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United States Department of State  
and the Broadcasting Board of Governors  
Office of Inspector General

# Report of Inspection

## International Broadcasting Bureau Kuwait Transmitting Station

Report Number ISP-IB-10-45, March 2010

### ~~IMPORTANT NOTICE~~

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## **PURPOSE, SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY OF THE INSPECTION**

This inspection was conducted in accordance with the Quality Standards for Inspections, as issued by the Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency, and the Inspector's Handbook, as issued by the Office of Inspector General (OIG) for the U.S. Department of State (Department) and the Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG).

### **PURPOSE**

The Office of Inspections provides the Secretary of State, the Chairman of the BBG, and Congress with systematic and independent evaluations of the operations of the Department and the BBG. Inspections cover three broad areas, consistent with Section 209 of the Foreign Service Act of 1980:

- **Policy Implementation:** whether policy goals and objectives are being effectively achieved; whether U.S. interests are being accurately and effectively represented; and whether all elements of an office or mission are being adequately coordinated.
- **Resource Management:** whether resources are being used and managed with maximum efficiency, effectiveness, and economy and whether financial transactions and accounts are properly conducted, maintained, and reported.
- **Management Controls:** whether the administration of activities and operations meets the requirements of applicable laws and regulations; whether internal management controls have been instituted to ensure quality of performance and reduce the likelihood of mismanagement; whether instance of fraud, waste, or abuse exist; and whether adequate steps for detection, correction, and prevention have been taken.

### **METHODOLOGY**

In conducting this inspection, the inspectors: reviewed pertinent records; as appropriate, circulated, reviewed, and compiled the results of survey instruments; conducted on-site interviews; and reviewed the substance of the report and its findings and recommendations with offices, individuals, organizations, and activities affected by this review.



**United States Department of State  
and the Broadcasting Board of Governors**

*Office of Inspector General*

PREFACE

This report was prepared by the Office of Inspector General (OIG) pursuant to the Inspector General Act of 1978, as amended, and Section 209 of the Foreign Service Act of 1980, as amended. It is one of a series of audit, inspection, investigative, and special reports prepared by OIG periodically as part of its responsibility to promote effective management, accountability and positive change in the Department of State and the Broadcasting Board of Governors.

This report is the result of an assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of the office, post, or function under review. It is based on interviews with employees and officials of relevant agencies and institutions, direct observation, and a review of applicable documents.

The recommendations therein have been developed on the basis of the best knowledge available to the OIG and, as appropriate, have been discussed in draft with those responsible for implementation. It is my hope that these recommendations will result in more effective, efficient, and/or economical operations.

I express my appreciation to all of those who contributed to the preparation of this report.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "H. W. Geisel".

Harold W. Geisel  
Deputy Inspector General

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## KEY JUDGMENTS

- The International Broadcasting Bureau (IBB) Kuwait Transmitting Station has become a key Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG) asset, one of the most cost-effective among IBB transmitting stations, and has an availability rating September 2009 of 99.73 percent. The station manager and staff do a good job of developing and managing this asset, but there are opportunities to improve further, particularly in terms of management controls.
- The station serves as a staging facility and storage site that has received large quantities of equipment from other decommissioned IBB transmitting stations. Much of this equipment was used, or IBB intends it to be used, at the station in support of the station's expanding role within BBG's global broadcast network. Other equipment is being stored for use either in Kuwait or at another BBG broadcast facility. This additional equipment has been a challenge for management controls relating to inventory. Over the years, the station has been limited by expanded responsibilities and understaffing in its ability to affect sound management controls over its substantial investment in property, equipment, and supplies.
- The station manager is managing work on several major projects. One is the construction of a \$5.2 million, 600,000-watt, medium wave transmitter intended to reach a high-priority audience in Iran. This project is far behind schedule. The reasons for the delay are multiple. The main reason is that the contractor recently defaulted and left the job. Shortly before he defaulted, the contractor was also debarred by the Department of Defense from other contracts. IBB Washington, which let the contract, is taking immediate steps to move forward with this high priority project. U.S. interests require the immediate completion of a transmitter that can reach all of Iran.
- The Kuwait Transmitting Station is a key part of IBB's global satellite interconnect system (SIS). This is a change from the station's status at the time of the last OIG inspection in 2003.<sup>1</sup> However, although the station has greater responsibilities today, it lacks the freedom to quickly carry them out. The management and engineers at the IBB Kuwait Transmitting Station are frustrated by delays when trying to troubleshoot information technology problems (which are now unnecessarily out of their control). To carry out its greater responsibilities, steps need to be taken to expedite the resolution of troubleshooting information technology problems and improve two-way communications between IBB and the Kuwait Transmitting Station.

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<sup>1</sup> OIG Report No. IBO-I-04-04, Inspection of IBB's Kuwait Transmitting Station, March 2004.

The inspection took place in Washington, DC, between August 24 and September 24, 2009, and in Kuwait City, Kuwait, between September 30 and October 22, 2009.

