



U.S. AGENCY FOR  
GLOBAL MEDIA



# FY 2022 Performance and Accountability Report



# Message from the U.S. Agency for Global Media CEO

On behalf of the U.S. Agency for Global Media (USAGM), I am pleased to present the Performance and Accountability Report (PAR) for Fiscal Year (FY) 2022. This report contains the results of this year's audit of the agency's financial statements, measures performance against FY 2022 objectives, highlights the accomplishments of the past year, and identifies future challenges.

The mission of USAGM is to inform, engage, and connect people around the world in support of freedom and democracy. USAGM accomplishes this mission through two federal entities: the Voice of America (VOA) and the Office of Cuba Broadcasting (OCB); and four USAGM-funded grantees: Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL), Radio Free Asia (RFA), the Middle East Broadcasting Networks (MBN), and the Open Technology Fund (OTF).

In FY 2022, news and information from USAGM's networks reached a worldwide measured audience of over 410 million people each week with programming in 63 languages. This represents an increase of sixteen million people from last year's record measured audience. Its significance is underscored in a global environment where autocratic regimes impede access to independent media or criminalize its consumption.

In FY 2022, USAGM measured audiences grew in key countries and regions around the world. In Nigeria, the audience has nearly doubled since it was last measured in 2018, to over 37 million adults weekly. In Latin America, new data revealed measured audience growth of 22 percent, adding over 12 million new consumers to the number reported in FY 2021. USAGM also continued to reach large audiences in countries of key national security interest, despite draconian crackdowns on free media in markets including Afghanistan, Russia, and Iran.

USAGM's networks pursue its mission by providing global audiences with essential news content on television, radio, internet, and social and mobile platforms. In the face of China's repression of its ethnic minority populations, Russia's invasion of Ukraine, or Iran's suppression of democratic activists, it is RFA, RFE/RL and VOA journalists that help global audiences separate facts from fake news and information. In the Middle East and Cuba, it is MBN and OCB who report on the news local media are not allowed to touch.

USAGM upholds freedom of expression and information as universal human rights. In addition, through OTF, USAGM also upholds the principle that freedom of access to information is also a fundamental human right. In light of ongoing state sponsored disruptions to internet freedom, notably in Russia, China and Iran, USAGM has robustly continued its support for OTF's development and maintenance of technologies that advance Internet freedom and are used by over two billion people worldwide. Visits to USAGM's own web sites through OTF-supported anti-censorship technologies almost doubled in FY 2022, to over 13 million per week.

This report catalogs an outstanding year of award-winning journalism, defense of media freedoms and strategic management toward the goals and objectives of USAGM – in support of the independent journalistic mission of its networks. It is a testament to many brave women and men working under difficult, at times even life-threatening conditions, to share free media with the world.

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

As I begin my term as the USAGM Chief Executive Officer, I want to recognize the agency's accomplishments in FY 2022, and express my deep appreciation for the critical work of USAGM personnel in carrying out the agency's mission by providing truthful, accurate, and fact-based news and information around the world. I am proud to share USAGM's FY 2022 achievements in this report and remain committed to ensure USAGM has the support and resources necessary to fulfill its mission.



Amanda Bennett  
Chief Executive Officer  
November 15, 2022

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# Introduction

## PURPOSE OF THE PERFORMANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY REPORT

The FY 2022 PAR provides performance and financial information for USAGM. This integrated presentation of the agency’s program performance, financial accountability, and managerial effectiveness is intended to assist Congress, the President, and the public in assessing USAGM’s performance relative to its mission and stewardship of the resources entrusted to it.

This report satisfies the reporting requirements of the following legislation:

- Federal Managers’ Financial Integrity Act of 1982 (FMFIA)
- Government Performance and Results Act of 1993 (GPRA)
- Government Management Reform Act of 1994 (GMRA)
- Reports Consolidation Act of 2000
- Accountability of Tax Dollars Act of 2002
- Government Performance and Results Modernization Act of 2010 (GPRMA)
- Grants Oversight and New Efficiency Act of 2016 (GONE)
- The Payment Integrity Information Act of 2019 (PIIA)

## STRUCTURE OF THE PERFORMANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY REPORT

The report includes the following sections:

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

The MD&A is an overview of USAGM, its organizational structure, and its mission. It includes a summary of the agency’s program highlights and accomplishments for FY 2022 and USAGM’s management and performance challenges. The MD&A also includes the results of the agency’s FY 2022 FMFIA internal control review and a section on management assurances.

**Performance Information**

The performance section presents annual program performance information as required by GPRA and GPRMA, and describes the agency's progress in meeting its operational strategic goals. The outcome of the FY 2022 goals and objectives is presented as well as a summary explanation of the verification and validation of performance measures used in the report.

**Financial Information**

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

**Other Information**

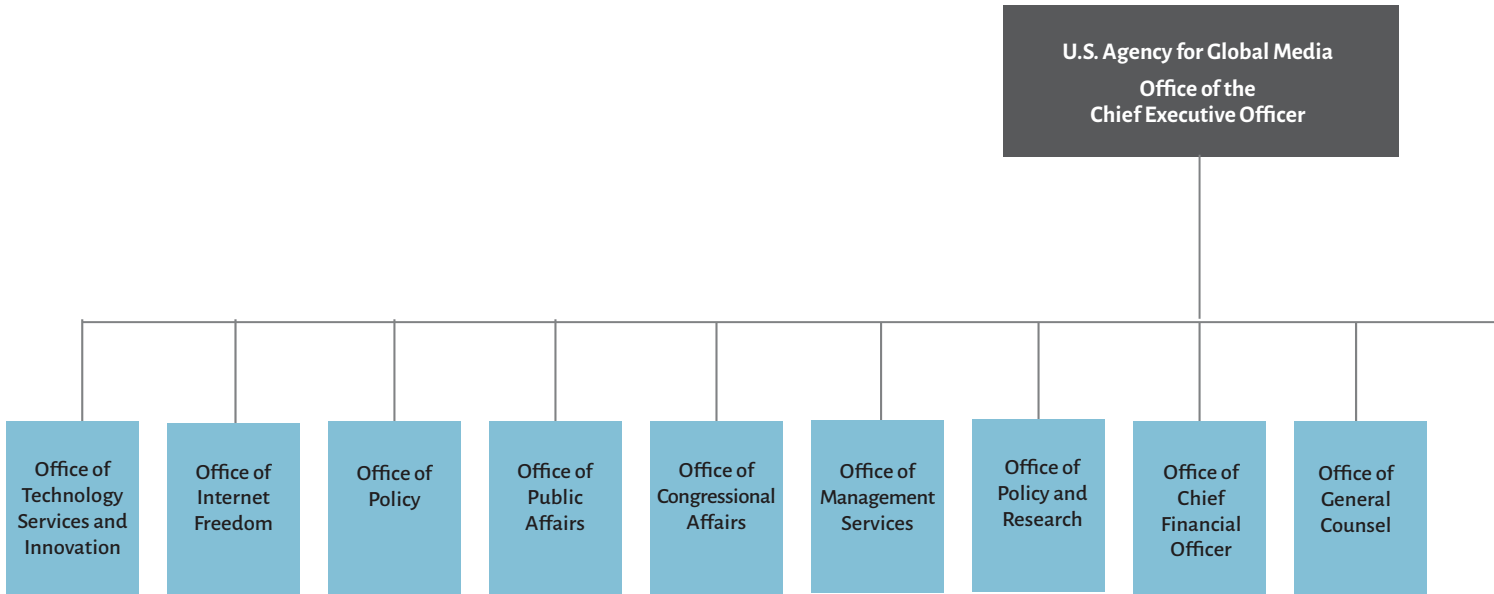
This section contains the Inspector General's statement on management and performance challenges along with USAGM's response. It also contains a summary of the financial statement audit, management assurances, payment integrity, and grants program information.

## Section 1:

### Management's Discussion and Analysis

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## USAGM ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE







## USAGM MISSION

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

USAGM informs, engages, and connects people around the world in support of freedom and democracy through its international media programs. Around the world, an estimated 410 million people consume USAGM programming in a typical week via radio, television, and the internet. All USAGM broadcast services must adhere to the standards and principles of the International Broadcasting Act of 1994, as amended, and support the USAGM mission.

# USAGM Organization

USAGM, originally the Broadcasting Board of Governors, became an independent federal entity on October 1, 1999 as a result of the 1998 Foreign Affairs Reform and Restructuring Act (Public Law 105-277). USAGM was created to administer civilian international media funded by the U.S. government in accordance with the U.S. International Broadcasting Act of 1994, as amended. The FY 2017 National Defense Authorization Act made several significant reforms to the agency's management structure. Primarily, the act authorized the position of a Presidentially-nominated, Senate-confirmed Chief Executive Officer (CEO). Under the new statutory structure, the CEO (or Acting CEO) serves as agency head, assuming all leadership, management, and operational authorities.

USAGM comprises two federal entities – the Voice of America (VOA) and the Office of Cuba Broadcasting (OCB), which broadcasts under the Martí brand – and four grantees wholly funded and overseen by USAGM – Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL), Radio Free Asia (RFA), the Middle East Broadcasting Networks (MBN), and the Open Technology Fund (OTF).

USAGM networks all work to advance the agency's mission but were created by the U.S. Congress to fulfill different roles in their respective markets. Telling America's story and explaining U.S. foreign policy are a significant part of USAGM's mandate. To that end, VOA provides comprehensive regional and world news to their local audiences, while also covering the United States in all its complexity, so that people in countries with at-risk systems might find inspiration in the U.S. model. RFE/RL, RFA, and OCB act as surrogate broadcasters, providing access to professional and fact-based regional and local news in countries subject to press restrictions. MBN serves as a hybrid of the two models, providing accurate and comprehensive news about the region and the United States. OTF works to advance internet freedom worldwide, enabling people to exercise their fundamental human rights online without fear of repressive censorship or surveillance.

# FY 2022 Goals and Objectives

Two overarching strategic goals are set forth in USAGM’s Strategic Plan 2022-2026:



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

## IMPACT OBJECTIVES:

- 1 Produce and curate compelling and impactful content that audiences use and trust
- 2 Prioritize audiences that are information-denied or targets of disinformation and extremist rhetoric
- 3 Reach and engage underserved audiences, including women, youth, and marginalized populations
- 4 Overcome censorship to connect audiences in closed societies
- 5 Optimize program delivery and digital engagement
- 6 Engage and empower local media and populations
- 7 Serve as an authoritative source of information on U.S. news, policy, and society
- 8 Serve as a surrogate news operation, delivering information otherwise not available in local markets

## AGILITY OBJECTIVES:

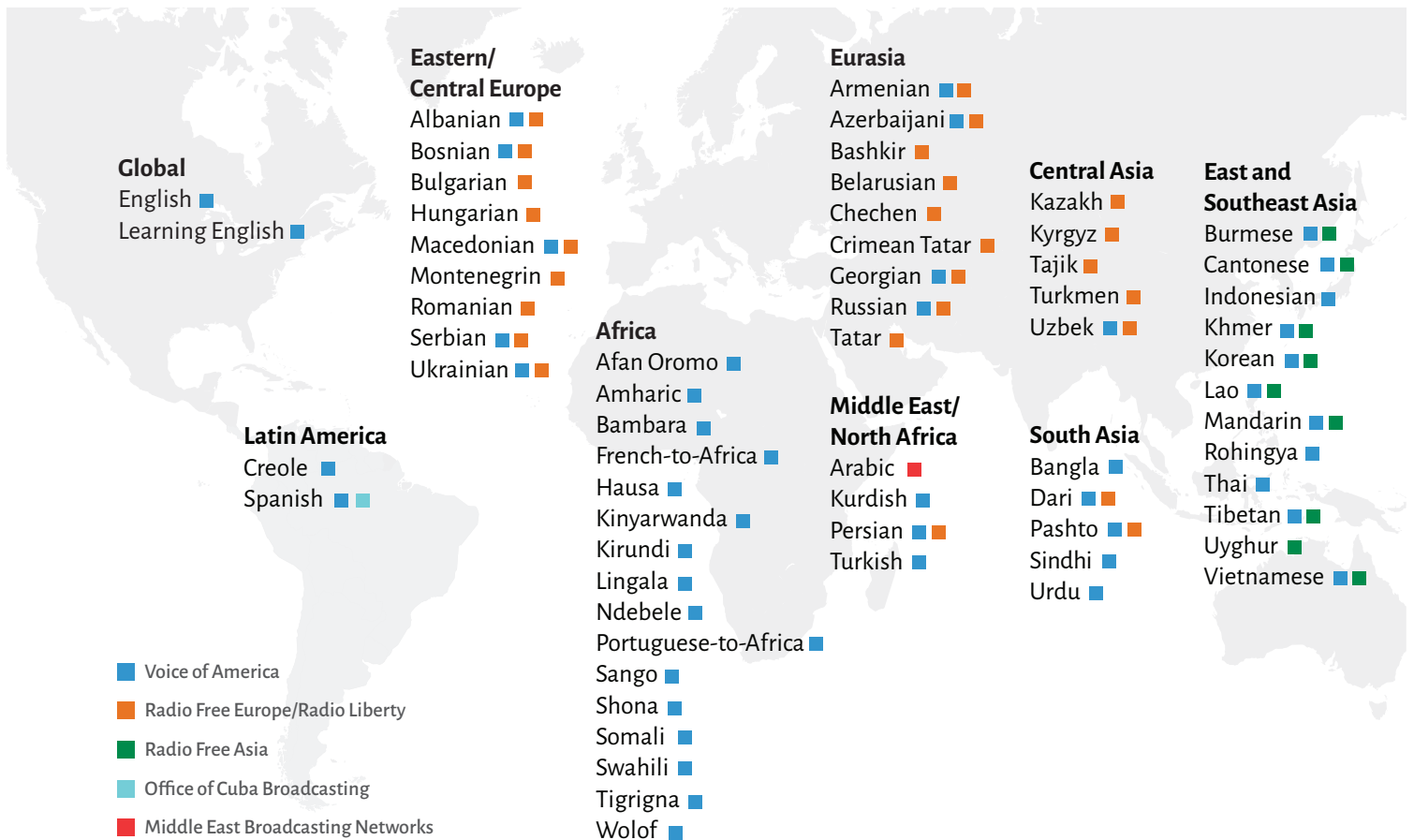
- 1 Manage a nimble, resilient, sustainable, efficient, and modern media enterprise
- 2 Enhance communication and strategic cooperation across USAGM networks and offices
- 3 Enable greater impact and accountability through data-driven evaluation and decision-making
- 4 Foster engagement, development, and equity in a diverse workforce

The agency set performance goals supporting each of the Impact and Agility Objectives. Highlights of USAGM’s performance in FY 2022 are presented on the following pages. Full performance results are presented in Section Two.

# Performance Highlights

Over the past year, USAGM has effectively distributed breaking news, in-depth reporting, and reasoned analysis via traditional and new-media platforms, illustrating that international media is an effective U.S. instrument for providing information to people around the world who are denied it by their own governments and media.

**Around the world, over 410 million people consume USAGM programming in a typical week in 63 languages.**



## KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN FY 2022

### Voice of America

Russia's invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 not only caused chaos and carnage within the country, it also upended regional politics and had destructive second- and third-order impacts worldwide, including food and economic insecurity. VOA's Ukrainian and Russian Services responded with new initiatives and a surge in programming, primarily focusing on breaking news complemented by official and expert perspectives from the United States. VOA Ukrainian and Russian also placed a premium on their live coverage, offering many hours of simultaneously translated official statements, major addresses, policy pronouncements, press conferences, congressional hearings and U.N. Security Council sessions, allowing skeptical audiences to engage with news events in real-time and to judge the situation on the ground for themselves. For example, special programs featuring Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky's March 2022 video address to the United States Congress, reactions from United States lawmakers to his speech, live reports from VOA reporters from the Capitol and the White House, and expert analysis garnered more than 2.4 million views across English, Russian, and Ukrainian digital properties within hours. Across its 48 languages, VOA also provided extensive coverage of the war and its broader global impact, helping audiences worldwide follow the ongoing crisis in Ukraine and better understand how the events relate to their own lives. VOA provided a global lens on China's expanded role in the world, shedding light on their disinformation and soft power campaigns, exploitative and corrupt investments, and degradation of the environment worldwide. VOA has also put a special emphasis on fighting censorship and disinformation, by launching direct-to-home satellite channels for Afghanistan and Ukraine, effectively deploying internet censorship circumvention tools in places like Afghanistan and Russia, establishing partnerships between its language services and with affiliate media to work on fact-checking projects, and providing comprehensive coverage of issues related to press freedom worldwide.

### Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty

In FY 2022, RFE/RL demonstrated enormous impact with its on-the-ground coverage of Russia's invasion of Ukraine and the consequences of the conflict in



Russia, Belarus, and other neighboring states. RFE/RL continued to provide an alternative to Russia's, China's, and Iran's state-sponsored disinformation throughout its entire area of coverage, providing on-the-ground reporting on major events, conducting extensive investigations, and engaging with audiences in their native languages despite efforts to censor or silence RFE/RL reporters. Chinese influence and disinformation across RFE/RL's coverage area are increasing rapidly. From the Kazakh Service producing a unique TV documentary on the first ethnic Kazakh woman-whistleblower who spent time in a Xinjiang political re-education camp, to the Balkan Service investigation revealing how Serbia spent \$19.3 million on six Chinese-made military drones, to an RFE/RL source revealing the Tajik Government's lease of a military base to the Chinese security forces, RFE/RL provides increasing coverage of China's attempts to grow its footprint in the region — with a strong focus on the export of surveillance technology and Eurasia's skyrocketing debt as a result of China's loans. In Iran, despite being barred from any official reporting presence on the ground, Radio Farda is one of the few news organizations that effectively provides Iranians with hard-hitting video footage of the realities of life inside their own country. In the past year alone, the subjects of these videos included extreme poverty in Iran's remote provinces, corruption at the highest levels of the Revolutionary Guards, smuggling of medicine from Iran to Afghanistan, and protests over water shortages and women's rights.

### Radio Free Asia

RFA's China Services were at the forefront of covering China's draconian COVID-19 pandemic lockdowns and the last gasps of political freedom in Hong Kong in FY 2022. The network's coverage of Hong Kong grew in prominence and importance as all independent media outlets were shuttered, creating a dramatic surge in traffic to and engagement with RFA's Cantonese social media accounts. RFA told the story of prominent activists and student leaders facing prosecution and of the tens of thousands of Hong Kong people who fled the city after the government crushed protests following the implementation of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP)-backed National Security Law. On the Mainland, RFA's China Services maintained focus on the CCP's COVID-19 pandemic quarantines in Shanghai and other major cities, its continuing crackdowns on house churches and religious freedom, and its treatment of the Uyghurs and other minorities. In

Burma, the significance of RFA's investigative reporting has grown further, as armed civil conflict escalated across the country following last year's military coup. In June 2022, RFA's investigation of a Myanmar soldier's cellphone documented the slaughter of 29 male villagers and crude exchanges among the phone owner's comrades bragging about how many they killed and how they did it. This multimedia package was shared by numerous experts and activists, including the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Burma and the director of Burma Campaign United Kingdom, and it was picked up by international media. Citing RFA, Human Rights Watch called for an investigation of the incident by the International Criminal Court.

### Middle East Broadcasting Networks

From the fall of the Kabul government in Afghanistan to the Russian invasion of Ukraine, MBN has been on the ground, and on air, providing accurate news coverage across the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region. In FY 2022, MBN continued to advance its mission on broadcast and digital platform with award winning programming and the launch of a new, mission-driven programming strategy. In April 2022, MBN was nominated for eleven New York Festivals TV and Film and New York Festivals Radio Awards – from which it won seven medals. MBN continues its distinction of uniquely presenting coverage of America, Americans and United States policy like no other media entity in the region, as highlighted by shows such as *From the Capital*, *Inside Washington*, and “American Highlights.” MBN is also a leader in fighting rampant disinformation in the region by providing news without the biases or agendas pervasive in the MENA market. In FY 2022, MBN continued delivering balanced news and information through its 11 daily Pan-Arab newscasts, three daily Iraq news shows, and daily live news analysis shows. In addition, production of a wide array of mission-oriented digital, television and video programming continued, including those focused explicitly on combatting disinformation such as *Alhurra Investigates*, *Debatable*, *Did it Really Happen?*, and *2 Dollars*. In FY 2022 MBN made critical improvements to its digital infrastructure and plans for broadcast infrastructure improvements. While digital consumption is poised to supplant television across many of MBN's markets, FY 2022 was a year of transition for MBN's digital properties. In partnership with USAGM, MBN has launched a digital streaming app to maximize the reach of its live streams and video-on-demand

programming content. It is now available on five platforms that cover the vast majority of the target audience. Also in FY 2022, MBN's multi-year broadcast infrastructure upgrade transitioned from conceptual to detail design, working through a value engineering process to ensure financial goals and honoring the agency's requirements concerning metadata standards, Media Asset Management system interoperability, file transport, and other vital sub-systems and functional components.

### Office of Cuba Broadcasting

OCB's Radio and Television Martí continued to cover the consequences of unprecedented protests that took place on July 11, 2021, followed by the Cuban government's oppressive response. Martí reported on the Cuban civil society's continued demands for personal freedoms, including free expression, and featured a special section, "Madres del 11J," comprising a series of audio-visual interviews with the mothers of those detained during and after the July 11 protests, many of whom are teenagers. In November 2021, Martí tapped into first-hand, on the ground accounts to cover the wave of repression unleashed by the Cuban government in anticipation of a planned, non-violent march. In July 2022, the network also produced a variety of multiplatform stories and features to mark the one-year anniversary of the largest public protests Cuba has seen in recent decades.

### Open Technology Fund

In FY 2022, OTF supported over 45 projects advancing the free and open Internet. These projects support the research, development, implementation, and maintenance of technologies and tools that advance internet freedom, including support for circumvention and privacy/security-enhancing technologies that are used by over 2 billion people worldwide. In addition, OTF provided emergency digital assistance to over 30 individuals, organizations, and journalists in places like Russia, Iran, and China through the Rapid Response Fund, which aids in secure hosting, security audits, and website sanitation to civil society organizations as well as direct funding for emergency digital security efforts. OTF also welcomed its seventh and eighth classes of fellows from the Information Controls Fellowship Program (ICFP). The 10 new fellows engaged in work on a wide range of projects including applied research on advancing the use of

circumvention tools during censorship events, mitigating potential security vulnerabilities in privacy tools, and identifying specific tools used in individual countries for information controls. In addition to direct support, OTF's Resource Labs provided expert services to projects across the internet freedom community. OTF provided usability and user-experience support to over 30 projects through its Secure Usability and Accessibility Lab, and over 15 independent security and safety audits of internet freedom technologies through the Red Team Lab.

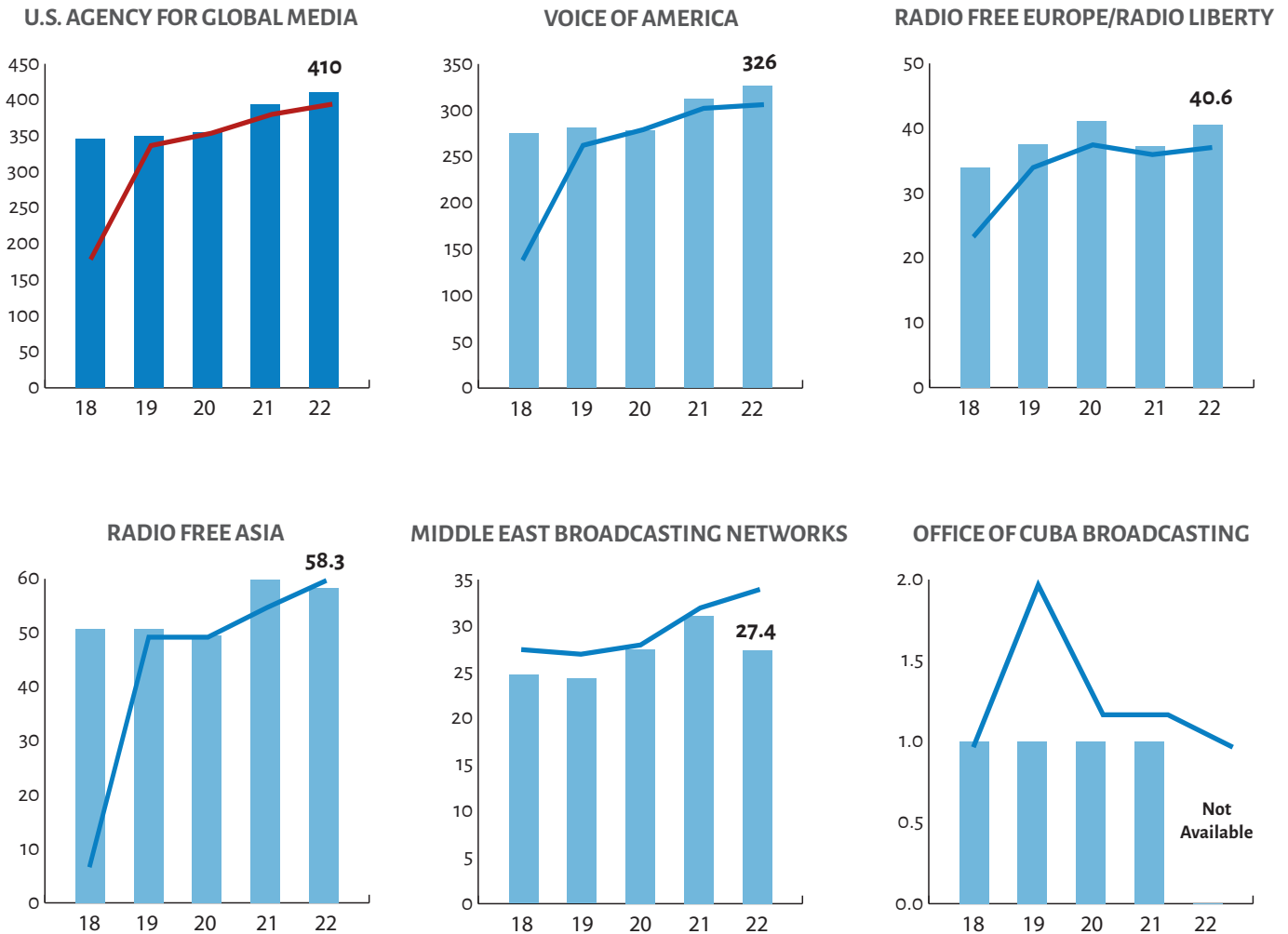
## USAGM WEEKLY AUDIENCE CHARTS

A key measure of USAGM’s success is its weekly audience. These charts present weekly audience for USAGM networks—individuals who have consumed news and information in the past seven days—from FY 2018 to FY 2022, along with the targets set by the agency. Impact cannot be reduced to a single quantitative factor and USAGM has implemented an Impact Model, supported by a robust set of performance indicators to gauge success. All of the performance indicators for USAGM Impact Objectives come from the Impact Model, which is described under “Evidence Building” in Section 2 of this document.

### USAGM Weekly Audience Charts

All audience numbers are in millions.

Targets indicated as red or blue line. FY 2022 targets are from the FY 2023 Congressional Budget Request.





# Ongoing Challenges

## MEDIA ENVIRONMENT

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

A key challenge for USAGM is delivering programming to audiences via the media and the formats they prefer, despite the instabilities and evolution of various media markets. USAGM has continued its migration away from shortwave and medium wave radio to formats and platforms that audiences increasingly use, including FM radio, television, and digital platforms. For example, in FY 2022, USAGM launched an upgraded content delivery portal, providing affiliate TV and radio stations faster download of broadcast quality content without the need for a satellite receiver. As file-based content also supports USAGM's efforts to enhance video-on-demand and over-the-top (OTT) platform delivery, the agency also launched OTT applications for VOA, RFA, Alhurra (MBN), and TV Martí (OCB) with content available in eighteen languages. Additionally, MBN's Radio Sawa continued work to migrate its FM radio audio programming to digital platforms.

To reach audiences, USAGM is constantly working to overcome various forms of censorship. USAGM has been at the forefront of the battle against digital censorship, working closely with other concerned parties and through

international forums. For example, after government crackdowns in Iran led to blocking of internet access following mass protests September 2022, USAGM noted a tremendous increase in the number of daily active users of OTF-supported censorship circumvention tools. These tools supported over 14.5 million users in Iran as of the end of FY 2022. Also, following the Turkish government's blocking of VOA Turkish online content in June 2022, the network deployed mirror sites to ensure audiences access.

USAGM responds to threats to democracy and the U.S. national interest worldwide with surges in broadcasting. In the weeks following Russia's invasion of Ukraine, Current Time (RFE/RL & VOA) provided round-the-clock breaking news coverage of the invasion, including the latest reporting, analysis, expert interviews, and live streams. In March 2022, with Ukrainian affiliates at risk of being shut down, USAGM launched a 24/7 direct-to-home satellite TV channel on Ukraine's most popular satellite. VOA also surged its coverage of Russia's war and its effects across the world, reporting on indirect impacts in Africa, Asia, and Latin America such as food crises, energy shortages, and inflation.

## **AUDIENCES**

Within this challenging environment, USAGM has achieved a record measured weekly audience of 410 million people. USAGM networks are focused on expanding their audiences and increasing their impact by targeting programming and delivery methods to engage key, strategic audiences in priority countries and regions aligned with U.S. interests. Through the Language Service Review process, USAGM language services identify key target audiences and associated impact goals and performance targets.

USAGM's Office of Policy and Research (OPR) made several changes in FY 2022 to improve strategic decision-making and program targeting throughout the agency. OPR advanced its development of a central data management system to modernize the acquisition, management and storage of the agency's digital and survey data, reducing the time and effort required to track performance of digital platforms. Additionally, OPR completed an agency-level digital governance policy to standardize digital metrics tracking practices across the networks and enable real-time digital metrics reporting.

OPR has led the development and testing of improved survey methodologies and a new survey questionnaire that will allow data collection to be faster, cheaper, and more reliable. In FY 2022, OPR improved efficiency of survey management, enabling two more full audience surveys than targeted. The agency also continued to utilize research funding strategically to place key performance metrics questions onto other parties' surveys. At fractional cost, these shorter omnibus surveys are an economical method of measuring audience reach in countries where there is a risk of data becoming outdated.

## **INFRASTRUCTURE**

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

The rapidly evolving broadcast information technology market requires USAGM to diversify and invest in its broadcast and transmission technologies. Audiences around the world depend on a wide range of platforms, requiring USAGM to maintain a traditional transmission network and invest in new media technology, to support programming efforts, such as news delivery via on-demand video or social media. New infrastructure must be established and maintained along with existing infrastructure, and this maintenance is complicated by the advent of digital technology with shorter lifecycles. Given these constraints, USAGM strives to allocate resources judiciously to address the most critical infrastructure requirements as well as recurring technical infrastructure requirements and one-time projects.

USAGM is aggressively shifting to digital platforms. Efforts include enterprise web and social media engagement tools to measure traffic and engagement on USAGM sites and accounts on key platforms and new encryption and proxy tools to circumvent censorship.

Where broadcast platforms remain essential, USAGM carefully manages its aging infrastructure to maintain a strong presence in critical markets, ensuring signal strength and reliability of broadcasts to these vital areas. USAGM monitors its signals in real time and conducts in-depth analyses to determine the best way to broadcast to a particular region. In FY 2022 USAGM transitioned to virtually all content delivery via secure public internet, after decades of delivering content globally via C-band satellite and then high-speed fiber. This helped USAGM discontinue operating a costly global fiber optic network, teleports, and leased satellite space segments, instead, integrating highly targeted platform solutions that offer increased reliability at a lower cost.

## **MANAGEMENT**

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

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

Internally, the quality, competence, and morale of the USAGM workforce is critical to mission achievement. As such, the agency has made the development and motivation of its workforce a key component of its Strategic Plan for meeting future challenges. Consistently low Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey (FEVS) scores and, specifically, issues of employee morale and satisfaction, made apparent in the results of these surveys, are being addressed through comprehensive communications initiatives and integrated intra-agency communications platforms.

# Financial Highlights

The summary of key financial measures from the Balance Sheet and Statements of Net Cost and Budgetary Resources is provided in the table below. The complete financial statements, including the independent auditor's reports, notes, and required supplementary information, are presented in Section II: Financial Information. The Consolidated Balance Sheet, Statement of Net Cost, Changes in Net Position, and Combined Statement of Budgetary Resources have been prepared to report the financial position and results of operations of USAGM, pursuant to the requirements of the Chief Financial Officers Act of 1990 and the Government Management Reform Act of 1994. Preparing these statements allows USAGM to improve financial management and provide accurate and reliable information to Congress, the President, and the taxpayer. USAGM management is responsible for the integrity and objectivity of the financial information presented in the statements.

| <b>Financial Highlights (in thousands)</b>              | <b>FY 2022</b>    | <b>FY 2021</b>    |
|---|-------------------|-------------------|
| At End of the Year:                                     |                   |                   |
| <b>Condensed Balance Sheet Data:</b>                    |                   |                   |
| Fund Balance with Treasury                              | \$ 286,463        | \$ 253,758        |
| Cash and Other Monetary Assets                          | 3                 | 3                 |
| Accounts Receivable                                     | 62                | 241               |
| Property, Plant and Equipment                           | 37,280            | 46,651            |
| Advances to Surrogate Broadcasters and Internet Freedom | 105,000           | 95,000            |
| Other   | 1,361             | 569               |
| <b>Total Assets</b>                                     | <b>\$ 430,169</b> | <b>\$ 396,222</b> |
| Accounts Payable and Other                              | \$ 30,679         | \$ 35,198         |
| Retirement and Payroll                                  | 41,009            | 50,586            |
| <b>Total Liabilities</b>                                | <b>\$ 71,688</b>  | <b>\$ 85,784</b>  |
| Unexpended Appropriations                               | \$ 344,870        | \$ 292,620        |
| Cumulative Results of Operations                        | 13,611            | 17,818            |
| <b>Total Net Position</b>                               | <b>358,481</b>    | <b>310,438</b>    |
| <b>Total Liabilities and Net Position</b>               | <b>\$ 430,169</b> | <b>\$ 396,222</b> |
| For the Year:   |                   |                   |
| <b>Condensed Statement of Net Cost Data:</b>            |                   |                   |
| Total Cost  | \$ 851,027        | \$ 823,883        |
| Total Earned Revenue                                    | (4,565)           | (4,416)           |
| <b>Total Net Cost of Operations</b>                     | <b>\$ 846,462</b> | <b>\$ 819,467</b> |



The financial statements and financial data presented in this report have been prepared from the accounting records of USAGM in conformity with accounting principles in the United States of America and incorporate the application of the standards as prescribed by the Federal Accounting Standards Advisory Board.

The Department of State's (DOS) Office of Inspector General (OIG) is statutorily responsible for the manner in which the audit of the USAGM's financial statements is conducted. The independent accounting firm, Kearney & Company, conducted our FY 2022 financial statement audit and issued an unmodified opinion on our Financial Statements.

USAGM received appropriations totaling \$885.0 million for Fiscal Year (FY) 2022, which represents an increase of \$82.0 million or 10 percent above the FY 2021 level. With these funds, USAGM delivers fact-based, objective, and professional journalism in 63 languages around the world. New investments will largely focus on countering Russian and Chinese disinformation, in addition to targeted spending on research and infrastructure modernization. In response to the situation in Ukraine, USAGM received \$25.0 million in supplemental appropriations. USAGM is using this funding to combat disinformation and provide comprehensive, unbiased journalistic coverage of the conflict in Ukraine; Russian citizens protesting the actions of the Kremlin; and the ongoing refugee and humanitarian crisis in the region. USAGM is committed to providing fact-based, compelling, and vital journalism as the situation in Ukraine, Russia, and Eastern Europe continues to unfold.

| <b>U.S. Agency for Global Media<br/>Summary of Appropriations<br/>FY 2022</b>     |                            |                              |
|---|----------------------------|------------------------------|
| <i>(\$ in thousands)</i>  |                            |                              |
| <b>International Broadcasting Operations<br/>(Program, Project, and Activity)</b> | <b>FY 2022<br/>Enacted</b> | <b>% of Total<br/>Budget</b> |
| <b>Federal Entities</b>   |                            |                              |
| Voice of America  | \$ 259,000                 | 30%                          |
| Office of Cuba Broadcasting   | \$ 12,973                  | 2%                           |
| International Broadcasting Bureau   | \$ 56,116                  | 7%                           |
| Office of Technology, Services, and Innovation                                    | \$ 177,515                 | 21%                          |
| <b>Total - Federal Entities</b>   | <b>\$ 505,604</b>          | <b>59%</b>                   |
| <b>Non-Federal Entities</b>   |                            |                              |
| Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty   | \$ 145,000                 | 17%                          |
| Radio Free Asia   | \$ 62,384                  | 7%                           |
| Middle East Broadcasting Networks   | \$ 110,312                 | 13%                          |
| Open Technology Fund  | \$ 27,000                  | 3%                           |
| <b>Total - Non-Federal Entities</b>   | <b>\$ 344,696</b>          | <b>40%</b>                   |
| <b>Total - International Broadcasting Operations</b>                              | <b>\$ 850,300</b>          | <b>99%</b>                   |
| <b>Broadcasting Capital Improvements<br/>(Program, Project, and Activity)</b>     |                            |                              |
| Broadcasting Capital Improvements   | \$ 9,700                   | 1%                           |
| <b>Total - Broadcasting Capital Improvements</b>                                  | <b>\$ 9,700</b>            | <b>1%</b>                    |
| <b>USAGM Grand Total - Appropriation/Request</b>                                  | <b>\$ 860,000</b>          | <b>100%</b>                  |
| <b>Ukraine Supplemental Funding</b>   | <b>\$ 25,000</b>           |                              |
| <b>USAGM Grand Total - Appropriation/Request</b>                                  | <b>\$ 885,000</b>          |                              |

#### LIMITATIONS OF FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

The principal financial statements are prepared to report the financial position, financial condition, and results of operations of USAGM, pursuant to the requirements of 31 U.S.C. 3515 (b). The statements are prepared from USAGM's books and records in accordance with U.S. generally-accepted accounting principles (GAAP) for Federal entities and the formats prescribed by the Office of Management and Budget. Reports used to monitor and control budgetary resources are prepared from the same books and records. The financial statements should be read with the realization that they are for a component of the U.S. Government.

# Analysis of Systems, Controls, and Legal Compliance

## FEDERAL MANAGERS' FINANCIAL INTEGRITY ACT

The Federal Managers' Financial Integrity Act (FMFIA) of 1982 (Public Law 97-255) is designed to provide reasonable assurance that agencies institute management accountability and internal controls that support five objectives:

- Programs achieve their strategic objectives,
- Resources are effectively used consistent with the agency's mission,
- Programs and resources are properly safeguarded against waste, fraud, and mismanagement,
- Information is reliable and timely to support decision making, and
- Agency complies with applicable laws and regulations.

OMB Circular A-123, Management's Responsibility for Enterprise Risk Management and Internal Control provides implementation guidance to Federal managers on improving the accountability and effectiveness of Federal programs and operations by identifying and managing risks, establishing requirements to assess, correct, and report on the effectiveness of internal controls. OMB Circular A-123 implements the FMFIA and GAO's Standards for Internal Control in the Federal Government (Green Book) requirements. Annually, USAGM assesses the vulnerability of their programs. Based on these assessments, reviews are conducted to determine their compliance with Sections 2 and 4 of FMFIA. Section 2 requires management controls to be in place, and Section 4 requires financial systems to conform to government-wide standards.

Annually, in compliance with the FMFIA of 1982 Section 2 and OMB Circular A-123 the agency head of USAGM provides the annual assurance statement on the status of:

- Effectiveness of internal control over financial reporting
- Effectiveness of internal control over operations
- Conformance with federal financial management system requirements

- Any material weakness found in the financial statements, which are derived from independent audits, Government Accountability Office (GAO), Office of the Inspector General (OIG) reviews, inspections or audits, and self-assessments conducted by USAGM’s management.

In compliance with FMFIA Section 4, 3512(d) (2) (B) Section 4-31 U.S.C. 3512(d)(2) (B), Senior Management prepares an annual statement on the agency’s accounting systems conformity to the principles, standards, and related requirements prescribed by the Comptroller General. Based on this requirement, USAGM is required to comply with the Federal Information Security Management Act (FISMA).

During FY 2022, USAGM has made continued progress implementing and maintaining an agency information security and risk management program. Over the past year, USAGM made significant progress in information security and risk management, while analyzing and developing an agency Zero Trust Architecture (ZTA) plan in response to the President’s Cyber Executive Order 14028 and subsequent OMB Memorandums M-21-30, M-21-31, M-22-01, M-22-09, and M-22-16. Notable accomplishments include the following:

1. Significant progress with deployment of tools and processes to improve our Information Security Continuous Monitoring (ISCM) Program
2. Continued progress with deployment of our Identity Credential Access Management (ICAM) strategy and Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA) solutions
3. Continued implementation of our Enterprise Risk Management (ERM) framework and Information Security Risk Management strategy, and finally
4. Continued implementation of our Supply Chain Risk Management (SCRM) strategy, policy and program plan.

In addition, as a qualitative measure of the effectiveness of USAGM’s IT security defenses, the agency’s information security team detected and investigated numerous suspicious cybersecurity events during the past year. However, none of these incidents impacted the agency’s international broadcasting mission in any way, and they would not be categorized as a “major” incident per the United

States Computer Emergency Readiness Team's (US-CERT) *Federal Incident Reporting Guidelines*.

The agency's management controls program is designed to ensure compliance with the goals, objectives, and requirements of the FMFIA and various Federal laws and regulations. USAGM employs an integrated process to perform the work necessary to meet the requirements of OMB Circular A-123's Appendix A and Appendix C (regarding Payment Integrity), the FMFIA, and the GAO's Green Book. During FY 2022 USAGM identified, assessed and analyzed agency-wide risks in accordance with OMB Circular A-123. The FY 2022 risk profile prioritized significant risks to the achievement of USAGM's objectives and mission. The agency has documented and continuously implements appropriate risk response mitigation strategies to these enterprise risks. Consistent with the ERM process, management continuously monitors the progress and effectiveness of these mitigation strategies. Management also considers results of OIG and GAO audit reports, the annual financial statement audit, OMB Circular A-123 Appendix A internal controls over reporting program assessments, and other relevant information.

