

# FY 2024 Agency Performance Report



*United in one mission: to inform, engage, and connect audiences around the world in support of freedom and democracy.*

# Introduction

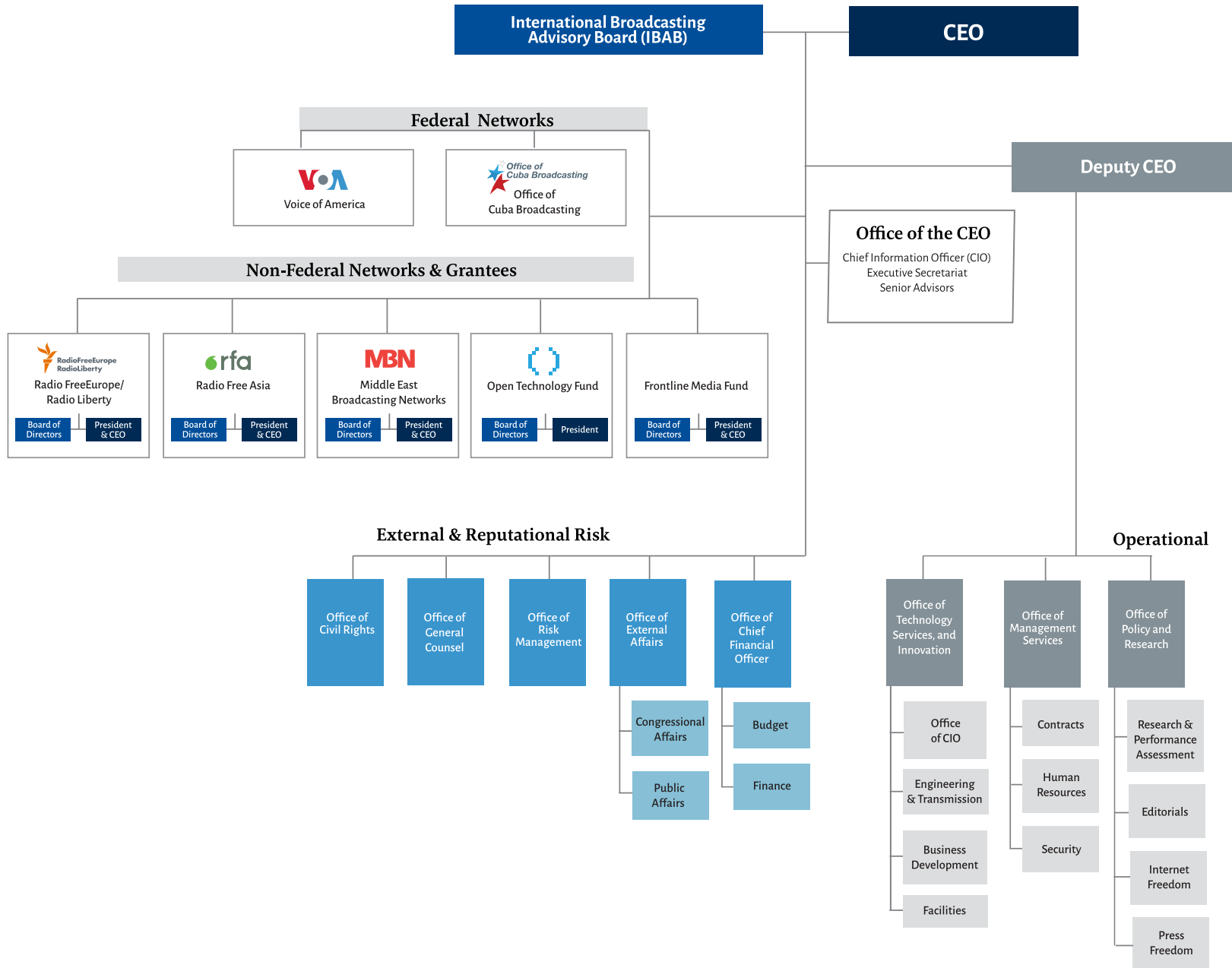
This Fiscal Year (FY) 2024 Agency Performance Report (APR) includes a summary of the United States Agency for Global Media (USAGM) strategic plan, a description of its performance indicators, and a summary of the status of the agency’s program performance. This report connects USAGM’s strategic goals, its impact and agility objectives, its performance in the preceding five years, and a summary of the verification and validation of performance measures used in the report. It fulfills the requirements of the Government Performance and Results Act of 1993 (GPRA) and the Government Performance and Results Modernization Act of 2010 (GPRMA) for annual performance reporting. This presentation of the agency’s program performance 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. Additional information about USAGM’s strategy, performance planning, and reporting are available at <https://www.usagm.gov/our-work/strategy-and-results/>

## Organizational Background

USAGM is America’s international, independent, public service media agency, encompassing the Voice of America (“VOA”), Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (“RFE/RL”), Radio Free Asia (“RFA”), the Middle East Broadcasting Networks (“MBN”), Radio and TV Martí (under the Office of Cuba Broadcasting – “OCB”), and the Open Technology Fund (“OTF”). In FY 2024, USAGM also launched a new non-federal entity, the Frontline Media Fund (“FMF”), to incubate and test new operating models, provide proof of concept, and propagate promising strategies to improve service delivery worldwide.

Combined, this global media enterprise is uniquely capable of defending press freedom and access to information in some of the most challenging countries for journalists. These capabilities stem from: (a) the scale at which the agency operates – working in 63 languages in over 100 foreign media markets around the world, with an FY 2024 measured audience of 427 million adults on a weekly basis outside the U.S.; (b) the range of local and technical expertise directly employed by the agency and its grantees, which includes several thousand journalists and experts with deep local knowledge and understanding of the environments in which they operate; and (c) the shared public-service mission of these efforts to deploy public-service journalism and technical tools to protect the fundamental human right to seek, receive, and impart information, regardless of frontiers.

# ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE



# Summary of the 2022–2026 USAGM Strategic Plan

USAGM’s 2022-2026 *Strategic Plan, Truth over Disinformation: Supporting Freedom and Democracy [March 2024 Update]*, guides the integration of performance planning, performance measurement, budgeting, and management of USAGM. Included in this submission are updates to the USAGM 2022-2026 Strategic Plan language published in March 2024.

In outlining a clear vision, mission, goals, and objectives, the Strategic Plan charts an ambitious path, given the global challenge of growing efforts to control information and erode trust in media and democratic institutions.

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

The agency’s vision is to ensure access to trusted, compelling, and impactful content in order to create a robust response to censorship and disinformation and support democratic ideals and values. This mission and vision are achieved through two strategic goals:

- **Expand freedom of information and expression; and**
- **Share America’s democratic experience and values.**

Free press and free expression are universally acknowledged as key to free, open, democratic societies, which in turn support American interests through stability, peace, alliances, and trade. Sharing America’s democratic experience and values serves the same purpose. In covering the United States, USAGM’s networks open a window onto democracy in action.

# Impact and Agility Objectives and Performance Goals

USAGM’s two strategic goals are supported by eight Impact Objectives, which focus on the performance of the mission, and four Agility Objectives, which focus on the management of the agency. Each of these objectives has supporting performance goals tracked by performance indicators that come from the USAGM Impact Model. Unless otherwise specified, performance targets in this report come from the [USAGM FY 2025 Agency Performance Plan / FY 2023 Agency Performance Report](#) and were developed based on leadership direction and expert analysis of multiple factors, including: current positioning of USAGM programming in relevant media markets, anticipated future trends, and proposed budgetary resources. Because USAGM does not have the resources to conduct full media surveys of its audiences in each country every year, many of the indicators with survey-dependent measurement were targeted to remain stable or change only slightly year to year. In addition to reporting updated measurements of performance indicators and the analysis of these findings, this report presents narrative evidence of the agency’s accomplishment of its objectives.

## RELATIONSHIP OF USAGM MISSION, GOALS AND OBJECTIVES



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# Impact Objective 1

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

Journalism is the daily work of USAGM networks, and building trust in that journalism is paramount. Creating compelling and impactful content requires the agency's networks to create programming that provides unique value in comparison 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 the networks' rigorous adherence to the highest professional standards of journalism and the agency's preservation of the editorial firewall that protects programming from outside interference.

USAGM and its networks will:

- Preserve the editorial firewall, protecting the independence and integrity of the networks' journalism through defined rules, regulations, and processes;
- Provide news and programming that is accurate, objective, and comprehensive, and in accordance with the highest professional standards of journalism;
- Produce news and information, consistent with audience needs and mission requirements, on issues that are not addressed adequately by media in the target area;
- 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.

USAGM tracks its progress in achieving Impact Objective 1 with the following performance goals.

IMPACT OBJECTIVE 1

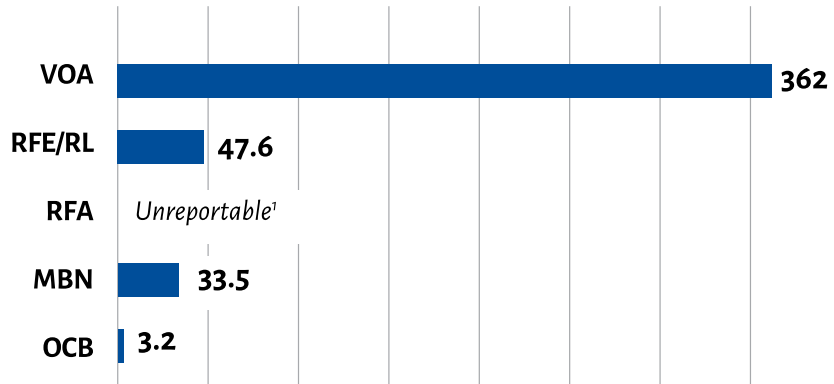
# Impact Performance Goals Overview

## GLOBAL REACH

### Total USAGM Weekly Audience

**427**  
**MILLION**  
unduplicated audience  
across all media

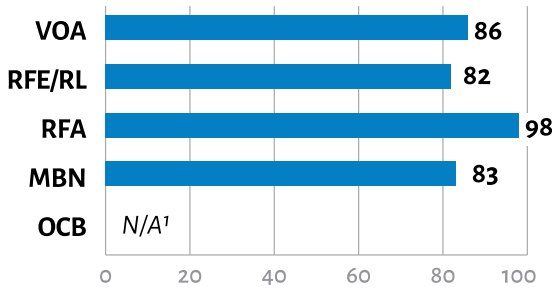
### Weekly Audience By Network



Note: USAGM global audience is an unduplicated total, meaning an individual audience member is counted once, regardless of how many networks they use. Therefore, the total USAGM audience is not equal to the sum of audiences of individual networks.

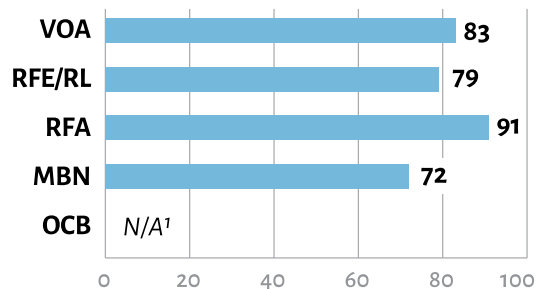
### CREDIBILITY

Percentage of audience who consider information from USAGM network to be very or somewhat trustworthy



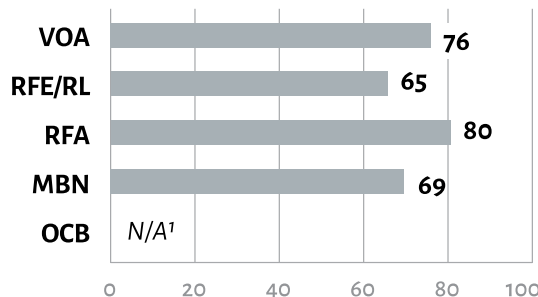
### NEWS VALUE

Percentage of audience who agree that network's broadcasts have increased their knowledge of news about the rest of the world



### INFLUENCE

Percentage of audience who agree that network's broadcasts help them form opinions on important issues



<sup>1</sup> In FY 2024, RFA's global measured weekly audience was unreportable and certain performance indicators for OCB had no reportable data available. Details follow below.



## IMPACT OBJECTIVE 1

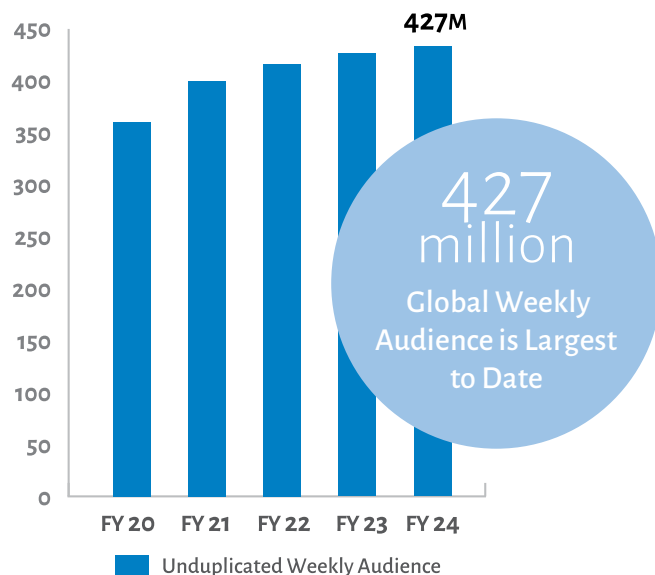
### Impact Performance Goal 1.1: **Reach significant audiences**

In FY 2024 USAGM survey research recorded its highest-ever measured global weekly audience of 427 million adults, without the inclusion of audience data for China. This exceeds the FY 2023 measured audience of 419 million.

- Due to political pressures impeding USAGM research in China since FY 2018, its 65 million weekly measured audience was last included in USAGM for FY 2022 and is excluded from FY 2023 and FY 2024 data.
- Based on an opt-in, online panel survey conducted in FY 2023, USAGM unofficially projects an additional audience of approximately 45 million adults for VOA in China. This is not officially reported at this time (details and methodology below).

USAGM MEASURED WEEKLY AUDIENCE  
(IN MILLIONS) 2020–2024

*\*without China in FY 2023–24*



Key growth drivers in USAGM's FY 2024 global audience estimate include:

- Larger measured audiences in Algeria, Bangladesh, Costa Rica, Ghana, Jordan, and Ukraine;
- Newly measured Radio Martí (OCB) reach outside of Cuba – in Venezuela, Costa Rica, Ecuador, and Mexico; and
- New survey research in countries that have large communities of Russian- and Mandarin-speaking diasporas

In addition, USAGM was able to field surveys in multiple markets that had not been surveyed, for security or budgetary reasons, in more than five years – yielding new audience measurements for Belarus, Chad, Uzbekistan, and Niger. Smaller USAGM network audiences were measured in FY 2024 in Ethiopia, Turkey, Malawi, Israel, the Palestinian Territories, Burkina Faso, and South Africa.

## A CLOSER LOOK: Overcoming audience research obstacles in China

China ranks among the lowest countries in global rankings of political, media and internet freedom. News and information from VOA and RFA in Mandarin and Cantonese are consistently blocked, jammed, and censored in China -- while its state-controlled China Global Television Network and China Radio International brands push to expand internationally. Behind the “Great Firewall” in China, access to RFA and most of VOA’s content requires the use of restricted circumvention tools – or finding content through the limited reach of indirect distribution, radio, or satellite broadcasts.

USAGM was last able to conduct a face-to-face audience survey in China in 2017 (first reported in FY 2018). That research covered 92% of the population and revealed a USAGM weekly audience of 65 million adults (44 million for RFA and 41 million for VOA). Since then, China’s government restrictions and political pressure on local survey research firms have prevented USAGM from conducting another face-to-face survey in the country.

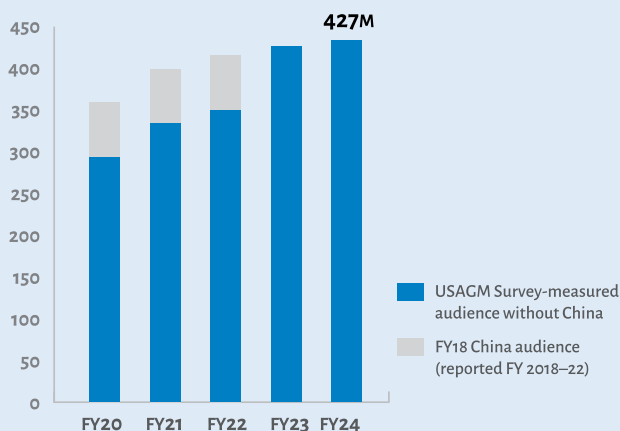
By FY 2023, strict adherence to the agency’s five-year data relevance policy dictated the expiration of FY 2018 survey data from USAGM’s reported global audience total. Facing limited options, USAGM’s Office of Policy and Research commissioned an

online panel survey to measure the size of VOA and RFA audiences among internet users in China. Panel surveys are widely used market research tools comprising individuals who actively choose to participate. Panels also provide a level of privacy USAGM expected would reduce the perceived risks of discussing its brands in China.

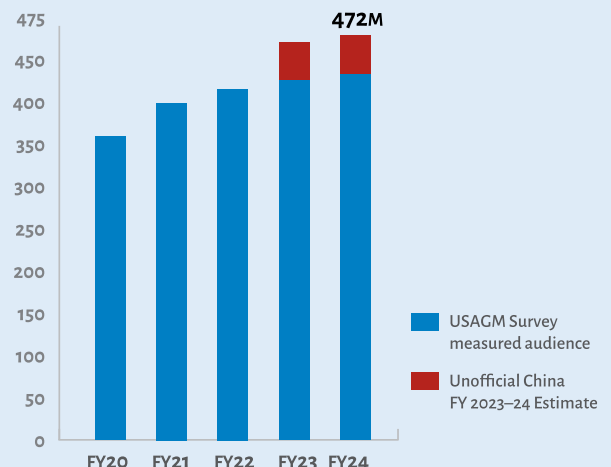
Unfortunately, local research companies, under pressure from the Chinese government, reversed early commitments to ask questions about RFA or its content in the panel surveys -- and would only agree to ask about VOA content in English, not Mandarin or Cantonese. In December 2023, Gallup and their local partner fielded the limited-question survey for USAGM to a panel that was fully representative of adult internet-users in China – approximately 59% of the total population.