## CONTEXT

The bilateral agreement<sup>2</sup> under which the IBB Kuwait Transmitting Station was established came about as one of the acts of a Kuwaiti Government grateful for its liberation on February 26, 1991, by a U.S.-led coalition during the Persian Gulf War. Kuwait had been under occupation since August 1990, when Iraq invaded it under the leadership of Saddam Hussein. The bilateral agreement leased to the United States, without cost, a 12-square kilometer tract of land approximately 48 miles north of Kuwait City for the purposes of transmitting international broadcasts. The agreement included favorable rates for electric power, to be no greater than the rates charged to the Government of the State of Kuwait. That rate is currently just over one-half U.S. cent for each kilowatt hour.<sup>3</sup> Consequently, the IBB Kuwait Transmitting Station is the most cost-effective Station in the BBG network.

The IBB Office of Engineering and Technical Services manages a global broadcast network of nearly 80 transmitting sites that deliver high frequency shortwave, medium wave, FM, and television broadcasts. The IBB Kuwait Transmitting Station, with shortwave, medium wave, and FM broadcast capability, plays a key role in this integrated worldwide network. Over the past several years, IBB Engineering has worked with the BBG to assess the effectiveness of transmission technologies and resources to serve priority audiences and match evolving media preferences. As a result, the BBG has closed several major transmitting stations and has carefully evaluated the best use of remaining broadcast equipment to serve mission needs throughout the global network. As part of a project to enhance broadcast capability from Kuwait, Engineering shipped two high power shortwave transmitters, two high power medium wave transmitters, antenna towers, associated components, and related materials and equipment from closed facilities to the Kuwait Transmitting Station. In addition, the Kuwait station has served as a holding area for additional broadcast equipment earmarked for other facilities. Kuwait's hot and dry environment makes

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<sup>2</sup> Agreement Between the Government of the State of Kuwait and the Government of the United States of America for the Establishment and Operation of a United States Radio Relay Station in the State of Kuwait. Signed at Kuwait City August 2, 1992, and subsequently ratified by both parties according to their respective constitutional requirements.

<sup>3</sup> The average rate per kilowatt hour for industrial customers in the United States was 6.96 cents or more than 11 times the rate charged to the IBB Kuwait Transmitting Station.

an excellent location for storing transmitter equipment because tubes and other sensitive components are not subjected to high humidity levels or the multiple freeze and thaw cycles that can lead to component damage.



**Main Transmitter Operations Site**

## EXECUTIVE DIRECTION

The IBB Kuwait Transmitting Station has become a key BBG asset and one of the most cost-effective of the IBB transmitting stations. The station manager and his staff do a good job of developing and managing this asset, but there are opportunities to improve further, particularly in regard to management controls. As other transmitting stations in the IBB network have been decommissioned, tons of equipment from some of those stations has been shipped to the Kuwait station. In addition, expanding the station to meet U.S. international broadcasting requirements, including overseeing multiple major projects, has been a consuming task for station management and has contributed to a breakdown in inventory controls.

## MISSION STRATEGIC PLAN PROCESS

The IBB Kuwait Transmitting Station plays an important role in the distribution of U.S. Government international broadcasts, but this is not reflected in Embassy Kuwait's priorities. The station manager attends the Embassy's weekly country team meetings and is a member of the emergency action committee, but the FY 2011 mission strategic plan (MSP) makes no mention of the transmitting station as the primary implementer or as a partner on any of the mission's goals; nor does the MSP include mission priorities in support of U.S. interests related to the transmitting station. This oversight may be attributed to the fact that the transmitting station is 48 miles from the Embassy, and the station staff focuses on technical and engineering matters. The transmitting station manager was not involved in the MSP process. Nonetheless, not mentioning the importance of the IBB Kuwait transmitting station's multiregional mission, and not including an explicit strategy or performance indicator in the MSP to ensure the uninterrupted operation of that broadcasting mission, could result in an inadequate embassy response to challenges that require political intervention on behalf of the station. Therefore, in its Report of Inspection for the Embassy, the OIG team has informally recommended that the Embassy revise the MSP to include the IBB Kuwait Transmitting Station and support for its multiregional mission.

**Recommendation 1:** The International Broadcasting Bureau should direct the station manager at the Kuwait Transmitting Station to represent the mission and needs of the transmitting station in the Embassy Kuwait Mission Strategic Plan process. (Action: IBB)

## MISSION AND PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

### MISSION

The mission of the IBB Kuwait transmitting station is to enhance public diplomacy by disseminating the news, views, and culture of the U.S. Government through the use of shortwave, medium-wave, and FM transmission media. It also serves as a major, land-based gateway in IBB's global satellite interconnect system (SIS). As such, in addition to the broadcast media mentioned above, it also facilitates the movement through the SIS of television programming. These services are relayed over satellite for direct-to-home reception or for rebroadcasting by another IBB transmitting station.

The Kuwait Transmitting Station specifically provides:

- Management of the IBB Djibouti transmitting station.
- 24-hour/day FM transmissions of Radio Sawa in Arabic (95.7 FM) and Voice of America in English (96.9 FM) from transmitters in Liberation Tower in Kuwait City.
- 24-hour/ day, medium-wave transmissions of Radio Sawa in Arabic (1548 AM) into Iraq.
- Management of FM affiliate contracts in the Middle East and Africa (see Appendix A).
- High power shortwave transmission in multiple languages for the Voice of America and for BBG grantee surrogate broadcasters (Middle East Broadcasting Networks, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, Radio Free Asia) in Asia, Africa, Europe, and the Middle East (see Appendix B).<sup>4</sup>

When the Ismaning, Germany, Transmitting Station was decommissioned in 2007, its equipment was sent to the IBB Kuwait transmitting station. At that time, the Kuwait station took on the new role of serving as a gateway in the global SIS. When the IBB Morocco transmitting station was decommissioned, the Kuwait station took over management of the IBB Djibouti transmitting station, which had

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<sup>4</sup> Surrogate broadcast services provide local news to audiences that are unable to get complete and unbiased news from indigenous or home government broadcasters.