## **FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS AND REPORTING INTERNAL CONTROL REVIEW**

Each year, USAGM receives an Independent Audit Report containing an opinion on our financial statements, a report on internal control over financial reporting, and a report on compliance with laws, regulations, contracts, and grant agreements. In addition to safeguarding resources and complying with laws and regulations, USAGM strives to fairly and accurately present financial reports that have a material effect on spending, budgetary, or other financial decisions.

## **FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS STRATEGIES**

USAGM currently uses CGI's proprietary Momentum Financials and Acquisitions version 7.9.0 as their financial system of record. The Integrated Award Environment (IAE) initiative managed by GSA retired the use of Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number as the official identifier for doing business with the federal government and introduced a new Unique Entity Identifier (UEI), generated in the System for Award Management (SAM). During FY 2022,

USAGM completed an upgrade to version 7.9 which supports the new UEI and allows increased functionality and compliance with a variety of mandated requirements.

USAGM payroll is processed through the Defense Civilian Pay System (DCPS). USAGM is finalizing requirements for conversion from Defense Civilian Personnel Data System (DCPDS) to a new Human Resource system to interface with DCPS.

E2 Solutions, is used by USAGM and by many other federal agencies, provides end-to-end travel approval, booking, and expense management capabilities. E2 Solutions synchronizes reservation and ticket data and incorporates system validation rules to ensure that reimbursements are compliant with financial policy.

USAGM continues to assess and automate processes to gain processing efficiencies and strengthen internal controls.

#### **PAYMENT INTEGRITY PROGRAM**

USAGM is dedicated to continued strengthening of its improper payments program to ensure payments are valid and processed correctly. The Program utilizes an experienced and trained staff, a financial management system that is designed with control functions to mitigate risk, and an analysis process to review transactions and procedures.

USAGM performs assessments and procedures to comply with the Payment Integrity Information Act of 2019, OMB Circular A-123 Appendix C and OMB Memorandum updates.

More information on USAGM's activities safeguarding against improper payments can be found in Section Four.

# FY 2022 Statement of Assurance



U.S. AGENCY FOR  
GLOBAL MEDIA

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

## FY 2022 STATEMENT OF ASSURANCE

The U.S. Agency for Global Media (USAGM) is responsible for managing risks and maintaining effective internal control to meet the objectives of Sections 2 and 4 of the Federal Managers' Financial Integrity Act. USAGM conducted its assessment of risk and internal control in accordance with OMB Circular No. A-123, *Management's Responsibility for Enterprise Risk Management and Internal Control*. Based on the results of the assessment, the agency can provide reasonable assurance that internal controls over operations, reporting, and compliance were operating effectively as of September 30, 2022. No material weaknesses were found in the design or operation of internal control over financial reporting.

By maintaining our dedicated efforts, USAGM is confident that we will continue to maintain and improve our internal control posture.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Amanda Bennett".

Amanda Bennett  
Chief Executive Officer  
November 10, 2022



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|---|----|
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|   |    |
|---|----|
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|---|----|
| Impact Objective 4: <i>Overcome censorship to connect audiences in closed societies .....</i> | 85 |
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# FY 2022 Goals, Objectives, and Results

## SUMMARY OF THE 2022-2026 USAGM STRATEGIC PLAN

USAGM's 2022-2026 Strategic Plan sets a course to continually improve U.S. international media operations to serve audiences throughout the world hungry for exceptional and compelling news content. It is an ambitious roadmap to maximize the journalistic impact of USAGM's networks in support of American interests, American national security, and universal values of freedom. The plan informs USAGM budget requests and supports the integration of performance, budget planning, and agency management.

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

To better fulfill that mission, the Strategic Plan sets forth two overarching strategic goals:

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

Freedom of the press and freedom of expression are essential to democracy, and promoting these principles supports the U.S. national interest through stability, peace, alliances, and trade. Communicating America's democratic experience and values serves the same purpose. In covering the United States, USAGM networks open a live window onto democracy in action.

USAGM's two strategic goals are supported by eight Impact Objectives and four Agility Objectives, each of which has supporting performance goals. All of the performance indicators supporting the Impact Objectives come from the USAGM Impact Model.

PERFORMANCE OVERVIEW

Mission:

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

Strategic Goals:

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

Objectives:

Impact Objectives

Agility Objectives  
(see page 135)

USAGM's Strategic Goals are supported by Impact Objectives, which focus on performance on the mission, and Agility Objectives, which focus on the management of the agency.

Each objective is broken down into measurable performance goals. USAGM sets targets for these goals annually. Following is the five-year historical data for each performance goal, an explanation of the indicator and how it is measured, and a detailed analysis of the results.

IMPACT OBJECTIVES:

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <p><b>1</b> Produce and curate compelling and impactful content that audiences use and trust</p>                     | <p>IMPACT OBJECTIVE 1 <span style="float: right;">35</span></p> <p>PERFORMANCE GOALS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1.1 Reach significant audiences</b> <span style="float: right;">38</span><br/>Citations of USAGM reporting in influential news outlets <span style="float: right;">43</span></li> <li><b>1.2 Provide programming that audiences find trustworthy</b> <span style="float: right;">48</span><br/>Programming responding to crisis situations <span style="float: right;">51</span></li> <li><b>1.3 Provide programming that increases audiences' understanding of current events</b> <span style="float: right;">56</span><br/>Producing or curating content on issues important to audiences <span style="float: right;">59</span></li> <li><b>1.4 Provide programming that is influential with audiences</b> <span style="float: right;">62</span><br/>Original investigative reporting <span style="float: right;">64</span></li> </ul> |
| <p><b>2</b> Prioritize audiences that are information-denied or targets of disinformation and extremist rhetoric</p> | <p>IMPACT OBJECTIVE 2 <span style="float: right;">67</span></p> <p>PERFORMANCE GOALS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>2.1 Achieve significant audience reach in environments subject to extremist rhetoric and violence</b> <span style="float: right;">69</span><br/>Examples of USAGM impact in environments subject to extremism <span style="float: right;">70</span></li> <li><b>2.2 Reach audiences in information-denied environments</b> <span style="float: right;">72</span><br/>Examples of USAGM impact in information-denied environments <span style="float: right;">74</span></li> <li><b>2.3 Reach audiences in environments targeted by state-sponsored disinformation campaigns</b> <span style="float: right;">77</span><br/>Examples of USAGM impact in environments targeted by state-sponsored disinformation campaigns <span style="float: right;">79</span></li> </ul>   |

|   |  |  |     |
|---|--|--|-----|
| 3 | Reach and engage underserved audiences, including women, youth, and marginalized populations         | IMPACT OBJECTIVE 3<br>PERFORMANCE GOALS:   | 81  |
|   |  | 3.1 <b>Increase representation of women in programming</b>   | 82  |
|   |  | 3.2 <b>Increase reach among traditionally underserved demographics, including youth and women</b>            | 82  |
|   |  | Programming targeting groups underrepresented in USAGM audiences   | 83  |
| 4 | Overcome censorship to connect audiences in closed societies   | IMPACT OBJECTIVE 4<br>PERFORMANCE GOALS:   | 85  |
|   |  | 4.1 <b>Increase usage of internet freedom products</b>   | 86  |
|   |  | Development of new technologies and activities to counter internet censorship and blocking                   | 88  |
|   |  | Circumvention and digital security technologies in action  | 90  |
| 5 | Optimize program delivery and digital engagement   | IMPACT OBJECTIVE 5<br>PERFORMANCE GOALS:   | 91  |
|   |  | 5.1 <b>Increase web traffic</b>  | 93  |
|   |  | 5.2 <b>Increase audience interaction via social media</b>  | 95  |
|   |  | Using alternative, creative ways to deliver content  | 98  |
| 6 | Engage and empower local media and populations   | IMPACT OBJECTIVE 6<br>PERFORMANCE GOALS:   | 100 |
|   |  | 6.1 <b>Build strong affiliate relationships</b>  | 102 |
|   |  | Substantive engagement with key local media affiliates   | 104 |
|   |  | 6.2 <b>Increase engagement with local media partners</b>   | 106 |
|   |  | Successful deployment of the U.S. bureau model   | 107 |
|   |  | 6.3 <b>Increase sharing of USAGM programming</b>   | 109 |
|   |  | USAGM-facilitated dialogue across religious, national, and ethnic divides                                    | 111 |
| 7 | Serve as an authoritative source of information on United States news, policy, and society           | IMPACT OBJECTIVE 7<br>PERFORMANCE GOALS:   | 113 |
|   |  | 7.1 <b>Provide programming that increases audiences' understanding of the United States</b>                  | 116 |
|   |  | 7.2 <b>Provide exceptional news and information</b>  | 120 |
| 8 | Serve as a surrogate news operation, delivering information otherwise not available in local markets | IMPACT OBJECTIVE 8<br>PERFORMANCE GOALS:   | 122 |
|   |  | 8.1 <b>Provide programming that increases audiences' understanding of current events in target countries</b> | 124 |
|   |  | Coverage of important local news stories that other media are not covering                                   | 127 |
|   |  | 8.2 <b>Provide exceptional news and information</b>  | 129 |
|   |  | Citizen journalism and user-generated content  | 131 |

# Impact Objective 1:

## Produce and curate compelling and impactful content that audiences use and trust

Journalism is the daily work of USAGM broadcasters, and building trust in that journalism is paramount. Creating compelling and impactful content requires the agency's networks to create programming that adds significant value compared to competitors, is tailored to meet the needs of local target audiences, and is curated with the purpose of supporting an active and democratic citizenry. This task requires rigorous adherence to journalistic standards, editorial transparency, and preservation of the editorial firewall that protects programming from outside interference.

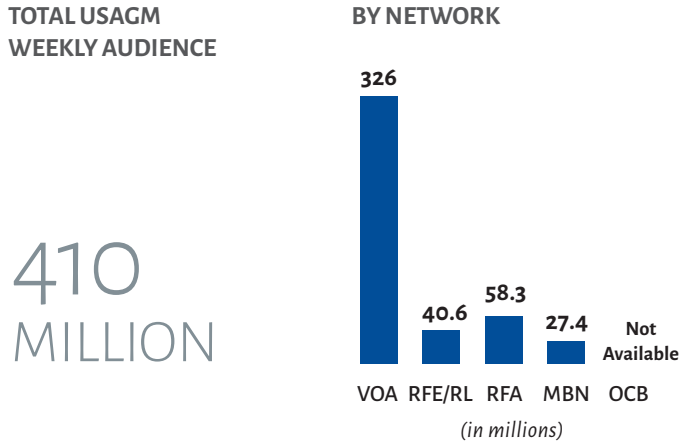
USAGM will:

- Provide news and programming that is accurate, objective, comprehensive, and in accordance with the highest professional standards of journalism;
- Preserve the editorial firewall, protecting the independence and integrity of networks' journalists;
- Produce news and information, consistent with audience needs and mission requirements, on issues that are not addressed adequately by media in the target area, e.g., human rights and good governance;
- Offer relevant and informative content that research, web analytics, and audience and affiliate feedback show is of vital interest to audiences, including reporting on health, climate, and technology;
- Produce enterprise reporting through deep and agenda-setting exploration of critical issues; and
- Curate content from and co-create content with reputable partners, as consistent with agency standards and editorial guidelines.

# Impact Performance Goal Overview

## 1.1

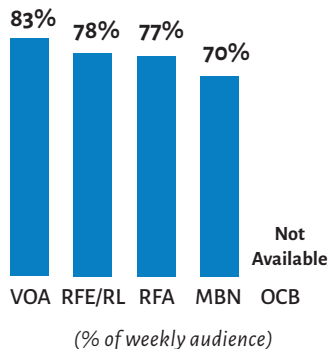
### Reach significant audiences



Note: Total USAGM audience is unduplicated, meaning an individual audience member is counted once, regardless of how many platforms or networks they use. Therefore, the total USAGM audience is not equal to the sum of audience by network or by platform.

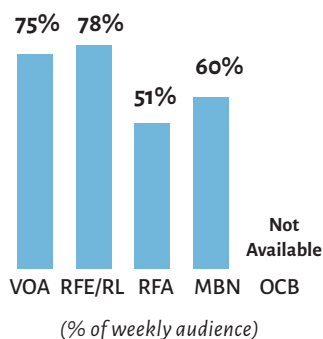
## 1.2

### Provide programming that audiences find trustworthy



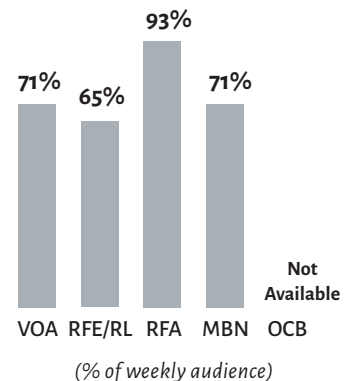
## 1.3

### Provide programming that increases audiences' perceptions of their understanding of current events

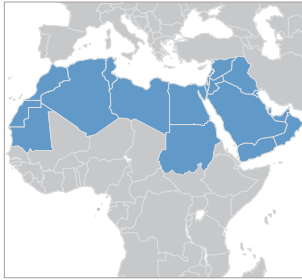


## 1.4

### Provide programming that is influential with audiences



## Audience by Region:



### MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA

30.3 MILLION

Data from Algeria, Egypt, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestinian Territories, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Tunisia, UAE. Current audience data unavailable for Bahrain, Libya, Mauritania, Oman, Syria, and Yemen. Reflects audiences for MBN and VOA.



### NEAR EAST, SOUTH AND CENTRAL ASIA, EURASIA

98.6 MILLION

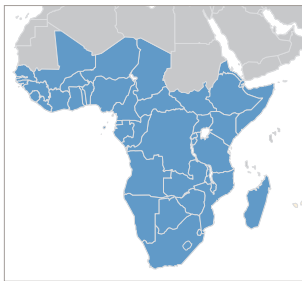
Data from Afghanistan, Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Bosnia, Bulgaria, Crimea, Estonia, Georgia, Hungary, India, Iran, Kazakhstan, Kosovo, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, Montenegro, Nagorno-Karabakh, Nepal, North Macedonia, Pakistan, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Tajikistan, Turkey, Turkmenistan, and Ukraine. Current audience data unavailable for Belarus, Sri Lanka, and Uzbekistan. Reflects audiences for RFE/RL and VOA.



### EAST AND SOUTHEAST ASIA

132.3 MILLION

Data from Burma, Cambodia, China, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Philippines, South Korea, Taiwan, Thailand, and Vietnam. Current audience data unavailable for Mongolia and North Korea. Reflects audiences for RFA and VOA.



### SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

78.0 MILLION

Data from Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Congo-Brazzaville, Cote d'Ivoire, DR Congo, Ethiopia, Gabon, Ghana, Guinea, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, South Africa, Tanzania, Togo, Uganda, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. Current audience data unavailable for Botswana, Burundi, Central African Republic, Chad, Eritrea, Kenya, Niger, Liberia, Madagascar, Mali, Sierra Leone, and South Sudan. Reflects audiences for VOA.



### LATIN AMERICA

71.1 MILLION

Data from Argentina, Brazil, Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Haiti, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay, and Venezuela. Current audience data unavailable for Cuba and Guatemala. Reflects audiences for VOA.

IMPACT OBJECTIVE 1

# Impact Performance Goal 1.1: Reach significant audiences

| Measured Weekly Audience (in millions) | FY 2018 Actual | FY 2019 Actual | FY 2020 Actual | FY 2021 Actual | FY 2022 Target <sup>1</sup> | FY 2022 Actual |
|--|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|-----------------------------|----------------|
| USAGM                                  | 345            | 350            | 354            | 394            | 394                         | 410            |
| VOA                                    | 275            | 281            | 278            | 312            | 309                         | 326            |
| RFE/RL                                 | 33.9           | 38.1           | 41.1           | 37.2           | 37.3                        | 40.6           |
| RFA                                    | 50.7           | 50.7           | 49.5           | 59.8           | 60.0                        | 58.3           |
| MBN                                    | 24.7           | 24.3           | 27.5           | 31.1           | 34.0                        | 27.4           |
| OCB <sup>2</sup>                       | 1.0            | 1.0            | 1.0            | 1.0            | 1.0                         | NA             |

<sup>1</sup> FY 2022 targets are from USAGM's FY 2023 Congressional Budget Request.

<sup>2</sup> USAGM did not commission a survey in Cuba in FY 2022. The last survey data was compiled for the FY 2017 PAR and the audience data is no longer considered current. A survey is planned and will be reported in FY 2023.

**Notes:**

- Every year, data from multiple USAGM networks' target countries is removed from Measured Weekly Audience totals if new audience surveys cannot be funded and executed before prior results have been reported for five years.
- Audience estimates do not include data for regions where political risk has made it impossible to carry out representative surveys in the target market, or where populations are too small relative to the resource requirement.
- For the reasons above, FY 2022 Measured Weekly Audience estimates do not include data for VOA, RFE/RL, RFA, MBN and OCB audiences in: Bahrain, Belarus, Botswana, Burundi, Central African Republic, Chad, Cuba\*, Eritrea, Guatemala\*, Kenya\*, Liberia, Libya\*, Madagascar, Mali\*, Mauritania, Mongolia, Niger\*, North Korea, Oman, Pakistan FATA, Sierra Leone, South Sudan, Sri Lanka, Syria, Uzbekistan\*, and Yemen\*.

\*The countries and regions marked with asterisks denote areas where new research is planned in FY 2023

**IMPACT INDICATOR:**

**Measured Weekly Audiences**

This indicator comes from national surveys measuring the number of adults<sup>1</sup> in target areas listening to, reading, or viewing USAGM programming or online content in the past week. The measure is reported for each language service (except Korean, Uyghur, and Tibetan) and for countries with USAGM audiences that have survey data reported within the last five years. It is based upon the measurement of the “regular listening audience,” a statistical standard long used to report international radio audience reach. Regular listening or viewing audience (radio, TV, or internet) has over the years been consistently defined as all adults listening or viewing at least once a week, determined by an audience survey that has an adequately designed sample. The USAGM weekly audience is unduplicated, i.e., a member of the audience is counted only once, regardless of the number of times, platforms, or networks they consume each week. USAGM does not conduct surveys in every country every year, so reach figures may in some cases reflect weekly reach measures collected from up to five years in the past. This may result in an over- or under-estimation of actual reach.

Additionally, as media markets in select regions become ever more repressive, it is becoming harder to find research partners willing to risk the safety of their staff and participants to carry out surveys about the consumption of USAGM media brands.

USAGM continues to explore alternative methods for measuring audience reach, such as integrating digital analytics and commercial ratings data.

<sup>1</sup> Defined as people aged 15 years and older, in alignment with standardized demographic data sources including the Population Reference Bureau (PRB), which USAGM draws from to calculate audience

**ANALYSIS OF RESULTS:**

|              |                            |                            |
|--------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| <b>USAGM</b> | <b>Target: 394 million</b> | <b>Actual: 410 million</b> |
|--------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|

With a measured weekly audience of 410 million, USAGM exceeded its target for FY 2022. This is a positive sign of the agency’s and its networks’ continued impact and growth. This is noteworthy, particularly as actual survey volume in FY 2022 returned to more normal levels, after a surge in FY 2021 to complete surveys delayed due to COVID-19 pandemic-related pauses in in FY 2020. Research results show that the agency has seen measured audience growth and decline in a number of key markets. Regional growth was highest in absolute and percentage



terms in Latin America, followed by Near East/South and Central Asia/Eurasia, and then sub-Saharan Africa. Notably, FY 2022 survey results showed strong growth in VOA’s audience in Angola and Nigeria. In Nigeria, the measured audience growth rate of over 70 percent was attributed to the large number of partnerships with local media (nearly tripling the number of affiliates from 29 to 88); greater demand for English-language content, and production of more short features suited to digital distribution.

Also, USAGM’s FY 2022 audience figure includes 2.8 million people accessing VOA Portuguese content in Brazil. Although Lusophone Africans living in Brazil have long been a target audience for the Portuguese Service, this is the first time the agency has commissioned a survey and included data from Brazil in its global audience measure.

USAGM’s measured audience share in Morocco dropped to 11 percent of adults in FY 2022 from 20 percent in 2019, representing 2.7 million fewer consumers. In Vietnam, an environment increasingly constrained by censorship and surveillance, the agency’s measured audience dropped by roughly 3 million people, primarily among VOA users.

**VOA** **Target: 309 million** **Actual: 326 million**

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With a measured weekly audience of 326 million, VOA exceeded its FY 2022 target, adding 14 million weekly users to its global count over FY 2021. Notable increases were found in Nigeria, Angola, and several markets in Latin America. A gain of 1.7 million is a result of being able to conduct a survey in Rwanda for the first time since 2013. These gains in measured audiences more than offset the less-than-expected loss in Afghanistan of 2.4 million after VOA was forced off local television platforms after the Taliban takeover.

**RFE/RL** **Target: 37.3 million** **Actual: 40.6 million**

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With a measured weekly audience of over 40 million in FY 2022, RFE/RL exceeded its target by over 8 percent. Compared to FY 2021, its weekly audience grew by 3.4 million. Results of a July 2022 national survey of Russia showed that measured use of RFE/RL journalism inside of Russia increased despite numerous attempts by Russian authorities to block its access. Each week, 11.3 million Russian adults use RFE/RL, an increase of 4.4 million compared to the national survey in 2018. Concurrent studies to measure audiences of regional RFE/RL

journalism in Tatarstan, Bashkortostan and Chechnya also showed that approximately 1 in 10 adults in each region use RFE/RL weekly. Weekly usage of Radio Free Afghanistan journalism rose in the latest national survey, as measured viewing of Azadi TV products increased. Use of radio and internet after the resumption of Taliban rule remained stable compared to the last survey. However, the overall number of Afghans measured to be using Azadi declined since the most recent survey could only be conducted over the phone among the nearly 60 percent of the population who own a mobile phone. Measured audiences to RFE/RL were also higher in both Armenia and Azerbaijan in recently completed national surveys. Weekly RFE/RL audiences fell slightly in Kazakhstan and more noticeably in Kyrgyzstan as the Kyrgyz Service’s television programs moved to new affiliates. Audiences for a new digital-only service in Hungary were measured for the first time and RFE/RL reaches 2.4 percent of Hungarian adults each week. USAGM lacks current audience estimates for RFE/RL in Belarus and Uzbekistan as well as in the breakaway regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia in the Caucasus, and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in Pakistan.

|            |                             |                             |
|------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <b>RFA</b> | <b>Target: 60.0 million</b> | <b>Actual: 58.3 million</b> |
|------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|

With a weekly measured audience of over 58 million for six of its nine language services, RFA fell short of its FY 2022 target. USAGM is not able to conduct representative quantitative audience research for RFA Korean, Tibetan, and Uyghur audiences. Measured audiences fell in the two markets where USAGM obtained new data in FY 2022. In both Hong Kong and Vietnam, increased government surveillance and repression likely depressed measured audiences, as respondents fear consuming or admitting to consuming RFA content. In Hong Kong, China’s growing control over the population has shuttered independent media outlets and increased crackdowns on political expression. Vietnam saw a ramping up of online censorship efforts and qualitative research suggests RFA audiences are particularly fearful of sharing their use of RFA news with strangers.

**MBN****Target: 34.0 million****Actual: 27.4 million**

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MBN missed its target for FY 2022, with a 12 percent decrease in measured weekly audience from FY 2021. FY 2022 measured audience in Egypt remained relatively stable, despite ongoing government access restrictions, as did measured audience in Saudi Arabia. New survey data measured a drop in audience in Morocco, possibly affected by a change in survey methodology. Additionally, previously reported survey results from Yemen first reported in the FY 2017 PAR are no longer considered current and are not included in MBN totals for FY 2022.

**OCB****Target: 1.0 million****Actual: NA**

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USAGM did not commission a survey in Cuba in FY 2022. The last survey data was compiled for the FY 2017 PAR and the audience data is no longer considered current. A survey is planned and will be reported in FY 2023.

A CLOSER LOOK:

# Citations of USAGM reporting in influential news outlets and awards

## MEDIA CITATIONS

**VOA** – A report on the U.S. plan to block imports from Nicaragua to pressure President Ortega over human rights violations was widely shared by affiliates including Mexico’s TV Azteca, Nicaragua’s La Prensa, Nicaragua Investiga, 100% Noticias, Revista Semana, Stereo100, Venezuela’s Efecto Cocuyo, and Colombia’s Semana. An exclusive interview with Ukrainian Defense Minister Oleksii Reznikov, who spoke of the importance of U.S. military to Ukraine, was cited by nearly 400 media organizations including Politico, The Daily Beast, BBC and top-rated news media in Ukraine.



(VOA)

**RFE/RL** – Coverage by the Kazakh service of the wave of nationwide protests that engulfed Kazakhstan in January 2022 was featured in media coverage around the world, including CNN, Financial Times, Al Jazeera, TRT World, NPR’s The World, TV Rain, The Insider, and Radio France International. Also, investigative



*RFE/RL coverage of protests in Provincial Kazakh cities amid state of emergency. (RFE/RL)*

journalism by the Ukrainian service exposed stories of Russian military planes destroyed by Ukrainian resistance and mass graves around the city of Mariupol. These stories were featured by major news outlets including The Wall Street Journal, CNN, Politico and the Kyiv Independent.



*RFA Mandarin's exclusive interview in September 2022 with chip magnate Robert Tsao (RFA)*

**RFA** – An exclusive Mandarin service interview in September 2022 with chip magnate Robert Tsao, who pledged to fund a millions-strong army of civilian warriors in Taiwan to defend against invasion, was cited by major local news, as well as The Guardian and AFP. Also, RFA's June 2022 coverage of the

economic turmoil in Laos was widely cited by Bloomberg, Nikkei Asia and The Diplomat. Also, investigative reporting on Cambodian kleptocracy by the Khmer service revealed individuals with close ties to the Cambodia government were embroiled in a \$100 million real estate fraud in Australia and that a Cambodian diplomat concealed his substantial stake in a major English soccer team. These stories were cited in The Diplomat, The Athletic and other outlets internationally.

**MBN** – Arabic press frequently cite MBN's coverage, creating a ripple effect for MBN's reporting. MBN's interviews with American officials are of significant interest and are often requoted in the local media in the Middle East. Al-Ahram (Egypt), Asharq Bloomberg (Saudi Arabia) and others cited Alhurra's interview with the State Department's Assistant Secretary for Economic Growth, Energy and the Environment José W. Fernández on the global food crisis. Several prominent media outlets cited Alhurra's interviews with State Department spokesman Ned Price about the U.S. support for the Iranian people, including LBC International (Lebanon), Al-Ahram (Egypt), Ashorouk (Egypt), National Iraqi News Agency (Iraq) and others.

Major indigenous media outlets also regularly quote MBN's reporting on American foreign policy. As an example, comments from State Department Spokesman Ned Price's about Iraq, Libya and the Palestinian Territories were quoted in media outlets, including Ashorouk (Egypt), Al-Youm Al-Sabea (Egypt), Libya al Ahrar (Libya), TRT Arabi (Turkey), Al-Wafd (Egypt), Al-Ahram (Egypt) and Masrawy (Egypt).



## AWARD-WINNING JOURNALISM

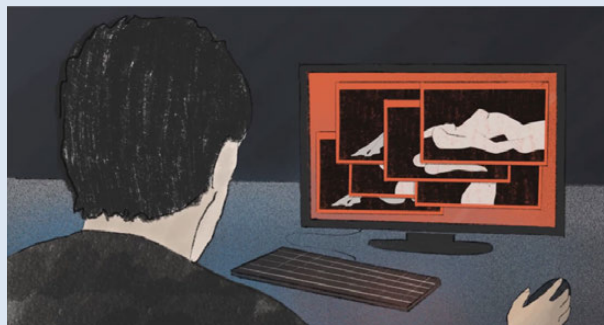


*RFE/RL report on Ukrainians seeking shelter in Shchastya, Ukraine. (RFE/RL)*

RFE/RL was the winner in the 2022 Online Journalism Awards in the Breaking News/Large Newsroom category, for its coverage of Russia’s War on Ukraine. The awards are considered the most prestigious in digital journalism. The citation recognized RFE/RL’s network of correspondents across Ukraine who contributed, “at great personal risk,” to live streams and live blogs and “provided immediate insights into their reporting in Instagram Stories and on Telegram and Viber in all of the region’s languages, including English.”

The Society of Publishers of Asia announced in June 2022 that two RFE/RL investigations won honorable mention in its annual journalism awards

competition: a Kyrgyz Service-Central newsroom investigation “The Sinister Side Of Kyrgyzstan's Online Sex Industry” in the category "Excellence in Reporting on Women’s Issues," and the Uzbek Service-Central Newsroom report on The Uzbek President’s Secret Mountain Hideaway, in the “Excellence in Investigative Reporting" category.



*RFE/RL Kyrgyz Service investigation: The Sinister Side of Online Sex Industry. Kateryna Ollynyk (RFE/RL Graphics)*

In FY 2022 VOA Mandarin and VOA Spanish collaborated on coverage of the environmental destruction caused by Chinese industrial fishing boats in the Galapagos Islands, and local activists' efforts to fight the depletion



(VOA)

of South American waters. Capturing both perspectives won VOA critical acclaim in both regions: the Mandarin-language video report won the prestigious SOPA's 2022 Finalist Award in the category of Excellence in Video Reporting, while the four-part Spanish original series on Chinese fishing, "Enjambre Flotante," (Floating Swarm), was selected as one of the best productions on environmental issues by the Inter-American Press Association, and won both a 2022 Clarion Award and a Silver Award in the 2021 New York Film Festival.



(RFA)

In March, RFA's global Mandarin digital brand 歪脑 | WHYNOT won three awards from the Society of News Design (SND) in its Best of Digital News Design competition. WHYNOT's special report, Between Vision and Reality: the Gap in China's Fight Against HIV, won the bronze award for Design in Health, alongside the New York Times. Two other special reports, Preserving the Erased Decade of the Chinese Feminist Movement and A Guide to the New Hong Kong Under the Chinese Communist Party, both received Awards of Excellence in Use of Commissioned Illustration. Other winners in this group included The Washington Post, POLITICO, and ProPublica. SND's Best of Digital News Design is a juried contest honoring visual and technical excellence in storytelling, graphics, social media and product design. There were a record 1,984 entries in the competition this year.

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*“Data Voids” uses animated infographics to explain the spread of online disinformation (MBN)*

In April, MBN won seven medals at the 2022 New York Festivals TV and Film Awards. MBN’s digital team won Silver in the Best Social Justice Reporting category for Alhurra.com’s report “Data Voids,” about openings created in the digital landscape for disinformation campaigns to flourish. In the category of Best Reporting on Heroes, ElSaha.com

won Silver medals for “Sophie’s World,” a profile of a single mother raising a daughter with Down syndrome, and for an interview with Demiana Nassar Hanna, a woman from a rural village who was lifted from obscurity when cast as the lead in the award-winning movie *Feathers*.

Alhurra’s Creative Services team was awarded three medals for their augmented reality work, including a Silver Medal for Best Use of Special Effects for Alhurra Television’s augmented reality production highlighting the potential ecological disaster posed by an oil storage ship in the Red Sea.

An *Alhurra Investigates* report on ISIS wives trying to return home, also won Bronze for Best Documentary on Social Issues. The program looked at the challenges of many of these women who are no longer welcome in their home countries.



*“Alhurra Investigates: ISIS Wives Trying to Return Home” (MBN)*

Also this year, two other *Alhurra Investigates* episodes won Silver at the 43<sup>rd</sup> annual Telly Awards. “Lebanon’s Illegal Emigration” was awarded in the Television category for Public Interest/Awareness and “Ethiopia’s Tigray War” in the Television category for News/News Feature.



IMPACT OBJECTIVE 1

Impact Performance Goal 1.2:  
Provide programming that audiences find trustworthy

| Program Credibility – percentage of weekly audience who consider information to be very or somewhat trustworthy | FY 2018 Actual | FY 2019 Actual | FY 2020 Actual | FY 2021 Actual | FY 2022 Target | FY 2022 Actual |
|---|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| VOA   | 84             | 83             | 83             | 81             | 82             | 83             |
| RFE/RL  | 77             | 73             | 75             | 74             | 76             | 78             |
| RFA   | 77             | 77             | 76             | 77             | 78             | 77             |
| MBN   | 80             | 75             | 68             | 70             | 73             | 70             |
| OCB   | 97             | 97             | 97             | 97             | --             | NA             |

IMPACT INDICATOR:

**Program Credibility**

This indicator is determined by a question in representative surveys about trustworthiness of news and information of those sampled respondents who listened to or viewed each station in the past week. The answers are registered on a four-point scale based on the following response options: “Trust a great deal,” “Trust it somewhat,” “Do not trust it very much,” or “Do not trust it at all.” The Program Credibility index is a weighted average, by audience size, of the percentage of those answering the question in the survey (excluding those who did not respond or did not know) who report trusting news from the station a great deal or somewhat. Credibility estimates are not included for countries where the number of regular listeners/viewers/online users is so small (n = <50) that the estimate is unreliable.

In FY 2022, USAGM revised its core questionnaire to better measure how contemporary audiences engage with modern media. As a result of testing and cognitive interviews, the question wording for program credibility has changed to

“how trustworthy do you find the content from [brand]?” registered on a four-point scale based on the following response options: “Very trustworthy,” “Somewhat trustworthy,” “Somewhat untrustworthy,” or “Very untrustworthy.” As results from the new questionnaire become available, they will be combined with previous results in the program credibility indicator.

**ANALYSIS OF RESULTS:**

**VOA** **Target: 82** **Actual: 83**

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VOA exceeded its FY 2022 target to further increase program credibility performance from FY 2021. Changes in broadcasters’ credibility responses tend to be driven by the differences in sizes of the markets measured year to year, rather than sudden changes in global perception. While growing audiences have historically correlated to lower levels of trust, VOA was able to maintain high credibility perception while also achieving significant audience growth.

**RFE/RL** **Target: 76** **Actual: 78**

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RFE/RL exceeded its program credibility target with a measurement of 78 percent. The network continues to hold a high level of credibility among its audience with almost four out of five weekly listeners, viewers, and online users rating its programming as “very” or “somewhat trustworthy,” including in some markets where worsening opinions of the United States may have contributed to lower program credibility ratings for the RFE/RL broadcast services operating there.

**RFA** **Target: 78** **Actual: 77**

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RFA’s overall program credibility measure remained unchanged from the previous fiscal year, missing its FY 2022 growth target, as no new data was added for this indicator. RFA credibility metrics are derived from prior survey results in Cambodia, Myanmar, and China. Because figures are weighted by audience size, China’s audience perceptions predominate in this metric. China’s more repressive control of media makes survey respondents reluctant to admit finding banned materials appealing or credible. Credibility numbers measured in the relatively more open markets of Cambodia and Myanmar were significantly higher in spite

of active online attacks against RFA in both markets. RFA’s credibility measure in USAGM’s most recent Myanmar survey module was extremely high (96.9 percent), less than two months before its democratically elected government was removed in a military coup in February 2021.

**MBN**

**Target: 73**

**Actual: 70**

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MBN fell short of its FY 2022 program credibility response target. Because this metric is based on a weighted average of MBN’s total audience, trust for Alhurra is heavily based on “Trust” rating in Iraq, where MBN has by far the largest audience. Trust in Iraq for Alhurra was 58 percent in the most recent USAGM national survey. Trust in other key countries including Morocco, Lebanon, and Saudi Arabia was much higher at 90 percent, 82 percent and 83 percent, respectively.

**OCB**

**Target: --**

**Actual: NA**

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USAGM did not commission a survey in Cuba in FY 2022. The last survey data was compiled for the FY 2017 PAR and the data for the “Trust” indicator is no longer considered current. A survey is planned and will be reported in FY 2023.

A CLOSER LOOK:

## Programming responding to crisis situations



*Myroslava Gongadze, VOA's Eastern Europe Chief reports on refugees along the Ukrainian-Polish border in the aftermath of the Russian invasion of Ukraine. (VOA)*

**UKRAINE** USAGM's networks ramped up timely and relevant coverage of Ukraine in FY 2022 in response to regional and global needs for factual coverage.

After the Russian invasion, VOA News Center created a live blog called "Latest Developments in Ukraine" on the Ukraine page of voanews.com and staffed it with a team of writers and editors to keep growing audiences updated 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, with breaking news, analysis, live coverage of press conferences and important speeches, as well as videos, tweets and items of topical interest related to the war. The Ukraine live blog has consistently ranked amongst the most viewed items with the longest engagement on voanews.com. VOA News Center covered the waves of crisis in Ukraine from a variety of aspects producing stories about its impact on different countries and continents. Online and television reports were based on stories from different Divisions and curated on different platforms, and drew from video footage collected by the VOA Russian and Ukrainian Services.

As the war progressed, VOA coverage expanded to include a variety of related themes such as the plight of Afghan refugees who fled to Ukraine to escape horrors in their country and who now faced the impacts of war in a country they expected to be a safe haven. These compelling stories were aired and published throughout the months after the Russian invasion in February of 2022.

Elsewhere, VOA African services depicted the economic impact of the war on their continent, and the Chinese branch covered China's response to the war.

VOA Turkish provided reporting on Turkey's role in the war, including focused attention on Turkish drones used by Ukraine and Turkey as a destination for Ukrainian refugees and Russian dissidents seeking refuge from the war and conscription. A September 2022 video news bulletin posted to the VOA Russian Service's news channel on YouTube that focused on women's protests in Russian cities against the government's partial mobilization of reserve forces generated 7.75 million views and over 27,000 comments.



*VOA's Dorian Jones interviews a Russian exile in Istanbul who escaped Russian conscription. (VOA)*

Reporting in March 2022 by RFE/RL Ukrainian Service correspondent Maryan Kushnir and the *Schemes* investigative team led to the September 2022 conviction of a Russian soldier by a Kyiv court was based on. The court convicted Sergei Shtainer of committing crimes against Ukraine's civilian population, sentencing him to 9 years in prison in the first such verdict since Russia's February 2022 invasion.

As soon as Russia invaded Ukraine, Alhurra (MBN) had live breaking news coverage approximately 21 hours per day, with correspondents in Ukraine, the Polish/Ukraine border, Russia, London, White House, State Department and Pentagon reporting on the daily events and reaction from the U.S. This extensive live coverage lasted for five weeks, before it was scaled back to 13 hours a day (for approximately another five week). *Alhurra Investigates* also explored the Russian war crimes in Ukraine, a story that was not widely reported in the Arab press.





*Still from story highlighting the ongoing danger to Nicaraguans trying to migrate. (VOA)*

**LATIN AMERICA** VOA's Latin America Division has provided extensive coverage of multiple migration crises, stitching together disparate movements and revealing the many economic, political, and social commonalities. VOA Spanish collaborated with an affiliate to produce a special series on the surge of migration out of

Nicaragua, driven by persecution, poverty, and a lack of opportunities. A separate set of extensive multiplatform coverage explored the migration crisis stemming from Venezuela, Central America, and Mexico to the U.S.; stories covered U.S. border migration challenges, Title 42 restrictions, an influx of thousands of Ukrainians fleeing the war who arrived to Tijuana to speed up their asylum cases to enter the U.S., and a multi-continent operation of humanitarian flights conducted by an Argentine philanthropist pilot who helped transport Ukrainian refugees fleeing the war. Yet another series tracked how pregnant Haitian women are flooding Dominican hospitals to give birth, driven by the lack of available public health in Haiti. The influx, overtaxing the Dominican system, is fueling resentment against Haitian undocumented migrants more broadly, who have fled their country amid political crisis, gang violence and economic downturn.

**AFGHANISTAN** VOA's Afghan Service featured a full week of comprehensive coverage of the first anniversary of the fall of Kabul on all its platforms, focusing on the impact on ordinary Afghans of the return of the Taliban. In its 12-hour daily special coverage from August 9 to 16, the service covered the most pressing issues the people of



*VOA coverage highlighted the restrictions on women under the Taliban. (VOA)*



VOA's "Homeland" follows the story of an Afghan journalist who chose to stay and try to work under Taliban restrictions. (VOA)

Afghanistan were facing under the Taliban, including repression of women, erosion of press freedoms and journalistic activity, and the gutting of civil society activities. The service produced around 80 original TV and radio packages and conducted dozens of interviews with women's activists, civil society

members, Taliban, former Afghan officials, Afghanistan experts, U.S. politicians, and members of the international community.

**SUDAN** Following the October 2021 coup, MBN launched a Sawa Sudan FM stream broadcasting 21-hours a day in Arabic from Khartoum to provide audiences the latest news and programs related to challenges faced by Sudanese people. Alhurra (MBN) launched *Between Two Niles*, which hosted guests including the President of the Sovereignty Council of Sudan Abdel Fattah Abdelrahman al-Burhan and the U.N.



VOA's South Sudan In Focus managing editor John Tanza appears on Africa 54 to discuss the military coup in Sudan and the aftermath. (VOA)

VOA English-to-Africa delivered real-time reporting from October's coup with the arrest of transitional leaders and demonstrations against the takeover. "I'm speaking from Khartoum south, where thousands of young people, men and women, are currently on the streets..." Michael Atit reported. Regional reaction, comments from the White House and the United Nations, and a denunciation of the coup by the U.S. ambassador to Sudan, led multimedia programming across languages, including Somali, Amharic, Afan Oromo, and Tigrigna.

**PAKISTAN** RFE/RL plays a vital public service media role in Pakistan's Pashtun-speaking northwestern tribal regions, Radio Mashaal provided comprehensive coverage of the devastating flooding that engulfed in three Pakistani provinces, including Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa which form the core of Mashaal's audience. Mashaal dedicated two live call-shows and its weekly live debate program to coverage of flood relief activities and the government's response to the floods, while the weekly live health program explained first aid during natural disasters.

The devastating crisis in Pakistan was also covered at length by both VOA Deewa and VOA Urdu Service correspondents. The Services provided robust coverage of the floods, reporting from remote areas that are often inaccessible to local outlets. Multimedia coverage provided a comprehensive view of the crisis, capturing the role of climate change, ensuing malnutrition, and risks of disease outbreak. Original video coverage from flooded areas attracted both audiences and affiliates, serving as a lifeline for individuals desperate for information, and highlighting the greatest needs for the distribution of recovery resources.



