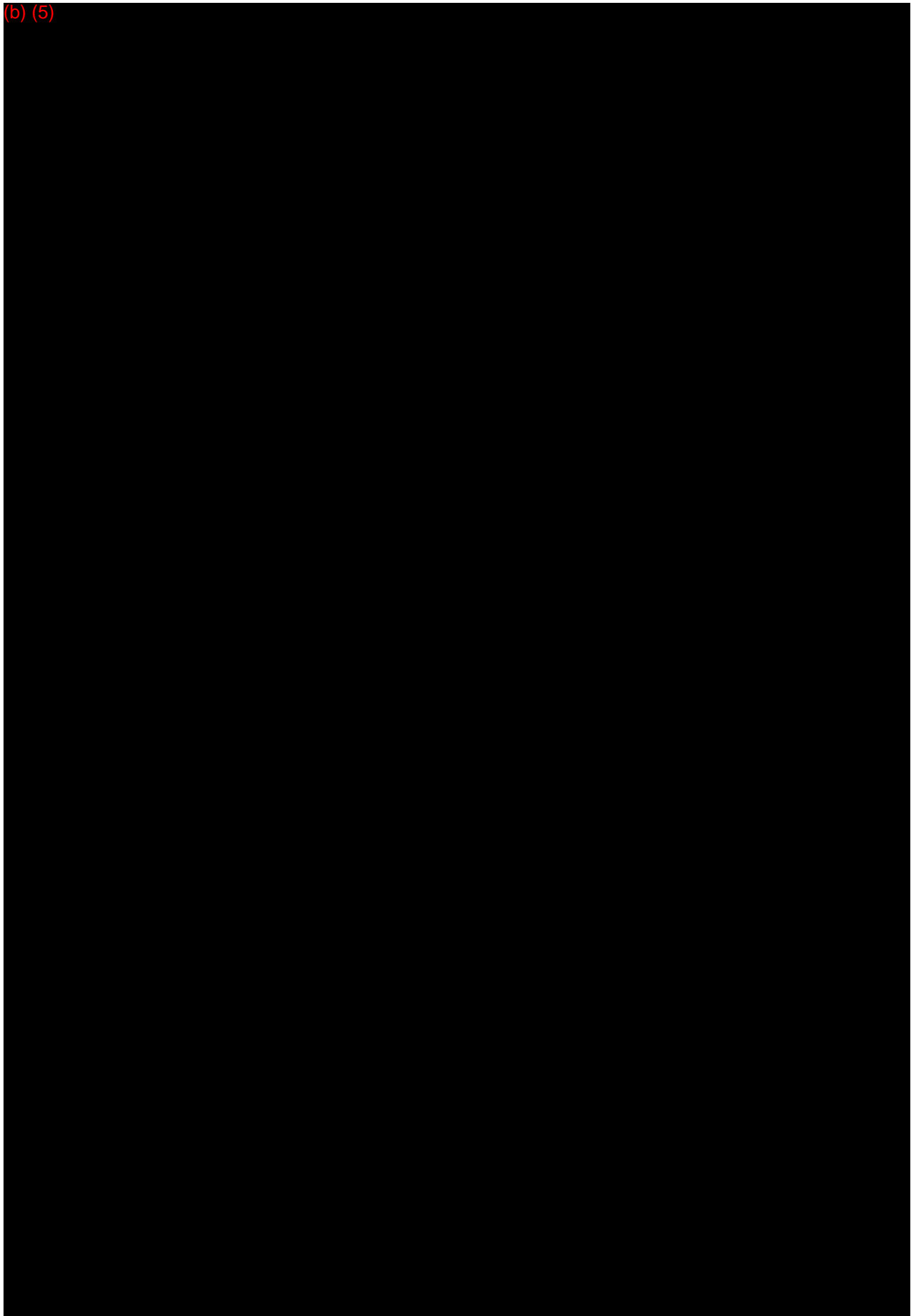
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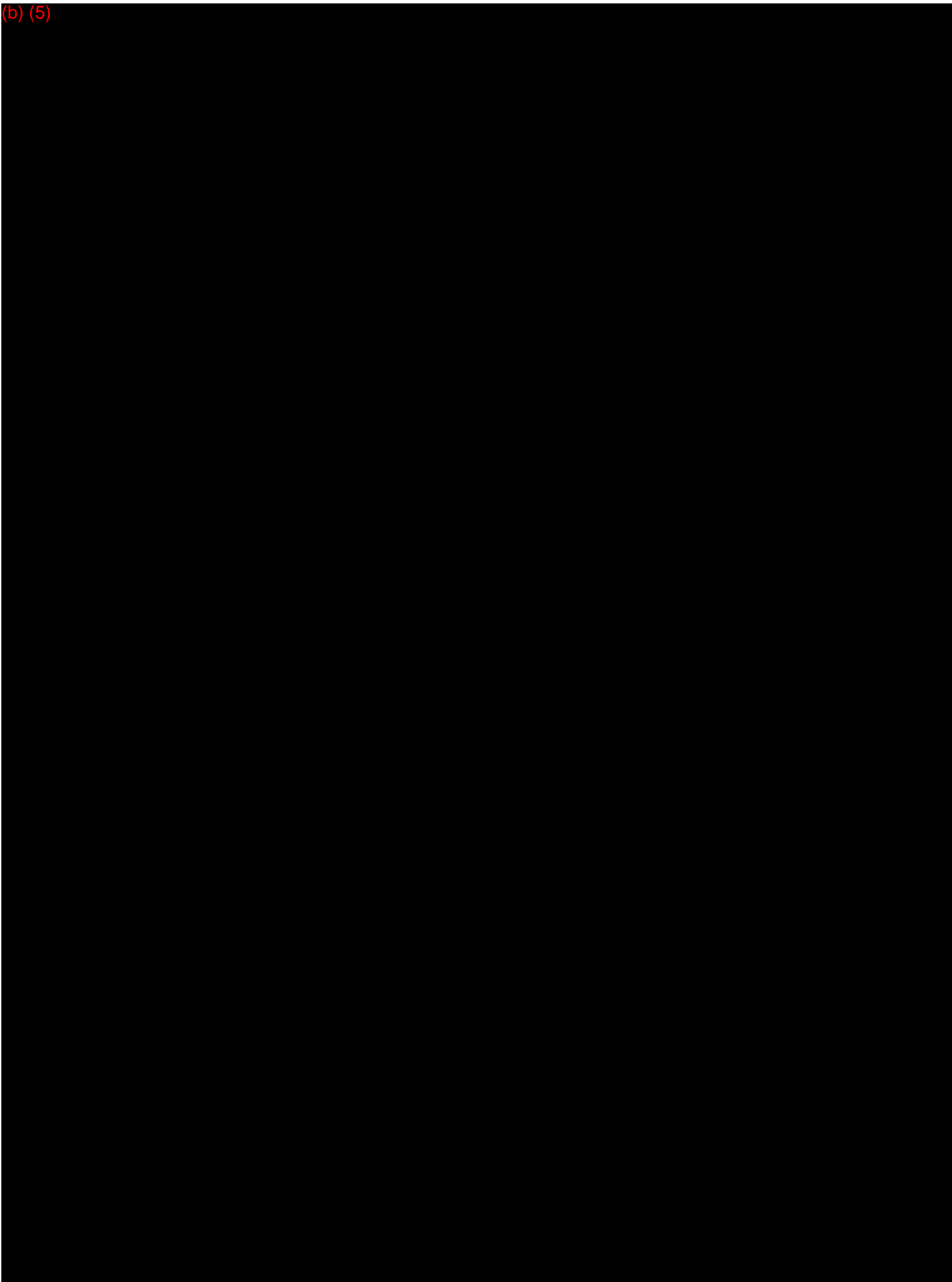
(b) (5)



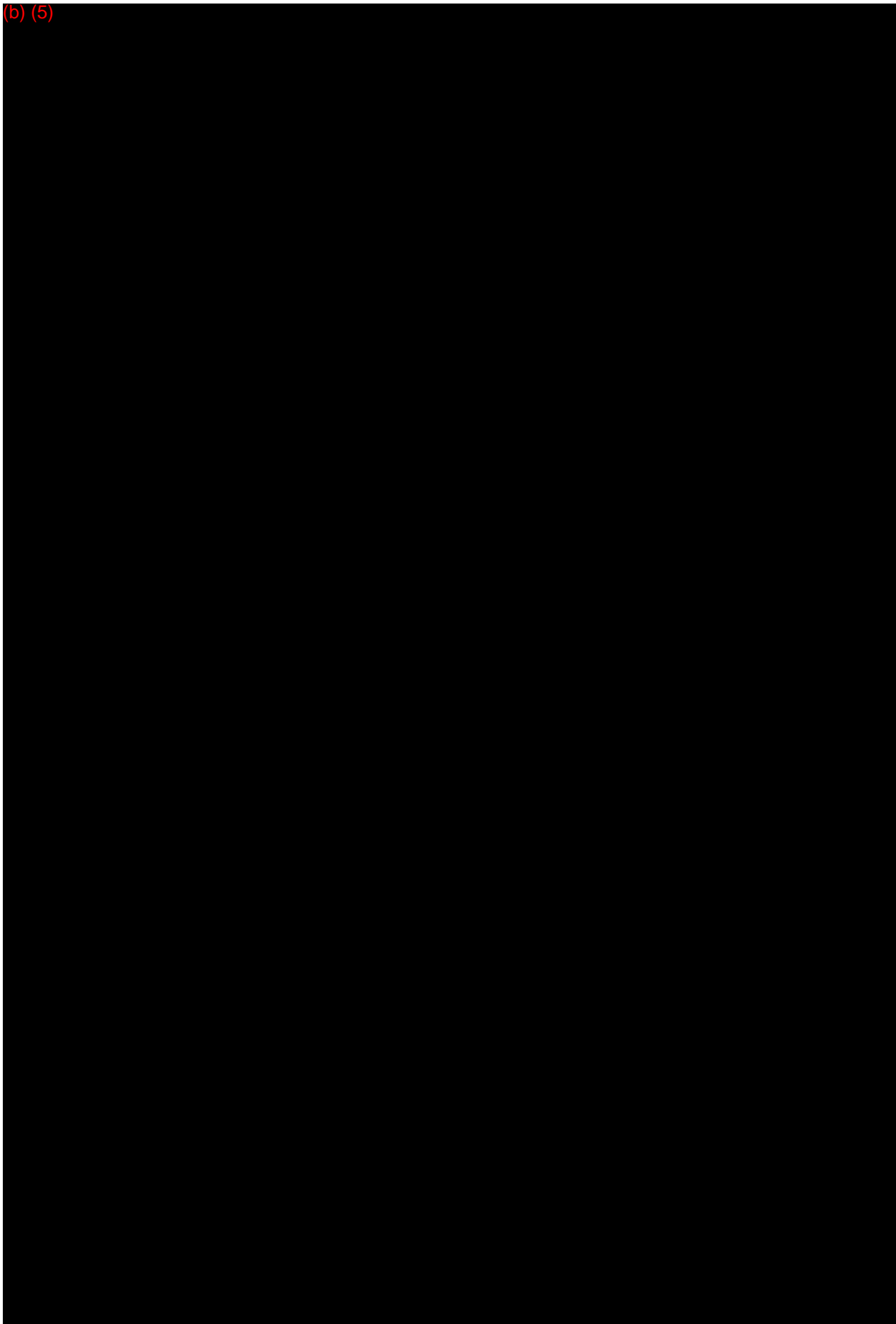
(b) (5)



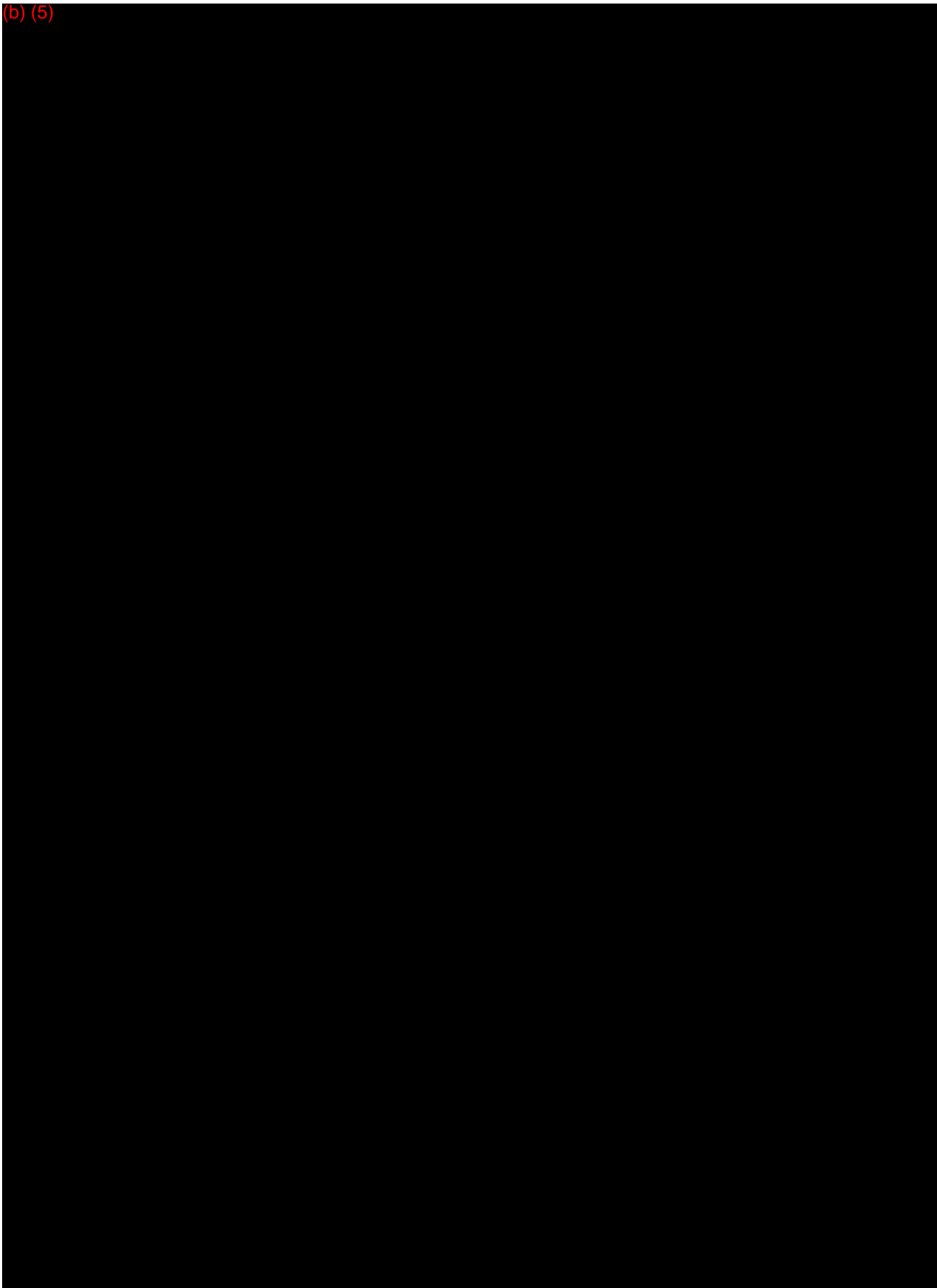
(b) (5)



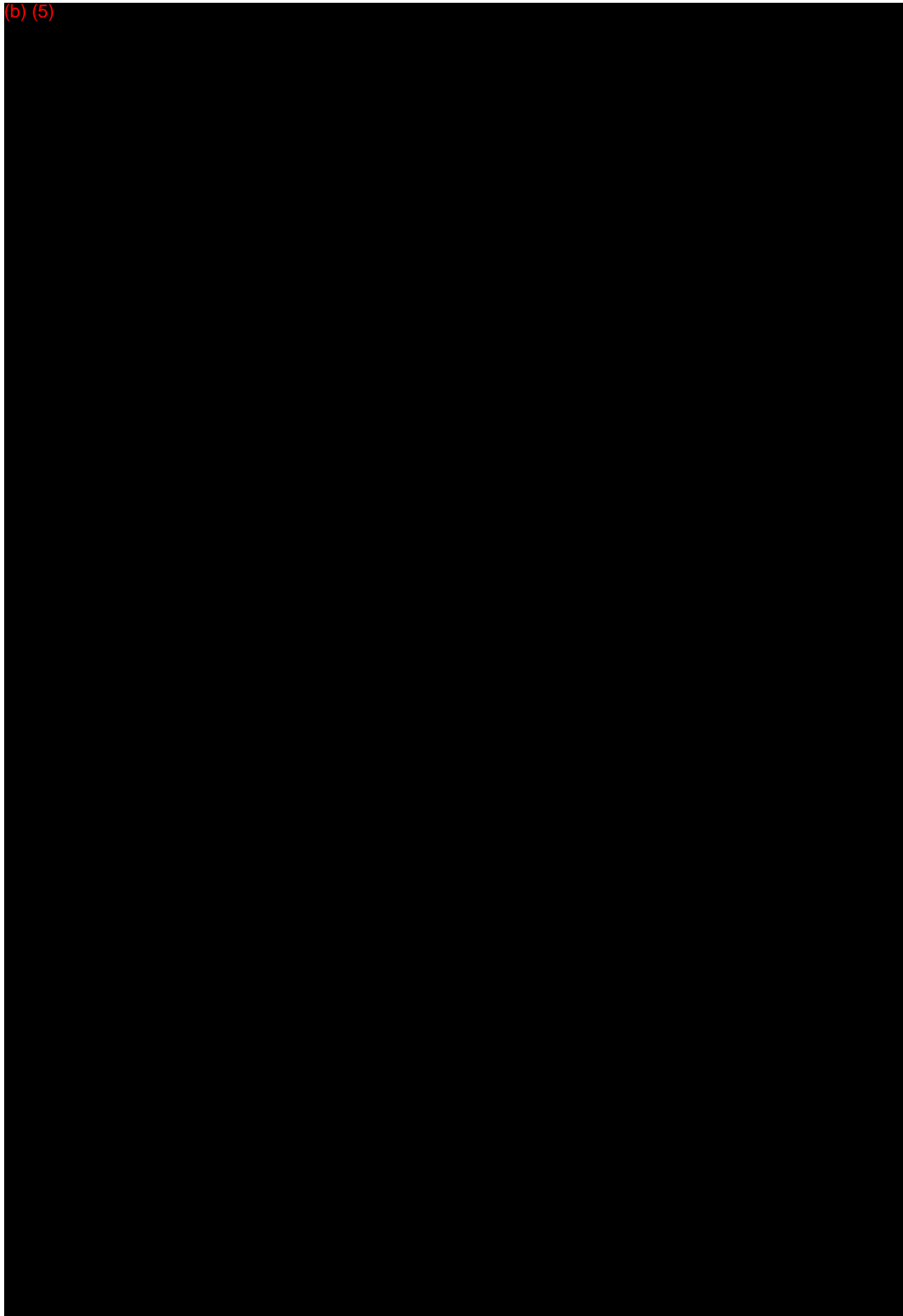
(b) (5)



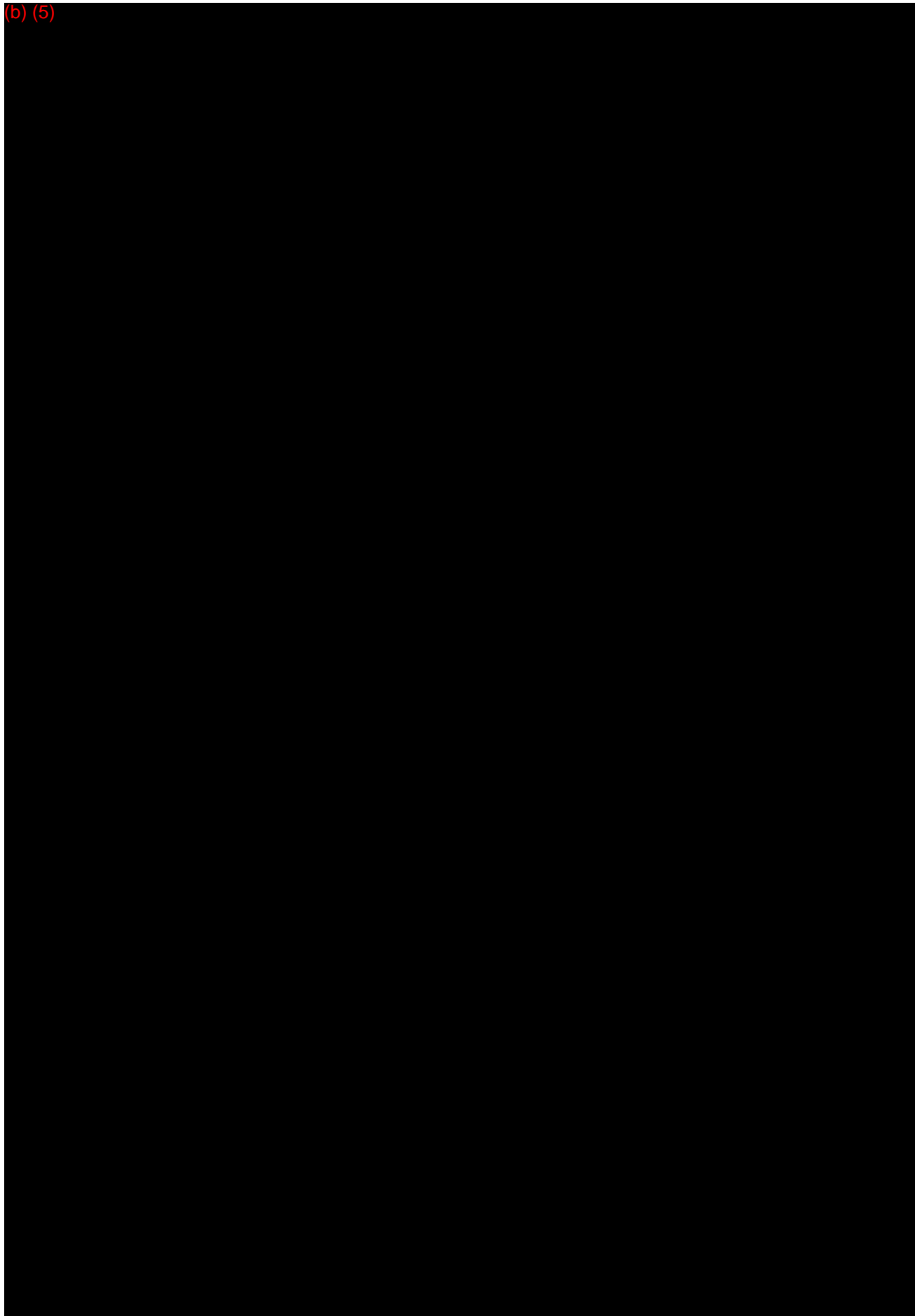
(b) (5)



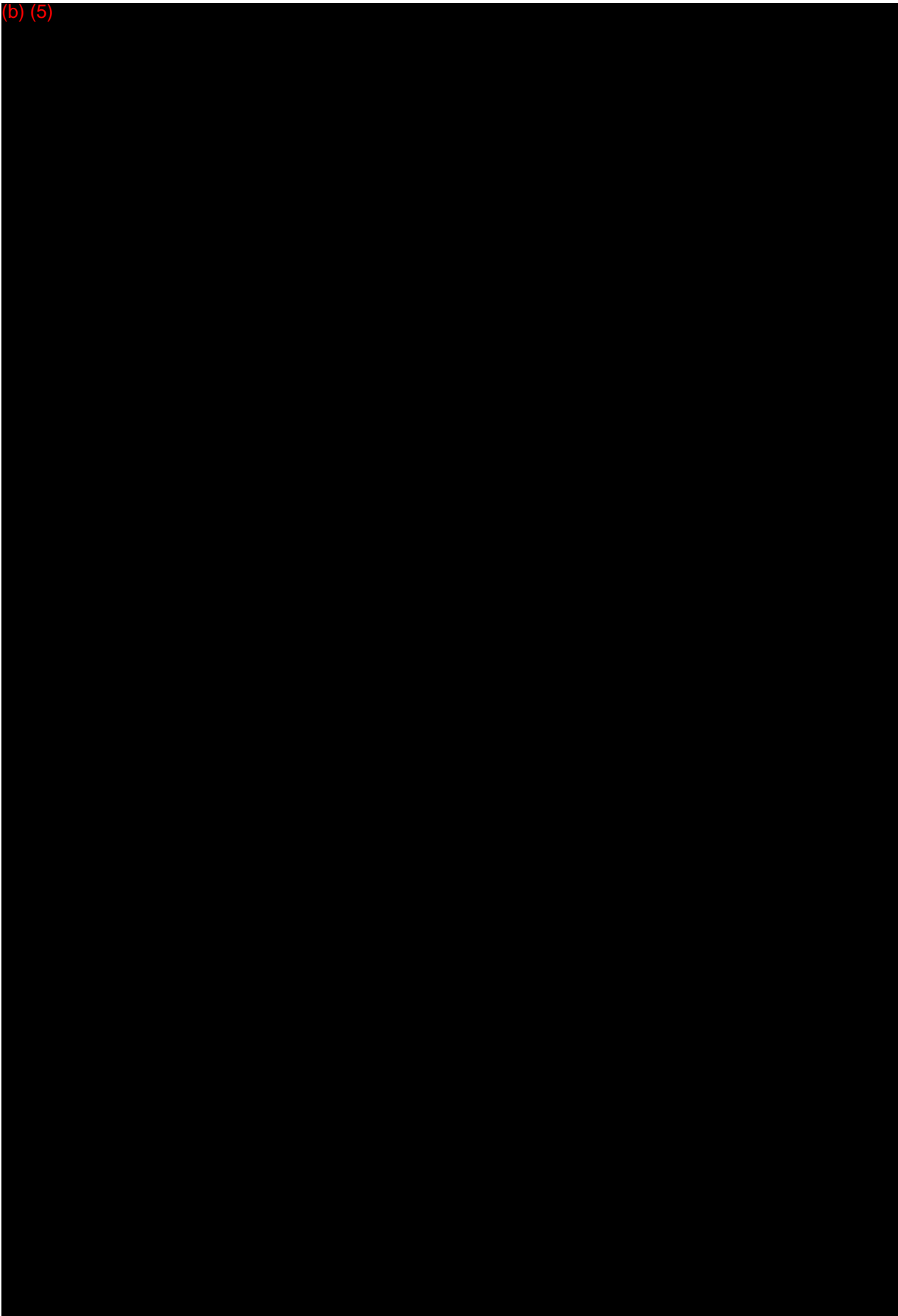
(b) (5)



(b) (5)



(b) (5)



(b) (5)



From: (b) (6)
To: (b) (6) [Kelu Chao](#)
Subject: Hiring Analysis as of mid-May
Date: Wednesday, May 13, 2020 10:26:28 AM
Attachments: [VOA FY20 Anticipated Hires Promotions and Losses \(20200512\).xlsx](#)

All,

I took a look at our Hiring Tracker sheet (see attached) and was surprised at some of the results; this includes folks who are scheduled to onboard up through 7/5/20.

