

10 FAM 350

INFORMATION RESOURCES PROGRAMS

(TL:PEC-010; 06-07-2002)

10 FAM 351 INFORMATION RESOURCE CENTERS (IRCs)

10 FAM 351.1 General

(TL:PEC-010; 06-07-2002)

As new technologies and improved access to digitized information have evolved, expanding the range of options for retrieving, packaging, and delivering information, traditional libraries have been transformed into mission-integrated Information Resource Centers (IRCs). IRCs are committed to deploy the majority of their information capability and resources to advance U.S. Government interests by increasing awareness and understanding of its policies among foreign nationals who influence how U.S. actions are perceived abroad.

10 FAM 351.2 IRC Responsibilities

(TL:PEC-010; 06-07-2002)

a. IRCs, located abroad, advance U.S. Government policy goals by identifying and selectively disseminating information to host country contacts who influence policy and public opinion on issues central to U.S. interest. An IRC is designed to serve post and mission-wide information needs in support of U.S. public diplomacy objectives.

b. IRCs should use the most efficient and cost-effective technology and delivery systems appropriate to the infrastructure of the host country, and are an integral component of the overall U.S. official presence abroad.

10 FAM 351.3 Headquarters Support

(TL:PEC-010; 06-07-2002)

a. The Office of Geographic Liaison's Information Resource team (IIP/G/IR) provides headquarters-level support to IRCs worldwide and to the Information Resource Officer (IRO) corps through:

- (1) Development of IRC policy and operating guidelines;

- (2) Information resources product development and acquisitions;
- (3) Centralized administrative and technical support; and
- (4) Specialized training in the field of information resources.

b. The IIP/G/IR Office Director serves as the headquarters spokesperson on issues concerning the Information Resource Officers corps and the Information Resource Center program in general. The IIP/G/IR Office Director monitors IRO and IRC reports, and briefs officials from the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Exchanges (ECA), the regional bureaus, the Office of the Inspector General (OIG), and field posts on IRO and IRC activities, as needed.

10 FAM 351.4 Professional Guidance

(TL:PEC-010; 06-07-2002)

IIP/G supports a specialist corps of Foreign Service Information Resource Officers who are assigned regional responsibilities for providing professional guidance and direction to the Information Resource Centers within a specified geographic area.

10 FAM 351.5 IRC Annual Plan

(TL:PEC-010; 06-07-2002)

IRCs are required to establish an annual plan in the appropriate format which documents posts' commitment to using IRC resources to meet both public diplomacy goals and mission relevant information needs of key mission staff. An annual plan gives the Coordinator for International Information Programs (IIP) and regional bureau officials relevant, up-to-date information about the programs; the technological environment of the IRC, its clients, resource base and personnel; and provides the contextual framework and action plan for IRO consultations. The Office of the Inspector General requires a copy of the IRC Annual Plan as a part of the pre-inspection documentation on posts to be inspected.

10 FAM 352 IIP/G/IR's INFORMATION RESOURCE SUPPORT

10 FAM 352.1 General

(TL:PEC-010; 06-07-2002)

IIP/G/IR supports the information resource needs of Information Resource Centers (IRCs) worldwide by creating information products specifically geared to the work of U.S. missions abroad and by identifying appropriate commercial and U.S. Government information resources, including the following.

(1) **Information Products**—Develops, produces, and distributes information products in a variety of formats specifically formulated to meet the needs of U.S. mission IRCs abroad, such as but not limited to the *Information USA*, available in CD-ROM and online formats.

(2) **Public Diplomacy Research Center Home Page**—Maintains a home page with policy and administrative guidance, IRC and IRO directories, access to other electronic resources on the Internet, and access to the State Department Library.

(3) **Public Diplomacy Research Center**—Provides the print and electronic information resource collection on public diplomacy for the Department of State.

(4) **Document Delivery**—Locates and delivers books and articles to IRCs abroad on request through established interlibrary loan procedures and the use of commercial document delivery services.

(5) **New Electronic Information Products**—Identifies, evaluates, recommends/acquires and provides training in the use of new electronic information products and services for use by IRCs worldwide.

(6) **Electronic Gateways**—Develops and manages electronic gateways to facilitate access to online resources within the Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs (R) family of bureaus and offices and at U.S. IRCs abroad.