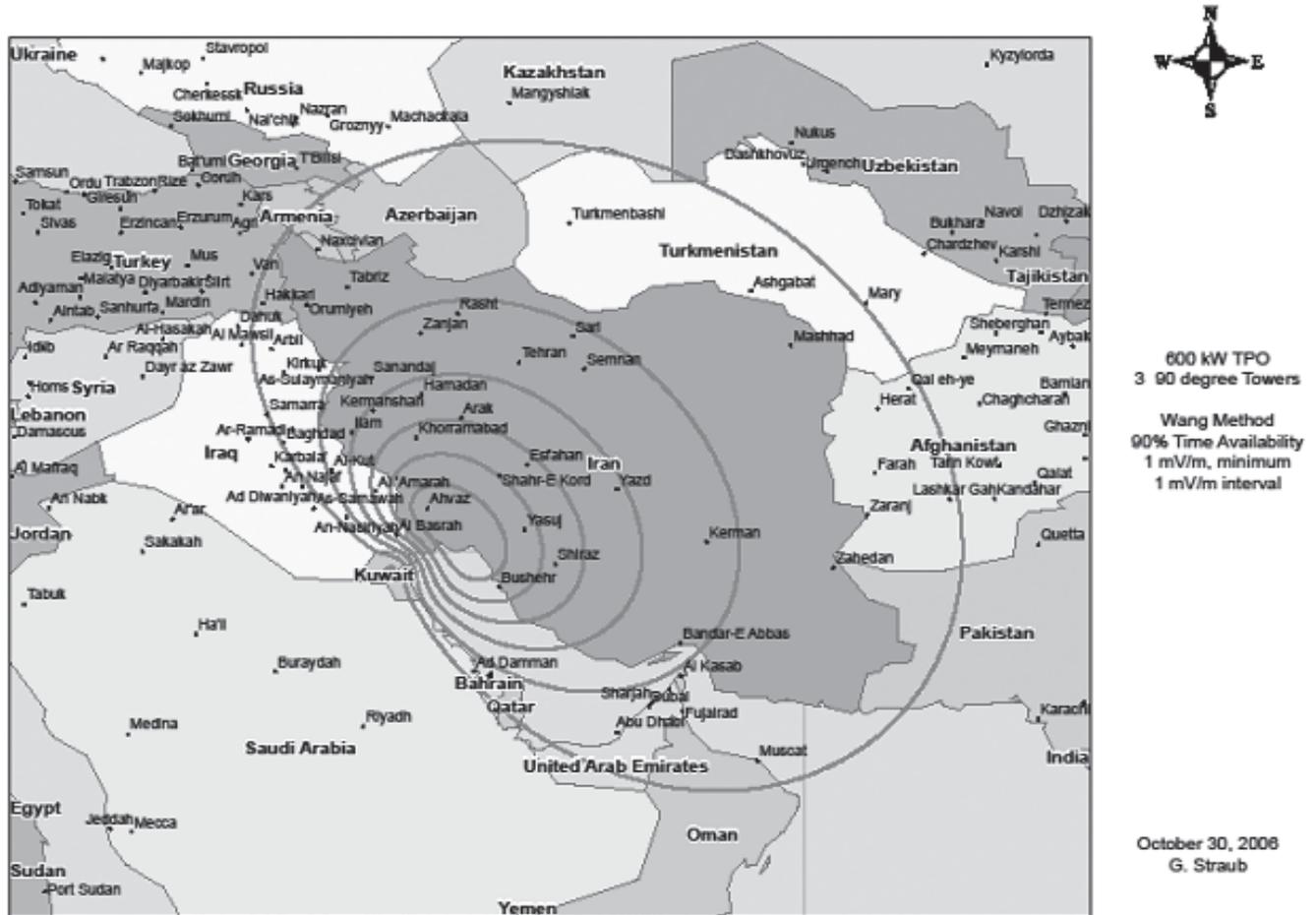
been managed from the Morocco station. It also took over seven Moroccan FM stations, as well as seven other African FM stations that had been managed by the Morocco station (see Appendix A). This is in addition to the 10 FM stations in the Middle East the station was already managing. Most of this expanded mission has come since the last OIG inspection in 2003. Moreover, since the last OIG inspection, the Kuwait station has added four shortwave transmitters—three shipped from the Greece Transmitting Station in 2003 and a fourth from the Germany station in 2004. Four high-gain curtain array antennas for the shortwave were also installed in 2004. In addition to its three medium-wave transmitters that were operational in 2003 together with a system of transmitting towers, an additional medium-wave transmitter project and a shortwave expansion project are underway. Two new shortwave transmitters were received in mid-2009. An 80 ton rotating antenna for the shortwave expansion project was under construction during the inspection. When completed, there will be six shortwave transmitters available for operation. The medium-wave project is discussed in the section below. The IBB Kuwait transmitting station and its current station manager have done an outstanding job of carrying out the station's expanded mission as demonstrated by its near perfect availability performance measure and managing the multiple ongoing projects, including security projects and projects for infrastructure augmentation.