Approved Vacancies in process:

First, most surprising, is that we now have only **67 positions in play** at the moment, down from our usual 80-90! Perhaps, this is due to HR working the positions more efficiently and that Amanda/Sandy have not approved any new hires since mid-November 2019.

Of the 67 positions, **18 selections** have been made or are in process (based on paperwork received by our office); 2 of those 18 are likely to onboard in May yet, and another 10 in June; 4 are having visa issues, 1 has a serious Security issue and one is an outlier for now. **24 of the 67 positions have been posted** and are in process. And **25 positions are still in HR** waiting to be posted though HR confirmed yesterday that a handful will be posted in the coming week. It is important to note that with these 25 positions, many are with management not just in HR; the draft Vacancy Announcement process takes a while to get through when everyone is so busy. Also, Divisions are giving HR their hiring priorities so some positions are lower priority than others.

New Hires Analysis:

97 positions are filled through 7/5/2020

Of those 97 positions, 34 (35%) are Internal hires/promotions; 33 (34%) are PSCs, POVs, or Consultants; and 30 (31%) are from outside the agency (2 are from MBN, 2 are PMFs).

So, overall, 69% are already being paid out of Salaries or GOE from the Agency, and 31% represent added costs to the Agency.

Is this helpful analysis? I try to do it every so often.

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Kelu Chao](#)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Re: Situational Telework - Jun 24
Date: Wednesday, June 24, 2020 5:28:21 PM

Understood. Thank you, Kelu. I don't know how the discussion got to the point where (b) (6) can say that it is (b) (6)'s decision to stay or return to Mandarin. I will check with (b) (6) in the morning.

(b) (6)

Sent from my iPhone

On Jun 24, 2020, at 17:19, Kelu Chao (b) (6) wrote:

You can't release (b) (6) until you have the replacement. It's hard to get approval nowadays as you know.

Sent from my iPhone

On Jun 24, 2020, at 5:04 PM, (b) (6) wrote:

Signing out.

- AM editorial meetings.
- Chat with (b) (6) about (b) (6) preparation for Wion's dry run on Friday. Explained to (b) (6) the difference in reporting to an international audience (rather than a U.S. domestic audience) -- that we need to provide background and context, and make sure we are balanced.
- Wion live hit is off to a good pre-start! Wion is communicating with our team on a daily basis. We hope we can do our first real live hit on July 3rd. We've just established a connection with our LUSmart and their LiveU unit. We tested out the connections yesterday, all are good to go. We only need to focus on content quality now.
- Organized a meeting between domestic contractor (b) (6), who's been working with (b) (6) on an OTT mini-doc, and (b) (6), who will assist (b) (6) in editing the subtitles. Very excited to see the final version!
- Spoke to (b) (6) about the "scare" of an FTE's J1 extension that is at risk of not getting extended on time because CEO Pack has not signed the memo. (b) (6)'s J1 visa expires next week on July 1. But we will wait for David Kotz's and (b) (6)'s update tomorrow morning. If we don't hear anything by tomorrow c.o.b., we may panic...
- Sorted out the English Learning production in Mandarin, where we've decided to move the resources into other more impactful contents because we've learned that our audience in China are already using/sharing the original version of English Learning contents on WeChat. But, VOA Mandarin will continue to share English Learning contents (in its original form) on our digital platforms: website and social media.
- Discussed the distribution of shortwave portable radios for Rohingya camp

with (b) (6) would like to know if (b) (6)'s staff (b) (6) can be available in Bangladesh to oversee the distribution. I'm still in discussion with (b) (6)

- Please advise: I heard from (b) (6) that (b) (6) was given the impression that (b) (6) will stay in News Center for good. I will follow up with (b) (6) to double check. If this is so, VOA Mandarin really needs to fill a couple of GS13 positions to supervise contents: one for the overnight, and another for the AM shift for the web (which is a 24/7 operation).

Thank you,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Wednesday, June 24, 2020 11:17 AM
To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Re: Situational Telework - Jun 24

Signing back in (b) (6)

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Wednesday, June 24, 2020 9:42 AM
To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Re: Situational Telework - Jun 24

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Wednesday, June 24, 2020 8:08 AM
To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Situational Telework - Jun 24

Signing in.

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)

Sent: Tuesday, June 23, 2020 6:59 PM

To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)

Cc: (b) (6)

Subject: Re: Situational Telework - Jun 23

Signing out. (b) (6)

(b) (6)

- AM editorial meetings.
- Weekly chat with (b) (6) shared how (b) (6) is pushing everyone to be more multi-platform when they carry out their reporting assignments. Also, (b) (6) has encouraged the Digital Team to do more than push contents produced by TV or Web, and turn it into a native social media content. This one example, they say, was based on my idea... <https://twitter.com/VOAChinese/status/1275197227045212163>
- Weekly Chiefs meeting:
 - talked about how the teams are doing going into our 4th month of telework.
 - Burmese feel they need to go back to the building to do live radio program. I suggested they look into using OBS or Wirecast to do it remotely (very similar to the Mandarin's TV program, but just using audio). I will reach out to (b) (6) and follow up (b) (6) is happy to hear of the prospect.
 - Some feel they are doing well with teleworking, especially when there is still looming fears of contamination.
 - Some Chief shared their challenge of getting someone to accept on the ground reporting -- then another Chief shared their suggestion: go down the list until you find someone who is willing. The principle behind this is that if the news is on the ground (like the recent protests), we should be all over it and report it.
 - There was a question about who to ask for guidance on editorial judgment now that (b) (6) is on detail. I reached out to (b) (6) who recommended to start with (b) (6).
 - There was a question on how the President's Executive Decision to suspend working visas will affect J1 visas (new ones and extensions). I've conveyed the question to David Kotz and he looped in GC (b) (6). I will update on the findings.
- Worked on (b) (6)'s coming back (or maybe not) with David Kotz.
- Worked with TSI to give them the info of the three iMac machines to be in the first trial batch.
- (I could not attend the CAB meeting, but (b) (6) and (b) (6), our POC for the project, attended. I got a note from TSI (b) (6) and (b) (6) that things will move forward!)

美国之音中文网 on Twitter

“从喜马拉雅到南中国海和东中国海，在几乎所



有被中国视为长久以来甚至是历史遗留的“闪点”问题上，中国近来越来越咄咄逼人 这让外界不禁要思忖，中国为什么要四面出击？中国的目的到底是什么？ <https://t.co/D6ScvVCfvF>
<https://t.co/gLePFbtvcZ>

twitter.com

Thank you,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)

Sent: Tuesday, June 23, 2020 12:54 PM

To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)

Cc: (b) (6)

Subject: Re: Situational Telework - Jun 23

Signing out.

(b) (6) Will return for CAB meeting with TSI and sign out with list of tasks.

Thank you,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)

Sent: Tuesday, June 23, 2020 8:37 AM

To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)

Cc: (b) (6)

Subject: Situational Telework - Jun 23

Signing in.

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)

Sent: Monday, June 22, 2020 5:35 PM

To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)

Cc: (b) (6)

Subject: Re: Situational Telework - Jun 22

Signing out.

- AM Editorial Meetings.

- Spoke to (b) (6) about invoicing the OTT content.
- Worked with (b) (6) on budget planning.
- Spoke to (b) (6) and (b) (6) about turning their 5-part series on 70th Anniversary of the Korean War into a visual story. Reached out to (b) (6) (b) (6) I think something can be done.
- Spoke to (b) (6) about turning their report on "Tensions in Every Direction, What Does China Really Want?" into an infographic or some kind. They are looking into this.
- Worked with TSI on iMacs transport to homes:
 - we will start with 3 iMacs for (b) (6), and (b) (6) (b) (6)
 - (b) (6) will be VOA's POC who will oversee the transports
 - (b) (6) will prep the machines for transport.
 - TSI will discuss last details of this "trial group" tomorrow in their CAB meeting.
 - If all goes well, the soonest would be Wednesday or later this week that we can move the iMacs.
- Worked with Travel, (b) (6) (Security) and (b) (6) about how to get (b) (6) and (b) (6) out of Beijing (b) (6) has been put on 5 itineraries but all flights end up cancelled. We fear (b) (6) will experience the same.
- Worked with (b) (6) about Wion TV contents to ensure balance and build credibility.

Thank you,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Monday, June 22, 2020 8:26 AM
To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Situational Telework - Jun 22

Signing in.

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Friday, June 19, 2020 6:03 PM
To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Re: Situational Telework - Jun 19

Signing out.

- AM editorial meetings.

Worked on the Mandarin OTT contractor's IPP invoice. (b) and I need to figure out how to price the various versions of the documentary that (b) is asked to produce. We have the funds, it's only a matter of how to invoice.

- Shared VOA Indonesian's Uighur contacts with (b). Hopefully Mandarin can do some unique Uighur reporting from America.
- Discussed World Refugee Day reports with Tibetans who've planned to do some but has not shared with News Center. But lots are being produced by Khmer, Burmese, Indonesian, and Vietnamese. They produced reports based on this year's theme "Everyone can make a difference. Every action counts."
- Discussed with (b) about (b) and admin changes in WebTA for (b) detail starting next week.
- Worked with TSI (b) (6) about iMacs. It's moving forward! Hopefully by Wednesday or Thursday next week, we will move 3 iMacs out to (b) (b) (6) and (b) (6) (Kurdish). I've supplied to TSI the "Proof of Concept Roadmap". (b) (6) and (b) (6) have reviewed and asked for VOA to appoint the POC to oversee the transport.
- Wion preparation: turns out (b) (6) is too green to handle Wion show independently. I've instructed (b) (6) and/or Ira to write the script for (b) to deliver live, and VOA will provide Wion the questions to ask. We just established a LiveU connection with Wion. Next week we will have a tech trial with them -- a rehearsal.

Thank you,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Friday, June 19, 2020 8:18 AM
To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Situational Telework - Jun 19

Signing in.

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Wednesday, June 17, 2020 9:21 PM
To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Re: Situational Telework - Jun 17

Signing out.

- AM Editorial meetings

USAGM focus group with EAP on reconstitution

- Coop weekly meeting
- Worked with (b) (6) on how to liaise with WION TV India (b) (6) trained (b) (6) on LUSmart
- Sort out the OTT production with (b) (6) and (b) (6) re IPP invoice. (b) (6) helped as well.
- Worked with TSI on getting iMacs to homes. Hopefully we can proceed on this next week, but I will know more tomorrow.

Thank you,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Wednesday, June 17, 2020 8:15 AM
To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Situational Telework - Jun 17

Signing in.

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Tuesday, June 16, 2020 6:33 PM
To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Re: Situational Telework - Jun 16

Signing out.

- AM editorial meetings.
- Tibetan stringer: had to explain to (b) (6) about not being able to recruit more stringers at this time (b) (6) wanted to reduce assignments for current stringers and make funds available for new stringers -- which cannot be done at the moment.
- Sorted out IPP invoice from a domestic stringer, (b) (6), who's been working with (b) (6) on a documentary.
- Followed up on PSC status for those who have passed the security check (Mandarin and Burmese).
- EAP Chiefs Meeting:
 - congratulated (b) (6) for being selected as an FTE!!
 - announced the contracts deadline that passed; asked everyone to be on top of the stringer balance on IPP because CON would not want to deal with movement of funds from one vendor to another; no new

stringers for now

- shared the news about (b) (6) going on detail next week, and (b) (6) will be acting chief
- CAB meeting with JR and TSI, regarding VOA's request to take iMacs home:
 - I invited (b) (6) and Jim Tunnessen to the meeting
 - Very fruitful. In the end (b) (6) is open to testing a few (most) urgent ones and see what is involved in the process.
 - (b) (6) and I met after the meeting, we decided that the POCs on VOA side are me and (b) (6).
 - We will determine 3 people with urgent needs to be the test cases: 1 from SCA, 2 from News Center
 - (b) (6) was also in the meeting, (b) (6) will also help with the process.
 - This is a great partnership between VOA and TSI.

Thank you,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Tuesday, June 16, 2020 8:38 AM
To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Situational Telework - Jun 16

Signing in.

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Monday, June 15, 2020 4:01 PM
To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Re: Situational Telework - Jun 15

Signing out.

- Meeting with WION TV on details of our programming:
 - they would like to start with a weekly, every Friday AM Eastern Time -- 7:30pm or 8:30pm local time in Delhi
 - duration is about 5-10 minutes
 - (b) (6) will be our reporter; (b) (6) will be the person of contact
 - connection will be done using LiveU (WION has LiveU in their studio), and (b) (6) will use LUSmart on the agency phone (b) (6)'s assigned
 - (b) (6) will start training (b) (6) on LUSmart, and put together

- equipment kit for (b) (6)
- o (b) (6) will be assisted by VOA Indonesian's (b) (6) who's done a ton of live hits. This is just for the first few hits.
 - o we will do a dry run this Friday, June 19th
- AM editorial meetings
 - Weekly meeting with Kelu
 - Meet with David Kotz and (b) (6) on (b) (6) -- final decision by GC is 8 days of suspension. Tentatively (b) (6) will report back to duty around June 23/24.
 - Coaching (b) (6) on WION TV production, especially about the fact that questions for chit-chat must be from VOA so (b) (6) is prepared with the answers -- this way VOA has full editorial control.
 - Talked to (b) (6) about the changes in China Branch.
 - o already started with assigning Libo in the overnight shift. (b) (6) and (b) (6) met with stringers last week and talked about workflow. Today is the second day for (b) (6) in his new role
 - o working on creating "desks" -- China desk and U.S. national desk
 - o working on shifting more resources to digital platforms from conventional TV
 - Worked with (b) (6) about re-allocating/shifting stringer money, which I've explained is discouraged by Office of Contracts. Will follow up with (b) (6) tomorrow.

Thank you,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Monday, June 15, 2020 7:25 AM
To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Situational Telework - Jun 15

Signing in.

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Friday, June 12, 2020 12:07 PM
To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Re: ituatinal Telework - Jun 12

Signing out. (b) (6)

AM editorial meetings.

- Discussions with (b) (6), separately with David Kotz, on how to ensure smooth transition of leadership when/if the freeze is lifted and (b) (6) starts (b) (6) detail in the News Center. David explained that as long as it doesn't involve any personnel action, it's in my authority to assign (b) (6) to attend editorial meetings and Chiefs meetings -- similar to times when (b) (6) is on leave. This will be only for next week, and we will see if we need to extend for another week. But I don't imagine (b) (6) serving this role this way for more than 2 weeks.
- Worked on the Critical Contractual Requirements data call.
- Finished more ePerformance.

Have a great weekend!

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Friday, June 12, 2020 8:04 AM
To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: ituatinal Telework - Jun 12

Signing in.

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Thursday, June 11, 2020 4:27 PM
To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Re: Situational Telework - Jun 11

Signing out.

- AM editorial meetings.
- Worked with USAGM to schedule a focus group about reconstitution
- Worked on USAGM Business Impact Analysis to be submitted to (b) (6) and (b) (6) tomorrow. Worked with (b) (6) on it, too.
- Division Directors meeting.
- Finalized more ePerformance

Thank you,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Thursday, June 11, 2020 8:37 AM
To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Situational Telework - Jun 11

Signing in.

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Wednesday, June 10, 2020 5:27 PM
To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Re: Situational Telework - Jun 10

Signing out.

- AM editorial meetings.
- Dealt with a Burmese staff who has raised issue with their rating, claiming bullying. (b) (6) and (b) (6) are on it.
- More ePerformance reviewing.
- Worked with (b) (6) and (b) (6) on USAGM Business Impact Analysis for EAP Division. I'll share with you, if you like. I'm still working on it, adding comments and more details to the answers we (me, (b) (6) and (b) (6)) discussed:
 - during a COOP situation, digital team must continue operation, non stop
 - thru digital, reporters can produce live streams (FB live, IG live, YouTube live, etc), or do a live hit with affiliates through digital platforms, such as LUSmart and Skype
 - equipment is essential to continue production. I mentioned our urgent need to assign iMacs for telework.
- Weekly COOP meeting. Everyone was very helpful in preparing the Request for Change Form for TSI.
- Talked to (b) (6) about iMacs. (b) (6) shared the Request for Change Form where we can present our needs and assess risks/benefits. The form has been submitted. This will be presented by (b) (6) on Tuesday in their weekly CAB meeting -- I don't know what CAB means.

*fingercrossed

Thank you,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Tuesday, May 12, 2020 8:51 AM
To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Situational Telework - May 12

Signing in.

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Friday, May 8, 2020 4:42 PM
To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Re: Situational Telework - May 8

Signing out.

- AM Editorial meetings
- Meeting with (b) (6) and (b) (6) about next week when (b) (6) takes acting role as China Branch Chief. There was an important point that (b) (6) made (b) (6) will be overseeing the Voltron transition. This is an opportunity for the Mandarin Service to take a step back and figure out how to improve their website and make it "sticky", meaning, people will stay on it because, for example, stories/reports have suggested related stories which may draw people deeper into the website. (b) (6) said that the website should be designed based on editorial judgement, not on what programs are produced by the language service. One suggestion is to encourage (b) (6), the supervisor for the web team, to take a more active role. We all agreed.
- Met with (b) (6) and (b) (6) from LER about the status of leave on (b) (6)'s WebTA
- Discussed with (b) (6) and (b) (6) about the letter to Amanda questioning why VOA Lao did not do a story on a scandal in a local Lao temple in Virginia. (b) (6) explained that a couple of months ago (b) (6) and (b) (6) discussed this and decided not to do it because of the intense in-fighting among the local Lao community in Fauquier County (the Wat Lao Buddhavong temple). I've reached out to (b) (6) and shared my draft response. I will follow up next week.
- Met with (b) (6) and (b) (6) about how to set up custom reports on Paycom. (b) (6) also explained some aspects of the bi-weekly spreadsheet (b) (6) sent -- which has been very helpful! (b) (6) will create a custom report for me (and I think the other Division Directors too) that will show the total OT and Comp Time to date of the PSCs. This will help me, in particular, with my monitoring of Service Chiefs and Supervisors.
- Gave (b) (6) some pointers about how to make (b) (6) supervisors under

(b) more accountable in doing their ePerformance reviews of the people they rate (b) also had questions about whether it is alright if an employee decides to telework from another city than their residence. To which I say, as long as they can guarantee that if they are needed back in the building that they will be able to do that, and as long as they meet their assignments and deadline. And most importantly, they must be careful and not get infected or infect others.

Good news today: VOA Khmer should be back on at least 3 major radio networks on May 18th!

Have a great weekend!

(b)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Friday, May 8, 2020 8:33 AM
To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Situational Telework - May 8

Signing in.

(b)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Thursday, May 7, 2020 1:50 PM
To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Re: Situational Telework - May 7

Signing out (early, leave request for 3 hours submitted in WebTA).

- AM editorial meeting was suddenly interrupted by (b) (6). So (b) took over.
- Coming back, worked on J1 extensions for Mandarin staff
- Worked on a couple of VPN requests. Turkish staff needed to expand their access to their work stations. Turns out, there is no remote access to Mac stations. And Urdu staff (b) is on extended leave.
- Managers meeting
- Worked on PSC awards budget so I can let Chiefs know how much they have. I used (b)'s latest spreadsheet.

Thank you,

(b)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Thursday, May 7, 2020 8:41 AM
To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Situational Telework - May 7

Signing in.

(b)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Wednesday, May 6, 2020 6:18 PM
To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Re: Situational Telework - May 6

Signing out.

- AM editorial meetings
- Coordination on (b) (6)'s termination of detail
- EAP Bridge Club - first one after covid19. This was a special opportunity for the whole division to come together and share experience and tips of teleworking. The pros and cons. Many say they like teleworking but are met with the challenge of time management because there is no physical distinction between work and off hours. Those who are living alone express they feel the loneliness and have to make an effort to reach out to non-work friends. Many saw it was challenging to learn new tools at first, but now they see how beneficial it is, i.e. Teams. It was a fun and informative meeting, with a cameo by some cats!
- Met with (b) (6) and (b) to talk about turning over the China Branch to (b) (and (b) as (b)'s detail ends this week. (b) understands that on Monday, (b) will be reporting to (b) (6).
- (b) and I met with Amanda, Sandy and Kelu about the reconstitution plan. They like the document and will mention it in the manager's meeting tomorrow.
- Talked to (b) (6) about (b)'s detail in the News Center. Then I talked to (b) (6). The start of the date will be May 24th (Sunday, pay period 11), giving (b) 2 weeks to wrap things up in EAP for her 120-day detail.

Thank you,

(b)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Wednesday, May 6, 2020 8:36 AM
To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Situational Telework - May 6

Signing in.

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Tuesday, May 5, 2020 4:59 PM
To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Situational Telework - May 5

I signed in at 8:30am, and I forgot to send an email. I guess my mind was preoccupied with the termination letter for (b) (6)

- Worked on LER's draft of termination letter of (b) (6)
- EAP Chiefs Meeting:
 - reminded all about ePerformance rating period ending for non-supervisors
 - reminded all about keeping track of cash awards as it is affected by performance rating
 - Chiefs discussed and shared their workflow for social media quality control. They will share with (b) (6) in email because IMEs will meet with Sandy on Friday (b) (6) had a good point: stay away from single sourcing a social media content, except maybe heads of state statements. But this is an ongoing discussion. The good thing is all Chiefs are more aware about this and are more vigilant in their control over social media contents.
 - I briefly explained that the agency is not officially "open" and returning to Cohen is (currently) on an as-needed basis, like the Korean Service. I did this because a few Service Chiefs were worried that they would be considered not performing or putting enough effort for the mission if they stay home. I made it clear to them, if they think there is a need to come back to the Cohen building and it will help strengthen our credibility and engagement, let me know, but telework workflow is just as effective depending on the format of your show and your audience media consumption culture. I added that the "return" of the 5 Korean staff had to be coordinated with USAGM and various elements in the building. (b) (6) shared that (b) (6) staff would be visited by checkers,

- making sure everyone wears masks and keeping social distancing.
- There was a question about reporters going back to the field to film and do reports, whether there is a guideline for this. I said that there has been a guideline for this: you are allowed to assign reporters to carry out assignments from the field. I reminded of the hand-carry letter that these reporters must have with them when doing so.
- Another question is about soundproofing equipment (Indo Svc): whether they can ask to have them purchased by the agency. I said I can check with (b) (6).
- Meeting with PR (b) (6) and (b) (6) about what VOA Mandarin can offer PR to "sell" to think tanks so that we can get more exposure for the talents and experts we have in the agency. We will follow up next week with topics that VOA Mandarin's (b) (6) or other respected journalists can speak about.

On that note, I propose that (b) (6) work on this idea of finding the topic and issues that VOA Mandarin can offer to think tanks and be a part of a panelist. Also, (b) (6) can work with (b) (6), who's detail has been extended. (b) (6) will return to the News Center next week, and (b) (6) is interested in applying for the Branch Chief position. If (b) (6) is selected, the difference in tasks will not be starkly different. (b) (6) will still be working with topics and issues about and around China. I'm open to discuss further, if you like.

Thank you,
(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Monday, May 4, 2020 5:01 PM
To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Re: Situational Telework - May 4

Signing out.

- AM editorial meetings
- Discuss VOA Lao PSC's sign in and sign out confusion with (b) (6) and (b) (6). Turns out the PSC, in (b) (6) sign out email, would write something like "I'm signing out, but I'll continue working for one hour" -- this raised a red flag to (b) (6), understandably, so I needed everyone to be on the same page. (b) (6) said that the PSC now understands the policy and procedure for extra hours.
- Prepping China Branch Chief vacancy announcement -- (potential confusion was avoided, I think)

Checking in with Kelu on "reconstitution" plans for VOA with (b) (6)

- Prep (b) (6)'s termination letter with LER
- VOA Burmese program review. (b) (6) provided an excellent review of their programs and had great suggestions on how to improve their online performance.
- Prep for tomorrow's Chief's meeting. Discussed with (b) (6) about digital editorial control. (b) (6) will meet with other IME's on Friday with Sandy to discuss this issue, and (b) (6) would like the Chiefs to share their mechanisms in the meeting tomorrow. I raised this issue a couple of weeks ago in the meeting, but this time we will dig deeper and make sure (b) (6) knows how much (or little) is being done to monitor our digital contents.

Thank you,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Monday, May 4, 2020 8:34 AM
To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Situational Telework - May 4

Signing in.

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Friday, May 1, 2020 3:14 PM
To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Re: Situational Telework - May 1

Signing out.

- AM editorial meetings
- Discussed performance with (b) (6)
- Discussed OTT phase 2 with (b) (6)
- Did more ePerformance reviews
- Discussed PSC budgeting and cash awards
- Spoke with (b) (6) about (b) (6) detail. Very positive. (b) (6) wants to stay in the News Center.
- Coordinated with (b) (6) about the radio show coming back to Cohen, and potential special coverage this weekend if (b) (6)'s condition becomes known

Thank you,

(b) (6)

Director - East Asia & Pacific Division
330 Independence Ave., SW (b) (6)
Washington, D.C. 20237
Tel: (b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Friday, May 1, 2020 6:39 AM
To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Situational Telework - May 1

Signing in at 6:45am.

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Thursday, April 30, 2020 2:03 PM
To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Situational Telework - April 30

Hi Kelu,

Sorry I forgot to sign in at 8:30 this morning. Now I'm signing out, but I'll be checking my email and available on Teams.

Activities:

- AM editorial meetings
- Coordinated VOA Korean program "return" to Cohen
- Coordinating budget with EO
- COOP meeting for "return" to Cohen
- Division Director's meeting
- Discussed additional PSC for Mandarin. NOTE: this candidate is a great graphics and visual story-teller! (b) (6) just graduated, so we would like to hire (b) (6) as a Level 1 PSC. I will send links to show examples of (b) (6) creations.

Thank you,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Wednesday, April 29, 2020 5:59 PM
To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)

Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Re: Situational Telework - April 29

Signing out.

Apologies for the late email. I was locked out of my email and Teams just when I was about to sign out at 4:30pm. Today:

- *AM editorial meetings
- *Discussion on performance with (b) (6) and (b) (6) (midterm)
- *Checked pulse with 4 Chiefs about the need for a few staff to return to Cohen
- *EAC town hall

Thank you,

(b) (6)

Sent from my iPhone

On Apr 29, 2020, at 09:43, (b) (6) wrote:

Signing in.

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Tuesday, April 28, 2020 4:54 PM
To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Re: Situational Telework - April 28

Signing out.

