



United States Department of State  
and the Broadcasting Board of Governors

*Office of Inspector General*

~~SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED~~

OCT 15 2009

**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** BBG Executive Director – Jeffrey Trimble

**FROM:** OIG/ISP – Robert B. Peterson, Assistant Inspector General for Inspections 

**SUBJECT:** Memorandum Report, Broadcasting Board of Governors Operations in Sarajevo, ISP-IB-10-18

The Office of Inspector General conducted a limited inspection of the Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG) operations in Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina. The inspection took place in May 2009 in conjunction with an inspection of Embassy Sarajevo.

U.S. international broadcasting entities in Sarajevo successfully produce and market programs that reflect American society and report accurate, objective, and balanced news, information, and programming about America and the world. The entities receive good support from Embassy Sarajevo when needed.

BBG has two colocated offices in Sarajevo. The first is the Office of Marketing and Program Placement (OMPP), which is responsible for marketing and placing Voice of America radio and television programs and Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL) radio and television programs with affiliate stations in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The second office is RFE/RL, which produces radio and television programs for placement on Bosnia and Herzegovina affiliate stations and contributes to the regional program broadcast from Prague for the entire Balkan region.

OMPP is under the management of a contractor who reports to the regional office of BBG's International Broadcasting Bureau in Prague. OMPP's goal is to ensure its programs reach all of Bosnia and Herzegovina and it currently has 68 affiliate stations throughout the country. Broadcast media entities in Bosnia and Herzegovina regularly seek to become affiliate stations. The OMPP representative expressed particular interest in adding affiliate stations in Republika Srpska, where the media is under increasing pressure from the ethnic Serb government. (According to the embassy's human rights report, Bosnian government respect for freedom of speech and the press declined during 2008 and some prominent individuals who criticized the government were the target of government reprisals). OMPP also arranges annual workshops or seminars for Bosnia and Herzegovina affiliate stations, which take place in Sarajevo and usually cover new broadcasting technology. The contractor who represents OMPP in Sarajevo is able to make use of the embassy facilities to receive and ship the technical equipment for the affiliate stations.

~~SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED~~

OMPP reported no problems with the affiliate stations in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and audience response to the programs has been positive. According to InterMedia's 2008 national survey, Voice of America radio, television, and Internet combined had an annual reach of 30.2 percent of the population in 2008. RFE/RL's total media reach in Bosnia and Herzegovina was 22.5 percent. In comparison, British Broadcasting Corporation radio in Bosnia had a 2008 annual reach of 7.6 percent, while Deutsche Welle's annual reach was 11.6 percent.

The RFE/RL main office in Sarajevo produces daily radio programs that are transmitted to affiliate stations for broadcast twice a day, each morning and each afternoon. It also transmits daily radio programs produced in Prague in the afternoon and evening. RFE/RL's TV Liberty produces a weekly television magazine that it transmits to 30 stations for broadcast on Sunday evening. With funding from the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, TV Liberty produces a program called "Open Parliament," in which students representing all regions of Bosnia and Herzegovina have the opportunity to come to Sarajevo to question members of parliament during the program. TV Liberty produces 12 open parliament segments per year and broadcasts them during the parliamentary sessions.

RFE/RL has six employees and 18 full-time freelancers in Sarajevo, 11 correspondents in various parts of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and a branch office in Banja Luka. Its correspondents and affiliates in Banja Luka and other parts of Republika Srpska have faced some political pressure from the Prime Minister of Republika Srpska. All of the RFE/RL affiliates in Banja Luka have continued to broadcast RFE/RL programs, however. Iranian Radio and TV's daily television program broadcasts anti-American news and propaganda in Bosnia and Herzegovina. According to RFE/RL management, Al-Jazeera has a regional office in Sarajevo and broadcasts extensively, but does not compete with RFE/RL.

RFE/RL has excellent cooperation with the embassy, particularly with the office of public affairs. RFE/RL interviews the Ambassador on a regular basis and provides coverage of the U.S. Agency for International Development projects, including those dealing with human trafficking and drug abuse and important events like Vice President Biden's visit.

~~**SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED**~~

CC: Janice H. Brambilla, Director of Management Planning, BBG  
Jeffrey Gedmin, President, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty  
Danforth W. Austin, Director, Voice of America  
John Welch, Special Advisor to International Broadcasting Bureau Director  
Doug Boynton, Office of Marketing and Program Placement, International Broadcasting  
Bureau  
Barbara Tripp, Management Analyst, Voice of America

~~SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED~~