*Across Pakistan this summer, flooding has displaced close to 8 million people and affected 33 million, including hundreds of thousands of pregnant women. VOA Urdu Service reporter Sidra Dar visited a medical camp in southern Pakistan's Sindh province, where pregnant women from some of the worst-hit areas in the country come to seek help. (VOA)*



IMPACT OBJECTIVE 1

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

| Understanding – percent of weekly audience who report that the broadcasts have increased their understanding of current events somewhat or a great deal | FY 2018 Actual | FY 2019 Actual | FY 2020 Actual | FY 2021 Actual | FY 2022 Target | FY 2022 Actual |
|---|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| VOA   | 76             | 76             | 75             | 75             | 76             | 75             |
| RFE/RL  | 73             | 75             | 75             | 78             | 79             | 78             |
| RFA   | 52             | 52             | 52             | 51             | 52             | 51             |
| MBN   | 70             | 66             | 65             | 50             | 55             | 60             |
| OCB   | 96             | 96             | 96             | 96             | 80             | NA             |

IMPACT INDICATOR:

Understanding of current events

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

USAGM’s revised core questionnaire has been tested in multiple markets and proven to more accurately capture how audiences use and remember engaging with its network’s programming. As a result of testing and cognitive interviews, the question wording for this indicator now asks whether respondents agree

or disagree that “[brand] increases my knowledge of news about the rest of the world.” As results from the new questionnaire become available, “understanding of current events” will be merged, and then eventually replaced by “knowledge of world news” in USAGM performance reporting.

**ANALYSIS OF RESULTS:**

**VOA** **Target: 76** **Actual: 75**

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In FY 2022, VOA maintained its reported level of “Understanding of Current Events” from FY 2021, though missing its growth target. Measures on this metric continue to be higher in Africa and in the English language generally, lower in Latin America and the Middle East, and mixed throughout Eurasia and East Asia.

**RFE/RL** **Target: 79** **Actual: 78**

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RFE/RL maintained its FY 2021 performance of 78 percent for this metric but missed its growth target for FY 2022. Almost four in five weekly listeners, viewers, or online users reported that RFE/RL programs increased their understanding of current events.

**RFA** **Target: 52** **Actual: 51**

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RFA’s understanding metric remains unchanged from FY 2021. As no additional data were available for this metric in FY 2022, it missed its growth target. This metric for was derived from measurements in China and Cambodia only. As with the Credibility metric, the Understanding indicator is reflective almost entirely of data from the national survey of Chinese audiences reported in FY 2018. China’s more repressive control of media make survey respondents reluctant to admit finding banned materials appealing. Understanding measures from a Cambodia national survey completed in October 2019, though significantly higher than those from China, failed to boost this indicator which is weighted by audience size.

**MBN****Target: 55****Actual: 60**

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MBN exceeded its FY 2022 target for this measure, but it is based solely on data from Saudi Arabia and Iraq. Because numbers are weighted for audience size, understanding for MBN primarily reflects Iraq, where MBN has by far the largest audience, obscuring even stronger “Understanding” performance for Alhurra in Saudi Arabia.

**OCB****Target: 80****Actual: NA**

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USAGM did not commission a survey in Cuba in FY 2022. The last survey data was compiled for the FY 2017 PAR and the data for the “Understanding” indicator is no longer considered current. A survey is planned and will be reported in FY 2023.

## A CLOSER LOOK:

# Producing or curating content on issues important to audiences

## HEALTH

*"This program for women is a service to humanity, thanks for creating awareness on this sensitive topic."*

*VOA Deewa listener from the Pakistani tribal district of Bajaur*

VOA Deewa's coverage of women's health has spurred a debate on infertility, menstrual education, and unwanted pregnancies in an area where discussion of women's reproductive health is taboo. VOA Deewa has brought female gynecologists to live shows to provide authoritative, scientific information

on critical topics like the management of menstrual health during the COVID-19 pandemic and effective hygiene; the gynecologists' availability for caller questions is a valuable resource, particularly for audiences in rural areas.

## HUMAN RIGHTS

MBN has several programs dedicated to highlighting human rights issues in the region and around the world. *Hakki* ("My Right") is an hour-long program that focuses on human rights issues in Iraq, Sudan and the Levant region, including freedom of religion, freedom of speech and the rights of minorities. Topics have included the rights of Syrian refugees, the impact of armed conflicts on children and child labor in Sudan.

*Word of Truth* is a weekly show that allows voices suppressed in the Middle East to be heard. It regularly tackles controversial topics such as violations of human rights and personal freedom in the MENA region. The show provides a platform



*Alhurra's Word of Truth (MBN)*

for moderate intellectuals whose ideas are often banned or marginalized in Arab countries. Topics have included free speech in Turkey, recruiting young Kurdish girls into the People Protection Units (YPG) militia and countries violating personal privacy under the pretext of security.



*Still from “You are Russian Now: Ukrainian Family Recall Deportation to Moscow” (RFE/RL)*

In FY 2022, RFE/RL reported closely on Russian “filtration” efforts and forced deportations from Ukraine. Since April 2022, the Services have publicized detailed eyewitness and first-hand accounts indicating these operations are pre-meditated, pervasive, and de-humanizing. Current Time published eyewitness reports of bribery and extortion at checkpoints and “filtration” camps built by Russian-backed separatists in Luhansk and Donetsk. The Ukrainian Service aired its own eyewitness reports on how filtration was carried out as residents sought to leave the besieged city of Mariupol and the Russian Service interviewed refugees about their experiences with “filtration.”

## TECHNOLOGY



*VOA's Linord Moudou interviews Bill Gates on his donation to support the work of small African farmers. (VOA)*

VOA Africa aired an exclusive interview with Bill Gates on the impact of climate change on farming, a topic of great interest to audiences across Africa. The Microsoft cofounder said he is giving \$315 million to a seed consortium working with small farmers around the world to grow crops that will adapt to climate change. From the U.N. Climate Change Conference in November, Gates told VOA that his foundation's work in Africa shows farmers are "already facing these difficulties, which will get significantly worse between now and the end of the century."

Beyond MBN's original reporting on technological and health innovations, several of MBN's acquired shows also deal with the topic. Alhurra aired the award-winning series *Henry Ford's Innovation Nation* that explored issues such as personal satellites, a thermometer predicting global hotspots and glasses that monitor a person's health. MBN also airs several of PBS's NOVA series, including profiling the most common and least understood particle in the universe, the neutrino, brain-controlled robotic limbs, and the discovery of Ice Age footprints.

IMPACT OBJECTIVE 1

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

| Helps form opinions on important topics<br>Percentage of weekly audience who report that the broadcasts have helped them form opinions on important topics somewhat or a great deal | FY 2018 Actual | FY 2019 Actual | FY 2020 Actual | FY 2021 Actual | FY 2022 Target | FY 2022 Actual |
|---|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| VOA   | 63             | 63             | 64             | 64             | 64             | 71             |
| RFE/RL  | 52             | 56             | 53             | 58             | 59             | 65             |
| RFA   | 87             | 87             | 85             | 93             | 90             | 93             |
| MBN <sup>1</sup>  | 71             | 75             | 63             | NA             | 70             | 71             |
| OCB   | 75             | 75             | 75             | 75             | 75             | NA             |

<sup>1</sup> This question was not included in MBN surveys reported in FY 2021

**IMPACT INDICATOR:**

**Helps form opinions**

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

In FY 2022, USAGM revised its core questionnaire to better measure how contemporary audiences engage with modern media. As a result of testing and cognitive interviews, the question wording for this indicator changed to ask audiences whether they agree or disagree that “[brand] helps me to form opinions on important issues.” As results from the new questionnaire become available,



USAGM will report combined figures from the old questionnaire (percentage of weekly audience selecting “a great deal” or “somewhat”) and the new questionnaire (percentage of weekly audience selecting “agree”).

**ANALYSIS OF RESULTS:**

**VOA** **Target: 64** **Actual: 71**

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VOA considerably exceeded this target in FY 2022 with 71 percent of weekly users saying its content has helped them form their opinions. Although the overall result has maintained stability over the past four years, individual results tend to be highly variable across markets. The lowest result in the FY 2022 calculation is Iran, at 40 percent, and the highest is Nigeria, at 91 percent.

**RFE/RL** **Target: 59** **Actual: 65**

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RFE/RL’s response rate of 65 percent of weekly users who say its content has helped them form their own opinions significantly exceeded the target of 59 percent and was the highest figure measured since the metric has been tracked.

**RFA** **Target: 90** **Actual: 93**

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RFA exceeded its target with 93 percent of weekly users saying that its content helped them form opinions. This metric is based on data from Cambodia only where RFA is highly influential. No additional data were available for this metric in RFA markets in FY 2022.

**MBN** **Target: 70** **Actual: 71**

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MBN exceeded its target for FY 2022, based on data on this indicator coming only from Saudi Arabia. It was not included in 2019-2022 surveys for other countries, but will be included on full surveys in FY 2023.

**OCB** **Target: 75** **Actual: NA**

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USAGM did not commission a survey in Cuba in FY 2022. The last survey data was compiled for the FY 2017 PAR and the data for the percent of weekly users who say its content has helped them form their own opinions is no longer considered current. A survey is planned and will be reported in FY 2023.



A CLOSER LOOK:

## Original investigative reporting

**RFE/RL** In February 2022, RFE/RL's Radio Farda published an exclusive expose featuring a leaked audio recording from 2019 that revealed massive, organized corruption at the highest levels of Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC). The report went viral on Instagram with the posted audio files quickly exceeding three million views. Fars News Agency, which is close to the Revolutionary Guards, was forced to confirm the authenticity of Farda's audio file, and Iranian officials were forced to react to the revelations.

In January 2022, editors of the Global Investigative Journalism Network named investigative reports by RFE/RL's Uzbek Service and Tajik Service, as well as the Ukrainian Service's *Schemes* investigative team, as some of the best examples of investigative journalism from Eastern Europe, Central Asia, and the Caucasus. They called a report on the rampant abuse of Tajik passports by migrant workers and international terrorists, "astounding". Many other impactful Tajik Service investigations were cited by mainstream international media.

A March 2022 *Schemes* investigation of a Swiss Internet bank issuing multi-currency credit cards to Russians despite the suspension of Visa and Mastercard payment systems in the Russian Federation caused the bank to end the practice.

An investigation by RFE/RL's Bulgarian Service revealed how the Russian energy giant LUKoil makes millions in Bulgaria—but pays almost no tax. The company today generates some of the highest revenues in Bulgaria, totaling more than the equivalent of 40 billion euros (\$45.7 billion) over the past 15 years.



*Screenshot of a popout player on Radio Farda featuring leaked audio of Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps. (RFE/RL)*



*RFE/RL's Kazakh service report on Nazarbayev real estate holdings. (RFE/RL)*

RFE/RL's Kazakh Service exposed the vast domestic real estate holdings of the family of longtime Kazakh leader Nursultan Nazarbayev in a pair of investigations about properties owned by the Nazarbayev family in Kazakhstan's commercial center, Almaty, and about properties owned in the capital, Nur-Sultan. Frustration among local Kazakhs over endemic corruption was one of the main drivers of the nationwide protests in January 2022; these investigations laid out the facts behind the frustration.

A July 2022 investigation by RFE/RL's Balkan Service found that companies linked to Serbian nationals who have been blacklisted by Washington for alleged ties to organized crime in Kosovo continued to win the equivalent of millions of dollars in state contracts from the Serbian government. The investigation, a joint effort by teams in Serbia and Kosovo, is the first to name highly controversial politicians in Kosovo linked with specific companies that control the northern part of the country, including Milan Radoicic, who is a defendant in the case of murdered Kosovo Serb politician Oliver Ivanovic in 2018.



*This construction site at a University is just one of the construction contracts documented by RFE/RL journalists. These contracts were awarded to Serbian companies with alleged ties to organized crime in Kosovo. (RFE/RL)*

**VOA** During the 2021-2022 Belarus-EU border crisis, VOA Kurdish investigated a disinformation campaign targeting Kurdish migrants, an example of continued investigative reporting on Russia’s global misinformation and disinformation efforts. A campaign on Facebook falsely claimed that Europe had decided to open the Polish border with Belarus to grant entry to stranded migrants – a claim officially rejected by the EU. This messaging was propagated by a parliament member in Iraqi Kurdistan and a journalist based in Athens. VOA reporting included interviews with affected migrants and migrant representatives, who explained how the misinformation pushed thousands of men, women, and children into harm’s way in Belarusian forests. After VOA’s questions, a Meta spokesperson said the company decided that both accounts violated Facebook rules by spreading false information and removed the two popular pages.

In Mali, the VOA Bambara Service established that Malian soldiers and Russian paramilitaries had assaulted women and attacked inhabitants of the small town of Nia-Ouro, located in the center of Mali. The radio piece featured interviews with eyewitnesses and community leaders with knowledge of the abuses. Finally, VOA’s Africa Division produced a 10-part series on the economic impact of the Ukraine crisis across the continent. The series explains both the conditions that African audiences are already experiencing and insight into what they might expect – vital information as audience members plan their daily lives.

**MBN** Alhurra Television’s award-winning series *Alhurra Investigates* unearths stories of corruption, human rights abuses and disinformation. Each week the series sheds light on issues not reported by other media outlets. In FY 2022, much of the investigative reporting examined the influence of Russia, China and Iran on the region. Media outlets have historically turned a blind eye to these stories due to their regional geopolitical influence. One such episode reported how Chinese loans collapsed the Sri Lankan economy; and how it could be a precursor to what would happen to Egypt and Iraq when China calls in their loans. Other episodes exposed Russian war crimes in Ukraine and Iran’s use of hostages as political capital.



*Alhurra Investigates- Ethiopia’s Tigray War. (MBN)*

## Impact Objective 2:

### Prioritize audiences that are information-denied or targets of disinformation and extremist rhetoric

In choosing languages and target areas, USAGM considers the local media situation, along with United States strategic interests, and prioritizes countries that lack a free or developed press. Special consideration is given to populations in information-denied environments and at risk due to disinformation and extremist propaganda.

USAGM prioritizes reaching audiences in areas plagued by disinformation and extremism, where extremist and foreign propaganda stymie free, open, democratic societies, thus threatening the United States and regional security.

Another key focus area is audiences subjected to censorship and state-sponsored disinformation campaigns, which seek to undermine democratic norms and the very idea of objective truth.

USAGM will:

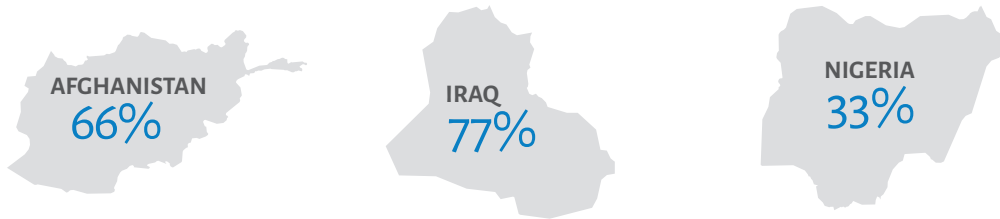
- Prioritize countries lacking freedom and democracy or faced with disinformation or extremism, where accurate, credible news and information are lacking. Enhance services to these areas, where feasible;
- If needed, introduce service in selected new languages to reach sizeable new audiences in countries where USAGM products are urgently needed;
- Serve as a conduit for the transmission of reporting from inside closed societies lacking press freedom;
- Use a broad range of tools to respond to disinformation, including creating compelling original content, fact-checking, exposing disinformation campaigns, and ensuring secure access to uncensored platforms;
- Ensure strong local news coverage, as warranted by events, to meet urgent audience needs in areas of crisis; and
- Draw on the experiences of the world's many models of free societies, in particular the United States, to present a broad array of political views and debates.

# Impact Performance Goal Overview

Snapshot of Weekly Audience Reach in Key Countries

## 2.1

**Achieve significant audience reach in environments subject to extremist rhetoric and violence.**



## 2.2

**Reach audiences in information-denied environments.**



## 2.3

**Reach audiences in environments targeted by state-sponsored disinformation campaigns.**



## IMPACT OBJECTIVE 2

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

|  | FY 2018 Actual      | FY 2019 Actual      | FY 2020 Actual      | FY 2021 Actual      | FY 2022 Target | FY 2022 Actual                   |
|--|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|----------------|----------------------------------|
| Increase or maintain weekly audiences in: <sup>1</sup> |                     |                     |                     |                     |                |                                  |
| Iraq <sup>2</sup>                                      | 42.6%<br>(Jan 2016) | 35.0%<br>(Jul 2017) | 61.7%               | 71.9%               | 78%            | 71.9%<br>(2019/-20) <sup>2</sup> |
| Nigeria  | 21.0%<br>(Feb 2016) | 19.2%<br>(Jul 2018) | 19.2%<br>(Jul 2018) | 19.2%<br>(Jul 2018) | 21%            | 33.2%                            |
| Afghanistan  | 38.5%<br>(Nov 2016) | 69.3%<br>(Jul 2018) | 69.3%<br>(Jul 2018) | 69.3%<br>(Jul 2018) | 45%            | 65.7%                            |
| Pakistan   | 2.9%<br>(Aug 2016)  | 5.3%<br>(Jan 2019)  | 5.3%<br>(Jan 2019)  | 5.3%<br>(Jan 2019)  | 5.3%           | 5.3%<br>(Jan 2019)               |
| Former FATA region <sup>3</sup>                        | 26.4%<br>(Jun 2015) | 26.4%<br>(Jun 2015) | NA                  | NA                  | NA             | NA                               |

<sup>1</sup> The countries and regions listed were selected by USAGM experts and represent a subset of those that USAGM networks target with programming that provides news and information to counter extremist messaging.

<sup>2</sup> The 2021 Iraq estimate includes data from two different surveys, one among Iraqi Arabs and one among Iraqi Kurds. In previous years, reach among Iraqi Arabs and Kurds was collected in a single survey. Fieldwork for the survey among Iraqi Arabs took place in August 2020; fieldwork for the Iraqi Kurdish survey took place in October 2019.

<sup>3</sup> The last USAGM survey of former Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) was conducted in June 2015, outside of the five-year reporting window for USAGM research. USAGM has tried to receive permission from local authorities to conduct a new survey in the Tribal Areas of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa without success.

### IMPACT INDICATOR:

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

### ANALYSIS OF RESULTS:

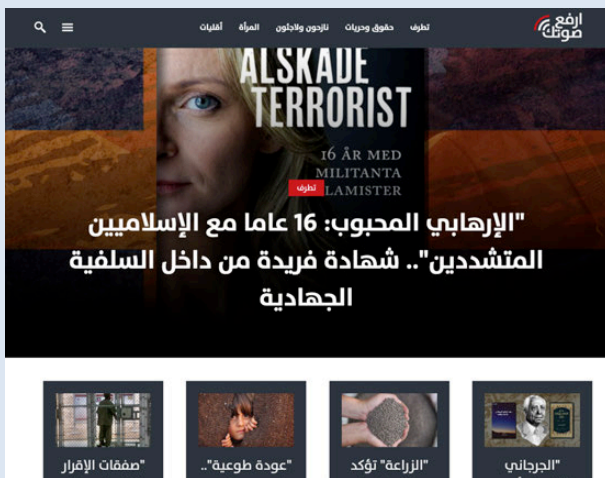
Of the listed countries, new survey results were available in FY 2022 for Nigeria and Afghanistan. In Nigeria, a new survey revealed an over 70 percent increase in measured VOA audience since 2018, growing now to one-third of the adult population. In Afghanistan, despite the new government removing USAGM media brands from most television partner stations and forcing many small radio partners to shutter, a telephone-based survey indicated that a majority of Afghans still accessed content produced by USAGM networks in FY 2022.



## A CLOSER LOOK:

# Examples of USAGM impact in environments subject to extremism

**MBN** – Despite the years since ISIS was forced out of Iraq, MBN examines the ongoing ramifications of that time and how people are still struggling to recover. The Special Representative of the U.N. Sec.-Gen. for Children and Armed Conflict joined *In Iraqi* to talk about the children being detained by ISIS and held in the Al Hol camp. Similarly, MBN's digital platform covering the root causes of extremism, Irfaasatak.com (Raise Your Voice), explored the challenges facing the rehabilitation of children after ISIS. Irfaaswatak.com also produced a mini-documentary about the real-world capabilities of ISIS and what threats they present with the Spokesperson of the Joint Special Operations Command Tahseen Al Khafaji, former Iraqi Lt. Gen. Emad Elo and former Iraqi Maj. Gen. Hisham Daraji. *Iraq This Evening* covered the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS's decision to give more than \$200 million in aid to Iraqi military forces.



*Irfaasawtak.com (Raise Your Voice) examines the root cause of extremism. (MBN)*

improve the lives of those most affected. Poverty is considered a root cause of extremism. In addition, through newscasts and programming MBN reports on U.S. military operations in the region that result in the death of extremist leaders, such as Abu Ibrahim Al Hashimi Al Qurayshi. Alhurra was the first Arabic media outlet on the scene and could confirm his death. Alhurra's newscasts highlighted

Irfaasawtak.com provides a place for audiences to share their opinions, regularly highlighting issues dealing with religious freedom, the rights of minorities and economic inequities in the region. Alhurra's newly launched program \$2 (Two Dollars), is a weekly look at what it is like living on two dollars a day.

Traveling across the region, \$2 focuses on the policies that lead to impoverishment and efforts to

President Biden’s remarks about the operation and expert analysis of what this meant for the future of the terrorist network. MBN also consistently reported on international efforts to end the financing of terrorist groups, including measures by the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS and the U.S.’s support for Iraq’s efforts to end the funding of terrorism. When the Iraqi Joint Operations Command launched operation “Solid Will” to eliminate ISIS in western Iraq, *In Iraqi, Jawlat Al Mourasilin* (Reporter’s Tour) and *Iraq Today* had expert analysis to talk about the hunt for ISIS in four provinces.

**VOA** – VOA’s coverage of extremism spanned the full lifecycle of extremist



*VOA Henry Wilkens interviews Fulani community leader about the persecution of Fulani by security forces in the north of the Ivory Coast. (VOA)*

movements, from ostracized communities under duress, to nascent extremist rhetoric and fomented violence, all the way through the Taliban’s takeover of Afghanistan and the implementation of its extremist ideology. In Cote d'Ivoire, VOA has covered how nomadic communities of the Fulani ethnicity are more frequently arrested and labeled as terrorists; ironically, that harassment has been seized upon by jihadist groups to exploit ethnic tensions and expand their recruitment activities. VOA has also covered experts’ opinions that child poverty and food insecurity in Nigeria has contributed to the recruitment and deployment of child soldiers by the Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP).



## IMPACT OBJECTIVE 2

# Impact Performance Goal 2.2: Reach audiences in information-denied environments

|  | FY 2018<br>Actual   | FY 2019<br>Actual   | FY 2020<br>Actual   | FY 2021<br>Actual   | FY 2022<br>Target | FY 2022<br>Actual   |
|--|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|-------------------|---------------------|
| Increase or maintain weekly audiences in: <sup>1</sup>   |                     |                     |                     |                     |                   |                     |
| China <sup>2</sup>   | 6.2%<br>(Aug 2017)  | 6.2%<br>(Aug 2017)  | 6.2%<br>(Aug 2017)  | 6.2%<br>(Aug 2017)  | 6.2%              | 6.2%<br>(Aug 2017)  |
| Vietnam  | 3.6%<br>(July 2016) | 3.6%<br>(Jul 2016)  | 3.6%<br>(Jul 2016)  | 11.2%<br>(Dec 2020) | 11.2%             | 6.4%<br>(Jun 2022)  |
| Laos   | 2.4%<br>(Sep 2016)  | 2.4%<br>(Sep 2016)  | 2.4%<br>(Sep 2016)  | 4.7%<br>(Dec 2020)  | 4.7%              | 4.7%<br>(Dec 2020)  |
| Turkmenistan   | NA                  | 6.1%<br>(Jun 2019)  | 6.1%<br>(Jun 2019)  | 6.1%<br>(Jun 2019)  | 6.1%              | 6.1%<br>(Jun 2019)  |
| Uzbekistan <sup>3</sup>  | 1.6%<br>(May 2017)  | 1.6%<br>(May 2017)  | 1.6%<br>(May 2017)  | 1.6%<br>(May 2017)  | 2.0%              | NA                  |
| Iran   | 23.4%<br>(Sep 2017) | 23.4%<br>(Sep 2017) | 23.4%<br>(Sep 2017) | 19.0%<br>(Mar 2021) | 19.0%             | 19.0%<br>(Mar 2021) |
| Azerbaijan   | 3.5%<br>(Dec 2015)  | 3.5%<br>(Dec 2015)  | 3.5%<br>(Dec 2015)  | NA                  | 3.0%              | 5.7%<br>(Feb 2022)  |
| Cuba   | 11.1%<br>(Mar 2017) | 11.1%<br>(Mar 2017) | 11.1%<br>(Mar 2017) | 11.1%<br>(Mar 2017) | 11.1%             | NA                  |
| Continue to serve and monitor information-denied environments lacking representative survey data, including North Korea, Eritrea, Syria, Tibet, and Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region. |                     |                     |                     |                     |                   |                     |

<sup>1</sup> Selected countries include those targeted by USAGM networks, in which USAGM is able to conduct research, that have the lowest press freedom scores on external indices.

<sup>2</sup> The last media survey of China was conducted in August 2017—more than 60 months ago, but within a five-year reporting window. The agency plans to commission a new survey in 2023.

<sup>3</sup> The last media survey of Uzbekistan was conducted in May 2017—more than 60 months ago, and outside a five-year reporting window. The agency plans to commission a new survey in 2023.

**IMPACT INDICATOR:**

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

**ANALYSIS OF RESULTS:**

Of the listed countries, new survey results were available in FY 2022 only for Vietnam and Azerbaijan. In Vietnam, the agency's 6.4 percent measured audience fell short of a target to maintain the 11.2 percent result noted in the December 2020 survey. FY 2022 performance was still higher than the 3.6 percent recorded in 2016. Possible factors explaining the drop include heightened news consumption in 2020 during COVID-19 pandemic lockdowns and aggressive steps taken in the last two years by the government to censor media and control information access. In Azerbaijan, a 2022 survey revealed a modest increase in the size of the agency's audience. Compared to the previous survey in 2015, RFE/RL's Azadliq has seen an increase in its weekly measured audience from 3.0 percent in 2015 to 4.2 percent in 2022. VOA's Amerikanin Sesi weekly measured audience reach is 1.7 percent of Azerbaijani adults, statistically stable since the 1.4 percent measured in 2015.

A CLOSER LOOK:

## Examples of USAGM impact in information-denied environments

**CHINA** As authorities in Hong Kong stepped up their efforts to silence outspoken voices and suppress dissent, local news sources were forced to close their doors. As a result, audiences turned to RFA for timely news. While Hong Kong was still reeling from the closure of Apple Daily, authorities shut down two more news outlets - Stand News and Hong Kong Daily News. RFA Cantonese's Instagram account subsequently surged, with followers doubling overnight to 47 thousand. In May, RFA's Cantonese Service reached 100 thousand followers on Instagram.

As China's government disseminated alternate versions of global events and sought to stamp out independent news coverage in FY 2022, VOA Mandarin exposed the realities of Russia's invasion of Ukraine. VOA Mandarin aired an exclusive interview with a Chinese blogger based in Odessa whose YouTube and WeChat videos have undercut the official Chinese narrative minimizing Russia's violence and favorably portraying President Putin. With the VOA coverage gaining traction, the blogger's story was later picked up by ChinaFile, and expanded upon by the New York Times and others.

VOA has also bulwarked China's effort to suppress information beyond its borders. In FY 2022, VOA Chinese reporters traveled to the Solomon Islands to document China's pressure to suppress foreign journalists providing coverage in that country and to provide essential, original contextual reporting on China's

bilateral security agreement, financial investment, and construction initiatives there.



*Nilar Thein and husband Ko Jimmy (Nilar Thein)*

**MYANMAR** When Myanmar's official media announced the junta's execution of four prominent opposition leaders in Yangon, RFA's Burmese, English, and Creative Multimedia teams

quickly released detailed stories about the four leaders. RFA was not only among the first to publish the news of Myanmar's first state killings since 1976, but also provided audiences with full multimedia coverage on the deaths of 1988 protest veteran Ko Jimmy, and former lawmaker Pyo Zeya Thaw, as well as activists Hla Myo Aung and Aung Thura Zaw. Within hours of the official announcement, RFA Burmese was first to interview Ko Jimmy's widow, Nilar Thein, who denounced the executions as "blatant murder," also saying that prison officials had refused to release her husband's body. RFA Burmese and BenarNews kept Myanmar citizens apprised of the world's swift condemnation of the junta's actions, including strong denunciations by ASEAN leaders and a large protest in Bangkok. RFA's Instagram and Twitter posts quickly went viral, and their first Facebook post received over 44 thousand reactions, 4,700 shares, and 1,800 comments.



*Burmese nationals chant slogans against their country's junta during a rally outside the Myanmar Embassy in Bangkok to protest Naypyidaw's execution of veteran democracy activist Ko Jimmy and three other political dissidents, July 26, 2022. (Subel Rai Bhandari/BenarNews)*

### *"My daughter was in perfect health before her arrest."*

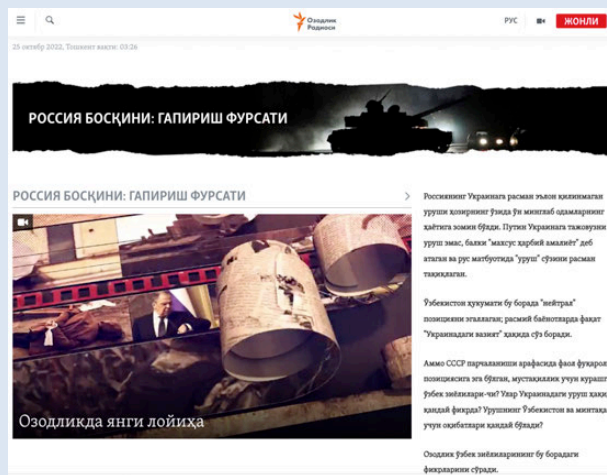
*Mojgan Amini, Mahsa Amini's mother in an interview with RFE/RL's Radio Farda*

Women's Handball Championship. Broadcasting what the IHF described as "Iranian women stepping into history," VOA Persian broke the boycott of women's sports on Iranian television screens and created quite a stir inside Iran where discussions over VOA Persian's live broadcasts grew into a broader political narrative about the Iranian government's overall neglect and underfunding of women's sports in Iran.

**IRAN** VOA Persian was the first Persian-language broadcaster to carry live coverage of the Iranian women's handball team's first-ever participation in the December 2021 International Handball Federation (IHF) World

On September 16, hours before 22-year-old Mahsa Amini’s death was announced at a Tehran hospital, sparking weeks of nationwide protests, RFE/RL’s Radio Farda conducted the first interview with her mother, who said “My daughter was in perfect health before her arrest” by Iran’s morality police for allegedly breaking the country’s hijab rules. The interview was used with attribution by international media outlets including the Washington Post.

**UZBEKISTAN** RFE/RL’s Uzbek Service is the number one source of news and information in the Uzbek language about the war in Ukraine, countering Russian propaganda and government narratives. In addition to daily TV shows on YouTube with the latest developments in Ukraine, the Service also launched a project to gauge the views of prominent Uzbek intellectuals – celebrities, writers, journalists, film directors, State officials, and others – about the war. Despite the government’s official “neutral” stance, and the pervasive impact of Russian propaganda, many of those contacted by the Service chose to speak out against the war in Ukraine. The publication of opinion-maker views that diverge from the government’s narrative remains unusual in Uzbekistan, and the project’s impact will continue to resonate in the future.



(RFE/RL)

**PAKISTAN** In 2022, Radio Mashaal broke the story of the Pakistani government’s secret talks with the banned extremist group Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan in Kabul, which was facilitated by the Afghan Taliban. Mashaal’s coverage of the talks and Pakistani moves to keep the talks going forced Pakistani authorities and the Afghan Taliban to confirm the secret negotiations with the TTP, as well as the Afghan Taliban’s role as mediator.

IMPACT OBJECTIVE 2

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

|  | FY 2018<br>Actual   | FY 2019<br>Actual   | FY 2020<br>Actual   | FY 2021<br>Actual   | FY 2022<br>Target | FY 2022<br>Actual   |
|--|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|-------------------|---------------------|
| Increase or maintain weekly audiences in: <sup>1</sup> |                     |                     |                     |                     |                   |                     |
| The Russian Federation                                 | 7.7%<br>(May 2018)  | 7.7%<br>(May 2018)  | 7.7%<br>(May 2018)  | 7.7%<br>(May 2018)  | 7%                | 10.6%<br>(Jul 2022) |
| Ukraine  | 18.0%<br>(Jun 2016) | 18.0%<br>(Jun 2016) | 24.4%<br>(May 2019) | 20.8%<br>(Dec 2020) | 21%               | 20.8%<br>(Dec 2020) |
| Moldova  | 32.1%<br>(Feb 2016) | 32.1%<br>(Feb 2016) | 32.2%<br>(Nov 2019) | 32.2%<br>(Nov 2019) | 32%               | 32.2%<br>(Nov 2019) |
| Kazakhstan   | 9.6%<br>(Nov 2016)  | 9.6%<br>(Nov 2016)  | 9.6%<br>(Nov 2016)  | 9.6%<br>(Nov 2016)  | 10%               | 9.4%<br>(Oct 2021)  |
| Tajikistan   | 10.8%<br>(Jun 2017) | 10.8%<br>(Jun 2017) | 10.8%<br>(Jun 2017) | 10.8%<br>(Jun 2017) | 11%               | 11.5%<br>(Sep 2021) |
| Estonia  | 5.1%<br>(Jun 2016)  | 5.1%<br>(Jun 2016)  | 12.9%<br>(Nov 2019) | 12.9%<br>(Nov 2019) | 13%               | 12.9%<br>(Nov 2019) |
| Latvia   | 5.2%<br>(Jul 2016)  | 5.2%<br>(Jul 2016)  | 14.3%<br>(Oct 2019) | 14.3%<br>(Oct 2019) | 15%               | 14.3%<br>(Oct 2019) |
| Lithuania  | 10.0%<br>(Jul 2016) | 10.0%<br>(Jul 2016) | 11.7%<br>(Oct 2019) | 11.7%<br>(Oct 2019) | 12%               | 11.7%<br>(Oct 2019) |

<sup>1</sup> The countries and regions listed were selected by USAGM experts and represent a subset of those that USAGM networks target with programming that provides news and information to counter state-sponsored propaganda.

**IMPACT INDICATOR:**

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

**ANALYSIS OF RESULTS:**

Of the listed countries, new survey results were available in FY 2022 only for Russia, Tajikistan, and Kazakhstan. Compared with results from previous surveys, the size of the audience and percentage of adults that access the agency’s media brands in Tajikistan and Kazakhstan has remained steady. Only marginal declines and increases were reported, enabling both markets to come close to or exceed their audience targets. In Russia, measured audiences in FY 2022 showed clear increases from 2018 survey data reported last year, where there was concern of a drop. In these countries, where state-sponsored disinformation is rampant, it is a testament to audience members’ enduring reliance on USAGM brands, like RFE/RL’s Radio Svoboda and Current Time TV and digital (led by RFE/RL in cooperation with VOA), for objective and independent journalism.

**CONTEXTUAL INDICATORS:**

| Freedom House Rankings                | # of USAGM target countries ranked |                           |                    |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|
|                                       | Not Free<br>(66 total)             | Partly Free<br>(60 total) | Free<br>(84 total) |
| 2022 Freedom in the World (political) | 57 <sup>1</sup>                    | 52 <sup>2</sup>           | 21                 |

<sup>1</sup>An additional 6 regions identified as “Not Free” by Freedom House are targeted by USAGM networks’ programming, but are not classified by USAGM as “target countries”

<sup>2</sup>An additional 3 regions identified as “Partly Free” by Freedom House are targeted by USAGM networks’ programming, but are not classified by USAGM as “target countries”

| Reporters Without Borders Rankings | # of USAGM target countries ranked |                         |                           |                            |                   |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------|
|                                    | Very Serious<br>(28 total)         | Difficult<br>(42 Total) | Problematic<br>(62 total) | Satisfactory<br>(40 Total) | Good<br>(8 total) |
| 2022 World Press Freedom Index     | 28                                 | 38                      | 45                        | 15                         | 2                 |



## A CLOSER LOOK:

# Examples of USAGM impact in environments targeted by state-sponsored disinformation campaigns

**RUSSIA** Current Time's *Footage vs. Footage* featured a report on the narratives promoted by Russian state media about the assassination of Darya Dugina, the daughter of prominent Kremlin-connected far-right ideologue Aleksandr Dugin, and herself a familiar face and rising star on right-wing media and at far-right events. The report examined the discrepancies in the purported evidence presented by the Russian Federal Security Service (FSB), which claimed to have cracked the case in less than two days and blamed Ukraine for the assassination and looked at the possible motivations behind her killing.

VOA Russian also delivered extensive coverage of the assassination, highlighting comments from political scientists, politicians, and other experts on Moscow's official narrative on the case. Political Scientist Andrey Piontkovsky told VOA that Dugina's murder was likely the work of the FSB itself, a possible warning to groups who criticize Putin, while the Hudson Institute's Richard Weitz said he suspects pro-Russian groups in Ukraine or the Russian government to be behind the deadly bombing. Russian opposition politician Ilya Ponomarev told VOA Russian that "the murder of Darya Dugina was the beginning of a violent resistance aimed at regime change in Russia," and said that the National Republican Army, a self-described anti-Putin resistance group, was allegedly behind the assassination.

RFE/RL covered a new report by the OSCE Academy in Bishkek focusing on Chinese information operations in Kyrgyzstan. According to the report, Beijing is investing heavily in Kyrgyzstan's underfunded media sector, expanding its state-run outlets, and building partnerships with local companies in an effort to shape the information landscape in the country.



**CHINA** RFA covered the State Department's recent report on China's efforts to manipulate global public opinion on Xinjiang and the predominantly Muslim Uyghurs who live there. The report notes Beijing's attempts to rewrite the global narrative through a variety of digital tools and private media companies to create a false appearance of support for its policies and discredit foreign accusations of genocide and crimes against humanity committed against the Uyghurs.

RFA also covered the Chinese Communist Party's growing propaganda and censorship efforts ahead of its 20th National Congress, tightening control of domestic internet users and spreading its official narrative overseas. The country's powerful Cyberspace Administration said it had shut down 1.34 billion social media accounts, deleted 22 million posts, and banned some 450,000 chat groups and forums among some of its recent actions. The piece also noted the visible information offensive by Chinese diplomats abroad, who have been penning op-ed articles in overseas media warning foreign officials not to visit Taiwan.

**MIDDLE EAST** Each week, MBN's new digital series *Did It Really Happen?* fills data voids that are being taken advantage of by political actors that spread disinformation for their own geopolitical gain. One story covered reports that appeared on social media saying COVID vaccines will destroy a person's immunity. *Did It Really Happen?* showed that this story was fake and presented research from the University of North Carolina. Another rumor the series tackled are the conspiracy theories surrounding Sept. 11th, including debunking the myth that Jewish Americans did not go to work on the tragic day because they knew the attack was coming.

Russian propaganda is pervasive in the Arab media, this was apparent in coverage of the Ukraine war. Many Arabic-language channels were giving an open microphone to Russian President Putin and Foreign Minister Lavrov as they expound on the success in the war. *Alhurra Investigates* provided viewers with an unbiased, in-depth report on Russia's actions in Ukraine including its war crimes. The video on Facebook had more than 7 million views.

## Impact Objective 3:

### Reach and engage underserved audiences, including women, youth, and marginalized populations

In all target markets, USAGM's networks seek to grow their audience base and reach those traditionally underserved by USAGM broadcasts. In many contexts, USAGM audiences have skewed older and male. Populations in many target countries are overwhelmingly young — a challenge, but also a chance to connect with a demographic that in some cases is unfamiliar with USAGM's networks and brands. The agency strives to serve the information needs of other marginalized populations, including refugees, religious and ethnic minorities, diaspora communities, people with disabilities, and sexual minorities.

USAGM will:

- Reach out to groups that traditionally have been underserved by news media, including women and youth, as well as refugee communities, with compelling programming that will inform and empower them;
- Increase the visibility in programming of members of underserved groups and address issues of concern and relevance to their lives;
- Sharpen audience segmentation and targeting to drive content strategies and better address gender and age demographics, as well as psychographic segments;
- Increase research to understand societal and systemic issues that influence media use by underserved audiences in order to adjust content and delivery decisions; and
- Participate in the 50:50 Project, a project that encourages the role of women as discretionary sources in news interviews.

## IMPACT OBJECTIVE 3

### Impact Performance Goal 3.1: Increase representation of women in programming

|   | FY 2021 Baseline <sup>1</sup> | FY 2022 Target | FY 2022 Actual |
|---|-------------------------------|----------------|----------------|
| Number of networks participating in 50:50 Project                                       | 1                             | 1              | 1              |
| Number of language services participating in 50:50 Project                              | 11                            | 15             | 15             |
| Percentage of discretionary guests who are women in participating programs <sup>2</sup> | 45.3                          | 46.0           | 45.3           |

<sup>1</sup>This was reported for the first time in FY 2021. Actuals are not available for FY 2018-2020.

<sup>2</sup>Percent of women among total discretionary guests throughout entire fiscal year, in participating programs.

#### ANALYSIS OF RESULTS:

USAGM met its FY 2022 targets for networks and language services participation in the 50:50 Project, increasing from FY 2021 levels. But as new programs join, their initially lower performance numbers bring down the average even as other programs have improved.

### Impact Performance Goal 3.2: Increase reach among traditionally underserved demographics, including youth and women

| FY 2022 Target   | FY 2022 Actual   |
|--|--|
| Work with network leadership and research staff to establish metrics for reaching underserved demographics | Meeting to identify currently tracked metrics that measure underserved audiences, and to identify additional metrics to track. |

#### ANALYSIS OF RESULTS:

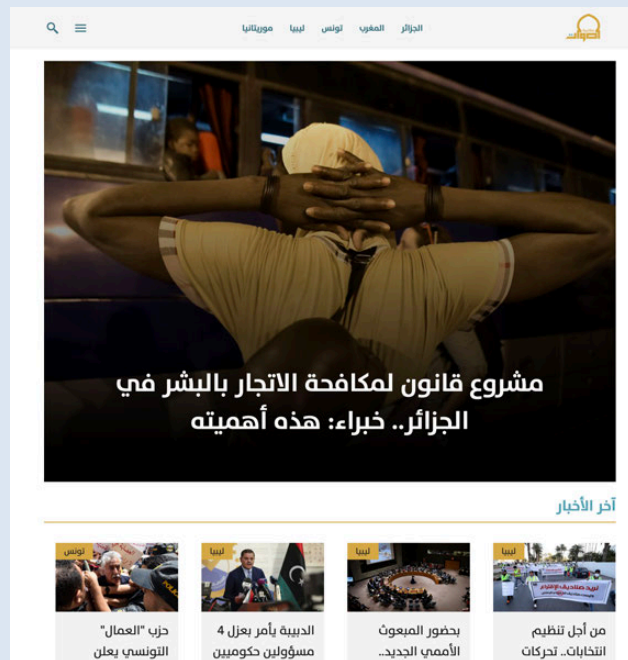
Research units of USAGM and its networks are working in FY 2023 to identify and track additional metrics that will better measure performance of increased reach among traditionally underserved demographics.