- AM editorial meetings
- Chat with new Mandarin Managing Editor
- EAP Chiefs weekly meeting: (1) sharing out team's successes and challenges; (2) ePerformance end date on Thursday for non-Supervisors; (3) impact highlights for Programming Office -- I shared what we submitted last week with the Chiefs to show them the end product that the Division submits so that they get a better understanding on how it is presented. The Chiefs were generally happy to see they've been included and that EAP is generating a lot of good reports; (4) how to keep up with the digital stats with the new dashboard that (b) (6)'s team sends out daily; (Note: although the general feeling in EAP about telework is positive, (b) (6) and (b) (6) expressed how important it

is for VOA to maintain a physical space, especially when hosting important people, and also considering Cohen's prime location that is so close to the Capitol. I answered that it is already possible to have a few people work from Cohen, but that it needs to be coordinated and approved by supervisors to make sure the agency has a good handle on how many people are in the building. I also shared (b) (6)'s email about the employee who "felt" like working from Cohen and caused some havoc.)

- Midterm reviews on ePerformance for 5 of the 13 people I supervise
- Gave feedback to (b) (6) on the VOA Thai feature story on the Thai drag queen in DC
- (b) (6)

Thank you,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Tuesday, April 28, 2020 8:35 AM
To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Situational Telework - April 28

Signing in.

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Monday, April 27, 2020 3:51 PM
To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Re: Situational Telework - April 27

Signing out.

- AM Editorial meetings
- Various LER issues: writing Douglas factor for (b) (6) case; VOA Korean employee issue; paper work for China Branch Chief position; Beijing position non-selection
- Meeting with Research about qualitative research for EAP
- Catching up with a couple of people in EAP

Thank you

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Monday, April 27, 2020 6:17 AM
To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Situational Telework - April 27

Signing in.

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Thursday, April 23, 2020 4:55 PM
To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Re: Situational Telework - April 23

Signing out.

- AM editorial meetings
- LER meetings re (b) (6) and (b) (6)
- Equipment (microphone and laptop) coordination and possible purchases. I will get in touch with (b) (6) and (b) (6) to ask if EAP can get 3-4 Macbooks, but on principle I would like to go by the telework agreement where it says that the employee should equip themselves with the tools to carry out assignments.
- Division Directors meeting
- Catching up with some EAP folks
- Women's Caucus virtual "happy hour"

Thank you,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Thursday, April 23, 2020 8:38 AM
To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Situational Telework - April 23

Signing in.

(b)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Wednesday, April 22, 2020 5:43 PM
To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Re: Situational Telework - April 22

Signing out.

- AM editorial meetings.
- Meetings with (b) (6) and (b) (6) over English to Asia's Instagram improvements and management. (Looking forward to immediate improvements in the next week.)
- Meeting with Research (b) (6) and (b) (6) on VOA Khmer survey -- unfortunately the internet questions did not include social media platforms in language, hence the 2.8% number does not reflect the robust engagement VOA Khmer has been getting on YouTube and Facebook (b) (6) has ideas on how to change/improve the questions in the next set of surveys.
- Meeting with David Kotz and (b) (6) on the Smith-Mundt reprimands to be changed to admonishments. (Thank you, Amanda, Sandy and Kelu for listening to feedback!)
- "Return to Cohen" planning (b) (6) will have bulletpoints to share in tomorrow's meeting, but the finished plan will be done early next week. (Curious about your 11-page doc (b) (6) !)

Thank you,

(b)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Wednesday, April 22, 2020 8:47 AM
To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Situational Telework - April 22

Signing in. Happy Earth Day!

(b)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Tuesday, April 21, 2020 3:51 PM
To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)

Subject: Re: Situational Telework - April 21

Signing out.

- AM editorial meetings
- Chiefs meeting:
 - a. Social media and digital posts editorial and quality control
 - b. More about the weekly impact highlight on Thursdays
 - c. Start thinking about "returning" to Cohen, what is needed? what will be kept from the telework workflow? what needs to be produced in Cohen? Someone commented that being out and about on the field is more important than coming back to Cohen. Chiefs will share with me their ideas. Burmese and Korean very eager to have a few people "return".
 - d. Vietnamese share their experience versioning VOA TEK with the Audiomix team
 - e. Updating podcast graphics
 - f. (b) 's town hall needs video questions. Chiefs will try their best to submit one.
 - g. Microphones have been ordered by (b)
- Update with Kelu and (b)
- Meeting on Voltron launch (Mandarin). Followed by meeting between me, (b) and (b) (6) on what's next.
- Meeting with LER on Korean FTE issue

Thank you,

(b) (6)
[Redacted]

Director - East Asia & Pacific Division
330 Independence Ave., SW (b)
Washington, D.C. 20237
Tel: (b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Tuesday, April 21, 2020 8:47 AM
To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Situational Telework - April 21

Signing in.

(b) (6)
[Redacted]

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Monday, April 20, 2020 1:18 PM
To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Situational Telework - April 20

Signing in.

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Friday, April 17, 2020 4:29 PM
To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Re: Situational Telework - April 17

Signing out.

- AM editorial meetings
- Discuss the impact highlight with (b) (6)
- Working on vet pass over memo
- Korean Svc disciplinary action to an FTE
- Town Hall meeting

Have a great weekend!

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Friday, April 17, 2020 8:21 AM
To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Situational Telework - April 17

Signing in.

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Thursday, April 16, 2020 5:15 PM
To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Re: Situational Telework - April 16

Sign out.

AM editorial meetings

- Meet with LER and (b) (6) on disciplinary action on an FTE
- Division Directors meeting
- Discuss Beijing position
- Online training: 'How to create a Crowdtangle trends report'
- Meeting on phases to return to Cohen

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6) >

Sent: Thursday, April 16, 2020 8:46 AM

To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)

Cc: (b) (6)

Subject: Situational Telework - April 16

Signing in.

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)

Sent: Wednesday, April 15, 2020 8:29 PM

To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)

Cc: (b) (6)

Subject: Re: Situational Telework - April 15

Signing out.

- AM editorial meetings
- Thai Service budget and domestic stringer to increase telling America's story contents
- Meeting with CON (b) (6) and (b) (6) to talk about office manager in Dharamsala
- VOA Women's Caucus monthly meeting
- EAC managers meeting
- Writing EAP weekly highlight -- will submit tomorrow morning

Thank you,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)

Sent: Wednesday, April 15, 2020 8:49 AM

To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)

Cc: (b) (6)

Subject: Situational Telework - April 15

Signing in.

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Tuesday, April 14, 2020 6:25 PM
To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Re: Situational Telework - April 13

Signing out.

- AM Editorial meetings
- Check in with Sandy and Kelu with (b) (6)
- Meeting, receiving oral reply from (b) (6)
- Rehearsal for virtual Town Hall

Big news: Worth of a Girl won three silver medals from the New York Festivals! This project was initiated by EAP, specifically the Indonesian Service with (b) (6)'s 3-part report on child marriage in Indonesia for International Women's Day (2018).

Thank you,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Tuesday, April 14, 2020 8:44 AM
To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Re: Situational Telework - April 13

Signing in.

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Monday, April 13, 2020 7:54 PM
To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Re: Situational Telework - April 13

Signing out.

- Prep for meeting with (b) (6)
- Meeting with LER and waited for (b) (6) for 30 minutes. Managed to get in touch with (b) (6) would not be reached. So I rescheduled for tomorrow. (b) (6) admitted that (b) (6) miscalculated the time.
- Discussed and consulted with (b) (6) and (b) (6) about Fondation Hironnelle's proposal to give VOA Burmese money to produce contents about Covid-19. Conclusion: no. Though both VOA and Hironnelle may share the same mission, VOA is prohibited from accepting any funds outside the budget from Congress. We replied back to Hironnelle and suggested that they take our content to use and broadcast to their audience in Myanmar.
- Discussed Beijing correspondent position and how we need to know what to do next. Though (b) (6) is granted a press pass (for 3 months, instead of 6 (b) (6) still needs to apply for a visa. But (b) (6) has been in this post for 4.5 years now, probably time to put someone with a fresh set of eyes in Beijing.
- ePerformance reviews for Thai, Vietnamese and Lao Chiefs
- Finished training for my COR

Thank you,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Monday, April 13, 2020 9:34 AM
To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Situational Telework - April 13

Signing in at 9:30am.

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Friday, April 10, 2020 5:58 PM
To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Re: Situational Telework - April 10

Signing out.

AM editorial meetings

Prep to receive oral response from (b) (6) on Monday

COR-1 certification online training

Thank you,

(b) (6)

On Apr 10, 2020, at 08:02, (b) (6)

(b) (6) wrote:

Signing in.

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Thursday, April 9, 2020 5:35 PM
To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Re: Situational Telework - April 9

Signing out.

- AM editorial meetings.
- Check in with Amanda, Sandy, Kelu
- Checked in with EAP folks
- Retaking COR1 Certification training (8-hour training, going to continue tomorrow)

Thank you,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Thursday, April 9, 2020 8:19 AM
To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Situational Telework - April 9

Signing in.

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Wednesday, April 8, 2020 15:51
To: Kelu Chao
Cc: (b) (6)

Subject: Re: Situational Telework - April 8

Signing out 30 minutes early. I've submitted a leave request on WebTA.

- AM editorial meetings
- worked with (b) (6) and (b) (6) on development of Beijing correspondent press pass (it was extended at the last minute, but he still needs to get visa extension)
- worked with (b) (6) and (b) (6) on (b) (6) case
- worked with (b) (6) on (b) (6) case
- worked with (b) (6) on back drop orders
- Covid-19 COOP check in meeting - (b) (6) will lead the start of the agency's road map to "returning" to the Cohen building

Thank you,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Wednesday, April 8, 2020 8:30 AM
To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Situational Telework - April 8

Signing in.

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Tuesday, April 7, 2020 6:25 PM
To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Re: Situational Telework - April 7

Signing out.

Busy day due to development of (b) (6)'s return:

- (b) (6)
- (b) (6) and I are working with Travel, (b) (6) (HR), and CFO (b) (6) to figure out this "un-precedented situation around a

the return of a reporter from a multi-year assignment

- (b) (6) flagged an issue with flight availability. Earliest available flight is on May 5th, and (b) (6) must leave by April 18th (unless (b) (6) press card miraculously gets extended)
- (b) (6)'s email looped in Security Office and the CFO to ensure (b) (6)'s safe return sooner than May 5th (the earliest available flight, when (b) (6) needs to leave China by April 18th)

Talked to LER about (b) (6) and (b) (6)

Had weekly Chief meeting:

- stringer projection and the importance of keeping a close eye on invoices and IPP balance; reached out to (b) (6) about IPP tracking
- (b) (6) shared several technical updates to help with telework
- Reminded everyone of the mandatory online security awareness training due in early May

Coordinated VPNs (hopefully the last batch) and VOA backdrop

Took care of interim ePerformance plans for Vietnamese, Thai and Lao Chiefs.

Thank you,

(b) (6)
Director - East Asia & Pacific Division
330 Independence Ave., SW (b) (6)
Washington, D.C. 20237
Tel: (b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Tuesday, April 7, 2020 8:31 AM
To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Situational Telework - April 7

Signing in.

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Monday, April 6, 2020 4:31 PM
To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Re: Situational Telework - April 6

Signing out.

- AM Editorial Meetings
- Meeting on EAP budget update
- Meet with Kelu
- Daily update with Amanda, Sandy, Kelu, (b) (6)
- Meet about Beijing Bureau prep to return (for (b) (6), with (b) (6) and (b) (6) and (b) (6))
- Online Security Awareness Training - completed
- Discussed technical support and quality control of Language Service programs with (b) (6)

Thank you,
(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Monday, April 6, 2020 7:53 AM
To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Situational Telework - April 6

Signing in.

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Date: Friday, April 3, 2020 at 3:47 PM
To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Re: Situational Telework - April 3

Signing out.

- 8am FAITAS training
- 9-10 morning editorial meetings
- Coordination with LER about (b) (6)'s update and (b) (6)'s situation. Spoke to both (b) (6) (b) (6) and (b) (6) (b) (6)
- Sent the reprimand letter to (b) (6) on Smith-Mundt

Act violation which (b) will challenge

- discussed backdrop purchasing and design with (b) (6) and (b) y
- Worked on State Department letter with (b) and (b), for Matt Walsh, to bring in Beijing news assistant
- Worked on PD reassignment of Digital/Multimedia Producers

Thank you,

(b)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Friday, April 3, 2020 7:47 AM
To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Situational Telework - April 3

Signing in. (Earlier than usual because I have an 8am mandatory COR training on FAITAS.)

(b)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Thursday, April 2, 2020 6:12 PM
To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Re: Situational Telework - April 2

Signing out.

- Morning editorial meetings
- Coordinated with (b) (6) about VOA backdrop
- Coordinated with (b) (6) on VPN and whether Help Desk can physically reboot a work station. (b) answer: yes, if (1) it's not in a locked room; (2) they know the specific work station number. But (b) (6) also noted that more and more people in the Help Desk are working remotely, and maybe one person is in the building. This can be a problem during weekends.
- Discussed with LER about VOA Lao termination of (b) (6)
- (over night) Coordinated the early return of VOA Burmese FTE. The latest update is that (b) will be on a commercial plane, but the U.S. Embassy knows

about the FTE's situation. The FTE will be on an ANA flight on Sunday, April 5th.

Thank you,

(b)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Thursday, April 2, 2020 8:26 AM
To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Situational Telework - April 2

Signing in.

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Wednesday, April 1, 2020 6:30 PM
To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Re: Situational Telework - April 1

Sign out.

- Morning AM editorial meetings
- Discussed with (b) (6) and (b) (6) about Paycom position to bring in our Beijing news assistant (b) (6)
- Coordinated early return of VOA Burmese FTE on rotation in Yangon after the U.S. Embassy alerted a "last call" for repatriation of U.S. citizens in Myanmar. Looped in Travel and Security offices. (b) (6) from Security is reaching out to the PAO and RSO to see if our FTE can secure a seat on the chartered plane.
- Coordinated VOA backdrop with (b) (6) (b) (6). Looped in (b) (6) and (b) (6). This backdrop will help strengthen our brand as our reporters provide live reports. (b) (6) and I think this could be a bigger ask, but we are only starting with EAP and Latam requests. (b) (6) and (b) (6) are communicating about the design.
- Discussed Lao recruit with Kelu

Thank you,

(b)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Wednesday, April 1, 2020 8:16 AM
To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Situational Telework - April 1

Signing in.

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Tuesday, March 31, 2020 4:54 PM
To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Re: Situational Telework - March 31

Signing out:

AM Meetings

11am Chiefs weekly meeting:

-shared VOA Vietnamese achieving 1 MILLION subscribers on YouTube

-shared VOA Thai's innovative use of Teams conference into a program

-announced the parking pass extension; the access letter

-talked about OT/CT projection, asked to be conservative but realistic, that is must reflect the assignments

necessary to fulfill our mission

Meeting with LER and (b) (6)

Meeting with Tibetan Chief about Dharamsala Office Manager

Put together VOA Lao cert documents.

Provided memo for VOA Thai re-filing for PSC Green Card application

Checked up on a couple of staff, brief chats.

Thank you,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Tuesday, March 31, 2020 8:18 AM

To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Situational Telework - March 31

Signing in.

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Monday, March 30, 2020 5:27 PM
To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Situational Telework - March 30

Hello,

I apologize I forgot to send a sign in email (at 8:45am) this morning because there was a lot to take care of immediately.

Now signing out (at 5:15pm):

- Morning editorial meetings
- Budget meeting with VOA Khmer
- Coordinating with LER on response to (b) (6)'s request to take sick leave
- Checking up on the 2nd week at 100% remote for all language services in EAP
- Testing out the town hall with Amanda
- Coordinate equipment with (b) (6)

FYI, VOA Thai took the Teams meeting to another level: turning their radio into a multi-media show!

They recorded the show as a Teams meeting in mp4 and posted that version to Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/105929502780726/videos/624692758092069/>

And then stripped the mp3 file from that and put it on satellite via the standard Dalet placeholder workflow.

<https://www.voathai.com/a/5328429.html>

Thank you,

(b) (6)
Director - East Asia & Pacific Division
330 Independence Ave., SW (b) (6)
Washington, D.C. 20237
Tel (b) (6)

From: (b) (6)

Sent: Friday, March 27, 2020 5:16 PM
To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Re: Situational Telework - March 27

Signing out.

AM editorial meetings.

Coordinated with Operations ((b) (6)) on their need for VPNs, inserting the priority list from (b) (6)'s team. Also communicated with (b) (6) about giving (b) access to the rundown from home, to prepare the Town Hall, so she can create Chyrons. Spoke to (b) (6) about (b) content editor for PNN to get a VPN.

Coordinated with (b) (6) and (b) on the article about the disinformation effort and finger-pointing between China and the U.S., using (b) 's interview with sources from (b) program "Issues and Opinions". This article should go out tonight, if not tomorrow (Saturday). It was a priority on (b) 's list.

Dealt with LER follow ups.

Dealt with small equipment requests and VOA backdrop with (b) (6). This is to ensure branding on our shows and reporter standups to affiliates. So far, Mandarins and Indonesians requested.

I believe those are the milestones today. Have a great weekend!

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Friday, March 27, 2020 8:13 AM
To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Situational Telework - March 27

Signing in.

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)

Sent: Thursday, March 26, 2020 6:00 PM
To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Re: Situational Telework - March 26

Signing out.

Morning filled with VPN coordination as Operations step up to get more people out of Cohen building. Most language services have their VPNs.

Multiple meetings about the Beijing bureau, re bringing in the news assistant; what to do with the leases; how (b) (6) should respond to questions during his meeting with officials tonight, DC time.

Took care of Lao and Korean certs packets.

Coordinated with (b) (6) about a couple of LER issues.

Evaluated phase 3.5 and 4 with (b) (6) and friends.

Thank you,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Thursday, March 26, 2020 9:12 AM
To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Situational Telework - March 26

Signing in at 8:45am. (Sorry, I forgot to sign in because of urgent VPN requests and brief discussion with (b) (6) .)

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Wednesday, March 25, 2020 4:12 PM
To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Re: Situational Telework - March 25

Signing out.

AM editorial meetings.

11am budget meeting for English to Asia.

12:30p meeting with Lao Chief about certs for Multimedia
IB

Meeting with Amanda, Sandy and Kelu about Beijing
bureau and VOA's response to China's request

Meeting with (b) (6) about
resuming live satellite broadcast from remote locations.

Managed more VPNs as Operations staff are under
pressure to start working outside the Cohen building.

Thank you,

(b) (6)
Director - East Asia & Pacific Division
330 Independence Ave., SW (b) (6)
Washington, D.C. 20237
Tel: (b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Wednesday, March 25, 2020 8:15 AM
To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Situational Telework - March 25

Signing in.

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Tuesday, March 24, 2020 4:44 PM
To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Re: Situational Telework - March 24

Signing out.

AM editorial Meetings

11am EAP Chiefs weekly meeting:

- reminding all of the telework protocol to send email at start and end of the day to supervisor and timekeeper. For PSCs, to supervisor and (b) (6). (I noticed only 2 Chiefs were doing this regularly, the others have not.)
- the need for emergency employees, if/when there's a

shelter in place

(b) (6) from BD joined. Asked that (b) (6) be looped in if there's any change in programming, but also pointing out that there is an increase demand for VOA contents as more and more affiliates curb their production.

-VOA Burmese will be joining the "100% club" in EAP starting tomorrow

Put together paper work for (b) (6) (Beijing news assistant) to be recruited to DC. Also, checked with (b) (6) about a J1 sponsorship for a current contractor and how to process in this situation. (b) (6) and David Kotz will late us know.

Big news: Azure will take a lot of the burden of upload shows into Dalet without a VPN, albeit fulfilling placeholders still need a VPN.

Thank you,

(b) (6)
Director - East Asia & Pacific Division
330 Independence Ave., SW (b) (6)
Washington, D.C. 20237
Tel: (b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Tuesday, March 24, 2020 8:06 AM
To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Situational Telework - March 24

Signing in.

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Monday, March 23, 2020 4:34 PM
To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Re: Situational Telework - March 23

Signing out.

8a sent list of names for VPNs to (b) (6) (coordinating with (b) (6) and (b) (6) throughout the day). Note: I think I see the end of the tunnel, we're about 60% done with VPN. Maybe 10 more

days.

9a-11a morning meetings

Worked with EAP Chiefs to streamline their production workflow. Found out some still need satellite feeds because they are transmitting to SW and MW. Luckily, VOA Indonesian is willing to forgo satellite for 41 out of their 44 news programs. They have been distributing them on 2 fronts: satellite and digital (USAGM Direct and Whatsapp).

Other meetings throughout the day (with (b) (6), for example) regarding phase 4.

Thank you,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Monday, March 23, 2020 8:01 AM
To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Situational Telework - March 23

Signing in.

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Friday, March 20, 2020 5:56 PM
To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Re: Situational Telework - March 20

Signing out.

7a send name list for VPN to TSI

8:30a meeting with (b) (6) about (b) (6) and (b) (6)

9-10a regular meetings, and coordinating on VPNs

11a budget meeting with Vietnamese

11:30a budget meeting with Lao

Discussed about Beijing bureau with (b) (6) and (b) (6), following development of (b) (6) being harassed by Chinese officials.

(b) (6) followed up with a letter to Amanda asking if she

would reach out to Matt Walsh. Amanda responded to say that Matt is on board. Then (b) (6) and I got to work on the paper work. (b) (6) and I also touched base on hiring (b) (6) as a PSC for Mandarin Service.

More coordination with (b) (6) about VPNs and bandwidth. Shared knowledge with (b) (6) about recording on Teams. I also guided (b) (6) to ask (b) (6) to install "Tape-a-Call" app on agency phones as alternative to record audio interviews on phones.

Will send a much shorter list for VPNs to Help Desk over the weekend.

Have a great weekend!

(b) (6)
Director - East Asia & Pacific Division
330 Independence Ave., SW (b) (6)
Washington, D.C. 20237
Tel: (b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Friday, March 20, 2020 8:23 AM
To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Situational Telework - March 20

Signing in.

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Thursday, March 19, 2020 4:25 PM
To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Re: Situational Telework - March 19

Signing out.

8:30-10:30a regular meetings

11:30a meeting with LER and (b) (6) re suspension of (b) (6) (5 days) and return of (b) (6) (March 23).

12p Division Director meeting

1:30p meeting with (b) (6) and (b) (6) from CON on the "new"

procurement process -- with Chiefs and reps

2:30p meeting with Amanda, (b) (6), Kelu, Sandy on response to China expelling VOA journalists

Throughout the day, coordinating VPNs for Kurdish, Urdu, Creole, with (b) (6) and (b) (6) (b) (6)

Reached out to (b) (6) and (b) (6) to push forward their plans to reduce more staff workin in Cohen.

Reached out to some staff to see how they're doing.

Thank you,

(b) (6)
Director - East Asia & Pacific Division
330 Independence Ave., SW (b) (6)
Washington, D.C. 20237
Tel: (b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Thursday, March 19, 2020 8:08 AM
To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Situational Telework - March 19

Signing in.

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Wednesday, March 18, 2020 6:06 PM
To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Re: Situational Telework - March 18

Signing off.

8:30-10a -- morning meetings

10:30a -- EAP workflow sharing meeting where representatives of language services talk about what works, what hasn't. This can be a daily meeting or not, it is open to the Division and anyone can initiate. One result of the meeting: create a Division teams group where everyone can share, and can address me directly. Me and (b) (6) have shared some updates regarding News

Center's use of AP playbook, and frame.io issues.

Throughout the day, (b) (6) and I talked: about the need for people to wait for instructions to come up to pick up VPNs, about the importance of not being on VPN too long. I've also forwarded the message from (b) (6) (b) (6) about fulfilling TV shows' placeholders -- how they are limited the number of shows to do this at one time, to avoid system sluggishness.

I had to step in and support VOA Khmer deal with a coordination issue. I looped in (b) (6) and (b) (6) together and asked them to step up as leaders and fill the "leadership vacuum" that I think created the miscommunication or miscoordination that was brought to my attention.

Talked to Kelu, (b) (6) and (b) (6) about how best to respond to China's request for information about our Beijing operation. (b) (6) will try to draft the answers (b) (6) will draft the final version of the letter for (b) (6).

Let me know if you have any questions.

Thank you,

(b) (6)
Director - East Asia & Pacific Division
330 Independence Ave., SW (b) (6)
Washington, D.C. 20237
Tel: (b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Wednesday, March 18, 2020 8:33 AM
To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Situational Telework - March 18

Signing in.

(b) (6)
Director - East Asia & Pacific Division
330 Independence Ave., SW (b) (6)
Washington, D.C. 20237
Tel: (b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Tuesday, March 17, 2020 4:58 PM
To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)

Subject: Re: Situational Telework - March 17

Signing off.

8:30am prep for meetings

9am-11:45am back to back meetings

12:30pm budget talk with Burmese Service

1:15pm daily check in on contingency

2pm call with (b) (6) and (b) (6) on the future of digital infrastructure:

- (b) (6) explained that currently our Microsoft software, the emails, Teams, OneDrive, Sharepoint are already on the Azure cloud network that allows about 10GB of power. (Don't ask me what that means.)
- One application for production: use Teams Video conferencing to record video interviews. This will not need a calling plan, nor will it crowd the agency's network because it's on Azure. (b) (6) and (b) (6) asked me to appoint a few people who can advocate this method of interviewing.
- According to (b) (6), Azure has a "media service" where we can deliver content which provides a lot of potential.
- (b) (6) also asks to have a couple of names to experiment fulfilling placeholders (TV) remotely using Dalet Galaxy, which allows both radio and TV contents to be uploaded remotely.

3pm call with (b) (6) -- various China Branch stuff

4pm checking in with (b) (6)

(throughout the day, I send names to (b) (6)'s team on Teams for urgent VPNs.)

Thank you,

(b) (6)
Director - East Asia & Pacific Division
330 Independence Ave., SW (b) (6)
Washington, D.C. 20237
Tel (b) (6)

From: (b) (6)

Sent: Monday, July 6, 2020 5:02 AM

To: (b) (6)

Subject: Re: Request for confidential assistance

Hi (b) (6),

I know both the complainant (b) (6) and the VOA journalist (b) (6) well. Islam was a colleague in Urdu, and I remember (b) (6) as hard working and eager to prove (b) (6).

(b) (6) is a human rights activist who supported PTM (a Pashtun rights movement disliked by Pakistan's army) and was wanted by the Pakistani intelligence agency ISI. (b) (6) went underground and escaped from the country before reaching the US and applying for asylum. VOA did stories on (b) (6) as did the New York Times, BBC, and others.

I've gone through (b) (6) Twitter feed carefully because the allegations are quite serious. Here are a couple of takeaways.

1. (b) (6) tone is different in (b) (6) English vs. Urdu Tweets. Some of (b) (6) Urdu Tweets are in bad taste and inappropriate for a VOA journalist.
2. (b) (6) has removed some of the Tweets from (b) (6) timeline, but the complainant has provided screen shots. Most other Tweets are still available on (b) (6) timeline.

Here is a list of Tweets that might be problematic and would need your attention. I've translated them as best I could and given a bit of context.

(b) (5)



It translates as..

(b) (5)



Please let me know if you need anything else.