## PRIORITY MEDIUM WAVE PROJECT

Construction of a \$5.2 million, 600,000-watt, medium-wave transmitter intended to reach a high-priority audience in Iran is far behind schedule. The expected completion date was initially May 22, 2008. As it is, the powerful transmitter was not available following the June 12, 2009, disputed election in Iran, and it remains unavailable. Existing medium-wave assets at the Kuwait transmitting station can reach only a narrow band of the western portion of Iran. The reasons for the delay are multiple. Even though the station had been paying the contractor, the contractor defaulted on paying its local vendors and employees. The contractor then left the job without completing it. Shortly before he defaulted, the contractor was also debarred by the Department of Defense from other contracts.

IBB Washington, which let the contract, is seeking resolution of the issue with the contractor and vendors. During the inspection, IBB terminated the contractor responsible for the delays. IBB then negotiated with the manufacturer of switchgear needed to complete the project for its shipment. IBB is also in discussions with prospective contractors for installation of the switchgear. IBB hopes to simultaneously commission the transmitter and antenna system to complete the project.

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**Calculated Skywave Field Strength**



**MW Project Iran overage Map**

## TROUBLESHOOTING INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY PROBLEMS

The Kuwait transmitting station is a key part of the IBB's SIS, which is a change from its status at the time of the last OIG inspection in 2003. However, although the station now has greater responsibilities, it lacks the freedom to quickly carry out its responsibilities. The management and engineers at IBB Kuwait Transmitting Station are frustrated by delays when trying to troubleshoot information technology (IT) problems (which are now out of their control, but could be in their control), while maintaining security of the stations systems and the IBB global network.

This is because the BBG's office of Computing Services recently has taken exclusive control of all network routers and switches operating within Kuwait's portion of the network, citing Federal Information Security Management Act<sup>5</sup> security require-

<sup>5</sup> 44 U.S.C. § 3541.

ments to protect the global 152.75.x.x network. Unfortunately, this has resulted in operational and maintenance issues that are having a negative impact on the broadcasting mission.

In addition, the transmitting station's IT network, which once processed only administrative IT communications like email and word processing, has evolved to include the control and operation of critical transmitter and satellite systems. The daily broadcasting and gateway processes at the IBB Kuwait Transmitting Station rely heavily on transmission-control protocol and Internet protocol technology and networked connectivity for audio switching, satellite signal multiplexing and encoding, system automation and remote FM monitoring. Presently, both BBG administrative IT systems and the Kuwait Transmitting Station's operational IT systems share a commonly-wired IT network.



Control Room for SIS Operations

With the BBG Office of Computing Services controlling access rights to the station's broadcast and satellite IT based equipment systems, the IBB Kuwait information technology staff must coordinate any updates to the transmitting station's equipment through BBG Washington. Due to the time difference and insufficient privileges, the IBB Kuwait Transmitting Station's information management staff cannot troubleshoot and resolve technical problems in a timely manner.

**Recommendation 2:** The International Broadcasting Bureau should update its standard operating procedures and delegate to the information technology staff of the International Broadcasting Bureau's Kuwait Transmitting Station the necessary rights to allow them to troubleshoot and fix critical transmission and satellite systems. (Action: IBB)



## RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

### RESOURCE PROFILE

**The IBB Kuwait Transmitting Station has the following resources:**

- Annual program budget of U.S. \$13 million.
- A staff of 29 (three U.S. officers; two TCN Foreign Service employees; and 24 TCN personal services contract employees).
- Assets valued at \$31 million, including:
  - two high-power, medium-wave transmitters (600 kW and 150 kW) and one smaller (50 kW) backup transmitter
  - four 250 kW shortwave transmitters
  - the station is the process of installing an additional 600kW medium-wave transmitter and two additional 250 kW shortwave transmitters.
- An extensive satellite gateway system with multi-channel direct uplink/downlink capabilities to the Atlantic Ocean Relay, Indian Ocean Relay, AsiaSat, and Hot Bird satellites.

*Source: Transmitting Station Manager – data as of October 7, 2009.*

### HUMAN RESOURCES

#### Developing and Rewarding American Staff

The transmitting station plant supervisor is a Civil Service employee on his second successive excursion to an IBB transmitting station. He encumbers an FP-02 Foreign Service officer position, but is temporarily paid at the FP-03 level. He has major responsibilities at this critically important facility. In fact, he has greater job responsibilities than do some more senior Foreign Service officers at a number of other IBB transmitting stations. He even has been the acting station manager at a time when major decisions and actions of political importance had to be made.

(Details of the situation are provided in the classified annex to the OIG Inspection Report of Embassy Kuwait.) The staffing requirements of the IBB transmission network have been decreasing because of the closure of stations, and no new career Foreign Service officers have been hired during the past 5 years. Thus, although the IBB Office of Engineering Operations is aware of the need for developing officer to replace those reaching retirement age, this officer has no immediate prospect of entering the Foreign Service to continue to do the job he already has demonstrated that he is well able to do.