A CLOSER LOOK:

## Programming targeting groups underrepresented in USAGM audiences

**CUBA** The Office of Cuba Broadcasting (OCB) produces daily and weekly radio programming intended for underrepresented audiences inside Cuba. *Abriendo Espacios* explores contemporary women's issues as they exist in Cuba. The weekly program not only features interviews with women inside Cuba, but also offers empowerment tools and inspiring examples. Focusing on the needs, interests, and challenges of the LGBTQ community, OCB produces *Arcoiris*, a weekly program focusing on concerns of that underrepresented audience. *Arte Express* is a weekly program reflecting Cuban politics and society. The show features interviews with artists, writers, musicians, and actors who exhibit their work either in exile or from inside Cuba. OCB's daily program *Café Digital* focuses on new technologies accessible inside Cuba.

**EGYPT** MBN frequently addresses domestic violence and how it has worsened under COVID restrictions. Alhurra also highlighted that the U.S. suspended military aid for Egypt due to human rights violations. Irfaasawtak.com (Raise Your Voice) drew attention to hate crimes against the LGBTQ+ community after an Iraqi transgender woman was killed by her brother. MaghrebVoices.com reported on the increased number of human trafficking cases in Tunisia.



MaghrebVoices.com home page. (MBN)

**LEBANON** Human rights topics are frequently covered throughout MBN's platforms and programs. As the economic crisis in Lebanon escalated, desperation set in for its citizens who want to escape to the promise of a better life. MBN did several in-depth reports on the smugglers who charge exorbitant prices for people to secure a seat on these risky "death boats" in the hopes of making it to Europe.

**LAOS** Lao's in-depth reporting in the Chinese-run Golden Triangle Special Economic Zone (SEZ) has drawn praise for its timely coverage of the secretive region. In January 2022, an RFA Lao report detailed three Lao women who had been lured to the SEZ and held for three weeks. Unable to reach local officials for help, the three women contacted RFA's Lao Service via Facebook messenger. Following the report's publication, more than a dozen women were rescued by local authorities. Shortly after RFA Lao's series of stories on women who were lured to the Golden Triangle SEZ to work as "chat girls," the Lao government issued a new regulation in February to curb human trafficking in the Golden Triangle SEZ.

**KENYA** Refugees and internally-displaced persons are chronically under-served and under-represented in media. In Kenya, the VOA Somali Service demonstrated the networks significant efforts to remedy that reality. The Service's "Good Evening, Dadaab," features the residents and unique issues of the Kenyan settlement of Dadaab. It has been home to hundreds of thousands of people for more than thirty years and is one of the world's largest refugee settlements. This program airs on VOA's FM station that serves the camp, as well as on VOA's radio network in Somalia and Djibouti. It was the second noteworthy addition to the radio stream for Somali-speaking refugee populations this year. In January 2022, VOA began broadcasting "Sesame Sheeko Sheeko," the Somali-language radio edition of the iconic American program for young children.

## Impact Objective 4:

### Overcome censorship to connect audiences in closed societies

For almost seventy years United States international broadcasting has fought censorship in all its forms. Today, as the global media environment continues to rapidly evolve, access to free and independent media is in decline. Digital censorship and jamming of radio and TV broadcasts, including those of USAGM, are growing in key markets. Journalists suffer harassment and violence daily. Media laws often restrict free flows of information, limiting the ability of international news organizations to distribute their content. The internet in particular is under assault as individual countries aggressively implement sophisticated internet firewalls and surveillance systems to censor and control digital ecosystems, preventing audiences from freely accessing and sharing content on digital platforms.

USAGM upholds the universal right of citizens everywhere to receive and impart information without restriction. The agency works on many fronts to make news and information accessible to its global audiences with the aim of enabling not only unfettered access to network content but also the full spectrum of independent news sources on the internet.

USAGM will:

- Lead in assisting the world's citizens to gain uncensored access to information on all platforms, advocating for this fundamental human right on the international stage, and coordinating within the U.S. government and with international broadcasters and other allies;
- Help audiences understand the practices and consequences of internet censorship and surveillance;
- Fund and promote technologies and train journalists to adopt tools and applications that counter internet censorship and internet blocking and allow citizens and journalists to operate securely online;
- Increase effective and safe use of social media and digital platforms to combat censorship and increase audience access points;

- Provide in-house digital expertise, working closely with journalists, to address real-time censorship and jamming issues in targeted regions; and
- Cultivate information-sharing relationships on internet freedom matters with interagency partners, nonprofits, and the private sector.

#### IMPACT OBJECTIVE 4

### Impact Performance Goal 4.1: Increase usage of internet freedom products

|  | FY 2018 Actual | FY 2019 Actual | FY 2020 Actual | FY 2021 Actual | FY 2022 Target | FY 2022 Actual |
|--|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Weekly unique users on USAGM-supported proxy tools                   | 967,763        | 621,392        | 555,443        | 1,538,461      | 1,660,000      | 2,980,770      |
| Weekly visits to USAGM web sites through USAGM-supported proxy tools | 8,452,100      | 7,092,592      | 3,607,942      | 7,975,000      | 8,176,000      | 13,307,670     |

#### IMPACT INDICATORS:

##### Aspects of usage of USAGM-supported proxy tools

The measures for this performance goal reflect various aspects of usage of various USAGM-supported proxy tools for circumventing internet censorship: Psiphon, nthLink, and NewNode. Metrics include average number of weekly unique users on the tools and average weekly visits to USAGM websites through the tools (measured as the number of landing pages served). In order to be more comprehensive and inclusive of new tools, USAGM is reporting overall figures for these categories beginning in FY 2021, rather than separately for each tool.

In FY 2022, USAGM-supported proxy tools were available for USAGM audiences in 28 languages: Afan Oromo, Amharic, Arabic, Azerbaijani, Belarusian, Burmese, Cantonese, Chechen, Crimean, Dari, English, Kazakh, Kyrgyz, Mandarin, Pashto, Persian, Russian, Spanish, Tajik, Tibetan, Tigrigna, Turkish, Turkmen, Ukrainian, Urdu, Uyghur, Uzbek, and Vietnamese.

**ANALYSIS OF RESULTS:**

|   |                          |                           |
|---|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| <b>Weekly unique users</b>              | <b>Target: 1,660,000</b> | <b>Actual: 2,980,770</b>  |
| <b>Weekly visits to USAGM web sites</b> | <b>Target: 8,176,000</b> | <b>Actual: 13,307,670</b> |

In FY 2022 users and visits for both of these indicators far exceeded target performance. Weekly unique users on USAGM-supported proxy tools were 80 percent higher than target, and weekly visits to USAGM web sites through these tools were 60 percent higher than target, reflecting increases of 94 percent and 67 percent respectively from FY 2021 levels. Major drivers of this performance were the Russian invasion of Ukraine and widespread protests in Iran. In the past, USAGM has not needed to provide circumvention tools to Russian audiences, but that changed when Russia invaded Ukraine and began blocking VOA and RFE/RL content. Additionally, VOA Persian and Radio Farda saw significant increases in usage as the protests in Iran grew in strength. Finally, USAGM-supported proxy tools saw a moderate increase from Turkish audiences when Turkey began blocking VOA’s Turkish service.

**Contextual Indicator:**

| Freedom House Rankings  | # of countries with customized USAGM-sponsored circumvention tools ranked as: |             |            |
|-------------------------|---|-------------|------------|
|                         | Not Free  | Partly Free | Not Ranked |
| 2022 Freedom on the Net | 12  | 1           | 4          |



## A CLOSER LOOK:

# Development of new technologies and activities to counter internet censorship and blocking

In FY 2022, the Open Technology Fund, a USAGM-grantee, again demonstrated its leadership in defending the freedom of access to news and information globally by supporting over 45 projects to research, develop, implement, and maintain of technologies and tools that advance internet freedom. This includes support for circumvention and privacy/security-enhancing technologies that are used by over 2 billion people worldwide

Over the past two years, authoritarian governments have taken extraordinary measures to expand the surveillance of citizens and censorship of websites. This included expanded censorship under the guise of safety in China, Iran, Russia, Bangladesh, Egypt, Venezuela, Cambodia, Burma and Belarus, among others. In the same period, OTF has been investing substantially in a range of trusted, intuitive anti-censorship tools to keep technical pace with the most sophisticated global censorship tactics.

As dozens of governments asserted their authority over the digital collection of personal information and implemented widespread tracking of movements and offline punishment for online activity, OTF has supported VPN-style circumvention tools such as Psiphon, Lantern and NthLink, that have provided direct circumvention life-lines to tens of millions of users in censored countries from Cuba to Belarus to Burma, particularly in periods of political and social unrest.

OTF has also supported new efforts to reduce the cost and increase the efficiency of circumvention efforts by investing in new machine-learning techniques. In order to meet the resources imbalance between highly resourced nation-state censors and far less resourced internet freedom tech developers, OTF has invested in technologies that leverage AI to automate the discovery of censorship evasion strategies without the need to hypothesize and build them first. Geneva, a genetic algorithm, has trained against real-world censors in China, India, Iran, and Kazakhstan to automatically identify new censorship techniques and evasion

strategies. To date, the tool has discovered dozens of previously unknown strategies to defeat state-level censorship.

While the previous two years have also witnessed hundreds of internet shutdowns including in Burma, Syria, China, Sudan, Uganda, Nigeria, Iran and India, OTF has been agile in response. One form of internet shutdown, which is exemplified by Iran's National Information Network, is a shutdown in which national communications infrastructure remains functional but is cut off from all points of global connectivity. But, this presents several avenues for meaningful mitigation. OTF support for Ouinet has created peer-to-peer content distribution networks that can serve a variety of cached content to users within areas cut-off from global networks. Another form of shutdown - illustrated in the days following the military coup in Myanmar - is to shut down the internet and mobile data but allow cellular calling and SMS. OTF support to Frontline Local and additional investments that build off that foundation attempt to extend some of the functionality and security guarantees of secure messengers to SMS-based communications for these types of shutdown situations.

With over 13 million weekly visits to USAGM networks' web sites coming through OTF-supported proxy tools in FY 2022, its work to support the freedom of news access continues to be an essential complement to the networks' production and distribution of independent of news and information for audiences globally.

## A CLOSER LOOK:

# Circumvention and digital security technologies in action

**UKRAINE** Given the Russian government's known offensive cyber capabilities, experts predicted that the Russian government would attempt to immediately surveil or shut down internet connectivity in Ukraine after its February 2022 invasion. While a shutdown has not occurred to date, Ukrainian citizens have taken proactive steps to protect themselves from digital threats with help from OTF. In the wake of the invasion, Signal, an OTF-supported secure communication platform, was the most downloaded and most used messaging application in Ukraine. In addition, adoption of OTF-supported circumvention tools increased significantly, with looming concerns of possible Russian government surveillance. OTF has also worked diligently with local partners to leverage technologies in anticipation of Russia's potential to impose internet shutdowns, including help deploying infrastructure that will allow Ukrainians to access the internet from regional points of connectivity despite physical infrastructure damage in other regions.

**RUSSIA** Following the invasion of Ukraine, the Russian government dramatically increased censorship efforts, targeting independent news sites (including RFE/RL and VOA) and social media platforms in particular. In response, use of OTF-supported circumvention tools surged dramatically, to nearly 2 million daily users. In addition to VPNs, OTF-supported mirror sites have received hundreds of millions of visits. As a result of these efforts, visits to RFE/RL's websites tripled post-invasion, and have since stabilized to over 150 percent of pre-invasion traffic. The network's content on banned social media platforms has also seen significant spikes in traffic, demonstrating that OTF-supported circumvention tools are successfully enabling Russian citizens to access fact-based and independent news from USAGM networks.

# Impact Objective 5:

## Optimize program delivery and digital engagement

To be effective, USAGM's networks must have a clear sense of their target audiences, an ability to articulate a specific editorial proposition for these audiences, and the ability to follow through with authentic and meaningful content. USAGM will adopt a quality over quantity approach, de-emphasizing stories and programs that do not add significant value to an existing market in favor of original and unique content that aims to improve the democratic and lived experience of the target audiences. USAGM will continue to grow and enhance new distribution methods, with specific attention to reaching audiences on their preferred media platforms.

USAGM will:

- Increase distribution on platforms that audiences use — mobile devices, FM, satellite, and digital and broadcast television — migrating away from traditional platforms, such as shortwave and medium wave radio, that do not reach large audiences;
- Expand reach on digital platforms, including new streaming and over-the-top platforms, with compelling content and tailored formats;
- Take advantage of the interactivity of social media platforms to focus on audience participation and engagement;
- Draw on research and other inputs to tailor format and presentation styles to audience needs and media usage habits, emphasizing high-quality, unique content that can break through saturated information ecosystems;
- Modernize USAGM production and broadcasting capabilities to support growing audience appetite for visual storytelling; and
- Closely monitor shifts in content consumption by young audiences to identify emerging digital platforms for adoption

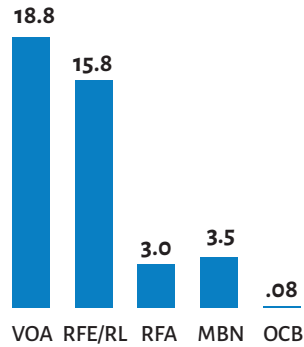
# Impact Performance Goal Overview

## 5.1

Increase web traffic

### WEEKLY WEB AND MOBILE VISITS

*in millions*



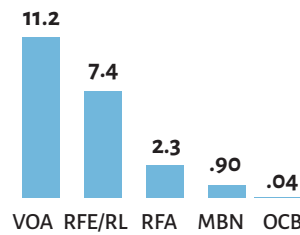
## 5.2

Increase audience interaction  
via social media

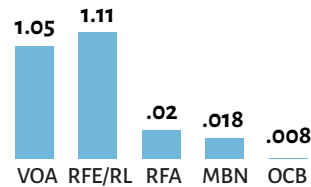
### DIGITAL ENGAGEMENT

*in millions*

Digital Reactions (Likes/Hearts)  
on Facebook, Twitter, YouTube & Instagrams



Select Digital Engagements (Comments/Shares)  
on Facebook, Twitter, YouTube & Instagrams



## IMPACT OBJECTIVE 5

### Impact Performance Goal 5.1: Increase web traffic

| Average weekly visits to web and mobile sites | FY 2018 Actual | FY 2019 Actual | FY 2020 Actual | FY 2021 Actual | FY 2022 Target | FY 2022 Actual |
|---|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| VOA   | 8,850,000      | 9,383,700      | 10,832,000     | 15,352,700     | 16,120,335     | 18,830,052     |
| RFE/RL  | 9,751,200      | 10,990,200     | 14,466,500     | 14,040,700     | 12,636,630     | 15,810,606     |
| RFA   | 1,010,900      | 1,267,000      | 1,468,100      | 2,184,300      | 2,621,160      | 3,018,000      |
| MBN   | 854,500        | 1,028,100      | 3,076,900      | 3,156,400      | 3,787,680      | 3,494,892      |
| OCB   | 142,600        | 136,100        | 163,900        | 103,000        | 82,400         | 82,589         |

**Note:**

- Data in the chart above should be compared across years and not across broadcasters, in part because broadcasters are measuring different numbers of web and mobile sites and languages, ranging from one to over 40.
- Significant increases in web traffic can often be attributed to specific current events and may not be sustained in future reporting periods.

**IMPACT INDICATOR:**

**Average weekly visits:**

This indicator measures the number of visits to USAGM websites over a 52-week period and creates an average based on 52 weeks of data coinciding with the fiscal year. Average weekly visits are derived from online analytic data tracked in Adobe Analytics. Unlike measured weekly audience reported above, average weekly visits to websites are not unduplicated, meaning one individual could account for multiple visits.

ANALYSIS OF RESULTS:

**VOA** **Target: 16,120,335** **Actual: 18,830,052**

---

VOA's web and mobile traffic exceeded the target set for FY 2022 by nearly 2.7 million weekly visits, which represented an increase of over 22 percent above FY 2021 traffic. The visits from mobile increased 31 percent year over year.

**RFE/RL** **Target: 12,636,630** **Actual: 15,810,606**

---

RFE/RL's web and mobile traffic exceeded the target set for FY 2022 by almost 3.2 million weekly visits, which represents an increase of nearly 13 percent above FY 2021 traffic.

**RFA** **Target: 2,621,160** **Actual: 3,018,000**

---

RFA's web and mobile traffic continued to grow in FY 2022, exceeding target by 15 percent. This represented over 38 percent growth from FY 2021.

**MBN** **Target: 3,787,680** **Actual: 3,494,892**

---

MBN's weekly web traffic in FY 2022 missed its target by 8 percent, but this still represented over 10 percent growth from traffic in FY 2021.

**OCB** **Target: 82,400** **Actual: 82,589**

---

OCB's web and mobile traffic met its FY 2022 target.



## IMPACT OBJECTIVE 5

# Impact Performance Goal 5.2: Increase audience interaction via social media

| Average weekly digital reactions <sup>1</sup> | FY 2020 Actual | FY 2021 Actual | FY 2022 Target | FY 2022 Actual |
|---|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| VOA   | 4,056,300      | 8,804,600      | 9,224,830      | 11,243,033     |
| RFE/RL  | 1,897,000      | 9,177,900      | 7,801,215      | 7,415,761      |
| RFA   | 2,381,600      | 6,149,400      | 4,612,050      | 2,311,885      |
| MBN   | 796,000        | 984,300        | 1,131,945      | 904,070        |
| OCB   | 49,800         | 41,700         | 43,785         | 36,907         |

<sup>1</sup>This was reported for the first time in FY 2020. Actuals are not available for FY 2018-2019.

### IMPACT INDICATOR:

#### Digital Reactions:

This indicator measures the weekly average number of reactions from social media accounts on measurable platforms, currently Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and Instagram. Digital reactions include: all reactions on Facebook, hearts on Twitter and Instagram, and likes and dislikes on YouTube. These reactions are tracked through online analytics by a third party vendor (Emplifi).

### ANALYSIS OF RESULTS:

#### VOA

**Target: 9,224,830**

**Actual: 11,243,033**

VOA social media reactions exceeded FY 2022 target by over two million reactions per week on average. This was a nearly 28 percent increase over FY 2021.

#### RFE/RL

**Target: 7,801,215**

**Actual: 7,415,761**

Reactions to RFE/RL content on social media accounts missed FY 2022 target. Decreased reactions were expected in FY 2022, despite impressive growth in FY 2021, as pressure against RFE/RL grew in a number of important markets which discouraged and even criminally punished consumers of RFE/RL journalism on social media to publicly interact with it in any way.

**RFA****Target: 4,612,050****Actual: 2,311,885**

RFA's experienced a dramatic drop in engagement in FY 2022, driven primarily by new restrictions on Facebook in Myanmar and rising fear of engagement in other Southeast Asian target markets. Similar challenges exists in Hong Kong, driven by new Beijing-backed security laws and the arrests of activists.

**MBN****Target: 1,131,945****Actual: 904,070**

MBN's FY 2022 performance for this indicator was slightly below its FY 2021 result and missed its growth target. The network attributes this to longer than expected lead times to create more original content, formalize a new marketing strategy, and complete technical enhancements. Increased suppression and monitoring of digital media activity in the region is also likely a factor.

**OCB****Target: 43,785****Actual: 36,907**

In FY 2022, OCB social media reactions missed its target and decreased approximately 11 percent from FY 2021 levels. Public reactions to social media in Cuba are affected by 2021 laws severely penalizing sharing content which can be deemed to be against the state.

| Average weekly select digital engagement actions <sup>1</sup> | FY 2020 Actual | FY 2021 Actual | FY 2022 Target | FY 2022 Actual |
|---|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| VOA   | 831,200        | 988,700        | 1,028,248      | 1,046,354      |
| RFE/RL  | 566,600        | 1,013,500      | 709,450        | 1,109,930      |
| RFA   | 542,900        | 1,074,200      | 698,230        | 247,034        |
| MBN   | 222,600        | 180,400        | 216,480        | 177,591        |
| OCB   | 23,000         | 16,300         | 12,225         | 8,230          |

<sup>1</sup>This was reported for the first time in FY 2020. Actuals are not available for FY 2018-2019

**IMPACT INDICATOR:**

**Select Digital Engagement Actions:**

This indicator measures the weekly average number of select engagement actions on measurable platforms, currently Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and Instagram. Select engagement actions include: comments and shares on Facebook, comments on YouTube and Instagram, and retweets and replies on Twitter. These actions are tracked through online analytics by a third party vendor (Emplifi).

**ANALYSIS OF RESULTS:**

**VOA** **Target: 1,028,248** **Actual: 1,046,354**

---

VOA social media engagement slightly exceeded the target set for FY 2022, with an increase of 6 percent from FY 2021.

**RFE/RL** **Target: 709,450** **Actual: 1,109,930**

---

Engagement with RFE/RL exceeded FY 2022 target, with an approximately 10 percent increase over FY 2021 levels. A significant increase came from YouTube comments, particularly Russian and Current Time channels.

**RFA** **Target: 698,230** **Actual: 247,034**

---

RFA missed its social media engagement target by over 60 percent. The decline came primarily from its Burmese page that had increased 89 percent in FY 2021, before new Facebook restrictions in Myanmar.

**MBN** **Target: 216,480** **Actual: 177,591**

---

In FY 2022 MBN digital engagement actions missed its target by 18 percent and decreased slightly from FY 2021. This performance likely results in part from increased suppression of digital media activity in the region that has reduced users' willingness to comment, share, or take part in other visible political social media engagements.

**OCB** **Target: 12,225** **Actual: 8,230**

---

In FY 2022, OCB social media engagement missed its target, decreasing more than expected from FY 2021, particularly in Facebook activity. Social media engagement in Cuba is critically affected by 2021 laws severely penalizing sharing content which can be deemed to be against the state.

## A CLOSER LOOK:

# Using alternative, creative ways to deliver content

**VOA** – In FY 2022, VOA published a range of innovative content utilizing illustration and animation to represent tragic events without gratuitous depictions of violence. The multimedia presentation “Terror in Tigray,” included a 25-minute documentary with original animation, but also supporting maps, drawings, and other graphics to provide greater context to a key world event.



*Antonio Gulene describes being held captive by militants in “Escaping Cabo Delgado’s Nightmare.” (VOA)*

The Africa Division produced “Escaping Cabo Delgado’s Nightmare,” a 20-minute documentary on extremism in the Mozambican province of Cabo Delgado. Insurgents linked to the Islamic State have staged attacks there since October 2017, killing, abducting, and displacing

the local population. The division sent a reporting team from the Portuguese to Africa and Swahili Services to camps in the province where uprooted people have sought safety. They interviewed those affected by the violence who are uncertain about when or whether they ever can go home.

The VOA story “No Place Safe” tracked the life of a Uyghur Man and his journey from a Chinese prison to refuge in Turkey with original creative illustrations capturing the long trajectory from imprisonment and persecution to freedom, balancing political events with the intimacy of one person’s lived experience.

As audiences’ demand has shifted to longer-form content and deeper understanding of other communities worldwide, in FY 2022 VOA launched the ambitious “52 Documentary” series, an innovative approach that uses original stories on dance, music, martial arts, sports, and cinema as lenses to reflect both individual experiences as well as larger themes like the refugee experience.

**OCB** - Radio and Television Martí developed a series of podcasts for the dissemination of content in non-traditional broadcast media. Topics range from the usual news events, history of popular protests in Cuba, digital technology, culture and censorship, to the war in Ukraine. In addition, as connectivity is improving in Cuba and the use of mobile devices is proliferating, OCB's content focused on a Digital First strategy. Circumvention tools such as Psiphon have been instrumental in reaching the Cuban audience.

**RFA** – Cell phone content set the foundation for RFA's bombshell report revealing grisly evidence of recent atrocities committed by the Myanmar military in the war-torn Sagaing region. In early June an intermediary provided RFA with 144 photos and a video that were recovered from a soldier's lost phone. Producing this report required days of careful verification and extensive teamwork between RFA's Burmese, English, and Creative teams. In the week after launch, the report garnered more than 2 million video views on RFA Burmese's Facebook and YouTube, while earning more than 1 300 retweets of the video and article on RFA English's social media.



*Screenshot from RFA's Myanmar cell phone story showing army rifle markings. (RFA)*

**MBN** – In FY 2022 MBN launched the weekly digital series *Did It Really Happen?* Publishing on all of MBN's digital platforms, it debunks fake news and combats disinformation. The digital program highlights false or misrepresented stories that appear on Arabic social media platforms each week. Although the short program deals with all areas of disinformation, it primarily reports on rumors and misleading information about the U.S. foreign policy, society and culture.

# Impact Objective 6:

## Engage and empower local media and populations

Local media affiliates are the primary means through which USAGM's networks reach their target audiences in most markets. Deepening the relationship with these media partners assists not only with content delivery but also in fostering rich, open media ecosystems. The agency leads by example in its journalistic practices and increasingly partners with affiliates on content co-creation. The agency's professionals also provide training to indigenous media on topics ranging from journalism principles to business practices. In a similar way, USAGM works to connect audiences to one another, and to foster the free flow of information, often through a wide array of web, mobile, and social media tools. These tools have made media personal, moving the power from centralized broadcasters to a new class of influencers, activists, videographers, and a content-generating public. They are using media not only to tell their stories on a digital world stage but also to connect with one another to chart the future of their communities and build new forms of civil society.

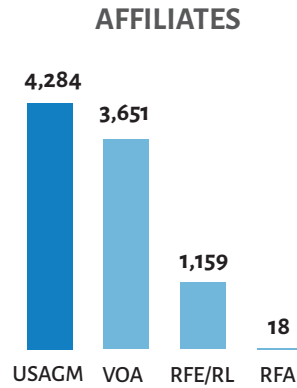
USAGM will:

- Expand local distribution, promotions, and co-productions through affiliation with strong local television and FM radio stations and digital platforms;
- Deepen relationships with key local media affiliates, providing editorial guidance, co-production opportunities, and other resources to strengthen local, independent media sectors;
- Offer training and technical assistance to local journalists on a range of topics, including journalistic standards, business practices, and safety and security;
- Nurture good journalism practices and leverage vetted, verified user-generated content from inside repressive states;
- Link citizens within repressive societies to one another and to key influencers through social media and training alumni networks;
- Facilitate dialogue across religious, national, and ethnic groups; and
- Continuously converse with USAGM audiences by using social media tools to identify, source, and distribute news content into the channels where people are having conversations about their community and the world.

# Impact Performance Goal Overview

## 6.1

Build strong affiliate relationships



## 6.2

Increase engagement with local media outlets

NUMBER OF USAGM AFFILIATES THAT SERVE MULTIPLE CITIES

568

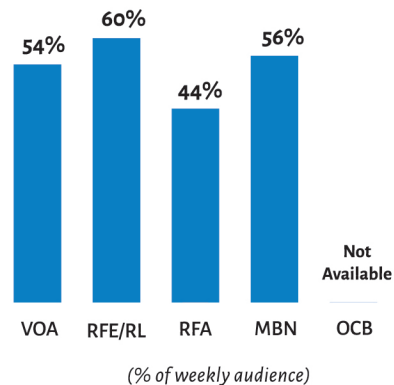
NUMBER OF WEEKLY DOWNLOADS FROM AFFILIATE CONTENT DISTRIBUTION PORTAL, DIRECT

4,600

## 6.3

Increase sharing of USAGM programming

PERCENTAGE OF WEEKLY AUDIENCE WHO SHARED SOMETHING HEARD/READ/SEEN ON BROADCASTER WEEKLY





## IMPACT OBJECTIVE 6

# Impact Performance Goal 6.1: Build strong affiliate relationships

| Number of affiliations (broadcast, online, and mobile) | FY 2018 Actual | FY 2019 Actual | FY 2020 Actual | FY 2021 Actual | FY 2022 Target | FY 2022 Actual |
|--|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| USAGM <sup>1</sup>                                     | NA             | 3,729          | 4,174          | 4,321          | 4,330          | 4,284          |
| VOA <sup>2</sup>                                       | 2,247          | 3,151          | 3,523          | 3,633          | 3,650          | 3,651          |
| RFE/RL   | 777            | 1,140          | 1,228          | 1,250          | 1,262          | 1,159          |
| RFA  | 11             | 10             | 11             | 19             | 23             | 18             |

<sup>1</sup> USAGM reported a consolidated number of affiliations for the first time in FY 2019. This number is unduplicated, meaning that a station or outlet is counted only once, even if it retransmits content from more than one USAGM network. For this reason, the total number of USAGM affiliations is lower than the sum of the individual network affiliations.

<sup>2</sup> The FY 2019 Actual for VOA presented here includes previously unreported stations or outlets that also retransmit RFE/RL or RFA content. In FY 2019, the number of USAGM affiliates that retransmitted only VOA content was 2,586, as reported in the PAR. Going forward, USAGM will report the full number of VOA affiliations, bringing it in line with the other networks.

### IMPACT INDICATOR:

#### Affiliations

Affiliates – broadcast stations and digital platforms that carry USAGM content – are a primary intermediary between USAGM’s networks and audiences. Counting the number of affiliates offers a measure of how many stations distribute USAGM content. As shortwave usage wanes in parts of the world, affiliations with local medium wave, FM radio, broadcast television, and satellite stations have grown in importance. With the growth of digital and mobile technology, there are new forms of affiliations, including online and mobile. The affiliation indicator counts all partnered radio and television stations, including broadcast relay stations, as well as online content delivery platforms, that regularly retransmit content from USAGM’s networks.

**ANALYSIS OF RESULTS:**

**USAGM Affiliates** **Target: 4,330** **Actual: 4,284**

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With 4,284 USAGM affiliates, USAGM fell short of its target of 4,330 affiliations in FY 2022 due primarily to losses of affiliates in Russia, after its invasion of Ukraine, and in Afghanistan, after the takeover of the Taliban. In many target countries, political risks for broadcasters of surrogate independent local media have presented a challenge to growing the number of affiliates.

**VOA Affiliates** **Target: 3,650** **Actual: 3,651**

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With 3,651 VOA affiliates, USAGM met its target for FY 2022.

**RFE/RL Affiliates** **Target: 1,262** **Actual: 1,159**

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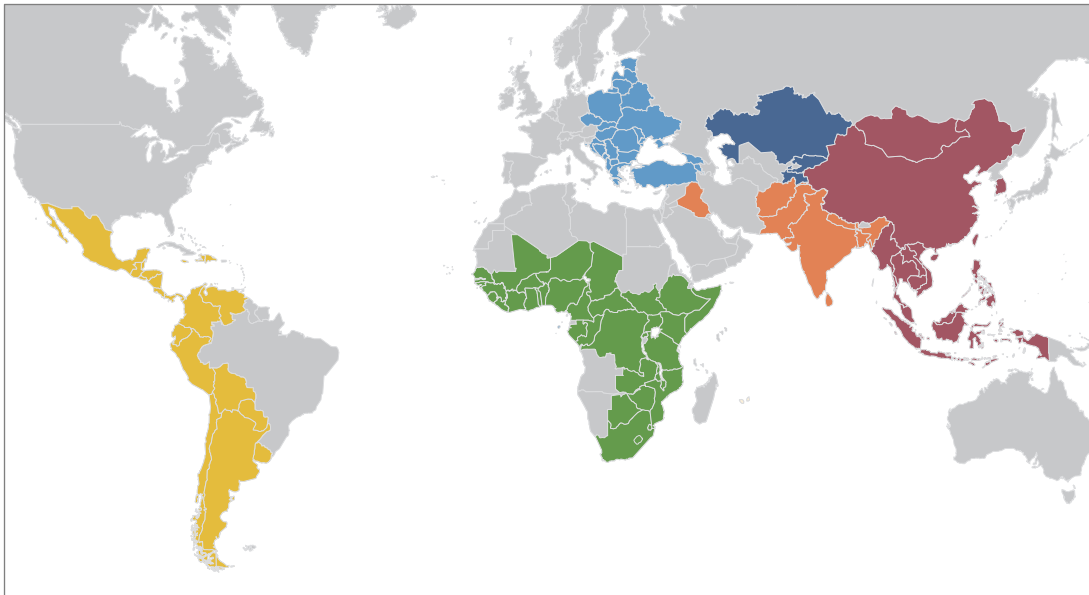
With 1,159 RFE/RL affiliates, USAGM fell short of its target for FY 2022 and dropped from FY 2021, due primarily to losses of affiliates in Russia, after its invasion of Ukraine, and in Afghanistan, after the takeover of the Taliban.

**RFA Affiliates** **Target: 23** **Actual: 18**

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With 18 RFA affiliates, USAGM fell short of its target of 23 affiliations for FY 2022 but remained relatively stable from FY 2021.

**Countries with USAGM Affiliates:**

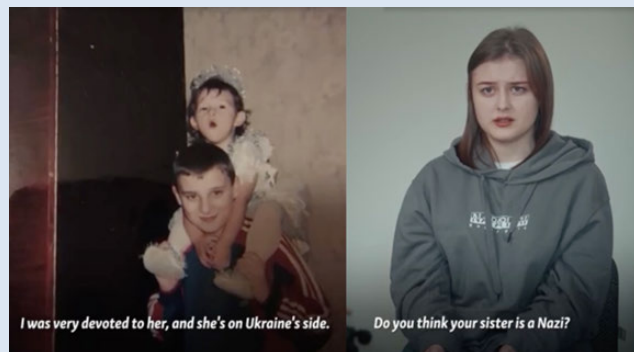


A CLOSER LOOK:

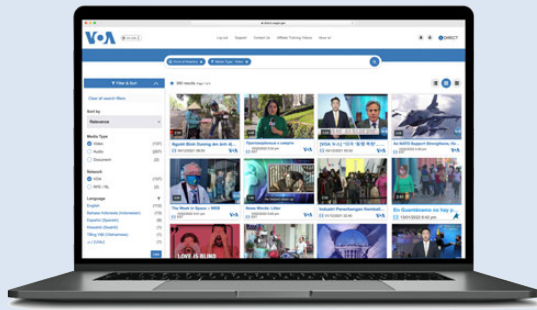
## Substantive engagement with key local media affiliates

**NEW BROADCAST AFFILIATES** In the wake of the Russian invasion of Ukraine, outside of Russia demand soared for Current Time, the 24/7 television and digital network for Russian speakers led by RFE/RL in cooperation with VOA. By the end of FY 2022, USAGM had signed 50 affiliates and 280 distributors in 20 countries, as regional media operators dropped Moscow's Russia Today (RT) channel. The Ukrainian state broadcaster requested permission from USAGM to air the Current Time feed as a backup feed. Current Time was also available in Estonia, Lithuania, Latvia, Russia, Moldova, Romania, Bulgaria and other countries with Russian speakers including Germany and the United Kingdom.

Current Time's riveting content included the documentary, "Broken Ties," a big hit with affiliate stations all across the Eurasia region. Filmed over a three-month period, "Broken Ties" follows seven Russian families as their relationships deteriorate in the months following the invasion of Ukraine. The film shows the human cost for Russians themselves of Putin's invasion as well as ways Kremlin disinformation and state propaganda are tearing Russian families apart.



*The documentary "Broken Ties" presents the thoughts of a brother living in Russia and a sister living in Ukraine about their feelings on Russia's invasion of Ukraine. (Current time)*



(USAGM)

### **NEW DELIVERY PLATFORM**

In FY 2022, USAGM introduced a game-changing relaunch of its Direct platform which allows affiliate stations around the world to download high-definition audio and video files for rebroadcast. The platform has an improved search function and provides news and

evergreen content. Direct offers accelerated file delivery and the ability to integrate into other platforms. Thousands of broadcast stations and digital platforms responded positively, and by the end of FY 2022 more than 4,200 affiliates worldwide were downloading content from the new Direct.

**NEW MEDIA TRAININGS** In FY 2022, USAGM’s international training program supported local affiliates and other media organizations in key regions with a record number of 60 trainings for 1,200 journalists around the world. From Albania to Zimbabwe, the trainings addressed subjects ranging from digital journalism to covering elections and investigating nature crimes. A companion piece to the training was successful promotion of the USAGM Training Network, a private Facebook group that offers media workers access to online training, best practices, and connections with journalists across the globe. More than 900 alumni of USAGM media training programs have joined the group.



*The training “Reporting Nature Crimes in Indonesia” covered how to report conservation crimes, including wildlife and timber trafficking, illegal fishing/crimes associated with IUU fishing, and illegal mining.*

(USAGM)

IMPACT OBJECTIVE 6

Impact Performance Goal 6.2:  
Increase engagement with local media partners

|  | FY 2018 Actual | FY 2019 Actual | FY 2020 Actual | FY 2021 Actual | FY 2022 Target | FY 2022 Actual |
|--|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Number of USAGM radio and TV affiliate networks that serve multiple cities or markets <sup>1</sup> | NA             | 452            | 540            | 564            | 570            | 568            |
| Number of weekly downloads from affiliate content distribution portal, Direct                      | 2,750          | 2,815          | 3,662          | 4,354          | 4,500          | 4,600          |
| Number of journalists trained in USAGM media development programs <sup>2</sup>                     | NA             | NA             | NA             | 1,038          | 1,000          | 1,300          |

<sup>1</sup>In FY 2019, USAGM changed the performance metrics for this goal to emphasize affiliates that are multi-market, rather than national, and to focus on those who air custom or interactive segments.

<sup>2</sup>This was a new metric in FY 2021. Actuals are not available for FY 2020.

**IMPACT INDICATORS:**

The indicators for increasing engagement with local media outlets include: the number of USAGM radio and TV affiliate networks that serve multiple markets by having more than one delivery station or platform and operating in more than one city and the number of journalists who participate in USAGM’s media development programs.

**ANALYSIS OF RESULTS:**

All of the affiliate engagement metrics in the chart above showed increases over FY 2021 and were close to or exceeded the targets set for FY 2022. The USAGM budget allows for training of roughly 1000 journalists per year, but in FY 2022, inter-agency agreements provided additional funding which enabled the increase for the year.

A CLOSER LOOK:

## Successful deployment of the U.S. bureau model

VOA serves as a critical resource for affiliates worldwide that seek to explain American life and Washington politics to their audiences. Many of VOA's language services act as U.S. bureaus for their affiliate partners, providing news and analysis of major developments in the United States that can be inserted directly into affiliate news programming. Pursuant to its Charter, VOA continues to explain the U.S. political process to the world, regularly supplying media outlets around the world content such as coverage of US elections and leveraging its Washington D.C. location to fulfill its mission of "telling America's story."



*VOA's Myroslava Gongadze interviews Secretary of State Anthony Blinken on Ukraine crisis. (VOA)*

Throughout FY 2022, VOA served as a trusted resource to explain major U.S. stories, including, for example, the tragic school shooting that took place in Uvalde, Texas. The VOA Spanish service team sent to cover the aftermath provided 300 live and taped reports in four days for media in the Latin American region. Twenty-one of the largest TV channels, such as Caracol and Azteca Television, aired the live content provided by VOA reporters three times daily. The service also featured reporting from Washington DC, as well as reaction and contextual stories. As a result, VOA Spanish's digital traffic garnered more than 100,000 page views on the website and 527,000 views on social media platforms.



Audiences across Eurasia have shown significant interest in news and information from the United States, and affiliates have recognized VOA as a valuable resource; VOA Eurasia journalists provided regular original live reporting to more than 50 national TV stations in Albania, Armenia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Georgia, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia, and Ukraine. VOA's spin-free reporting mostly focused on U.S. policy perspectives and actions regarding Russia's war against Ukraine, as well as the U.S. official position on developments in the target area. VOA coverage, especially Ukraine-focused interviews with U.S. officials, lawmakers and visiting newsmakers from the region, often dominated the news agenda in the target countries.

As overseas outlets have seen diminished budgets and have been subjected to increasingly harsh repression, they have turned to VOA to supplement their own content, particularly in explaining how U.S. interests intersect with target audiences. For example, as Turkish networks navigated both diminished press freedoms and a dire economic crisis, VOA has emerged as a leading source to cover US-Turkey relations from Washington, developments at the United Nations in New York, the increased migration of Turkish people from the US-Mexico border, and Silicon Valley and its emerging Turkish diaspora.

Lighter stories included VOA coverage of U.S. arts and entertainment, as was the case when VOA Indonesian provided live and recorded reports on the 94th Academy Awards for affiliates on all platforms. VOA reporters delivered 15 live reports for major national television stations, including MetroTV, KompasTV, TransTV, CNN Indonesia, and BeritaSatuTV. The VOA team produced more than a dozen reports for the affiliates' Instagram accounts, including Prambors, a major radio network popular with a younger audience.

Meanwhile, VOA reporters conducted 73 live inserts for Indonesian radio stations, including a broadcast for CPP RadioNet, which reaches 21 cities across Indonesia. The VOA Indonesian team also created a Reel video on the Hollywood Walk of Fame which received 186 thousand plays, nearly 8,000 likes, and 200 shares on Instagram as of April 1, 2022.



## IMPACT OBJECTIVE 6

# Impact Performance Goal 6.3: Increase sharing of USAGM programming

| Sharing – Percentage of weekly audience who shared something heard/read/seen on broadcaster weekly | FY 2018 Actual | FY 2019 Actual | FY 2020 Actual | FY 2021 Actual | FY 2022 Target | FY 2022 Actual |
|--|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| VOA  | 46             | 49             | 49             | 50             | 49             | 54             |
| RFE/RL   | 44             | 41             | 40             | 47             | 47             | 60             |
| RFA  | 41             | 41             | 37             | 44             | 44             | 44             |
| MBN  | 67             | 62             | 48             | 55             | 58             | 56             |
| OCB  | 56             | 56             | 56             | 56             | 56             | NA             |

### IMPACT INDICATOR:

#### Sharing of programming

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

In FY 2022, USAGM revised its core questionnaire to better measure how contemporary audiences engage with modern media. As a result of testing and cognitive interviews, the question wording for the sharing indicator changed to ask how often audience members share news from [brand] with family, other relatives, or other people with responses on a four-point scale based on the following response options: “several days a week or more,” “once a week,” “less often,” or “never.” As results from the new questionnaire become available, they will be combined with previous results in the “Sharing” indicator.