10 FAM 352.2 Administrative Support

(TL:PEC-010; 06-07-2002)

Administrative support consists of the following.

(1) **Centralized Online Database Contracts**—Negotiates and funds centralized contracts for major U.S. commercial and government online databases, fundamental to the electronic IRC program.

(2) **Database Coordination**—Works with commercial database vendors to improve existing products to better meet the needs of IRCs and information professionals.

(3) **Procurement**—Provides guidance and assistance with procurement of U.S. information resources for IRCs, by establishing blanket purchase agreements and standardized “consortium” pricing for print and electronic information resources, and, by serving as a liaison between posts abroad and U.S. vendors.

(4) **Acquisitions Documentation**—Provides bibliographic documentation to facilitate the procurement of standard U.S. reference resources by IRCs in the field.

(5) **Fee Recycling**—Manages the program through which IRCs may charge fees for specific services.

10 FAM 352.3 Technical Support

(TL:PEC-010; 06-07-2002)

Technical support consists of the following.

(1) **General Support**—Provides technical support on IRC electronic resources to IRCs and IROs in the field.

(2) **Electronic Resources and Systems**—Identifies and evaluates for field use automation products unique to IRC work.

(3) **Electronic Communications**—Establishes and maintains an electronic communication systems among IROs stationed around the world, such as e-mail discussion groups, digital video conferencing, etc.

10 FAM 352.4 Specialized Training

(TL:PEC-010; 06-07-2002)

Because of the highly technical and specialized nature of modern electronic Information Resource Center work, specialized training for Information Resource Center staff and Information Resource Officers is an essential component of headquarters support. IIP/G/IR supports specialized training programs, specifically geared to Information Resource Centers and Information Resource Officers, including the following.

(1) **Foreign Service National (FSN) Employee Program**—An annual training program for FSN employees representing Information Resource Centers at posts worldwide, focusing on the development of expert knowledge and skills specific to IRC work.

(2) **Information Resource Officer Conference**—An annual conference of Information Resource Officers to provide professional and program development to the specialist corps of Information Resource Officers.

(3) **Regional FSN Training Programs**—Workshops and conferences organized by regional Information Resource Officers and held at regional training facilities to improve technical knowledge and skills of FSN IRC employees.

(4) **New Information Resource Officer Training**—Orientation and training for newly hired Information Resource Officers.

(5) **Continuing Education Programs**—Specialized training in newly evolving aspects of information resource work for Information Resource Officers, Information Resource Center staff, and other information professionals in the Bureau of Public Diplomacy.

10 FAM 352.5 Professional Guidance

(TL:PEC-010; 06-07-2002)

The Office of Geographic Liaison (IIP/G) supports a specialist corps of Foreign Service Information Resource Officers (IROs) who are assigned regional responsibilities for providing professional guidance and direction to the Information Resource Centers (IRCs) within a specified geographic area. While the majority of Information Resource Officers are assigned to posts abroad, there is a Washington, DC-based IRO on some geographic teams who has dual responsibilities of covering a geographic area while also providing headquarters representation and support to that team's field-based IROs. IIP/G team-based IROs monitor the reporting of IROs assigned to their geographic areas and work closely with their corresponding regional bureaus. IROs from geographic teams brief officials as needed. Washington, DC-based IROs work together as a standing team to develop policies, program guidance and new initiatives that serve IRCs worldwide.

10 FAM 352.5-1 IRO Responsibilities

(TL:PEC-010; 06-07-2002)

IROs visit the majority of posts in their assigned regions at least twice a year. During the visits, the IRO will work with the Public Affairs Officer and other officers in countries of designated responsibility to develop the most effective mix of information services and resources to support mission pro-

gram plan objectives and public diplomacy goals. Core responsibilities of the IRO are to:

(1) Counsel and assist posts in developing their information capability to communicate with target audiences on key mission program plan and public affairs issues;

(2) Evaluate host country information infrastructure and determine realistic levels and applications of information technology required to conduct outreach and information dissemination programs consistent with established IIP expectations;

(3) Evaluate management policies and practices affecting post information capability and advise posts of alternatives to improve effectiveness and productivity;

(4) Assess the professional development needs of Foreign Service National staff and develop training programs, as appropriate;

(5) Assist IRCs and missions abroad in the effective use of IIP produced information resources;

(6) Report to the Coordinator for International Information Programs (IIP) and the regional bureaus on the status of post efforts to promote mission program plan objectives through cost-effective use of electronic and print resources;

(7) Maintain a realistic travel schedule that meets the needs of constituent posts and IIP priorities, supplementing official consultations with regular correspondence and electronic communications as needed; and

(8) Develop and maintain contacts within host country information communities in area of responsibility and represent public diplomacy interests as appropriate.