Best Regards,

(b) (6)

Bureau Chief

Pakistan & Afghanistan

Voice of America

Work: + (b) (6)

Cell Pak

Cell Afg:

Twitter: (b) (6)

FB: (b) (6)

www.voanews.com

VOA broadcasts approximately 1,800 hours a week of news, information, educational, and cultural programming to an estimated worldwide audience of more than 187 million people via TV, Radio and Web. Programs are produced in 45 languages.

From: (b) (6)

Sent: Friday, July 3, 2020 2:14 AM

To: (b) (6)

Subject: Request for confidential assistance

Hi (b) (6). I am hoping you can help us with a sensitive matter. Below, you will find two long emails -- one from a reader complaining of "online harassment" by (b) (6), whom you may remember from the Urdu Service (b) (6) is now with the News Center working on the VOA (b) (6). The other is (b) (6)'s long defense of (b) (6). I have reviewed (b) (6) tweets in English and find nothing wrong with them, but the complaint concerns (b) (6) tweeting in Urdu. Would you be able to get onto (b) (6) Urdu Twitter feed and see whether you find anything there that concerns you? We have a meeting to discuss this on Monday, so anything you can tell me by then would be a big help. Thanks and enjoy the holiday weekend, if you are taking one.

From: (b) (6)

Sent: Thursday, July 2, 2020 7:51 AM

To: (b) (6)

Subject: RE: Cyber Harassment Complaint

Good Morning (b) (6),

I became aware of a cyber harassment complaint being launched against me by a twitter user.

I had talked to (b) (6) about it yesterday and made (b) aware of all this situation that arose after my tweet sharing the news of a supreme court decision regarding asylum seekers in the United States. (b) is aware and satisfied with my explanation regarding this. And this is continuation of the same commotion.

Here is the story

(b) (6)



(b) (6)

Regards

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Wednesday, July 1, 2020 6:13 PM
To: (b) (6); Amanda Bennett
 (b) (6); VOA South and Central Asia Division
 (b) (6); VOA Urdu Service <(b) (6)>
 (b) (6) VOA English to Asia
 (b) (6) VOA Director's Office <(b) (6)>
 (b) (6) <(b) (6)>; Public Relations
Cc: (b) (6) David Kligerman
 (b) (6)
Subject: Cyber Harassment Complain against VoA Journalist (b) (6)

Greetings from New York,

I am writing this email to report online harassment that I've been facing from a Voice of America Journalist named (b) (6) based in Washington DC working with Urdu Service (b) (6) has used (b) (6) twitter account (b) (6), which is a verified account because of (b) (6) association with Voice of America to defame, humiliate, hound me, and tarnish my reputation, thus also encouraging the more dirty crowd to hound me online.

(b) (6) has also used (b) (6) Twitter account to show support to the political party "Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaaf (PTI), to malign other political parties (Pakistan Muslim League-N), and to malign politicians in general. Maligning politicians have been part of Pakistan's military establishment's efforts in Pakistan to discredit democracy and politics. (b) (6), as a VoA journalist, has used (b) (6) influence to malign politicians thus aiding to the narrative of Pakistan's military establishment. (b) (6) has used (b) (6) twitter account to hound other journalists too such as Asma Shirazi of Aaj News and Mansoor Ali Khan of Express-News.

I believe, that as per the policies of VoA, VoA journalists cannot

use their twitter account to defame, harass and humiliate human rights activists. I believe, this is against the Charter of Voice of America, because as a VoA journalist (b) (6) should stay impartial, neutral and unbiased. However (b) (6) has remained clearly biased in favor of PTI and against PML-N and PPP. (b) (6) is clearly violating policies of Voice of America.

I'm aware of some instances where other employees of the VoA faced inquiries and warnings because they were reported by (b) (6) (b) (6) for posting in favor of civil rights movement (Pashtun Tahafuz Movement), thus fellow journalists were forced into self-censorship. However, at the same time, (b) (6) has been using (b) (6) social media to defame activists, politicians, political parties, civil rights movements and promote PTI. (b) (6) in the past has also used (b) (6) influence in VoA urdu to wrongfully promote (b) (6) (b) (6) when (b) (6) was a participant in the (b) (6) (b) (6)

young person who participated in the conference. There were at least three other Pakistani young people participating and even speaking in the event, however (b) (6) used (b) (6) influence in VoA to profile (b) (6) (b) (6) as the only and first ever Pakistani participant.

I am a well known human rights activist from Pakistan living in exile in United States of America because I had been hounded by Pakistani authorities for my human rights activism. Please see below the following two articles of New York times to understand the kind of systematic persecution that I had faced from Pakistan state authorities for past two years.

i.

[https://www.nytimes.com/2019/07/23/world/asia/pakistan-\(b\) \(6\)-.html](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/07/23/world/asia/pakistan-(b) (6)-.html)

ii.

[https://www.nytimes.com/2019/09/19/world/asia-\(b\) \(6\)-\(b\) \(6\)-pakistan-activist.html](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/09/19/world/asia-(b) (6)-(b) (6)-pakistan-activist.html)

(b) (6), Hounding me and (b) (6)

(Screenshots Annex 1a-1h)

(b) (6) has used (b) (6) twitter account to do negative propaganda against me by calling me a run-away from Pakistan, calling my human rights activism as lies & defamation of Pakistan, and my activism as a scheme of lies to seek asylum in the USA. (b) (6) has used extremely vulgar language in (b) (6) tweets against me and other activists including sexual slurs, such as in the following tweet (b) (6) intentionally writes (b) (6)

(b) (6) to harass me sexually. (Please see the screenshots of (b) (6) tweets). Please note this kind of harassment has been part of Pakistan Security Agency (ISI) 5th Generation warfare; in which ISI uses troll teams to hound human rights activists using similar narrative. I wonder, why an employee of VoA is following the same pattern.

In other tweets (b) (6) called me names such as Scum, muck, mentally ill, someone who has piles of mouth and other abusive words in Urdu such as (b) (6) cross the line of decency by sharing fake allegation against me using on (b) (6) twitter saying that I had been requesting (b) (6) time and again to interview me for VoA but (b) (6) had declined it, which is a humiliating lie about me and is against the principles of ethical journalism. Please ask (b) (6) to present the evidence to the management.

Not only, (b) (6) has directly attacked me but has also regularly retweeted such propaganda tweets of other propagandist such as (b) (6) (b) (6) (b) (6). (Please see screenshots of the tweets) (b) (6) (b) (6) not only maligned me, but also tried to malign (b) (6) (b) (6), who is also a human rights activist by posting her picture and calling her a runaway from Pakistan. I believe people who've shared other pictures of (b) (6) under (b) (6) tweets are either fake profiles of (b) (6) or (b) (6) friends through whom (b) (6) has posted more pictures of (b) (6), trying to give a racist impression that (b) (6) had been sleeping with as (b) (6) to get the green card of USA. (b) (6) had been hiding replies of people who called out (b) (6) for (b) (6) digital attack on me but didn't hide these racist comments targeting (b) (6).

Hounding other Journalists (Annex 5a-5b)

(b) (6) has a history of hounding journalists of VoA for having political opinions (b) (6) dislikes (and disliked by ISI) by reporting about them to VoA management, the history of (b) (6) complaints can be checked for it thus forcing them into self-censorship.

(b) (6) also has a history of maligning journalists from other media houses such as (b) (6) retweeted a tweet against Arshad Waheed (a Geo Journalist) calling him un-intelligent and an advocate for freedom of Mir Shakeel ur Rehman, owner of Jang Group and Geo who has been hounded by the military establishment and has been in arbitrary detention despite of no legal case against him.

In one of (b) (6) tweets, (b) (6) called Najam Sethi, the founder of Friday Times, as Mr. Sethi xxx (xxx is used to mute abusive fuck words). (b) (6) has accused Asma Shirazi of bribery, and Mansoor Ali Khan as a "whats app Journalist" (meaning, someone who is not independent and post only what has been sent to (b) (6) in WhatsApp by the political party for whom (b) (6) does propaganda) (b) (6) has also used (b) (6) Twitter account to call journalists who criticize the government as liars and their journalism as a scheme of lies to seek asylum abroad.

Using VoA's credibility to mock and humiliate political parties (PML (N) and PPP) (Annex tweets screenshots 2a-2p)

(b) (6) has used (b) (6) VoA's credibility to continuously attack Pakistani politicians like Shahbaz Sharif, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, Pakistan Peoples Party and Pakistan Muslim League (N). PML-N

and PPP are currently hounded by the Pakistan's military establishment and many PML-N politicians have been framed in different cases. (b) (6) has taken part in anti-PML(N) twitter trends calling PML(N) as are at large (پٹواری_غدارری_پہر فراری).

In (b) (6) tweets (b) (6) has body shamed former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, calling (b) (6) his tummy as the result of corruption (again ISI's narrative as not a single court in Pakistan has proved any corruption on former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif), has asked Fawad Chaudhry, current PTI's Minister Science and Technology to take action against Nawaz Shareef, has mocked Shahbaz Shareef for his speeches in which he has shared his vision of becoming Prime Minister of Pakistan, has mocked Maryam Nawaz Sharif for running a personal Instagram account and has mocked Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, the Chairman of Pakistan's Peoples Party-PPP. (b) (6) has endorsed a number of humiliating tweets against PML-N and PPP. (Please see screenshots). It has put a question mark on the neutrality of a VoA journalist and (b) (6) professionalism.

Using VoA's Credibility to Discredit Politicians (Annex Tweet Screenshots 3a-3d)

(b) (6) has used (b) (6) twitter account habitually to mock politicians in generally and discredit politicians thus discrediting democracy. (b) (6) is in the habit of running humiliating twitter quizzes against politicians such as on September 5th 2019 (b) (6) ran twitter quiz asking people who is the most un-intelligent/ineligible politician out of Nawaz Sharif, Asif Ali Zardari, Fazul ur Rehman and Imran Khan. All these four persons are head of political parties.

On 4th September, 2019 (b) (6) ran a quiz asking people who is the most cheap/stupid politician out of Asif Zardari and Fazlur Rehman. (b) (6) regularly calls Nawaz Sharif a runaway (who is on a bail from the court) and on 2nd June, 2020 run a quiz asking "if life from corona can also be saved by "running away" pointing towards politicians who were testing positive for Corona.

In one (b) (6) tweet (b) (6) called these politicians as "Gutter".

Using VoA's Credibility to promote PTI (Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaaf) (Annex Tweet Screenshot 3a-3d)

(b) (6) has regularly used (b) (6) twitter account to promote PTI. (b) (6) regularly appreciates and endorses statements of Fawad Chaudhry, posted (b) (6) pictures of Participation in event of Imran Khan when he visited USA calling Imran Khan a star.

Screenshots:

Using VoA's Credibility to Hound Student Activist Asking for Internet Rights: (Annex Tweet Screens 7a-7b)

With the pandemic, Higher Education Commission of Pakistan decided to make education online. However, most of the areas of

Province Balochistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Gilgit Baltistan does not have internet facilities. Despite of court orders, security situation has been made as an excuse to deprive these areas of internet. Therefore, students of these areas have been protesting against the online education and have been asking for access to internet so that they are not left behind in education. (b) (6) has regularly campaigned against the students who have been protesting, calling it a lame excuse to not study, and accusing those of protesting as youngsters who won't have the opportunity to run love affairs/sexual affairs because of online education. (b) (6) has endorsed comments of those calling co-education system as problematic/harmful to the society. The student activists who're protesting for the right to internet has been facing severe crackdown and arbitrary arrests. It's a shame to see a VoA journalists taking side instead of remaining impartial.

Pro-Cynthia D. Ritchie (Annex Tweet Screenshots 8a-8j)

Cynthia D. Ritchie, is a controversial figure, a US citizen who lives in Pakistan. She is involved in targeted harassment of Pakistani women activists who are already at the target of Pakistan's powerful military establishment, PPP and PTM. She also has accused PPP's leader of raping her. Both PPP activists and Cynthia have attempted to make legal cases against each other as well. Some see Cynthia on the payroll of ISPR, especially after her letters to FIA and her visa application letter in which she has mentioned her close working relation with Pakistan military and ISPR. (b) (6) has used (b) (6) twitter account to regularly endorse the posts of Cynthia D. Ritchie through (b) (6) retweets and comments on her posts making (b) (6) impartial and biased. (b) (6) has continuously through (b) (6) retweets and comments endorsed the controversial statements of Cynthia D Ritchie.

Instigating Violence:

(b) (6) instigated violence by asking the sitting Minister Fawad Chaudhry to use violence against those who break social distancing rules. Please note Pakistan's police and security forces have a history of abuse of power.

Please click on the following link to download the Annex document having copy of the screenshots of (b) (6) problematic tweets.

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1bKjt_2yUuJkXVCnSSLcgYwLypJYVqsUA/view?usp=sharing

Regards

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: Kelu Chao; Elez Biberaj; (b) (6)
Subject: Fwd: Inquiry: USAGM / J-1 visas
Date: Thursday, July 9, 2020 10:52:28 PM

FYI... we are going the story. USAGM answered back.

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Thursday, July 9, 2020 10:17 PM
To: Jonathan Bronitsky
Subject: Re: Inquiry: USAGM / J-1 visas

Thank you Jonathan - Just seeing this now. Appreciate the response.

From: Jonathan Bronitsky (b) (6)
Sent: Thursday, July 9, 2020 6:57 PM
To: (b) (6)
Subject: Inquiry: USAGM / J-1 visas

Hi, (b) (6).

Re your J-1-visa inquiry, the following is attributable on background to a "USAGM spokesperson":

USAGM leadership is dedicated to ensuring that the agency has the resources needed to advance its mission and those of its networks and grantees. Given that the agency broadcasts internationally in over 60 languages, it appreciates the value of critical-language skills offered by U.S. citizens and foreign nationals. To improve agency management and protect U.S. national security, it is imperative to determine that hiring authorities and personnel practices are not misused. As such, USAGM is undertaking a comprehensive, case-by-case assessment of personal services contractors (PSCs) who are J-1 visa holders.

Thanks for reaching out.

Sincerely,
Jonathan

From: (b) (6)
To: [Kelu Chao](#)
Cc: [Elez Biberaj](#); (b) (6)
Subject: Re: Inquiry: USAGM / J-1 visas
Date: Friday, July 10, 2020 8:10:00 AM

That's a good question, maybe we can follow-up on this. I think they don't realize that this people are full timers and assume they are contractors or psc's

From: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Date: Thursday, July 9, 2020 at 11:44 PM
To: (b) (6)
Cc: Elez Biberaj (b) (6)
Subject: Re: Inquiry: USAGM / J-1 visas

Why do they focus on PSCs? Many J1 visa holders are FTEs. The Thai FTE whose visa expired on July 1 is the FTE.

Sent from my iPhone

On Jul 9, 2020, at 10:52 PM, (b) (6) wrote:

FYI... we are going the story. USAGM answered back.

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Thursday, July 9, 2020 10:17 PM
To: Jonathan Bronitsky
Subject: Re: Inquiry: USAGM / J-1 visas

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To: (b) (6)
Subject: Inquiry: USAGM / J-1 visas

Hi, (b) (6)

Re your J-1-visa inquiry, the following is attributable on background to a "USAGM spokesperson":

USAGM leadership is dedicated to ensuring that the agency has the resources needed to advance its mission and those of its networks and grantees. Given that the agency broadcasts internationally in over 60 languages, it appreciates the value of critical-language skills offered by U.S. citizens and foreign nationals. To improve agency management and protect U.S. national security, it is imperative to determine that hiring authorities and personnel practices are not misused. As such, USAGM is undertaking a comprehensive, case-by-case assessment of personal services contractors (PSCs) who are J-1 visa holders.

Thanks for reaching out.

Sincerely,
Jonathan

From: (b) (6)
To: Kelu Chao
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Situational Telework - Jul 10
Date: Friday, July 10, 2020 8:13:22 AM

Signing in.

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Thursday, July 9, 2020 6:20 PM
To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Re: Situational Telework - Jul 9

Signing out.

- AM Editorial meetings.
- Talked to (b) (6) to catch up on how (b) (6) is doing. Probed a bit about (b) (6). Asked to give me a list of J1 holders in VOA Korean.
- Talked to (b) (6) about finalizing (b) (6)'s performance review, with (b) (6). Also about the budget report for Gary Thatcher. Needed to explain to him again that the enhancement is now part of GOE, but he finally understood.
- Talked to (b) (6) about their J1 holders whose visas are about to expire. Also, I asked them to put together a narrative showcasing the value of these reporters for our operation.
- Several correspondence about the J1 visa issue all around.

Thank you,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Thursday, July 9, 2020 8:45 AM
To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Situational Telework - Jul 9

Signing in.

Nadia

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Wednesday, July 8, 2020 5:49 PM
To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Re: Situational Telework - Jul 8

Signing out.

- AM editorial meetings.
- Meeting with (b) (6) about (b) (6)
- Meeting about Global Mandarin. (So sorry, I did not realize I hadn't accepted (b) (6)'s invite.)
- Talked to (b) (6) about accommodation for (b) (6)'s and (b) (6)'s self-quarantine. This is when the issue about (b) (6)'s status as a PSC was raised by (b) (6) who advised me to check with (b) (6) about getting the approval of CEO Pack, despite the fact that (b) (6) has a J1 and all. The latest update from (b) (6) is that many parties in the agency are aware of this issue and it is being escalated.
- Most of the second half of the day is communicating between HR (b) (6) and David, (b) (6) and (b) (6) and GC (b) (6) on what to do to anticipate at least 4 staff in EAP who will face the possibility of returning home.

Thank you,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Wednesday, July 8, 2020 8:41 AM
To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Situational Telework - Jul 8

Signing in

(b)

On Jul 7, 2020, at 16:37, (b) (6) wrote:

Signing out.

- AM editorial meetings
- Chat with (b) about Mandarin operations.
- EAP Chiefs meeting:
 - about reconstitution, someone suggest that the Agency needs to make clear whether coming back to the Cohen building as voluntary or based on what other considerations. (I explained that there will be an email from HR listing names of those who've been exempted.)
- Meeting on Park disciplinary action.
- Follow up with (b)
- Follow up with (b)
- CAB meeting with (b) and TSI about more iMacs for telework.

Thank you,

(b)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Tuesday, July 7, 2020 8:12 AM
To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Situational Telework - Jul 7

Signing in

(b)

On Jul 6, 2020, at 16:06, (b) (6) wrote:

Signing out.

- AM editorial meetings.
- Meeting with (b) about (b) and (b)'s departure for DC from Beijing. (b) and (b) thinks it's smarter to wait until whethe (b) gets the visa extension, otherwise, he will have had a "gap" between the expiration (Wednesday, July 8) and tentative departure, July 12. The "gap" may pose a risk in the future if (b) needs to travel to China for either work or personal. Meanwhile, we will move on with (b)'s flight for July 12.
- Debrief on interviews with candidates for Deputy Director of Office of Business Development with Barbara Brady, (b) (b) (6), and (b) (6).
- Worked on response from audience who criticized VOA Vietnamese as pro-communism.
- Discussed the budget plans for 4th quarter with EO.
- Discussed temporary promotion to GS13 in Mandarins to take care of overnight shifts and other supervisory roles, such as the China focused news desk. According to (b), HR has not moved on the "excepted" list that is stuck in the middle of the current hiring freeze. But (b) will be ready with the paper work.
- Worth of a Girl won another award!! The 2020 Clarion Award from the Association for Women in Communications (AWC).

Thank you,

(b)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Monday, July 6, 2020 8:11 AM
To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Situational Telework - Jul 6

Signing in

(b)

On Jul 2, 2020, at 16:23, (b) (6) wrote:

Signing out

- AM editorial meetings
- Update the annual budget narrative and sent to (b) I'm still working on Burmese part
- Worked on getting (b) and (b) tickets out of Beijing with Travel, (b) (6) The foreign ministry of China has approached Yibing again asking about VOA's financial report (b) answered (b) 'll need to check with HQ We need to get (b) out sooner rather than later We hope by Monday the Travel Office will be able to purchase the tickets for them
- Talked to (b) about (b)'s performance review plan, considering the case is still with David Kotz
- Talked to (b) to ask about the second dry run, but the first with (b) (6) Need to do one more before next Friday's debut (I hope)
- (b) also shared issues (b)'s having with (b) (6) , but that (b) is working with LER to handle it

Thank you

Have a great 4th!

(b)

On Jul 2, 2020, at 08:12, (b) (6) wrote:

Signing in

(b)

On Jul 1, 2020, at 14:37, (b) (6) wrote:

Signing out.

- AM editorial meetings.
- Communication with HR and management about the J1 visa expiration case of (b) (6) . The latest update was from (b) who informed me that Elez will bring this issue to Andre Mendez this morning. As of 2pm, I have not heard any news.
- Bridge Club: Tips on Producing Video from Home. VOA Khmer colleagues share what they learned from a webinar on production from home. Very useful and lots of engagement. About 32 people attended the virtual discussion!
- Interview candidate for Deputy Director of BD.
- Meeting the new Social Media Liaison (b)'s replacement in (b) (6)'s team: (b) (6) . This meeting was initiated by (b) (6) , who've invited all the Digital Leads. Very fruitful meeting. About 17 people attended, involving all 11 language services.

Thank you,

(b)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Wednesday, July 1, 2020 8:28 AM
To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Situational Telework - Jul 1

Signing in

(b)

On Jun 30, 2020, at 18:17, (b) (6) wrote:

Signing out

- Early meeting on Galaxy roll out with (b) (6) and (b) request to get updates on the reconstitution plan of VOA so they can better strategize the roll out of Galaxy and Windows 10 They were under the impression that the list of 20 shows "coming back" into the Cohen building are returning next week I explained that is not the case, but I told them I'll send them updates. Andy will also share how the operations team is preparing for these returns, and that may affect the priority of the shows
- Meet with (b) We talked about the return of (b) and (b)
 - (b) said to (b) does not want to be the editor checking other people's work (b) wants to continue doing the kind of writing (b) does for Central, but (b) doesn't want to have any supervision I suggested to (b) to reach out to (b) (6) and ask (b) the workflow and supervision process in the News Center (I don't believe (b) works with no supervision)
 - (b) is open to returning and doing editor tasks (b) and (b) have a planned schedule for (b)
- Weekly Chiefs Meeting
 - Flagged Pack's announcement about Elez Biberaj as Acting Director
 - Quite a few were asking about more guidance on editorial Some asked whether it is a breach of the firewall Some say it is not because media like Washington Post and others also have editorials Some question the strange way the use of editorials was announced, by the PR office strange In any case, until there are specific guidance, EAP languages will continue using/not using/selectively using the editorials as usual
 - (b) proposed a collaborative coverage on China's effort to improve their image with journalists by inviting non-English speaking journalists to come to China and see how journalism is done This effort was reported by the international Federation of Journalists (<https://www.ifj.org/media-centre/news/detail/category/press-releases/article/inside-chinas-strategy-to-influence-the-worlds-media.html>)
 - EAP language services (not all, but a few) will reach out to journalists in their target market who have participated in the China program, even better if they have also participated in the US State Department program (IVLP) for journalists
- Interviewed 2 candidates for the Deputy Director of Business Development There's one more tomorrow

Thank you,

(b)

On Jun 30, 2020, at 08:44, (b) (6) wrote:

Signing in

(b)

On Jun 29, 2020, at 18:19, (b) (6) (b) (6) wrote:

Signing out.

- AM editorial meetings.
- Reached out to HR about (b) return (b) says it is still on hold due to the freeze).
- Reached out to HR about the VOA Korean selection in Seoul (b) (6) says it's on hold due to the freeze).
- Discussed budget with (b). I may have to give strong reminder and a serious conversation with (b) (6) about not sticking to the budget (b)'s been over budget for stringers every month). The good thing, we may have a little money to hire domestic stringer for Vietnamese (Southern California) and Thai (New York) to do a few reports telling America's story for the remainder of the year.
- Followed up with (b) and (b) (6) about invoicing. (b) is taking over as COR.
- Talked to (b) and (b) about the situation in Beijing. Followed up with Travel Office about (b) and (b) taking China Air flights and getting

reimbursed.

- (b) (6) spoke to (b) (6), who turns out to be open to copy-editing for the AM news team in Mandarin.
- On (b) (6) is doing much better in News Center, not sure if having (b) (6) back will bring added value to the team... but we can discuss more later.
- Worked with (b) (6) about development with WION. We are going live this Friday, but with (b) (6) (b) (6) is setting up another dry run tomorrow or Wednesday with (b) (6) WION already knows and likes (b) (6)
- Followed up with (b) (6) on iMacs. Three were transported on Friday, all good. Looking to see if we can transport more, and coordinating with TSI.

Thank you,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Monday, June 29, 2020 8:44 AM
To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Situational Telework - Jun 29

Signing in.

FYI, I'm on the interview/selection board for the Deputy Director of USAGM's Business Development. We're conducting interviews today and tomorrow.

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Wednesday, June 24, 2020 5:28 PM
To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Re: Situational Telework - Jun 24

Understood Thank you, Kelu I don't know how the discussion got to the point where (b) (6) can say that it is (b) (6)'s decision to stay or return to Mandarin I will check with (b) (6) in the morning

(b) (6)

Sent from my iPhone

On Jun 24, 2020, at 17:19, Kelu Chao
(b) (6) wrote:

You can't release (b) (6) until you have the replacement It's hard to get approval nowadays as you know

Sent from my iPhone

On Jun 24, 2020, at 5:04 PM,
(b) (6) wrote:

Signing out.

- AM editorial meetings.
- Chat with (b) (6) (b) (6) about (b) (6) preparation for Wion's dry

run on Friday. Explained to (b) the difference in reporting to an international audience (rather than a U.S. domestic audience) -- that we need to provide background and context, and make sure we are balanced.

- Wion live hit is off to a good pre-start! Wion is communicating with our team on a daily basis. We hope we can do our first real live hit on July 3rd. We've just established a connection with our LUSmart and their LiveU unit. We tested out the connections yesterday, all are good to go. We only need to focus on content quality now.
- Organized a meeting between domestic contractor (b) (6), who's been working with (b) on an OTT minidoc, and (b) (6), who will assist (b) in editing the subtitles. Very excited to see the final version!
- Spoke to (b) about the "scare" of an FTE's J1 extension that is at risk of not getting extended on time because CEO Pack has not signed the memo. (b) (6)'s J1 visa expires next week on July 1. But we will wait for David Kotz's and (b) (b)'s update tomorrow morning. If we don't hear anything by tomorrow c.o.b., we may panic...
- Sorted out the English Learning production in Mandarin, where we've decided to move the resources into other more impactful contents because we've learned that our audience in China are already using/sharing the original version of English Learning contents on WeChat. But, VOA Mandarin will continue to share English Learning contents (in its original form) on our digital platforms: website and social media.
- Discussed the distribution of shortwave portable radios for Rohingya camp

with (b) (6) would like to know if (b) (6)'s staff (b) (6) can be available in Bangladesh to oversee the distribution. I'm still in discussion with (b) (6).