### Third Country National Employee Compensation

Fifteen IBB staff members were employed previously as technicians at the IBB Philippines Transmitting Station. The personnel files for these employees indicate that they were hired from abroad as third country national (TCN) employees, and brought to Kuwait at U.S. Government expense. Unlike non-Kuwaiti TCN staff hired in Kuwait, these employees, whether on tours of duty in excess of 1 year or for tours of duty for 1 year or less, were entitled under 3 FAM 7274.4-3 to benefits that may not be in the local compensation plan.

These Filipino TCN employees are covered under the local compensation plan, which includes salary in local currency, an 8.33 percent annual bonus for satisfactory performance, a miscellaneous benefit allowance, free insurance for coverage of health, life, and disability, and a service indemnity bonus for those separating from the transmitting station's employment on good terms. According to 3 FAM 7274.4-2, if the TCN employee does not match the local employment category, an embassy may determine whether each individual or category of TCNs should receive optional benefits that vary from the prevailing practice upon which the local compensation plan is based. IBB's Washington headquarters may, in exceptional circumstances, authorize an offset in salaries appropriate to the type of benefit not in the local compensation plan. After examining all this information, the OIG team concluded that the station needs to review its policy regarding the Filipino TCN employees' compensation package.

**Recommendation 3:** Embassy Kuwait should evaluate the compensation package for third country national employees hired from overseas to work at the Kuwait Transmitting Station, in order to determine whether the compensation package is sufficient to provide adequate compensation for work done. The Embassy should then submit to the International Broadcasting Bureau, a request for any appropriate adjustments. (Action: Embassy Kuwait, in coordination with IBB)

## Staff Issues

Due to its isolated location, the transmitting station provides two shuttle buses from residential areas to the station and back. The station's 48-hour work week includes two 12½-hour days and three 8-hour days. The technical staff works rotating shifts, to cover nights, and the compensation plan reflects this arrangement. Five local staff members have administrative duties, including general administrative oversight, time and attendance, and procurement.

Since the transmitting station does not have a representative on Embassy Kuwait's locally employed (LE) staff committee, the station's LE personnel do not have a regular opportunity to express their concerns. Therefore, in its report of inspection for the Embassy, the OIG team has informally recommended that the Embassy provide information to the transmitting station staff regarding local staff committee activities and give the station's LE staff members an opportunity to voice their concerns.

The transmitting station does not post Equal Employment Opportunity and Civil Rights information. Consequently, the names of the Equal Employment Opportunity counselor and the Federal Women's Program coordinator are not available to staff. Therefore, in its report of inspection for the Embassy, the OIG team has informally recommended that Embassy Kuwait provide this information to the transmitting station; the team also is informally recommending that, once the transmitting station receives these materials, it should post them on the station's bulletin board.

## Desk Audit

The radio technician, an LE staff member, handles the IT duties of the station's satellite system communications and is also responsible for administration of the local area network (LAN). (In most large transmitting stations, these duties are divided between two employees.) The OIG team found that the radio technician's position description does not include LAN administration-related duties. The absence of significant regular work duties in the position description is inadequate. It also may negatively affect the employee's compensation.

**Recommendation 4:** The International Broadcasting Bureau should direct that Embassy Kuwait and the Kuwait Transmitting Station conduct a desk audit on the radio technician position IBB-036, revise the position description to more accurately reflect the employee's duties, and make appropriate adjustments to the compensation rate for this position. (Action: IBB, in coordination with Embassy Kuwait and the Kuwait Transmitting Station)

## Computer Assisted Job Evaluation Review

The IBB Kuwait transmitting station has grown substantially in both size and complexity. Five locally-employed staff, the transmitter plant assistant supervisor, and four shift supervisors appear to be under-graded, especially as compared to their counterparts at other IBB transmitting stations. After the station completes the current major projects, which is expected to be by May of 2010, it would be appropriate for the computer-assisted job evaluation (CAJE) officer to conduct a review of these five positions, under the CAJE system, in order to ensure that staff members are being properly compensated for their contributions.

**Recommendation 5:** The International Broadcasting Bureau should review the position descriptions of the transmitter plant assistant supervisor (position IBB-020) and the four shift supervisors (position numbers IBB-014; IBB-014; IBB-017; and IBB-037), to determine whether they are accurate, and then refer them to the Embassy Kuwait computer-assisted job evaluation officer for review. (Action: IBB)

## MANAGEMENT CONTROLS

Management controls are the organization, policies, and procedures used to ensure that programs achieve their intended results; resources are used in a manner that is consistent with agency missions; programs and resources are protected from waste, fraud, and mismanagement; laws and regulations are followed; and reliable and timely information is obtained, maintained, reported, and used for decision-making.

OMB Circular A-123, *Management Accountability and Control*, provides guidance regarding the accountability and effectiveness of Federal programs and operations, by establishing, assessing, correcting, and reporting on management controls. Agencies are responsible for developing programs and implementing strategies and operations that help ensure accountability for results and include appropriate, cost-effective controls. Managers are responsible for ensuring the quality and timeliness of program performance; increasing productivity; controlling costs and mitigating adverse aspects of agency operations; and ensuring that programs and activities are managed with integrity and in compliance with applicable laws. In addition, the station's transmitting station instructions (TSI) provide written guidance for maintaining controls.