10 FAM 352.5-2 IRO Reports

(TL:PEC-010; 06-07-2002)

a. IROs are required to file reports as soon as possible but no later than one month after completing their consultation and debriefing with the Public Affairs Officer or designate at post. Reports are expected to focus on the effectiveness of the program in advancing mission program plan objectives, and will include recommendations for further IRC program development. IRO visit reports should follow the established format, not exceeding 3 to 4 pages in length. Address reports to the post Public Affairs Officer; copies should be distributed to the team leader of the appropriate geographic team, the Office Director for information resources, and the regional bureau's country affairs officer. Geographic Office Directors are responsible

for responding to the reports and for coordinating follow-up support with the office of international information programs and the regional bureaus, as appropriate.

b. In addition to regular reports submitted following each visit to posts in his or her area of assigned responsibility, the IRO is also required to submit an annual home post report, usually in October. This report will reflect the highlights of the home post's IRC program, where the IROs spend the majority of his or her time, during the previous fiscal year. Home post reports follow the same established format as regional visit reports.

c. The Office of the Inspector General (OIG) requires the two most recent IRO reports as a part of the pre-inspection documentation on posts to be inspected.

10 FAM 352.5-3 IRO Evaluations

(TL:PEC-010; 06-07-2002)

In accordance with 3 FAH-1 2813.3, evaluations for regional IROs assigned to posts abroad will be the Public Affairs Officer or designee at the home post of the regional officer. Posts serviced by the regional IRO will submit evaluations of the officer's performance to the rating officer to use in preparing the evaluation report. The reviewing officer for field-based IROs is the Office Director of the geographic team to which the IRO is assigned. The rating officer for Washington, DC-based IROs is the Office Director of the team to which the IRO is assigned. The reviewing officer for Washington, DC-based IROs is the Office Director for Information Resources.

10 FAM 352.5-4 Information Resource Center Annual Plan

(TL:PEC-010; 06-07-2002)

a. Following the established format, each IRC is required to establish an Annual Plan which documents the post's commitment to using IRC resources to meet both public diplomacy goals and mission relevant information needs of key mission staff. The Annual Plan gives the Office of International Information Programs and regional bureau officials relevant, up-to-date information about the programs, the technological environment of the IRC, its clients, resource base and personnel, and provides the contextual framework and action plan for IRO consultations. The IRC Annual Plan is drafted by the IRO in consultation with the IRC Director and his or her U.S. supervisor, then cleared by the Public Affairs Officer. Intended not to exceed five pages in length, the Annual Plan should be revised annually, usually in conjunction with the Mission Program Plan process. The IRC Annual Plan should be forwarded to the Office Director of the appropriate geographic team, the Office Director for Information Resources, and the Regional Bureau's Country Affairs Officer.

- b. The OIG requires a copy of the IRC Annual Plan as a part of the pre-inspection documentation on posts to be inspected.

10 FAM 353 IRC OPERATING GUIDELINES

10 FAM 353.1 Services

(TL:PEC-010; 06-07-2002)

Specialized research services and outreach programs are the basic services of the IRC. The development of new information products in support of U.S. policy goals specifically targeted to local audiences are a key component of the IRCs outreach programs. These products, which may present the full range of discussion on any issue, are often developed from IIP information products and may be disseminated through Selected Dissemination of Information (SDI) programs, an article alert service, the mission home page, electronic outreach services, or a variety of similar services. Because IRCs are committed to deploying the majority of its resources in support of mission goals, services to the broader public should be carried out within those limitations necessary to ensure that the primary mission of the IRC is met.