- Please advise: I heard from (b) (6) that (b) (6) was given the impression that (b) (6) will stay in News Center for good. I will follow up with (b) (6) to double check. If this is so, VOA Mandarin really needs to fill a couple of GS13 positions to supervise contents: one for the overnight, and another for the AM shift for the web (which is a 24/7 operation).

Thank you,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
(b) (6)
Sent: Wednesday, June 24, 2020 11:17 AM
To: Kelu Chao
(b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
(b) (6)
Subject: Re: Situational Telework - Jun 24

Signing back in (b) (6)

(b) (6)

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
(b) (6)
Sent: Wednesday, June 24, 2020 9:42 AM
To: Kelu Chao
(b) (6) >
Cc: (b) (6)
(b) (6)
Subject: Re: Situational Telework - Jun 24

Need to step out for an hour. I'm

(b) (6)

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
(b) (6)
Sent: Wednesday, June 24, 2020 8:08 AM
To: Kelu Chao
(b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
(b) (6)
Subject: Situational Telework - Jun 24

Signing in.

(b)

From: (b) (6)
(b) (6)
Sent: Tuesday, June 23, 2020 6:59 PM
To: Kelu Chao
(b) (6)
Cc: John Lippman
(b) (6)
Subject: Re: Situational Telework - Jun 23

Signing out: (b) (6)
(b) (6)

- AM editorial meetings.
- Weekly chat with (b) (6). (b) (6) shared how (b) (6) is pushing everyone to be more multi-platform when they carry out their reporting assignments. Also, (b) (6) has encouraged the Digital Team to do more than push contents produced by TV or Web, and turn it into a native social media content. This one example, they say, was based on my idea... <https://twitter.com/VOAChinese/status/1275197227045212163>
- Weekly Chiefs meeting:
 - talked about how the teams are doing going into our 4th month of telework.
 - Burmese feel they need to go back to the building to do live radio program. I suggested they look into using OBS or Wirecast to do it remotely (very similar to the Mandarin's TV program, but just using audio). I will reach out to (b) (6) and follow up. (b) (6) is happy to hear of the prospect.
 - Some feel they are doing well with teleworking, especially when there is still looming fears of contamination.
 - Some Chief shared their challenge of

getting someone to accept on the ground reporting -- then another Chief shared their suggestion: go down the list until you find someone who is willing. The principle behind this is that if the news is on the ground (like the recent protests), we should be all over it and report it.

- There was a question about who to ask for guidance on editorial judgment now that (b) is on detail. I reached out to (b) who recommended to start with (b) (b).
- There was a question on how the President's Executive Decision to suspend working visas will affect J1 visas (new ones and extensions). I've conveyed the question to David Kotz and he looped in GC (b) (b). I will update on the findings.
- Worked on (b) 's coming back (or maybe not) with David Kotz.
- Worked with TSI to give them the info of the three iMac machines to be in the first trial batch.
- (I could not attend the CAB meeting, but (b) (6) and (b) (6), our POC for the project, attended. I got a note from TS (b) (6) and (b) that things will move forward!)



美国之音中文网 on Twitter

“从喜马拉雅到南中国海和东中国海，在几乎所有被中国视为长久以来甚至是历史遗留的‘闪点’问题上，中国近来越来越咄咄逼人。这让外界不禁要思忖，中国为什么要四面出

twitter.com

Thank you,
(b)

From: [Elez Biberaj](#)
To: [VOA Director's Office](#)
Cc: [Kelu Chao](#); [Elez Biberaj](#)
Subject: FW: VOA Mandarin 5
Date: Monday, July 13, 2020 1:47:12 PM

FYI

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Monday, July 13, 2020 1:31 PM
To: Elez Biberaj; (b) (6)
Cc: Michael Pack; (b) (6); Andre Mendes; (b) (6)
Subject: VOA Mandarin 5

Dear Elez,

First of all, congratulations on your appointment as Acting VOA Director. I'm glad that as a recognized area expert and someone who has studied history you will have a chance to make VOA a better news and information outlet. I hope that VOA can focus once again on basic human rights and universal values while presenting America in a balanced way to countries that are in most desperate need of uncensored information. I also hope that you will try to steer VOA away from domestic U.S. partisanship and narrow social journalistic activism practiced by the previous management.

I have been looking at the VOA English News website in the last few days and will send you a few comments on news coverage separately. I hope you don't mind if I do this from time to time. I'm not quite sure how the so-called "Firewall" works at VOA (I doubt anyone really does because it's not clearly spelled out anywhere). But as I understand it, USAGM CEO cannot tell VOA journalists how to cover news. Presumably you do, hence I will write to you and copy Michael Pack and Andre Mendes as needed.

I used to send similar e-mails to John Lansing and Amanda Bennett from time to time when I saw problems with VOA news coverage and various management issues, but they had ignored me, and if they took any actions, they were too little and too late. Long before some of these problems became public scandals, I told them both, among other things, about VOA services translating and posting partisan electoral videos in violation of U.S. law and the VOA Charter, illegal targeting of Americans with Facebook ads, VOA managers and reporters posting photographs of themselves with politicians thus influencing VOA reporting and possibly U.S. elections, VOA editors and reporters posting obscene partisan comments and memes on social media, and a VOA language service employing a contractor who earlier produced anti-U.S. Russian propaganda videos with conspiracy theories and anti-Semitic messages.

My e-mail to you today was prompted by a lengthy VOA report I saw this morning about a J-1 visa VOA journalist from Thailand.

<https://www.voanews.com/press-freedom/visa-delays-could-hamper-voa-news-coverage-journalists-say>

To me it was rather a poor example of an aggrieved VOA journalist because Thailand is not exactly a dictatorship. Moreover, the report is fundamentally flawed as a news story, in my view, because either the new USAGM management is targeting foreign J-1 visa journalists

only for ideological or other nefarious reasons or is conducting a normal management review.

The VOA reporter who produced this report should have asked you for a comment: what you think this is all about? You are Acting VOA Director and your view is highly relevant. If it is an ideological witch hunt, which I don't think it is, you should protest and resign. But if it is not, you should say so. VOA should have produced a much better report and VOA English Newsroom reporters should have talked to you.

To me, none of this appears new or particularly unusual. I saw many transitions at VOA. I remember how some VOA managers and quite a few VOA English Newsroom editors and reporters lashed out at Ronald Reagan and his appointees at VOA, including leaking hysterical accusations to WP and NYT. The Reagan years turned out to be the most successful for VOA. I also still remember working for VOA during the first few years in the 1970s as a non-citizen. I had to wait several months to get my first paycheck and I survived only because my colleagues at VOA, at that time complete strangers, lent me money. VOA always had a nightmarish bureaucracy. My employment status was reviewed every year and there was considerable uncertainty each time as to what would happen to my job.

Such personal employee concerns are normal and should not be the story. Foreign audiences have much bigger problems and concerns than problems and concerns of individual VOA reporters. The story should be, if there is one, whether the current management retaliates against foreign VOA reporters for some specific ideological or some other unacceptable reasons. The VOA story implied unacceptable behavior but provided absolutely no proof. That's poor journalism, itself motivated by ideological reasons.

There is, however, proof of ideologically-motivated discrimination against VOA's Mandarin Service journalists which, unfortunately, appears to be of no interest to the VOA Newsroom. I am talking about the VOA Mandarin 5. The Newsroom could have done a long story about how their colleagues, former refugees from communist-ruled China, at least one a former political prisoner, who are now U.S. citizens, sit at home for months and years after being humiliated with accusations by the previous management of being bad and insubordinate journalists because they tried to interview a Chinese whistleblower, a critic of the communist regime. According to the previous management, they disobeyed an order, which they deny they did. The previous management also accused them of not obtaining a proper response from Chinese communist officials to the whistleblower's accusations.

Why is it that the VOA Newsroom does not want to do an investigative story on these VOA Mandarin Service journalists or on thousands of critical social media comments about how VOA treated them and ruined its own reputation in China and among the Chinese diaspora? What about an investigative story about accusations about long lasting mismanagement in the VOA Persian Service and thousands of social media comments as well as reactions from Iranian-American leaders? What is more important: Thailand (since VOA could not produce a better example) or problems in VOA coverage to China and Iran which cry out for a management review?

If we assume that some J-1 visa journalists do not get their visas renewed, is it for political reasons or because there are other journalists who would do a better job? The VOA report was poorly done because it does not try to answer any of these questions. Will Mr. Pack escort them to the plane to force them to go back to China or Iran or can they apply for political asylum in the United States, which they certainly can. The VOA report is strangely vague on

this point. Why?

Elez, I bring it up not because I expect you to change overnight what partisan-driven and highly-biased VOA Newsroom editors choose to cover but because I want to urge you to personally press for a speedy resolution of the case of the fired or suspended VOA Mandarin 5 journalists. They are the real victims of discrimination and they are the ones who are truly suffering. I think you may be able to do something quickly to address this long-lasting injustice. It could perhaps send a signal to the VOA Newsroom that “Free Press Matters” and prompt them to do a story on the VOA Mandarin 5. (On second thought, it might be better if they do not.)

I may not have all the information on the Guo Wengui incident, but I have quite a lot. Even if there was something some of the VOA Mandarin 5 did wrong, it was minor compared to the failure of a number of VOA senior managers who did not provide them with proper guidance and supervision. When things went wrong because the former USAGM/VOA management team did not take charge, they lashed out at VOA foreign language service immigrant broadcasters to cover up their own lack of leadership and their failure to manage.

It is one of the most shameful episodes in VOA’s history, especially the ideologically-driven and perhaps fear-driven lack of public support for the VOA Mandarin 5 from their VOA English Newsroom colleagues and from the newsrooms of most mainstream U.S. media.

I can understand that many VOA journalists were afraid to stand up to John Lansing and Amanda Bennett. The VOA Mandarin 5 did get, however, plenty of support from the emigre media and from Chinese American leaders and scholars — none of which was reported by VOA. Some of the punished VOA Mandarin Service reporters are former political prisoners in China and/or political refugees. They are honorable men and women with decades of journalistic experience. I’m thinking particularly of Huchen Zhang whom you may know. He is still waiting to be allowed to go back to work. He is truly suffering. I would be enormously grateful to you and will say so publicly if you try to address the injustice committed against these brave VOA journalists and right the wrongs done to them under the previous USAGM/VOA management.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: [Elez Biberaj](#)
To: (b) (6)
Cc: [Michael Pack](#); [Andre Mendes](#); [Elez Biberaj](#)
Subject: RE: VOA Mandarin 5
Date: Monday, July 13, 2020 4:51:18 PM

Greetings, (b) (6)!

It's good to hear from you – it's been a long time. I hope you are doing well.

Thank you very much for your congratulations. As you can well imagine, when I assumed this position I was inundated with many pressing issues and it will take me some time to address them. I'm looking forward to working with our new agency leadership in the coming weeks and anticipate a bright future for VOA!

With best wishes,

Elez

Dr. Elez Biberaj
Acting Director
Voice of America
330 Independence Avenue, SW

(b) (6)

Washington, D.C. 20237

(b) (6)

Mobile

(b) (6)



A Free Press Matters

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Monday, July 13, 2020 1:31 PM
To: Elez Biberaj (b) (6)
Cc: Michael Pack (b) (6); Andre Mendes (b) (6)
Subject: VOA Mandarin 5

Dear Elez,

First of all, congratulations on your appointment as Acting VOA Director. I'm glad that as a recognized area expert and someone who has studied history you will have a chance to make VOA a better news and information outlet. I hope that VOA can focus once again on basic human rights and universal values while presenting America in a balanced way to countries that are in most desperate need of uncensored information. I also hope that you will try to steer VOA away from domestic U.S. partisanship and narrow social journalistic activism practiced by the previous management.

I have been looking at the VOA English News website in the last few days and will send you a few comments on news coverage separately. I hope you don't mind if I do this from time to time. I'm not quite sure how the so-called "Firewall" works at VOA (I doubt anyone really does because it's not

clearly spelled out anywhere). But as I understand it, USAGM CEO cannot tell VOA journalists how to cover news. Presumably you do, hence I will write to you and copy Michael Pack and Andre Mendes as needed.

I used to send similar e-mails to John Lansing and Amanda Bennett from time to time when I saw problems with VOA news coverage and various management issues, but they had ignored me, and if they took any actions, they were too little and too late. Long before some of these problems became public scandals, I told them both, among other things, about VOA services translating and posting partisan electoral videos in violation of U.S. law and the VOA Charter, illegal targeting of Americans with Facebook ads, VOA managers and reporters posting photographs of themselves with politicians thus influencing VOA reporting and possibly U.S. elections, VOA editors and reporters posting obscene partisan comments and memes on social media, and a VOA language service employing a contractor who earlier produced anti-U.S. Russian propaganda videos with conspiracy theories and anti-Semitic messages.

My e-mail to you today was prompted by a lengthy VOA report I saw this morning about a J-1 visa VOA journalist from Thailand.

<https://www.voanews.com/press-freedom/visa-delays-could-hamper-voa-news-coverage-journalists-say>

To me it was rather a poor example of an aggrieved VOA journalist because Thailand is not exactly a dictatorship. Moreover, the report is fundamentally flawed as a news story, in my view, because either the new USAGM management is targeting foreign J-1 visa journalists only for ideological or other nefarious reasons or is conducting a normal management review.

The VOA reporter who produced this report should have asked you for a comment: what you think this is all about? You are Acting VOA Director and your view is highly relevant. If it is an ideological witch hunt, which I don't think it is, you should protest and resign. But if it is not, you should say so. VOA should have produced a much better report and VOA English Newsroom reporters should have talked to you.

To me, none of this appears new or particularly unusual. I saw many transitions at VOA. I remember how some VOA managers and quite a few VOA English Newsroom editors and reporters lashed out at Ronald Reagan and his appointees at VOA, including leaking hysterical accusations to WP and NYT. The Reagan years turned out to be the most successful for VOA. I also still remember working for VOA during the first few years in the 1970s as a non-citizen. I had to wait several months to get my first paycheck and I survived only because my colleagues at VOA, at that time complete strangers, lent me money. VOA always had a nightmarish bureaucracy. My employment status was reviewed every year and there was considerable uncertainty each time as to what would happen to my job.

Such personal employee concerns are normal and should not be the story. Foreign audiences have much bigger problems and concerns than problems and concerns of individual VOA reporters. The story should be, if there is one, whether the current management retaliates against foreign VOA reporters for some specific ideological or some other unacceptable reasons. The VOA story implied

unacceptable behavior but provided absolutely no proof. That's poor journalism, itself motivated by ideological reasons.

There is, however, proof of ideologically-motivated discrimination against VOA's Mandarin Service journalists which, unfortunately, appears to be of no interest to the VOA Newsroom. I am talking about the VOA Mandarin 5. The Newsroom could have done a long story about how their colleagues, former refugees from communist-ruled China, at least one a former political prisoner, who are now U.S. citizens, sit at home for months and years after being humiliated with accusations by the previous management of being bad and insubordinate journalists because they tried to interview a Chinese whistleblower, a critic of the communist regime. According to the previous management, they disobeyed an order, which they deny they did. The previous management also accused them of not obtaining a proper response from Chinese communist officials to the whistleblower's accusations.

Why is it that the VOA Newsroom does not want to do an investigative story on these VOA Mandarin Service journalists or on thousands of critical social media comments about how VOA treated them and ruined its own reputation in China and among the Chinese diaspora? What about an investigative story about accusations about long lasting mismanagement in the VOA Persian Service and thousands of social media comments as well as reactions from Iranian-American leaders? What is more important: Thailand (since VOA could not produce a better example) or problems in VOA coverage to China and Iran which cry out for a management review?

If we assume that some J-1 visa journalists do not get their visas renewed, is it for political reasons or because there are other journalists who would do a better job? The VOA report was poorly done because it does not try to answer any of these questions. Will Mr. Pack escort them to the plane to force them to go back to China or Iran or can they apply for political asylum in the United States, which they certainly can. The VOA report is strangely vague on this point. Why?

Elez, I bring it up not because I expect you to change overnight what partisan-driven and highly-biased VOA Newsroom editors choose to cover but because I want to urge you to personally press for a speedy resolution of the case of the fired or suspended VOA Mandarin 5 journalists. They are the real victims of discrimination and they are the ones who are truly suffering. I think you may be able to do something quickly to address this long-lasting injustice. It could perhaps send a signal to the VOA Newsroom that "Free Press Matters" and prompt them to do a story on the VOA Mandarin 5. (On second thought, it might be better if they do not.)

I may not have all the information on the Guo Wengui incident, but I have quite a lot. Even if there was something some of the VOA Mandarin 5 did wrong, it was minor compared to the failure of a number of VOA senior managers who did not provide them with proper guidance and supervision. When things went wrong because the former USAGM/VOA management team did not take charge, they lashed out at VOA foreign language service immigrant broadcasters to cover up their own lack of leadership and their failure to manage.

It is one of the most shameful episodes in VOA's history, especially the ideologically-driven and perhaps fear-driven lack of public support for the VOA Mandarin 5 from their VOA English

Newsroom colleagues and from the newsrooms of most mainstream U.S. media.

I can understand that many VOA journalists were afraid to stand up to John Lansing and Amanda Bennett. The VOA Mandarin 5 did get, however, plenty of support from the emigre media and from Chinese American leaders and scholars — none of which was reported by VOA. Some of the punished VOA Mandarin Service reporters are former political prisoners in China and/or political refugees. They are honorable men and women with decades of journalistic experience. I'm thinking particularly of Huchen Zhang whom you may know. He is still waiting to be allowed to go back to work. He is truly suffering. I would be enormously grateful to you and will say so publicly if you try to address the injustice committed against these brave VOA journalists and right the wrongs done to them under the previous USAGM/VOA management.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: (b) (6) [Elez Biberaj](#)
Cc: (b) (6) [Kelu Chao](#)
Subject: Re: Burmese needs new PSCs ASAP to avoid severe disruption in affiliate TV shows
Date: Tuesday, July 14, 2020 8:06:46 PM

thanks to you all.

(b) (6)

(b) (6)

Chief, VOA Burmese

Tel: (1) (b) (6)

Mobile (b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Tuesday, July 14, 2020 7:44:01 PM
To: (b) (6)
(b) (6); Elez Biberaj (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6); Kelu Chao
(b) (6)
Subject: Re: Burmese needs new PSCs ASAP to avoid severe disruption in affiliate TV shows

Thank you so much, (b) (6)!

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Tuesday, July 14, 2020 5:43 PM
To: (b) (6)
(b) (6) Elez Biberaj (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6); Kelu Chao
(b) (6)
Subject: RE: Burmese needs new PSCs ASAP to avoid severe disruption in affiliate TV shows

H (b) (6),

This information has been added to the spreadsheet—hopefully we will get approval soon.

Thanks,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Tuesday, July 14, 2020 2:35 PM
To: (b) (6)
(b) (6); Elez Biberaj (b) (6)

Cc: (b) (6); Kelu Chao
(b) (6)

Subject: Re: Burmese needs new PSCs ASAP to avoid severe disruption in affiliate TV shows

Importance: High

Hi (b) (6),

Here are the information:

- Entity: VOA
- Requirement Name(s):
 - (b) (6) (U.S. citizen)
 - (b) (6) (U.S. citizen, current Federal employee, with US Census commission)
- Program Office: VOA Burmese Service
- Requirement Description: expedite the current on-boarding process for two new Burmese PSCs
- Total Obligation Required for this Requirement: Multimedia Journalists Level 2
- Date by which Requirement Must be Processed: ASAP (preferably starts on July 20, 2020)
- Potential Adverse Impact on Agency if Not Processed:
- Recruiting quality Burmese-speaking journalists in the U.S. . We have lost one selectee a few months ago due to the long time to do process (a prolonged time, nearly 3 months, on security screening process) - that she took another job when the security result came through. This is the second attempt and also facing another unfortunate delay. The situation this time will be more problematic as Burmese Service is anticipation a severe disruption in our TV programming for affiliates in Burma, especially leading up to the Myanmar election in November (5 days after the US election, November 8).
- These candidates are US citizens.
- IQ#: N/A

Thank you,

(b) (6)
Director - East Asia & Pacific Division
330 Independence Ave., SW (b) (6)
Washington, D.C. 20237
Tel: (b) (6)

From: (b) (6)

Sent: Tuesday, July 14, 2020 12:36 PM

To: (b) (6) Lwin

(b) (6) Elez Biberaj (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6) Kelu Chao
(b) (6)
Subject: RE: Burmese needs new PSCs ASAP to avoid severe disruption in affiliate TV shows

Hi (b) (6),

I don't believe these individuals are on the contracting exemption list. If you could provide additional information, I will add them. Here are the categories required for the sheet—I've added information that I know, but I need your help filling in the rest of the information. The USAGM front office has to approve all new hires. Please also include their resumes.

- Entity: VOA
- Requirement Name: (Provide Name of Individuals)
- Program Office: VOA Burmese Service
- Requirement Description: expedite the current on-boarding process for two new Burmese PSCs
- Total Obligation Required for this Requirement: (please provide the PSC level for each individual and I can estimate the cost until the end of the year)
- Date by which Requirement Must be Processed: (Please provide)
- Potential Adverse Impact on Agency if Not Processed: Recruiting new PSCs among Burmese communities in US is very difficult. We have lost one selected candidate a few months ago due to a prolonged time (nearly 3 months) on security screening process -she already took another job when the security result came through. This is the second attempt and also facing an unfortunate delay again. The situation this time will be more problematic as Burmese Service is anticipation a severe disruption in our TV programming for affiliates in Burma due to understaffing. This candidate is a US citizen (PLEASE CONFIRM THIS IS TRUE)
- IQ#: N/A

Thanks,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Tuesday, July 14, 2020 12:00 PM
To: (b) (6);
Elez Biberaj (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6); Kelu
Chao (b) (6)
Subject: RE: Burmese needs new PSCs ASAP to avoid severe disruption in affiliate TV shows

Thanks, (b) (6).

(b) (6), for our reference, could you please confirm the names of the two pending PSC hires?

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Tuesday, July 14, 2020 11:57 AM
To: (b) (6); Elez Biberaj (b) (6) >
Cc: (b) (6); Kelu Chao (b) (6)
(b) (6)
Subject: Re: Burmese needs new PSCs ASAP to avoid severe disruption in affiliate TV shows

Thank you, (b) (6),
I'm adding (b) (6) and (b) (6) here to see if they can help us.

Hi Elez,

I know you're inundated with requests, but these PSCs are an easy issue because (1) the budget has been approved; (2) they have both passed the security checks; (3) they are both in the U.S., no need for J1 visas.

It is particularly important because VOA Burmese has 1 FTE who is in jeopardy of not having her J1 extended (as she waits for her Green Card).

Please advise.

(b) (6)

Director - East Asia & Pacific Division
330 Independence Ave., SW (b) (6)
Washington, D.C. 20237
Tel: (b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Tuesday, July 14, 2020 10:52 AM
To: (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6); Kelu Chao (b) (6); Elez Biberaj (b) (6)
Subject: Burmese needs new PSCs ASAP to avoid severe disruption in affiliate TV shows

(b) (6),

I am requesting your kind assistance to expedite the current on-boarding process for two new Burmese PSCs. We have already received their favorable security screening results since a bit while ago, and are waiting their starting date. One candidate had already informed his current employer for his departure date.

Recruiting new PSCs among Burmese communities in US is very difficult. I had lost one of my selected candidate a few months ago due to a prolonged time (nearly 3 months) on security screening process -she already took another job when the

security result came through. This is my second attempt and also facing an unfortunate delay again.

The situation this time will be more problematic as Burmese Service is anticipation a severe disruption in our TV programming for affiliates in Burma when a key TV host/producer (b) (6) has to be placed on unpaid-leave on 24 July afterward.

(b) (6) J-1 visa expires on the day and (b) (6) is still waiting for (b) (6) green card process coming through. Although new PSCs will not be matching (b) (6) capacity, the new PSCs would at least ease the burden of the team if we can train/assimilate them into our working environment in advance. I would like to have the two new PSCs get on-board as earliest as possible.

thanks

(b) (6)

Chief, Burmese Service
Voice of America

Tel: (b) (6)

Mobile: (b) (6)

Fax: (b) (6)

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [VOA Program Office](#)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: LATAM -J-1
Date: Thursday, July 16, 2020 1:16:54 PM
Attachments: [JUSTIFICATION-J1 EXTENSION LATAM-BRIEF-JULY 16-2020.docx](#)

Please see attachment

From: (b) (6)
To: VOA Director's Office; Kelu Chao; (b) (6)
Subject: July 21, 9:00 am Sr Staff Meeting Agenda
Date: Tuesday, July 21, 2020 7:44:07 AM
Attachments: [July 21 Agenda Daily Staff Meeting.docx](#)
[J-1 Visa Narrative for Front Office 7-21-2020-wcbjr.docx](#)
[VOA 2021 Calendar 7-20-20 ForPrinter ReducedSize \(1\).pdf](#)
[OCDO and SPOPs Absorbtion.docx](#)
[Outlook-u2psjm5x.png](#)

Good morning,

Please find attached the July 21 Sr. Staff Meeting Agenda for today along with relevant attachments. Have a great hotter than July Tuesday!

(b) (6), VOA Chief of Staff
U.S. Agency for Global Media
Voice of America
330 Independence Ave., SW – (b) (6)
Washington, DC 20237
(b) (6) Business



From: (b) (6)
To: [VOA Director's Office](#); [Kelu Chao](#); [Yolanda Lopez](#); [Bridget Serchak](#)
Subject: July 22, 9:00 am Agenda Sr Staff Meeting
Date: Wednesday, July 22, 2020 7:46:36 AM
Attachments: [July 22 Agenda Daily Staff Meeting.docx](#)
[Statement on CDC blackballing.docx](#)
[Strategic Discussion - Outstanding Issues.docx](#)
[2020 EOY Action Timeline.pdf](#)
[FY 2020 Acquisition Deadline Flyer.pdf](#)
[J-1 Visa Narrative for Front Office 7-21-2020-6 00 AM Version.kgl.docx](#)
[Outlook-vi3kiu2u.png](#)

Good morning,

Please find the agenda for this morning's July 22, 9:00 am Sr Staff Meeting along with attachments. Make it a terrific Heat Wave Wednesday!

(b) (6), VOA Chief of Staff
U.S. Agency for Global Media
Voice of America
330 Independence Ave., SW – (b) (6)
Washington, DC 20237
(b) (6) Business



From: (b) (6)
To: [Michael Pack](#)
Cc: [Andre Mendes](#); [Emily Pauline Newman](#); [Diane Cullo](#); [Jonathan Bronitsky](#); [VOA Director's Office](#); [Elez Biberaj](#)
Subject: RESENDING with Revised Critical Visa Action List -- Request for Guidance on VOA's Urgent Requirements
Date: Wednesday, July 22, 2020 11:43:04 AM
Attachments: [Lun Ai Timeline 7-21-2020.docx](#)
(b) (6) [Email PDF.pdf](#)
[VOA Past Due Contracts 7-21-2020.xlsx](#)
[VOA Critical Visa Actions 7-22-2020.FINAL.xlsx](#)

Michael:

My colleagues and I greatly appreciated the opportunity to meet with you, Andre, Emily, Diane, Mora, and Jonathan last Friday, and we very much look forward to working with you in advancing the agency's mission and addressing the challenges ahead.