Results of the online panel survey, as administered behind China’s firewall and accessible via VPN, indicated a 5.5 % weekly reach among internet users in China for VOA’s content in English – e.g. 45 million adults. While audiences for RFA or for VOA’s local language content could not be measured by this 2023 panel survey, other research efforts indicate that RFA and VOA Mandarin and Cantonese have a significant audience in China that cannot be accurately estimated at this time.

USAGM MEASURED WEEKLY AUDIENCE (IN MILLIONS) WITHOUT FY 18 CHINA SURVEY RESULTS IN FY 2020–22



USAGM MEASURED WEEKLY AUDIENCE (IN MILLIONS) WITH UNOFFICIAL ESTIMATE FOR CHINA IN FY 2023–24



Impact Performance Goal 1.1: **Reach significant audiences** (cont'd)

**USAGM MEASURED WEEKLY AUDIENCE – AGENCY TOTAL (in millions)<sup>1,2</sup>**

	FY 2020	FY 2021	FY 2022	FY 2023 <sup>3</sup>	FY 2024
<b>USAGM</b>					
Target	354	380	394	427	434
Actual	354	394	410	419	427

**USAGM MEASURED WEEKLY AUDIENCE – NETWORK TOTALS (in millions)<sup>1,2</sup>**

	FY 2020	FY 2021	FY 2022	FY 2023 <sup>3</sup>	FY 2024
<b>VOA</b>					
Target	282	305	309	339	356
Actual	278	312	326	354	362
<b>RFE/RL</b>					
Target	37.7	36.2	37.3	41.7	43.0
Actual	41.1	37.2	40.6	42.1	47.6
<b>RFA<sup>4</sup></b>					
Target	49.5	55.0	60.0	59.8	NA
Actual	49.5	59.8	58.3	Unreportable	Unreportable
<b>MBN</b>					
Target	28.0	32.0	34.0	31.0	34.0
Actual	27.5	31.1	27.4	33.8	33.5
<b>OCB</b>					
Target	1.2	1.2	1.0	NA	0.9
Actual	1.0	1.0	NA	0.8	3.2

1 Measured weekly audience is the estimated number of adults (15 and older) in target areas listening to or viewing USAGM programming or online materials in the past week according to representative face-to-face or phone surveys.

2 FY 2023 and FY 2024 targets and actual performance for VOA, RFA, and USAGM total global audiences do not include data or estimates for audiences in China due to government restrictions limiting USAGM's ability to conduct comprehensive surveys of its programming since FY 2018.

3 FY2023 reported USAGM total and MBN audience measures have been adjusted for corrections made after publication of USAGM FY 2025 APP/ FY 2023 APR. Changes represent less than one percent decrease from prior report.

4 RFA global measured weekly audience was unreportable for FY 2023 and FY 2024 due to conditions that have prevented USAGM survey questions about RFA's Mandarin and Cantonese programming in China since FY 2018. Also, USAGM is not able to measure RFA audiences in North Korea, Xinjiang (Uyghur service), and Tibet. Audience data is only available for four of RFA's nine language services, and those totals are included in USAGM global audience estimates.

## INDICATOR:

### Measured Weekly Audiences

This indicator comes from nationally-representative media use surveys in target markets and estimates the number of adults listening to, reading, or viewing USAGM programming or online materials in the past week. 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 in the past seven days, as determined by an audience survey that has an adequately designed sample. The USAGM total weekly audience is unduplicated, i.e., a member of the audience is counted only once, meaning that regardless of the number of times they consume content, and whether they access that content on multiple platforms or networks, an audience member is counted only once. 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 underestimation of actual reach. Additionally, platforms, political restrictions, or volatility in certain markets may prevent the measurement of the current reach for services broadcasting to these areas, resulting in an undercount of audience. USAGM continues to explore alternative methods for measuring audience reach, such as online panel surveys, integrating digital analytics, and commercial ratings data.

Specific exceptions to available data for USAGM audiences:

- Measurements include audience data for each language service and each country served by USAGM networks, provided that the agency was able to conduct a relevant representative survey within the past five years.
- As noted above, USAGM has been unable to conduct a fully representative audience survey in China since FY 2018. Results from a 2023 USAGM internet panel survey indicate a VOA audience of at least 45 million, but due to PRC government restrictions on survey questions and topics, this data is not included in the agency’s FY 2024 global audience estimates.
- In addition to challenges measuring Mandarin and Cantonese program audiences in China, restrictive media and political environments have resulted in audience measurement gaps in FY 2024 reporting for USAGM language services in North Korea (VOA and RFA), Xinjiang (RFA), and Tibet (VOA and RFA).
- Because USAGM can only conduct representative surveys among the primary audiences of four of RFA’s nine language services, the agency is not reporting a total audience number for the network in FY 2024. USAGM will continue to explore options to expand the agency’s ability to measure the reach of RFA programming.

## ANALYSIS:

### VOA

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With a measured weekly audience of 362 million, VOA exceeded its FY 2023 target, adding eight million weekly users to its global audience count compared to FY 2023. Substantial gains in Ghana and new users from countries that had not been surveyed in more than five years (Botswana, Chad, Gambia, Liberia, Niger, Madagascar, and Sierra Leone) offset audience losses in populous Ethiopia. USAGM has not been able to conduct representative audience research in People's Republic of China for the last seven years; however, data from Taiwan and Chinese diaspora audience in Malaysia show that more people tune in to VOA in those markets in FY 2024 than in previous surveys. Despite mounting barriers to access independent content in Russia, VOA audience grew by almost three million in this vital market. Ukraine, too, saw considerable audience increases. Uzbekistan and Belarus were surveyed for the first time in seven years, adding another million weekly users.

### RFE/RL

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The FY 2024 increases in measured weekly audiences can be attributed to audience growth in recently completed surveys in Central Asia and Eastern Europe along with audience measurements from markets measured for the first time. After several years without survey data in Belarus and Uzbekistan, FY 2024 surveys showed a weekly measured audience for RFE/RL of 8.8% in Uzbekistan and 10.5% in Belarus. Moreover, new survey data showed a marked increase in measured audience in Serbia from the prior survey from 5.9% to 12.9%, in Ukraine from 15.0% to 29.5% and in Kosovo from 10.3% to 16.3%. National surveys in Brazil, Canada, Mongolia, Poland and Germany captured RFE/RL users in all of those countries, adding over one million audience members.

### RFA

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Because USAGM cannot conduct representative surveys among the primary target audiences of five of RFA's nine language services, the agency is not reporting a total audience number for the network. The PRC and Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) continue to block USAGM from conducting representative surveys for Mandarin, Cantonese, Uyghur, Tibetan and Korean audiences. However, past surveys in Southeast Asia, a new survey in the Cox's Bazar Rohingya Refugee Camps in Bangladesh, and surveys of Taiwan and among Chinese diaspora populations in Australia, Canada, Malaysia, and Singapore demonstrate RFA's continued strong performance where measurable.

## **MBN**

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MBN's past-week reach is slightly lower in 2024 than in 2023, but this obscures fluctuations in reach by country. In the Palestinian Territories and Tunisia, for example, this metric declined for MBN declined significantly from past surveys. But, in Algeria and the UAE it increased significantly. Past-week reach in the West Bank and Gaza in August 2024 was 13.5% versus an historic high of 53% in January 2019, the date of the last comparable survey. MBN's reported audience also declined due to lack of current survey data for Kuwait and Qatar.

## **OCB**

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Measured audience for OCB in FY 2024 includes results from new surveys asking about Radio Martí programming consumption in markets outside of Cuba. This year's data includes OCB audiences in Venezuela, Costa Rica, Ecuador, and Mexico. There is no updated data in FY 2024 for OCB audience inside Cuba.

## A CLOSER LOOK: Awards for USAGM networks' journalism

VOA – Voice of America's commitment to impactful journalism received widespread recognition in FY 2024. VOA China's podcast *My Voice, Our Story: The Young Generation with White Paper in Hand* won the Society of Publishers in Asia's Award of Excellence for its multidimensional portrayal of the 2022 White Paper Movement.



VOA documentary *Jamala: Songs of Freedom*

The documentary *Jamala: Songs of Freedom*, which captures the activism of a Ukrainian singer-songwriter during Russia's invasion, earned a Gold Dolphin at the Cannes Corporate Media & TV Awards. Additionally, VOA's Press Freedom team received the National Press Club's Arthur Rowse Award for *Last of the Watchdogs*, a series exploring the decline of local journalism in the U.S.



Video capture from VOA's *From Fear to Freedom: A Uyghur's Journey*.

At the 2024 New York Festivals TV & Film Awards, VOA secured three gold, two silver, and five bronze awards, tying its record. Gold winners included *From Fear to Freedom: A Uyghur's Journey* and *The Endless Start*, which spotlight human rights issues in Xinjiang and Iran. In the Documentary Series

category at the Gabriel Awards, VOA Spanish took top honors for *Nicaragua: Voices in Exile*, which features accounts of former political prisoners deported by the Ortega government. VOA's 52 *Documentary* series also received the Online Journalism Award and additional accolades from the Gracie Awards and New York Festivals for its compelling storytelling on women's issues worldwide

RFE/RL – In the 2024 New York Festivals TV & Film Awards in April, RFE/RL's Ukrainian Service won a Gold Award for *Silent Deportation*, a documentary addressing forced Crimean Tatar displacement following the 2014 Russian occupation. In the festival's Radio Awards, RFE/RL's Farda received Bronze for their *Vida* podcast.



RFE/RL Video Producer Parisa Sohbaty recording a podcast for Radio Farda, RFE/RL's Persian-language service, called "Vida."

In June, the Society of Publishers in Asia awarded RFE/RL its 2024 SOPA Award for its investigation the prior year into Kazakh and Kyrgyz companies funneling Western technology to Russian firms, describing it as a "tour de force of investigative reporting."

In January 2024, the Investigative Reporters & Editors group awarded RFE/RL's Current Time and Hungarian service a special citation for the IRE Philip Meyer Journalism Award, one of the most prestigious prizes in data journalism. The winning RFE/RL story, "Putin and Orbán's Media Masquerade," showed how Russian and Hungarian propaganda have been interwoven throughout the war in Ukraine.

The Global Investigative Journalism Network named three RFE/RL reports among its Best Investigative Stories in Russian, and two among its Best Stories in Ukrainian. The topics of the recognized reports included Russia’s internet censorship, corruption in Central Asia, and the secretive pharma empire built by the daughter of the President of Tajikistan off lucrative government contracts.



RFE/RL journalist Natasia Arabuli.

In August 2024, Natasia Arabuli of RFE/RL was one of six recipients of the 2024 Free Media Award for her “fearless independent journalism” investigating abuses in the Georgian Orthodox Church and other injustices in Georgia.

**RFA** – Radio Free Asia (RFA) and its media brands, 歪脑 | WHYNOT and BenarNews, enjoyed a successful award season in FY 2024, garnering numerous prestigious recognitions, including a National Edward R. Murrow Award, a Gracie Award, and an award from the Asian American Journalists Association (AAJA). These awards highlighted the breadth of RFA’s journalism and storytelling, with recognized projects covering diverse and pressing issues across Asia. Notable projects included an in-depth look at the ongoing humanitarian crisis in Myanmar, an exploration of the impact and cultural symbolism of Chinese war films, and an engaging series on Chinese-American cuisine and its evolving cultural significance in the United States.

**MBN** – Alhurra’s *Chapters* podcast won gold at the New York Festival Radio Awards, in the Narrative/Documentary Podcast category for the episode, “The Last Days in Kojo.” The program chronicles the details of the day ISIS invaded the Yazidi village named Kojo with firsthand accounts from survivors. This program was also named a People’s Voice Winner for Best Documentary Podcast at the annual Webby Awards. Alhurra.com’s report on AI cloning in media, *Digital Twins* was recognized as a finalist for Best News/Feature Investigative Report at the New York Festivals-TV and Film Awards. At the 45<sup>th</sup> Annual Telly Awards, Alhurra.com’s digital report, *Labaki’s Victims Speak Out* won a Silver prize in the Online-Social Issues category. The network was also recognized with two bronze awards for reports in Online-Social Impact (*Similar but Different- Being Transgender*) and in Online–Public Interest and Awareness (*Digital Twins*).



OCB staff celebrate with their Emmys.

**OCB** – TV Martí won four Regional Emmys(R) at the 2023 National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences Suncoast Chapter Awards event for outstanding programs in Politics/Government News (Cuba Protesta and La Frontera), Politics/Government Long Form Content ( 11): Puestos y Conectados, Capítulo 3, ¿Dónde está mi Hijo?), and Military News (US Coast Guard Repatriates 75 Cubans Migrants). The winning entries and two additional nominated pieces were testaments to OCB/TV Martí’s high journalistic standards in the coverage of significant and impactful topics.



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 2020	FY 2021	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024
<b>VOA</b>					
Target	82	80	82	81	85
Actual	83	81	83	85	86
<b>RFE/RL</b>					
Target	74	75	76	79	79
Actual	75	74	78	78	82
<b>RFA<sup>1</sup></b>					
Target	76	77	78	80	90
Actual	76	77	77	98	98
<b>MBN<sup>2</sup></b>					
Target	80	70	73	74	81
Actual	68	70	70	81	83
<b>OCB<sup>3</sup></b>					
Target	97	97	NA	NA	NA
Actual	97	97	NA	NA	NA

1 **RFA:** FY 2024 results limited to data from Cambodia, Myanmar, and the Cox’s Bazar Rohingya Refugee Camps in Bangladesh.

2 **MBN:** FY 2024 results limited to data from only eight countries/territories.

3 **OCB:** Drop in overall sample size due to security concerns conducting FY 2023 survey, which resulted in too few users for USAGM research analysis of most key performance indicators. No reportable data for FY 2023 or FY 2024.

**INDICATOR:**

**Program Credibility**

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 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 are being combined with previous results in the program credibility indicator. 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.

Until FY 2022, this indicator was 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 were 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 was 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.

#### **ANALYSIS:**

##### **VOA**

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VOA’s strong performance on this metric demonstrates that users around the world find VOA content trustworthy. While growing audiences have historically been associated with lower levels of trust, VOA was able to maintain high credibility while also achieving audience growth. Nine in 10 of VOA brand weekly users in Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Iraqi Kurdistan, Cambodia, Myanmar, Vietnam, Kenya, Nigeria, Niger, Somalia, Zimbabwe, Kosovo, Bosnia, and Guatemala say they trust VOA content. All (99%) of weekly users in Ukraine find VOA trustworthy. In Taiwan, eight in ten of VOA brand weekly users report trust in VOA content.

##### **RFE/RL**

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The Baltics have seen an increase in the trust measure for RFE/RL’s Current Time channel in the past three years as the brand becomes more established in the region. For instance, the trust measure in Latvia for Current Time increased from 64% to 91% during this period. In Afghanistan, this measurement was 91% for Azadi programming. Central Asia has somewhat lower measurements for this metric than other regions, ranging from 66% in Kazakhstan to 79% for Azattyk in Kyrgyzstan. Slight growth for FY 2024 results from inclusion of newly conducted data from Belarus and Ukraine, where RFE/RL brands are seeing high trust among audiences at 88% and 92%, respectively.

##### **RFA**

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FY 2024 credibility metrics are based on Cambodia, Myanmar and the Cox’s Bazar Rohingya Refugee Camps in Bangladesh, all representing audiences where RFA has a longstanding reputation as a trustworthy independent news source among audiences. In FY 2024, the Cox’s Bazar Rohingya Refugee Camps survey was the only new data added, covering Rohingya refugees from Myanmar who are described by the UN as “the most persecuted minority in the

world.” RFA’s Burmese Service has provided exceptional coverage of the violence against the Rohingya in Burmese and Rakhine languages.

## **MBN**

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MBN’s performance on this metric continues to increase, likely because of MBN’s heavy emphasis on quality journalism that is accurate, balanced, and informative. MBN reinforces high journalistic standards with regular internal and external training for content creators and provides journalists with detailed written guidelines to follow for all content produced. The credibility calculation is from the following countries: Algeria, Egypt, Iraq, Lebanon, Morocco, The Palestinian Territories, Saudi Arabia, and Yemen.

## A CLOSER LOOK: Citations of USAGM reporting in influential news outlets

**RFA** – In October 2023, within days of Hamas’ attack within Israel, RFA Korean reported on evidence that Hamas fighters were using weapons sourced from North Korea. RFA’s investigation had cited a video showing a member of Hamas brandishing what appeared to be a North Korean F-7 high-explosive fragmentation rocket. RFA’s report was cited by AP and France24, as well as major South Korean media outlets, prompting Pyongyang to react. The North Korean government called the claims “baseless, homegrown myths” in an article published by the state-run Korean Central News Agency, but the South Korean Joint Chiefs of Staff later issued a press release confirming that Hamas had been using the F-7 rocket.



[RFA web article on North Korean weapons used by Hamas published in the days following the October 7 attacks. Published October 17, 2023.](#)

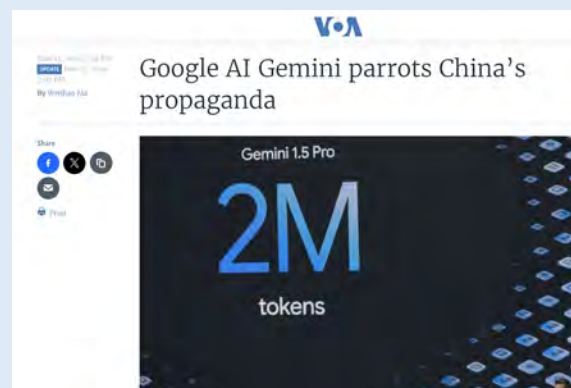
The U.S. State Department’s 2024 Religious Freedom Report cited RFA Cantonese’s coverage of the Kowloon Mosque in Hong Kong raising the PRC flag in compliance with China’s religious guidelines of “patriotism and love of religion” and “Sinicization of Islam.” Meanwhile, RFA Korean coverage was cited 19 times in the U.S. State Department 2023 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices.



[Martí article on immigration from July 10, 2024.](#)

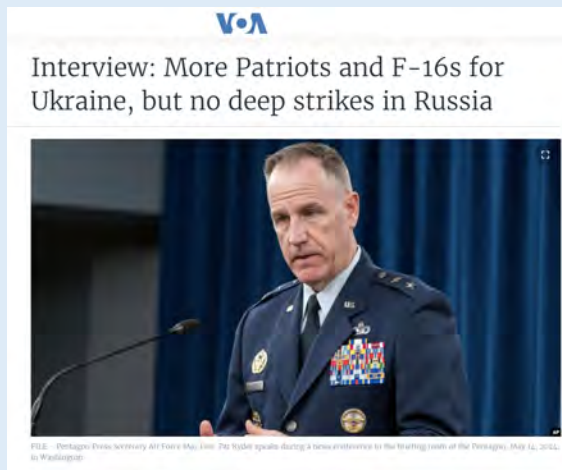
**OCB** – Impactful reports from Martinoticias have garnered significant attention from major news outlets such as The Miami Herald, Diario Las Americas, and other media focused on Cuban affairs that highlighted and cited OCB stories in FY 2024. This widespread coverage has amplified discussions around U.S.-Cuba migration policies, raising public and political awareness and leading to increased scrutiny.