The Kuwait transmitting station manager has a firm grasp of the importance of management controls, but the OIG team found several areas for improvement. During its review, OIG found examples of internal controls weaknesses, and deficiencies in the Kuwait transmitting station's property management program. The station's Statement of Assurance is flawed and gives inaccurate assurance with respect to property management. The OIG team counseled the station manager to avail himself, if he thinks it necessary, of the assistance of a consultant or a member of Embassy Kuwait's property management staff to establish a property management control program that meets requirements.

## PROPERTY MANAGEMENT

### Nonexpendable Property

The Kuwait transmitting station is deficient in many of its property management procedures. Hand receipts, required per TSI Section 108.9, *Accounting for Nonexpendable Property*, are not used. The sole storekeeper updates records in the Property In-

ventory Processing System based on observation. As a result, the Kuwait transmitting station can neither document approval, authorization, and receipt for property transactions nor determine other details of property transfers. This increases the risk that nonexpendable property may be lost, misused, or stolen.

**Recommendation 6:** The International Broadcasting Bureau should require the Kuwait Transmitting Station to enforce the regulation requiring the use of hand receipts to account for nonexpendable property. (Action: IBB, in coordination with the Kuwait Transmitting Station)

The preparation of inventory certification disclosures is not consistent with the requirements of TSI 108.19, *Displaying Property Information at the Transmitting Station*. Consequently, the 2008 and 2009 certifications are of dubious worth. The regulation requires the station staff to compare the results of a physical inventory to the inventory records, at a specific point in time, and to report shortages in two categories — those which are resolvable by IBB management and those needing clearance by the mission property survey board.

The 2008 certification disclosure compared final inventories between March 31, 2007, and March 31, 2008, reporting no difference between the two in terms of value (\$31,062,628) and number of items (649). There was no documentation to confirm the beginning inventory's value. Documentation to confirm the ending inventory was based simply on computer printouts of inventory items; although this was seemingly an end product of a scanning exercise, there was no reconciliation evidence, which is a necessary feature of an inventory scanning process.

A different approach was used for the 2009 certification. This inventory compared quantities from an inventory report dated February 18, 2009, to the results of a physical inventory dated March 31, 2009. The station could not explain the rationale for the comparison. The certification reported inventory overages of \$1,500,095. Overage analysis and documentation were not available.

The weak property management procedures are linked to the transmitting station manager's failure to assume the responsibilities of accountable (property) officer, as required in TSI 108.6, *Responsibilities*, as well as his failure to train staff members who have property custodian responsibilities. As a result of these flawed inventory practices, the station is not receiving the benefit that annual property inventory reconciliations can provide — i.e., an assurance that inventory reports are accurate and nonexpendable property is not being misplaced, lost, or stolen.

**Recommendation 7:** The International Broadcasting Bureau should require the Kuwait Transmitting Station manager to assume the responsibilities of accountable (property) officer, as required, and provide adequate training in nonexpendable and expendable property management procedures to all station employees with property custodial responsibilities. (Action: IBB, in coordination with the Kuwait Transmitting Station)

**Recommendation 8:** The International Broadcasting Bureau should require the Kuwait Transmitting Station manager to conduct a physical inventory of nonexpendable property, report the results to the Bureau in Washington in the transmitting station instructions-prescribed format, and enter data into the Property Inventory Processing System regarding any disparities between the physical inventory and the property records on file. (Action: IBB, in coordination with the Kuwait Transmitting Station)

## EXPENDABLE PROPERTY

The Kuwait transmitting station also lacks accountability for its expendable supplies, a large inventory that includes many expensive electronic and mechanical parts for its broadcasting maintenance program. The station does not control the issuance of expendable supplies and does not use written transaction records to document approval, authorization, or receipt of transactions and distributions. The station does use a “withdrawal slip” to record distributions of expendable supplies. This limited system details the property being issued and who is receiving it, and it is used as the basis for updating the expendable supplies computer application; however, the system is not adequate, since anyone at the station can access the supply room and remove property. BBG advises OIG that the withdrawal slip process is in place, but agrees that more attention should be paid to documenting and carrying out this function.

**Recommendation 9:** The International Broadcasting Bureau should require the Kuwait Transmitting Station manager to implement procedures to document approval, authorization, and receipt for transactions of expendable supplies, and to disseminate this information to Kuwait transmitting station technical staff. (Action: IBB, in coordination with the Kuwait Transmitting Station)

The Stock Record System (the IBB's expendable supplies application) has been in use for more than 10 years. Despite this, the station's stock records for numerous, expensive expendable supplies have not been entered in the application's database. Most of the unrecorded inventory relates to a 2005 property transfer, representing 475 item descriptions and comprising thousands of individual items, worth hundreds of thousands of dollars. A spot check of the physical stock found 29 transmitting tubes, each valued at \$38,000. The inventory in the Stock Record System showed 19. BBG concedes that the inventory of these high-value items called tetrodes did not match, but states that the agency procedures are not to declare the fragile tetrodes to be viable components until in-service testing can be done. In-service testing of such tubes is a time consuming process. With the broadcasting schedule of the Kuwait Transmitting Station, it may take up to 6 months to fully test a tube and declare it to be viable. Because of the large number of tubes shipped to the station, combined with the other workloads placed on the station, the station transmitter plant technicians have not been able to complete in-service testing of these tubes.