**ANALYSIS OF RESULTS:**

**VOA** **Target: 49** **Actual: 54**

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VOA exceeded its FY 2022 target for weekly sharing of its news by users, with now over half of all surveyed users reporting they share something they have seen or heard from VOA with their personal network. This increase is largely driven by new data in Nigeria, where VOA audience members who reported sharing content rose by approximately 20 percent.

**RFE/RL** **Target: 47** **Actual: 60**

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RFE/RL’s measurement for weekly sharing of programming was 60 percent in FY 2021, significantly exceeding its target of 47 percent. After some declines in previous years, the figure for FY 2022 is the best figure ever recorded, driven up by widespread sharing of journalism from Radio Free Afghanistan.

**RFA** **Target: 44** **Actual: 44**

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This indicator is unchanged from FY 2021, as no additional data were available for this metric in RFA markets in FY 2022. RFA’s measure for weekly sharing of content is based entirely on data from Cambodia

**MBN** **Target: 58** **Actual: 56**

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MBN’s missed its FY 2022 target but results were only slightly lower than FY 2021. One factor is that Morocco “Sharing” results measured at 67 percent in 2019, are not included because the question could not be added to the 2021 survey.

**OCB** **Target: 56** **Actual: NA**

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USAGM did not commission a survey in Cuba in FY 2022. The last survey data was compiled for the FY 2017 PAR and the data for “Sharing” of programming is no longer considered current. A survey is planned and will be reported in FY 2023.

## A CLOSER LOOK:

# USAGM-facilitated dialogue across religious, national, and ethnic divides

**MBN** In FY 2022, Alhurra launched a new program called *America-The Melting Pot*. This program explores the different cultures that make up America, highlighting how those who came to the U.S. integrated their cultural heritage into the fabric of the country through food, traditions, and even the people themselves. Each week the program profiles a different region of the world and how its culture has become intertwined in shaping America into what it is today.

The past year offered a unique opportunity with Ramadan, Easter, and Passover occurring simultaneously; it was an ideal opportunity to highlight the different faiths, exposing their similarities and differences. *Alhurra Today* showed Muslims in Egypt joining Christians in their Easter celebrations. *Al Yawm* (Today) examined how churches in Iraq, Ukraine, and Jerusalem celebrated Easter this year. The segment included an interview with Father Ibrahim Flints, Advisor to the Custodian of the Holy Land. Also, *Iraq Today* explored Ramadan customs in Mosul, and Alhurra reported on people returning to the markets in Jerusalem for Ramadan.

Beyond different religions, MBN highlighted different communities. For example, *Iraq This Evening* discussed the rights of African Iraqis with the President of the Iraqis of African Descent Association Abdul-Hussain Abdul-Razzaq and a member of the Commission for Human Rights in Iraq Fadel Al Gharawi. Former U.S. Amb. to Qatar Patrick Nickolas Theros and Rep.-Elect in the Colorado House of Representatives Iman Jodeh spoke about the contributions of Arab Americans on Alhurra Tonight. When the popular South Korean boy band BTS came to the White House, Alhurra highlighted the contributions of Asian Americans in the U.S.

**VOA** Facilitating dialogue across religious, national, and ethnic groups is a regular focus of VOA programming. VOA French produces the weekly radio show “Dialogue des religions” (Dialogue of Religions) exploring different religions and their major tenets. Audience members also represent their own faith practices and discuss virtues of tolerance.

VOA Deewa has leveraged Twitter Spaces as a venue for Pakistanis, Afghans, and members of diaspora communities to express their views candidly and to engage in direct conversation with opposing views on critical issues. VOA Deewa engaged community leaders and religious scholars in town halls to discuss tactics for combating the spread of polio in the regions. Religious extremists have propagated an anti-vaccination campaign that led to violence against vaccinators in Afghanistan and Pakistan; VOA’s programming allows for an alternative narrative to emerge organically from communities’ own representatives.

**RFE/RL** The Ukrainian Service used unique archival documentation to report seven stories about Ukrainians who protected Jews during the Holocaust. The feature stories were made after the Embassy of Israel prepared a ceremony to name newly announced Righteous Among the Nations Ukrainians. The Service received unique documents and memories from the 1940s and was the only media outlet publishing all the stories in great detail.

## Impact Objective 7:

### Serve as an authoritative source of information on United States news, policy, and society

Representing American society and presenting and discussing United States policy are legislated mandates for the agency and thus constitute mission imperatives. USAGM's coverage of the United States is comprehensive across all elements of society and aims to convey the practice of democracy in all of its complexity in the most credible way. It is not about persuading audiences to admire the United States; it is about helping them see how the United States manages the challenges of a democratic society — from economic growth to fiscal crises to race relations to educating youth to addressing environmental change. These topic areas find ready comparisons in USAGM's target countries and resonate with audiences in practical, meaningful ways.

Carrying out this element of USAGM's mission requires sensitivity and creativity. Currents of anti-Americanism still run strong in some parts of the world, necessitating deft outreach that stresses dialogue, not monologue. The way people interact with media today, with emphasis on interaction, further affirms this approach. At the same time, America's still dominant role on the global stage makes it a focal point of international attention and its national language is the one that tens of millions of people around the world seek to learn. VOA, in particular, is uniquely mandated and positioned to leverage these advantages to connect with diverse international audiences, serving as a United States news bureau for affiliate partners and providing English-learning programming.

USAGM will:

- Serve as a United States bureau for media outlets across the world that wish to engage with us for news, analysis, and perspectives from the United States – a model that has succeeded in Ukraine, Latin America, Nigeria, Indonesia, and elsewhere;
- Portray the breadth and diversity of the American experience, both positive and negative, with particular attention to diaspora communities and Americans outside of major cities;

- Emphasize English learning as a vehicle for positive audience engagement and interaction as well as information on American society and culture;
- Leverage the global interest in American politics with in-depth coverage and analysis of national elections and coverage of other political events to impart the news and to elucidate the democratic process, while localizing stories to make them compelling to target audiences; and
- Satisfy the world's growing appetite for learning English through innovative social media videos, TV and radio programs, and online instruction.

# Impact Performance Goal Overview

## 7.1

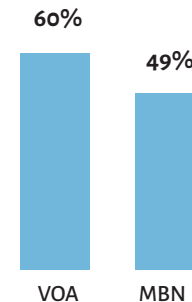
**Provide programming that increases audiences' understanding of the United States**

### PROGRAMMING PROVIDES UNDERSTANDING OF AMERICAN SOCIETY IN TARGET COUNTRIES



(% of weekly audience)

### PROGRAMMING PROVIDES UNDERSTANDING OF AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY IN TARGET COUNTRIES



(% of weekly audience)

## 7.2

**Provide exceptional news and information**

### PERCENTAGE OF VOA WEEKLY AUDIENCE REPORTING THAT BROADCASTER PRESENTS INFORMATION THEY CANNOT GET FROM OTHER MEDIA

29%

## IMPACT OBJECTIVE 7

# Impact Performance Goal 7.1: Provide programming that increases audiences' understanding of the United States

| Understanding of American society – percentage of weekly audience who report that the broadcasts have increased their understanding of American society somewhat or a great deal | FY 2018 Actual | FY 2019 Actual | FY 2020 Actual | FY 2021 Actual | FY 2022 Target | FY 2022 Actual |
|--|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| VOA  | 62             | 56             | 56             | 55             | 56             | 62             |
| MBN  | 42             | 44             | 38             | 54             | 60             | 54             |
| OCB  | 85             | 85             | 85             | 85             | 85             | NA             |

| Understanding of U.S. foreign policy – percentage of weekly audience who report that the broadcasts have increased their understanding of U.S. foreign policy somewhat or a great deal | FY 2018 Actual | FY 2019 Actual | FY 2020 Actual | FY 2021 Actual | FY 2022 Target | FY 2022 Actual |
|--|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| VOA  | 60             | 54             | 53             | 53             | 54             | 60             |
| MBN  | 42             | 44             | 47             | 50             | 60             | 49             |
| OCB  | 89             | 89             | 89             | 89             | 89             | NA             |

### IMPACT INDICATORS:

#### Understanding of American Society:

This indicator is determined by a question in representative surveys asking past week listeners/viewers/online users of a USAGM network's broadcasts in a particular language whether the broadcasts have "increased their understanding of American society." The answers are registered on a four-point scale based on the following response options: "a great deal," "somewhat," "very little," or "not at all." The understanding indicator is a weighted average, by audience size, of the



percentage of those answering the question in the survey (excluding those who did not respond or did not know) who chose “a great deal” or “somewhat.”

In FY 2022, USAGM revised its core questionnaire to better measure how contemporary audiences engage with modern media. As a result of testing and cognitive interviews, the question wording for understanding of American society changed to ask audiences whether they agree or disagree that “[brand] increases my knowledge about the people and culture of the United States.” As results from the new questionnaire become available, USAGM will report combined figures from the old questionnaire (percentage of weekly audience selecting “a great deal or somewhat”) and the new questionnaire (percentage of weekly audience selecting “agree”).

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

This indicator is determined by a question in representative surveys asking past week listeners/viewers/online users of a USAGM network’s broadcasts in a particular language whether the broadcasts have “increased their understanding of United States foreign policy.” The answers are registered on a four-point scale based on the following response options: “a great deal,” “somewhat,” “very little,” or “not at all.” The “Understanding” indicator is a weighted average, by audience size, of the percentage of those answering the question in the survey (excluding those who did not respond or did not know) who chose “a great deal” or “somewhat.”

In FY 2022, USAGM revised its core questionnaire to better measure how contemporary audiences engage with modern media. As a result of testing and cognitive interviews, the question wording for understanding of United States foreign policy changed to ask audiences whether they agree or disagree that “[brand] increases my knowledge about the United States government’s relationship with the rest of the world.” As results from the new questionnaire become available, USAGM will report combined figures from the old questionnaire (percentage of weekly audience selecting “a great deal or somewhat”) and the new questionnaire (percentage of weekly audience selecting “agree”).

## ANALYSIS OF RESULTS:

### Understanding of American Society

#### VOA

Target: 56

Actual: 62

VOA highly exceeded its FY 2022 target, which also marked a sharp increase from FY 2021. This indicator tends to remain stable over time, but several markets showed a dramatic increase in 2022, and in several others USAGM was able to measure this indicator for the first time in many years. Since the results are weighted to audience size, Afghanistan and the Dominican Republic are two drivers of this growth, with those in the former market claiming increased understanding of American society growing from approximately 55 percent to 85 percent. Although much smaller, VOA's audience in Russia rose markedly on this indicator, from 47 percent to 71 percent.

#### MBN

Target: 60

Actual: 54

MBN's measure for understanding of American society missed its FY 2022 growth target but did not decline from FY 2021. New results are included this year from Saudi Arabia, but the question was not part of the latest survey in Morocco where the measure was previously 66 percent. Results for this weighted average metric primarily reflect Iraq where MBN has the largest audience by far.

#### OCB

Target: 85

Actual: NA

USAGM did not commission a survey in Cuba in FY 2022. The last survey data was compiled for the FY 2017 PAR and the data for understanding American society is no longer considered current. A survey is planned and will be reported in FY 2023.

## Understanding of U.S. Foreign Policy

### VOA

Target: 54

Actual: 60

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VOA greatly exceeded its FY 2022 target for increasing understanding of U.S. foreign policy with a marked increase over FY 2021. There were several markets in which VOA audiences reported an increase in this metric, such as Vietnam, but the result is primarily driven by the large audience in Afghanistan, where nearly twice the percentage claimed an increase in understanding of U.S. foreign policy than in the previous survey

### MBN

Target: 60

Actual: 49

---

MBN's measure for understanding of U.S. foreign policy in FY 2022 was slightly lower than FY 2021, but well below its latest target. The change in the last year was driven by the drop of data from Morocco, where the prior measure was 64 percent, due to the inability to ask this question in the most recent survey.

### OCB

Target: 89

Actual: NA

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USAGM did not commission a survey in Cuba in FY 2022. The last survey data was compiled for the FY 2017 PAR and the data for understanding U.S. Foreign Policy society is no longer considered current. A survey is planned and will be reported in FY 2023.

## IMPACT OBJECTIVE 7

# Impact Performance Goal 7.2: Provide exceptional news and information

| Uniqueness<br>Percentage of weekly audience reporting that broadcaster presents information they cannot get from other media | FY 2018 Actual | FY 2019 Actual | FY 2020 Actual | FY 2021 Actual | FY 2022 Target | FY 2022 Actual |
|--|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| VOA  | 31             | 28             | 28             | 29             | 29             | 29             |

### IMPACT INDICATORS:

#### Uniqueness

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

In FY 2022, USAGM revised its core questionnaire to better measure how contemporary audiences engage with modern media. As a result of testing and cognitive interviews, the question wording for uniqueness changed to ask about various aspects of uniqueness. As results from the new questionnaire become available, the general uniqueness indicator in this performance goal will be replaced by one that asks whether audiences agree or disagree that “[brand] covers news about the United States that I cannot get elsewhere.”

ANALYSIS OF RESULTS:

Uniqueness

**VOA**

**Target: 29**

**Actual: 29**

---

VOA met its FY 2022 target for “uniqueness” maintaining performance from FY 2021. Only 14 markets produced survey data tracking this indicator for VOA. In Afghanistan, with its large VOA audience, security conditions required shorter phone surveys, and this question was not included.

## Impact Objective 8:

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

In markets without an established free press, or where state-run media are dominant, the USAGM's networks play a surrogate role, fulfilling the role of highly professionalized local press. In this role, the networks emphasize domestic news for their geographically-defined audiences and cover developments specific to defined target markets, especially in fragile democracies. Programming focuses on local news events not covered in state-controlled domestic media, as well as other sensitive topics, including religion, science, and locally-banned literature and music. In turn, the networks give voice to underserved populations, dissidents, and civil society — while maintaining balanced coverage — and serve as platforms for a range of opinions and voices from these countries.

USAGM will:

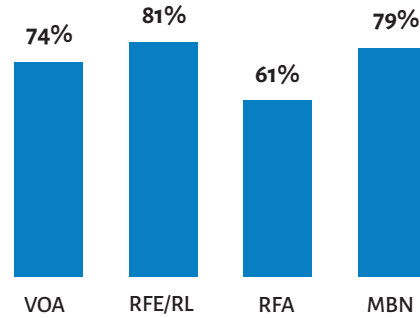
- Build strong networks of local stringers across target regions;
- Where possible, maintain a robust on-the-ground bureau presence to report local news from a local perspective;
- Where in-country access is limited, cultivate networks of trusted contributors and influencers and closely monitor official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

# Impact Performance Goal Overview

## 8.1

**Provide programming that increases audiences' understanding of current events in target countries**

### PROGRAMMING PROVIDES UNDERSTANDING OF CURRENT EVENTS IN TARGET COUNTRIES

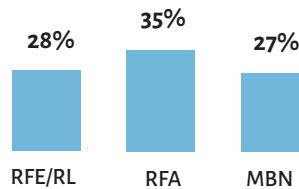


(% of weekly audience)

## 8.2

**Provide exceptional news and information**

### PERCENTAGE OF WEEKLY AUDIENCE REPORTING THAT BROADCASTER PRESENTS INFORMATION THEY CANNOT GET FROM OTHER MEDIA



(% of weekly audience)

## IMPACT OBJECTIVE 8

### Impact Performance Goal 8.1: Provide programming that increases audiences’ understanding of current events in target countries

| Understanding of current events in target country – percentage of weekly audience who report that the broadcasts have increased their understanding of current events in the target country somewhat or a great deal | FY 2018 Actual | FY 2019 Actual | FY 2020 Actual | FY 2021 Actual | FY 2022 Target | FY 2022 Actual |
|--|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| VOA in relevant markets  | NA             | NA             | 72             | 71             | 72             | 74             |
| RFE/RL   | 77             | 75             | 75             | 76             | 76             | 81             |
| RFA  | 83             | 83             | 78             | 61             | 62             | 61             |
| MBN  | NA             | NA             | NA             | 57             | 60             | 79             |
| OCB  | NA             | NA             | NA             | NA             | NA             | NA             |

**Note:**

This was a new measure in FY 2018. Actuals are only available for a small number of language services for FY 2018-2020. There is no data to report for OCB.

**IMPACT INDICATORS:**

**Understanding of current events in target country**

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



In FY 2022, USAGM revised its core questionnaire to better measure how contemporary audiences engage with modern media. As a result of testing and cognitive interviews, the question wording for this indicator now asks whether respondents agree or disagree that “[brand] increases my knowledge of news in [country].” As results from the new questionnaire become available, “understanding of current events in target country” will be replaced by “knowledge of news in country” in USAGM performance reporting.

**ANALYSIS OF RESULTS:**

**VOA** **Target: 72** **Actual: 74**

---

VOA exceeded its FY 2022 target for increasing understanding of current events in target countries though it has results from few markets for this new metric. It may take several years to complete surveys in a sufficient number of markets to establish meaningful target. Among those markets included in FY 2022, Kosovo, Haiti, and Afghanistan showed the highest results, all above 90 percent.

**RFE/RL** **Target: 76** **Actual: 78**

---

Based on data from 15 countries and regions, RFE/RL’s FY 2022 positive response rate for understanding of current events in the target country was 78 percent, slightly exceeding its target. RFE/RL continues to increase the understanding of current events in the target area through its surrogate broadcasting among a significant portion of its audience with nearly four in five weekly listeners, viewers, or online users reporting that its programs increased their understanding of current events in the target area

**RFA** **Target: 62** **Actual: 61**

---

This indicator is unchanged from FY 2021, as no additional data were available in RFA markets in FY 2022. RFA’s rating for understanding of current events in the target country is based only on data from Cambodia, where latest figures were significantly lower than in prior cycles. Positive responses to survey questions about RFA may also be affected by respondent fears of expressing support for the network given Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen has denounced and attempted to discredit it with increasing ferocity.

**MBN****Target: 60****Actual: 79**

---

MBN greatly exceeded its target for FY 2022 due to a better than expected performance in Saudi Arabia. Performance on this indicator is based on data in Morocco and Saudi Arabia only. Measured results in Saudi Arabia were 88 percent for Alhurra and 80 percent for Radio Sawa. In Morocco, 72 percent of past week Alhurra users said the station increased their understanding of events in Morocco.

**OCB****Target: NA****Actual: NA**

---

USAGM did not commission a survey in Cuba in FY 2022. The last survey data was compiled for the FY 2017 PAR and the data for understanding target country current events is no longer considered current. A survey is planned and will be reported in FY 2023.

## A CLOSER LOOK:

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

With on-the-ground reporters across the world, USAGM networks provide audiences unique local coverage of major events.

**RFA** Vietnamese top cop To Lam, thought to be a potential future leader of the Communist Party of Vietnam, was caught on video at a luxury steakhouse in London, being hand-fed a \$1,975 gold-coated steak by Turkish celebrity chef and social media star, Nusret Gökçe. The video obtained by RFA's Vietnamese Service went viral, prompting social media questions about how a Communist Party official on a monthly salary of roughly \$660 USD could afford the luxury meal.

**RFE/RL** When Afghanistan's Taliban government issued a decree in April 2022 that women should not travel without an adult male escort (Mahram), women called in to Radio Azadi's radio shows to share their experiences on how the travel ban affected them.

RFE/RL's Uzbek Service continues to achieve daily impact for its audience via its Telegram messenger-based Sizdan Telegram project, which encourages local authorities to investigate and take action to resolve complaints posted by members of the public to the Service's @SizdanTelegram channel. Teachers, medical workers, labor migrants, local businessmen, farmers, and students are among the hundreds that write to the Service to describe their problems.

Radio Mashaal uses citizen journalism to engage with its audience and provide solutions to some of their problems. In July 2022, based on reporting by its audience, Mashaal provided intense coverage of a spike in homicides in northwestern Pakistan's Dera Ismail Khan district.

**MBN** Alhurra Television, Sawa Radio, and MBN's digital platforms are among the few places where citizens in the Middle East can learn about Russia's and China's influence on their governments. One *Alhurra Investigates* episode explored how China's loans posed economic risks to Egypt and Iraq similar to those seen in Sri Lanka. Another episode examined a deal by Russia with the Sudanese government to exploit Sudan's natural resource of gold, particularly in response to economic sanctions following the war in Ukraine.

**VOA** VOA's English-to-Africa Khartoum delivered real-time reporting from October's coup in Sudan with the arrest of transitional leaders and demonstrations against the takeover. Regional reaction, comments from the White House and the United Nations, and a denunciation of the coup by the U.S. ambassador to Sudan, led multimedia programming across languages, including Somali, Amharic, Afan Oromo, and Tigrigna.

IMPACT OBJECTIVE 8

## Impact Performance Goal 8.2: Provide exceptional news and information

| Uniqueness<br>Percentage of weekly audience reporting that broadcaster presents information they cannot get from other media | FY 2018 Actual | FY 2019 Actual | FY 2020 Actual | FY 2021 Actual | FY 2022 Target | FY 2022 Actual |
|--|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| RFE/RL   | 25             | 26             | 27             | 27             | 29             | 28             |
| RFA  | 40             | 40             | 38             | 35             | 36             | 35             |
| MBN  | 32             | 29             | 30             | 30             | 35             | 27             |
| OCB  | 78             | 78             | 78             | 78             | 78             | NA             |

**IMPACT INDICATORS:**

**Uniqueness**

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

In FY 2022, USAGM revised its core questionnaire to better measure how contemporary audiences engage with modern media. As a result of testing and cognitive interviews, the question wording for uniqueness changed to ask about various aspects of uniqueness. As results from the new questionnaire become available, the general uniqueness indicator in this performance goal will be replaced by a uniqueness index reflecting responses to whether USAGM’s networks “cover news not covered by other brands,” “present news in a way that other brands do not,” “cover international news stories that audiences cannot get elsewhere,” and “include different viewpoints.”

## ANALYSIS OF RESULTS:

### Uniqueness

#### RFE/RL

Target: 29

Actual: 28

RFE/RL’s 28 percent positive response rating for “Uniqueness” reflects an increase from FY 2021, but was slightly below its FY 2022 target. RFE/RL continues to provide unique information to a significant proportion of its audience with more one-quarter of weekly listeners, viewers, or online users reporting that “very little” or “none” of the information provided by RFE/RL is available elsewhere.

#### RFA

Target: 36

Actual: 35

This indicator for RFA is unchanged from FY 2021, as no additional data were available for this metric in its markets in FY 2022. This indicator is based on data from Cambodia only and these results were lower than anticipated. It may be noted that in the same survey, 83 percent of RFA’s weekly audience in Cambodia agreed with a different question expressing that RFA provides information about Cambodia that they cannot get otherwise.

#### MBN

Target: 35

Actual: 27

MBN’s “Uniqueness” rating is lower than its FY 2022 target, but consistent with previous years. Providing content audiences find unique has been a significant challenge in the Arab world where audiences have access to hundreds of well-funded local and international TV and radio stations and digital media sources. A 2016 USAGM-MBN funded content analysis of Alhurra competitors also found that while many outlets cover the same general topics as Alhurra, they do not provide as much depth, are more critical of the United States, and/or do not cover issues as objectively as Alhurra.

#### OCB

Target: 78

Actual: NA

USAGM did not commission a survey in Cuba in FY 2022. The last survey data was compiled for the FY 2017 PAR and the data for “Uniqueness” is no longer considered current. A survey is planned and will be reported in FY 2023.

A CLOSER LOOK:

## Citizen journalism and user-generated content

USAGM networks use citizen journalists and user-generated content (UGC) to gather and present information from repressive environments and present diverse perspectives to their audiences.

**RFE/RL** User-generated content makes up a considerable part of the radio programs of RFE/RL's Afghan Service's radio programs – two hours of daily call-in programs rely purely on UGC. User content allowed the Service to cover women's protests in Kabul when the Taliban did not allow journalists to report from the scene. After the 2021 fall of Kabul to the Taliban, the Service opened WhatsApp channels where it receives hundreds of messages every day on various topics that are used across the Service's content platforms.

**MBN** At times, the only way to tell an important story is through user-generated content and citizen journalism. MBN's Irfaasawtak.com ("Raise Your Voice") encourages discourse and feedback. Many readers use the comments section to share their stories with videos and photos.

UGC content can go viral. In the first days of the Ukraine war, Maria Dashenko, a young Ukrainian woman, sent Alhurra.com a video of herself speaking in Arabic and pleading for Arabs to support her country. The video garnered 11 million views and 78,000 comments. Alhurra's newscasts also use citizen journalism in protests and clashes. UGC videos were essential as stories of Lebanese citizens in desperation due to the economic crash agreed to pay smugglers and risk their lives to get to Europe. They often film the horrendous conditions on overcrowded boats that are not seaworthy. These videos are imperative to tell their important stories.

**VOA** User-generated content has been an accelerant for the protests engulfing Iran following the death of Mahsa Amini. Iranian women have catalyzed the widespread demonstrations through videos they have posted online, removing their hijabs, or cutting their hair as acts of defiance. VOA Persian has paired those images and videos with original reporting, providing an unfiltered look into

events through users' content while also preserving VOA's journalistic standards and providing added value through context and analysis. As schoolgirls joined the protests, VOA Persian interviewed the mother of a 16-year-old girl beaten to death by security forces, covered global reactions to her death across social media, and reported on the government's pressure on the girl's family. This comprehensive coverage attracted tens of millions of video views and spikes in engagement across all platforms, as audience members turned to VOA as a reliable source during national crisis.



## PERFORMANCE OVERVIEW

### Mission:

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

### Strategic Goals:

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

### Objectives:

Impact Objectives  
*(see page 35)*

Agility Objectives

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*USAGM's Strategic Goals are supported by Impact Objectives, which focus on performance on the mission, and Agility Objectives, which focus on the management of the agency.*

*Each objective is broken down into measurable performance goals. USAGM sets targets for these goals annually. Following is the five-year historical data for each performance goal, an explanation of the indicator and how it is measured, and a detailed analysis of the results.*

AGILITY OBJECTIVES:

|   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| <p><b>1</b> Manage a nimble, resilient, sustainable, efficient, and modern media enterprise</p>             | <p>AGILITY OBJECTIVE 1</p> <p>PERFORMANCE GOALS:</p> <p><b>1.1 Streamline program delivery</b></p> <p><b>1.2 Automate and streamline key business processes</b></p> <p><b>1.3 Migrate onsite systems to cloud for enhanced effectiveness and efficiency</b></p> <p><b>1.4 Implement key media and IT security systems for all USAGM entities</b></p> <p><b>1.5 Broaden Agency sustainability efforts</b></p>  | <p>135</p> <p></p> <p>136</p> <p>139</p> <p>140</p> <p>142</p> <p>145</p>            |
| <p><b>2</b> Enhance communication and strategic cooperation among USAGM networks and offices</p>            | <p>AGILITY OBJECTIVE 2</p> <p>PERFORMANCE GOALS:</p> <p><b>2.1 Launch a comprehensive internal communications campaign to improve internal communications between leadership and staff</b></p> <p><b>2.2 Support network-led initiatives to share content across networks and services</b></p> <p><b>2.3 Build systems to support sharing content across networks and services</b></p>  | <p>146</p> <p></p> <p>147</p> <p>149</p> <p>150</p>                                  |
| <p><b>3</b> Enable greater impact and accountability through data-driven evaluation and decision-making</p> | <p>AGILITY OBJECTIVE 3</p> <p>PERFORMANCE GOALS:</p> <p><b>3.1 Strengthen research program</b></p> <p>USAGM research in challenging environments</p> <p>Changing measures for changing habits</p> <p><b>3.2 Conduct rigorous annual content reviews for each language service</b></p> <p><b>3.3 Build systems and processes to support data-driven evaluation and decision-making</b></p> <p>Pilot projects to bring research data and evaluation products to senior leaders and other key decision-makers.</p> | <p>151</p> <p></p> <p>152</p> <p>153</p> <p>155</p> <p>156</p> <p>156</p> <p>158</p> |
| <p><b>4</b> Foster engagement, development, and equity in a diverse workforce</p>                           | <p>AGILITY OBJECTIVE 4</p> <p>PERFORMANCE GOALS:</p> <p><b>4.1 Improve workforce engagement</b></p> <p><b>4.2 Improve employee training and development</b></p> <p><b>4.3 Address equity and increase diversity in management</b></p> <p><b>4.4 Institute strategic human capital planning</b></p> <p><b>4.5 Improve personnel evaluation processes</b></p> <p><b>4.6 Improve performance culture of the agency</b></p>   | <p>159</p> <p></p> <p>160</p> <p>161</p> <p>162</p> <p>162</p> <p>163</p> <p>164</p> |

# Agility Objective 1:

## Manage a nimble, resilient, sustainable, efficient, and modern media enterprise

By virtue of historical circumstance, USAGM's operations fall under six separate entities and respective support organizations. This structure has resulted in strong and trusted brands, but presents challenges with federal and non-federal components operating under different legal and administrative frameworks. USAGM must have the agility to operate in a rapidly evolving and challenging global media environment and the standardization or interoperability that enables nimble resource allocations. The agency continues to transform its operations in order to fulfill its charter and meet the challenges of growing geopolitical instability, technological change, and growing threats to free media.

USAGM will:

- Pursue an efficient and effective organizational structure;
- Modernize its technological platforms and workflows, enabling it to seamlessly meet and exceed global standards in content creation, acquisition, and distribution, while closely tracking and adjusting to audience consumption behaviors;
- Streamline and, where possible, automate business processes and workflows;
- Employ cloud-based technologies to maximize nimbleness, resilience, and cost savings;
- Protect USAGM from persistent threats from state and non-state actors through enhancements to its cybersecurity posture.
- Improve the environmental sustainability of agency operations; and
- Leverage new mobile, agile, and cloud-based technologies to reduce physical space requirements and adjust the agency's global footprint to best ensure the safety and security of its journalists.

**AGILITY OBJECTIVE 1**

# Agility Performance Goal 1.1: Streamline program delivery

| Conduct annual data-driven business reviews to optimize shortwave and medium wave radio transmission network |  |
|--|--|
| <b>FY 2021<br/>Baseline</b>  | First review of SW and MW transmission completed   |
| <b>FY 2022<br/>Target</b>  | Conduct review and implement recommendations   |
| <b>FY 2022<br/>Actual</b>  | A number of changes made, including elimination of VOA Urdu and reductions of VOA and RFA Burmese. |

| <b>Optimize remaining shortwave distribution, taking advantage of the strategic location and lower operating cost of Kuwait Transmitting Station</b> |  |
|--|--|
| <b>FY 2018 Actual</b>  | Poros Transmitting Station closed. Installation of new antenna at Kuwait Transmitting Station underway, expected to be complete in Q2 FY 2019.   |
| <b>FY 2019 Actual</b>  | Poros Transmitting Station handed over in September 2019. The installation of the new SW antenna at Kuwait Transmitting Station has been delayed due to contracting and logistical issues. It is now expected in Q3 FY 2020. Restored 4 (of 15) antennas on CNMI Transmitting Station to service.  |
| <b>FY 2020 Actual</b>  | At Kuwait Transmitting Station, new SW antenna for Middle East completed in Q2 FY 2020. Contract for design and installation of new SW antenna arrays for Africa awarded Q4. Restored 3 more (total 7 of 15) antennas on CNMI Transmitting Station to service. Broad cross-agency business review of all SW and MW transmission begun, with recommendations for cuts and reductions made.  |
| <b>FY 2021 Actual</b>  | <p>CNMI: a) Antenna 270L has been erected, and transmission line repairs are ongoing. Proof of performance testing is scheduled for FY 2022 Q2. b) Parts for antenna 305L have been delivered, inventoried, and staged for erection as soon as an installation contract is awarded. c) Four additional antennas ordered in FY 2020 are being fabricated and scheduled for delivery in FY 2022. Delays largely the result of the ongoing pandemic.</p> <p>Kuwait: expansion project extended into FY 2023 due to two factors: a) terrain where the new antenna arrays are to be built requires extensive pre-work; b) Kuwait has implemented severe COVID-19 restrictions that have prevented necessary visits by engineers outside the country</p> |
| <b>FY 2022 Target</b>  | <p>Complete restoration of 2 more antennas on CNMI Transmitting Station to service and work to restore 2 additional antennas.<sup>1</sup></p> <p>Expansion of shortwave at KTS completed.</p>  |
| <b>FY 2022 Actual</b>  | <p>Restored one antenna on CNMI Transmitting Station. Additional antenna only requires ground works repair due to delay on parts.</p> <p>SW antenna expansion is well underway, with completion anticipated in FY 2023. The building expansion for the transmitters will complete in FY 2024. In FY 2022, construction contract was awarded,</p>   |

<sup>1</sup> USAGM is still targeting two antenna installations per year, but ongoing COVID-19 restrictions have made progress difficult.

| <b>Continue building out and supporting USAGM's bespoke VOD/OTT (video on demand/over the top) platform</b> |  |
|---|--|
| <b>FY 2021<br/>Baseline</b>   | Current status: content available in 15 languages and on 15 platforms/operating systems, including Apple TV, Samsung, etc.   |
| <b>FY 2022<br/>Target</b>   | Add content in 3 more languages and 1 more platform/operating system. Consider adding other features and graphical refinements   |
| <b>FY 2022<br/>Actual</b>   | Additional 5 languages added, all available on multiple Oses and devices, including Samsung Smart TVs, LG Connected TVs, Amazon Fire TV, and more than a dozen manufacturers that use the Android TV OS. In FY 2022 USAGM also added enhanced analytics and security measures. |

| <b>Optimize the FM network remote monitoring capability: implement monitoring across all sites and make the system more efficient by replacing VSATs and emails with GSM-based system</b> |  |
|---|--|
| <b>FY 2021<br/>Baseline</b>   | 65 of 95 FM stations have remote monitoring capabilities   |
| <b>FY 2022<br/>Target</b>   | Pilot GSM-based system. Seek to reduce per-station monitoring costs  |
| <b>FY 2022<br/>Actual</b>   | A Technical Evaluation Panel concluded a review of offers for upgraded connectivity to enable monitoring. Award will be made in FY 2022. That will be rolled out in FY 2023. |

#### **ANALYSIS OF RESULTS:**

With the end of COVID-19 pandemic restrictions, USAGM expects no new delays of projects related to streamlining program delivery. However, significant delays from previous years continued to impact project schedules in FY 2022.

AGILITY OBJECTIVE 1

# Agility Performance Goal 1.2: Automate and streamline key business processes

| Unify USAGM “help desk” services management and provision through a TSI-led ServiceDesk by establishing a common tool set for USAGM organizations to utilize |   |
|--|---|
| <b>FY 2018 Actual</b>  | Consolidation of support team efforts, including IT help desk, building facilities, Network Control Center, and telecoms, into integrated Solutions Center (now named TSI Help Center) has begun. Expected completion in Q1 FY 2019.    |
| <b>FY 2019 Actual</b>  | Majority of Help Center services consolidated. Full rollout not achieved due to new requirement to support VOA technology suite.  |
| <b>FY 2020 Actual</b>  | Help Center 50% consolidated. In FY 2020 USAGM focused Help Center consolidation specifically on integrating the support of Voltron, cross-training, building out new resources and implementation of new workflows.                    |
| <b>FY 2021 Actual</b>  | Help Desk consolidation not 100%, due to shifts in agency leadership over the past year. However, expanded service offerings planned with RFE/RL to add support on Help Desk for agency CMS, Pangea.                                    |
| <b>FY 2022 Target</b>  | <p>Pilot shared services approach that is paid into by agency networks that participate.</p> <p>Extend Help Desk services to integrate DST, Telecoms, NCC, &amp; Facilities calls, to improve service delivery &amp; communications</p> |
| <b>FY 2022 Actual</b>  | Implementation of Avanti ITSM Service Management tool that will help extend and provide consolidated Helpdesk services to internal USAGM service-oriented departments and other USAGM entities.   |

**ANALYSIS OF RESULTS:**

USAGM met FY 2022 targets for automating and streamlining key business processes.

## AGILITY OBJECTIVE 1

# Agility Performance Goal 1.3: Migrate onsite systems to cloud for enhanced effectiveness and efficiency

Make all media creation and editing systems available via cloud/mobile platforms for United States based staff to promote efficient media production and sharing

|                             |   |
|-----------------------------|---|
| <b>FY 2021<br/>Baseline</b> | Limited access available for US-based staff; VPN access or being on site required |
| <b>FY 2022<br/>Target</b>   | Adobe- cloud-based video editing solution piloted and rolled out                  |
| <b>FY 2022<br/>Actual</b>   | Adobe cloud-based video editing solution pilot currently in progress.             |

Make media creation and editing systems available for staff outside the United States

|                             |  |
|-----------------------------|--|
| <b>FY 2021<br/>Baseline</b> | Only available on an ad hoc basis  |
| <b>FY 2022<br/>Target</b>   | All approved users anywhere in the world can access the media creation and editing systems                                       |
| <b>FY 2022<br/>Actual</b>   | All approved users with accounts in agency's active directory accounts are able to access the media creation and editing systems |

Reduce USAGM IT Infrastructure footprint

|                             |  |
|-----------------------------|--|
| <b>FY 2021<br/>Baseline</b> | Over 80 percent of storage utilization in the Cloud; some server infrastructure virtualized and cloud- |
| <b>FY 2022<br/>Target</b>   | Begin migrating server infrastructure to Cloud (85 percent migration target by FY 2024)                |
| <b>FY 2022<br/>Actual</b>   | Continue migrating server infrastructure to Cloud (85 percent migration target by FY 2024)             |



| Establish policy to encourage USAGM entities to use shared media services |   |
|---|---|
| FY 2021<br>Baseline   | Policy proposed, not implemented  |
| FY 2022<br>Target   | Policy proposed, implemented  |
| FY 2022<br>Actual   | Continued review/assessment of a proposed policy to the USAGM entities. |

**ANALYSIS OF RESULTS:**

USAGM has met some but not all targets for FY 2022 on projects related to migrating onsite systems to cloud for enhanced effectiveness and efficiency.

AGILITY OBJECTIVE 1

# Agility Performance Goal 1.4: Implement key media and IT security systems for all USAGM entities

| Improve efficacy of IT security training |   |
|--|---|
| <b>FY 2020<br/>Baseline</b>              | Approximately 20 percent of users will click on a spoofed phishing test   |
| <b>FY 2021<br/>Target</b>                | Mimic realistic phishing to test users' IT security awareness; provide training to those who click. (Target was that less than 20 percent of users will click). |
| <b>FY 2021<br/>Actual</b>                | Campaign yielded a phish rate of only 9.3 percent. All users that clicked were provided micro-training to show indicators of phishing attempts.                 |

| Strengthen USAGM'S cybersecurity posture |  |
|--|--|
| <b>FY 2018<br/>Actual</b>                | <p>Made progress toward defined level of maturity of IT Information Security Program.</p> <p>Piloted DHS CDM (Department of Homeland Security Continuous Diagnostics and Mitigation) tools to enhance the agency's ability to identify and mitigate the impact of cyber threats. Full rollout expected in Q1 FY 2019</p>   |
| <b>FY 2019<br/>Actual</b>                | Completed, received approval for, and published several dozen information security and privacy strategies, policies, and procedures. Completed first phase of multifactor authentication (MFA), as well as deployment of DHS monitoring tools and dashboard.   |
| <b>FY 2020<br/>Actual</b>                | <p>Pilot program launched to implement multifactor authentication (MFA) for all users accessing the agency network, systems, applications, and cloud services. COVID-19 pandemic delayed agency-wide deployment.</p> <p>Launched a Data Loss Prevention pilot program to better protect information from accidental or malicious exfiltration. This pilot will also provide secure means for staff to share information with external partners for legitimate business needs.</p> <p>Adjusted IT security architecture, tools, and procedures to extend operations and monitoring to a de-centralized operations model during the COVID-19 pandemic, which increased the agency's ability to detect and prevent data loss, data exfiltration, and compromise of credentials.</p> <p>Built an Information Security Risk Management Program and IT Governance Program.</p> |

|                              |   |
|------------------------------|---|
| <p><b>FY 2021 Actual</b></p> | <p>The FY 2021 OIG FISMA report confirmed USAGM’s IT Security program is at level 3, i.e., “Consistently Implemented.”</p> <p>Most measures of the Data Loss Prevention program have been implemented. For example, USAGM can now monitor the movement of large amounts of data to and from the federal network; and will receive alerts regarding anomalous file movement and deletion of data in cloud-based storage.</p> <p>Piloting the IT Security Risk Management and IT Governance programs has been impacted by the dispersed nature of the workforce (i.e., 100% telework by most staff) since the pandemic began and the multiple changes of agency leadership, which will be required to support implementation.</p> <p>USAGM further developed cloud-based tools and procedures to support its decentralized workforce and new remote-work security policies and procedures that support the USAGM IT strategic plan. For example, configuring Microsoft Sentinel to follow a playbook for certain activities with the Azure and email services; and moving, updating, or extending security tools to support USAGM’s off-site data center.</p> <p>USAGM completed integration of existing tools and introduced a LAN micro segmentation strategy to provide a more secure network.</p> |
| <p><b>FY 2022 Target</b></p> | <p>Maintain “Consistently Implemented” maturity level for USAGM’s information security program while developing the agency’s Zero Trust Architecture transition plan in response to Cyber EO 14028</p> <p>Develop agency ZTA implementation plan, Brief senior management on ZTA strategies and incorporate into budget and overall USAGM strategic planning.</p> <p>IT Governance program fully adopted with routine Investment Review Board meetings and CPIC processes for USAGM’s federal entities.</p> <p>Pilot PIV MFA for USAGM devices and network</p> <p>Pilot Supply Chain Risk Management and Counterfeit Software and Device protection program</p> <p>Pilot Windows 11 OS security features</p> <p>Migrate On-Premise applications to the Cloud ensuring ZTA is fully adopted</p>  |

|                                  |   |
|----------------------------------|---|
| <p><b>FY 2022<br/>Actual</b></p> | <p>The OIG has given USAGM a Consistently Implemented rating for our FISMA program.</p> <p>USAGM's initial ZTA plan was developed and submitted to OMB. USAGM's ZTA funding request was submitted to GSA for TMF funding consideration and included in the agency's FY 2024 budget plan.</p> <p>IT Governance program is fully adopted with routine Investment Review Board meetings and CPIC processes for USAGM's federal entities.</p> <p>USAGM's PIV MFA enforcement is underway with 7% of total agency users currently using PIV cards for login to agency devices.</p> <p>USAGM has piloted the SCRM program.</p> <p>Pilot of Windows 11 OS secure configuration was deferred to FY 2023</p> <p>ZTA Pilot migration of On-Premise applications to the Cloud was deferred to FY 2023.</p> |
|----------------------------------|---|

**ANALYSIS OF RESULTS:**

USAGM met or exceeded FY 2022 targets regarding implementation of key media and IT security systems, with the exception of two pilot projects deferred to FY 2023.