**VOA** – In June, VOA China revealed that Google’s AI assistant, Gemini, provided Mandarin responses aligned with Chinese propaganda, praising Xi Jinping and the CCP while avoiding topics like Xinjiang and human rights abuses. This finding highlighted AI’s potential for bias when trained on selective data. The exclusive report was widely cited globally, including by China Times (Taiwan), Yahoo News (Taiwan), Pos Kota (Indonesia), and the U.S.-based World Journal.



[VOA article on AI bias published June 13, 2024.](#)

After months of close engagement with U.S. and Ukrainian aviators, VOA Ukrainian broke the story on F-16 deliveries to Ukraine, gaining widespread attention. An interview with Pentagon Press Secretary Major General Pat Ryder was cited 112 times, and an exclusive with Ukrainian pilot known by his call sign, "Phantom," was reprinted by 80 outlets across Ukrainian, Western, and Russian media. Coverage included a popular interview with retired U.S. Air Force Lt. Col. Dan Hampton, also quoted by Newsweek and Yahoo News.

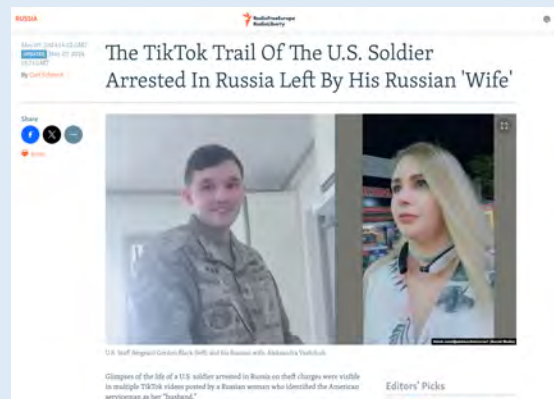


[VOA Ukrainian interview with Pentagon Press Secretary Major General Pat Ryder published July 14, 2024.](#)

**MBN** – MBN is cited throughout the Arabic-language press on a daily basis. Al Arabiya Television published statements in January 2024 from Alhurra's interview with Lebanon's caretaker PM Najib Mikati regarding the United States' proposal to reach a ceasefire agreement between Lebanon and Israel and the implementation of the UN Security Council Resolution 425, calling for Israel to withdraw and establishing the UN Interim Force in Lebanon. During the interview, Mr. Mikati also discussed Hamas' presence in Lebanon and Hezbollah's attacks on Israel.

In May, the prominent pan-Arab daily newspaper Al-Quds Al-Arabi cited statements aired on Alhurra in May 2024 from military experts refuting social media posts claiming that a space laser weapon targeted the helicopter carrying Iran's President and Foreign Minister causing the crash that resulted in their deaths. While in September, the Turkish news agency Anadolu Ajansi and the Turkish public broadcaster TRT Arabic cited Alhurra for its report on US Secretary of State Antony Blinken's visit to Egypt to discuss a potential ceasefire and hostage release in Gaza.

**RFE/RL** – In May 2024, investigative journalists from RFE/RL's Russian Service, Balkan Service and Central Newsroom mobilized to find what could be learned about Gordon Black, the U.S. soldier whose arrest in Far Eastern Russia was dominating headlines. The result was an exclusive story revealing glimpses of Black's life via multiple TikTok videos posted by a Russian woman who identified the American serviceman as her "husband." The story was published in English, Russian, and Serbian, and was cited by numerous international media outlets including ABC World News Tonight, NBC News, Reuters, CNN, The Washington Post, USA Today, Politico, Axios, and VOA.



[RFE/RL journalists uncovered the digital trail of the life U.S. serviceman Gordon Black who was arrested in Russia after visiting his girlfriend.](#)

IMPACT OBJECTIVE 1

Impact Performance Goal 1.3:

**Provide programming that increases audiences’ perceptions of their understanding of current events**

**KNOWLEDGE OF INTERNATIONAL NEWS<sup>1</sup>**

*Percentage of weekly audience who agree that the broadcasts have increased their knowledge of news about the rest of the world*

	FY 2020	FY 2021	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024
<b>VOA</b>					
Target	75	76	76	76	83
Actual	75	75	75	83	83
<b>RFE/RL</b>					
Target	75	76	79	75	78
Actual	75	78	78	78	79
<b>RFA<sup>2</sup></b>					
Target	53	51	52	60	85
Actual	52	51	51	91	91
<b>MBN</b>					
Target	70	70	55	60	75
Actual	65	50	60	75	72
<b>OCB<sup>3</sup></b>					
Target	80	80	80	NA	NA
Actual	96	96	NA	NA	NA

- 1 Title of the reporting table for this performance goal updated in FY 2024 from “Knowledge of World News.”
- 2 **RFA:** FY 2024 results limited to data from Cambodia, Myanmar and the Cox’s Bazar Rohingya Refugee Camps in Bangladesh.
- 3 **OCB:** Drop in overall sample size due to security concerns conducting FY 2023 survey, which resulted in too few users for USAGM research analysis of most key performance indicators. No reportable data for FY 2023 or FY 2024.

**INDICATOR:**

**KNOWLEDGE OF INTERNATIONAL NEWS**

USAGM’s revised core questionnaire has been tested in multiple markets since FY 2022 and has 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” is being replaced by “knowledge of international news” in USAGM performance reporting.

Until FY 2022, this indicator was 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 were 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 was 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.”

#### ANALYSIS:

##### VOA

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As forecasted, VOA has maintained a strong performance on this metric. VOA’s extensive and comprehensive coverage of international news drives a high level of agreement on this question across different markets. Close to 90% or more of VOA brand weekly users in Indonesia, Cambodia, Myanmar, Taiwan, Iraqi Kurdistan, Afghanistan, Liberia, Kenya, Mali, Serbia, Ukraine, Nicaragua, and El Salvador report that VOA has increased their knowledge of news about the rest of the world.

##### RFE/RL

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Increase in the knowledge of world events was observed in the Baltic countries for RFE/RL’s Current Time channel from 2019 to 2022, as the brand became more established in the region. The slight gains in measured increase in knowledge of the world news indicator is driven by Tajikistan and Ukraine data, where 82% and 83% of the population reported that the services’ programming increases their knowledge about world events. Additionally, 87% of the surveyed respondents in Russia, one RFE/RL’s largest markets, assess that the service’s journalism increases their knowledge of events in the world.

##### RFA

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In FY2024, RFA experienced no change in this metric. The only new data included was from the Cox’s Bazar Rohingya Refugee Camps, which represents a small population that rated RFA very highly in this metric. Previous years had limited opportunities for substantial growth because of the overwhelming size of RFA’s China audience relative to its other markets, which weighed this metric heavily toward lower measurements from China.

## MBN

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The slight decrease in this measure is likely due in part to relatively low percentages of Alhurra users in Saudi Arabia and Egypt who said the network increases their knowledge of international news, at 54.5% and 62.8% for Saudi Arabia and Egypt, respectfully. It obscures much higher percentages in countries such as Lebanon (87.9%), Morocco (88.1%). It also likely reflects, in part, audiences' higher interest in these countries in local issues than in international events. Included in this indicator's results for FY 2024 are: Algeria, Egypt, Iraq, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, the Palestinian Territories, Saudi Arabia, and Yemen.



## A CLOSER LOOK: Programming responding to crisis situations



*Alhurra reporters have led coverage of the Hamas attack on Israel and its aftermath.*

**MBN** – Alhurra’s television and digital platforms went into breaking news coverage immediately after the October 7<sup>th</sup> 2023 Hamas attack on Israel, with minute-by-minute updates from Gaza, the West Bank, south Lebanon, and Israel. As the war shifted to Gaza, MBN correspondents risked their lives, sleeping in their cars near hospitals to avoid Israeli rocket attacks. At a time of heightened emotion across all media outlets in the region, MBN’s coverage was a bastion of accurate news that fact-checked the rampant rumors flooding social media. MBN was the only Arabic language network covering the stories of the Israeli people and their suffering, while never ceasing reporting on Israel’s military strikes and more importantly, the humanitarian situation on the ground in Gaza. MBN journalists also served as correspondents for other USAGM networks, providing daily footage and interviews distributed throughout the organization.

**RFE/RL** – In June 2024, RFE/RL extensively covered the Summit on Peace in Ukraine, which took place on in Switzerland. Current Time aired the sole live video broadcast for Russian-speaking audiences, additionally featuring analysis from leading experts and simultaneous translation of press events from participating delegates. The Ukrainian Service

covered the event not only for RFE/RL, but also for affiliates and independent media, such as Suspilne (Ukraine’s public broadcaster), Ukrainska Pravda, 1+1, and other Ukrainian TV channels.

**VOA** – When Hamas launched its attack on Israel on October 7, 2023, VOA quickly mobilized to deliver comprehensive, real-time coverage across divisions. VOA Persian provided on-the-ground reporting and interviews with key figures, including former Israeli leaders and families of hostages. As the conflict unfolded, VOA Persian captured rare perspectives from Iranian citizens who criticized Hamas—a sentiment repressed within Iran. For audiences in South Asia, VOA Urdu dispatched a language-qualified reporter to Israel, resulting in significant viewer engagement, with Facebook video views surging by 267% in the first week.



*VOA Spanish provided coverage of the Venezuelan elections to audiences across the Southern hemisphere.*

During Venezuela’s elections, VOA Spanish was a primary information source for regional affiliates, including Caracol TV (Colombia) and TV Azteca (Mexico). VOA’s in-depth coverage over the election weekend generated over 4.37 million video views in just three days, contributing to a 185% increase in daily site visits and totaling 17 million views across platforms in July.

IMPACT OBJECTIVE 1

Impact Performance Goal 1.4:

**Provide programming that is influential with audiences**

**HELPS FORM OPINIONS ON IMPORTANT ISSUES'**  
*Percentage of weekly audience who agree that broadcasts help them form opinions on important issues*

	FY 2020	FY 2021	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024
<b>VOA</b>					
Target	63	64	64	66	78
Actual	64	64	71	78	76
<b>RFE/RL</b>					
Target	56	54	59	66	66
Actual	53	58	65	64	65
<b>RFA<sup>2</sup></b>					
Target	87	90	90	90	82
Actual	85	93	93	80	80
<b>MBN</b>					
Target	80	65	70	75	75
Actual	63	NA	71	72	69
<b>OCB<sup>3</sup></b>					
Target	75	75	75	NA	NA
Actual	75	75	NA	NA	NA

1 Title of the reporting table for this performance goal updated in FY 2024 from “Helps Form Opinions of Important Topics.”  
 2 **RFA:** FY 2024 results limited to data from Cambodia, Myanmar and the Cox’s Bazar Rohingya Refugee Camps in Bangladesh.  
 3 **OCB:** Drop in overall sample size due to security concerns conducting FY 2023 survey, which resulted in too few users for USAGM research analysis of most key performance indicators. No reportable data for FY 2023 or FY 2024.

**INDICATOR:**

**Helps Audiences Form Opinions on Important Issues**

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 asking past-week listeners/ viewers/online users of [language] whether they agree or disagree that “[brand] helps me to form opinions on important issues.” As results from the new questionnaire become available, USAGM is reporting 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”).

Until FY 2022, this indicator was determined by a question in representative surveys asking audiences whether the broadcasts have helped them form opinions on important topics. The answers were registered on a four-point scale based on the following response options: “a great deal,” “somewhat,” “very little,” or “not at all.” This indicator was 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.”

## ANALYSIS:

### VOA

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VOA experienced a slight drop for this metric in FY 2024 compared to historically high 78% measured in FY 2023. The new estimate, however, remains higher than FY 2020 - FY 2022 trend. As measured in recent surveys, close to nine in 10 of VOA brand weekly users in Afghanistan, Cambodia, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Kenya, Liberia, Nigeria, and Tanzania agree that VOA helps them to form opinions on important issues.

### RFE/RL

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FY 2024 actuals for this indicator were only slightly lower than expected in several markets, although Serbia and Ukraine showed high measures for this indicator. The brand is highly respected in Serbia as indicated by 85% of respondents reporting the brand helps form opinion.

### RFA

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FY2024 data is from Cambodia, Myanmar and Cox's Bazar Rohingya Refugee Camps only. Though RFA performed well in this metric in the new FY2024 survey of Cox's Bazar Rohingya Refugee Camps in Bangladesh (93.6%), the camps' small population size was overshadowed by lower measurements from other markets. Previous FY2021 - FY2022 metric was derived only from Cambodia, where programming is extremely influential.

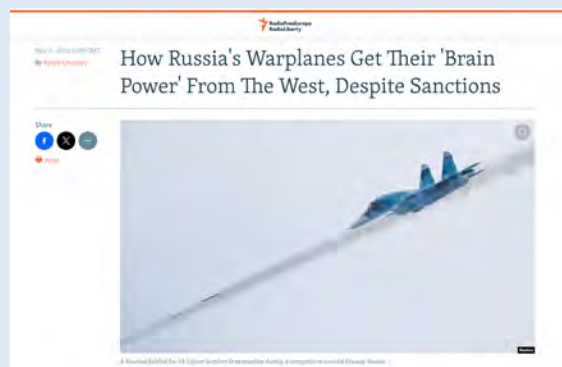
### MBN

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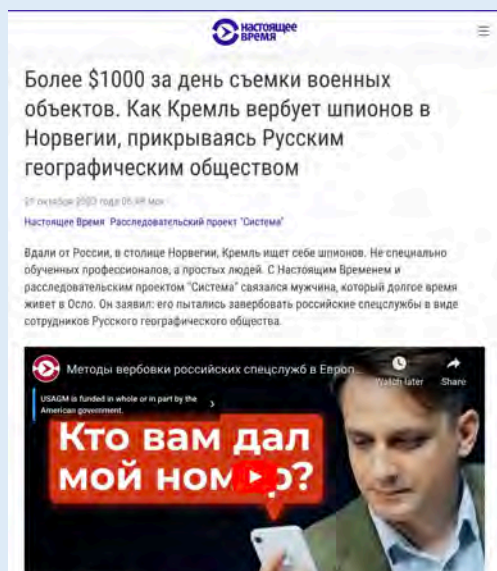
Though answers were positive on this metric for more than two-thirds of respondents, a slight decrease overall was attributable to a smaller majority of respondents in Saudi Arabia (58.8%) and the Palestinian Territories (54.5%) who agreed that Alhurra helps form their opinions on important issues. Percentages were higher among Alhurra past-week users in Algeria (85.0%), Yemen (72.7%), and Libya (73.8%). Countries included in this indicator’s FY 2024 measurement are: Algeria, Libya, the Palestinian Territories, Saudi Arabia, and Yemen.

## A CLOSER LOOK: Original investigative reporting

**RFE/RL** – In FY24, RFE/RL’s investigative efforts shed light on critical issues across regions marked by political repression, corruption, and disinformation. Following the death of Wagner Group leader Yevgeny Prigozhin, RFE/RL’s Ukrainian and Russian teams revealed that Redut, presented as a private military company, is run by Russian military intelligence (GRU) to recruit soldiers for the Kremlin’s war in Ukraine, with their findings widely cited by media outlets. In Norway, investigations by RFE/RL’s Current Time and Systema units exposed a Russian spy recruitment scheme disguised as the Russian Geographical Society, offering payments for intelligence, and included insights from Norway’s Police Intelligence head, Hanne Blomberg.



[RFE/RL’s Schemes investigation on firms evading sanctions led to several firms being added to an updated U.S. sanctions list.](#)



[Current Time and Systema investigative unit exposed a Russian spy recruitment ring.](#)

In April 2024, the Ukrainian service’s investigative project *Schemes* revealed how Russia’s military circumvents Western sanctions to acquire electronic components for warplanes used in its invasion of Ukraine, leading to the inclusion of several implicated firms on an updated U.S. sanctions list by the Treasury Department in August. Additionally, a November 2023 investigation by RFE/RL’s Balkan service uncovered that Serbian companies were exporting dual-use goods to Russia, despite President Aleksandar Vucic’s pledge against facilitating sanctions evasion, resulting in swift responses from the U.S. and EU and the subsequent addition of the firm Avio Chem to the UK’s sanctions list. Moreover, a January 2024 investigation by RFE/RL’s Moldovan service and Russian-language Systema unit exposed that Western suppliers continued shipping aircraft parts to Russia in 2023, prompting the Moldovan government to expedite its compliance with EU sanctions.

The Uzbek service highlighted the December 2023 energy crisis, where protests over fuel shortages led to significant government policy changes, despite local media suppression. Radio Farda reported on financial mismanagement at Iran’s state broadcaster, which undermined critical infrastructure funding, while the Azeri service uncovered President Ilham Aliyev’s family’s control over four banks, violating antitrust laws. Additionally, the Tajik service published information on imprisoned government critics, igniting discussions on unjust sentencing practices among social media users.

**VOA** – VOA Russian’s investigative work on Russian disinformation was cited by the FBI and DOJ in an affidavit as the U.S. acted against Kremlin-backed efforts to disrupt U.S. elections. This reporting profiled Ilya Gambashidze, a key figure behind the “Doppelganger” disinformation campaign.



[This Wall Street Journal explainer on China's Hydropower construction features Tibetan video footage from RFA.](#)

**RFA** – In February 2024, RFA published a series of exclusive reports on rare protests against China's government in the Sichuan province in response to the start of a massive dam project expected to displace multiple Tibetan villages and monasteries. Initial protests led to the arrest and mistreatment of Tibetan monks and residents, and news coverage of that led to further large-scale protests and the arrests of more than 1,000 Tibetans. RFA shared citizen video footage of these events with other networks, including The Wall Street Journal. WSJ highlighted RFA's footage and images in an extensive feature story as well as a 7-minute explainer video on the impact of hydropower construction inside the PRC. In August 2024, RFA also used citizen footage and satellite imagery to confirm an exclusive story about the destruction of a 135-year-old Buddhist monastery in Qinghai after the construction of a dam, which submerged the monastery in rising waters.