10 FAM 353.2 Audiences

(TL:PEC-010; 06-07-2002)

The primary audiences of the IRC are those members of the local community who have been identified by the mission as important to the conduct of bilateral relations with the United States, usually members of the host country government, political institutions, non-government organizations, and the media, business and academic communities. In some countries, the IRC also provides services to a more general, secondary audience through limited public access hours.

10 FAM 353.3 Staff

(TL:PEC-010; 06-07-2002)

The modern, electronic IRC must be staffed by fully trained information experts with an extensive knowledge of the United States and U.S. research resources, the skills to use sophisticated electronic databases, and the ability to rapidly identify, retrieve, authenticate, interpret, package and disseminate information on the wide range of complex issues identified in the Mission Program Plan. The IRC Standard Job Descriptions (PER/OE/HRM) Supplement to 3 FAH-2 Chapter 4, Appendix J-6010 USIS Librarian Standards, should be applied to all appropriate IRC positions. IRC

staff should expect to receive on-going training to ensure competence in the rapidly changing electronic information environment.

10 FAM 353.4 Information Resources

(TL:PEC-010; 06-07-2002)

a. Basic to the IRC concept is the migration from the print to the digital environment; however, it is recognized not all information is most efficiently or cost-effectively accessible in the electronic format, and not all local information infrastructures adequately support electronic resources. While electronic information resources are the preferred medium, IRCs will maintain a mix of print and electronic sources for the foreseeable future.

b. Whatever their format, information resources will be selected for their value in providing information that advances understanding of U.S. policies and the political, social and intellectual context which has shaped them. The information resource base available through an IRC should be balanced and representative of the prominent currents of past and contemporary U.S. thought, and should provide:

(1) Primary source documentation of U.S. Government domestic and foreign affairs policies in effect and under formulation with emphasis on mission program plan objectives;

(2) Representative examples of thoughtful discussion and debate of U.S. Government policy by the U.S. media and research communities;

(3) Historical and contextual background to current U.S. Government policies;

(4) Insights to the evolution of U.S. values and to the structure, function, and organization of U.S. political and social institutions; and

(5) Information on specific areas of bilateral U.S./host country interest and developing foreign affairs issues.

10 FAM 353.5 Reporting

(TL:PEC-010; 06-07-2002)

IRC program and activities of the IRC are established annually, in coordination with the IRC, in the IRC Annual Plan. IROs are required to report regularly on the Information Resource Centers in their areas of geographic responsibility. In addition, IRCs are expected to produce regular reports demonstrating the effectiveness of the program in meeting mission program plan goals and in reaching its targeted audiences. Reports should be produced regularly, either monthly or quarterly, and should also include high-

lights of interest to mission officials. IRCs should also contribute routinely to post's reporting to the regional bureaus, in the format defined in the Government Performance and Reporting Act (GPRA).

10 FAM 353.6 Promoting the IRC

(TL:PEC-010; 06-07-2002)

The promotion of the IRCs services should be an on-going activity with targeted audience members. This can be done through special orientation programs demonstrating IRC resources and services to mission staff, and through other specialized programming for specifically targeted members of the mission audience.

10 FAM 353.7 Fee Recycling

(TL:PEC-010; 06-07-2002)

a. In Public Law. 100-204, amended by Public Law. 101-246, Congress granted IRCs at U.S. missions abroad the authority to charge fees for certain services and to use the proceeds for the expansion of IRC services. The fee recycling legislation clearly states that income generated from this program is meant to supplement, not offset, funds appropriated for IRC programs.

b. Guidelines for fee recycling include:

(1) **Membership Fees**—Membership fees cannot under any circumstances be charged for the use of the Information Resource Center;

(2) **Services Covered**—Fees may be charged for photocopying, printing of electronic and microform resources; interlibrary loan services; online database searches and associated telecommunications costs and print-outs; document delivery; and mailing of IRCs materials;

(3) **Services Not Covered**—Fees cannot be charged for the sell of books, periodicals, or other materials the post would normally purchase for its own collections;

(4) **Reporting Requirements**—IIP/G/IR grants approval of post recycling levels. Posts must report to IIP/G/IR and appropriate Department of State budget offices on a routine basis monies collected under the recycling program; and

(5) **Guidance**—IIP/G/IR provides guidance to posts on specific recycling activities and expenditures.

10 FAM 354 THROUGH 359 UNASSIGNED