AGILITY OBJECTIVE 1

# Agility Performance Goal 1.5: Broaden agency sustainability efforts

| Develop agency-wide sustainability program based on administration guidance and goals |  |
|---|--|
| <b>FY 2021<br/>Baseline</b>   | No agency-wide sustainability program  |
| <b>FY 2022<br/>Target</b>   | Develop sustainability program and communicate this, along with associated goals and guidance, across the agency |
| <b>FY 2022<br/>Actual</b>   | USAGM engaged a firm to conduct an agency-wide sustainability assessment   |

| Reduce real estate footprint at Cohen Building headquarters and USAGM's other federal properties |  |
|--|--|
| <b>FY 2021<br/>Baseline</b>  | 735,000 square feet  |
| <b>FY 2022<br/>Target</b>  | 715,000 square feet  |
| <b>FY 2022<br/>Actual</b>  | USAGM reduced used space to 698k sq ft. Cohen: 21k sq ft available for release to GSA, pending approval; OCB Miami: 15k sq ft released to GSA in FY 2022 and additional 1500 sq ft warehouse closed. VOA also closed San Francisco bureau office space |

| Move agency headquarters from Wilbur J. Cohen building to another location by 2028 |  |
|--|--|
| <b>FY 2021<br/>Baseline</b>  | Commercial realtor engaged; space estimates drawn up   |
| <b>FY 2022<br/>Target</b>  | Refine space estimates, based on evolving needs  |
| <b>FY 2022<br/>Actual</b>  | Space estimates refined, but continue to evolve, pending space utilization and other factors |

**ANALYSIS OF RESULTS:**

USAGM met FY 2022 targets for broadening agency sustainability efforts.

## Agility Objective 2:

### Enhance communication and strategic cooperation among USAGM networks and offices

USAGM is one of the world's largest news-gathering and reporting enterprises with 50 overseas news bureaus and production centers, 3,500 employees, and 1,500 stringer reporters. Each of the agency's five public service media networks generates original reporting every day from in and around the world's hotspots — including Afghanistan, Burma, China, Haiti, Iran, North Korea, Russia and its periphery, the Sahel and Central Africa, Syria, Venezuela, Yemen — primarily in vernacular languages for target audiences in these areas.

The themes covered in original reporting from these locations — highlighting human rights, authoritarian repression, disinformation campaigns, etc. — resonate with audiences around the world. USAGM's networks strive to make this content available in English and vernacular languages to serve broader audiences. Specifically, the agency facilitates communication and coordination among broadcast networks and support offices, reinforcing their unique and respective mission-driven legislated roles in areas served by multiple broadcasters. The agency will also continue to collaborate with other United States government entities on areas of shared interest or concern.

USAGM will:

- Ensure coordinated and complementary mission-driven operations and content in markets served by two USAGM media entities;
- Build and sustain internal content-sharing mechanisms, aligning internal editorial support and coordination, as needed;
- Employ new bridge editors and other content-sharing mechanisms to channel original reporting from the language services to the central newsrooms and across USAGM to fully leverage the agency's expansive global network of field-based reporters;

- Better leverage news gathering, including stringer and correspondent networks or rotating correspondents, across USAGM to ensure required editorial coordination and avoid redundancy;
- Align all support functions to USAGM vision, strategic priorities, and goals; and
- Participate in inter-agency meetings, committees, and strategies in support of United States government priorities to ensure that USAGM capabilities, expertise, actions, and impact are fully and accurately shared with other government entities.

## AGILITY OBJECTIVE 2

### Agility Performance Goal 2.1: Launch a comprehensive internal communications campaign to improve internal communications between leadership and staff

| Increase staff consumption of and engagement with a wide range of communications products | FY 2021 Baseline <sup>1</sup> | FY 2022 Target | FY 2022 Actual     |
|---|-------------------------------|----------------|--------------------|
| Average weekly reach of emails <sup>2</sup>   | 170                           | 250            | NA                 |
| Average weekly digital visits on Workplace  | 264                           | 350            | 192                |
| Average weekly digital visits on SharePoint   | 2,705                         | 3,000          | 2,769              |
| Digital engagement (likes, comments, shares) on Workplace                                 | 7,084                         | 10,000         | 6,495 <sup>3</sup> |
| Average audience size for virtual events  | 131                           | 150            | 45 <sup>4</sup>    |

<sup>1</sup>This was reported for the first time in FY 2022. Actuals are not available for FY 2018-2019

<sup>2</sup>Not tracked as of FY 2022 due to inability to consistently measure readership and questions about utility of the metric.

<sup>3</sup>Reporting changed in FY 2022 from “reactions, comments, and shares” to “reactions, comments, and *connections*”

<sup>4</sup>Reduced number of agency-wide town halls and focused on smaller, office-specific events

| Percentage of employees who agree that they know how their work relates to the agency's goals and priorities (from FEVS) | FY 2020 Actual <sup>1</sup> | FY 2021 Actual | FY 2022 Target | FY 2022 Actual |
|--|-----------------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| USAGM  | 60                          | 85             | 86             | 83             |
| Government-wide  | 72                          | 85             | NA             | 84             |

<sup>1</sup>This was reported for the first time in FY 2022. Actuals were not available for FY 2018-2019.

### Analysis of Results:

New strategies and changes to platform analytical tools resulted in lower-than-expected internal communications metrics for FY 2022. Average weekly visits to SharePoint and Workplace held steady for the most part. The apparent decline in engagement on Workplace is associated with a change in interactions as measured by Workplace Insights. The FY 2022 Workplace engagement figure includes posts, comments, and reactions, but it no longer includes "shares." The average audience size of virtual events dropped following a focus on small office and topic-specific events rather than broad agency-wide town halls. Weekly reach of emails was not tracked due to inability to consistently measure readership.

USAGM closely missed its FY 2022 target for percentage of employees who agree that they know how their work relates to the agency's goals and priorities based on responses to the Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey (FEVS), but maintained performance comparably superior to FY 2020 as that seen in FY 2021 and close to the government-wide average.



AGILITY OBJECTIVE 2

## Agility Performance Goal 2.2: Support network-led initiatives to share content across networks and services

|   | FY 2021 Baseline <sup>1</sup>   | FY 2022 Target  | FY 2022 Actual  |
|---|---|---|---|
| Support content sharing initiatives led by USAGM's networks while protecting the editorial independence of each network | VOA-OCB collaboration on Latin America; RFE/RL-RFA coverage of China; | RFA, VOA, RFE/RL, MBN, and OCB collaboration coverage of Chinese malign influence | RFA, VOA, RFE/RL, MBN, and OCB collaboration coverage of Chinese malign influence |

<sup>1</sup>This was reported for the first time in FY 2022. Actuals are not available for FY 2018-2020.

**ANALYSIS OF RESULTS:**

USAGM met FY 2022 target to support network-led initiatives to share content across networks and services.

AGILITY OBJECTIVE 2

## Agility Performance Goal 2.3: Build systems to support sharing content across networks and services

|   | FY 2021<br>Baseline <sup>1</sup>  | FY 2022<br>Target   | FY 2022<br>Actual  |
|---|---|---|--|
| Develop and support agency-wide Media Asset Management system | Networks use Dalet or another MAM with varying degrees of satisfaction              | Work closely with agency leadership and networks to identify a MAM that can be utilized across the agency     | Stabilization of current MAM technology Infrastructure and socialization of MAM to networks.<br><br>Initial deployment of MAM access will be via deployment of archive capability. |
| Develop and support agency-wide Content Management System     | Completed CMS audit and initiated re-integration of VOA onto modernized Pangea CMS. | Work closely with agency leadership and networks to identify a new CMS that can be utilized across the agency | Continue to work closely with agency leadership and networks to identify a new CMS that can be utilized across the agency  |

<sup>1</sup>This was reported for the first time in FY 2022. Actuals are not available for FY 2018-2020.

**ANALYSIS OF RESULTS:**

USAGM met or exceeded FY 2022 goals to build systems to support sharing content across networks and services.

## Agility Objective 3:

### Enable greater impact and accountability through data-driven evaluation and decision-making

USAGM is focused on improving the collection, distribution, and use of research, evaluation, and performance data to facilitate informed strategic decisions.

The agency organizes this work around an impact framework outlining how it measures effectiveness in achieving the mission. In ongoing efforts to implement contemporary media practices and maintain competitive relevance in the marketplace, USAGM has developed a strong body of evidence to address these questions and is actively working to standardize, consolidate, and govern this data to make it more accessible and actionable for decision-makers at all levels..

USAGM will:

- Establish and maintain a robust data management system that standardizes practices for storing, processing, accessing, and analyzing data to accurately measure USAGM impact, reach, and credibility;
- Prioritize evaluation and learning agendas to ensure that data and corresponding analysis continuously inform decision-making processes;
- Develop data evaluation skills across the workforce and feed impact data into planning and decision-making at all levels of the agency; and
- Continue to implement and refine the USAGM Impact Model as needed to reflect changes in the media environment.

AGILITY OBJECTIVE 3

## Agility Performance Goal 3.1: Strengthen research program

|  | FY 2018 Actual | FY 2019 Actual | FY 2020 Actual | FY 2021 Actual <sup>1</sup> | FY 2022 Target | FY 2022 Actual |
|--|----------------|----------------|----------------|-----------------------------|----------------|----------------|
| Number of full media surveys completed within the last two fiscal years  | 18             | 15             | 12             | 8                           | 8              | 10             |
| Number of omnibus surveys completed within the last two fiscal years   | 2              | 10             | 20             | 56                          | 70             | 69             |
| Percentage of surveys (full or omnibus) used for performance indicators that were completed within the last two fiscal years | 19%            | 26%            | 33%            | 66%                         | 80%            | 79%            |

<sup>1</sup> FY 2021 Actual number for ‘full media survey’ and ‘percentage of surveys used for performance indicators’ corrected from those published in FY 2023 CBJ

### ANALYSIS OF RESULTS:

For Agility Performance Goal 3.1, USAGM met both indicator target levels. Due to improved internal practices resulting in more efficient survey management, USAGM completed two more full surveys in FY 2022 than originally predicted—gathering critical additional data before the September 30th annual reporting deadline. The agency also continued to utilize research funding strategically by continuing to place key performance metrics questions onto other parties’ existing surveys. At one-tenth the cost of a stand-alone, commissioned full survey, these shorter omnibus surveys are a cost-effective method of measuring audience reach in countries that might not warrant a full survey. By maintaining a similar volume of omnibus surveys from the previous year, the agency has steadily improved the portion of its surveys that have been conducted in the two fiscal years.

## A CLOSER LOOK:

# USAGM research in challenging environments

In FY 2022, USAGM made advances in conducting studies in all regions of the world, including countries where environments are challenging for journalists and researchers alike. In addition to including USAGM survey questions in 69 omnibus surveys in the last two years, the agency has conducted 10 full surveys in that time period to collect a complete set of impact indicators for target countries of USAGM networks. The breadth of outcomes can be seen in results of four surveys conducted with trusted research partners this year.

**NIGERIA** The biggest growth in measured audience in FY 2022 was the result of a new survey in the most populous country on the African continent. While a less geopolitically challenging environment, the size and scope of the undertaking were immense. To cover all of the media offerings available in the market and to adequately represent the general population, USAGM researchers designed five different surveys and doubled their standard sample size. The results were an encouraging confirmation of successful news and information programming from the VOA Hausa and English to Africa services and of increased marketing through a national network of affiliate broadcasters. Measured weekly audience grew over 70% from the previous survey in 2018, reflecting a reach of over 33 million people in Nigeria.

**VIETNAM** In a country where all media is repressed by the government, survey results suggested challenges when citizens are wary of acknowledging the use of USAGM brands. The latest surveys reflected a decline from a national weekly audience of 11.2% of the adult population in 2020 to 6.4% of the adult population in 2021.

**RUSSIA** In FY 2022 USAGM commissioned a wide-ranging media survey of Russia, including special attention to the Tatarstan, Bashkortostan, and Chechnya regions. Nearly 9000 Russians were surveyed by phone to learn how they accessed news and other media during the summer of 2022, at a time when Rozkomnadzor, Russia's federal communications control authority, had blocked many foreign websites and social media platforms. RFE/RL's Radio Sloboda and

Current Time, produced in cooperation with VOA, reported modest audience increases where audience losses were forecast, despite intense government pressure and being labelled as foreign agents by the Russian government.

**AFGHANISTAN** After the Taliban takeover in Afghanistan in 2021, USAGM research teams were forced to evacuate Kabul where they were conducting in-person surveys. Researchers quickly relocated, built remote calling operations, and conducted telephone-based surveys. The revised surveys included questions about public perception on key issues. Survey findings aided USAGM broadcasters in augmenting programming to help increase audience awareness of drug addiction and local agriculture supporting opiate production. Given the original FY 2022 expectation of audience share to drop to 45 percent of adults in Afghanistan, the 65.7 percent result of the modified survey was a great testament to the value seen in VOA and RFE/RL programming in the country.

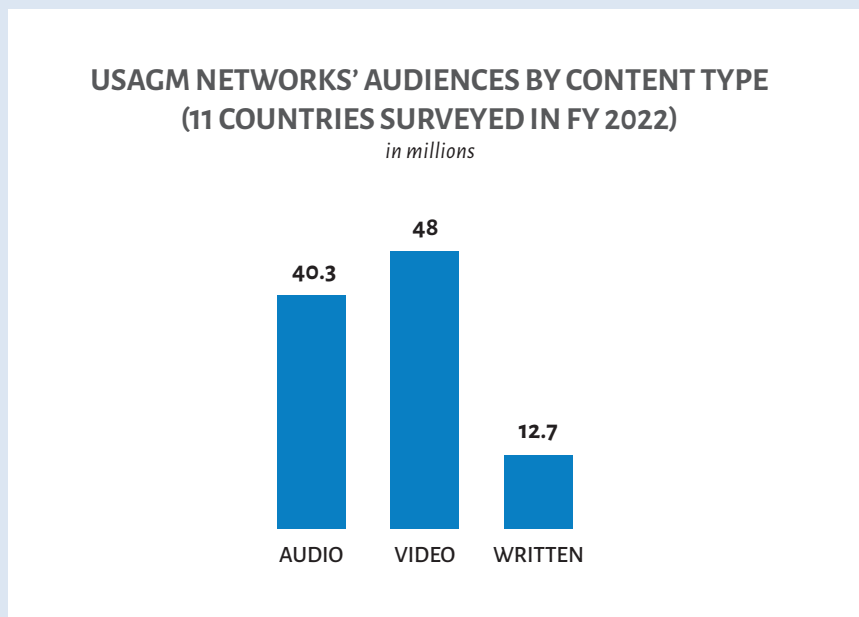
**ACLOSERLOOK:**

## Changing measurements for changing habits

In FY 2022, audience measures transitioned from traditional device-based reporting (i.e., radio, television, and digital) to audience characterization by content-type, i.e., audio, video, or written content to better reflect contemporary audiences' access of media across traditional and digital platforms:

- **AUDIO CONTENT** is aural information available on a radio, television set, or on websites, apps, or social media.
- **VIDEO CONTENT** is visual information available on a television set, websites, apps or social media. It includes full-length programs and/or short videos.
- **WRITTEN CONTENT** is information or materials available on websites, apps, and social media, and can also include printed material.

As this data becomes available for a greater share of USAGM target countries, these metrics will be reported regularly with global audience data. FY 2022 results from the first set of new surveys in Afghanistan, Angola, Azerbaijan, Brazil, Cameroon, Dominican Republic, Nigeria, Russia, Rwanda, Saudi Arabia, and Vietnam show comparable consumption of audio and video programming and smaller but significant consumption of written content.



### AGILITY OBJECTIVE 3

## Agility Performance Goal 3.2: Conduct rigorous annual content reviews for each language service

|  | FY 2022 Target | FY 2022 Actual |
|--|----------------|----------------|
| Percentage of language services with a completed program review in the previous cycle <sup>1</sup> | 95             | 95             |

<sup>1</sup>This was reported for the first time in FY 2022. Actuals are not available for FY 2018-2021.

#### ANALYSIS OF RESULTS:

USAGM met FY 2022 target levels for completed language service reviews. This new metric has a target of 100 percent completion in FY 2023. Due to FY 2022 organizational changes at OCB, including the onboarding of a new Standards and Best Practices editor, USAGM extended the network’s timeline to complete its annual Program Review to December 2022.

### AGILITY OBJECTIVE 3

## Agility Performance Goal 3.3: Build systems and processes to support data-driven evaluation and decision-making

|   | FY 2021 Baseline <sup>1</sup>   | FY 2022 Target  | FY 2022 Actual  |
|---|---|---|---|
| Formally institute evidence best practices                                | Extensive consultation on Strategic Plan; worked with networks to finalize new survey questionnaire | Conduct Capacity Assessment, consult stakeholders for building Learning Agenda and Annual Evaluation Plan | Plan for stakeholder meeting on Learning Agenda and Evaluation Plan                             |
| Unify USAGM audience data assets to allow greater automation and analysis | Requested TMF funding for enterprise Data Management System (DMS)                                   | Pending funding, begin buildout of new DMS  | TMF did not fund OPR’s proposal. OPR is using increased base funding to develop a re-scoped DMS |

<sup>1</sup>This was reported for the first time in FY 2022. Actuals are not available for FY 2018-2020.



**ANALYSIS OF RESULTS:**

Due to organizational changes and funding challenges, USAGM moved these FY 2022 project targets for building systems and processes supporting data-driven evaluation and decision making to FY 2023.

A CLOSER LOOK:

## Pilot projects to bring research data and evaluation products to senior leaders and other key decision-makers

**IMPROVING DATA MANAGEMENT** In FY 2022, USAGM launched its first enterprise data warehousing solution. The Data Management System (DMS) houses nearly every performance related data set available to the agency including survey results, web, app, social media, and podcast engagements, circumvention/proxy traffic to digital platforms, third party market research, competitor performance, and budget data. Though networks have direct access to the DMS, the Office of Policy and Research (OPR) has also reworked its web platform, [data.usagm.gov](https://data.usagm.gov), to function as the data portal by which users can interpret DMS insights via automated reporting solutions and dashboards. The DMS gives decision-makers at all levels of the organization - from senior leadership to front-line programming staff - insights into audience behaviors, content performance, and strategic opportunities

# Agility Objective 4

## Foster engagement, development, and equity in a diverse workforce

USAGM's diverse, multi-cultural, and multi-talented workforce offers a rich range of experience and expertise to carry out the agency's mission. In order to succeed in the rapidly changing, highly competitive global media environment, this workforce needs the right skillsets to develop and implement innovative solutions for target countries consistent with emerging priorities, programming formats, and advances in technology.

Additionally, employees and contractors will be most effective when they are fully engaged, motivated, and respected. Equity needs to be the job of every office, manager, and employee, empowering a workforce that includes diversity of thought, diversity in its people, and diversity in its business practices. Employees must be evaluated fairly; thus, USAGM has renewed its focus on personnel appraisals and is currently undertaking several initiatives that will strengthen this important accountability tool. In addition, USAGM is dedicated to recruiting and retaining an inclusive and diverse workforce.

USAGM will:

- Create and promote a workplace where the talents of all individuals are recognized and appreciated;
- Enhance recruitment, hiring, and personnel management policies that advance inclusion and diversity;
- Increase non-traditional accessions and expedite hiring;
- Explore creative and adaptive workforce retention policies for mission critical skills;
- Improve workforce career development to ensure we are an employer of choice;
- Support the health and wellness of all employees and contractors and ensure a safe and secure work environment for all;

- Consistently communicate organizational goals, objectives, priorities, and performance expectations in a timely manner to staff at all levels in the agency;
- Develop cross-training and internal development standards and procedures, as applicable.
- Promote human capital planning and management as a top priority for senior executives, managers, and supervisors throughout the agency; and
- Improve the consistency and credibility of agency performance management processes

#### AGILITY OBJECTIVE 4

## Agility Performance Goal 4.1: Improve workforce engagement

| USAGM Employee Engagement Index Results | FY 2018 Actual | FY 2019 Actual | FY 2020 Actual | FY 2021 Actual | FY 2022 Target | FY 2022 Actual |
|---|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| USAGM                                   | 61             | 62             | 60             | 70             | 71             | 69             |
| Government-wide (for comparison)        | 68             | 68             | 72             | 71             | NA             | 71             |

#### INDICATOR:

##### Employee Engagement Index (EEI)

This indicator is taken from the Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey and it assesses the critical conditions conducive for employee engagement (e.g., effective leadership, work which provides meaning to employees). The index is comprised of three indices: Leaders Lead, Supervisors, and Intrinsic Work Experience. This indicator is a bellwether that often indicates whether the agency can expect to see improvement across all indices.

#### ANALYSIS OF RESULTS:

**Employee Engagement Index (EEI)**                      **Target: 71**                      **Actual: 69**

USAGM fell short of its FY 2022 target, returning to levels comparable to FY 2021, and still reflecting a marked improvement over prior years.

AGILITY OBJECTIVE 4

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

| Percentage of employees who believe that their work unit has the job-relevant knowledge and skills necessary to accomplish organizational goals (from Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey) | FY 2018 Actual | FY 2019 Actual | FY 2020 Actual | FY 2021 Actual | FY 2022 Target | FY 2022 Actual |
|--|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| USAGM  | 70             | 71             | 72             | 77             | 80             | 76             |
| Government-wide (for comparison)   | 80             | 81             | 82             | 60             | NA             | 79             |

| Progress on Mandatory Training Goals                    | FY 2021 Baseline <sup>1</sup>   | FY 2022 Target   | FY 2022 Actual   |
|---|---|--|--|
| Improve compliance with mandatory training requirements | Mandatory training compliance and enforcement handled by individual offices | Build central tracking and reporting system for mandatory training | Central tracking and reporting system for mandatory training established |

<sup>1</sup>This was reported for the first time in FY 2022. Actuals are not available for FY 2018-2020.

**INDICATOR:**

**Workforce Knowledge and Skills**

This indicator is taken from the Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey and measures employee agreement that their work unit has the job-relevant knowledge and skills necessary to accomplish organizational goals.

**ANALYSIS OF RESULTS:**

USAGM fell short of its FY 2022 target for Workforce Knowledge and Skills, returning to levels comparable to FY 2021 which reflected marked improvement from prior years.

USAGM met its FY 2022 target to build a central tracking system for mandatory training.

#### AGILITY OBJECTIVE 4

### Agility Performance Goal 4.3: Address equity and increase diversity in management

| Percentage of Employees at GS-14 Level or Above Who Are: | FY 2021 Baseline <sup>1</sup> | FY 2022 Target | FY 2022 Actual |
|--|-------------------------------|----------------|----------------|
| Minorities (either Hispanic or non-White)                | 40                            | 41             | 37             |
| Women  | 40                            | 41             | 40             |

<sup>1</sup>This was reported for the first time in FY 2022. Actuals are not available for FY 2018-2020.

#### ANALYSIS OF RESULTS:

USAGM fell short of its FY 2022 targets for diversity of both minorities and women, with equal or lower percentages of employees at GS-14 level or above from those groups than in FY 2021.

#### AGILITY OBJECTIVE 4

### Agility Performance Goal 4.4: Institute strategic human capital planning

| Progress on Strategic Human Capital Planning           | FY 2021 Baseline <sup>1</sup>                          | FY 2022 Target  | FY 2022 Actual  |
|--|--|---|---|
| Institute agency-wide strategic human capital planning | Personnel resource requests considered on ad hoc basis | Build office-level human capital plans, tied to the agency strategic plan | Office-level human capital plans created based on strategic plan. |

<sup>1</sup>This was reported for the first time in FY 2022. Actuals are not available for FY 2018-2020.

#### ANALYSIS OF RESULTS:

USAGM met its FY 2022 target to build office-level human capital plans based on the agency strategic plan.

#### AGILITY OBJECTIVE 4

## Agility Performance Goal 4.5: Improve personnel evaluation processes

|  | FY 2018 Actual | FY 2019 Actual | FY 2020 Actual | FY 2021 Actual <sup>1</sup> | FY 2022 Target | FY 2022 Actual |
|--|----------------|----------------|----------------|-----------------------------|----------------|----------------|
| Percentage of federal employees with personnel evaluations completed on time | 76             | 82             | 100            | 98                          | 98.5           | 99.1           |

<sup>1</sup>In FY 2021, USAGM's Office of Human Resources adjusted their designation of "eligible employees" to apply a more rigorous standard against which this metric is measured.

#### ANALYSIS OF RESULTS:

USAGM continued to push for on-time completion of performance evaluations through agency-wide large and small group trainings to help supervisors and to increase accountability for timely completion.

AGILITY OBJECTIVE 4

# Agility Performance Goal 4.6: Improve performance culture of the agency

| Results-oriented performance culture index (from Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey) | FY 2018 Actual | FY 2019 Actual | FY 2020 Actual | FY 2021 Actual | FY 2022 Target | FY 2022 Actual <sup>1</sup> |
|---|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|-----------------------------|
| USAGM   | 51             | 51             | 63             | 68             | 69             | 70                          |
| Government-wide   | 56             | 57             | 70             | 68             | NA             | 71                          |

<sup>1</sup> In FY 2022 FEVS data changed the question “In my work unit, steps are taken to deal with a poor performer who cannot or will not improve” to break out how poor performers are addressed. As a result, we dropped that element from the index. The FY 2022 Actuals now reflect the following nine aspects of performance culture:

1. I am given a real opportunity to improve my skills in my organization.
2. I feel encouraged to come up with new and better ways of doing things.
3. I know what is expected of me on the job.
4. My talents are used well in the workplace.
5. I know how my work relates to the agency's goals.
6. The people I work with cooperate to get the job done.
7. In my work unit, differences in performance are recognized in a meaningful way.
8. My work unit has the job-relevant knowledge and skills necessary to accomplish organizational goals.
9. Employees in my work unit produce high-quality work.

**INDICATOR:**

**Results-oriented Performance Culture Index**

This indicator was an index derived from the Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey (FEVS) and combined questions dealing with recognition, supervision, safety, work connection, and performance. OPM discontinued the Results-oriented performance culture index; additionally, in FY 2020, OPM cut 7 of the 13 questions historically asked in this index to capture concerns related to the COVID-19 pandemic. USAGM will develop new performance goals and indicators related to performance under its next Strategic Plan.

**ANALYSIS OF RESULTS:**

USAGM maintained comparable performance to government-wide averages for performance on this index in FY 2022. But the components of the index were changed from FY 2021, so year-to-year comparison is not possible.



# Verification and Validation of Performance Measures

USAGM performance indicators are the product of a competitive, multi-million dollar research operation. Since FY 2017, USAGM has relied on 15 of the international media research firms to implement data collection in its markets worldwide. In addition to reducing costs through competition, the multiple-vendor approach ensures that the agency utilizes technical and regional experts to conduct research in the world's most challenging and sensitive environments.

USAGM contractually obligates research vendors to exercise quality controls during fieldwork data collection, such as daily checks of interview audio recordings; time stamps on survey administration; and consistent training for survey field teams. After research vendors deliver data, USAGM contracts yet another third-party vendor to conduct rigorous data validation procedures, resulting in the elimination of duplicate or insufficient data. When assurance procedures are complete, USAGM's Office of Policy and Research (OPR) calculates performance values, which are then sent to research directors for verification at the network level.

In terms of data limitations, the agency's audience reach estimates are weighted using available figures published annually by the Population Reference Bureau (PRB). Because the PRB is released once each year, and USAGM conducts research on a rolling basis, there are a few cases where audience estimates are based on population figures from the previous year. Since population figures tend to make larger shifts over the longer term, the agency has determined that smaller census differences from one year to the next are sufficient for audience estimates.

USAGM has worked to mitigate another data limitation, related to the decreasing number of recent omnibus and national surveys that comprise performance data. Through commissioning a suite of omnibus surveys on a global scale, USAGM has been able to raise the percentage of surveys conducted within the past two fiscal years to 66 percent, from a low of just 19 percent in FY 2018.

In 2021, USAGM continued its initiative to revise its standard national survey questions focusing on brand use rather than platforms to better reflect the way people think about their individual media consumption today. USAGM

commissioned cognitive testing of the new instrument in five markets and survey testing in four. The resulting new survey instrument is better aligned with how contemporary audiences access content today. The new questionnaire is also shorter, simpler, and provides comprehensive notes for translators and interviewers to collect accurate and consistent data across markets. USAGM continues to explore alternative methods for measuring audience reach, such as integrating digital analytics and commercial ratings data.

Through its leadership in the Conference of International Broadcasting Audience Researchers (CIBAR) and other industry communities of practices, USAGM participates in setting and enforcing international media research standards, including transparency in data collection and continuous learning throughout research implementation.

# Evidence Building

USAGM conducts a range of activities to build evidence and support organizational learning throughout the agency and its networks.

## **RESEARCH AND ANALYTICS**

USAGM undertakes quantitative, qualitative, evaluative, digital, and ad hoc research projects every year to directly support decisions on programming and strategy. Since FY 2002, USAGM has used a consolidated contract to procure audience and market research for all USAGM broadcast services. The agency maintains an extensive database of audience and market data that consolidates research results. The archive covers over 90 countries and contains socioeconomic and demographic data as well as strategically important information on local media, competition, and audience preferences and needs.

USAGM uses several enterprise digital analytics tools to track the performance of its content on web and social platforms. The research and analytics data guides USAGM strategic planning at all levels, specifically on-air program development, program reviews, and the agency's comprehensive annual strategic review of all language services.

## **LANGUAGE SERVICE REVIEW**

The Annual Language Service Review (LSR) is a comprehensive assessment of the languages in which USAGM networks broadcast. The process fulfills the Congressional mandate in the U.S. International Broadcasting Act of 1994 to “review, evaluate, and determine, at least annually, after consultation with the Secretary of State, the addition or deletion of language services.”

USAGM analyzes data in key areas that shape priorities, including press freedom, political freedom, civil liberties, economic freedom, instability, and human development indices from nongovernmental organizations (e.g., Freedom House, Reporters Without Borders, The Heritage Foundation and The Wall Street Journal, and the United Nations Development Programme). These indicators are combined into a prioritization index, together with the State Department's global ranking of USAGM language services relative to U.S. foreign policy priorities. This

process enables USAGM to evaluate changing conditions worldwide and adjust broadcast languages accordingly.

As part of the Language Service Review, USAGM considers how the agency's mission is carried out by the networks in each target country and region. Informed by research and analysis on competitive landscapes, USAGM language services set priority goals for the coming year.

The results of this strategy review include summaries of the media environments, target audiences, and USAGM objectives in each country and region. It also includes goals and performance targets, based on USAGM's Impact Model, for each USAGM target area for the coming year. As progress toward these goals and targets is tracked, USAGM has the opportunity to monitor performance and take corrective actions.

In FY 2022, USAGM used the Language Service Review process to explain the agency's new Strategic Plan to managers at the language service level, and to discuss their role in implementing its key elements.

## **PROGRAM REVIEW**

USAGM networks conduct yearly reviews of their language services and their programming in order to maintain high-quality broadcasts and to help the language services progress toward their strategic goals. These program reviews are evaluations of the quality of a selection of programming of each language service based upon both internal and external feedback. The reviews aim to provide network leadership and USAGM an independent evaluation of the work of each language service and identify areas where further attention is needed in order to achieve the service's goals. In FY 2022, USAGM continued its central oversight of the networks' program review process.

## **IMPACT MODEL**

USAGM has developed a robust Impact Model, tied directly to its mission, which provides a comprehensive framework for measuring impact in the varied and complicated media environments in which USAGM networks operate. The model looks beyond sheer audience size and assesses the concrete change that the news

and information provided by USAGM's networks has made in the lives of audience members, in the local media sector, and among governments. USAGM has now aligned all internal and external reporting with this model. All of the indicators used in language service strategies and for Impact Objectives come from the Impact Model.

USAGM has made impact a key priority. USAGM's research staff and network research directors continue to develop and refine the Impact Model and use it as a communications tool and accountability measure.

## **OTHER EVALUATIONS**

The Office of the Inspector General (OIG) provides USAGM and Congress with systematic and independent evaluations of the operations of USAGM, designed to prevent and detect waste, fraud, and abuse. OIG inspections also generally review whether policy goals and objectives are being effectively achieved. The intent of OIG evaluations is to review and strengthen management controls. OIG fully supports 22 USC 6209a(b) that states OIG shall respect the journalistic integrity of all the broadcasters and may not evaluate the philosophical or political perspectives reflected in the content of broadcasts.

The Government Accountability Office (GAO) audits agency operations to determine whether federal funds are being spent efficiently and effectively, including investigating allegations of illegal and improper activities, reporting on how well government programs and policies are meeting their objectives, and performing policy analyses and outlining options for Congressional consideration. GAO also advises Congress and the heads of executive agencies about ways to make government more efficient, effective, ethical, equitable, and responsive.

### Section 3: Financial Information

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# Message from the Chief Financial Officer



U.S. AGENCY FOR  
GLOBAL MEDIA

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

## Message from the Chief Financial Officer

I am pleased to present the Fiscal Year (FY) 2022 financial statements for the U.S Agency for Global Media (USAGM). We are firmly committed to the highest standards of financial accountability and reporting. The Performance and Accountability Report is our principal report to the President, the Congress, and the American people on our stewardship of the public funds with which we have been entrusted and which are essential for achieving our important mission to inform, engage, and connect people around the world in support of freedom and democracy.

The Agency has received an unmodified (clean) audit opinion on the FY 2022 and FY 2021 financial statements, with no material weaknesses in internal controls over financial reporting identified by the Independent Auditor. Over the past year, we have worked diligently to meet the reporting, audit, and compliance requirements that the Office of Management and Budget, the Treasury, and the Congress have put in place to improve federal financial management, business practices, and accountability.

Throughout FY 2022, we worked diligently to eliminate the material weakness that the auditors identified in FY 2021, making significant progress on the validity of unliquidated obligations. While USAGM has improved accounting for unliquidated obligations (ULOs), USAGM must continue to strengthen its process for the timely identification and close-out of obligations that are no longer valid.

USAGM senior leadership appreciates the importance of strong grants management and is taking steps to improve the agency's grants monitoring policies and procedures and their implementation. Working with a contractor team of subject matter experts, we are making strides in improvement of grantee oversight and monitoring.

We are appreciative of the professionalism and hard work of our dedicated staff and pleased with the progress we have made in FY 2022. We acknowledge there is additional work to be done and improvements to be made that will require our continued attention and new focus. With our commitment to continued progress and in partnership with the independent financial auditors and the Office of the Inspector General, we will successfully resolve the remaining issues presented. We are committed to be efficient and effective stewards of the agency's limited resources to further its vital mission.

Sincerely,

Grant Turner  
Chief Financial Officer



# Independent Auditor's Report



Office of Inspector General  
United States Department of State

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November 15, 2022

Ms. Amanda Bennett  
Chief Executive Officer  
U.S. Agency for Global Media  
330 Independence Ave., SW  
Suite 3300  
Washington, DC 20237

Dear Ms. Bennett:

An independent external auditor, Kearney & Company, P.C., was engaged to audit the financial statements of the U.S. Agency for Global Media (USAGM) as of September 30, 2022 and 2021, and for the years then ended; to report on internal control over financial reporting; and to report on compliance with laws, regulations, contracts, and grant agreements. The contract required that the audit be performed in accordance with U.S. generally accepted government auditing standards and Office of Management and Budget audit guidance.

In its report, *Independent Auditor's Report on the U.S. Agency for Global Media FY 2022 and FY 2021 Financial Statements* (AUD-FM-IB-23-08), Kearney & Company found:

- the financial statements as of and for the fiscal years ended September 30, 2022 and 2021, are presented fairly, in all material respects, in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America;
- no material weaknesses<sup>1</sup> in internal control over financial reporting;
- one significant deficiency<sup>2</sup> in internal control over financial reporting, specifically in the area of grantee monitoring; and
- one instance of reportable noncompliance with laws, regulations, contracts, and grant agreements, specifically federal grant regulations.

Kearney & Company is responsible for the enclosed auditor's report, which includes the Independent Auditor's Report; the Report on Internal Control Over Financial Reporting; and the Report on Compliance With Laws, Regulations, Contracts, and Grant Agreements, dated

---

<sup>1</sup> A material weakness is a deficiency, or combination of deficiencies, in internal control, such that there is a reasonable possibility that a material misstatement of the entity's financial statements will not be prevented, or detected and corrected, on a timely basis.

<sup>2</sup> A significant deficiency is a deficiency, or combination of deficiencies, in internal control that is less severe than a material weakness, yet important enough to merit attention by those charged with governance.

Office of Inspector General | U.S. Department of State | 1700 North Moore Street | Arlington, Virginia 22209  
[www.stateoig.gov](http://www.stateoig.gov)

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November 15, 2022; and the conclusions expressed in the report. The Office of Inspector General (OIG) does not express an opinion on USAGM's financial statements or conclusions on internal control over financial reporting and compliance with laws, regulations, contracts, and grant agreements.

USAGM's comments on the auditor's report are attached to the report.

OIG appreciates the cooperation extended to it and Kearney & Company by USAGM managers and staff during this audit.

Sincerely,



Diana R. Shaw  
Senior Official Performing the Duties of the Inspector General

Enclosure: As stated.

cc: OCFO – Grant K. Turner  
OMS – USAGM Inspections  
Kearney & Company, P.C. – Kelly E. Gorrell

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[www.stateoig.gov](http://www.stateoig.gov)

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1701 Duke Street, Suite 500, Alexandria, VA 22314  
PH: 703.931.5600, FX: 703.931.3655, www. Kearneyco.com

**INDEPENDENT AUDITOR’S REPORT**  
AUD-FM-IB-23-08

To the U.S. Agency for Global Media Chief Executive Officer and the Senior Official  
Performing the Duties of the Inspector General

**Report on the Audit of the Financial Statements**

***Opinion***

We have audited the accompanying financial statements of the U.S. Agency for Global Media (USAGM), which comprise the consolidated balance sheets as of September 30, 2022 and 2021; the related consolidated statements of net cost and changes in net position and the combined statements of budgetary resources for the years then ended; and the related notes to the financial statements.

In our opinion, the accompanying financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of USAGM as of September 30, 2022 and 2021, and its net cost of operations, changes in net position, and budgetary resources for the years then ended, in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

***Basis for Opinion***

We conducted our audits in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America (GAAS); the standards applicable to financial audits contained in *Government Auditing Standards*, issued by the Comptroller General of the United States; and Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Bulletin No. 22-01, “Audit Requirements for Federal Financial Statements.” Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor’s Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements section of our report. We are required to be independent of USAGM and to meet our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the relevant ethical requirements relating to our audits. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

***Responsibilities of Management for the Financial Statements***

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America, and for the design, implementation, and maintenance of internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.



In preparing the financial statements, management is required to evaluate whether there are conditions or events, considered in the aggregate, that raise substantial doubt about USAGM's ability to continue as a going concern for 12 months beyond the financial statement date.

***Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements***

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements, as a whole, are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not absolute assurance and, therefore, is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with *Government Auditing Standards* will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control. Misstatements are considered material if there is a substantial likelihood that, individually or in the aggregate, they would influence the judgment made by a reasonable user based on the financial statements.

In performing an audit in accordance with *Government Auditing Standards*, we:

- Exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit.
- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, and design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks. Such procedures include examining, on a test basis, evidence regarding the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of USAGM's internal control. Accordingly, no such opinion is expressed.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluate the overall presentation of the financial statements.
- Conclude whether, in our judgment, there are conditions or events, considered in the aggregate, that raise substantial doubt about USAGM's ability to continue as a going concern for a reasonable period of time.

We are required to communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit, significant audit findings, and certain internal control-related matters that we identified during the audit.

***Required Supplementary Information***

Accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America require that the Management's Discussion and Analysis and Deferred Maintenance and Repairs (hereinafter referred to as "required supplementary information") be presented to supplement the financial statements. Such information is the responsibility of management and, although not a part of the



financial statements, is required by OMB Circular A-136, “Financial Reporting Requirements,” and the Federal Accounting Standards Advisory Board, which consider the information to be an essential part of financial reporting for placing the financial statements in an appropriate operational, economic, or historical context. We have applied certain limited procedures to the required supplementary information in accordance with GAAS, which consisted of making inquiries of management about the methods of preparing the information and comparing the information for consistency with management’s responses to our inquiries, the financial statements, and other knowledge we obtained during our audits of the financial statements. We do not express an opinion or provide any assurance on the information because the limited procedures do not provide us with sufficient evidence to express an opinion or provide any assurance.

#### ***Other Information***

Management is responsible for the other information included in the Performance and Accountability Report. The other information comprises the Message from the U.S. Agency for Global Media Chief Executive Officer, the Introduction, Performance Information, Message from the Chief Financial Officer, and the Other Information section of USAGM’s Performance and Accountability Report, but it does not include the financial statements and our auditor’s report thereon. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information, and we do not express an opinion or any form of assurance thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and consider whether a material inconsistency exists between the other information and the financial statements, or the other information otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If, based on the work performed, we conclude that an uncorrected material misstatement of the other information exists, we are required to describe it in our report.

#### ***Other Reporting Required by Government Auditing Standards***

In accordance with *Government Auditing Standards* and OMB Bulletin No. 22-01, we have also issued reports, dated November 15, 2022, on our consideration of USAGM’s internal control over financial reporting and on our tests of USAGM’s compliance with certain provisions of applicable laws, regulations, contracts, and grant agreements for the year ended September 30, 2022. The purpose of those reports is to describe the scope of our testing of internal control over financial reporting and compliance and the results of that testing and not to provide an opinion on internal control over financial reporting or on compliance. Those reports are an integral part of an audit performed in accordance with *Government Auditing Standards* and OMB Bulletin No. 22-01 and should be considered in assessing the results of our audits.

Alexandria, Virginia  
November 15, 2022



## INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT ON INTERNAL CONTROL OVER FINANCIAL REPORTING

To the U.S. Agency for Global Media Chief Executive Officer and the Senior Official  
Performing the Duties of the Inspector General

We have audited, in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America; the standards applicable to financial audits contained in *Government Auditing Standards*, issued by the Comptroller General of the United States; and Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Bulletin No. 22-01, "Audit Requirements for Federal Financial Statements," the financial statements and the related notes to the financial statements of the U.S. Agency for Global Media (USAGM) as of and for the year ended September 30, 2022, and we have issued our report thereon dated November 15, 2022.