As a follow up to the meeting, I am taking the liberty of respectfully reminding you of three issues that require your office's immediate attention: the **J-1 Visa renewals, the extension of critically important contracts, and approval for two PSC hires.**

It is absolutely imperative that we receive guidance from your office, as we need to communicate information about these issues with our staff. Our inability to answer questions is having a very negative effect on morale within VOA. Furthermore, delays may expose USAGM to legal liabilities, violate commitments made to Congressional appropriators, and permanently damage relationships with overseas affiliates. I hope this memo will assist your office in providing guidance.

J-1 Visas

The failure to renew the J-1 visas will force VOA to reduce or cancel a number of mission-critical programs, including those targeting priority areas such as China, Venezuela, Pakistan, and Nigeria. The process of hiring replacement journalists is a long one (at the minimum, six months) as it takes time to advertise positions, vet candidates, and perform security clearances. Exhaustive searches frequently find that no U.S. citizens with the same skills and expertise can be found, introducing additional delays in identifying and onboarding staff. We have already lost two journalists to Visa expirations, and will lose eight more in the next three weeks if no action is taken.

Please note that by law, U.S. citizens are given hiring preferences over foreign nationals for FTE positions. Vacancy announcements for broadcasters are always posted for citizens first, and eligible candidates who are not U.S. citizens are only considered when no qualified citizens are available. VOA uses J-1 Visas to attract top talent around the world only when we cannot fill a position with a US citizen. **I have attached a list of twelve Visa actions that are with your office that require immediate attention.**

Critical Contracts

VOA has reached a critical stage with the **expiration of critically important contracts.** Failure to renew these contracts will result in the disruption of programming and the infrastructure that supports these core functions; we also risk losing funding for the Agency as fiscal-year contracting deadlines are already upon us. **I have attached a spreadsheet to this email that lists our most urgent contracting actions** from the SharePoint site. All of these contracting actions are past their original due dates.

PSC Hiring Approval

There are two individuals that have received job offers from VOA and cleared security, who only require your approval to start working. (b) (6) is a popular journalist and program host from Pakistan who will work in the Urdu Service. (b) (6) has been in the country in limbo since June 16th. (b) (6) has worked for VOA for years in Beijing, but we are bringing (b) (6) to the U.S. because the Chinese government has recently begun harassing (b) (6) and we fear for (b) (6) safety. (b) (6) is ready to board a plane this Saturday. There could be legal consequences if these individuals are not permitted to start working. I have attached an email from (b) (6) and additional information on (b) (6)'s case to this email.

Thank you for your consideration of these critical issues. My team is happy to discuss details or provide more information if it will be helpful. We look forward to your decisions so we can move forward with the important mission of international broadcasting.

Elez

From: (b) (6)
To: (b) (6); [Elez Biberaj](#)
Cc: (b) (6); [Kelu Chao](#)
Subject: Re: Burmese needs new PSCs ASAP to avoid severe disruption in affiliate TV shows
Date: Wednesday, July 22, 2020 4:44:59 PM

thanks (b) (6).

(b) (6)

(b) (6)

Chief, VOA Burmese

Tel: (b) (6)

Mobile: (b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Wednesday, July 22, 2020 3:18:56 PM
To: (b) (6)
(b) (6); [Elez Biberaj](#) (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6); Kelu Chao
(b) (6)
Subject: RE: Burmese needs new PSCs ASAP to avoid severe disruption in affiliate TV shows

Hi (b) (6),

Unfortunately, we have no new information regarding on-boarding/hiring requests. As of right now, the USAGM Front Office has not approved any PSC or FTE hires. We will provide information as it becomes available.

Thanks,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Wednesday, July 22, 2020 8:42 AM
To: (b) (6)
(b) (6); [Elez Biberaj](#) (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6); Kelu Chao
(b) (6)
Subject: Re: Burmese needs new PSCs ASAP to avoid severe disruption in affiliate TV shows

Good morning (b) (6)

Any update on Burmese PSC on-boarding? An essential FTE will be out this Friday as her J-1 expires and we seriously need these new PSCs to (possibly) continue program placement to affiliate Mizzima TV station. Burmese Service has been on staff shortage since the departure of a senior editor last year and addition of two new TV programs to affiliates.

With this unexpected shortfall I am now facing real staffing crisis. Pls help.

thanks

(b) (6)

Chief, Burmese Service
Voice of America

Tel: (b) (6)

Mobile: (b) (6)

Fax: (b) (6)

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)

Sent: Tuesday, July 14, 2020 5:43 PM

To: (b) (6)

(b) (6); Elez Biberaj (b) (6)

Cc: (b) (6); Kelu Chao

(b) (6)

Subject: RE: Burmese needs new PSCs ASAP to avoid severe disruption in affiliate TV shows

Hi (b) (6),

This information has been added to the spreadsheet—hopefully we will get approval soon.

Thanks,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)

Sent: Tuesday, July 14, 2020 2:35 PM

To: (b) (6)

(b) (6); Elez Biberaj (b) (6)

Cc: (b) (6); Kelu Chao

(b) (6)

Subject: Re: Burmese needs new PSCs ASAP to avoid severe disruption in affiliate TV shows

Importance: High

Hi (b) (6),

Here are the information:

- Entity: VOA
- Requirement Name(s):
 - (b) (6) (U.S. citizen)
 - (b) (6) (U.S. citizen, current Federal employee, with US Census commission)
- Program Office: VOA Burmese Service
- Requirement Description: expedite the current on-boarding process for two new Burmese PSCs
- Total Obligation Required for this Requirement: Multimedia Journalists Level 2
- Date by which Requirement Must be Processed: ASAP (preferably starts on July 20,

2020)

- Potential Adverse Impact on Agency if Not Processed:
- Recruiting quality Burmese-speaking journalists in the U.S. . We have lost one selectee a few months ago due to the long time to do process (a prolonged time, nearly 3 months, on security screening process) - that she took another job when the security result came through. This is the second attempt and also facing another unfortunate delay. The situation this time will be more problematic as Burmese Service is anticipation a severe disruption in our TV programming for affiliates in Burma, especially leading up to the Myanmar election in November (5 days after the US election, November 8).
- These candidates are US citizens.
- IQ#: N/A

Thank you,

(b) (6)

Director - East Asia & Pacific Division
330 Independence Ave., SW (b) (6)
Washington, D.C. 20237
Tel: (b) (6)

From: (b) (6)

Sent: Tuesday, July 14, 2020 12:36 PM

To: (b) (6)

(b) (6); Elez Biberaj (b) (6)

Cc: (b) (6); Kelu Chao

(b) (6)

Subject: RE: Burmese needs new PSCs ASAP to avoid severe disruption in affiliate TV shows

Hi (b) (6),

I don't believe these individuals are on the contracting exemption list. If you could provide additional information, I will add them. Here are the categories required for the sheet—I've added information that I know, but I need your help filling in the rest of the information. The USAGM front office has to approve all new hires. Please also include their resumes.

- Entity: VOA
- Requirement Name: (Provide Name of Individuals)
- Program Office: VOA Burmese Service
- Requirement Description: expedite the current on-boarding process for two new Burmese PSCs
- Total Obligation Required for this Requirement: (please provide the PSC level for each individual and I can estimate the cost until the end of the year)
- Date by which Requirement Must be Processed: (Please provide)
- Potential Adverse Impact on Agency if Not Processed: Recruiting new PSCs among

Burmese communities in US is very difficult. We have lost one selected candidate a few months ago due to a prolonged time (nearly 3 months) on security screening process -she already took another job when the security result came through. This is the second attempt and also facing an unfortunate delay again. The situation this time will be more problematic as Burmese Service is anticipation a severe disruption in our TV programming for affiliates in Burma due to understaffing. This candidate is a US citizen (PLEASE CONFIRM THIS IS TRUE)

- IQ#: N/A

Thanks,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Tuesday, July 14, 2020 12:00 PM
To: (b) (6);
Elez Biberaj (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6) Kelu
Chao (b) (6)
Subject: RE: Burmese needs new PSCs ASAP to avoid severe disruption in affiliate TV shows

Thanks, (b) (6).

(b) (6), for our reference, could you please confirm the names of the two pending PSC hires?

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Tuesday, July 14, 2020 11:57 AM
To: (b) (6); Elez Biberaj (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6) Kelu
Chao (b) (6) (b) (6)
<klarson@usagm.gov>
Subject: Re: Burmese needs new PSCs ASAP to avoid severe disruption in affiliate TV shows

Thank you, (b) (6)
I'm adding (b) (6) and (b) (6) here to see if they can help us.

Hi Elez,

I know you're inundated with requests, but these PSCs are an easy issue because (1) the budget has been approved; (2) they have both passed the security checks; (3) they are both in the U.S., no need for J1 visas.

It is particularly important because VOA Burmese has 1 FTE who is in jeopardy of not having her J1 extended (as she waits for her Green Card).

Please advise.

(b) (6)

Director - East Asia & Pacific Division
330 Independence Ave., SW (b) (6)
Washington, D.C. 20237
Tel: (b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Tuesday, July 14, 2020 10:52 AM
To: (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6); Kelu Chao (b) (6); Elez Biberaj (b) (6)
Subject: Burmese needs new PSCs ASAP to avoid severe disruption in affiliate TV shows

(b) (6)

I am requesting your kind assistance to expedite the current on-boarding process for two new Burmese PSCs. We have already received their favorable security screening results since a bit while ago, and are waiting their starting date. One candidate had already informed his current employer for his departure date.

Recruiting new PSCs among Burmese communities in US is very difficult. I had lost one of my selected candidate a few months ago due to a prolonged time (nearly 3 months) on security screening process -she already took another job when the security result came through. This is my second attempt and also facing an unfortunate delay again.

The situation this time will be more problematic as Burmese Service is anticipation a severe disruption in our TV programming for affiliates in Burma when a key TV host/producer (b) (6) has to be placed on unpaid-leave on 24 July afterward.

(b) (6) J-1 visa expires on the day and (b) (6) is still waiting for (b) (6) green card process coming through. Although new PSCs will not be matching (b) (6) capacity, the new PSCs would at least ease the burden of the team if we can train/assimilate them into our working environment in advance. I would like to have the two new PSCs get on-board as earliest as possible.

thanks

(b) (6)

Chief, Burmese Service
Voice of America

Tel: (b) (6)

Mobile: (b) (6)

Fax: (b) (6)

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Redacted]
Subject: RE: Hiring for VOA Thai
Date: Thursday, July 23, 2020 11:00:23 AM

Hmmm. If the budget is approved, are we interpreting it as the CEO approves individuals? Or is the budget itself not really approved?

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Thursday, July 23, 2020 10:05 AM
To: (b) (6)
Subject: Re: Hiring for VOA Thai

I don't know (b) (6). The Burmese Service have been trying to start 2 new PSCs since a few months ago. The positions/budgets have been approved. And they are both US citizens. Yet, they cannot start because the CEO must approve their employment.

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Thursday, July 23, 2020 9:44 AM
To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: RE: Hiring for VOA Thai

Wouldn't that be interfering in the journalism, as long as the budget is there?

From: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Sent: Thursday, July 23, 2020 9:32 AM
To: (b) (6)
Cc: [Redacted]
(b) (6)
Subject: Re: Hiring for VOA Thai

I like your idea. Do we need to have a contract with individual stringer? If so, then we have to submit it and wait for approval?

Sent from my iPhone

On Jul 23, 2020, at 8:48 AM, (b) (6) wrote:

Good morning, Kelu,

Following up on (b) (6)'s situation, I think we need to make plans to employ (b) (6) as an overseas stringer. We have every confidence that (b) (6) can produce at the same volume and quality in Thailand, as (b) (6) has in DC. During (b) (6) brief quasi-personal visit to Thailand last year, (b) (6) managed to produce a high-quality, great story-telling piece about how some monks in Thailand implement eco-friendly methods of receiving food from the community:

<https://www.voanews.com/episode/thai-monks-adopt-earth-day-practices-eliminate-plastic-waste-4264621>

(b) (6) produced this with very little equipment, imagine what (b) (6) can produce if (b) (6) is fully equipped with proper cameras and editing tools.

VOA Thai cannot afford to lose the rare talent (b) (6) has. Please advise on how to proceed.

Thank you,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Wednesday, July 22, 2020 10:10 AM
To: (b) (6); Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
(b) (6)
Subject: RE: Hiring for VOA Thai

(b) (6),

This is truly a disheartening situation for (b) (6) as well as VOA and our reputation with our audiences and media partners. If you are unable to get approval to fill behind (b) (6) what will be the impact on Thai programs?

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Wednesday, July 22, 2020 9:51 AM
To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
(b) (6)
Subject: Hiring for VOA Thai

Hi Kelu,

You may have heard that (b) (6)'s visa cannot be reinstated because of the kind of J1 that VOA has (per agreement of some kind with State Department). VOA Thai has significantly increased VOA's brand awareness and trust, especially in the last few years. Losing a member of the team is not just disheartening, but it has a direct affect on the ability of the Service to step up to the demands of the market and audience in Thailand.

With your approval, I would like to prioritize hiring an FTE very soon after (b) (6) officially separates from the agency.

Thank you for all your support and guidance, especially through the issue with J1 extensions. We really appreciate all you've give us. Please let me know how to proceed.

Thank you,

(b) (6)

Director - VOA East Asia and Pacific Division

P: (b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Kelu Chao](#)
Cc: (b) (6); [Elez Biberaj](#); (b) (6)
Subject: Requesting approval for a contingency realignment of the VOA Macedonian Service's programming
Date: Friday, August 14, 2020 4:59:34 PM
Attachments: [MACEDONIAN CONTINGENCY REQUEST-am.docx](#)

Kelu,

In anticipation of challenges the Service will face with looming departure of two of its essential team members due to their J-1 visa expiration, we kindly request approval to temporarily shorten the TV programming and stop its satellite distribution.

Please find the memo attached.

Thank you and have a great weekend.

(b) (6)
Internet Managing Editor

(b) (6)

From: [REDACTED]
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: [REDACTED]
Date: August 17, 2020 9:25 AM
Attachments: [REDACTED]

Still waiting for confirmation from OMS, but it looks like it is NOT Global Mende...

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, August 17, 2020 9:25 AM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Cont. acts app oved on Friday after noon. Please proceed.

To me it looks like it is this one



But, nothing is confirmed yet, I'm still waiting to hear from OMS. You can check the Site approval Site yourself at any time [https://www.oms.gov.sg/portal/oms/act/approval](#). I've attached my download from this morning - this would not have any of the new app ovals yet. OMS has to be the ones to make those.

Thanks,

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, August 17, 2020 9:14 AM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Cont. acts app oved on Friday after noon. Please proceed.

[REDACTED] is interested in knowing about this one too...

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, August 17, 2020 9:11 AM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Cont. acts app oved on Friday after noon. Please proceed.

What is "site please"?

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, August 17, 2020 9:08 AM
To: Kalu Chua [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Cont. acts app oved on Friday after noon. Please proceed.

Thanks Kalu [REDACTED] sent to me and I'm asking [REDACTED] to confirm that the approval on Global Mende in space is one of the 4 app ovals... however, I don't see approval of any PSCs for Global Mende in...

From: Kalu Chua [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, August 17, 2020 9:07 AM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Cont. acts app oved on Friday after noon. Please proceed.

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Elizabeth [REDACTED]
Date: August 17, 2020 8:49:25 AM
To: VCA Director's Office [REDACTED], Kalu Chua [REDACTED]
Cc: Elizabeth [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: Contracts approved on Friday afternoon. Please proceed.

FYI

From: Andrew Mendle [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, August 17, 2020 8:45 AM
To: Yvonne Balaz [REDACTED], Thomas Layton [REDACTED], Elizabeth [REDACTED], Jeffrey Shapiro [REDACTED]
Cc: Frank Wuco [REDACTED]
Subject: Cont. acts app oved on Friday after noon. Please proceed.
Importance: High

With thanks to Frank Wuco for helping us get this thing unjammed.

Best,

Andrew

By date due

- Tanpop station in Sao Tome
- Ko san TV P og sms
- Mombasa lease
- Co Secu ity
- News centre Social distancing and Mera
- Spill e network se vices
- Ne dno is
- Subject: Johannebu g
- Contract cable
- FL Keys aqueduct
- OCB Xe os
- Agg eption He dno e DGA
- TSI Nyedink
- TSI He dno e Repair
- HA Des gns Newscentre
- SenFau wale supply
- T anslating se vices
- MAG subsidizing
- Renovation of office space all 4
- IAA And Na cotica
- Shella ODDCA mon to ing
- Cable inf ant utcu e
- IRM Business p ocess staff Suppo t
- FM Bangal
- Dube ene ggy cover
- Satellite Downlink
- Ove had gene ato
- Renovate gue d houses
- Red suite suppo t
- Ca acas Office Lease
- Inte p ete s
- Jenito ial Udo n
- One month extension Thailand
- P riting St ingu P ess ca ds
- K K Secu ity
- PSA Software e
- FINANCIAL cal
- City of London
- Monito ing Helsinki
- Renovate mon to ing se vices
- Gia dening udo n
- Jenito ial asom
- Gia dening asom
- Batte les replacement
- ATB T rinetco k renewal
- Ve zon network
- Fede al Exp ess
- ATB T Mobil ty
- Ve zon
- Di ecty
- Gia baqo se vice
- Khoad ope ations
- Ente p lew software e
- ODD Hooping task o dia
- Artema wcow yCMMI

Elect cal maintenance
New IDQ
Kuwait admin chills
Promotional items
ATP Log stics
High power ebu lid
Capacitors
High power tubes
Level 3
Lithuanian
ZIX
Kuwait t ansportation
Station gene ato maintenance
High power IDQ
High capacity
Tandem p ope t asset
Demio en
Lampe the m
Simla web
Mogadishu
Congo
Synthesis
Raga Med a
GRC tool
HA Design (dalet)
Social Bkake
Wochit
Pakistan FM
Humsu
Hum TV
Skyline
Moby
Eaton
Satellite Distribution
Bilis station
Afghanistan
T ansportation se v ces saotome
Customs clearance
HWAC Sao Tome
Chabreat
Mozambique Omnibus
Kakama
CCB Digital audience
Uzbekistan training
eOPF
Mass t ans t
Intelsat 901
Oacle HCM

Andre V. Mendes
Chief Operating Officer
United States Agency for Global Media



From: [REDACTED]
To: [REDACTED] ; [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED] ; Keli Chao: [REDACTED]
Subject: Approved Contracting Actions
Date: Monday, August 17, 2020 2:26:00 PM
Attachments: SharePoint Full List 8-17-2020.xlsx

Division Directors,

We received 18 approvals this morning. I have attached the SharePoint contracting approval list as of this afternoon and sorted it for those that were just approved today. Please review this and share it with your EO's.

As a reminder, you can check the SharePoint site at any time to confirm if an item was approved: <https://bbg.sharepoint.com/sites/offices/management-services/SitePages/Critical-Contractual-Requirements.aspx?source=https%3A%2F%2Fbbg.sharepoint.com%2Fsites%2Foffices%2Fmanagement-services%2FSitePages%2FForms%2FAllPages.aspx>

I have also pasted a summary of the recently approved VOA items below.

Thanks,

[REDACTED]

Entity	Requirement Name	Program Office
VOA	Korean TV Programs	EAP
VOA	Mombasa Center	VOA Africa/Swahili
VOA	Cortac Security – Correspondents Residence Security	VOA Johannesburg Bureau
VOA	News Center	Social Distancing equipment and macs
VOA	Spitfire Network Services Ltd	London Bureau
VOA	Nerdworks T/A Dial a Nerd	VOA Johannesburg Bureau
VOA	SagaciIT Pty Ltd T/A Fatbudgie – Telephone services	VOA Johannesburg Bureau
VOA	HA Designs	News Center
VOA	SenEau water supply service	Dakar Bureau
VOA	IAA - Anti-Narcotics INL/State Investment Funding	SCA Division
VOA	Venezuela Office Lease (Caracas)	Latin America
VOA	Interpreters	Latin America
VOA	Printing and shipping Stringer Press Cards	VOA Nairobi Bureau
VOA	K K Security	VOA Nairobi Bureau
VOA	IAA Anti-Narcotics INL/State investment funding	SCA Division
VOA	City of London	London Bureau
VOA	Tandem Property Asset Management LLP	London Bureau
VOA	HA Design (Dalet)	CDO

From: (b) (6)
To: (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: FW: Approved Contracting Actions
Date: Tuesday, August 18, 2020 10:34:12 AM
Attachments: SharePoint Full List 8-17-2020.xlsx

Hi Kelu,

Chris Luer just asked me if any of the contracting actions that were approved yesterday support Global Mandarin. I looked through the list and did not see any. But, I wanted to run this by you to confirm you agree. Please let me know if you think any fit this category.

Thanks,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Monday, August 17, 2020 2:25 PM
To: VOA Division Directors (b) (6)
Cc: VOA Director's Office (b) (6); Kelu Chao (b) (6); (b) (6)
Subject: Approved Contracting Actions

Division Directors,

We received 18 approvals this morning. I have attached the SharePoint contracting approval list as of this afternoon and sorted it for those that were just approved today. Please review this and share it with your EO's.

As a reminder, you can check the SharePoint site at any time to confirm if an item was approved: <https://bbg.sharepoint.com/sites/offices/management-services/SitePages/Critical-Contractual-Requirements.aspx?source=https%3A%2F%2Fbbg.sharepoint.com%2Fsites%2Foffices%2Fmanagement-services%2FSitePages%2FForms%2FAllPages.aspx>

I have also pasted a summary of the recently approved VOA items below.

Thanks,

(b) (6)

Entity	Requirement Name	Program Office
VOA	Korean TV Programs	EAP
VOA	Mombasa Center	VOA Africa/Swahili
VOA	Cortac Security – Correspondents Residence Security	VOA Johannesburg Bureau
VOA	News Center	Social Distancing equipment and macs
VOA	Spitfire Network Services Ltd	London Bureau
VOA	Nerdworks T/A Dial a Nerd	VOA Johannesburg Bureau
VOA	SagacIT Pty Ltd T/A Fatbudgie – Telephone services	VOA Johannesburg Bureau
VOA	HA Designs	News Center
VOA	SenEau water supply service	Dakar Bureau
VOA	IAA - Anti-Narcotics INL/State Investment Funding	SCA Division
VOA	Venezuela Office Lease (Caracas)	Latin America
VOA	Interpreters	Latin America
VOA	Printing and shipping Stringer Press Cards	VOA Nairobi Bureau
VOA	K K Security	VOA Nairobi Bureau
VOA	IAA Anti-Narcotics INL/State investment funding	SCA Division
VOA	City of London	London Bureau

VOA	Tandem Property Asset Management LLP	London Bureau
VOA	HA Design (Dalet)	CDO

From: [Kelu Chao](#)
To: [VOA Program Office](#)
Subject: Fwd: Requesting approval for a contingency realignment of the VOA Macedonian Service's programming
Date: Wednesday, August 19, 2020 8:44:06 AM
Attachments: [MACEDONIAN CONTINGENCY REQUEST-am.docx](#)
[ATT00001.htm](#)

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: (b) (6)
Date: August 14, 2020 at 4:59:34 PM EDT
To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6), Elez Biberaj
(b) (6)
(b) (6)
(b) (6)
(b) (6)
Subject: Requesting approval for a contingency realignment of the VOA Macedonian Service's programming

Kelu,

In anticipation of challenges the Service will face with looming departure of two of its essential team members due to their J-1 visa expiration, we kindly request approval to temporarily shorten the TV programming and stop its satellite distribution.

Please find the memo attached.

Thank you and have a great weekend.

(b) (6)
Internet Managing Editor
Fur Asia Division
(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Barbara Brady](#) (b) (6)
Cc: [Kelu Chao](#)
Subject: FW: Requesting approval for a contingency realignment of the VOA Macedonian Service's programming
Date: Wednesday, August 19, 2020 9:50:30 AM
Attachments: [MACEDONIAN CONTINGENCY REQUEST-am.docx](#)
[ATT00001.htm](#)

What will the long-term impact be if we do this?

From: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Sent: Wednesday, August 19, 2020 8:44 AM
To: VOA Program Office (b) (6)
Subject: Fwd: Requesting approval for a contingency realignment of the VOA Macedonian Service's programming

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: (b) (6)
Date: August 14, 2020 at 4:59:34 PM EDT
To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6), Elez Biberaj
(b) (6)
(b) (6)
Subject: Requesting approval for a contingency realignment of the VOA Macedonian Service's programming

Kelu,

In anticipation of challenges the Service will face with looming departure of two of its essential team members due to their J-1 visa expiration, we kindly request approval to temporarily shorten the TV programming and stop its satellite distribution.

Please find the memo attached.

Thank you and have a great weekend.

(b) (6)
Internet Managing Editor
Eurasia Division
(b) (6)

From: [Kelu Chao](#)
To: (b) (6)
Cc: [Kelu Chao](#)
Subject: FW: Russia-Foreign Agents Meeting Notes
Date: Wednesday, August 19, 2020 5:27:40 PM
Attachments: [VOA-Russia Registration Notes-Dec-13-2019.docx](#)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Friday, December 13, 2019 2:27 PM
To: Amanda Bennett (b) (6)
Cc: Kelu Chao (b) (6); Lillian Cheng (b) (6); Elez Biberaj (b) (6); David Kligerman <dkligerman@usagm.gov>
Subject: Russia-Foreign Agents Meeting Notes

Hi Amanda,

We discussed options regarding the new Russian law requiring registration of journalists as foreign agents today.

Please see the attached. Matt Walsh is putting this on the top of next Tuesday's ICC meeting.

FYI,

(b) (6)

ATTENDEES: Kelu Chao, (b) (6), Lillian Cheng, (b) (6), Elez Biberaj, (b) (6)

Overview: Russia's new regulations for registration of journalists as foreign agents targets VOA and RFE/RL and anyone who may work for a foreign news organization. Journalists may be fined up to \$78,000 and jailed if they violate the new law. VOA currently has sixteen contractors/stringers working throughout Russia and most of them are Russian citizens. How can VOA respond with the goals of maintaining VOA's presence and brand in Russia and protecting those who file stories for VOA?

(b) (5)



(b) (5)

(b) (6)

VOA

Senior Advisor to the Director

330 Independence Ave., SW

Washington, DC 20237

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [VOA Program Office](#)
Subject: Draft Impact Report on Hiring Freeze and J-1 Visas
Date: Friday, August 21, 2020 2:34:10 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[VOA Impact Assessment of Freeze on Hires and J1 Visas.docx](#)
[VOA Impact Assessment of Freeze on Hires and J1 Visas.pdf](#)

Hi All,

Attached is a draft version of the compiled impact report regarding the hiring freeze and the non-renewal of J-1 visas for your comments/feedback before we submit it to Elez. Let me know if you have any questions!