**MBN** – Alhurra's investigative unit focused on reporting on China, Russia, and Iran's influence in the region. In FY 2024, Alhurra Investigates uncovered the Chinese technology that Iran uses to monitor and track its citizens. The program also spoke to Ukrainian women who were victims of rape by

Russian soldiers, a story not covered in the mainstream Arab press. The investigative unit provided exclusive coverage of the harrowing experiences of Ukrainian women who suffered sexual violence at the hands of Russian soldiers, bringing attention to the humanitarian crisis often absent from mainstream Arab media narratives.



[Martínoticias reported on the former prosecutor of four pro-democracy protesters sentenced to prison time who entered the U.S. and applied for asylum.](#)

**OCB** – In June 2024, Martínoticias launched an investigative report about a former Cuban prosecutor, who sought several years of prison time for participants in the July 11th protests in Cuba, and her plans to enter the U.S. from Mexico. Her work for Cuba's autocratic government resulted in prison sentences for four pro-democracy protesters from 3 years to 4 years or more. In response, U.S. representatives sent letters to the State Department and Homeland Security, urging them to deny entry to the former prosecutor. Months later, Martínoticias documented the presence of the prosecutor in Houston, Texas, after she entered the U.S. through CBP One. She is currently awaiting an asylum hearing scheduled for April 2025.

## 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 campaigns, extremist propaganda, and digital authoritarianism.

USAGM prioritizes reaching audiences in areas where extremist and foreign propaganda stymie free, open, democratic societies, thus threatening U.S. 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 and its networks 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;**
- **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 to outside audiences through expanded translation capabilities;**
- **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 U.S., to present a broad array of political views and debates.**

USAGM tracks its progress in achieving Impact Objective 2 with the following performance goals:

## IMPACT OBJECTIVE 2

### Impact Performance Goal 2.1:

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

COUNTRY OR REGION <sup>1</sup>	FY 2020 Actual	FY 2021 Actual	FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Target	FY 2024 Actual
Increase or maintain weekly audiences in:						
Iraq <sup>2</sup>	62%	72%	72% (FY 2021)	34%	34%	34%
Nigeria	19% (Jul 2018)	19% (Jul 2018)	33%	33% (FY 2022)	33%	33% (FY 2022)
Afghanistan <sup>3</sup>	69% (Jul 2018)	69% (Jul 2018)	66%	66% (FY 2022)	45%	66% (FY 2022)
Pakistan	5.3% (Jan 2019)	5.3% (Jan 2019)	5.3% (Jan 2019)	5.7%	5.7%	5.7% (FY 2023)
Former FATA region <sup>4</sup>	26% (Jun 2015)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

- The countries and regions listed above were selected by USAGM experts and represent a subset of those that the USAGM networks target with programming that provides news and information to counter extremist messaging. The selection of countries in this section was updated during FY 2024 for FY 2025 performance reporting.
- FY 2023 measured reach for MBN in Iraq declined amidst significant pressure on production and broadcasts. Radio Sawa's past-week reach decreased to 3.9% (from 20.8% in 2017) following the Iraqi government's shutdown of FM transmitters in Baghdad and Al Hilla. Alhurra's past-week reach declined from 2020 after MBN scaled back Baghdad operations due to staff safety concerns after Iraqi government pressure over Alhurra reporting on corruption.
- FY 2022-2024 Afghanistan actual results are based on June 2022 national survey of mobile phone owners, covering only 58% of the Afghan population, as opposed to the nationally representative survey in FY 2018. New Afghanistan survey field work in FY 2024 was interrupted by government interference, and USAGM is still evaluating the usability of the data collected.
- The last USAGM probability survey of the Merged Tribal Areas (MTA or "Ex-FATA") was conducted in June 2015, outside of the five-year reporting window for USAGM research. USAGM has sought permission from local authorities to conduct a new survey in the Tribal Areas of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa without success. In 2023 USAGM obtained data from a convenience sample of residents or recent migrants from the Merged Tribal Areas. Results showed that 26.1% of surveyed respondents access a USAGM brand on a weekly basis, with VOA reaching 22.4% of respondents and RFE/RL reaching 10.3% of respondents.

### INDICATOR:

Measured weekly audience is explained above 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.

## A CLOSER LOOK:

# Programming and impact in environments subject to extremism

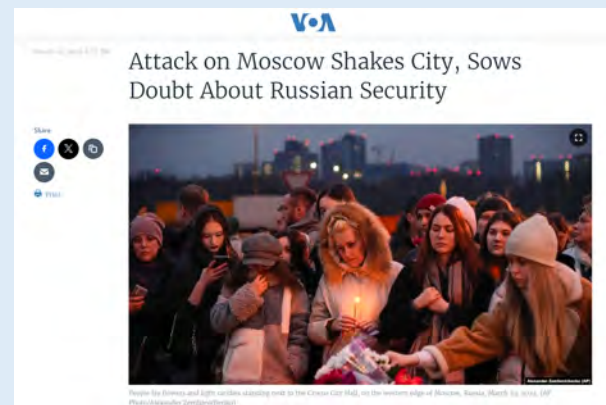


MBN's *Raise Your Voice* project covers stories about the root cause and impact of extremism across the Middle East.

MBN – Extremism is a frequently addressed topic for MBN across multiple media platforms. Alhurra's coverage combines human stories with broader analysis, an approach that fosters essential discussions on security and counter-radicalization. In July 2024, after a mass shooting by ISIS at a Shia mosque in Oman, Alhurra.com immediately covered the regional security implications following this first ISIS attack in the country as well as Oman and the U.S.'s response to the tragedy. The program *Raise Your Voice* published an article uncovering significant disagreements between ISIS's central command and its Afghanistan branch. The Afghanistan faction persistently defies central directives, including the establishment of an independent media institution and the formation of a separate "Sharia Council" issuing fatwas that contradict central rulings. Leaked documents reveal ISIS's central command's discontent with these deviations. The *Raise Your Voice* website published an article examining in depth the possibilities that

Abdul Qadir Mumin, the leader of ISIS in Somalia, might be the same person as Abu Hafis al-Hashimi, whom ISIS declared as its global leader in August 2023. The articles explore the reasons that could push the organization to relocate its global leadership to Africa.

RFE/RL – In addition to Current Time and RFE/RL Russian extensively covering the March 2024 terrorist attack in Moscow, the Tajik Service tapped its local journalists to visit the family homes of three of the accused suspects in the attack -- producing an exclusive video profile viewed 1.7 million times on YouTube. RFE/RL's Romanian Service also worked with a Bulgarian research organization to expose the role of the Russian Embassy in Bucharest in propagating Kremlin narratives about the attack on Facebook.



[VOA Russian reported on the ISIS attack at Moscow's Crocus City Hall.](#)

VOA – VOA Russian attracted a large audience with its coverage of the March 2024 ISIS-related terrorist attack at Moscow's Crocus City Hall, which left 145 dead and over 550 injured. The broadcast, VOA Russian's most-watched stream to date, included real-time updates, expert analysis, and on-the-ground footage which later disproved Kremlin claims of Ukrainian involvement.



## IMPACT OBJECTIVE 2

### Impact Performance Goal 2.2:

### Reach audiences in information-denied environments

COUNTRY OR REGION <sup>1,2</sup>	FY 2020 Actual	FY 2021 Actual	FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Target <sup>1</sup>	FY 2024 Actual
Increase or maintain weekly audiences in:						
China <sup>3</sup>	6.2% (FY 2017)	6.2% (FY 2017)	6.2% (FY 2017)	NA	NA	NA
Vietnam	3.6% (FY 2016)	11%	6.4%	6.4% (FY 2022)	6.4%	6.4% (FY 2022)
Laos	2.4% (FY 2017)	4.7%	4.7% (FY 2021)	4.3%	4.3%	4.3% (FY 2023)
Turkmenistan	6.1% (FY 2019)	6.1% (FY 2019)	6.1% (FY 2019)	6.1% (FY 2019)	6.1%	NA
Uzbekistan	1.6% (FY 2017)	1.6% (FY 2017)	N/A	N/A	NA	11%
Iran	23% (FY 2018)	19%	19% (FY 2021)	19% (FY 2021)	19%	19% (FY 2021)
Azerbaijan	3.5% (FY 2016)	N/A	5.7% (FY 2022)	5.7% (FY 2022)	5.7%	5.7% (FY 2022)
Cuba <sup>4</sup>	11% (FY 2017)	11% (FY 2017)	NA	4.1%	4.1%	4.1% (FY 2023)

- Selected countries include those targeted by USAGM networks, in which the agency has been able to conduct research, that have the lowest press freedom scores on external indices. The selection of countries in this section was updated during FY 2024 for FY 2025 performance reporting.
- USAGM networks continue to serve and monitor impact in other information-denied environments where fully representative survey data is not currently obtainable, including: North Korea, Eritrea, Syria, Tibet, and Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region.
- No new reportable survey data for China since FY 2018.
- FY 2023 decline in OCB reach in Cuba linked to sharp decline in radio news consumption since 2017 survey, as well as users migrating to digital platforms being unable to access OCB websites blocked by the government and pressure from a 2023 law threatening that engagement with “enemy” outlets via social media can be penalized if considered to “subvert the constitutional order.”

#### INDICATOR:

Measured weekly audience is explained above 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.

## A CLOSER LOOK:

# Balancing journalist safety with exceptional reporting

**VOA** – The Creole Service partnered with USAGM to provide safety training for 15 Haiti-based journalists working in increasingly dangerous conditions. The program, led by Global Journalist Security (GJS), covered essential survival skills, including navigating hostile areas, managing interactions with armed groups, digital security, and emergency first aid. Shortly after the training, one of the Haitian journalists was kidnapped by gangs in Port-au-Prince. During his 17-day captivity, the journalist utilized the safety protocols learned in the training to stay safe, ultimately securing his release unharmed. This incident highlights the critical importance of equipping journalists with practical tools to navigate high-risk environments effectively.



*Haitian journalists receive journalist safety training in January 2024.*



*Alhurra reporter and Burke Award winners Wesam Yasin and Amir S.A. Altorok report from Gaza.*

**MBN** – The escalation of Hamas-Israeli conflict on October 7, 2023, created immense challenges for MBN's Gaza team, who reported under extraordinary danger. They documented Israeli airstrikes, civilian struggles, first-responder efforts, and exploitation by profiteers while enduring the same hardships, including displacement and resource shortages. Strict security protocols and close coordination with USAGM and U.S. partners ensured some protection for staff. The team's exceptional coverage earned correspondents Wesam Yasin, Saif R.J. Alswaitti, and videographer Amir S.A. Altorok the 2024 Burke Award for journalistic courage and excellence.

**RFA** – In FY 2024, RFA delivered objective news to audiences in closed media environments while prioritizing journalist safety. This delicate balance was evident in the decision to close RFA's Hong Kong bureau after the passage of the "Safeguarding National Security Ordinance" in March 2024, granting authorities sweeping powers to prosecute dissent. References to RFA as a "foreign" entity, the departure of other media outlets, and prosecutions

of local journalists underscored the risks. Despite removing full-time staff, RFA maintained strong audience engagement with critical reporting on unemployment, commemorations of the 2019 protests, and corporate pressures on the Consumer Council.



*RFA's Hong Kong journalists continued to report after RFA's bureau in Hong Kong was closed.*



**RFE/RL** – The arrest of Tatar-Bashkir journalist Alsu Kurmasheva on October 18, 2023, highlighted the heightened risks faced by RFE/RL journalists. A successful advocacy

campaign secured her release and led to revamped processes for high-risk travel, ensuring thorough risk assessment and collaboration. This approach allowed RFE/RL to continue critical reporting, including civilian perspectives in Donetsk, post-election turmoil in Georgia, and investigative exposés on energy contracts in Uzbekistan.



*RFE/RL's Alsu Kurmasheva with her family at Andrews Air Force base after she was released from Russian custody in a prisoner exchange on August 1, 2024.*

## IMPACT OBJECTIVE 2

### Impact Performance Goal 2.3:

## Reach audiences in environments targeted by state-sponsored disinformation campaigns

Country <sup>1</sup>	FY 2020 Actual	FY 2021 Actual	FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Target	FY 2024 Actual
Increase or maintain weekly audiences in:						
The Russian Federation	7.7% (FY 2018)	7.7% (FY 2018)	11%	11% (FY 2022)	11%	8.7%
Ukraine	18% (FY 2016)	21% (FY 2021)	21% (FY 2021)	21% (FY 2021)	15%	34%
Moldova	32% (FY 2020)	32% (FY 2020)	32% (FY 2020)	32% (FY 2020)	32%	32% (FY 2020)
Kazakhstan	9.6% (FY 2017)	9.6% (FY 2017)	9.4%	9.4% (FY 2022)	9%	9.4% (FY 2022)
Tajikistan	11% (FY 2017)	11% (FY 2017)	11%	18%	18%	18% (FY 2023)
Estonia	13% (FY 2020)	13% (FY 2020)	13% (FY 2020)	23%	23%	23% (FY 2023)
Latvia	14% (FY 2020)	14% (FY 2020)	14% (FY 2020)	15%	15%	15% (FY 2023)
Lithuania	12% (FY 2020)	12% (FY 2020)	12% (FY 2020)	26%	26%	26% (FY 2023)

<sup>1</sup> The countries 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 disinformation. The selection of countries in this section was updated during FY 2024 for FY 2025 performance reporting.

#### INDICATOR:

Measured weekly audience is explained above 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.

CONTEXTUAL INDICATORS:

FREEDOM HOUSE RANKINGS	# of USAGM target countries/regions ranked as:		
	“Not Free” <i>(out of 67 Total)</i>	“Partly Free” <i>(out of 59 Total)</i>	“Free” <i>(out of 84 Total)</i>
2024 Freedom in the World	64	54	23

REPORTERS WITHOUT BORDERS RANKINGS	# of USAGM target countries/regions ranked as:				
	“Very Serious” <i>(36 Total)</i>	“Difficult” <i>(49 Total)</i>	“Problematic” <i>(50 Total)</i>	“Satisfactory” <i>(37 Total)</i>	“Good” <i>(8 Total)</i>
2024 World Press Freedom Index	34	45	34	14	1

## A CLOSER LOOK: Countering malign influence

**RFE/RL**— Current Time’s media literacy project *Smotri v Oba* (“Footage vs. Footage”) continued to turn the tables on Russian propaganda programs in FY 2024, debunking the Kremlin’s disinformation about Russia’s war on Ukraine. RFE/RL transformed *Smotri v Oba* from a weekly news program to a rapid-response digital-first project that consistently garners millions of views across the program’s social media. It’s popular reports tackle timely issues, such as debunking Vladimir Putin’s interview with Tucker Carlson, Russian media reactions to Texas’s efforts to take control of the U.S.-Mexico border, and Russia’s cyber war on Ukraine.



*Smotri v Oba* (“Footage vs. Footage”) host *Andrey Cherkasov*

Also in FY 2024, RFE/RL’s Balkan Service infiltrated a Telegram group that was targeting anti-war Russian dissidents in Serbia, and pre-bunked disinformation claiming that the dissidents were a destabilizing factor. Thanks to RFE/RL’s reporting, the Telegram channels were shut down before the disinformation could go viral.

**OCB**— *MartiVerifica* features a dedicated website focused on detecting and fact-checking disinformation from the Cuban government, while also producing counterpoint articles and audiovisual media content for Facebook, YouTube, X, WhatsApp, Instagram, and Telegram. OCB also continued its work with StopFake.org in FY 2024, countering Russian disinformation about its Ukraine invasion. The project earned acclaim at the 2023 Global Summit on Disinformation organized by the Inter American Press Association (IAPA).



*OCB’s MartiVerifica site.*

**VOA**— VOA China, in collaboration with Taiwan’s Doublethink Lab, used data mining to expose PRC disinformation during the U.S. election, identifying China-linked accounts on X and TikTok that spread misleading narratives. This joint effort led to the removal of “MAGAflage,” a network of 11 pro-Beijing accounts, highlighting VOA China’s effectiveness in combatting disinformation.



[\*VOA China article outlines Chinese misinformation strategies on social media. Published September 28, 2024.\*](#)

VOA Ukrainian’s exclusive report on Russian-operated scam sites gathering Ukrainians’ personal data was widely cited by over 50 media outlets, including *Ukrayinska Pravda* and *TSN*. U.S. defense officials revealed these sites may be part of a strategy to detain family members in occupied areas.



VOA launched a new radio program, Fulani Voices to reach African youth across 14 African countries.

VOA Africa launched *Fulani Voices*, a 30-minute weekly program in its 49th broadcast language targeting Fulani youth across 14 countries in West and Central Africa that are vulnerable to malign information campaigns. VOA Africa’s series, *China in Africa*, investigates the impact of unregulated Chinese investments on local industries across the continent, from fishing in Angola to garment competition in Ethiopia. The series explores how these investments reshape Africa’s economy and highlights the need for equitable development. VOA Deewa conducted street theaters in Pakistan’s Pashtun regions in partnership with UNICEF and health officials to counter polio vaccine disinformation. This outreach reached high-vaccine-refusal areas, delivering direct messages on immunization’s importance.



MBN produces the series *Did It Really Happen?* to fact-check misinformation in Arabic media.

**MBN** – With its ethical, fact-based, investigative and explanatory journalism, MBN exposed the malign content pushed by Russia, Iran and China that remains unchecked by regional media. MBN has grown its reporting on this content for the past two years and worked to make the content digital-

friendly and appealing to younger generations. MBN produces a digital series, *Did It Really Happen?* that fact-checks misinformation in Arabic media to provide audiences with the reality of the story. In FY 2024, after a months-long investigation, Alhurra Digital revealed a misinformation campaign on X that spreads anti-West messaging and has strong connections to Saudi Arabia. The campaign utilizes a network of “news accounts” that share the same naming pattern, photos, and graphic designs and even copy each other’s tweets. The campaign gained more followers after the start of the Israel-Hamas war. It has also increased its resources with on-ground correspondents in what could be an attempt to gain more credibility.



RFA’s Asia Fact Check Lab

**RFA** – The network established the Asia Fact Check Lab (AFCL) to counter disinformation in today’s complex media environment through media monitoring, fact-check publications, and in-depth reports to increase readers’ understanding of current affairs internationally. In January 2024, in the lead-up to and during Taiwan’s general election, RFA’s AFCL exposed the manufacturing of fake polls by the pro-China online media outlet “Finger Media” during the Taiwan election. Taiwan’s Minister of Foreign Affairs highlighted the report at a conference. In November 2023, amid the Israel-Hamas war, RFA’s AFCL revealed how misinformation about the conflict has proliferated on social media through AI-generated images and spread by “verified” users.