### Internal Control Over Financial Reporting

In planning and performing our audit of the financial statements, we considered USAGM's internal control over financial reporting (internal control) as a basis for designing the audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances for the purpose of expressing our opinions on the financial statements, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of USAGM's internal control. Accordingly, we do not express an opinion on the effectiveness of USAGM's internal control. We limited our internal control testing to those controls necessary to achieve the objectives described in OMB Bulletin No. 22-01. We did not test all internal controls relevant to operating objectives as broadly defined by the Federal Managers' Financial Integrity Act of 1982,<sup>1</sup> such as those controls relevant to ensuring efficient operations.

A deficiency in internal control exists when the design or operation of a control does not allow management or employees, in the normal course of performing their assigned functions, to prevent, or detect and correct, misstatements on a timely basis. A material weakness is a deficiency, or combination of deficiencies, in internal control such that there is a reasonable possibility that a material misstatement of the entity's financial statements will not be prevented or detected and corrected on a timely basis. A significant deficiency is a deficiency, or a combination of deficiencies, in internal control that is less severe than a material weakness, yet important enough to merit attention by those charged with governance.

Our consideration of internal control was for the limited purpose described in the first paragraph of this section and was not designed to identify all deficiencies in internal control that might be material weaknesses or significant deficiencies; therefore, material weaknesses or significant deficiencies may exist that have not been identified. Given these limitations, during our audit, we did not identify any deficiencies in internal control that we consider to be material weaknesses. We identified a deficiency in internal control, described below, that we consider to be a significant deficiency.

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<sup>1</sup> Federal Managers' Financial Integrity Act of 1982, Public Law 97-255, 96 STAT 814 (September 8, 1982).



### Grantee Monitoring Control - Significant Deficiency

USAGM has four significant grantees that it funds through annual grant agreements: Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL), Radio Free Asia (RFA), Middle East Broadcasting Networks (MBN), and the Open Technology Fund (OTF). USAGM's four grantees collectively received over \$335 million from USAGM in federal grant awards during FY 2022, which represents approximately one-third of USAGM's annual funding. To address a significant deficiency identified during prior financial statement audits, USAGM approved and issued standard operating procedures<sup>2</sup> for grantee monitoring in February 2019. However, the financial statement audits continued to identify a significant deficiency related to grantee monitoring. Therefore, USAGM obtained the services of a contractor to develop and implement a comprehensive grants monitoring program.

During FY 2022, the contractor developed four new policies<sup>3</sup> that are planned to be included in a new USAGM Grants Administration Manual. The contractor also developed oversight tools that will be used in conjunction with the Grants Administration Manual to aid in consistent implementation of the grant monitoring controls identified in the standard operating procedures. Furthermore, the contractor implemented a pilot program to assess the effectiveness of new controls with one of USAGM's grantees—MBN. As of September 2022, the four new policies were in draft form and the results of the pilot program were being reviewed by management.

We selected 15 control activities identified in the standard operating procedures to test whether USAGM had effectively implemented grantee monitoring procedures. For RFE/RL, RFA, MBN, and OTF, we found that 9 of 15 controls tested were operating effectively. The remaining six control activities were not implemented by USAGM for the four grantees in FY 2022. Specifically, USAGM had not reviewed the allowability of grantee costs, performed grant closeouts, conducted formal documented site visits, monitored equipment purchased by grantees, reviewed grantee disbursement reconciliations, or conducted risk assessments.

Although USAGM made progress in strengthening its grants monitoring program, by engaging contractor support to develop desk guides and oversight tools, its new grants monitoring program was not fully implemented as of September 30, 2022. Because USAGM continued to lack effective grantee oversight, there is an increased risk of waste, fraud, and abuse of federal funds. USAGM is the primary funding source for the four grantees; therefore, an organized and documented approach to oversight is needed to demonstrate accountability and mitigate risk. Weaknesses in controls over grantee monitoring have been reported each year since the audit of USAGM's FY 2013 financial statements.

During the audit, we noted an additional matter involving internal control over financial reporting that we will report to USAGM management in a separate letter.

---

<sup>2</sup> USAGM, Standard Operating Procedures for Monitoring Grants, February 2019.

<sup>3</sup> The four desk guides related to cost allowability reviews, on-site reviews (i.e., site visits), grant closeouts, and desk reviews (e.g., reviews of federal financial reports and statements of obligations and disbursements).



### Status of Prior Year Findings

In the Independent Auditor's Report on Internal Control Over Financial Reporting that was included in the audit report on USAGM's FY 2021 financial statements,<sup>4</sup> we noted several issues that were related to internal control over financial reporting. The status of the FY 2021 internal control findings is summarized in Table 1.

**Table 1. Status of Prior Year Findings**

| Control Deficiency                                | FY 2021 Status         | FY 2022 Status         |
|---|------------------------|------------------------|
| Validity and Accuracy of Unliquidated Obligations | Material Weakness      | Management Letter      |
| Grantee Monitoring                                | Significant Deficiency | Significant Deficiency |

### USAGM's Response to Findings

USAGM provided its response to our findings in a separate letter included in this report as Appendix A. We did not audit management's response, and accordingly, we express no opinion on it.

### Purpose of This Report

The purpose of this report is solely to describe the scope of our testing of internal control over financial reporting and the results of that testing and not to provide an opinion on the effectiveness of USAGM's internal control. This report is an integral part of an audit performed in accordance with *Government Auditing Standards* and OMB Bulletin No. 22-01 in considering the entity's internal control over financial reporting. Accordingly, this report is not suitable for any other purpose.

Alexandria, Virginia  
November 15, 2022

<sup>4</sup> Office of Inspector General, *Independent Auditor's Report on the U.S. Agency for Global Media FY 2021 and FY 2020 Financial Statements* (AUD-FM-IB-22-11, November 2021).



## **INDEPENDENT AUDITOR’S REPORT ON COMPLIANCE WITH LAWS, REGULATIONS, CONTRACTS, AND GRANT AGREEMENTS**

To the U.S. Agency for Global Media Chief Executive Officer and the Senior Official  
Performing the Duties of the Inspector General

We have audited, in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America; the standards applicable to financial audits contained in *Government Auditing Standards*, issued by the Comptroller General of the United States; and Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Bulletin No. 22-01, “Audit Requirements for Federal Financial Statements,” the financial statements and the related notes to the financial statements, of the U.S. Agency for Global Media (USAGM) as of and for the year ended September 30, 2022, and we have issued our report thereon dated November 15, 2022.

### **Report on Compliance**

As part of obtaining reasonable assurance about whether USAGM’s financial statements are free from material misstatement, we performed tests of USAGM’s compliance with certain provisions of laws, regulations, contracts, and grant agreements, noncompliance with which could have a direct and material effect on the determination of financial statement amounts and disclosures. We limited our tests of compliance to these provisions and did not test compliance with all laws, regulations, contracts, and grant agreements applicable to USAGM. However, providing an opinion on compliance with those provisions was not an objective of our audit; accordingly, we do not express such an opinion.

The results of our tests disclosed an instance of noncompliance that is required to be reported under *Government Auditing Standards* and OMB Bulletin No. 22-01. In each year since the audit of USAGM’s FY 2013 financial statements, independent auditors have identified substantial noncompliance with federal grant regulations. USAGM is responsible for monitoring the use of funds provided to its grantees to ensure that the grantees adhere to relevant laws and regulations. As noted in our Independent Auditor’s Report on Internal Control over Financial Reporting, USAGM has not fully implemented many of its grantee monitoring controls. As a result, USAGM continued to be in substantial noncompliance with the Code of Federal Regulations, Title 2, Subtitle A, Chapter II, Part 200, “Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards,” which provides guidance to agencies for grant oversight.

### **USAGM’s Response to Findings**

USAGM provided its response to our findings in a separate letter included in this report as Appendix A. We did not audit management’s response, and accordingly, we express no opinion on it.





**Purpose of This Report**

The purpose of this report is solely to describe the scope of our testing of compliance with laws, regulations, contracts, and grant agreements and the results of that testing and not to provide an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's compliance. This report is an integral part of an audit performed in accordance with *Government Auditing Standards* and OMB Bulletin No. 22-01 in considering the entity's compliance. Accordingly, this report is not suitable for any other purpose.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Kearney &amp; Company".

Alexandria, Virginia  
November 15, 2022

# Response to the Audit

Appendix A



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

November 15, 2022

Diana Shaw  
Acting Inspector General  
U.S. Department of State

Dear Ms. Shaw:

The U.S. Agency for Global Media (USAGM) is committed to maintaining fiscal responsibility and transparency for the taxpayer funds entrusted by Congress to pursue its global mission to inform, engage, and connect people around the world in support of freedom and democracy. The Performance and Accountability Report (PAR) is a key part of maintaining this commitment, providing a comprehensive account of USAGM's financial activities. I am pleased that USAGM continues to receive an unmodified opinion for this fiscal year's financial statement audit. USAGM is committed to working towards greater efficiency, effectiveness, and accountability in its financial operations. USAGM operations are global and complex, with programming in 63 languages, thousands of media partners, and on-the-ground reporting capabilities around the world. USAGM recognizes that our strength as an organization requires a strong fiscal foundation and effective stewardship over the resources entrusted to us by the American people.

Working with a team of subject matter experts, USAGM has developed a grants administrative manual and has a test pilot underway for the desk reviews. During this next fiscal year, we will continue to implement and finalize controls for grantee monitoring and oversight. I am confident we will improve compliance in this area during FY 2023.

We thank Kearney & Company for their sustained efforts and professionalism, while working through the complex issues associated with the global nature of USAGM's financial processes.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Grant Turner".

Grant Turner  
Chief Financial Officer



# Financial Statements

**U.S. Agency for Global Media  
Consolidated Balance Sheet  
As of September 30, 2022 and 2021**  
*(in thousands)*

|  | <b>FY 2022</b>    | <b>FY 2021</b>    |
|--|-------------------|-------------------|
| <b>Assets (Note 2):</b>  |                   |                   |
| <b>Intragovernmental:</b>  |                   |                   |
| Fund Balance with Treasury (Note 3)  | \$ 286,463        | \$ 253,758        |
| Accounts Receivable (Note 5)   | 13                | 193               |
| Total Intragovernmental  | 286,476           | 253,951           |
| <b>With the Public:</b>  |                   |                   |
| Cash and Other Monetary Assets (Note 4)                                      | 3                 | 3                 |
| Accounts Receivable, Net (Note 5)  | 49                | 48                |
| General Property, Plant and Equipment, Net (Note 6)                          | 37,280            | 46,651            |
| Advances and Prepayments   |                   |                   |
| Advances to Surrogate Broadcasters and Internet Freedom (Note 7)             | 105,000           | 95,000            |
| Other Prepaid Assets (Note 8)  | 1,148             | 569               |
| Other Assets (Note 8)  | 213               | -                 |
| Total with the Public  | 143,693           | 142,271           |
| <b>Total Assets</b>  | <b>\$ 430,169</b> | <b>\$ 396,222</b> |
| <b>Liabilities (Note 9):</b>   |                   |                   |
| <b>Intragovernmental:</b>  |                   |                   |
| Accounts Payable   | \$ 1,452          | \$ 3,079          |
| Other Liabilities  |                   |                   |
| Accrued FECA Liabilities (Note 9)  | 1,298             | 1,298             |
| Other Liabilities (Note 12)  | 1,231             | 2,921             |
| Total Intragovernmental  | 3,981             | 7,298             |
| <b>With the Public:</b>  |                   |                   |
| Accounts Payable   | 19,460            | 21,433            |
| Federal Employee (and Veteran) Benefits Payable                              |                   |                   |
| Actuarial FECA Liabilities (Note 9)  | 7,826             | 7,754             |
| Accrued Annual and Compensatory Leave (Note 9)                               | 18,735            | 21,805            |
| Foreign Service Nationals After-Employment Benefits (Note 9 and 10)          | 5,271             | 7,090             |
| Environmental and Disposal Liabilities (Note 9 and 11)                       | 859               | 823               |
| Other Liabilities  |                   |                   |
| Accrued Payroll and Benefits (Note 9)  | 7,879             | 12,639            |
| Other Liabilities (Note 12)  | 7,677             | 6,942             |
| Total with the Public  | 67,707            | 78,486            |
| <b>Total Liabilities</b>   | <b>\$ 71,688</b>  | <b>\$ 85,784</b>  |
| Commitments and Contingencies (Note 9, 13 and 14)                            |                   |                   |
| <b>Net position:</b>   |                   |                   |
| Unexpended Appropriations-Funds from Other than Dedicated Collections        | \$ 344,870        | \$ 292,620        |
| Cumulative Results of Operations-Funds from Other than Dedicated Collections | 13,611            | 17,818            |
| <b>Total Net Position</b>  | <b>\$ 358,481</b> | <b>\$ 310,438</b> |
| <b>Total Liabilities and Net Position</b>                                    | <b>\$ 430,169</b> | <b>\$ 396,222</b> |

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these statements.

**U.S. Agency for Global Media**  
**Consolidated Statement of Net Cost**  
**For the Years Ended September 30, 2022 and 2021**  
*(in thousands)*

|  | <b>FY 2022</b>           | <b>FY 2021</b>           |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| <b>Voice of America (VOA)</b>                      |                          |                          |
| Gross Costs  | \$ 422,702               | \$ 422,745               |
| Less: Earned Revenues                              | <u>(1,162)</u>           | <u>(1,897)</u>           |
| Net Program Costs                                  | 421,540                  | 420,848                  |
| <b>Office of Cuba Broadcasting (OCB)</b>           |                          |                          |
| Gross Costs  | 29,469                   | 41,753                   |
| Less: Earned Revenues                              | <u>-</u>                 | <u>-</u>                 |
| Net Program Costs                                  | 29,469                   | 41,753                   |
| <b>Surrogate Broadcasters and Internet Freedom</b> |                          |                          |
| Gross Costs  | 398,856                  | 359,385                  |
| Less: Earned Revenues                              | <u>(3,403)</u>           | <u>(2,519)</u>           |
| Net Program Costs                                  | 395,453                  | 356,866                  |
| Total Gross Costs                                  | 851,027                  | 823,883                  |
| Less: Total Earned Revenues                        | (4,565)                  | (4,416)                  |
| <b>Net Cost of Operations</b>                      | <b><u>\$ 846,462</u></b> | <b><u>\$ 819,467</u></b> |

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these statements.

**U.S. Agency for Global Media**  
**Consolidated Statement of Changes in Net Position**  
**For the Years Ended September 30, 2022 and 2021**  
*(in thousands)*

|  | <b>FY 2022</b>           | <b>FY 2021</b>           |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| <b>Unexpended Appropriations:</b>                      |                          |                          |
| Beginning Balance                                      | \$ 292,620               | \$ 284,723               |
| Appropriations Received                                | 885,000                  | 802,957                  |
| Other Adjustments (+/-)                                | (2,722)                  | (2,400)                  |
| Appropriations Used                                    | <u>(830,028)</u>         | <u>(792,660)</u>         |
| Net Change in Unexpended Appropriations                | <u>52,250</u>            | <u>7,897</u>             |
| Total Unexpended Appropriations: Ending                | <u>344,870</u>           | <u>292,620</u>           |
| <b>Cumulative Results from Operations:</b>             |                          |                          |
| Beginning Balances                                     | \$ 17,818                | \$ 32,397                |
| Appropriations Used                                    | 830,028                  | 792,660                  |
| Donations and forfeitures of cash and cash equivalents | 1                        | -                        |
| Transfers-in/out without reimbursement (+/-)           | -                        | 9                        |
| Imputed Financing                                      | 12,226                   | 12,219                   |
| Net Cost of Operations (+/-)                           | <u>846,462</u>           | <u>819,467</u>           |
| Net Change in Cumulative Result of Operations          | <u>(4,207)</u>           | <u>(14,579)</u>          |
| Cumulative Results of Operations: Ending               | <u>13,611</u>            | <u>17,818</u>            |
| <b>Net Position</b>                                    | <b><u>\$ 358,481</u></b> | <b><u>\$ 310,438</u></b> |

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these statements.

**U.S. Agency for Global Media**  
**Combined Statement of Budgetary Resources**  
**For the Years Ended September 30, 2022 and 2021**  
*(in thousands)*

|   | <b>FY 2022</b>           | <b>FY 2021</b>           |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| <b>Budgetary Resources:</b>   |                          |                          |
| Unobligated Balance from Prior Year Budget Authority, Net (Discretionary and Mandatory) | \$ 98,658                | \$ 111,063               |
| Appropriations (Discretionary and Mandatory)  | 885,469                  | 803,425                  |
| Spending Authority from Offsetting Collections (Discretionary and Mandatory)            | 6,132                    | 3,818                    |
| <b>Total Budgetary Resources</b>  | <b><u>\$ 990,259</u></b> | <b><u>\$ 918,306</u></b> |
| <b>Status of Budgetary Resources:</b>   |                          |                          |
| New Obligations and Upward Adjustments (Total)  | \$ 883,436               | \$ 838,791               |
| Unobligated Balance, End of Year  |                          |                          |
| Apportioned, Unexpired Accounts   | 55,295                   | 28,283                   |
| Unapportioned, Unexpired Accounts   | 16,889                   | 14,382                   |
| Unexpired Unobligated Balance, End of Year  | <u>72,184</u>            | <u>42,665</u>            |
| Expired Unobligated Balance, End of Year  | <u>34,639</u>            | <u>36,850</u>            |
| Unobligated Balance, End of Year (Total)  | 106,823                  | 79,515                   |
| <b>Total Budgetary Resources</b>  | <b><u>\$ 990,259</u></b> | <b><u>\$ 918,306</u></b> |
| <b>Outlays, Net, and Disbursements, Net</b>   |                          |                          |
| Outlays, Net (Total) (Discretionary and Mandatory)                                      | <u>851,215</u>           | <u>798,197</u>           |
| <b>Agency Outlays, Net (Discretionary and Mandatory)</b>                                | <b><u>\$ 851,215</u></b> | <b><u>\$ 798,197</u></b> |

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these statements.

# United States Agency for Global Media Notes to Principal Financial Statements

## NOTE 1: SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

### A. Reporting Entity

On October 1, 1999, the United States Agency for Global Media (USAGM), originally the Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG) became the independent, autonomous entity responsible for all U.S. Government and government-sponsored, non-military, international broadcasting. This was the result of the 1998 Foreign Affairs Reform and Restructuring Act (Public Law 105-277). The Fiscal Year 2017 National Defense Authorization Act made several significant reforms to the agency's management structure. Primarily, the act authorized the position of a Presidentially-nominated, Senate-confirmed Chief Executive Officer (CEO). Under the new statutory structure, the CEO serves as agency head, assuming all leadership, management, and operational authorities. The six media organizations that comprise the USAGM complement and reinforce one another in a shared mission vital to U.S. national interests: to inform, engage, and connect people around the world in support of freedom and democracy. USAGM's mission is supported by two overarching strategic goals: (1) expanding freedom of information and expression and (2) sharing America's democratic experience and values. Together, USAGM networks communicate each week with more than 410 million people across the globe. USAGM is composed of two federal entities:

- Voice of America (VOA)
- Office of Cuba Broadcasting (OCB)

The USAGM CEO and agency offices conducting oversight and support, including the International Broadcasting Bureau (IBB) and Office of Technology Services and Innovation (TSI), do not engage in the development of news content. The CEO and oversight and support offices including the International Broadcasting Bureau (IBB) and Office of Technology Services and Innovation (TSI) do not engage in the development of news content. The CEO provides overall governance for USAGM and has authority to make grants to carry out its statutorily defined broadcasting mission. The oversight and support offices of TSI maintain the global distribution network over which all USAGM-funded

news and information programming is distributed. Other offices provide administrative functions which are governed by federal laws and regulations. The VOA and OCB are the components of the agency that develop news content along with grantees or surrogate broadcasters: Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL), Radio Free Asia (RFA), Middle East Broadcasting Networks (MBN). The Open Technology Fund (OTF) supports internet freedom. All USAGM broadcast services adhere to the standards and principles of the International Broadcasting Act of 1994, as amended, and support the USAGM mission.

The grantees or surrogate broadcasters and internet freedom – RFE/RL, RFA, MBN, and OTF – are independent non-federal entities who receive the majority of their funding from USAGM. They are organized and managed as private, independent, non-profit corporations and considered disclosure entities in accordance with Statement of Federal Financial Accounting Standards (SFFAS) No. 47, Reporting Entity (See Note 18). Further information on these grantees can be found at:

- Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty - [www.rferl.org](http://www.rferl.org)
- Radio Free Asia - [www.rfa.org](http://www.rfa.org)
- Middle East Broadcasting Networks - [www.alhurra.com](http://www.alhurra.com)
- Open Technology Fund - [www.opentech.fund](http://www.opentech.fund)

## **B. Basis of Presentation and Accounting**

These financial statements have been prepared to report the financial position, net cost, changes in net position, and budgetary resources of USAGM, consistent with the Chief Financial Officers' Act of 1990 and the Government Management Reform Act of 1994. These financial statements have been prepared from the books and records of USAGM in accordance with U.S. generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP) for federal entities, and presented in accordance with the form and content requirements of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circular No. A-136, *Financial Reporting Requirements, revised*. GAAP for federal entities, as prescribed by the Federal Accounting Standards Advisory Board (FASAB); FASAB's SFFAS No. 34, *The Hierarchy of Generally Accepted*



*Accounting Principles, Including the Application of Standards Issued by the Financial Accounting Standards Board*, which incorporates the GAAP hierarchy into FASAB's authoritative literature is the designated standard-setting body for the Federal Government.

Financial transactions are recorded in the financial system, using both an accrual and a budgetary basis of accounting. Under the accrual method, revenues are recognized when earned, and expenses are recognized when a liability is incurred, without regard to the receipt or payment of cash. Budgetary accounting facilitates compliance with legal requirements and mandated controls over the use of federal funds. It generally differs from the accrual basis of accounting in that obligations are recognized when new orders are placed or contracts awarded. In Accordance with SFFAS 56, accounting standards allow certain presentations and disclosures to be modified, if needed, to prevent the disclosure of classified information.

### **C. Assets and Liabilities**

Assets and liabilities presented on USAGM's balance sheet includes both entity and non-entity balances. Entity assets are assets that USAGM has authority to use in its operations. Non-entity assets are held and managed by USAGM, but are not available for use in operations.

Intragovernmental assets and liabilities arise from transactions between USAGM and other federal entities. All other assets and liabilities result from activity with non-federal entities. Liabilities covered by budgetary or other resources are those liabilities of USAGM for which Congress has appropriated funds or funding is otherwise available to pay amounts due. Liabilities not covered by budgetary or other resources represent amounts owed in excess of available congressionally appropriated funds or other amounts. The liquidation of liabilities not covered by budgetary or other resources is dependent on future congressional appropriations or other funding.

### **D. Fund Balance with Treasury**

Fund Balance with Treasury (FBWT) includes several types of funds available to pay current liabilities and finance authorized purchases.

### General Funds

These consist of expenditure accounts used to record financial transactions arising from congressional appropriations, as well as receipt accounts.

### Trust Funds

These are used for the acceptance and administration of funds contributed from public and private sources and programs.

### Other Fund Types

These include miscellaneous receipt accounts, deposit and clearing accounts maintained to track receipts and disbursements awaiting proper classification.

USAGM does not maintain cash in commercial bank accounts for the funds reported in the balance sheet, except for Imprest Funds under section E.

Treasury processes domestic receipts and disbursements. Two Department of State financial service centers, located in Bangkok, Thailand, and Charleston, South Carolina, provide financial support for USAGM operations overseas. The U.S. disbursing officer at each center has the delegated authority to disburse funds on behalf of the Treasury.

### E. Imprest Fund

USAGM operates an imprest fund in the amount of \$3,000 at USAGM Robert E. Kamosa Transmitting Station in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. Due to the remote location and 24 hour continuous operation of the mission, these funds are necessary and used to pay for time sensitive expenditures required to be paid in cash to local vendors. USAGM has Treasury approved delegation of disbursing authority for the establishment and operation of the imprest fund.

### F. Accounts Receivable

Accounts receivable consists of amounts owed to USAGM by other federal agencies and the public. Intragovernmental accounts receivable represents amounts due from other federal agencies for reimbursable activities. Accounts receivable from the public represent amounts due from common carriers for unused airline tickets, and from vendors for erroneous or duplicate payments. These receivables are stated net of any allowances for estimated uncollectible

amounts. The allowance, if any, is determined by the nature of the receivable and an analysis of aged receivable activity. Aged receivables more than 120 days without payment arrangements in place are sent to Treasury for collection through the Treasury Offset Program (TOP).

#### **G. Advances and Prepayments**

Payments made in advance of the receipt of goods and services are recorded as advances or prepayments, and recognized as expenses when the related goods and services are received. Advances are made principally for: official travel to some USAGM employees; salary advances to some USAGM employees, often for employees transferring to overseas assignments; advance payments to other Federal entities as part of a reimbursable agreement; prepaid leases; and miscellaneous prepayments and advances to surrogate broadcasters and internet freedom for future services. Advances to surrogate broadcasters and internet freedom receiving grant awards are described further in Note 7.

#### **H. Personnel Compensation and Benefits**

##### **Annual, Sick and Other Leave Program**

Annual, sick and other leave time are accrued when earned, reduced when taken, and adjusted for changes in compensation rates. An unfunded liability is recognized for earned but unused annual leave as these balances will be funded from future appropriations in the year that leave is taken. Sick leave is expensed when taken, and no liability is recognized as employees are not vested in unused sick leave.

##### **Retirement Plans**

Civil Service employees participate in either the Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS) or the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS). Employees covered under CSRS contribute 7.00 percent of their salary; USAGM contributes 7.00 percent. Employees covered under CSRS also contribute 1.45 percent of their salary to Medicare insurance; USAGM makes a matching contribution. On January 1, 1987, FERS went into effect pursuant to Public Law 99-335. Most employees hired after December 31, 1983, are automatically covered by FERS and Social Security. Employees hired prior to January 1, 1984, were allowed to join FERS or remain in CSRS. Employees participating in FERS contribute 0.80

percent of their salary, with USAGM making contributions of 18.40 percent. FERS employees also contribute 6.20 percent to Old Age Survivor and Disability Insurance (OASDI) and 1.45 percent to Medicare insurance. USAGM makes matching contributions to both.

Effective January 1, 2013, pursuant to Public Law 112-96, Section 5001, new employees (as designated in the statute) pay higher FERS employee contributions (3.10 percent instead of 0.80 percent) with USAGM making contributions of 16.60 percent. These employees are covered under the FERS as Revised Annuity Employees (RAE), FERS-RAE. Effective January 1, 2014, Section 401 of the “Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013,” signed into law by the President on December 26, 2013, made another change to the Federal Employees’ Retirement System (FERS). New employees (as designated by that statute) pay higher FERS employee contributions (4.40 percent instead of 0.80 percent) with USAGM making contributions of 16.60 percent. These employees are covered under the FERS as Further Revised Annuity Employees (FRAE), FERS-FRAE.

Employees covered by CSRS and FERS are eligible to contribute to the U.S. Government’s Thrift Savings Plan (TSP), administered by the Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board. USAGM makes a mandatory contribution of 1 percent of basic pay for FERS-covered employees. In addition, USAGM makes matching contributions of up to 5 percent of basic pay, for FERS employees who contribute to the Thrift Savings Plan. Contributions are matched dollar for dollar for the first 3 percent of pay contributed each pay period and 50 cents on the dollar for the next 2 percent of pay. For CSRS participants, there is no governmental matching contribution. The maximum amounts that either FERS or CSRS employees may contribute to the plan in calendar year 2022 is \$20,500. Those who are of age fifty and older may contribute an additional \$6,500 in catch-up contributions.

Foreign Service employees participate in either the Foreign Service Retirement and Disability System (FSRDS) or the Foreign Service Pension System (FSPS). The FSRDS is the Foreign Service equivalent of CSRS as described in chapter 83 of Title 5, U.S.C. Employees covered under FSRDS contribute 7.25 percent of their salary; USAGM contributes 7.25 percent. Employees covered under FSRDS also contribute 1.45 percent of their salary to Medicare insurance; USAGM makes a matching contribution. The FSPS is the Foreign Service equivalent of the FERS, as described in chapter 84 of Title 5, U.S.C. In general, all Foreign Service eligible

participants hired after December 31, 1983, participate in the FSPS. Most employees hired after December 31, 1983, are automatically covered by FSPS and Social Security. Employees hired prior to January 1, 1984, were allowed to join FSPS or remain in FSRDS. Employees participating in FSPS contribute 1.35 percent of their salary, with USAGM making contributions of 20.22 percent. FSPS employees also contribute 6.20 percent to OASDI and 1.45 percent to Medicare insurance. USAGM makes matching contributions to both. A primary feature of FSPS is that it offers a TSP into which USAGM automatically contributes 1 percent of pay and matches employee contributions up to an additional 4 percent. FSRDS-covered employees may make voluntary contributions to the TSP, but without the employer 1 percent contribution or employer-matching contributions. Effective January 1, 2013, pursuant to Public Law 112-96, Section 5001, new employees (as designated in the statute) pay higher FSPS employee contributions (3.65 percent instead of 1.35 percent) with USAGM making contributions of 17.92 percent. These employees are covered under FSPS as Revised Annuity Employees (RAE), FSPS-RAE. The Department of State manages the FSRDS and FSPS plans.

#### Health Insurance

Most of USAGM's employees participate in the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program (FEHB), a voluntary program that provides protection for enrollees and eligible family members in case of illness, accident, or both. Under FEHB, USAGM contributes the employer's share of the premium as determined by the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM).

#### Life Insurance

Unless specifically waived, employees are covered by the Federal Employees Group Life Insurance Program (FEGLI). FEGLI automatically covers eligible employees for basic life insurance in amounts equivalent to an employee's annual pay. Enrollees and their family members are eligible for additional insurance coverage, but the enrollee is responsible for the cost of the additional coverage. Under FEGLI, USAGM contributes the employer's share of the premium, as determined by OPM.

### Workers' Compensation

The Federal Employees' Compensation Act (FECA) provides income and medical cost protection to covered federal civilian employees injured on the job, to employees who have incurred work-related occupational diseases, and to beneficiaries of employees whose deaths are attributable to job-related injuries or occupational diseases. The FECA program is administered by the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL), which initially pays valid claims. The FECA liability consists of two components. First is a current liability amount based on actual claims paid by DOL but not yet reimbursed by USAGM. Timing of USAGM's reimbursement to DOL is dependent on appropriated funds made available for this purpose and generally occurs two to three years after actual claims had been paid. The second FECA component is the actuarial estimate of future benefit payments for death, disability, medical, and miscellaneous costs. This estimate is determined using a method that analyzes historical benefit payment patterns related to a specific period in order to predict the ultimate payments related to the current period. The estimated liability is not covered by budgetary resources and will require future funding.

### Federal Employees Post-Employment Benefits

USAGM does not report CSRS, FERS, FEHB or FEGLI assets, accumulated plan benefits, or unfunded liabilities applicable to its employees; OPM reports this information. As required by Statements of Federal Financial Accounting Standards (SFFAS) No.5, *Accounting for Liabilities of the Federal Government*, USAGM reports the full cost of employee benefits for the programs that OPM administers. USAGM recognizes an expense and imputed financing source for the annualized unfunded portion of CSRS, post-retirement health benefits, and life insurance for employees covered by these programs. The additional costs are not actually owed or paid to OPM, and thus are not reported as liabilities on the balance sheet. For each fiscal year the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) calculates the U.S. Government's service costs for covered employees, which is an estimate of the amount of funds that, if accumulated annually and invested over an employee's career, would be enough to pay that employee's future benefits. Since the U.S. Government's estimated FY 2022 service cost exceeds contributions made by employer agencies and covered employees, the plan is not fully funded by USAGM and its employees. For FY 2022 USAGM recognized \$12.2 million as an imputed cost and as an imputed financing source for the

difference between the estimated service cost and the contributions made by USAGM and its employees.

#### **Foreign Service Nationals (FSN) After-Employment Benefits**

USAGM employs approximately 280 FSN employees at 21 overseas posts. Many of these posts offer after-employment benefits that are based on the employment laws and prevailing wage practices in that host country. These benefits may include annuity-based defined benefit plans, defined contribution plans, and lump sum voluntary severance and retirement benefits. Descriptions of these after-employment benefits and projected plan benefits are presented in fuller details in Note 10.

#### **Personal Services Contractors**

Beginning in June 2019, Personal Service Contractors (PSCs) became a part of USAGM's workforce. VOA relies on the specialized skills of over 600 contractors to develop and deliver content to its worldwide audience. USAGM is exploring different approaches to streamline management of these contractors and increase the agility with which leadership can leverage its contractor resources to complement its robust federal workforce. Previously managed by staffing service procurements, PSCs are currently managed directly in accordance with individual personnel service contract agreements with the agency. The agency has a procurement contract to administer payroll and associated benefits on the agency's behalf. PSCs are eligible to participate in a voluntary benefits program that offers health, dental, vision, disability, and life insurance benefits for enrollees and eligible family members. USAGM contributes a flat monthly rate to health insurance plans. In addition, PSCs may use pre-tax dollars to purchase WMATA SmartTrip benefits. USAGM also pays the employer's portion of Workers' Compensation premiums due to Federal and State authorities. PSCs do not participate in after-employment benefits, and there is no post-employment liability related to PSCs.

#### **I. Contingent Liabilities**

A loss contingency is an existing condition, situation, or set of circumstances involving uncertainty as to possible loss which should ultimately be resolved when a future event occurs or fails to occur. Contingencies are accrued in the financial statements where the liability is probable and the cost is measurable.

Contingencies that do not meet any of the conditions for liability recognition, but for which there is at least a reasonable possibility that a liability may be incurred, are disclosed but not accrued, as presented in Note 14.

#### **J. Revenues and Financing Sources**

USAGM operations are financed through congressional appropriations, reimbursement for the provision of goods or services to other federal agencies and the public, transfers and donations. Financing sources are received in direct annual and no-year appropriations; these appropriations may be used, within statutory limits, for operating and capital expenditures.

Work performed for other federal agencies under reimbursable agreements is initially financed through either an advance of funds received or the Bureau providing the service, and is subsequently reimbursed. Reimbursements are recognized as revenue when earned, i.e., goods have been delivered or services rendered, and the associated costs have been incurred. Occasionally, earned revenues occur when USAGM provides goods or services to the public in which case the revenue is recognized when collected.

An imputed financing source is recognized to offset costs incurred by USAGM and funded by another federal source, in the period in which the cost was incurred. The types of costs offset by imputed financing are employees' pension benefits, health insurance, life insurance, and other post-retirement benefits for employees. Funding from other federal agencies is recorded as an imputed financing source.

#### **K. Net Position**

USAGM's net position contains the following components:

##### **Unexpended Appropriations**

This is the sum of undelivered orders and unobligated balances. Undelivered orders represent the amount of obligations incurred for goods or services ordered, but not yet received. An unobligated balance is the amount available after deducting cumulative obligations from total budgetary resources. As obligations for goods or services are incurred, the available balance is reduced.



### Cumulative Results of Operations

These include (1) the accumulated difference between revenues and financing sources less expenses since inception; (2) USAGM's investment in capitalized assets financed by appropriation; (3) donations; and (4) unfunded liabilities, for which liquidation may require future congressional appropriations or other budgetary resources.

### L. Management's Use of Estimates

The preparation of financial statements requires management to make estimates and assumptions affecting the reported amounts of assets, liabilities, revenues, expenses, and the disclosure of contingent liabilities. Actual results could differ from these estimates.

### M. Statement of Net Cost Presentation

The cost and revenue information presented in the Statement of Net Cost is aligned to the two federal broadcasting entities, displayed separately, and the four grantees, or surrogate broadcasters and internet freedom, displayed in the aggregate. Costs of oversight and support offices are allocated between the broadcasting entities. The two overarching strategic goals outlined in the Strategic Plan are (1) Expand freedom of information and expression, and (2) Communicate America's democratic experience. Both federal entities and all four grantees carry out activities to achieve these goals. VOA's mission aligns directly with USAGM's second goal, and its efforts are largely focused on achieving this goal, while the other entities are primarily focused on achieving the first goal.

### NOTE 2: ENTITY / NON-ENTITY ASSETS

Entity and Non-Entity assets of USAGM have been combined on the balance sheet. Non-entity assets relate primarily to state and local taxes and other employee payroll withholdings included under FBWT deposit accounts and are currently held by but not available to USAGM. The funds are restricted by nature and will be forwarded to Treasury or other entities at a future date.

Non-entity assets as of September 30, 2022 and 2021 are summarized as follows:

| <b>Non-Entity Assets (in thousands)</b> | <b>2022</b>       | <b>2021</b>       |
|---|-------------------|-------------------|
| Intragovernmental:                      |                   |                   |
| Fund Balance with Treasury              | \$ 4,084          | \$ 2,944          |
| Total Intragovernmental                 | 4,084             | 2,944             |
| Total Non-Entity Assets                 | 4,084             | 2,944             |
| Total Entity Assets                     | 426,085           | 393,278           |
| <b>Total Assets</b>                     | <b>\$ 430,169</b> | <b>\$ 396,222</b> |

**NOTE 3: FUND BALANCE WITH TREASURY**

Treasury performs cash management activities for all federal agencies. The Fund Balance with Treasury (FBWT) represents the right of USAGM to draw down funds from Treasury for expenses and liabilities. The balances in Note 3 are reconciled to Treasury and primarily consist of appropriated, trust, deposit and clearing funds.

Appropriated funds are general fund expenditure accounts established to record amounts appropriated by law for the general support of Federal Government activities and the subsequent expenditure of these funds. It includes spending from both annual and permanent appropriations.

Trust fund balances consist primarily of (1) Foreign Service National Separation Liability Trust; and (2) Miscellaneous Trust.

Other Fund types consist of Deposit and Clearing accounts with balances held but not available by USAGM. Deposit fund examples are: Withheld State and Local Taxes (payroll); Other Federal Payroll Withholdings; Collections of receivables from Canceled Accounts; and General Funds Proprietary Receipts, Not Otherwise Classified. Clearing fund examples are: Proceeds of Sales, Personal Property; and Budget Clearing Account (Suspense).

The Status of Fund Balance with Treasury as of September 30, 2022 and 2021, consists of the following:

| <b>Status of Fund Balance with Treasury (in thousands)</b> | <b>2022</b>       | <b>2021</b>       |
|--|-------------------|-------------------|
| Unobligated Balance  |                   |                   |
| Available  | \$ 72,184         | \$ 42,665         |
| Unavailable  | 34,639            | 36,849            |
| Obligated Balance Not Yet Disbursed                        | 175,516           | 171,293           |
| Non-Budgetary Fund Balance with Treasury                   | 4,124             | 2,951             |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>\$ 286,463</b> | <b>\$ 253,758</b> |

The status of the fund balance may be classified as unobligated available, unobligated unavailable, obligated balance not yet disbursed, and non-budgetary Fund Balance with Treasury. Unobligated available funds, depending on budget authority, are generally available for new obligations in the current fiscal year. The unobligated unavailable amounts are those appropriated in prior fiscal years but not available to fund new obligations; however they are available to increase existing prior year obligations. The obligated but not yet disbursed balance represents amounts designated for payment of goods and services ordered but not yet received, or goods and services received but for which payment has not yet been made.

Canceled funds returned to Treasury as of September 30, 2022 and 2021 totaled \$2.7 million and \$2.4 million, respectively.

#### **NOTE 4: CASH AND OTHER MONETARY ASSETS**

Cash consists of funds held outside of Treasury and the Federal Reserve by authorized fiscal officers or agents. Cash includes all monetary resources on hand or on deposit with a financial institution, including coins, paper currency, and readily negotiable instruments such as checks and money orders. USAGM's use of unrestricted cash consists of funds on deposit with a Treasury designated financial institution, for use by the transmitting stations of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, as delegated by Treasury.

Cash and Other Monetary Assets as of September 30, 2022 and 2021 consists of the following:

| <b>Cash and Other Monetary Assets (in thousands)</b> | <b>2022</b> | <b>2021</b> |
|--|-------------|-------------|
| Cash   | \$ 3        | \$ 3        |
| <b>Total Cash and Other Monetary Assets</b>          | <b>\$ 3</b> | <b>\$ 3</b> |

**NOTE 5: ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLE, NET**

Accounts receivable as of September 30, 2022 and 2021, are as follows:

| <b>Accounts Receivable (in thousands)</b> | <b>2022</b>  | <b>2021</b>   |
|---|--------------|---------------|
| Intragovernmental                         | \$ 13        | \$ 193        |
| Public                                    | 49           | 53            |
| Allowance for Uncollectible Accounts      | -            | (5)           |
| <b>Total Accounts Receivable, Net</b>     | <b>\$ 62</b> | <b>\$ 241</b> |

An Allowance for uncollectible accounts is established on an individual account basis based on an overall assessment of the debtor’s willingness and ability to pay. Delinquent debts are referred to Treasury in accordance with the Debt Collection Improvement Act of 1996.

**NOTE 6: PROPERTY, PLANT, AND EQUIPMENT, NET**

Property, plant, and equipment (PP&E) consist of land, buildings, equipment and vehicles. There are no restrictions on the use of property, plant, and equipment. USAGM capitalizes property, plant, and equipment with a useful life of two years or more that meet the established capitalization thresholds. In FY 2017, USAGM updated the PP&E policy for capitalization. The thresholds for capitalization are as follows for property acquired on or after October 1, 2016: equipment costing \$75,000 or more, buildings and capital leases costing \$100,000 or more, and other structures and facilities costing \$100,000 or more. In addition, ADP software costing \$250,000 or more, and all land, land rights, and vehicles are capitalized, regardless of cost.

The thresholds for capitalization are as follows for property acquired before October 1, 2016: equipment costing \$25,000 or more, buildings and capital leases

costing \$100,000 or more, and other structures and facilities costing \$50,000 or more. In addition, ADP software costing \$250,000 or more, and all land, land rights, and vehicles are capitalized, regardless of cost.

Expenditures for normal repairs and maintenance are expended unless the expenditure is equal to or greater than \$75,000 and the improvement increases the asset's useful life by two years or more, in which case the amounts are capitalized.

Depreciation or amortization is computed using the straight-line methodology over the assets' useful lives ranging from three to thirty years. Amortization of capitalized software begins on the date it is put in service, if purchased, or when the module or component has been successfully tested if developed internally.