Best,

(b) (6)



PMF Management and Program Analyst
Voice of America Programming Directorate
U.S. Agency for Global Media

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: (b) (6); [VOA Program Office](#)
Subject: RE: Draft Impact Report on Hiring Freeze and J-1 Visas
Date: Friday, August 21, 2020 3:00:35 PM
Attachments: [VOA Impact Assessment of Freeze on Hires and J1 Visas \(b\) \(6\) Edits\).docx](#)
[image001.png](#)

Hi (b) (6),

Thanks for doing this. It looks great. I've attached a word doc with a bunch of editing comments. I put the suggested corrections in my comments.

Let me know what else I can do.

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Friday, August 21, 2020 2:34 PM
To: VOA Program Office (b) (6)
Subject: Draft Impact Report on Hiring Freeze and J-1 Visas

Hi All,

Attached is a draft version of the compiled impact report regarding the hiring freeze and the non-renewal of J-1 visas for your comments/feedback before we submit it to Elez. Let me know if you have any questions!

Best,

(b) (6)



PMF Management and Program Analyst
Voice of America Programming Directorate
U.S. Agency for Global Media

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [VOA Program Office](#)
Subject: RE: Draft Impact Report on Hiring Freeze and J-1 Visas
Date: Friday, August 21, 2020 3:28:32 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[VOA Impact Assessment of Freeze on Hires and J1 Visas \(Revised\).docx](#)
[VOA Impact Assessment of Freeze on Hires and J1 Visas \(Revised\).pdf](#)

Update: attached is a new version with Tim's edits incorporated. Please review this one instead!

Thanks everyone,

(b) (6)



PMF Management and Program Analyst
Voice of America Programming Directorate
U.S. Agency for Global Media

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Friday, August 21, 2020 2:34 PM
To: VOA Program Office (b) (6)
Subject: Draft Impact Report on Hiring Freeze and J-1 Visas

Hi All,

Attached is a draft version of the compiled impact report regarding the hiring freeze and the non-renewal of J-1 visas for your comments/feedback before we submit it to Elez. Let me know if you have any questions!

Best,

(b) (6)



PMF Management and Program Analyst
Voice of America Programming Directorate
U.S. Agency for Global Media

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Redacted]
Cc: [Kelu Chao](#)
Subject: RE: Draft Impact Report on Hiring Freeze and J-1 Visas
Date: Friday, August 21, 2020 3:59:25 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[VOA Impact Assessment of Freeze on Hires and J1 Visas.docx](#)

(b) (5)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Friday, August 21, 2020 2:34 PM
To: VOA Program Office (b) (6)
Subject: Draft Impact Report on Hiring Freeze and J-1 Visas

Hi All,

Attached is a draft version of the compiled impact report regarding the hiring freeze and the non-renewal of J-1 visas for your comments/feedback before we submit it to Elez. Let me know if you have any questions!

Best,

(b) (6)



PMF Management and Program Analyst
Voice of America Programming Directorate
U.S. Agency for Global Media

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6); Kelu Chao
Subject: Re: Hiring Priorities Questions
Date: Thursday, August 27, 2020 8:58:47 AM
Attachments: [VOA Hiring Priorities \(August 2020\) EAP \(Edit V3\).xlsx](#)

Hi (b) (6),

I've switched a few around. FYI, the 2 Burmese PSCs have been approved in FY20, and they are ready to start. So, if I may, they're a low hanging fruit, just needs the CEO's approval. They are both US citizens.

Let me know if you have any questions.

Thank you,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Thursday, August 27, 2020 8:47 AM
To: (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6); Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Subject: RE: Hiring Priorities Questions

Good morning all,

Will you be reviewing this and sending me an update? Or should I use this list as it is? I'm attaching again if you need – I added the list of Mandarin vacancies from (b) (6) minus a few. A question came up also regarding the News center overseas bureau positions – one was posted for Beijing and the News Center says it should be on the EAP list...shall I add it? I need to finalize the EAP by 10 am this morning.

Thanks,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Wednesday, August 26, 2020 12:57 PM
To: (b) (6); (b) (6)
(b) (6) <kechao@voanews.com>
Subject: RE: Hiring Priorities Questions

All,

I've attached our updated EAP Hires Priority list – please feel free to move the positions up or down so they are in rank order of priority to fill and return to me soonest.

Thanks.

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Wednesday, August 26, 2020 10:21 AM

To: (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)

(b) (6); Kelu Chao (b) (6)

Subject: Re: Hiring Priorities Questions

Mandarin has the following 10 unfilled vacancies, all resulting from separations from the last three years:

- (b) (6) (GS-14, Mandarin Service Chief)
- (b) (6) (GS-13, Digital team leader)
- (b) (6) (GS-13, senior reporter)
- (b) (6) (GS-12, IB)
- (b) (6) (GS-13, senior editor)
- (b) (6) (GS-13, senior editor)
- (b) (6) (GS-13, senior reporter)
- (b) (6) (GS-13, senior editor)
- (b) (6) (GS-12, radio production specialist)
- (b) (6) (GS-12, IB)

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Wednesday, August 26, 2020 10:11 AM

To: (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)

(b) (6); Kelu Chao (b) (6)

Subject: Re: Hiring Priorities Questions

Thank you, (b) (6). Yes, please add them if you have the information. Let me know.

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)

Sent: Wednesday, August 26, 2020 9:49 AM

To: (b) (6)

Cc:

(b) (6); Kelu Chao (b) (6)

Subject: Hiring Priorities Questions

Good morning (b) (6),

I've attached our edits to the Hiring Priorities list you sent us for EAP and have some questions. There are a lot more vacancies in Mandarin than listed on the sheet – would you like to add them? Or should I? I've noted them next to the first entry. Further, I added (b) (6) – the recent Vietnamese selection that is not yet on board due to the hiring freeze; please prioritize where you want (b) (6) on the list. I also have some questions on the Lao entry – when was this position lost? Not a J-1 visa holder? And last, I added the citizen conversion for Burmese that is not yet posted because of the freeze – no need to prioritize that one.

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: (b) (6); [VOA Program Office](#)
Subject: Re: Draft Impact Report on Hiring Freeze and J-1 Visas
Date: Friday, August 21, 2020 4:30:37 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#) (b) (6)
[VOA Impact Assessment of Freeze on Hires and J1 Visas \(Revised\)](#) (b) (6) docx
[VOA Impact Assessment of Freeze on Hires and J1 Visas \(Revised\)](#) (b) (6) docx

(b) (6)

I made a few edits as well. See attached.

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Friday, August 21, 2020 3:28 PM
To: VOA Program Office (b) (6)
Subject: RE: Draft Impact Report on Hiring Freeze and J-1 Visas

Update: attached is a new version with (b) (6)'s edits incorporated. Please review this one instead!

Thanks everyone,

(b) (6)



PMF Management and Program Analyst
Voice of America Programming Directorate
U.S. Agency for Global Media

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Friday, August 21, 2020 2:34 PM
To: VOA Program Office (b) (6)
Subject: Draft Impact Report on Hiring Freeze and J-1 Visas

Hi All,

Attached is a draft version of the compiled impact report regarding the hiring freeze and the non-renewal of J-1 visas for your comments/feedback before we submit it to Elez. Let me know if you have any questions!

Best,

(b) (6)

(b) (6)



PMF Management and Program Analyst
Voice of America Programming Directorate
U.S. Agency for Global Media

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Kelu Chao](#); (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Re: Hiring Priorities Questions
Date: Monday, August 31, 2020 5:17:21 PM
Attachments: [VOA Hiring Priorities \(August 2020\) EAP \(Edit V4\).xlsx](#)

Hi (b) (6), Kelu,
Please find the new spreadsheet attached, as discussed.

I added 4 VOA Korean, and 3 VOA Indonesian.

Thank you,
(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Thursday, August 27, 2020 9:21 AM
To: (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6); (b) (6); Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Subject: RE: Hiring Priorities Questions

This looks good to me. I will add the Beijing correspondent position to the list, perhaps after (b) (6)'s replacement?

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Thursday, August 27, 2020 8:58 AM
To: (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6); (b) (6); Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Subject: Re: Hiring Priorities Questions

Hi (b) (6),
I've switched a few around. FYI, the 2 Burmese PSCs have been approved in FY20, and they are ready to start. So, if I may, they're a low hanging fruit, just needs the CEO's approval. They are both US citizens.

Let me know if you have any questions.

Thank you,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Thursday, August 27, 2020 8:47 AM
To: (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6); Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Subject: RE: Hiring Priorities Questions

Good morning all,

Will you be reviewing this and sending me an update? Or should I use this list as it is? I'm attaching again if you need – I added the list of Mandarin vacancies from Jing minus a few. A question came up also regarding the News center overseas bureau positions – one was posted for Beijing and the News Center says it should be on the EAP list...shall I add it? I need to finalize the EAP by 10 am this morning.

Thanks,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Wednesday, August 26, 2020 12:57 PM
To: (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6); Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Subject: RE: Hiring Priorities Questions

All,

I've attached our updated EAP Hires Priority list – please feel free to move the positions up or down so they are in rank order of priority to fill and return to me soonest.

Thanks.

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Wednesday, August 26, 2020 10:21 AM
To: (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6); Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Subject: Re: Hiring Priorities Questions

Mandarin has the following 10 unfilled vacancies, all resulting from separations from the last

three years:

- (b) (6) (GS-14, Mandarin Service Chief)
- (b) (6) (GS-13, Digital team leader)
- (b) (6) (GS-13, senior reporter)
- (b) (6) (GS-12, IB)
- (b) (6) (GS-13, senior editor)
- (b) (6) (GS-13, senior editor)
- (b) (6) (GS-13, senior reporter)
- (b) (6) (GS-13, senior editor)
- (b) (6) (GS-12, radio production specialist)
- (b) (6) (GS-12, IB)

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Wednesday, August 26, 2020 10:11 AM
To: (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6); Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Subject: Re: Hiring Priorities Questions

Thank you, Carol. Yes, please add them if you have the information. Let me know.

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Wednesday, August 26, 2020 9:49 AM
To: (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6); Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Subject: Hiring Priorities Questions

Good morning (b) (6)

I've attached our edits to the Hiring Priorities list you sent us for EAP and have some questions. There are a lot more vacancies in Mandarin than listed on the sheet – would you like to add them? Or should I? I've noted them next to the first entry. Further, I added (b) (6) – the recent Vietnamese selection that is not yet on board due to the hiring freeze; please prioritize where you want (b) (6) on the list. I also have some questions on the Lao entry – when was this position lost? Not a J-1 visa holder? And last, I added the citizen conversion for Burmese that is not yet posted because

of the freeze – no need to prioritize that one.

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: (b) (6)
Cc: [Kelu Chao](#)
Subject: FW: Requesting approval for a contingency realignment of the VOA Macedonian Service's programming
Date: Wednesday, August 19, 2020 9:50:30 AM
Attachments: [MACEDONIAN CONTINGENCY REQUEST-am.docx](#)
[ATT00001.htm](#)

What will the long-term impact be if we do this?

From: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Sent: Wednesday, August 19, 2020 8:44 AM
To: VOA Program Office (b) (6)
Subject: Fwd: Requesting approval for a contingency realignment of the VOA Macedonian Service's programming

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: (b) (6)
Date: August 14, 2020 at 4:59:34 PM EDT
To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
(b) (6)
(b) (6) Elez Biberaj
Subject: Requesting approval for a contingency realignment of the VOA Macedonian Service's programming

Kelu,

In anticipation of challenges the Service will face with looming departure of two of its essential team members due to their J-1 visa expiration, we kindly request approval to temporarily shorten the TV programming and stop its satellite distribution.

Please find the memo attached.

Thank you and have a great weekend.

(b) (6)
Internet Managing Editor
Eurasia Division

(b) (6)

From: [Kelu Chao](#)
To: (b) (6)
Cc: [Kelu Chao](#)
Subject: FW: Russia-Foreign Agents Meeting Notes
Date: Wednesday, August 19, 2020 5:27:40 PM
Attachments: [VOA-Russia Registration Notes-Dec-13-2019.docx](#)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Friday, December 13, 2019 2:27 PM
To: Amanda Bennett (b) (6)
Cc: Kelu Chao (b) (6); Lillian Cheng
(b) (6); Elez Biberaj
(b) (6); David Kligerman (b) (6)
Subject: Russia-Foreign Agents Meeting Notes

Hi Amanda,

We discussed options regarding the new Russian law requiring registration of journalists as foreign agents today.

Please see the attached. Matt Walsh is putting this on the top of next Tuesday's ICC meeting.

FYI,

(b) (6)

ATTENDEES: Kelu Chao, (b) (6), Lillian Cheng, (b) (6), Elez Biberaj, (b) (6)

Overview: Russia's new regulations for registration of journalists as foreign agents targets VOA and RFE/RL and anyone who may work for a foreign news organization. Journalists may be fined up to \$78,000 and jailed if they violate the new law. VOA currently has sixteen contractors/stringers working throughout Russia and most of them are Russian citizens. How can VOA respond with the goals of maintaining VOA's presence and brand in Russia and protecting those who file stories for VOA?

(b) (5)



(b) (5)



(b) (6)



VOA

Senior Advisor to the Director

330 Independence Ave., SW

Washington, DC 20237

(b) (6)



From: [Frank Wuco](#)
To: [Elez Biberaj](#); [Michael Pack](#)
Cc: [Emily Pauline Newman](#); [Diane Cullo](#); [Kelu Chao](#); (b) (6)
Subject: RE: VOA Urgency -- Hausa, Spanish Contract/Programming
Date: Thursday, September 10, 2020 2:28:22 PM

Thank you, Elez. Reviewing now.

From: Elez Biberaj (b) (6)
Sent: Thursday, September 10, 2020 11:16 AM
To: Michael Pack (b) (6)
Cc: Frank Wuco (b) (6); Emily Pauline Newman (b) (6); Diane Cullo (b) (6); Kelu Chao (b) (6); Elez Biberaj (b) (6)
Subject: VOA Urgency -- Hausa, Spanish Contract/Programming

Michael:

As a follow up to our meeting yesterday, I want to bring to your attention two critically important actions that will have a significantly adverse impact on VOA audiences and the agency's mission. If no decision is made by USAGM by September 13, for requested resources in two areas, VOA will be forced to terminate or reduce crucial programming in Nigeria and Venezuela, only weeks before the U.S. presidential election. The following two actions would be taken:

(b) (5)



While I understand USAGM is currently reviewing all contracts, I urge you in the strongest possible terms to take a close look at these two urgent matters. **I respectfully request that you approve J-1 Visa extensions for six employees in VOA's Hausa Service and approve 4 PSCs and the 13 POV contracts in the VOA Spanish service.**

VOA remains ready to further brief decision-makers should there be any questions.

Background

VOA Hausa to Nigeria—In northern Nigeria, VOA reaches 20 million adults per week in a country split between a Christian south and Muslim north, with vicious terrorist groups in the north constantly undermining the country's democratic aspirations. The Africa Division made extensive efforts to identify U.S. citizens to fill these jobs and only moved on to Nigerians after those efforts failed.

VOA broadcasts to Nigeria, Africa's most populous nation, in the Hausa language. Its content is one of the few unifiers between the southern Christian part of Nigeria and the Muslim north. With a measured weekly audience of 20 million, it serves a continent that is on the front lines of major U.S. government initiatives against global terrorism and counters a

Chinese Communist influence initiative that is undermining U.S. interests. VOA's Hausa brand in Africa is strong and VOA is seen as an example of U.S. leadership in the region.

VOA Hausa language television broadcasts currently air on 25 TV stations in Nigeria and Niger. The departure of six J-1 visa employees (TV Executive Producer, TV news anchor, chief political correspondent, copy editor, lead video editor, and social media coordinator) will literally shut down the production of the weekly news magazine *Taskar* and the weekly health program *Lafiyarmu*. And, Several Hausa language radio programs targeting young audiences will also be eliminated.

VOA has no realistic alternatives with regard to recruitment of VOA Hausa speakers in the near term, even if there were highly qualified candidates in the U.S it would take approximately six months to hire them. This would be extremely disruptive to VOA's programming to Nigeria. Recruitment of these J-1 individuals took place only after federal job postings in the United States by VOA and USAGM failed to identify qualified Hausa-proficient U.S.-citizen journalists.

VOA Spanish to Venezuela – In Venezuela we are facing a lost opportunity with the newly acquired USAGM Barranquilla Medium Wave station. In Venezuela, we reach we reach 16% of the country's adults. VOA Spanish is the largest single contributor to USAGM audiences and its impact across Latin America is enormous for such a modestly-funded service, reaching 62 million adults weekly. USAID gave USAGM \$1 million for the new medium wave station in Colombia that can reach over the border, while Congress gave the service dedicated funds to launch new digital and broadcast products to focus on the huge damage to the country under the Madura regime.

VOA's Spanish service stands to lose, four PSCs and 13 POVS (Contractors). The service's graphic artists, shooters, fixers and other stringers on Paydesk and StoryHunter will also be lost. All of these people have existing contracts that we are requesting renewals for. It does not involve new hires. In the case of the POV's the request is to exercise an option year extension for funding. In the case of the Paydesk and Story Hunter contracts, these have not been renewed. These contracts are renewed on a yearly basis. As a result of inaction, the daily radio program for Venezuela that was slated to coincide with the beginning of the contract for the new Barranquilla Medium Wave station in Colombia has been canceled. All of USAGM's year-long efforts to pay for and secure a radio transmitter for radio distribution in Venezuela will be lost. Plans to do a weekly television program for Central America have also been canceled.

Since seventeen Spanish contractors have not been renewed by USAGM VOA Spanish reduced shifts and original news coverage. It also stopped Venezuela YouTube Channel, and Venezuela WhatsApp content distribution to key affiliates. Continued inaction will force the Service to cut back or eliminate more programming, beginning September 13, including its daily targeted radio content on the new MW station about Venezuela and for Venezuela.

These Latin America requests are linked to external funding and a strategic need already recognized by the White House, State Department and Congress. Failure to sustain and enhance VOA Spanish programming to Venezuela will only benefit international media competitors from China and Russia, which each have their own Spanish language services providing content to Latin American media – America's rivals will increasingly become the dominant voices on the continent.

Both of these countries are critical to U.S. interests. Our presence in Nigeria and Venezuela make a strong statement about our country's commitment to freedom and democracy and carries America's story to places where the narrative about the United States is constantly distorted. Killing these programs may allay your concerns about bad actors entering our employ, but it introduces enormous new risks for U.S. interests around the world. There are direct, and real-world consequences to these terminations.

Thank you.
Elez

Dr. Elez Biberaj
Acting Director
Voice of America
330 Independence Avenue, SW

(b) (6)

Washington, D.C. 20237

(b) (6)

Mobile

(b) (6)



A Free Press Matters

From: (b) (6)
To: [Kelu Chao](#)
Subject: FTA waiting to hire an anchor
Date: Tuesday, September 15, 2020 12:50:27 PM

International Broadcaster (Multimedia) (French) was advertised in June 2019.

Certificates of Eligibles issued August 2019 qualified 11 U.S. citizens and 17 non-citizens.

U.S. Citizen (b) (6) did not reply to an interview request. Interviews began in September 2019 with all other U.S. citizen candidates and with a selection of non-citizen candidates. Two citizens and two non-citizens were selected.

Non-citizen (b) (6) was selected in February 2020.

(b) (6) is waiting for (b) (6) J-1 visa interview.

(b) (6) worked four years for (b) (6) reporting on current affairs issues including gender discrimination in media. (b) (6) gained (b) (6) radio experience with (b) (6) in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, and has worked since 2017 for the (b) (6) in Dakar, where (b) (6) regularly conducts on-camera interviews with regional newsmakers and writes well-considered scripts for radio and television.

(b) (6) placed first in (b) (6) class at (b) (6) and has consistently demonstrated a commitment to balanced news reporting and to developing new program ideas for younger audiences, as demonstrated, in part, by (b) (6) "highlighting emerging African entrepreneurs."

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From: [Kelu Chao](#)
To: (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6); [Kelu Chao](#)
Subject: RE: GAO followup
Date: Thursday, September 17, 2020 6:21:20 PM
Attachments: [VOA Impact Assessment of Freeze on Hires and J1 Visas.docx](#)
[CONSEQUENCES - VOA Africa Division.docx](#)

Here are the two documents!

From: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Sent: Thursday, September 17, 2020 6:20 PM
To: (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
(b) (6); Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Subject: RE: GAO followup

(b) (6),

Please see two documents on

- 1) a compilation list of impacts that the freeze on J1/Contract/Hiring has had/is having on VOA.
- 2) Negative impact in Africa

Let us know if you have more questions.

Best,
Kelu

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Thursday, September 17, 2020 12:45 PM
To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
(b) (6)
Subject: RE: GAO followup

Great; thanks so much, Kelu.

(b) (6)

From: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Sent: Wednesday, September 16, 2020 10:57 PM
To: (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
(b) (6)
Subject: Re: GAO followup

Hi (b) (6) is on vacation until next week. I will send you USAGM Freeze's negative impact on VOA programming tomorrow. You can also ask (b) (6) and (b) (6), as they may have different account.

Best,
Kelu

Sent from my iPhone

On Sep 16, 2020, at 9:21 PM, (b) (6) wrote:

Hi (b) (6),

Thank you very much for the information you sent last week. I apologize for my late response.

Another thing we had discussed obtaining from you was a list of impacts that the freeze on new contracts and technology migrations has had/is having on VOA. If you haven't had a chance to compile this information for us yet, would it be appropriate to direct this question to (b) (6) and (b) (6)? We have a meeting on resource issues scheduled with them on Friday afternoon.

Best,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)

Sent: Friday, September 11, 2020 6:55 PM

To: (b) (6)

Cc: Kelu Chao (b) (6)

(b) (6)

Subject: RE: GAO followup

(b) (5)



From: (b) (6)
Sent: Friday, September 11, 2020 6:47 PM
To: (b) (6)
Cc: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
(b) (6)
Subject: RE: GAO followup

Hello (b) (6),
I am sorry for the delay in responding. I have attached the J-1 list and a larger list of civil service employees working at VOA on visas. Both are without Personally Identifying Information. You have asked more good questions! Please see below for the answers (in *italics*).
Best regards,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Thursday, September 10, 2020 1:47 PM
To: (b) (6)
Cc: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
(b) (6)
Subject: RE: GAO followup

Hi (b) (6),

I wanted to check in on the status of our request from our meeting in July, but also to add a few questions (please see below). If you think it would be more appropriate for us to pose these questions to Dr. Biberaj, please let us know how you would like us to approach setting up a meeting with him.

(b) (5)

First, since the change in USAGM leadership this summer, has USAGM established (or communicated intent to establish) any new processes for investigating complaints about or lapses in journalists' adherence to professional and journalistic standards, essentially the role of the standards editor? If so, will you provide a description of the new process and any supporting documents that USAGM has issued?

(b) (5)

(b) (5)



Second, can you describe the process used to investigate and the disciplinary actions taken by USAGM or VOA as a result of the VOA Urdu Biden story and any other similar incidents that have transpired since the change in USAGM leadership this summer?

(b) (5)



(b) (5)



Third, since the change in USAGM leadership, has USAGM participated in or requested to participate in any news- or content-related meetings at VOA? Has USAGM leadership requested that VOA run any specific content?

(b) (5)



As always, we would happy to schedule time to discuss these and any other issues by phone.

Best,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Wednesday, August 26, 2020 5:20 PM
To: (b) (6)
Cc: Kelu Chao, (b) (6)
(b) (6)
Subject: Re: followup

(b) (6),

I did. Sorry! I'm away from the office right now but will send them all tomorrow!

(b) (6)

On Aug 26, 2020, at 2:02 PM, (b) (6) wrote:

Hi (b) (6),

I wanted to check in to see if you had a chance to pull any of the requested documents for us. I imagine things continue to very busy at this time. Do you think you could aim to have something by 9/11? We're also happy to take what we can as things become available. At around time, we'll be starting our process of pulling together what we have (to see what we can say) and identify any additional documents/information we may need to request.

Also, can you help me with contact information for the Acting VOA Director and the CDO?

- Regarding the Acting Director, could you let me know the best way to request a meeting?
- When we spoke with (b) (6) earlier this month, he mentioned that someone named (b) (6) was currently acting as the CDO. Could you provide his contact information?

Thank you and I hope you are well!

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Friday, July 31, 2020 9:49 PM
To: (b) (6)
Cc: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Subject: RE: followup

(b) (6),

Thank you so much for reaching out and for the very insightful discussion yesterday.

One thing I neglected to request is information for setting up a meeting with VOA's acting director (e.g., his assistant's contact information). Because we have met with each of the outgoing network heads, we would like to attempt to speak with the current ones as well. Also, with the departure of VOA's CDO, is there someone who is currently conducting the work of the CDO?

In terms of the overall document request, please send what you have as they become available. If you could provide what you can over the next 2-3 weeks, that would be helpful. I don't anticipate this happening, but I'll let you know if anything becomes more pressing than the others and ask you to prioritize, if necessary.

Thank you again and have a wonderful weekend!

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Friday, July 31, 2020 4:45 PM
To: (b) (6)
Cc: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Subject: followup

CAUTION EXTERNAL EMAIL: Do not click on any links or open any attachments unless you trust the sender and/or know the content is safe. If you are suspicious of the e-mail, click on the Report Phishing button.

Hi (b) (6)

It was good speaking with you and the team yesterday. I owe you a bunch of stuff. I'll get it to you next week, and hope that works for you.

Meantime, please let me know if there are other things you need, or if there are some things you need more quickly than others.

Best regards,

(b)

From: (b) (6)
To: Elez Biberaj; Kelu Chao
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: VOA Burmese Lost another PSC
Date: Wednesday, September 23, 2020 10:49:00 AM

Good morning, Elez, Kelu,

I hope you are well. I'm reaching out to you because one PSC from VOA Burmese has resigned. Meanwhile, the Service is still waiting on approval for 2 PSCs who have been on standby for a couple of months, now -- they are American citizens, and live in the U.S.

VOA Burmese has been reporting on Myanmar's historic election set for November 8, 2020). VOA's reports are carried by at least 4 national TV stations, and has garnered a lot of engagement online. The recent resignation of PSC, (b) (6), has hit the Service quite seriously because (b) (6) was producing contents for Mizzima TV and Fortune TV daily, as well as translating the Editorials.

We seek guidance and support to push the 2 American PSCs to be able to start their position with VOA Burmese.

Please advise.

Thank you,

(b) (6)
Director - East Asia & Pacific Division
330 Independence Ave., SW (b) (6)
Washington, D.C. 20237
Tel: (b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Tuesday, July 14, 2020 7:44 PM
To: (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6); Elez Biberaj (b) (6); Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Subject: Re: Burmese needs new PSCs ASAP to avoid severe disruption in affiliate TV shows

Thank you so much, (b) (6)!