## Impact Objective 3: Reach and engage underserved audiences, including women, youth, and marginalized populations

In all target markets, the USAGM 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 the target countries are overwhelmingly young - a challenge, but also a chance to connect with a demographic that in many 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 and its networks will:

- **Reach out to groups in target markets 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, especially encouraging their participation as authoritative experts, 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; and**
- **Increase research to understand societal and systemic issues that influence media use by underserved audiences in order to adjust content and delivery decisions.**

USAGM tracks its progress in achieving Impact Objective 3 with the following performance goals:



### IMPACT OBJECTIVE 3

Impact Performance Goal 3.1:

## Increase reach among traditionally underserved demographics, including youth and women<sup>1</sup>

#### PERCENTAGE OF WOMEN IN USAGM AUDIENCE<sup>2</sup>

	FY 2023 Baseline	FY 2024 Target <sup>2</sup>	FY 2024 Actual
USAGM	45.5%	46%	45.3%
VOA	45.5%	46%	45.4%
RFE/RL	44.7%	45%	45.7%
RFA <sup>3</sup>	36.5%	NA	39.9%
MBN	43.4%	43%	44.8%
OCB	64.4%	64%	47.7%

#### PERCENTAGE OF YOUTH (AGES 15- 24) IN USAGM AUDIENCE<sup>2</sup>

	FY 2023 Baseline	FY 2024 Target <sup>2</sup>	FY 2024 Actual
USAGM	28.5%	30%	28.3%
VOA	29.3%	30%	28.8%
RFE/RL	20.3%	20%	20.2%
RFA <sup>3</sup>	25.3%	NA	25.7%
MBN	29.3%	29%	29.1%
OCB	18.8%	19%	10.6%

1 Reported as “Impact Performance Goal 3.2” in USAGM FY 2025 APP/ FY 2023 APR.

2 FY 2023 Baseline and FY 2024 results derived from weighted average of demographic data available from 74 out of 96 surveyed markets. New metric, no data reported for FY 2019-2022.

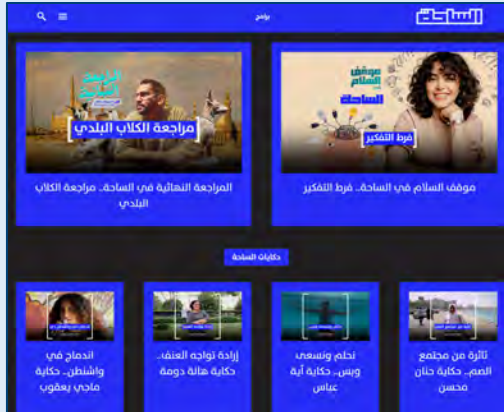
3 No RFA forecast for these metrics in FY 2024 due to uncertainty about which of its markets would be measurable.

#### INDICATORS:

The measures for these performance indicators reflect percent of women and youth (ages 15-24) as a portion of networks’ audiences, based on weighting of measurements from countries with demographic data available in survey results, currently representing 74 of 96 markets.

## A CLOSER LOOK:

# Programming targeting groups underrepresented in USAGM audiences



Elsaha.com site.

**MBN** – In FY 2024, Elsaha.com highlighted the struggles and triumphs of women in the MENA region who face adversity head-on, navigate through a maze of stereotypes and prejudices to realize their aspirations, and defy the status quo. A story of 24-year-old paralympic powerlifter, Fatma Mahrous, highlighted the Para-Olympian's 18 international medals overcoming the challenges of her disability. In Iraq, Alhurra.com reported on women banned from participating in a marathon in the city of Basra in response to pressure from religious figures. The report included activist claims that this incident reaffirms that the situation for women in Iraq has regressed. The report was reposted on the Iraqi Women's League's human rights website and several others. Within 12 hours of the story being posted on social media, there were more than 93,000 views and 680 comments about the decision. In Algeria, MaghrebVoices.com highlighted female breakthroughs in the agricultural sector, challenging traditional gender roles.

**VOA** – In FY 2024, VOA Armenian's project *One Woman's Story*, which shares the journey of a domestic violence survivor, gained 560,000 views in one week. The woman's story of resilience and rebuilding with the help of a support center resonated deeply, especially amid the Nagorno-Karabakh crisis.



VOA Armenian documentary *One Woman's Story* explored the story of a domestic violence survivor.

**RFE/RL** – On International Women's Day, Radio Farda's released *Wellbeing of Women in Iran Based on Major Global Indices*, a report leveraging infographics to compare the challenges faced by Iranian women with those in neighboring countries. Concurrently, Radio Azadi highlighted the resilience of Afghan women under Taliban rule, illustrating the stark differences in their lives before and after the Taliban's resurgence, with an interview of UN Special Rapporteur Richard Bennett. In Pakistan, Radio Mashaal reported on the Aurat March rallies in various cities, focusing on the obstacles faced by female candidates in recent elections and addressing widespread violence against women in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa province.

## Impact Objective 4:

### Overcome censorship to ensure access and connect audiences in closed societies

For almost 70 years, U.S. 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 digital firewalls and surveillance systems to censor and control digital ecosystems, preventing audiences from freely exploring and sharing our 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 unfettered access not only to USAGM networks' content but also to the full spectrum of independent news sources on the internet.

USAGM and its networks 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 and partnerships on internet freedom matters with interagency partners, nonprofits, and the private sector.**

USAGM tracks its progress in achieving Impact Objective 4 with the following performance goal:

## IMPACT OBJECTIVE 4

### Impact Performance Goal 4.1:

## Increase usage of internet freedom products

### MONTHLY ACTIVE USERS OF USAGM PROXY TOOLS (in millions)<sup>1</sup>

	FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Target	FY 2024 Actual
Average monthly active users on USAGM-supported proxy tools	18.4 MM	29.8 MM	NA	45.6 MM

<sup>1</sup> This is a new metric, revised to unique Monthly Active Users (MAUs) from prior “weekly active users” indicator to conform to industry standards for reporting proxy tool usage. Data is unavailable for FY 2020 and FY 2021, and there was no prior target for FY 2024.

### WEEKLY VISITS TO USAGM SITES VIA PROXY TOOLS (in millions)

	FY 2020 Actual	FY 2021 Actual	FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Target	FY 2024 Actual
Average weekly visits to USAGM networks’ sites, via USAGM-supported proxy tools	3.6MM	8.0MM	13.3MM	14.8MM	15.5MM	17.7MM

#### INDICATORS:

The measures for this performance goal reflect various aspects of usage of censorship circumvention tools supported by the Open Technology Fund (OTF) that enable increased access to digital content from USAGM’s networks in repressive environments. The two indicators are (i) the average number of unique monthly active users (MAUs) on the tools, which is a change from prior weekly measure, and (ii) the average weekly visits to USAGM websites through the tools, as measured by the number of landing pages served.

#### ANALYSIS:

Demand for circumvention tools has surged globally in the last few years – and continues to increase – as these have become prerequisites for billions of people to access the free and open internet. By exclusively supporting the per user carrying costs on these tools, OTF has been able to reliably sustain a growing user base.

#### CONTEXTUAL INDICATOR:

FREEDOM HOUSE RANKINGS (only 70 countries ranked)	# of countries with custom USAGM-supported circumvention tools ranked as:			
	Not Free (21 Total)	Partly Free (32 Total)	Free (19 Total)	Not Ranked <sup>1</sup>
2024 Freedom on the Net	12	2	0	5

<sup>1</sup> Afghanistan, Eritrea, Syria, Tajikistan, and Turkmenistan do not have data for ranking in the “Freedom on the Net” index, but all of these countries are ranked as “Not Free” in Freedom House’s Global Freedom Index and classified as “Very Serious Situation” (the least favorable ranking) in RSF’s World Press Freedom Index.

# Impact Objective 5:

## Optimize program delivery and digital engagement

To be effective, USAGM networks must have a clear sense of their target audiences, an ability to articulate a specific editorial proposition for these audiences, and the capability 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 and its networks will:

- Increase distribution on platforms that audiences use – social media, FM, satellite, and digital and broadcast television – migrating away from legacy platforms where they do not reach large or target audiences;
- Expand reach on digital platforms, including new streaming and over-the-top platforms, with compelling content and tailored formats;
- Where possible, 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 distribution capabilities to support growing audience appetite for visual storytelling and incorporate new story-centric production methodologies; and
- Closely monitor shifts in content consumption by young audiences to identify emerging digital platforms for adoption.

USAGM tracks its progress in achieving Impact Objective 5 with the following performance goals:

## IMPACT OBJECTIVE 5

### Impact Performance Goal 5.1: **Increase web traffic**

#### AVERAGE WEEKLY VISITS TO WEBSITES

	FY 2020 Actual	FY 2021 Actual	FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Target <sup>2</sup>	FY 2024 Actual
VOA	10,832,000	15,352,700	18,830,052	15,514,742	16,290,479	16,398,113
RFE/RL	14,466,500	14,040,700	15,810,606	12,470,000	12,844,100	13,534,364
RFA	1,468,100	2,184,300	3,018,000	2,927,405	3,015,227	3,483,163
MBN	3,076,900	3,156,400	3,494,892	2,051,644	3,692,959	2,986,308
OCB	163,900	103,000	82,589	45,800	NA	64,053

#### INDICATOR:

##### Average Weekly Visits:

This indicator measures the total number of sessions for all visitors to USAGM websites and mobile sites over a 52-week period coinciding with the fiscal year. This indicator does not measure visits to social media sites such as Facebook, YouTube, or X, nor some proxy visits. Average weekly visits are derived from online analytic data tracked in Adobe Analytics. Visits are not an indicator of depth of experience (total volume of content consumed, including video, audio, articles, etc.). These figures should be compared across years and not across broadcasters, in part because broadcasters are measuring different numbers of websites and languages. Unlike measured weekly audience reported above, average weekly visits to websites are not unduplicated, meaning one individual who visited a website more than once a week would be counted multiple times.

#### ANALYSIS:

##### VOA

Despite a 39% decline in referrals due to a deprioritization of news content by social media companies, VOA weekly websites visits increased 6% from FY 2023. The growth is attributable to increased referrals from circumvention tools and search engines due to VOA services' efforts to optimize their websites for these platforms. Notably, visits to the VOA Persian website increased by 54% in FY2024, attributable to the service's coverage of the conflict between Israel

and Iran, and VOA Ukrainian’s ongoing coverage of the war with Russia corresponded with an 18% increase in their site visits over FY 2023.

#### **RFE/RL**

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RFE/RL grew weekly web visits in FY 2024 to over one million more per week than in FY 2023. This also surpassed the network’s target for FY 2024.

#### **RFA**

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In FY 2024, RFA experienced a surge in website traffic from high VPN use in Myanmar following major escalations of conflict since October 2023. With over 500 thousand more average weekly visits in FY 2024 compared to FY 2023, RFA went past its target with 19% growth in this metric.

#### **MBN**

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Despite not meeting its aggressive recovery target for FY 2024, MBN grew weekly web visits over 45% since FY 2023, building back usage after the prior year’s drop attributable to a ransomware attack and negative impacts from changes to social media referrals.

#### **OCB**

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After a period of reduced funding and staff cuts, OCB website visits began to rebound in April 2024 as the network expanded its team with additional funding. Despite the permanent blocking of the website in Cuba, and a reduction in web traffic from FY 2023 due to the suspension of Facebook Instant Articles and Google AMP, OCB showed sustained growth in website visits in the second half of FY 2024

## IMPACT OBJECTIVE 5

### Impact Performance Goal 5.2:

## Increase audience interaction via social media

### AVERAGE WEEKLY DIGITAL ENGAGEMENTS<sup>1</sup>

	FY 2020 Actual	FY 2021 Actual	FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Target <sup>1</sup>	FY 2024 Actual
VOA	34,038,462	35,769,231	43,653,846	32,307,692	NA	17,286,731
RFE/RL	23,055,540	21,998,710	32,126,252	22,463,364	NA	11,650,364
RFA	21,426,643	23,473,776	9,449,524	8,573,737	NA	4,345,726
MBN <sup>2</sup>	6,868,691	6,159,861	9,543,532	6,358,526	NA	1,721,029
OCB	193,210	205,075	215,359	198,243	NA	226,497

1 Beginning in FY 2024, this new performance indicator consolidates and replaces two earlier indicators, “Digital Reactions” and “Select Digital Engagements.” There was no FY 2024 target as this is a new metric.

2 MBN: Reported FY 2024 MBN Digital Engagements data from X currently incomplete due to technical issues, performance reporting subject to future correction.

#### INDICATOR:

#### Digital Engagements

This new indicator combines and replaces two metrics previously reported separately: “Digital Reactions” and “Select Digital Engagements.” The new measure reports the total number of average weekly reactions and engagements on measurable USAGM networks’ branded assets across social media platforms. Digital Engagements include: all reactions/comments/shares/post-clicks on Facebook, likes/comments/shares/saves on Instagram, likes/reposts/replies on X, likes/comments/shares on YouTube and likes/comments/shares on TikTok. These engagements are tracked through online analytics by a third-party vendor (Emplifi).

#### ANALYSIS:

Across USAGM networks, recent declines in digital engagements can be attributed to deprioritization of news content on social media platforms, particularly Facebook, Instagram and X. Also, research suggests that social media users in multiple USAGM target markets risk government reprisals and online harassment for publicly showing engagement with sensitive news content. Several of these markets -- including Myanmar, Laos, Vietnam and Cuba -- have seen recent implementations of government policies specifically aimed at curbing online



political dissent. Consequently, many online users are moving from public platforms like Facebook and X to more private spaces such as messaging apps Telegram and WhatsApp. As services shifted focus and resources to YouTube, notably VOA Central News' coverage of the Israel-Hamas conflict, VOA saw a five percent increase in engagements on the platform. Also, despite increased legal threats in Cuba against any manifestation of discontent on social media, OCB content on digital platforms during FY 2024 showed the highest growth in engagement in the last five years.

## IMPACT OBJECTIVE 5

### Impact Performance Goal 5.3: **Increase average weekly digital video views**

#### AVERAGE WEEKLY DIGITAL VIDEO VIEWS<sup>1,2</sup>

	FY 2020 Actual	FY 2021 Actual	FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Target <sup>1</sup>	FY 2024 Actual
VOA	126,003,879	121,355,000	170,943,948	145,775,038	NA	124,250,714
RFE/RL	122,883,803	129,396,148	239,774,863	203,980,719	NA	176,425,044
RFA	63,540,477	47,635,529	25,118,494	30,403,234	NA	21,386,538
MBN	18,772,050	21,109,810	33,261,651	26,111,161	NA	11,242,155
OCB	650,972	1,495,611	491,959	887,727	NA	905,119

1 New performance indicator reported for FY 2023, with no prior targets set for FY 2024.

2 Some video view data from X, Instagram, and Facebook was missing from earlier reporting published in USAGM's FY 2025 APP/FY 2023 APR. Complete figures from previous years are reported here.

#### INDICATOR:

##### Digital Video Views

This indicator measures the average weekly total video views from USAGM networks' branded websites and social media profiles. Views recorded with no minimum view time for branded websites, but minimum video view times for YouTube of 30 seconds and for other social media platforms (e.g. Facebook, Instagram, and X) of three seconds. These video views are tracked through online analytics by Adobe Analytics and third-party vendor (Emplifi).

#### ANALYSIS:

Across USAGM networks, decline in digital video views can be attributed to deprioritization of news content on social media platforms, especially Facebook. In addition, many online users are moving from public platforms like Facebook and X to more private spaces, such as messaging apps Telegram and WhatsApp. Despite algorithm changes which decreased RFA's video views on social media and overall performance in this metric, the network experienced considerable growth of video views on YouTube, which is an increasingly popular platform in its target region. VOA's shift in resources and focus toward platforms other than Facebook helped increase video views on Instagram by 37% in FY 2024, with VOA Persian generating 1.8 billion video views (a 40% increase). Additionally, despite increased legal threats in Cuba and the noted changes to social media algorithms, OCB concluded FY 2024 with the best performance in video view in the past three years. Notably, OCB's increase to 9.8 million video views on YouTube in FY 2024 were more than double those in FY 2023.

## A CLOSER LOOK: Digital Engagement

**RFA** – In collaboration with RFA’s Investigative, Multimedia and Audience teams, RFA Burmese published a five-part series focusing on Myanmar’s young generations joining the fight against the junta. The series, reported from inside Myanmar, generated 5 million combined views across social media platforms in the last two weeks of September 2024.

RFA’s timely coverage of the sudden death of former Chinese Prime Minister Li Keqiang in October 2023 fueled a significant uptick in traffic across RFA Mandarin’s website, with Facebook views increasing by 124% and YouTube views by 79% compared to a week earlier, while its following on X increased by 166%. Around this same time, RFA Mandarin’s reports on the forced disappearance of top foreign affairs diplomat Qin Gang garnered a significant surge in website traffic, as RFA’s story was viewed by over 200,000 unique readers.

In July, RFA Cantonese launched a Threads account to reach younger users in Hong Kong and quickly amassed 63,000 followers within two months.

**VOA** – VOA Ukrainian drew large audiences with a six-hour live broadcast on April 20, 2024, covering the U.S. House vote on Ukraine aid. Featuring live reporting, commentary, and translated debates, the broadcast was restreamed by 10 Ukrainian news outlets, reaching over 450,000 viewers and generating more than 15,000 interactions across platforms. VOA China achieved 182.37 million YouTube views in FY 2024, surpassing CCTV, BBC, and DW in digital reach and engagement on various platforms. In FY 2024, VOA South & Central Asia Division achieved a substantial digital footprint, with 1.73 billion video views across Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and X. Increased engagement with younger audiences boosted Instagram views by over 20%, totaling 300 million for the year.

**MBN** – In September 2024, after Israel targeted Hezbollah sites in Lebanon killing its chief Hassan Nasrallah and several other leaders, media coverage of the assassinations generated sharp increases in engagements and visits to Alhurra digital sites. Engagement on Alhurra’s Facebook page increased over 125% from the prior week and week on week increase in followers for Alhurra on Instagram was 15 times higher than the average weekly increase since January. Visits and article views on MBN’s websites also rose significantly. On Saturday, September 28, 2024, MBN’s websites had over six times as many visits and over 10 times as many article views as the same day in 2023.