Property, plant, and equipment consists of property used in operations and consumed over time. The following table summarizes cost and accumulated depreciation/amortization of property, plant, and equipment as of September 30, 2022 and 2021.

| <b>PP&amp;E (in thousands)</b>       |                            | <b>2022</b>       |                                 |                       | <b>2021</b>       |                                 |                       |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------|
| <b>Property Category</b>             | <b>Useful Life (Years)</b> | <b>Cost</b>       | <b>Accumulated Depreciation</b> | <b>Net Book Value</b> | <b>Cost</b>       | <b>Accumulated Depreciation</b> | <b>Net Book Value</b> |
| Land                                 | N/A                        | \$ 3,416          | \$ -                            | \$ 3,416              | \$ 3,416          | \$ -                            | \$ 3,416              |
| Construction-in-Progress             | N/A                        | 417               | -                               | 417                   | 417               | -                               | 417                   |
| Building                             | 30                         | 24,279            | (21,818)                        | 2,461                 | 24,279            | (21,249)                        | 3,030                 |
| Other Structures                     | 20                         | 6,217             | (5,982)                         | 235                   | 6,217             | (5,955)                         | 262                   |
| Equipment                            | 6-30                       | 281,002           | (255,161)                       | 25,841                | 296,325           | (262,900)                       | 33,425                |
| Vehicles                             | 6                          | 5,746             | (4,671)                         | 1,075                 | 5,761             | (4,441)                         | 1,320                 |
| Assets under Capital Lease Leasehold | 10                         | -                 | -                               | -                     | -                 | -                               | -                     |
| Improvements                         | 10-20                      | 7,472             | (3,637)                         | 3,835                 | 7,472             | (3,078)                         | 4,394                 |
| Software                             | 3-6                        | 6,590             | (6,590)                         | -                     | 6,590             | (6,203)                         | 387                   |
| Software-in-Development              | N/A                        | -                 | -                               | -                     | -                 | -                               | -                     |
| <b>Total</b>                         |                            | <b>\$ 335,139</b> | <b>\$ (297,859)</b>             | <b>\$ 37,280</b>      | <b>\$ 350,477</b> | <b>\$ (303,826)</b>             | <b>\$ 46,651</b>      |

Depreciation and amortization expense as of September 30, 2022 and 2021 is \$9.6 million and \$12.0 million, respectively.

On October 24, 2018, Super Typhoon Yutu made landfall on Saipan and Tinian, the largest islands of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) and severely damaged the transmitting station's infrastructure while knocking

out all broadcasts to North Korea, China, and other target countries in East Asia. While transmitter infrastructure was recovered soon after the storms passing, the 16 shortwave curtain antennas were completely shredded. With all but one support tower having survived unscathed, the Robert E. Kamosa Transmitting Station (REKTS) took immediate steps to restore 15 of 16 shortwave antennas. Five shortwave antenna systems were fully restored using parts salvaged from the field by the end of FY 2020. However, efforts to recover the remaining ten systems have been hampered by lack of funding and COVID-19 pandemic related supply issues. USAGM secured funding to order six replacement antenna systems. Two systems received in FY 2021 have been erected, with one in operation and the second expected to come on line by November 2022. The remaining four ordered antennas are due to arrive in early 2023. The agency is evaluating whether or not to seek replacement of the sixteenth antenna system. Total assets held in CNMI have an approximate book value of \$6.3 million as of September 30, 2022.

**NOTE 7: ADVANCES TO SURROGATE BROADCASTERS AND INTERNET FREEDOM**

USAGM has disbursed funds but for which goods and services have not been delivered or performed. Grant funds are issued periodically throughout the year on an advance basis and liquidated based on actual expenses incurred by the grantee. The grant advance liquidation approach utilizes expenses as recorded in the grantee's preliminary unaudited Trial Balances through September of the year being audited. In some instances, grantees provided estimates for expenses and year-end adjustments for activity incurred but not recorded in the preliminary trial balance due to timing and availability. The grantee advance accrual does not account for grantee executed vendor contracts awarded where services have not been received by the grantee as of year-end.

Advances to surrogate broadcasters and internet freedom for the years ended September 30, 2022 and 2021 are \$105 million and \$95 million, respectively.

## NOTE 8: OTHER PREPAID ASSETS

Other assets consist of (a) inactive assets, (b) leases and other expenses that are paid in advance, (c) advances and prepayments to USAGM employees for official travel, miscellaneous prepayments, and salary advances to USAGM employees transferring to overseas assignments. Other assets consist of the following as of September 30, 2022 and 2021:

| <b>Other Assets (in thousands)</b> | <b>2022</b>     | <b>2021</b>   |
|------------------------------------|-----------------|---------------|
| Inactive PP&E                      | \$ 213          | \$ -          |
| Prepaid Leases                     | 1,067           | 545           |
| Travel & Salary Advances           | 81              | 24            |
| <b>Total</b>                       | <b>\$ 1,361</b> | <b>\$ 569</b> |

## NOTE 9: LIABILITIES NOT COVERED BY BUDGETARY RESOURCES

USAGM's liabilities are classified as liabilities covered by budgetary resources, liabilities not covered by budgetary resources, or liabilities not requiring budgetary resources. Liabilities not covered by budgetary resources are liabilities for which Congressional action is needed before budgetary resources can be provided. They include the annual leave, workers compensation, pensions and other retirement benefits, contingent liabilities, and environmental liabilities. Liabilities not requiring budgetary resources are for liabilities that have not in the past required nor will they in the future require the use of budgetary resources.

Liabilities Not Covered by Budgetary Resources as of September 30, 2022 and 2021 are summarized below.

| <b>Liabilities Covered / Not Covered by Budgetary Resources<br/>(in thousands)</b> | <b>2022</b>             | <b>2021</b>             |
|--|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| <b>Intragovernmental</b>   |                         |                         |
| Accrued FECA Liabilities   | \$ 1,298                | \$ 1,298                |
| Total Intragovernmental  | <u>1,298</u>            | <u>1,298</u>            |
| <b>Public</b>  |                         |                         |
| Actuarial FECA Liabilities   | 7,826                   | 7,754                   |
| Accrued Annual and Compensatory Leave  | 18,735                  | 21,805                  |
| Contingent Liabilities   | 5,292                   | 4,826                   |
| Foreign Service National After-Employment Benefits                                 | 5,271                   | 7,090                   |
| Environmental and Disposal Liabilities   | <u>859</u>              | <u>823</u>              |
| Total Liabilities Not Covered by Budgetary Resources                               | 39,281                  | 43,596                  |
| Total Liabilities Covered by Budgetary Resources                                   | 30,022                  | 40,072                  |
| Total Liabilities Not Requiring Budgetary Resources                                | <u>2,385</u>            | <u>2,116</u>            |
| <b>Total Liabilities</b>   | <b><u>\$ 71,688</u></b> | <b><u>\$ 85,784</u></b> |

**NOTE 10: FOREIGN SERVICE NATIONALS (FSN) AFTER-EMPLOYMENT BENEFITS**

USAGM operates overseas in 21 countries and employs approximately 280 local nationals known as Foreign Service Nationals (FSNs). FSNs do not qualify for federal civilian benefits, and therefore cannot participate in any of the federal civilian retirement plans. Instead, FSN employees participate in a variety of plans established by the Department of State based upon prevailing wage and compensation practices in the host country, unless the Department of State makes a public interest determination to do otherwise. In general, USAGM follows host country (i.e., local) practices and conventions in compensating FSNs. The end result is that compensation for FSNs is often not in accordance with what would otherwise be offered or required by statute and regulations for federal civilian employees.

FSN after-employment benefits are included in the Post's Local Compensation Plan (LCP). The LCP may include defined benefit plans, defined contribution plans, and retirement and voluntary severance lump sum payment plans. These plans are typically in addition to or in lieu of participating in the host country's local social security system. These benefits form an important part of USAGM's



total compensation and benefits program that is designed to attract and retain highly skilled and talented FSN employees. USAGM has implemented various local arrangements with third party providers for defined contribution plans for the benefit of FSNs.

#### **Defined Benefit Plans**

USAGM has implemented various arrangements for defined benefit pension plans for the benefit of FSNs in 4 countries. Some of these plans supplement the host country's equivalent to U.S. social security and others do not. While none of these supplemental plans are mandated by the host country, some are substitutes for optional tiers of a host country's social security system. Such arrangements include (but are not limited to) conventional defined benefit plans with assets held in the name of trustees of the plan who engage plan administrators, investment advisors and actuaries, and plans offered by insurance companies at predetermined rates or with annual adjustments to premiums. USAGM deposits funds under various fiduciary-type arrangements, purchases annuities under group insurance contracts or provides reserves to these plans. Benefits under the defined benefit plans are typically based either on years of service and/or the employee's compensation (generally during a fixed number of years immediately before retirement). The range of assumptions that are used for the defined benefit plans reflects the different economic and regulatory environments within the various countries. The net defined benefit liability is comprised of the present value of the defined benefit obligation less the fair value of plan assets.

#### **Retirement and Voluntary Severance Lump Sum Payments**

In 11 countries, FSN employees are provided a lump-sum separation payment when they resign, retire, or otherwise separate through no fault of their own. The amount of the payment is generally based on length of service, rate of pay at the time of separation, and the type of separation.

The cost method used for the valuation of the liabilities associated with these plans is the Projected Unit Credit actuarial cost method. The participant's benefit is first determined using both their projected service and salary at the retirement date. The projected benefit is then multiplied by the ratio of current service to projected service at retirement in order to determine an allocated benefit. The Projected Benefit Obligation (PBO) for the entire plan is calculated as the sum of the individual PBO amounts for each active member. Further, this calculation

requires certain actuarial assumptions be made, such as voluntary withdraws, assumed retirement age, death and disability, as well as economic assumptions. These are done by the Department of State and its actuaries whose results are provided to the federal agencies for their use. USAGM relies on the actuarial reports to obtain required financial information. The total liabilities reported for the FSN After-employment Benefits as of September 30, 2022 and 2021 are as follows:

| <b>After-Employment Benefit Liabilities (in thousands)</b> | <b>2022</b>     | <b>2021</b>     |
|--|-----------------|-----------------|
| Defined Benefits Plans                                     | \$ 126          | \$ 700          |
| Voluntary Severance  | 1,721           | 2,055           |
| Supplemental Retirement Lump Sum                           | 3,424           | 4,335           |
| <b>Total After-Employment Benefit Liabilities</b>          | <b>\$ 5,271</b> | <b>\$ 7,090</b> |

**NOTE 11: ENVIRONMENTAL AND DISPOSAL LIABILITIES**

Environmental and disposal liabilities result from hazardous and potentially hazardous materials at current operating locations and abandoned facilities that create a public health or environmental risk. The related cleanup cost to remove, contain or dispose of any hazardous materials or properties is recognized as an environmental and disposal liability until the end of the useful life of the PP&E or until the operations at the PP&E locations cease either permanently, temporarily, or until a voluntary remediation approach is adopted.

Federal, state, and local statutes and regulations require environmental cleanup. Some of these statutes include the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act; The Resource Conservation and Recovery Act; as well as State and Local laws.

Through an internal survey to comply with SFFAS 5, *Accounting for Liabilities of the Federal Government*, SFFAS 6, *Accounting for Property, Plant and Equipment*, FASAB Technical Bulletin 2006-1, *Recognition and Measurement of Asbestos-related Cleanup Costs* and Federal Financial Accounting and Auditing (FFAA) Technical Release 2, *Determining Probable and Reasonably Estimable for Environmental Liabilities in the Federal Government*, Technical Release 10, *Implementation Guidance on Asbestos*.

USAGM recognizes an estimated \$215 thousand in cleanup cost to remove hazardous materials from a transmitter facility. The estimate was received in previous years and the facility disposition has not changed.

Cleanup Costs Associated with Facilities and Installed Equipment, and Technical Release 11, Implementation Guidance on Cleanup Costs Associated with Equipment, USAGM in FY 2013 identified offices and building facilities that contained non-friable and friable asbestos. Based on this survey, USAGM has recognized an estimated asbestos cleanup liability in the amount of \$645 thousand for four of its overseas facilities. The total estimate is based on the vendor quotes provided for asbestos cleanup-efforts adjusted for September 30, 2022 currency exchange rates. The total estimated potential environmental liability including removal of hazardous materials and asbestos for USAGM in FY 2022 is \$859 thousand.

**NOTE 12: OTHER LIABILITIES**

Other liabilities consist of the following as of September 30, 2022:

| <b>Other Liabilities (in thousands)</b> | <b>Current</b>  | <b>2022<br/>Total</b> |
|---|-----------------|-----------------------|
| <b>Intragovernmental</b>                |                 |                       |
| Employer Contribution/Payroll Taxes     | \$ 1,231        | \$ 1,231              |
| Total Intragovernmental                 | \$ 1,231        | \$ 1,231              |
| <b>Public</b>                           |                 |                       |
| Contingent Liabilities                  | 5,292           | 5,292                 |
| Deposit and Suspense Liabilities        | 2,385           | 2,385                 |
| <b>Total Other Liabilities</b>          | <b>\$ 8,908</b> | <b>\$ 8,908</b>       |

### NOTE 13: OPERATING LEASE LIABILITIES

USAGM leases real property in overseas and domestic locations under operating leases that expire in various years. The threshold for operating lease review and disclosure is \$50,000 in total lease payments. USAGM has three real property leases with the General Services Administration that are cancelable with a four month notice. Minimum future lease payments under non-cancelable and cancelable operating leases having remaining terms in excess of one year as of September 30, 2022 for each of the next 5 years and in aggregate follows:

| <b>Non-Cancelable Operating Leases (in thousands)</b> |                 |                    |                 |
|---|-----------------|--------------------|-----------------|
| <b>Fiscal Year</b>                                    | <b>Federal</b>  | <b>Non-Federal</b> | <b>Total</b>    |
| 2023  | \$ 232          | \$ 1,038           | \$ 1,270        |
| 2024  | 232             | 502                | 734             |
| 2025  | 232             | 348                | 580             |
| 2026  | 232             | 199                | 431             |
| 2027  | 232             | 60                 | 292             |
| 2028 and there after                                  | 457             | 348                | 805             |
| <b>Total Future Lease Payments</b>                    | <b>\$ 1,617</b> | <b>\$ 2,495</b>    | <b>\$ 4,112</b> |

| <b>Cancelable Operating Leases (in thousands)</b> |                   |                    |                   |
|---|-------------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| <b>Fiscal Year</b>                                | <b>Federal</b>    | <b>Non-Federal</b> | <b>Total</b>      |
| 2023  | \$ 16,371         | \$ 209             | \$ 16,580         |
| 2024  | 16,371            | 209                | 16,580            |
| 2025  | 16,371            | 156                | 16,527            |
| 2026  | 16,372            | 76                 | 16,448            |
| 2027  | 16,372            | 76                 | 16,448            |
| 2028 and there after                              | 18,474            | 303                | 18,777            |
| <b>Total Future Lease Payments</b>                | <b>\$ 100,331</b> | <b>\$ 1,029</b>    | <b>\$ 101,360</b> |

### NOTE 14: CONTINGENT LIABILITIES

USAGM is a party in various administrative proceedings, legal actions, and tort claims that may ultimately result in settlements or decisions adverse to the Federal Government. These include legal cases that have been settled but not yet paid, and claims where the amount of potential loss is probable and estimable. No amounts have been accrued in the financial records for claims where the amount of potential loss cannot be estimated or the likelihood of an unfavorable outcome is less than probable. The accrued and potential contingent liabilities as

of September 30, 2022 and 2021 are as follows. The agency does not have any material environmental or other contingent liabilities to disclose.

| <b>Legal Contingent Liabilities (in thousands)</b> |         |                     |                         |                    |
|--|---------|---------------------|-------------------------|--------------------|
|  | FY 2022 | Accrued Liabilities | Estimated Range of Loss |                    |
|  |         |                     | Lower End of Range      | Upper End of Range |
| Probable   |         | \$ 5,292            | \$ 5,292                | \$ 5,292           |
| Reasonably Possible                                |         | -                   | -                       | 2,683              |
| <br>   |         |                     |                         |                    |
|  | FY 2021 | Accrued Liabilities | Estimated Range of Loss |                    |
|  |         |                     | Lower End of Range      | Upper End of Range |
| Probable   |         | \$ 4,826            | \$ 4,826                | \$ 4,826           |
| Reasonably Possible                                |         | -                   | -                       | 645                |

**NOTE 15: UNDELIVERED ORDERS AT THE END OF THE PERIOD**

Budgetary resources obligated for undelivered orders for the years ended September 30, 2022 and 2021 are \$261.3 million and \$233.9 million, respectively.

| <b>Undelivered Orders at the End of the Period (in thousands)</b> | <b>2022</b>       | <b>2021</b>       |
|---|-------------------|-------------------|
| <b>Federal</b>  |                   |                   |
| Unpaid  | \$ 2,153          | \$ 2,212          |
| <b>Total Federal Undelivered Orders at the end of the period</b>  | <b>\$ 2,153</b>   | <b>\$ 2,212</b>   |
| <b>Public</b>   |                   |                   |
| Paid  | \$ 106,148        | \$ 95,569         |
| Unpaid  | 153,010           | 136,142           |
| <b>Total Public Undelivered Orders at the end of the period</b>   | <b>\$ 259,158</b> | <b>\$ 231,711</b> |
| <b>Undelivered Orders at the end of the period</b>                | <b>\$ 261,311</b> | <b>\$ 233,923</b> |

**NOTE 16: EXPLANATION OF DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE SBR AND THE BUDGET OF THE US GOVERNMENT**

A comparison between the FY 2022 Statement of Budgetary Resources and the FY 2022 actual numbers presented in the FY 2024 Budget cannot be performed as the FY 2024 Budget is not yet available. The FY 2024 Budget is due to be published in February 2023 and will be available at:

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/budget/>

USAGM reconciled the amounts of the FY 2021 column on the statement of Budgetary Resources (SBR) to the actual amounts for FY 2021 in the FY 2023 President’s Budget for budgetary resources, obligations incurred, distributed offsetting receipts and net outlays published in March 2022, as presented below.

| <b>For the Fiscal Year Ended<br/>September 30, 2021 (in millions)</b> | <b>Budgetary<br/>Resources</b> | <b>Obligations<br/>Incurred</b> | <b>Distributed<br/>Offsetting<br/>Receipts</b> | <b>Net Outlays</b> |
|---|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|--|--------------------|
| Combined Statement of Budgetary Resources                             | \$ 909                         | \$ 839                          | \$ -   | \$ 798             |
| Expired Accounts  | (29)                           | (2)                             | -  | -                  |
| Rounding  | 1                              |                                 | -  | (1)                |
| <b>Budget of the United States Government</b>                         | <b>\$ 881</b>                  | <b>\$ 837</b>                   | <b>\$ -</b>                                    | <b>\$ 797</b>      |

## NOTE 17: RECONCILIATION OF NET COST OF OPERATIONS TO NET OUTLAYS

There are inherent differences in timing and recognition between the accrual proprietary accounting method used to calculate net cost and the budgetary accounting method used to report net outlays and obligations. A required reconciliation between budgetary and financial accounting information established by Statement of Federal Financial Accounting Standards (SFFAS) 7, *Accounting for Revenue and Other Financing Sources and Concepts for Reconciling Budgetary and Financial Accounting* has been amended by SFFAS 53: *Budget and Accrual Reconciliation*. This Statement provides for the budget and accrual reconciliation (BAR). The BAR explains the relationship between the entity's net outlays on a budgetary basis and the net cost of operations during the reporting period. The reconciliation of net cost to net outlays as of September 30, 2022 and 2021 is as follows:

| Reconciliation of Net Operating Cost and Net Budgetary Outlays (in thousands)            | Intragovernmental | With the Public | Total FY2022 | Intragovernmental | With the Public | Total FY2021 |
|--|-------------------|-----------------|--------------|-------------------|-----------------|--------------|
| <b>Net Cost</b>  | \$ 103,549        | \$ 742,913      | \$ 846,462   | \$ 106,416        | \$ 713,051      | \$ 819,467   |
| <b>Components of Net Operating Cost Not Part of the Budgetary Outlays</b>                |                   |                 |              |                   |                 |              |
| Property, plant, and equipment depreciation  |                   | (9,647)         | (9,647)      |                   | (11,989)        | (11,989)     |
| Property, plant, and equipment disposals and revaluations                                |                   | (433)           | (433)        |                   | (360)           | (360)        |
| Other  |                   | 151             | 151          |                   | 9               | 9            |
| <b>Increase/(decrease) in assets:</b>  |                   |                 |              |                   |                 |              |
| Accounts receivable  | (179)             | -               | (179)        | (49)              | (22)            | (71)         |
| Other assets   | -                 | 10,579          | 10,579       | -                 | 9,372           | 9,372        |
| <b>(Increase)/decrease in liabilities:</b>   |                   |                 |              |                   |                 |              |
| Accounts payable   | 3,306             | 1,973           | 5,279        | (714)             | (3,921)         | (4,635)      |
| Environmental and disposal liabilities   |                   | (37)            | (37)         |                   | (88)            | (88)         |
| Federal employee and veteran benefits payable  |                   | 4,831           | 4,831        |                   | (650)           | (650)        |
| Other liabilities  | 11                | 5,152           | 5,163        | 31                | (1,390)         | (1,359)      |
| <b>Financing Sources:</b>  |                   |                 |              |                   |                 |              |
| Imputed Cost   | (12,226)          | -               | (12,226)     | (12,220)          | -               | (12,220)     |
| <b>Total Components of Net Operating Cost Not Part of the Budget Outlays</b>             | (9,088)           | 12,569          | 3,481        | (12,952)          | (9,039)         | (21,991)     |
| <b>Components of the Budget Outlays That Are Not Part of Net Operating Cost</b>          |                   |                 |              |                   |                 |              |
| Acquisition of capital assets  |                   | 922             | 922          |                   | 295             | 295          |
| <b>Financing Sources:</b>  |                   |                 |              |                   |                 |              |
| Transfers out (in) without reimbursements  | 350               |                 | 350          | 426               |                 | 426          |
| <b>Total Components of the Budgetary Outlays That Are Not Part of Net Operating Cost</b> | 350               | 922             | 1,272        | 426               | 295             | 721          |
| <b>Misc Items</b>  |                   |                 |              |                   |                 |              |
| Non-Entity Activity  |                   |                 |              | -                 |                 | -            |
| <b>Total Other Reconciling Items</b>   | -                 | -               | -            | -                 | -               | -            |
| <b>Net Outlays (Calculated Total)</b>  | \$ 94,811         | \$ 756,404      | \$ 851,215   | \$ 93,890         | \$ 704,307      | \$ 798,197   |
| <b>Budgetary Agency Outlays, net (SBR 4210)</b>  |                   |                 |              |                   |                 |              |
| Budgetary Agency Outlays, net  |                   |                 | \$ 851,215   |                   |                 | \$ 798,197   |

## NOTE 18: DISCLOSURE ENTITIES AND RELATED PARTIES

Under SFFAS 47, agencies must disclose certain information for entities that must be included, but not consolidated, in their financial statements referred to as “disclosure entities” or related parties. USAGM has four such disclosure entities.

USAGM broadcast services and the internet freedom program include four USAGM-sponsored grantees: Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL), Radio Free Asia (RFA), the Middle East Broadcasting Networks (MBN), and the Open Technology Fund (OTF). RFE/RL, RFA, MBN are surrogate networks that receive the majority of their funding from USAGM, but are organized and managed as private non-profit corporations. The grantees are also responsible for developing broadcast content (radio and television news programs), which is distributed by USAGM. OTF was previously housed at RFA, and was separately incorporated as an independent grantee in FY 2019; it focuses on projects supported by USAGM’s internet freedom budget. The grantees are funded through annual grant agreements. In FY 2022, the four grantees combined received \$335 million in grant funding.

RFE/RL, Inc. is a private, nonprofit, multimedia broadcasting corporation that serves as a surrogate media source in 27 languages and in 23 countries, including Afghanistan, Iran, Pakistan, Russia, and Ukraine. RFE/RL also reaches Russian-speaking audiences in 26 countries and globally via the Current Time digital television network. With its broadcasting headquarters in Prague, 22 local bureaus (including Moscow, Kyiv, Budapest, and Bucharest) and 1,900 journalists throughout its broadcast region, RFE/RL’s proximity to its audiences facilitates the production of compelling, locally-oriented programming in a cost-effective manner. Reaching more than 37.2 million people each week, RFE/RL provides what many people cannot get locally: uncensored local and regional news, responsible discussion, and open debate via radio, television, and digital media.

Radio Free Asia (RFA) is headquartered in Washington, D.C., with six bureaus and offices overseas. RFA is a private, nonprofit, multimedia news corporation with approximately 290 employees. RFA has an estimated audience of 58.1 million people and supports nine languages. Radio Free Asia’s mission is to provide accurate and timely news and information to Asian countries whose



governments prohibit access to a free press. RFA brings award-winning, domestic journalism and uncensored content to people in six Asian countries that restrict free speech, freedom of the press, and access to reliable information beyond their borders. RFA also provides educational and cultural programming, as well as forums for audiences to engage in open dialogue and freely express opinions.

Middle East Broadcasting Network (MBN) is an Arabic-language news organization that broadcasts news and current affairs programming to audience in the Middle East and North Africa reaching more than 33.6 million people in 22 countries. MBN consists of two television networks (Alhurra and Alhurra-Iraq); Radio Sawa; Alhurra.com; RadioSawa.com; Irfaasawtak.com; Maghreb Voices; ElSaha.com and various social media platforms. The networks broadcast news and information from their headquarters in Northern Virginia, along with bureaus in Cairo, Dubai, Jerusalem, Beirut, Erbil, Rabat, Baghdad, and Washington, D.C. MBN has an estimated 775 employees including correspondents throughout the Middle East and North Africa. MBN continues its distinction of uniquely presenting coverage of America, Americans and United States policy like no other media entity in the region.

Open Technology Fund (OTF) was incorporated as an independent non-profit organization and became a non-federal grantee of USAGM in September 2019. OTF is committed to advancing global Internet freedom and enhances USAGM's mission to "inform, engage, and connect people around the world in support of freedom and democracy" by supporting the applied research, development, implementation, and maintenance of technologies that provide secure and uncensored access to USAGM's content and the broader internet, and counter attempts by authoritarian governments to control the internet and restrict freedom online. Originally created in 2012 as a program of Radio Free Asia, this standalone, non-profit entity supports the digital security needs of USAGM broadcast networks while also creating a more streamlined and efficient system for identifying, supporting, and iterating the next generation of internet freedom technologies.

USAGM is party to some grantee lease commitments for land and buildings, and may have a financial commitment in the event of lease termination. However, for most ongoing grantee lease and employee benefit commitments, USAGM and the

US Government does not have an explicit agreement to support or commitment to fund upon any termination of the current relationship.

The risks resulting from USAGM involvement with the grantee entities during the period include:

- The financial commitment made each year through the current grant agreement
- Potential termination costs resulting from the termination of certain grantee leases

The USAGM's benefits resulting from USAGM's involvement with include:

- Support in development of common content and delivery
- Access to office space in certain markets

The primary financial asset existing between grantees and USAGM is the grant advance.

Approximately 99% of the grantees' revenue for the years ended September 30, 2022 and 2021 was derived from federal appropriations through grants from USAGM. USAGM has no contractual or statutory provisions requiring future support, however there is no reason to believe that the relationships with these grantees will be discontinued in the foreseeable future. However, any interruption of these relationships (i.e., the failure to renew grant agreements or withholding of funds) would adversely affect the grantees' ability to finance ongoing operations.

USAGM does not believe there is any material financial exposure resulting from its involvement with the grantees.

Each of the grantee's annual financial reports can be obtained from the Federal Audit Clearinghouse which operates on behalf of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) to maintain a public database of completed audits. The website can be located at: <https://harvester.census.gov/facweb/>

USAGM has no related party entity information to disclose.

# Required Supplementary Information

## DEFERRED MAINTENANCE AND REPAIRS

Deferred maintenance is maintenance that was not performed when it should have been, that was scheduled and not performed, or that was delayed for a future period. Maintenance is the act of keeping property, plant, and equipment (PP&E) in acceptable operating condition and includes preventive maintenance, normal repairs, replacement of parts and structural components, and other activities needed to preserve the asset so that it can deliver acceptable performance and achieve its expected life. Maintenance excludes activities aimed at expanding the capacity of an asset or otherwise upgrading it to serve needs different from or significantly greater than those needs originally intended to be met by the asset.

USAGM has an ongoing maintenance and repair plan for its PP&E that allows it to prioritize required maintenance on its assets and schedule that maintenance appropriately. The maintenance plan is developed and updated by an inspection of its assets to determine current conditions and to estimate costs to correct any deficiencies. It is the policy of USAGM to maintain and preserve all PP&E regardless of recorded values and it does not differentiate between PP&E that is capitalized versus those that are expensed.

USAGM reviewed its FY 2022 maintenance and repair plan and identified those projects where maintenance or repair had been planned and/or required but nevertheless was not performed in FY 2022. For those projects where maintenance was not performed and where the current condition level required maintenance to return them to an acceptable level, in accordance with the amended SFFAS Deferred Maintenance and Repairs No. 42, USAGM estimates and discloses deferred maintenance cost.

| <b>Deferred Maintenance and Repairs (in thousands)</b> |   |              |   |            |
|--|---|--------------|---|------------|
| <b>PP&amp;E Category</b>                               | <b>FY 2022 Estimated Cost to Return to Acceptable Condition</b> |              | <b>FY 2021 Estimated Cost to Return to Acceptable Condition</b> |            |
| Equipment  | \$  | 425          | \$  | 398        |
| Other Structures & Facilities                          |   | 768          |   | 23         |
| Building   |   | 100          |   | 46         |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>\$</b>   | <b>1,293</b> | <b>\$</b>   | <b>467</b> |

## Section 4: Other Information

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# Inspector General’s Statement on Management and Performance Challenges



Office of Inspector General  
United States Department of State

## Inspector General Statement on the U.S. Agency for Global Media’s Major Management and Performance Challenges

FISCAL YEAR 2022

OIG-EX-23-01

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## INTRODUCTION

Each year, in accordance with the Reports Consolidation Act of 2000,<sup>1</sup> the Office of Inspector General (OIG) for the U.S. Agency for Global Media (USAGM) identifies the most significant management and performance challenges facing the agency and briefly assesses progress in addressing those challenges. The resulting report is included in the agency's annual performance and accountability report.

OIG identified the following management challenges in fiscal year (FY) 2022:

- Information Security and Management
- Financial Management
- Contract and Grant Management

These issues go to the core of USAGM's programs and operations. Continued attention to these concerns will improve USAGM's operations and, accordingly, its ability to fulfill its underlying mission. OIG provides this report so that, taken together with the work OIG produces throughout the year, USAGM can institute appropriate measures to improve operational efficiency and effectiveness.

## INFORMATION SECURITY AND MANAGMENT

In the annual audit of USAGM's information security program, OIG reported that although USAGM continued prior years' efforts to define and implement an organization-wide information security program during FY 2022, additional steps are needed to fully implement an effective program.<sup>2</sup> Overall, the auditor concluded that four of five functions were operating below a maturity level of 4, which is considered to be an effective level of security.

USAGM improved certain aspects of its information security program (e.g., implementation and operation of a Continuous Diagnostics and Mitigation tool and the development and implementation of key IT security documentation); however, additional time and resources are needed to complete the implementation of other USAGM initiatives. USAGM officials also stated that various external factors, including the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, affected USAGM's ability to address certain deficiencies.

<sup>1</sup> The Reports Consolidation Act of 2000, § 3, Pub. L. 106-531 (amending 31 U.S.C. § 3516).

<sup>2</sup> OIG, *Audit of the U.S. Agency for Global Media FY 2022 Information Security Program* (AUD-IT-IB-22-41, September 2022).

## FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

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As in previous years, an independent external auditor reported issues related to unliquidated obligations (ULO), which represent amounts of orders, contracts, and other binding agreements for which the goods and services ordered have not been received or have been received but payment has not yet been made. The external auditor reported a material weakness in internal control related to the validity and accuracy of USAGM's ULOs.<sup>3</sup> During the project, the auditor identified a significant number and amount of invalid ULOs based on the lack of supporting documentation and the inability to support bona fide need. The deficiency occurred because USAGM officials did not consistently perform reviews of obligations for validity and bona fide need as required by USAGM policy. Also, some requests to deobligate funds were not processed timely. Funds that could have been used for other purposes may have remained open as invalid ULOs.

OIG also reported deficiencies with the completeness, accuracy, and timeliness of some accounting data that USAGM submitted for display on USASpending.gov.<sup>4</sup> One reason for the deficiencies identified was a lack of quality assurance.<sup>5</sup>

## CONTRACT AND GRANT MANAGEMENT

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USAGM has four grantees that it funds through annual grant agreements: Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, Radio Free Asia, the Middle East Broadcasting Networks, and the Open Technology Fund. For selected grants, an independent external auditor found that USAGM had not reviewed the allowability of grantee costs, performed grant close-outs, conducted formal documented site visits, reviewed performance progress reports, monitored equipment purchased by grantees, monitored grantee contracts and leases, reviewed grantee disbursement reconciliations, or conducted risk assessments, as described in its standard operating procedure. USAGM officials stated that they had not fully implemented several of the key monitoring activities included in USAGM's procedure due to personnel and resource limitations. Weaknesses in controls over grantee monitoring have been reported each year since the audit of USAGM's FY 2013 financial statements. Without effective oversight of grantees, the risk of waste, fraud, and abuse of federal funds increases.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>3</sup> OIG, *Independent Auditor's Report on the U.S. Agency Global Media FY 2021 and FY 2020 Financial Statements* (AUD-FM-IB-22-11, November 2021).

<sup>4</sup> USASpending.gov is a publicly accessible website that provides data on federal awards, including contracts and grants.

<sup>5</sup> OIG, *Audit of the U.S. Agency for Global Media's FY 2021 Implementation of the Digital Accountability and Transparency Act of 2014* (AUD-FM-IB-22-09, November 2021).

<sup>6</sup> AUD-FM-IB-22-11, November 2021.



A special OIG review in August 2022 highlighted a contract USAGM signed with McGuireWoods, a U.S.-based international law firm, for legal and investigative services.<sup>7</sup> USAGM used a special statutory authority to exempt the contract from federal rules governing procurement, such as those requiring competition and cooperation with OIG. However, USAGM did not follow the procedures laid out in its internal policies for use of the procurement exemption. USAGM's then-Chief Executive Officer (CEO) did not assign a contracting officer to oversee the contract; rather, a senior advisor to the CEO served as the de facto contracting officer but did not exercise the same level of oversight as a contracting officer.

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<sup>7</sup> OIG, *Review of the U.S. Agency for Global Media's Contract With McGuireWoods* (ESP-IB-22-03, August 2022).

# Agency Response to the Management and Performance Challenges



U.S. AGENCY FOR  
GLOBAL MEDIA

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

October 31, 2022

Ms. Diana Shaw  
Acting Inspector General  
Office of Inspector General  
U.S. Department of State

Dear Ms. Shaw:

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the Office of Inspector General (OIG)'s *Statement on the U.S. Agency for Global Media's (USAGM) Major Management and Performance Challenges* for Fiscal Year (FY) 2022. I appreciate OIG identifying challenges to agency operations, including those related to information security, financial management, and contracts and grants management. I am pleased to highlight USAGM's progress on these issues since they were identified in OIG reports over the last fiscal year as well as plans for further improvement.

#### Information Security and Management

Over the past year, USAGM made significant progress in information security while developing an agency Zero Trust Architecture plan in response to the President's Cyber Executive Order 14028 and OMB Memoranda. The agency's noteworthy cybersecurity accomplishments include:

- Deploying tools and processes to improve the agency's Information Security Continuous Monitoring;
- Continued progress deploying the agency's Identity Credential Access Management strategy and Multi-Factor Authentication solutions; and
- Implementing the agency's Supply Chain Risk Management strategy, policy and plan.

In addition, as a qualitative measure of the effectiveness of USAGM's IT security defenses, the agency's information security team detected and investigated numerous suspicious cybersecurity events during the past year. None of these incidents impacted the agency's international broadcasting mission.

Building on the significant progress that USAGM made in FY 2022, I am committed to the continued improvement of the agency's information security.



#### **Financial Management**

Over the past few years, USAGM has worked to systematically address outstanding issues related to unliquidated obligations (ULO). In FY 2022, USAGM successfully closed-out a substantial number of ULOs. In FY 2023, the agency will continue to strengthen processes for timely identification and close-out of unliquidated obligations.

USAGM has worked to address identified deficiencies in accounting data submitted for display on USASpending.gov. The agency has implemented a quality assurance process to identify accounting data variances for corrective action by appropriate agency offices. These new quality assurance procedures will ensure the most accurate information is reported on USASpending.gov.

#### **Contracts and Grants management**

USAGM appreciates the importance of strong grants management and is working to fully implement key grants monitoring activities mentioned in the OIG's management challenges statement. During FY 2022, USAGM engaged a contractor to provide subject matter expertise in writing a Grant Administration Manual (GAM), which establishes procedures for cost allowability reviews, grants close out, desk reviews, and on-site visits. USAGM completed a draft version of the GAM in April 2022, and is currently testing the manual's procedures. In July 2022, USAGM began a desk review of the Middle East Broadcasting Networks. USAGM plans to begin two more desk reviews of the Open Technology Fund and Radio Free Asia in January 2023. Additionally, to ensure the grantees understand the Uniform Guidance, USAGM is offering grantee staff training sessions on the requirements of the Uniform Guidance, appropriations law for grants, and on USAGM's GAM. In FY 2023, USAGM's grants staff plan to prioritize completing risk assessments for all four USAGM-affiliated grantees and to close out prior year grants that do not have active obligations.

USAGM thanks OIG for its special review of the agreement that former USAGM leadership signed with the law firm McGuireWoods. As OIG recommended, USAGM updated and strengthened its internal policies for use of the agency's statutory exemption from federal procurement laws. Based on the agency's updated policy, OIG closed the two recommendations from this report earlier in October.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to respond to OIG's FY 2022 management challenges statement. I look forward to a positive and productive relationship with OIG.

Sincerely,



Amanda Bennett  
Chief Executive Officer

# Summary of Financial Statement Audit and Management Assurances

TABLE 1

## Summary of Financial Statement Audit

|   |                   |     |          |              |                |
|---|-------------------|-----|----------|--------------|----------------|
| Audit Opinion                               | Unmodified        |     |          |              |                |
| Restatement                                 | No                |     |          |              |                |
|   |                   |     |          |              |                |
| Material Weaknesses                         | Beginning Balance | New | Resolved | Consolidated | Ending Balance |
| <i>Validity and Accuracy of Obligations</i> | 1                 | 0   | 1        |              | 0              |
| <i>Total Material Weaknesses</i>            | 1                 | 0   | 1        |              | 0              |

TABLE 2

**Summary of Management Assurances**

|  |   |     |          |              |            |                |
|--|---|-----|----------|--------------|------------|----------------|
| Effectiveness of Internal Control over Financial Reporting (FMFIA § 2) |   |     |          |              |            |                |
| Statement of Assurance   | Unmodified  |     |          |              |            |                |
| Material Weaknesses  | Beginning Balance   | New | Resolved | Consolidated | Reassessed | Ending Balance |
| <i>Total Material Weaknesses</i>                                       | <i>N/A</i>  |     |          |              |            |                |
|  |   |     |          |              |            |                |
| Effectiveness of Internal Control over Operations (FMFIA § 2)          |   |     |          |              |            |                |
| Statement of Assurance   | Unmodified  |     |          |              |            |                |
| Material Weaknesses  | Beginning Balance   | New | Resolved | Consolidated | Reassessed | Ending Balance |
| <i>Total Material Weaknesses</i>                                       | <i>N/A</i>  |     |          |              |            |                |
|  |   |     |          |              |            |                |
| Conformance with financial management system requirements (FMFIA § 4)  |   |     |          |              |            |                |
| Statement of Assurance   | Federal Systems conform to financial management system requirements |     |          |              |            |                |
| Non-Conformances   | Beginning Balance   | New | Resolved | Consolidated | Reassessed | Ending Balance |
| <i>Total Non-Conformances</i>  | <i>N/A</i>  |     |          |              |            |                |
|  |   |     |          |              |            |                |

# Reporting on Payment Integrity

The Payment Integrity Information Act of 2019 requires agencies to periodically review all programs and activities, identify those that may be susceptible to significant improper payments, estimate annual improper payments in susceptible programs and activities, and report the results of their improper payment activities. The USAGM is dedicated to maintaining the strength of our improper payments program to ensure payments are legitimate, and processed accurately and efficiently. The Office of Chief Financial Officer (OCFO) performs the processes and procedures to comply with the requirements of OMB Circular A-123 Appendix C and reports the USAGM's improper payments through the Annual OMB Data Call. A more detailed information on improper payments is available at <https://paymentaccuracy.gov>.

# Report on Grants Oversight & New Efficiency (GONE) Act Requirements

USAGM is comprised of four non-federal entities (NFEs) overseen and funded by USAGM: Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL), Radio Free Asia (RFA), the Middle East Broadcasting Networks (MBN), and the Open Technology Fund (OTF) that receive legislatively mandated grantee funding from USAGM each fiscal year.

The grantees are organized and managed as private, independent, non-profit corporations. Grant funds are issued periodically throughout the year on an advance basis and liquidated based on actual expenses incurred by the grantee. The chart below denotes the number of open grants related to the three designated grantees.

| CATEGORY  | 2-3 Years | >3-5 Years | >5 Years |
|---|-----------|------------|----------|
| Number of Grants/Cooperative Agreements with Zero Dollar Balances | 7         | 6          | 53       |
| Number of Grants/Cooperative Agreements with Undisbursed Balances | 0         | 0          | 0        |
| Total Amount of Undisbursed Balances                              | 0         | 0          | 0        |

If the grantee has carryover funds, they request approval from USAGM to retain the funds. USAGM reviews the request and makes a determination on the request. Because the nature of the grant is continuous, both for funding and execution of the mission, USAGM does not close out these grant agreements even though there are no undisbursed balances to the grantee remaining.

On cover, clockwise from top left: Current Time reporter in Ukraine; VOA Hausa's Baraka Bashir reporting on the economic crisis in Nigeria; RFA reporter in the field; Alhurra reporter Rabah Filali covers the Supreme Court decision on Roe vs. Wade on June 24, 2022.



330 Independence Ave SW | Washington, DC 20237  
202.920.2000 | [usagm.gov](http://usagm.gov) | [@USAGMgov](https://twitter.com/USAGMgov)