The Kuwait Transmitting Station does not conduct annual inventories of expendable supplies, as is required in TSI Section 108.11, *Accounting for Expendable Property*. As a result, the station does not have a baseline upon which to document changes in its inventory; thus, it does not have a reasonable assurance that the station's costly expendable supplies are being protected against loss, misuse, and theft.

**Recommendation 10:** The International Broadcasting Bureau should amend the Kuwait Transmitting Station manager's work requirements statement to include his responsibility for supervision of an annual expendable supplies inventory. (Action: IBB, in coordination with the Kuwait Transmitting Station)

**Recommendation 11:** The International Broadcasting Bureau should require the Kuwait Transmitting Station manager to conduct a physical inventory of the station's expendable property, report the results, and document all discrepancies between the physical inventory and the extant data in the Stock Record System records (Action: IBB, in coordination with the Kuwait Transmitting Station)

**Recommendation 12:** The International Broadcasting Bureau should require the Kuwait Transmitting Station manager, immediately after conducting the physical inventory of expendable property, to train the property custodian(s) in the correct use of the Stock Record System, task the property custodian(s) to enter the updated expendable property information into the Stock Record System database, and supervise the property custodian(s) to confirm that the station staff enters accurate, up-to-date data into the Stock Record System. (Action: IBB, in coordination with the Kuwait Transmitting Station)

## INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

The OIG team reviewed the station's information management system for its office computers, and for the maintenance and operation of its SIS. Three LE staff members are responsible for maintaining and operating these disparate systems. They divide their duties between the internal, unclassified local area network (LAN) the staff uses for email and general office communications, and the SIS the station uses to program and operate its mission critical transmitter and satellite systems.

The IBB's internal LAN supports roughly 30 users, 17 administrative workstations, 29 broadcasting support workstations and 5 servers. However, the variety and complexity of the transmitter and satellite systems require the information management staff to spend roughly 75 percent of their time on operating and maintaining the SIS. For September 2009, the information management staff helped the station achieve its near-perfect rate of 99.73 percent broadcast availability.







## FORMAL RECOMMENDATIONS

**Recommendation 1:** The International Broadcasting Bureau should direct the station manager at the Kuwait Transmitting Station to represent the mission and needs of the transmitting station in the Embassy Kuwait Mission Strategic Plan process. (Action: IBB)

**Recommendation 2:** The International Broadcasting Bureau should update its standard operating procedures and delegate to the information technology staff of the International Broadcasting Bureau's Kuwait Transmitting Station the necessary rights to allow them to troubleshoot and fix critical transmission and satellite systems. (Action: IBB)

**Recommendation 3:** Embassy Kuwait should evaluate the compensation package for third country national employees hired from overseas to work at the Kuwait Transmitting Station, in order to determine whether the compensation package is sufficient to provide adequate compensation for work done. The Embassy should then submit to the International Broadcasting Bureau, a request for any appropriate adjustments. (Action: Embassy Kuwait, in coordination with IBB)

**Recommendation 4:** The International Broadcasting Bureau should direct that Embassy Kuwait and the Kuwait Transmitting Station conduct a desk audit on the radio technician position IBB-036, revise the position description to more accurately reflect the employee's duties, and make appropriate adjustments to the compensation rate for this position. (Action: IBB, in coordination with Embassy Kuwait and the Kuwait Transmitting Station)

**Recommendation 5:** The International Broadcasting Bureau should review the position descriptions of the transmitter plant assistant supervisor (position IBB-020) and the four shift supervisors (position numbers IBB-014; IBB-014; IBB-017; and IBB-037), to determine whether they are accurate, and then refer them to the Embassy Kuwait computer-assisted job evaluation officer for review. (Action: IBB)

**Recommendation 6:** The International Broadcasting Bureau should require the Kuwait Transmitting Station to enforce the regulation requiring the use of hand receipts to account for nonexpendable property. (Action: IBB, in coordination with the Kuwait Transmitting Station)

**Recommendation 7:** The International Broadcasting Bureau should require the Kuwait Transmitting Station manager to assume the responsibilities of accountable (property) officer, as required, and provide adequate training in nonexpendable and expendable property management procedures to all station employees with property custodial responsibilities. (Action: IBB, in coordination with the Kuwait Transmitting Station)

**Recommendation 8:** The International Broadcasting Bureau should require the Kuwait Transmitting Station manager to conduct a physical inventory of nonexpendable property, report the results to the Bureau in Washington in the transmitting station instructions-prescribed format, and enter data into the Property Inventory Processing System regarding any disparities between the physical inventory and the property records on file. (Action: IBB, in coordination with the Kuwait Transmitting Station)

**Recommendation 9:** The International Broadcasting Bureau should require the Kuwait Transmitting Station manager to implement procedures to document approval, authorization, and receipt for transactions of expendable supplies, and to disseminate this information to Kuwait transmitting station technical staff. (Action: IBB, in coordination with the Kuwait Transmitting Station)

**Recommendation 10:** The International Broadcasting Bureau should amend the Kuwait Transmitting Station manager's work requirements statement to include his responsibility for supervision of an annual expendable supplies inventory. (Action: IBB, in coordination with the Kuwait Transmitting Station)

**Recommendation 11:** The International Broadcasting Bureau should require the Kuwait Transmitting Station manager to conduct a physical inventory of the station's expendable property, report the results, and document all discrepancies between the physical inventory and the extant data in the Stock Record System records (Action: IBB, in coordination with the Kuwait Transmitting Station)