*OCB’s Ricardo Quintana reports from a migrant camp.*

**OCB** – Martinoticias digital engagement continues to show growth, particularly from Cuba, despite ongoing restrictions on website access. Notably, the network has experienced an increase in visitors with and without circumvention tools. In November 2023, a video package covering Cubans stranded in Tapachula, Mexico, garnered widespread attention, amassing over 477,000 views on Facebook. Reporter Ricardo Quintana’s reporting on the ground from a makeshift camp with hundreds of Cuban migrants resonated deeply with viewers and drove high social media engagement.

# Impact Objective 6:

## Engage and empower local media and populations

Local media affiliates are the primary means through which USAGM 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 and its networks 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 democratically oriented 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.**

USAGM tracks its progress in achieving Impact Objective 6 with the following performance goals:

IMPACT OBJECTIVE 5

Impact Performance Goal 6.1: **Build strong affiliate relationships**

**Number of affiliations (broadcast, online, and mobile)**

	FY 2020 Actual	FY 2021 Actual	FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Target <sup>1</sup>	FY 2024 Actual
<b>USAGM<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>4,174</b>	<b>4,321</b>	<b>4,284</b>	<b>4,434</b>	<b>4,450</b>	<b>4,886</b>
VOA	3,523	3,633	3,651	3,764	3,800	4,225
RFE/RL	1,228	1,250	1,159	1,281	1,300	1,302
RFA	11	19	18	32	37	38
OCB	NA	NA	NA	37	45	53

<sup>1</sup> USAGM affiliates are counted only once, regardless of whether they carry content from more than one USAGM network.

**INDICATOR:**

**Affiliations**

Affiliates — broadcast stations and digital platforms that carry USAGM content — are a primary intermediary between USAGM’s networks and its 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 (AM) and FM radio, broadcast television, and satellite channels 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:**

USAGM significantly outperformed targets for affiliate growth in FY 2024, primarily with regard to VOA. Media freedom crackdowns combined with poor global economic conditions led to affiliation declines in some areas.

## IMPACT OBJECTIVE 6

### Impact Performance Goal 6.2:

### **Increase engagement with local media partners**

	FY 2020 Actual	FY 2021 Actual	FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Target	FY 2024 Actual
Number of USAGM radio and TV affiliate networks that serve multiple cities or markets	540	564	568	606	610	738
Number of weekly downloads from affiliate content distribution portal, Direct	3,622	4,354	4,600	4,650	4,800	4,750
Number of journalists trained in USAGM media development programs <sup>1</sup>	NA	1,038	1,300	1,530	1,000	1,362

<sup>1</sup> This was a new performance metric in FY 2021. Actuals are not available for FY 2020.

#### 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, the average number of weekly downloads (audio, video, text, or photos) from Direct (USAGM’s affiliate content distribution portal), and the number of journalists who participate in USAGM’s media development programs around the world.

#### ANALYSIS:

USAGM exceeded prior year performance and FY 2024 target for number of affiliates reaching multiple markets. The agency exceeded prior year performance and nearly met target for weekly downloads from Direct, and number of journalists trained through USAGM programs exceeded FY 2024 targets despite a decline from recent record high metric in FY 2023.

## A CLOSER LOOK: U.S. bureaus, co-productions and affiliate successes



VOA Spanish reports from Washington, DC to affiliates across Latin America on election night.

**VOA** – VOA Spanish provided customized election coverage for over 50 Latin American media partners, including live reports and more than 20 video pieces on the 2024 U.S. Presidential Debates. Affiliates downloaded election content over 1,060 times in a single month. VOA also served as a Washington Bureau for over 50 networks across Ukraine, the Balkans, and the South Caucasus, delivering timely U.S. election coverage to the regions. VOA Ukrainian partnered with Suspilne TV to create a bi-weekly podcast on U.S. elections, targeting younger audiences with insights into U.S. politics and resulting in significant engagement across digital platforms.



VOA's StartUP Africa series was co-produced with five media partners across Africa.

VOA Africa's StartUP Africa series, in co-production with major partners like KTN TV in Kenya and Channels TV in Nigeria, continued its exploration of tech startups across the continent.

VOA Swahili launched *Jarida la Wikiendi*, a 30-minute weekend show covering U.S., international, and regional issues in collaboration with Royal Media in Nairobi and Azam TV in Dar es Salaam and featuring analysis with hosts from all three networks. VOA Turkish delivered over 170 live reports for Turkish affiliates in 2024, sometimes lasting up to two hours. Sozcu TV, a top Turkish news channel, now co-produces a weekly show with VOA Turkish.



OCB affiliates download the five-minute newscast Noticias de Cuba from USAGM's Direct platform.

**OCB** – In FY 2024 broadcast affiliates grew from 37 to 50 across Latin America for OCB's daily weekday news segment *Noticias de Cuba* ("Cuba News"). The program launched in May 2022 to provide dedicated news coverage in Cuba, and it now reaches audiences in Colombia, Mexico, Argentina, the Dominican Republic, and Venezuela. Notably, several of these stations extend their coverage to Cuba, ensuring that OCB news about Cuba reaches its own citizens, despite challenges imposed by the regime.

## IMPACT OBJECTIVE 6

### Impact Performance Goal 6.3:

## Increase sharing of USAGM programming

### SHARING

*Percent of weekly audience who shares news heard/read/seen on broadcaster at least once a week*

	FY 2020	FY 2021	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024
<b>VOA</b>					
Target	49	50	49	52	54
Actual	49	50	54	56	NA
<b>RFE/RL</b>					
Target	45	42	47	48	47
Actual	40	47	60	55	NA
<b>RFA</b>					
Target	42	43	44	45	35
Actual	37	44	44	34	NA
<b>MBN</b>					
Target	55	50	58	61	55
Actual	48	55	56	46	NA
<b>OCB</b>					
Target	60	59	56	NA	NA
Actual	56	56	NA	NA	NA

#### INDICATOR TO BE REMOVED:

#### Sharing of Programming

This indicator was previously determined by a question in representative surveys asking audiences how often they share news that they had heard, seen, or read from a USAGM entity with friends or relatives, or with their social network. However, observation and analysis over several years determined this was not a consistent indicator of performance. Notably, in many USAGM markets sharing news critical of authoritarian governments can pose grave personal risks to media consumers. Therefore, this indicator was removed from agency performance tracking and reporting in FY 2024.



# Impact Objective 7:

## Serve as an authoritative source of information on U.S. news, policy, and society

Representing American society and presenting and discussing U.S. policy are legislated mandates for the agency and thus constitute mission imperatives, especially for VOA, OCB, and MBN. Their coverage of the U.S. 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 U.S.; it is about helping them see how the U.S. 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 our 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 U.S. news bureau for affiliate partners and providing English-learning programming.

USAGM and its networks will:

- **Expand the successful U.S. bureau model to more media outlets across the world that wish to engage with us for news, analysis, and perspectives from the United States – building on success 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;**
- **Expand fact-checking sites to timely debunk bad actors’ narratives undermining U.S. values and its relationship with allies;**
- **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.**

USAGM tracks its progress in achieving Impact Objective 7 with the following performance goals:

**IMPACT OBJECTIVE 7**

Impact Performance Goal 7.1:

**Provide programming that increases audiences’ understanding of the U.S.**

**KNOWLEDGE OF U.S. SOCIETY<sup>1</sup>**

*Percentage of weekly audience who agree that the broadcasts increase their knowledge of U.S. society*

	FY 2020	FY 2021	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024
<b>VOA</b>					
Target	56	58	56	62	72
Actual	56	55	62	72	72
<b>MBN</b>					
Target	55	50	54	60	56
Actual	38	54	54	53	46
<b>OCB</b>					
Target	89	89	89	NA	NA
Actual	89	89	NA	NA	NA

<sup>1</sup> Title of the reporting table for this performance goal was updated in FY 2024 from “Understanding of American Society.”

## KNOWLEDGE OF U. S. FOREIGN POLICY<sup>1</sup>

*Percentage of weekly audience who agree that broadcasts increase their knowledge about U.S. government's relationship with the rest of the world*

	FY 2020	FY 2021	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024
<b>VOA</b>					
Target	54	55	54	60	71
Actual	53	53	60	71	73
<b>MBN</b>					
Target	46	55	60	55	68
Actual	47	50	49	68	42
<b>OCB<sup>3</sup></b>					
Target	89	90	89	NA	NA
Actual	89	89	NA	NA	NA

1 Title of the table for this performance goal updated in FY 2024 from “Understanding of United States Foreign Policy.”

2 To limit risk to researchers and respondents, this question was removed from the FY 2023 Cuba media survey due to security concerns around the sensitivity of the topic. Data reported for OCB in USAGM FY 2025 APP / FY 2023 incorrectly duplicated MBN results as entries for OCB in each performance year, but this is now reported correctly.

### INDICATORS:

#### Knowledge of U.S. Society:

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 U.S. society changed to ask past-week listeners/viewers/online users of a USAGM network’s broadcasts in a particular language 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”).

Until FY 2022, this indicator was 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 were 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 was 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.”

## Knowledge of U. S. Foreign Policy:

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 U. S. foreign policy changed to ask past-week listeners/viewers/ online users of a USAGM network’s broadcasts in a particular language 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 is reporting 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”).

Until FY 2022, this indicator was determined by a question in representative surveys asking audiences whether the broadcasts have “increased their understanding of United States foreign policy.” The answers were 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 was 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.”

### ANALYSIS:

#### VOA

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Data suggest that VOA’s focus on telling America’s story is indeed findings success with audiences around the world. VOA maintains a strong performance on these metrics, with considerable gains achieved in surveys already reported in FY 2023 (Indonesia, Cambodia, Kenya, and Mali). Among FY 2024 surveys, Ukraine, Taiwan, Kosovo, Ecuador, Ghana, and Liberia stand out as markets where eight in ten of VOA brand weekly users agree that VOA has increase their knowledge of U.S. culture and U.S. foreign policy.

#### MBN

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MBN generally expects this performance indicator to be relatively low due to the limited interest in US foreign policy among audiences in its target region. The significant decrease this year from FY23 is mostly attributable to low levels of understanding among Saudi and Palestinian users of Alhurra. Only 33.9% and 40.6%, respectively said Alhurra had increased their understanding of US foreign policy. The reported metric for increased knowledge of US foreign policy includes four countries: Algeria (57.1%); Palestinian Territories; Saudi Arabia and Lebanon (61.6%). The reported metric on understanding of US culture includes Algeria, Egypt, Iraq, Lebanon, Palestinian Territories, Saudi Arabia, and Yemen.

## IMPACT OBJECTIVE 7

Impact Performance Goal 7.2:

### **Provide exceptional news and information**

#### **UNIQUENESS**

*Percentage of weekly audience reporting that broadcaster presents information they cannot get from other media*

	<b>FY 2021 Actual</b>	<b>FY 2021 Actual</b>	<b>FY 2022 Actual</b>	<b>FY 2023 Actual</b>	<b>FY 2024 Target</b>	<b>FY 2024 Actual</b>
VOA	28	29	29	NA	NA	NA

#### **INDICATOR TO BE REMOVED:**

##### **Uniqueness**

Until FY 2022 this indicator was 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 wording of the question was revised in FY 2022 but subsequent analysis determined this indicator was still not a positive factor in consumer assessment of programming value. Therefore, this indicator was removed from agency performance tracking and reporting in FY 2024.

## 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 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 and its networks 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 the 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.**

USAGM tracks its progress in achieving Impact Objective 8 with the following performance goals:

## IMPACT OBJECTIVE 8

Impact Performance Goal 8.1:

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

#### KNOWLEDGE OF NEWS IN COUNTRY<sup>1,2</sup>

*Percent of weekly audience who agree that the broadcasts increase their knowledge of news in country*

	FY 2020	FY 2021	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024
<b>VOA</b>					
Target	NA	72	72	74	80
Actual	72	71	74	80	82
<b>RFE/RL</b>					
Target	75	76	76	67	82
Actual	75	76	81	82	82
<b>RFA</b>					
Target	78	62	62	67	93
Actual	78	61	61	93	93
<b>MBN</b>					
Target	NA	NA	60	75	79
Actual	NA	57	79	79	74

1 Title of the table for this performance indicator updated in FY 2024 from “Understanding of Current Events in Target Country.”

2 New measure in FY 2018. Actuals only available for a small number of language services for FY 2018-2020. No data available for OCB FY 2020-2024.

#### INDICATOR:

##### Knowledge of News in Country:

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 have become available, “understanding of current events in target country” has been replaced by “knowledge of news in country” in USAGM performance reporting.

Until FY 2022, 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 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 percent 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.”

#### **ANALYSIS:**

##### **VOA**

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VOA exceeded its FY 2023 target on this metric. Weekly users who turn to VOA for information about their countries find this reporting impactful. Eight in ten (or more) of VOA brand weekly users in Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Myanmar, Indonesia, Iraqi Kurdistan, Angola, Mali, Nigeria, Ecuador, Nicaragua, and Kosovo report that VOA has increased their knowledge of news in their countries.

##### **RFE/RL**

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FY 2024 metrics maintained performance measured in FY 2023 primarily due to recent data from Russia where both RFE/RL brands targeting the country – Radio Svoboda and Current Time - have high measurements for increasing audiences’ understanding of current events in Russia, at 85% and 86%, respectively.

##### **RFA**

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FY 2024 metric for this indicator was based on data from Cambodia and Myanmar as in FY 2023, with the addition this year of data from and Cox’s Bazar Rohingya Refugee Camps in Bangladesh. Both FY 2023 and FY 2024 showed significant improvement from FY 2022 which was based on Cambodia alone.

##### **MBN**

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Level of Understanding of Current Events in Target country decreased in FY24 from FY23, primarily as the result of lower levels of understanding among past-week users of Alhurra in Saudi Arabia (51% of past-week Alhurra users in KSA said Alhurra increased their understanding of events in KSA). Significantly larger percentages of past-week Alhurra users in Algeria (75.8%); Egypt (82.6%) and Iraq (78.3%) said Alhurra had increased their understanding of events in their countries. Countries included in this performance indicator are Algeria, Egypt, Iraq, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestinian Territories, Saudi Arabia, and Yemen.



IMPACT OBJECTIVE 8

Impact Performance Goal 8.2:

**Provide exceptional news and information**

**UNIQUENESS**

*Percentage of weekly audience reporting that broadcaster presents information they cannot get from other media*

	FY 2020 Actual	FY 2021 Actual	FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Actual <sup>1</sup>	FY 2024 Target	FY 2024 Actual
RFE/RL	27	27	28	NA	NA	NA
RFA	38	35	35	NA	NA	NA
MBN	30	30	27	NA	NA	NA
OCB <sup>2</sup>	78	78	NA	NA	NA	NA

1 Due to status of data from FY 2022 revisions to USAGM's survey questions related to this indicator, as explained below, the agency is not prepared to report results for FY 2023 and FY 2024.

2 No reportable data for OCB in FY 2022.

**INDICATOR TO BE REMOVED:**

**Uniqueness**

Until FY 2022 this indicator was 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 wording of the question was revised in FY 2022 but subsequent analysis determined this indicator was still not a positive factor in consumer assessment of programming value. Therefore, this indicator was removed from agency performance tracking and reporting in FY 2024.

# Agility Objective 1:

## Manage a nimble, resilient, sustainable, efficient, and mission-focused 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 maintain a focus on the missions of its networks and grantees, and have the agility to operate in a rapidly evolving and challenging global media environment with the simplification, standardization or interoperability of tools and processes to enable nimble resource allocations and rapid evolution to location-independent collaborative cloud-based workflows. 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 and its networks will:

- Coordinate the allocation of resources through standardization and interoperability;
- Assess the usefulness of the hybrid grantee-government network model now in place;
- Evaluate and seek opportunities to move the federal elements of the agency from outdated and inefficient facilities to modern, cost-effective new headquarters, while updating the agency's media production infrastructure to better meet current and future audience needs;
- 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;
- Assess and update internal processes and procedures for simplicity, efficiency, and mission-focus;
- Streamline and, where possible, automate business processes and workflows;
- Employ cloud-based technology to maximize nimbleness, resilience, and cost savings;
- Evaluate the utilization of new corporate or governance structures to most effectively and efficiently carry out agency oversight responsibilities;
- Ensure the safety and security of our journalists, wherever they are, through systems to monitor and improve responsiveness and efficacy of safety measures;

- Ensure that all USAGM journalists are given the tools and training they need to stay secure and to practice the highest possible standards and ethics;
- Protect USAGM from persistent threats posed by state and non-state actors through enhancements to its cybersecurity posture;
- Improve the environmental sustainability of agency operations; and
- Leverage new hybrid, mobile, agile workflows to reduce physical space requirements.

USAGM tracks its progress in achieving Agility Objective 1 with the following performance goals:

## 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 Baseline</b>	First review of SW and MW transmission completed.
<b>FY 2022 Actual</b>	A number of changes made, including elimination of radio for VOA Urdu and reductions for VOA and RFA Burmese.
<b>FY 2023 Actual</b>	No new cuts or reductions implemented. New set of reduction and cut recommendations issued.
<b>FY 2024 Target</b>	Further reductions and/or eliminations will be based on audience research and other strategic considerations.
<b>FY 2024 Actual</b>	About 25 percent of USAGM total transmission load reduced, allowing for consolidation of remaining broadcasts from fewer transmitting stations. Closure of Sao Tome and CNMI stations initiated.