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)

Sent: Tuesday, July 14, 2020 5:43 PM

To: (b) (6)

(b) (6); Elez Biberaj (b) (6)

Cc: (b) (6); Kelu Chao

(b) (6)

Subject: RE: Burmese needs new PSCs ASAP to avoid severe disruption in affiliate TV shows

Hi (b) (6),

This information has been added to the spreadsheet—hopefully we will get approval soon.

Thanks,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)

Sent: Tuesday, July 14, 2020 2:35 PM

To: (b) (6)

(b) (6); Elez Biberaj (b) (6)

Cc: (b) (6); Kelu Chao

(b) (6)

Subject: Re: Burmese needs new PSCs ASAP to avoid severe disruption in affiliate TV shows

Importance: High

Hi (b) (6),

Here are the information:

- Entity: VOA
- Requirement Name(s):
 - (b) (6) (U.S. citizen)
 - (b) (6) (U.S. citizen, current Federal employee, with US Census commission)
- Program Office: VOA Burmese Service
- Requirement Description: expedite the current on-boarding process for two new Burmese PSCs
- Total Obligation Required for this Requirement: Multimedia Journalists Level 2
- Date by which Requirement Must be Processed: ASAP (preferably starts on July 20, 2020)
- Potential Adverse Impact on Agency if Not Processed:
- Recruiting quality Burmese-speaking journalists in the U.S. . We have lost one selectee a few months ago due to the long time to do process (a prolonged time, nearly 3 months, on security screening process) - that she took another job when the security

result came through. This is the second attempt and also facing another unfortunate delay. The situation this time will be more problematic as Burmese Service is anticipation a severe disruption in our TV programming for affiliates in Burma, especially leading up to the Myanmar election in November (5 days after the US election, November 8).

- These candidates are US citizens.
- IQ#: N/A

Thank you,

(b) (6)

Director - East Asia & Pacific Division
330 Independence Ave., SW (b) (6)
Washington, D.C. 20237
Tel: (b) (6)

From: (b) (6)

Sent: Tuesday, July 14, 2020 12:36 PM

To: (b) (6)

(b) (6) Elez Biberaj (b) (6)

Cc: (b) (6); Kelu Chao

(b) (6)

Subject: RE: Burmese needs new PSCs ASAP to avoid severe disruption in affiliate TV shows

Hi (b) (6),

I don't believe these individuals are on the contracting exemption list. If you could provide additional information, I will add them. Here are the categories required for the sheet—I've added information that I know, but I need your help filling in the rest of the information. The USAGM front office has to approve all new hires. Please also include their resumes.

- Entity: VOA
- Requirement Name: (Provide Name of Individuals)
- Program Office: VOA Burmese Service
- Requirement Description: expedite the current on-boarding process for two new Burmese PSCs
- Total Obligation Required for this Requirement: (please provide the PSC level for each individual and I can estimate the cost until the end of the year)
- Date by which Requirement Must be Processed: (Please provide)
- Potential Adverse Impact on Agency if Not Processed: Recruiting new PSCs among Burmese communities in US is very difficult. We have lost one selected candidate a few months ago due to a prolonged time (nearly 3 months) on security screening process -she already took another job when the security result came through. This is the second attempt and also facing an unfortunate delay again. The situation this time will be more problematic as Burmese Service is anticipation a severe disruption in our TV programming for affiliates in Burma due to understaffing. This candidate

is a US citizen (PLEASE CONFIRM THIS IS TRUE)

- IQ#: N/A

Thanks,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Tuesday, July 14, 2020 12:00 PM
To: (b) (6);
Elez Biberaj (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6); Kelu
Chao (b) (6)
Subject: RE: Burmese needs new PSCs ASAP to avoid severe disruption in affiliate TV shows

Thanks, (b) (6).

(b) (6), for our reference, could you please confirm the names of the two pending PSC hires?

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Tuesday, July 14, 2020 11:57 AM
To: (b) (6); Elez Biberaj (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6); Kelu
Chao (b) (6)
(b) (6)
Subject: Re: Burmese needs new PSCs ASAP to avoid severe disruption in affiliate TV shows

Thank you, (b) (6)
I'm adding (b) (6) and (b) (6) here to see if they can help us.

Hi Elez,

I know you're inundated with requests, but these PSCs are an easy issue because (1) the budget has been approved; (2) they have both passed the security checks; (3) they are both in the U.S., no need for J1 visas.

It is particularly important because VOA Burmese has 1 FTE who is in jeopardy of not having her J1 extended (as she waits for her Green Card).

Please advise.

(b) (6)

Director - East Asia & Pacific Division
330 Independence Ave., SW (b) (6)
Washington, D.C. 20237
Tel: (b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Tuesday, July 14, 2020 10:52 AM
To: (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6); Kelu Chao (b) (6); Elez Biberaj (b) (6)
Subject: Burmese needs new PSCs ASAP to avoid severe disruption in affiliate TV shows

(b) (6),

I am requesting your kind assistance to expedite the current on-boarding process for two new Burmese PSCs. We have already received their favorable security screening results since a bit while ago, and are waiting their starting date. One candidate had already informed his current employer for his departure date.

Recruiting new PSCs among Burmese communities in US is very difficult. I had lost one of my selected candidate a few months ago due to a prolonged time (nearly 3 months) on security screening process -she already took another job when the security result came through. This is my second attempt and also facing an unfortunate delay again.

The situation this time will be more problematic as Burmese Service is anticipation a severe disruption in our TV programming for affiliates in Burma when a key TV host/producer (b) (6) has to be placed on unpaid-leave on 24 July afterward.

(b) (6) J-1 visa expires on the day and (b) (6) is still waiting for (b) (6) green card process coming through. Although new PSCs will not be matching (b) (6) capacity, the new PSCs would at least ease the burden of the team if we can train/assimilate them into our working environment in advance. I would like to have the two new PSCs get on-board as earliest as possible.

thanks

(b) (6)

(b) (6)
Chief, Burmese Service
Voice of America
Tel: (b) (6)
Mobile: (b) (6)
Fax: (b) (6)
(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Kelu Chao](#)
Subject: FW: HR Priorities
Date: Tuesday, September 29, 2020 1:21:09 PM

I'm not sure why he does this – makes people think there are other priorities than what you and Elez have agreed on so far....

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Tuesday, September 29, 2020 1:20 PM
To: (b) (6)
(b) (6)
Subject: RE: HR Priorities

Thanks (b) (6) for this input. I can find the other Citizen Conversion names (Persian, Russian, Georgian) but David Kotz in HR is working on getting approval for those (due to OPM regulations/rules) so we won't need to add them to our list of Hiring Priorities just yet.

I gave Elez 6 Temporary Promotions to request approval for thus far (one of which has become effective already), and am working on a couple more that Kelu asked the Divisions to provide. And then we will see if we can ask for the two Career Ladder promotions you list below. Good to pull list together of positions where people are leaving or have left since CEO Pack has been on board, such as Hausa and Korean.

I know that SPOP too is in urgent need to get positions approved and that might be an easier lift given there tend not to be any visa issues.

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Tuesday, September 29, 2020 1:11 PM
To: (b) (6)
(b) (6)
Subject: HR Priorities

I think we need an updated short list of HR priorities to see if we can actually replace some of the folks who have left or are about to leave during Mr. Pack's tenure and get action on some legal requirements.

Priority 1 – GS-9/11/12 International Broadcaster (Multimedia) multiple positions

VOA will lose five? Hausa Service employees by Nov. 12, 2020, if their visas are not renewed, thus crippling the Service's programming:

(b) (6) GS-12

(b) (6) [redacted] GS-12

(b) (6) [redacted] GS-12

(b) (6) [redacted] GS-12

(b) (6) [redacted] (PSC?)

Priority 2 - Career Ladder Promotions

(b) (6) [redacted] GS-9 IT Specialist (VOA Digital Office)

(b) (6) [redacted] GS-11 International Broadcaster (VOA Vietnamese)

Priority 3 - Citizen Conversions

Three employees who have already become U.S. Citizens:

(b) (6) [redacted] GG-12 (Burmese)

(Not sure about the other two names)

Thanks,

(b) (6) [redacted]

From: (b) (6)
To: (b) (6)
Cc: [Kelu Chao](#)
Subject: RE: outside evaluators for the U.S. election
Date: Monday, September 14, 2020 9:49:21 PM

Got any in mind?

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Thursday, September 10, 2020 9:48 AM
To: (b) (6)
Cc: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Subject: RE: outside evaluators for the U.S. election

They need to know the U.S. election and campaign system. Citizens not required, and if it's someone living abroad it may not be a problem (if they are U.S. citizens, for example).

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Thursday, September 10, 2020 12:46 PM
To: (b) (6)
Cc: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Subject: Re: outside evaluators for the U.S. election

They must be journalists, living in the US? With US residence or citizenship?

(b) (6)
Internet Managing Editor
Eurasia Division

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Thursday, September 10, 2020 12:43 PM
To: (b) (6)
Cc: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Subject: outside evaluators for the U.S. election

Hi (b) (6),

We've been asked to hire two outside evaluators fluent in Russian (other languages, too – you are not being targeted!) to look at our U.S. election campaign coverage between now and the Electoral College vote in December. Both should be smart journalists, but one should “lean Democratic Party” and the other should “lean Republican Party.” ASAP, could you please suggest some people we might call (specifying which are more liberal and which are more conservative, so we can ensure a balance)?

Best regards,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: (b) (6)
Cc: [Kelu Chao](#)
Subject: Re: outside evaluators for the U.S. election
Date: Tuesday, September 15, 2020 7:55:56 AM

Yes, I will send you this morning a list with emails and separate them to left and right, indicating citizens and political leaning...

Just need to get it ready, you'll have it shortly.

Get [Outlook for iOS](#)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Monday, September 14, 2020 9:49:16 PM
To: (b) (6)
Cc: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Subject: RE: outside evaluators for the U.S. election

Got any in mind?

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Thursday, September 10, 2020 9:48 AM
To: (b) (6)
Cc: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Subject: RE: outside evaluators for the U.S. election

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From: (b) (6)
Sent: Thursday, September 10, 2020 12:46 PM
To: (b) (6)
Cc: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Subject: Re: outside evaluators for the U.S. election

They must be journalists, living in the US? With US residence or citizenship?

(b) (6)
Internet Managing Editor
Eurasia Division
(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Thursday, September 10, 2020 12:43 PM
To: (b) (6)
Cc: Kelu Chao (b) (6)

Subject: outside evaluators for the U.S. election

Hi (b) [REDACTED],

We've been asked to hire two outside evaluators fluent in Russian (other languages, too – you are not being targeted!) to look at our U.S. election campaign coverage between now and the Electoral College vote in December. Both should be smart journalists, but one should “lean Democratic Party” and the other should “lean Republican Party.” ASAP, could you please suggest some people we might call (specifying which are more liberal and which are more conservative, so we can ensure a balance)?

Best regards,

(b) [REDACTED]

From: (b) (6)
To: [Kelu Chao](#)
Subject: FTA waiting to hire an anchor
Date: Tuesday, September 15, 2020 12:50:27 PM

International Broadcaster (Multimedia) (French) was advertised in June 2019.

Certificates of Eligibles issued August 2019 qualified 11 U.S. citizens and 17 non-citizens.

U.S. Citizen (b) (6) did not reply to an interview request. Interviews began in September 2019 with all other U.S. citizen candidates and with a selection of non-citizen candidates. Two citizens and two non-citizens were selected.

Non-citizen (b) (6) was selected in February 2020.

(b) (6) is waiting for (b) (6) J-1 visa interview.

(b) (6) worked four years for (b) (6) reporting on current affairs issues including gender discrimination in media. (b) (6) gained (b) (6) radio experience with (b) (6) in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, and has worked since 2017 for the (b) (6) in Dakar, where (b) (6) regularly conducts on-camera interviews with regional newsmakers and writes well-considered scripts for radio and television.

(b) (6) placed first in (b) (6) and has consistently demonstrated a commitment to balanced news reporting and to developing new program ideas for younger audiences, as demonstrated, in part, by (b) (6) highlighting emerging African entrepreneurs.

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From: (b) (6)
To: (b) (6)
Cc: [Kelu Chao](#)
Subject: Re: outside evaluators for the U.S. election
Date: Tuesday, September 15, 2020 3:53:38 PM
Attachments: [Candidates-Russian.xlsx](#)

(b) (6)

consider this a living document. Highlighted are people who have done some media evaluations, others are qualified as well.

Some of the neutral ones, like (b) (6), are true experts.

I added emails in the spreadsheet, but please let me know if you need phone numbers etc.

Best,

(b) (6)
Internet Managing Editor
Eurasia Division

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Tuesday, September 15, 2020 7:55 AM
To: (b) (6)
Cc: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Subject: Re: outside evaluators for the U.S. election

Yes, I will send you this morning a list with emails and separate them to left and right, indicating citizens and political leaning...

Just need to get it ready, you'll have it shortly.

Get [Outlook for iOS](#)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Monday, September 14, 2020 9:49:16 PM
To: (b) (6)
Cc: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Subject: RE: outside evaluators for the U.S. election

Got any in mind?

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Thursday, September 10, 2020 9:48 AM
To: (b) (6)

Cc: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Subject: RE: outside evaluators for the U.S. election

They need to know the U.S. election and campaign system. Citizens not required, and if it's someone living abroad it may not be a problem (if they are U.S. citizens, for example).

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Thursday, September 10, 2020 12:46 PM
To: (b) (6)
Cc: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Subject: Re: outside evaluators for the U.S. election

They must be joournalists, living in the US? With US residnece or citizenship?

(b) (6)
Internet Managing Editor
Eurasia Division
(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Thursday, September 10, 2020 12:43 PM
To: (b) (6)
Cc: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Subject: outside evaluators for the U.S. election

H (b) (6),
We've been asked to hire two outside evaluators fluent in Russian (other languages, too – you are not being targeted!) to look at our U.S. election campaign coverage between now and the Electoral College vote in December. Both should be smart journalists, but one should “lean Democratic Party” and the other should “lean Republican Party.” ASAP, could you please suggest some people we might call (specifying which are more liberal and which are more conservative, so we can ensure a balance)?
Best regards,
(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: (b) (6)
Cc: Kelu Chao
Subject: RE: Plus One Launch
Date: Tuesday, September 29, 2020 10:46:19 AM

As long as it's not targeting US citizens.

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Tuesday, September 29, 2020 10:40 AM
To: (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6); Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Subject: Re: Plus One Launch

Ok. Will do.

I asked Kelu if our team members want to share the link with friends/family members to ask them to watch and subscribe, is that ok?

Not sure if we're good to promote it on that level.

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Tuesday, September 29, 2020 9:12 AM
To: (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6); Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Subject: RE: Plus One Launch

I also asked (b) (6) for his people to pull it, so this may duplicate....

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Tuesday, September 29, 2020 9:09 AM
To: (b) (6); Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: RE: Plus One Launch

Please provide us daily traffic and engagement numbers if you can.

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Tuesday, September 29, 2020 5:16 AM
To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Plus One Launch

Hi Kelu and (b) (6),

We launched at 9pm ET on Monday.

This is the youtube link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VimKw5Krgaw>

And this is the Bilibili link: <https://www.bilibili.com/video/BV1N54y1y7XU>

	<p><u>多喝热水？来看美国人是 怎么实现冰水自由的！_哔哩哔哩(゜-゜)つロ干 杯~-bilibili</u></p>
	<p>温水是什么？美国人不懂。美国人对冷水和冷食尤为喜爱，其实“冷”这个词根本不足以概括，“冰”才更为贴切。为何他们酷爱喝冰水？冰水喝着真的更爽吗？来看专业品水师和美国从业医生怎么说。欢迎在评论区给我们留言哦！</p> <p>www.bilibili.com</p>

Will let you know which piece we're thinking for next week.

Thanks.

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: (b) (6)
Cc: Kelu Chao
Subject: Re: Plus One Launch
Date: Tuesday, September 29, 2020 10:54:32 AM

Got it.

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Tuesday, September 29, 2020 10:45 AM
To: (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6); Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Subject: RE: Plus One Launch

As long as it's not targeting US citizens.

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Tuesday, September 29, 2020 10:40 AM
To: (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6); Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Subject: Re: Plus One Launch

Ok. Will do.

I asked Kelu if our team members want to share the link with friends/family members to ask them to watch and subscribe, is that ok?

Not sure if we're good to promote it on that level.

From: (b) (6) >
Sent: Tuesday, September 29, 2020 9:12 AM
To: (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6); Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Subject: RE: Plus One Launch

I also asked (b) (6) for his people to pull it, so this may duplicate....

From: (b) (6)
Sent: Tuesday, September 29, 2020 9:09 AM
To: (b) (6); Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: RE: Plus One Launch

Please provide us daily traffic and engagement numbers if you can.

From: (b) (6)

Sent: Tuesday, September 29, 2020 5:16 AM

To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)

Cc: (b) (6)

Subject: Plus One Launch

Hi Kelu and (b) (6),

We launched at 9pm ET on Monday.

This is the youtube link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VimKw5Krgaw>

And this is the Bilibili link: <https://www.bilibili.com/video/BV1N54y1y7XU>

	<p>多喝热水？来看美国人是 怎么实现冰水自由的！ 哔哩 哔哩 (° - °) つロ 干 杯~-bilibili</p>
	<p>温水是什么？美国人不懂。美国人对冷水和冷食尤为喜爱，其实“冷”这个词根本不足以概括，“冰”才更为贴切。为何他们酷爱喝冰水？冰水喝着真的更爽吗？来看专业品水师和美国从业医生怎么说。欢迎在评论区给我们留言哦！</p> <p>www.bilibili.com</p>

Will let you know which piece we're thinking for next week.

Thanks.

(b) (6)

From: [Kelu Chao](#)
To: [VOA Program Office](#)
Subject: Fwd: Impact of Hiring Freeze on VOA Operations
Date: Tuesday, October 6, 2020 4:10:09 PM
Attachments: [ATT00001.htm](#)
[VOA Impact Assessment October 6, 2020.docx](#)
[ATT00002.htm](#)

FYI

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: (b) (6)
Date: October 6, 2020 at 11:31:01 AM PDT
To: Kelu Chao (b) (6)
Subject: FW: Impact of Hiring Freeze on VOA Operations

For your records.

From: Elez Biberaj (b) (6)
Sent: Tuesday, October 6, 2020 2:14 PM
To: Frank Wuco (b) (6)
Cc: Emily Pauline Newman (b) (6)
VOA Director's Office (b) (6); Elez Biberaj
(b) (6)
Subject: Impact of Hiring Freeze on VOA Operations

Frank:

I am taking the liberty of respectfully reminding the CEO office of the adverse impact that the hiring freeze, the loss of a large number of J-1 visa holder reporters, and the non-approval of further PSC contracts are having on VOA programming and operations. Please find attached details on how these actions have diminished VOA's ability to fulfill its mission. To avoid further diminishment of VOA's ability to provide comprehensive news and information to the global audiences it serves, it is imperative that USAGM take action now to lift the freeze on hiring and other important personnel actions.

Thank you.

Elez

Dr. Elez Biberaj
Acting Director
Voice of America
330 Independence Avenue, SW

(b) (6)

Washington, D.C. 20237

(b) (6)

Mobile

(b) (6)

From: (b) [redacted]
To: (b) Director's Office
Cc: (b) [redacted]; Kelu Chao
Subject: PSC Hiring
Date: Friday, October 16, 2020 6:46:52 PM
Attachments: [SharePoint List \(personnel actions\) 10-16-2020.xlsx](#)

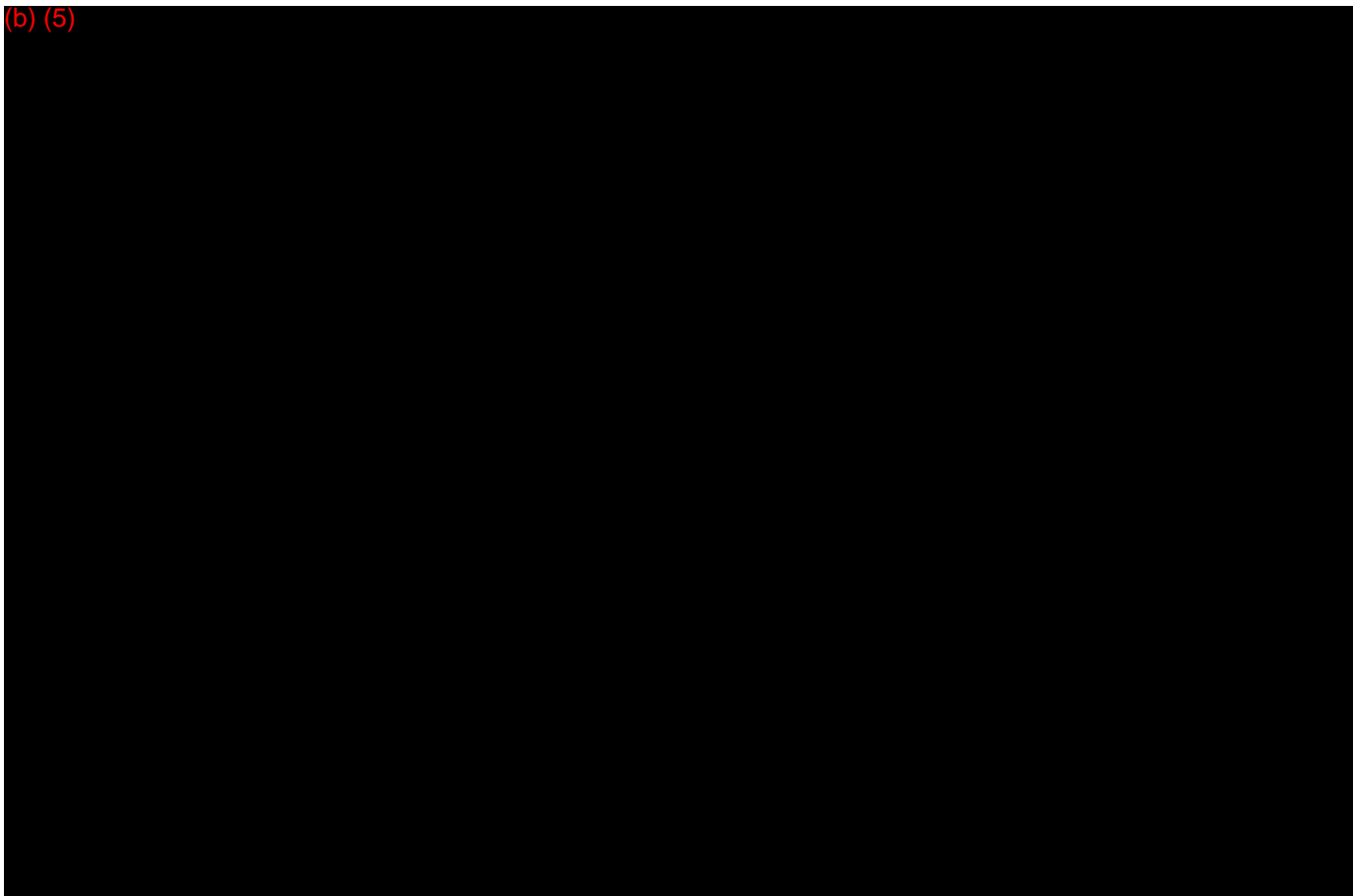
Hi,

I had a conversation with the folks in OMS earlier this evening, and they informed me that Frank had lifted the PSC Hiring Freeze. As long as selectees don't appear on the OPM Security List and are not a J-1, we can bring them onboard. I have drafted the note below for Division Directors, but I wanted to run it by some of you to be sure it is clear and sounds like a workable process.

I welcome your input/edits.

Thanks,

(b) [redacted]



I know this is a lot of information for a Friday night, but I hope this news brightens your weekend. I am sure you have questions, so I plan to provide information/clarification at the Division Director meeting next week.

Thanks,

(b) [redacted]

From: (b)
To: VOA Director's Office; VOA Division Directors
Cc: (b) (6); Kelu Chao
Subject: PSC Hiring
Date: Friday, October 16, 2020 7:09:53 PM
Attachments: SharePoint List (personnel actions)_10-16-2020.xlsx

Division Directors,

The Office of Management Services (OMS) has given us some good news on PSC/POV approvals. We have been cleared to resume the hiring process for PSCs/POVs, as long as the individual selected for a position is not a J-1 Visa holder, and their name is not on the OPM Security List. (As a reminder, the OPM Security List contains names of individuals whose prior background check was done from 2012 – 2019. If an individual's name appears on this list, they require further vetting, and they cannot be brought onboard until cleared by OMS.)

We are also cleared to post new PSC positions. We will continue with the internal VOA approval process for posting to Paycom that we had established before the freeze. Individuals who are selected for positions will still need to be cleared by OMS.

Please note, this does not apply to FTE hiring—that is still frozen.

OMS is using the SharePoint Database to track clearances. I have attached an excel version of the current SharePoint list—sorted for VOA Personnel Actions—for your reference. You can find the full list on SharePoint: <https://bbg.sharepoint.com/sites/offices/management-services/lists/FY2021%20Critical%20Requirements%20List/AllItems.aspx?FilterField1=Modified&FilterValue1=2020%2D10%2D16&FilterDisplay1=10%2F16%2F2020&FilterType1=DateTime&viewid=49ed6a1b%2D918e%2D4ac3%2D836a%2De6289a521dbd>

Some PSC positions already appear on the SharePoint list. Moving forward, in order to facilitate approvals, we will only add a PSC position to the SharePoint list once you have selected an individual to hire. In order to add the request to the list, you should send me the following information, and be sure to include the selected individual's name in the "Requirement Name" field:

- Entity: VOA
- Requirement Name: (Include Selectee Name)
- Program Office: (Division/Language Service)
- Requirement Description:
- Total Obligation Required for this Requirement:
- Date by which Requirement Must be Processed:
- Potential Adverse Impact on Agency if Not Processed:
- J-1 Visa: (Yes/No):
- Additional Details:

For those positions that already appear on the SharePoint List:

1. If an individual had been selected and was in the hiring process, for the most part, they have been marked as approved, and onboarding can continue.
2. There are a few individuals who were in the hiring process but are marked as disapproved and/or as "additional vetting required" on the SharePoint list. These individuals' names appear on the OPM Security List, so they will have to wait until they are cleared from that list before we can move forward.
3. If you have a position on the list, but there is no specific name associated with the position, you will see it is marked as "awaiting approval." You should provide me with the selectee's name as soon as you have it so we can add it to the "Requirement Name" field. OMS can then check the name to be sure it does not appear on the OPM security list. I also need you to confirm that the individual is not a J-1 Visa holder.

Again, moving forward, we will not put PSC positions on the SharePoint list until they have been internally cleared and you have made a selection.

I know this is a lot of information for a Friday night, but I hope this news brightens your weekend. I am sure you have questions, so I plan to provide information/clarification at the Division Director meeting next week.

Thanks,

(b)