**Recommendation 12:** The International Broadcasting Bureau should require the Kuwait Transmitting Station manager, immediately after conducting the physical inventory of expendable property, to train the property custodian(s) in the correct use of the Stock Record System, task the property custodian(s) to enter the updated expendable property information into the Stock Record System database, and supervise the property custodian(s) to confirm that the station staff enters accurate, up-to-date data into the Stock Record System. (Action: IBB, in coordination with the Kuwait Transmitting Station)

Recommendation 13:

Recommendation 14:







## PRINCIPAL OFFICIALS

	<b>Name</b>	<b>Arrival Date</b>
Station Manager	Gaines Johnson	11/26/2006
Resident Engineer	Sheldon Daitch	07/18/2008
Transmitting Station Plant Manager	Charles Shepard	10/27/2007



## ABBREVIATIONS

BBG	Broadcasting Board of Governors
CAC	compound access control
CAJE	Computer-assisted job evaluation
FAH	Foreign Affairs Handbook
FAM	Foreign Affairs Manual
FE/BR	forced entry and ballistic resistant
FS	Foreign Service
IBB	International Broadcasting Bureau
IT	information technology
LAN	local area network
LE	locally employed
MSP	mission strategic plan
OIG	Office of Inspector General
SIS	satellite interconnect system
TCN	third country national
TSI	transmitting station instructions



## APPENDIX A - SUBSIDIARY FM SITES

<b>Country</b>	<b>City</b>	<b>Station Type</b>
Qatar	Doha	FM
Bahrain	Manama	FM
United Arab Emirates	Abu Dhabi	FM
United Arab Emirates	Dubai	FM
Lebanon	Beit Mary	FM
Lebanon	Terbol Bekaa	FM
Lebanon	Jabal Safi	FM
Lebanon	Terbol North	FM
Lebanon	Deir Al Achayer	FM
Lebanon	Jabal Akroum	FM
Burkina Faso	Ouagadougou	FM
Djibouti	Arta	FM
Djibouti	Djibouti City	FM
Ghana	Accra	FM
Ivory Coast	Abidjan	FM
Kenya	Nairobi	FM
Morocco	Agadir (Interim)	FM
Morocco	Casablanca	FM
Morocco	Fes	FM
Morocco	Marrakech	FM
Morocco	Meknes	FM
Morocco	Rabat (Interim)	FM
Morocco	Tangier	FM
Rwanda	Kigali	FM
Sierra Leone	Freetown	FM
Sudan	Khartoum	FM

Source: IBB Kuwait Transmitting Station



## APPENDIX B - LIST OF SERVICES

This is a listing of services and languages supported by the IBB Kuwait Transmitting Station. Supported is defined as:

- Satellite Gateway (services are relayed over satellites for direct-to-home reception or for rebroadcasting by another IBB Transmitting Station).
- Broadcast directly from shortwave or medium-wave transmitters at Kuwait.
- Feeds to other satellite uplink stations (i.e., ArabSat and NileSat).
- Feeds for BBG subsidiary FM and MW transmitters (in Asia, Middle-East & Africa).
- American Embassy Television Network service.
- News and closed-circuit feeds for BBG language services.

### A. Voice of America (VOA)

#### 1. Video Service

- a. DOS Video
- b. Asiasat Video
- c. IOR Video
- d. Hotbird Video

#### 2. Audio Service

a. English	j. Dari	s. Laotian
b. Amharic	k. French	t. Mandarin
c. Albanian	l. Greek	u. Persian
d. Azerbaijani	m. Georgian	v. Pashto
e. Bangla	n. Hindi	w. Portuguese
f. Burmese	o. Indonesian	x. Russian
g. Cantonese	p. Khmer	y. Somali
h. Chinese	q. Korean	z. Spanish
i. Croatian	r. Kurdish	aa. Sudanese
		ab. Thai
		ac. Tibet
		ad. Turkish
		ae. Uzbek

**B. Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL)**

a. Armenia	g. Kosovo	m. Tatar-Bashkir
b. Azerbaijan	h. Kyrgyzstan	n. Turkmenistan
c. Saudi Arabia	i. Macedonia	o. Ukraine
d. Belarus	j. North Caucasus	p. Uzbekistan
e. Georgia	k. Russia	
f. Kazakhstan	l. Tajikistan	

**C. Radio Free Asia (RFA)**

a. Burmese	d. Korean	g. Tibetan
b. Cantonese	e. Laotian	h. Uyghur
c. Khmer	f. Mandarin	i. Vietnamese

**D. Middle East Broadcasting Network (MBN) (Radio Service)**

a. MBN 1 - SAWA Levant	e. MBN 5 – SAWA North Africa
b. MBN 2 - SAWA Iraq	f. MBN 6 – SAWA Sudan
c. MBN 3 - SAWA Egypt	g. MBN 7 – Radio Farda
d. MBN 4 - SAWA Gulf	h. MBN 8 – SAWA Lebanon

**E. Middle East Broadcasting Network (MBN) (Video Service)**

- a. Al-Hurra
- b. Al-Hurra Iraq
- c. Al-Hurra Europe
- d. Persian News Network (PNN) (Video Service) (VOA)

Source: IBB Kuwait Transmitting Station

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