Optimize remaining shortwave distribution, taking advantage of the strategic location and lower operating cost of Kuwait Transmitting Station

<b>FY 2021 Baseline</b>	Restored 2 more antennas on CNMI Transmitting Station to service. Completed build of new SW antenna arrays for Africa completed at Kuwait Transmitting Station.
<b>FY 2022 Actual</b>	Restored one antenna on CNMI Transmitting Station. Additional antenna only requires ground works repair due to delay on parts. SW antenna expansion is well underway. In FY 2022, construction contract was awarded.
<b>FY 2023 Actual</b>	7 antenna systems of the 16 total on CNMI have been restored to service. More work is dependent on additional funding, which at this moment is not available. SW antenna expansion completed; testing will be completed by end of FY 2023.
<b>FY 2024 Target</b>	7 antenna systems of the 16 total on CNMI have been restored to service. More work is dependent on additional funding, which at this moment is not available. Completion of building expansion for the transmitters in FY 2024.
<b>FY 2024 Actual</b>	CNMI station slated for closure Kuwait expansion project continues with the acquisition of 4 transmitters (FY2025 delivery and installation)

Continue building out and supporting USAGM's bespoke VOD/OTT (video on demand/over the top) platform	
<b>FY 2021 Baseline</b>	Current status: content available in 15 languages and on 15 platforms/operating systems, including Apple TV, Samsung, etc.
<b>FY 2022 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>FY 2023 Actual</b>	<p>3 languages (Turkish, Tibetan, and Thai) added, totaling 21 supported languages.</p> <p>RFE/RL Votvot OTT apps launched to counter Russian disinformation and better serve Russian-speaking diaspora.</p> <p>Complete suite of Adobe analytics implemented for all OTT platforms.</p> <p>Added security enhancements and new features: pop up when updates are available, new splash screen, closed captions finalized.</p>
<b>FY 2024 Target</b>	<p>Transfer all USAGM OTT apps on all supported platforms to a new code base, enabling a redesign with modern look and multiple new features.</p> <p>Implement Analytics Tealium tag management system.</p> <p>Continue building user base and ensuring that the user experience and feature set remain competitive with consumer expectations. Additional enhancements intended to benefit USAGM workflow are also expected.</p>
<b>FY 2024 Actual</b>	<p>Transferred all USAGM OTT apps on all supported platforms to a new code base, enabling a redesign with modern look, multiple new features, and additional languages.</p> <p>Implemented Analytics Tealium tag management system.</p> <p>Continued building user base and ensuring that the user experience and feature set remain competitive with consumer expectations. Additional enhancements to also benefit USAGM workflows.</p>

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>FY 2021 Baseline</b>	65 of 95 FM stations have remote monitoring capabilities.
<b>FY 2022 Actual</b>	A Technical Evaluation Panel concluded a review of offers for upgraded connectivity to enable monitoring. Award made in FY 2022. That will be rolled out in FY 2023.
<b>FY 2023 Actual</b>	By end of FY 2023, five sites added to next-gen remote monitoring system. New VSAT systems being installed at all sites.
<b>FY 2024 Target</b>	<p>Conduct at least one test of site connected to local terrestrial internet. Conduct study to identify all sites where this will be possible. Develop network-wide project with TSI Global Networks division to deploy physical routers and other upgrades at sites to enable this.</p> <p>Implement changes to Microsoft Dynamics and Field Service applications to enable full monitoring automation.</p>
<b>FY 2024 Actual</b>	Upgraded seven FM sites with existing remote monitoring (Ndjamenana, Abidjan, Nouakchott, Dakar, Bamako, Djibouti, and Lome) to remote monitoring with 4G/LTE cellular capability.

## A CLOSER LOOK:

# Strategic downsizing – shortwave and medium wave radio

Since the mid-1990s, as shortwave audiences dwindled after the Cold War and the advent of the internet, the world's shortwave broadcasters have decreased or ceased cross-border radio. USAGM downscaled its shortwave and medium wave station network from about two dozen stations in the mid-1990s to eight by 2018. While shortwave and medium wave radio remain valuable platforms for reaching some of the world's most media-deprived audiences, most audiences in 2024 were overwhelmingly accessing news on other platforms. USAGM's own audience research also shows shortwave listenership in many markets is too low to report a statistically significant finding.

As part of this realignment effort, in FY 2024 USAGM reduced its transmission load by about 25 percent, reducing or eliminating broadcasts to regions where shortwave audiences are virtually non-existent.

Those transmission cuts allowed USAGM to consolidate remaining broadcasts amongst fewer transmitting stations and enable closure of two sites—the Sao Tome and CNMI stations. USAGM expects the closure of Sao Tome and CNMI to be effectively completed by the end of FY 2025.

While substantial, cost savings from a station closure are not realizable immediately. Closure of a station requires approximately two years to complete, due to the need to serve notice to the local staff, relocate US personnel, deconstruct buildings and towers, and otherwise prepare the property for return to the host.

Where shortwave is ineffective, program and transmission resources for shortwave broadcasts can be repurposed to produce and distribute content on more popular platforms. Savings can also help maintain USAGM transmissions where still required to reach audiences most dependent on cross-border radio, such as in North Korea, Afghanistan, rural Africa, and western China.



*Work crew in Sao Tome dismantling transmitter cabling from USAGM shortwave radio towers and antenna systems (seen in background).*

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 Service Desk by establishing a common tool set for USAGM organizations to utilize	
<b>FY 2021 Baseline</b>	Help Desk services IT-related calls for federal workforce (mostly headquarters).
<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.
<b>FY 2023 Actual</b>	Service Desk common tool set established through use of Ivanti ITSM, Vonage automated call distribution, and IT Catalog presence on SharePoint and the self-service tool.
<b>FY 2024 Target</b>	Pilot shared services approach paid into by USAGM networks that participate. Pilot use of automation tools to streamline help operations. Train help desk service staff on ITIL best practices and principles.
<b>FY 2024 Actual</b>	Drop shared services approach paid into by USAGM networks. Continue use of automation tools to streamline help operations and training help desk service staff on ITIL best practices and principles.



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 to promote efficient media production and sharing <sup>1</sup>	
<b>FY 2021 Baseline</b>	Limited access available for U.S.-based staff; VPN access or being on site required. Available on ad-hoc basis for staff outside the U.S.
<b>FY 2022 Actual</b>	Adobe cloud-based video editing solution pilot currently in progress for U.S. based staff. All approved users with accounts in agency's active directory are able to access the media creation and editing systems outside the U.S.
<b>FY 2023 Actual</b>	Dalet Galaxy cloud-based video editing solution deployed for U.S.-based staff. Dalet and Adobe systems in the cloud solutions were piloted and tested successfully for staff outside the U.S.
<b>FY 2024 Target</b>	Successfully pilot and test Adobe & Dalet Galaxy cloud-based solutions for U.S.-based staff. Roll out Dalet and Adobe in the cloud systems for all approved users with active directory accounts for staff outside U.S.
<b>FY 2024 Actual</b>	Dalet Galaxy proof of concept (POC) still in progress (pilot will continue into FY 25) Adobe POC was successfully piloted, however VOA's broad return to office (RTO) post-COVID deemphasized this requirement.

<sup>1</sup> This metric was previously tracked separately for U.S.-based staff and staff outside the U.S., but it has been combined in FY 2024 as targets have converged.

Reduce USAGM IT Infrastructure footprint	
<b>FY 2021 Baseline<sup>1</sup></b>	NA
<b>FY 2022 Actual<sup>1</sup></b>	NA
<b>FY 2023 Actual<sup>1</sup></b>	NA
<b>FY 2024 Target</b>	Complete migration of server infrastructure to the cloud.
<b>FY 2024 Actual</b>	Completed cloud migration of 19% of server infrastructure

<sup>1</sup> FY 2021-2023 actuals incorrect in prior reports. Baseline reset as of FY 2024. Targets reduced from prior expectations due to budget constraints.

**INDICATOR TO BE REMOVED:**

**Establish policy to encourage USAGM entities to use shared media services**

This indicator, previously within Agility Performance Goal 1.3, was intended to track progress on an agency-wide initiatives to align technology platforms of all USAGM networks for cost-savings. Challenges with the legal frameworks of grantee agreements and aspects of their financial independence limit the agency's ability to do this in many instances. In future planning, USAGM will articulate a new component with similar impact on the agency's agility.

AGILITY OBJECTIVE 1

Agility Performance Goal 1.4:

**Implement key media and IT security systems for all USAGM entities**

Improve efficacy of Federal IT security training	
<b>FY 2021 Baseline</b>	About 20% of users will click on a spoofed phishing test.
<b>FY 2022 Actual</b>	Campaign yielded a phish rate of only 9.3%. All users that clicked were provided micro-training to show indicators of phishing attempts.
<b>FY 2023 Actual</b>	Surpassed 10% of users spoofed in phishing tests; investing in additional training for FY 2024.
<b>FY 2024 Target</b>	Maintain target of 10% or lower for phishing simulations.
<b>FY 2024 Actual</b>	Maintained target of 10% or lower.

Strengthen USAGM's cybersecurity posture

<p><b>FY 2021 Baseline</b></p>	<p>Achieved “consistently implemented” maturity level for USAGM’s information security program. “Consistently implemented” means that the cybersecurity program is not only in place but also actively followed and enforced across all parts of the organization, ensuring compliance with FISMA requirements and effective protection of information and systems.</p>
<p><b>FY 2022 Actual</b></p>	<p>The OIG has given USAGM a Consistently Implemented rating for our FISMA program. USAGM’s initial Zero Trust Architecture (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. ZTA Pilot migration of On-Premise applications to the Cloud was deferred to FY 2023.</p>
<p><b>FY 2023 Actual</b></p>	<p>“Consistently Implemented” maturity level maintained. IT governance program fully adopted. PIV MFA fully implemented across federal side of agency by end of FY 2023. ZTA implementation underway.</p>
<p><b>FY 2024 Target</b></p>	<p>Maintain “Consistently Implemented” maturity level for USAGM’s information security program while implementing the agency’s ZTA transition plan. Fully implement Supply Chain Risk Management and Counterfeit Software and Device protection program. Complete implementation of ZTA.</p>
<p><b>FY 2024 Actual</b></p>	<p>Maintained “Consistently Implemented” FISMA maturity level for USAGM’s information security program while implementing the agency’s ZTA transition plan for Identity, Device, and Network Pillars. Contracting delays pushed complete ZTA implementation into FY 2025.</p>

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 Baseline</b>	No agency-wide sustainability program.
<b>FY 2022 Actual</b>	USAGM engaged a firm to conduct an agency-wide sustainability assessment.
<b>FY 2023 Actual</b>	USAGM's employed firm completed assessments of two transmitting stations by end of FY 2023.
<b>FY 2024 Target</b>	USAGM's employed firm to finalize transmission network sustainability assessment.
<b>FY 2024 Actual</b>	USAGM completed sustainability survey of Botswana transmitting station.

Reduce real estate footprint at Cohen Building headquarters and USAGM's other federal properties <sup>1</sup>	
<b>FY 2021 Baseline</b>	810,729 square feet
<b>FY 2022 Actual</b>	807,359 square feet
<b>FY 2023 Actual</b>	757,199 square feet
<b>FY 2024 Target</b>	669,000 square feet
<b>FY 2024 Actual</b>	607,036 square feet

1 FY 2021-2023 measures updated in FY 2024 to correct 3-5% underreporting of total agency real estate footprint. No material changes in trend of reduction.

2 FY 2025 real estate footprint expected to increase temporarily during transition to new Washington DC offices, when two office buildings will be leased simultaneously. This is expected to be corrected downward in the following year.

Move agency headquarters from Wilbur J. Cohen building to another location by 2028

<b>FY 2021 Baseline</b>	Commercial realtor engaged; space estimates drawn up.
<b>FY 2022 Actual</b>	Space estimates refined, but continue to evolve, pending space utilization and other factors.
<b>FY 2023 Actual</b>	USAGM issued a public Request for Lease Proposals.
<b>FY 2024 Target</b>	Sign lease and begin design work for new facility.
<b>FY 2024 Actual</b>	USAGM signed lease for 1875 Pennsylvania Ave. building before end of fiscal year, announced on September 27, 2024; basic design work initiated.

## Agility Objective 2:

### Enhance transparency, communication, and strategic cooperation across USAGM networks and offices

USAGM is one of the world's largest newsgathering 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, Ukraine, Belarus, the Caucasus and Central Asia, the Sahel and Central Africa, Syria, Venezuela, and 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 U.S. government entities on areas of shared interest or concern.

USAGM and its networks will:

- **Improve internal communication and transparency of shared services operations;**
- **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;**
- **Develop 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 newsgathering, including stringer and correspondent networks or rotating correspondents, across USAGM to ensure editorial coordination and avoid redundancy;**
- **Align all support functions to USAGM's vision, strategic priorities, and goals; and**
- **Participate in inter-agency meetings, committees, and strategies in support of U.S. government priorities to ensure that USAGM capabilities, expertise, actions, and impact are fully and accurately shared with other government entities.**

USAGM tracks its progress in achieving Agility Objective 2 with the following performance goals:

## 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	FY 2022 Actuals	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Target	FY 2024 Actual
Monthly newsletter reach <sup>1</sup>	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Average weekly digital visitors on Workplace <sup>2</sup>	264	192	272	275	255
Average weekly digital visits on SharePoint <sup>3</sup>	2,705	2,769	2,076	2,500	1,960
Digital engagement on Workplace <sup>3,4</sup>	7,084	6,495	7,670	8,000	6,168
Number of virtual and hybrid OCEO agency events each year <sup>5</sup>	NA	NA	8	12	5
Total annual audience for OCEO virtual and hybrid events <sup>3,5</sup>	NA	NA	274	300	2,500

- 1 New metric planned for first reporting in FY 2024, but agency has been unable to track data as of publication. Metric for average reach of new agency wide CEO newsletters distributed 1-2 times per month, measured by opened emails and workplace views.
- 2 Labeled as “visits” in reports prior to FY 2025 OMBJ Performance Plan, corrected here to “visitors.”
- 3 Federal entities only, slower growth expected with increased shift to Workplace.
- 4 Reporting changed in FY 2023 to “reactions and comments” only, had changed in FY 2022 to “reactions, comments, and connections” from “reactions, comments, and shares” in FY 2021.
- 5 Includes agency-wide events with representation of Office of the CEO only. Includes both online and in-person audiences for “hybrid” events. This does not include in-person only events.

#### PERCENTAGE OF EMPLOYEES WHO AGREE THAT THEY KNOW HOW THEIR WORK RELATES TO THE AGENCY’S GOALS AND PRIORITIES (FROM FEVS<sup>1</sup>)

	FY 2020 Actual	FY 2021 Actual	FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Target	FY 2024 Actual
USAGM	60	85	83	86	86	86
Government-wide	72	85	84	85		

- 1 Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey



AGILITY OBJECTIVE 2

Agility Performance Goal 2.2:

**Support network-led initiatives to share content across networks and services**

Support content sharing initiatives led by USAGM's networks while protecting the editorial independence of each network	
<b>FY 2021 Baseline<sup>1</sup></b>	VOA-OCB collaboration on Latin America; RFE/RL-RFA coverage of China.
<b>FY 2022 Actual</b>	RFA, VOA, RFE/RL, MBN, and OCB collaboration coverage of Chinese malign influence.
<b>FY 2023 Actual</b>	Feasibility study ongoing.
<b>FY 2024 Target</b>	Successful deployment of high priority content translation and other activities determined based on policy priorities at the time.
<b>FY 2024 Actual</b>	Initiated development of Mandarin and English language Global News Service (“GNS”) that curates, translates, and disseminates content from all USAGM networks on a singular global platform.

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

## AGILITY OBJECTIVE 2

### Agility Performance Goal 2.3:

## Build systems to support sharing content across networks and services

Develop and support agency-wide Media Asset Management system	
FY 2021 Baseline <sup>1</sup>	Networks use Dalet or another MAM with varying degrees of satisfaction.
FY 2022 Actual	Stabilization of current MAM technology Infrastructure and socialization of MAM to networks. Initial deployment of MAM access via deployment of archive capability.
FY 2023 Actual	Expansion of MAM to Federal entities underway. VOA is being standardized on Dalet Galaxy, USAGM is the established system owner and O&M provider. OCB has indicated their desire to transition to the Dalet product suite. MBN, RFE/RL and RFA also standardizing on Dalet.
FY 2024 Target	Continue to deepen the adoption of the MAM tool across entities. Begin archive integration planning.
FY 2024 Actual	RFA, RFE/RL, and MBN are in the process of integrating a Dalet product. OCB has been briefed on Dalet, but plans not yet solidified on implementation.

Develop and support agency-wide Content Management System	
FY 2021 Baseline <sup>1</sup>	Networks use Pangea or another CMS with limited satisfaction; VOA's Voltron CMS being discontinued and rolled back.
FY 2022 Actual	Continue to work closely with agency leadership and networks to identify a new CMS that can be utilized across the agency.
FY 2023 Actual	Initiated a general Proof of Concept for utilization of potential CMS solutions.
FY 2024 Target	Begin migration to new CMS.
FY 2024 Actual	Market research, planning, and leadership briefings on new CMS done.

1 This was reported for the first time in FY 2021. Actuals are not available for FY 2020.

## 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 that outlines 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 and its networks will:

- Annually collect data measuring audience size and impact, even in closed societies;
- 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 media consumption in target markets.

USAGM tracks its progress in achieving Agility Objective 3 with the following performance goals:

AGILITY OBJECTIVE 3

Agility Performance Goal 3.1: **Strengthen research program**

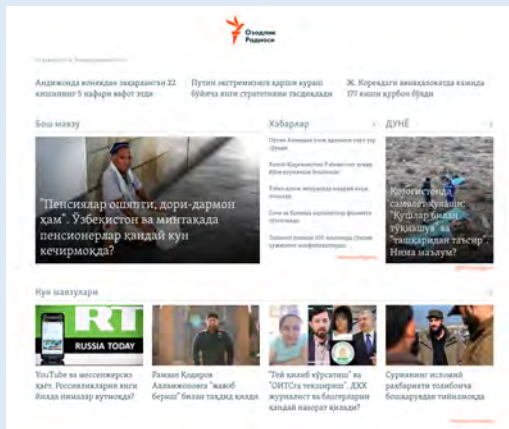
	FY 2021 Baseline	FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Target	FY 2024 Actual
Number of full media surveys completed within the last two fiscal years	7	10	25	29	29
Number of omnibus surveys completed within the last two fiscal years	55	66	42	50	58
Percentage of surveys (full or omnibus) used for performance indicators that were completed within the last two fiscal years	66%	79%	69%	64%	74%

## A CLOSER LOOK: USAGM research in action

In 2024, USAGM’s research program completed several ambitious studies, overcoming challenging geopolitical conditions to collect information from audiences in places where our brands are considered foreign agents.

USAGM also launched several landmark research studies that shed light on the changing news habits of Russian emigres and on foreign audiences’ perceptions of Voice of America compared with Kremlin and PRC-funded media outlets—all with the aim of helping the agency’s language services to more effectively engage foreign audiences.

### Research in Challenging Environments



*Because Radio Ozodlik is blocked in Uzbekistan, Uzbek audiences must reach its content using circumvention tools.*

**Uzbekistan** – Despite tightly controlled information environments, USAGM’s research partners completed a national survey in FY 2024 for Uzbekistan, a country consistently rated among the lowest for press freedom, USAGM brand Radio Ozodlik has been blocked for two decades. Nevertheless, Uzbeks can access Ozodlik content through social media platforms and circumvention tools. Conducting research with this population is risky, particularly when the survey asks about controversial media brands. It required approvals from the ubiquitous and powerful local governing bodies (“Mahalla committees”) in each target neighborhood throughout the country. Despite these

challenges, USAGM’s field team successfully conducted 2,000 interviews, which allowed USAGM to measure weekly reach and gather other valuable information about Uzbek audiences for the first time since 2016.



In Belarus, over **450,000 calls** were placed to reach the 1,000 people necessary to complete the research study.

**Belarus** – In Belarus, another country among the lowest rated for press freedom, researchers encountered controversy around USAGM brands, as well as pressure allegedly due to the Belarusian government’s efforts to protect its citizens from fraudulent phone calls. USAGM’s field partner dedicated extra resources to work through intensive processes framed as anti-fraud protection measures. Research teams randomly dialed phone numbers and were frequently connected to an AI voice that screened out unwanted phone numbers. Once the team identified that their connected call had been intercepted by anti-fraud bots, the phone number then had to be replaced. A time-consuming and arduous process, researchers placed over 475,000 calls to survey a sample of 1,000 people.

Nevertheless, this first USAGM survey in Belarus in eight years was completed in July 2024, and it established that one in 10 adults in Belarus access RFE/RL or VOA content in a typical week.



VOA reaches **46%** of adults each week in Niger.

**Niger** – Despite the unpredictable security and political situation in Niger, a team of researchers completed a nationally representative survey of the

country in 2024, the first for USAGM since 2019. The results show that VOA is a major source of news in the country, reaching 46% of adults in Niger on a weekly basis, with VOA's Hausa content driving the reach. Conducting fieldwork in such an unstable and insecure environment requires a team of committed interviewers who can adapt to the local situation daily. Since the coup of July 2023, the security situation in Niger has been strained and many rural areas have remained unsafe during fieldwork. Due to the security situation, the field team had to get the permission of local officials to conduct interviews, especially in rural areas, and present official authorizations to respondents before conducting interviews. In many cases, the daily security situation prevented fieldwork in that area, and sampled areas had to be replaced on the spot.

### Research with Sensitive Populations



*VOA reports from Cox's Bazaar refugee camp.*

**Rohingya Refugees** – For the first time in USAGM history, the agency commissioned a representative survey to measure the reach of VOA and RFA in the Rohingya Refugee camps located in the Cox's Bazaar district of Bangladesh. All 33 refugee camps were represented in the survey, and the results reflect the use of USAGM networks by over 900,000 refugees. Results show that USAGM networks are strong sources of news for Rohingya refugees in these camps - VOA reaches a fifth of adults weekly, almost 100,000 people, while RFA is used by 8 percent of adults in the camps.

### Research with “New” Audiences

**Russian Emigres** – In 2024 USAGM embarked on a large-scale qualitative research project with Russians living outside of Russia. Between February and June 2024, USAGM's research partner facilitated 41 focus groups in nine countries with sizeable Russian populations in Armenia, Cyprus, Dubai, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, Serbia, and Turkey. Researchers explored how these Russians get their news, the types, and topics they desire, and if and how they are sharing news with others both in and outside of Russia. The research also highlighted the diversity among Russians living abroad.

**Cuban Diaspora** – This year USAGM expanded on new research to understand Martí audiences outside of Cuba. In 2023, Martí was used weekly by approximately 10% of adults in Nicaragua. In 2024, USAGM measured Martí audiences for the first time in Venezuela, Mexico, Ecuador, and Colombia. Although reach per country is small, these combined new audiences has contributed to an increase in Martí's global reach from 327,000 adults measured within Cuba in 2023, to 3.2 million adults who access Martí content weekly across Latin America. In 2025 USAGM's research partners will conduct qualitative research with Cuban immigrants outside of Cuba to better understand Martí's branding, content, and how to reach more younger audiences.

**Other Diasporas** – In 2024, USAGM commissioned research to study Russian and Mandarin-speaking diaspora communities, in countries including Poland, Germany, Canada, Australia, Malaysia, Singapore, and Brazil. These important target audiences in non-traditional markets are small, but serve as a reminder of the mobility of modern news consumers

**Understanding What Makes Audiences Trust the News** – In 2024 USAGM investigated levels trust in media among the general populations in 42 countries. The first multi-country poll on this topic revealed that news' consumers trust in media is correlated with their trust in other institutions, and that foreign audiences are most likely to cite “breaking news” as the reason to trust news sources. This research is vital to helping USAGM and its networks target audiences most likely to demand international media and engage with them effectively.

### AGILITY OBJECTIVE 3

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

	FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Target	FY 2024 Actual <sup>2</sup>
Percentage of language services with a completed program review in the previous cycle <sup>1</sup>	95%	98%	100%	97.5%

- 1 This was reported for the first time in FY 2022. Actuals are not available for FY 2020-2021. TV, Radio, and Digital platforms reviewed as separate services for MBN and OCB.
- 2 Program review reports submitted and evaluated for 77 language services/platforms, out of 79 expected reviews. Missing reviews for VOA Kurdish, due to personnel changes in review period, and RFA Cantonese, due to relocation of Hong Kong staff for safety.

### AGILITY OBJECTIVE 3

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

Formally institute evidence best practices	
FY 2021 Baseline	Extensive consultation on Strategic Plan; worked with networks to finalize new survey questionnaire.
FY 2022 Actual	Plan for stakeholder meeting on Learning Agenda and Evaluation Plan.
FY 2023 Actual	Analytics and Research evidence from Legacy systems further incorporated into LSR process. Learning Agenda and Annual Evaluation Plan formalization pushed to FY 2024 to assess and leverage capabilities of new systems and personnel.
FY 2024 Target	Finalize Learning Agenda and Annual Evaluation Plan, including incorporation of new tools and comparative indicators into LSR process.
FY 2024 Actual <sup>1</sup>	Ongoing and increasing incorporation of evidence from new audience data platforms and comparative indicators in LSR process.

- 1 Insufficient resources to formally institute and manage Learning Agenda and Evaluation Plan, which is optional for the agency; agency will instead shift to incorporating key components into existing, ongoing processes.

Unify USAGM audience data assets to allow greater automation and analysis

<b>FY 2021 Baseline</b>	Requested TMF funding for enterprise Data Management System (DMS).
<b>FY 2022 Actual</b>	TMF did not fund OPR's proposal. OPR is using increased base funding to develop a re-scoped DMS.
<b>FY 2023 Actual</b>	Unified 125 datasets, with uniform variables labels, definitions, syntax, and prepared a survey database suitable for ingestion into the enterprise DMS.
<b>FY 2024 Target</b>	Apply improved DMS to numerous strategic business questions and offer direct access to the platform to USAGM, its networks, and inter-agency partners.
<b>FY 2024 Actual</b>	Successfully revamped the data.usagm.gov portal to apply DMS to several key business questions from USAGM leadership and network partners.



# 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 federal 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 and its networks 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.**

USAGM tracks its progress in achieving Agility Objective 4 with the following performance goals:

## AGILITY OBJECTIVE 4

### Agility Performance Goal 4.1: **Improve workforce engagement**

#### EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT INDEX IN FEVS<sup>1</sup>

	FY 2020 Actual	FY 2021 Actual	FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Target	FY 2024 Actual
USAGM	60	70	69	70	72	70
Government-wide	68	71	71	72		

<sup>1</sup> Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey

#### PERFORMANCE NOTES:

USAGM OHR has established the employee engagement council called "Employee Pulse" and is in the process of establishing a Leadership Engagement Advisory Council to further enhance its workforce engagement efforts.

## 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 FEVS<sup>1</sup>)

	FY 2020 Actual	FY 2021 Actual	FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Target	FY 2024 Actual
USAGM	72	77	76	77	78	78
Government-wide	82	80	79	80		

<sup>1</sup> Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey

#### PERFORMANCE NOTES:

The U.S. Agency for Global Media (USAGM) is continually enhancing its training and workforce development programs to meet its diverse and evolving operational needs. As part of a broader strategic initiative, the agency is working toward establishing the USAGM Academy, which will provide standardized training for journalists across all USAGM entities. Additionally, the Human Resources - Workforce Development (HRWD) team is collaborating closely with the Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO) to deliver essential AI training to all employees, ensuring compliance with agency policy in this rapidly developing field. The HRWD team also plans to engage with various departments to identify specific skill gaps and training requirements, with the goal of more effectively addressing workforce needs.

## MANDATORY TRAINING

Improve compliance with mandatory training requirements	
<b>FY 2021 Baseline<sup>1</sup></b>	Mandatory training compliance and enforcement handled by individual offices.
<b>FY 2022 Actual</b>	Central tracking and reporting system for mandatory training established.
<b>FY 2023 Actual</b>	Established process and dashboard to track journalistic mandatory training across all agency entities. OWSD, with LER, informs employees of repercussion risks for non-compliance.
<b>FY 2024 Target</b>	Improve mandatory training compliance percentages.
<b>FY 2024 Actual</b>	Improved the mandatory training compliance to 95% by instituting a new accountability process, including implementation of periodic reminder notifications, escalations and personalized communications.

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

## A CLOSER LOOK: USAGM training and workforce development

USAGM continues to improve its training and workforce development initiatives to meet its diverse, evolving work needs. In 2024, USAGM developed and implemented a robust consulting and values analysis framework to engage internal and external stakeholders to explore training interests and skills gaps throughout its journalism networks. As a result of these targeted conversations, the USAGM training catalog for FY 2024 offered various technical and soft-skills courses targeted to address journalistic credibility, equal opportunity, performance accountability, audience awareness, and employee wellness. Also, USAGM continues to use standardized measurement tools and dashboards to track skills obtainment and ethics compliance.

**Topical/Position Focus Journalism Training** – In FY 2024, USAGM provided topical training to support journalists in developing interpersonal skills to cultivate newsroom environments that promote authentic reporting through work-life balance. Reporting and editorial staff received cohort training in several topics, including utilizing a proactive mindset, seeking diverse voices, validating source relationships, vicarious trauma, navigating budget constraints, motivational strategies, and story socialization and promotion.

**Ongoing Journalism Fundamentals Training** – USAGM federal and non-federal networks understand the importance of providing continual access to fundamental journalism refresher training for our journalists and support staff. In FY2024, Voice of America and the Office of Cuba Broadcasting standardized its refresher training and included it as a mandatory element in all performance appraisals for federal and contract staff. This training is available live and on-demand, and all USAGM journalists, federal and non-federal, are welcome to attend or can be provided with content for agency-specific customization. Topics included Balanced and Bias-Free Reporting, Copyrights and Newsfeeds, Best Practices, and Editorial Firewalls.

**USAGM Academy** – USAGM awarded a 5-year blanket purchase agreement to facilitate the establishment of the USAGM Academy, an internal educational body created to provide comprehensive training addressing emerging issues, topics, and trends in journalism. The training courses developed will be available to USAGM federal and non-federal networks. To ensure all entities have a voice in the courses offered, USAGM established the USAGM Council, a group of representatives from each entity. The role of the USAGM Council is to advise on topics such as training, review of pilot classes, feedback from newsrooms, discussion on the format or delivery of training, etc.

**Solutions Journalism** – USAGM introduced Solutions Journalism techniques to empower our audiences as change agents through intentional storytelling that aligns with our agency's mission to inform, engage, and connect. This program provided editors and reporters with practical, customizable methods to pair journalism and ideas of agency to help audiences find solutions to problems and learn from their experiences.

Also, USAGM, with the support of the Solutions Journalism Network, has several staffers recognized as accredited international trainers in Solutions Journalism.

**Hostile Environment and Emergency First Aid Training (HEFAT)** – Offering and promoting physical and psychological journalist safety is a top priority for USAGM. In FY 2024, the agency provided over 100 staffers (journalists and security personnel) the opportunity to attend training emphasizing the importance of risk assessment and stress management while working within hostile political and unstable socioeconomic environments. Topics covered included sexual assault avoidance, interrogation and captivity, basic digital hygiene, combat hazards, and general first aid.

#### AGILITY OBJECTIVE 4

### Agility Performance Goal 4.3:

## Address equity and increase diversity in management

	FY 2021 Baseline <sup>1</sup>	FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Target	FY 2024 Actual
Minorities (either Hispanic or non-White)	40	37	44	42	46
Women	40	40	39	41	38

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

#### PERFORMANCE NOTES:

USAGM is continuing to expand its recruitment efforts to target senior level outreach events with a specific focus on minorities and women. The agency has participated in numerous recruitment events targeted in underserved communities with the intention to increase awareness and employment opportunities at USAGM. OHR in support of the DEIA program is currently working on recruitment initiatives including: veterans, Schedule A efforts, paid internships, special recruitment events, and initiatives at historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs) and Hispanic-serving institutions (HSIs).

#### AGILITY OBJECTIVE 4

### Agility Performance Goal 4.4:

## Institute strategic human capital planning

Institute agency-wide strategic human capital planning	
FY 2021 Baseline <sup>1</sup>	Personnel resource requests considered on ad hoc basis.
FY 2022 Actual	Office-level human capital plans created based on strategic plan.
FY 2023 Actual	Secured OPM assistance in integrating agency human capital and workforce planning processes with USAGM Strategic Plan.
FY 2024 Target	Identify areas of investment in human capital that tie to strategic plan.
FY 2024 Actual	Identified a new labor management system (LMS) that ties to the strategic plan. The new LMS makes it easier for employees to find relevant training and for supervisors to recommend and manage training for employees. With the new LMS, completions from external platforms are able to flow into the system seamlessly.

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

## AGILITY OBJECTIVE 4

### Agility Performance Goal 4.5:

#### Improve personnel evaluation processes

	FY 2021 Baseline <sup>1</sup>	FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Target	FY 2024 Actual
Percentage of federal employees with personnel evaluations completed on time	98	99	98	98	98

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

#### PERFORMANCE NOTES:

- In the 2021-2022 reporting period, USAGM enforced accountability measures for supervisors who failed to establish or complete employee plans within the designated timelines. This had a direct impact on their performance ratings, particularly concerning the mandatory element of "Standard Supervisory." The agency remains committed to maintaining accountability for supervisors throughout the 2022-2023 reporting year and beyond.
- In the 2023-2024 reporting period, USAGM further enforced accountability measures for supervisors who failed to establish or complete employee plans within the designated timelines. These measures included having direct impact on the supervisor's own rating when they failed to meet established goals and deadlines.
- The agency's HR performance management team oversaw the entire performance plan lifecycle. The team proactively facilitated this process by generating and providing weekly and ad-hoc reports, sending out timely email reminders, offering personalized one-one-one support, conducting group workshops, and actively seeking support from senior management.
- The agency maintains ongoing commitment to enhance its performance management system continually. Notably, recent improvements include the incorporation of foreign service plans into the system. Looking ahead, the agency plans to further enhance the system by integrating senior foreign service and senior executive plans.

AGILITY OBJECTIVE 4

Agility Performance Goal 4.6:

**Improve performance culture of agency**

**INDEX OF PERFORMANCE CONFIDENCE QUESTIONS ON FEVS<sup>1</sup>**

	FY 2020 Actual	FY 2021 Actual	FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Target	FY 2024 Actual
USAGM	86	81	81	82	83	81
Government-wide	87	84	84	84		

<sup>1</sup> Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey

**INDICATOR:**

As the Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey (“FEVS”) no longer tracks the “Performance Culture Index” reported by USAGM in prior years, in FY 2024 the agency replaced that metric with OPM’s new “Performance Confidence Index.” The new index compiles positive response rates to five performance-related questions on the annual FEVS. This measure assesses the extent to which employees believe their organization has an outstanding competitive future, based on innovative, high-quality products and services that are highly regarded by the marketplace. The Performance Confidence Index is an average of the responses for the following items: “Employees in my work unit meet the needs of our customers;” “Employees in my work unit contribute positively to my agency’s performance;” “Employees in my work unit produce high-quality work;” “Employees in my work unit adapt to changing priorities; Employees in my work unit achieve our goals.”

# Appendix: Data Verification and Validation

To demonstrate the impact of broadcasting activities, USAGM maintains a robust research program composed of national surveys, omnibus surveys, panels, interviews, and focus groups. Nationally representative (or close-to nationally representative) surveys, conducted in accordance with the highest professional standards by local market research firms, are the primary source for the agency’s impact indicators. Survey response rates vary by country, with higher response rates generally in Africa and the lowest response rates in Eurasia. Further information on the USAGM research program and its methodology can be found on the USAGM website at: <https://www.usagm.gov/our-work/impact-and-results/>.

Several impact indicators (including Program Credibility, Knowledge of U.S. Society, Knowledge of U.S. Foreign Policy, and Knowledge of News in Country) are based on a subset of surveyed markets. This is due either to the weekly audience in some markets being too small for analysis ( $n < 50$ ) or to the question not being asked due to survey space limitations (only true in cases where USAGM buys space on third party surveys or, in rarer instances, where country conditions limit data collection to shorter interviews over the phone).

USAGM also maintains an advanced digital analytics infrastructure, monitoring traffic to each network’s social media, mobile apps, websites, digital audio programming and other digital platforms using industry standard tools and methodologies. USAGM collects this data in a state-of-the-art Data Management System (DMS). The DMS structures and makes metrics available to networks, USAGM stakeholders, and Congress in the form of reports, dashboards and data exports. USAGM analysts use this resource for quantitative analysis of network services and platforms utilizing advanced data science methods and artificial intelligence tools.

## VERIFICATION AND VALIDATION OF DATA

USAGM and its research vendors follow standards set by the Conference of International Broadcasting Audience Researchers, ESOMAR, and other international organizations that lead the market research industry in ethical, professional research practice.

Once data has been collected, all research vendors must send their data to a third- party vendor hired by the agency for the sole purpose of performing data quality assurance protocols. After a thorough review, and — if necessary — several rounds of critical feedback with vendors, USAGM determines whether data warrants new fieldwork or is acceptable.

Every survey commissioned by USAGM requires research vendors to produce a technical report, detailing the sampling plan, population weights, problems encountered in the field, and



resolution methods. This information about data collection conditions is a critical component of ensuring the design effects are included in computations.

Before research projects can conclude, the USAGM research team — some combination of USAGM research staff and analysts, network research directors, and project managers — agree on the validity of reach figures and impact metrics.

Digital information collected into the DMS is subject to both regular human review and automated daily quality control checks for data fidelity. USAGM consults with each of its networks' digital analytics professionals on new enterprise digital analytics tool acquisitions and digital collections implementation projects, to maintain the highest standards of data integrity possible.