

10 FAM 360 IIP INFORMATION RESOURCE PROGRAMS

*(CT:PEC-017; 03-01-2011)
(Office of Origin: IIP)*

10 FAM 361 PROGRAMS, PRODUCTS, AND SERVICES

(CT:PEC-011; 02-03-2006)

The Office of Information Resource Services (IIP/G/IR) directly and indirectly supports key information programs of U.S. embassies through:

- Information Resource Officer (IRO) corps (see [10 FAM 362](#))
- Information Resource Centers (IRC) (see [10 FAM 363](#))
- American Corners (AC) (see [10 FAM 364](#))
- Databases and other information products (see [10 FAM 365](#))

10 FAM 362 INFORMATION RESOURCE OFFICERS (IRO)

(CT:PEC-011; 02-03-2006)

IROs are Foreign Service specialists who have responsibility as regional consultants for advising and providing expertise to posts in the regions that they serve. Through regular visits and electronic communications, they work closely with public affairs officers (PAOs), other Public Affairs Sections (PAS) officers and Information Resource Center (IRC) staff at posts in their portfolios. They ensure that the IRC's outreach and information services are cost-effective, of the highest quality and consonant with the mission's public diplomacy strategy. IROs coordinate their work with IIP Geographic and Information Resource (IIP/G/IR) offices in Washington, DC. They ensure that posts make use of IIP products and services and that feedback from the field is relayed to the Bureau so that IIP products remain relevant to public diplomacy needs.

10 FAM 362.1 IRO Responsibilities

(CT:PEC-011; 02-03-2006)

- a. Ideally, IROs should visit posts in their assigned regions at least twice a year.
- b. Core responsibilities of the IRO are to:
 - (1) Counsel and assist posts in developing the most effective information resources, services, and outreach strategies to communicate with target audiences on key mission performance plans and public diplomacy issues.
 - (2) Evaluate management policies and practices affecting IRC programs, making recommendations to improve productivity, and ensuring that IRCs function as integrated resources for the mission.
 - (3) Report and make recommendations to posts and bureau officers on the effectiveness of IRC programs and the use of IIP products and services.
 - (4) Assess the professional development needs of the IRC staff, develop training programs, and provide professional guidance on IRC personnel issues.
 - (5) Evaluate host country information infrastructure to determine realistic levels and applications of information technology needed to conduct outreach and information dissemination programs consistent with established IIP expectations.
 - (6) Develop and maintain contacts within host-country information communities.
 - (7) Assist posts in the evaluation of sites for American Corners and in setting up suitable collections and resources.
 - (8) In the case of Washington, DC-based IROs, participate in bureau initiatives supporting IROs and IRCs in their region and worldwide and serve as the bureau liaison to the relevant geographic bureau when applicable.
 - (9) Manage classified material and information properly.

10 FAM 362.2 IRO Reporting Requirements

(CT:PEC-011; 02-03-2006)

- a. IROs are required to file trip reports within one month of completing their consultation at post. IROs should post their reports in the IRO report database maintained by IIP/G/IR (see 1 FAM 353.2).
- b. IROs establish and update annual plans for each post in their portfolios. The annual plan identifies the resources and strategies the IRC will use to meet mission performance plan and public diplomacy goals and to address mission relevant information needs of key staff. The IRO is responsible for writing the plan and clearing it with the PAO. Ideally, the plan should be updated or revised during the first visit to post in the fiscal year.
- c. In the fourth quarter of the fiscal year, the IRO submits an annual "home post" report on the status of the IRC. It highlights significant achievements completed previous year.
- d. IROs submit an annual financial plan and quarterly financial reports to IIP/G/IR.
- e. The Office of the Inspector General (OIG) requires the two most recent IRO reports and the most recent IRC annual plan as a part of the pre-inspection documentation on posts to be inspected.
- f. Guidelines for these reports can be found on the IIP Intranet web site. The Office Director of IIP/G/IR must approve any request for exceptions to compliance with the above requirements.

10 FAM 362.3 IRO Evaluations

(CT:PEC-011; 02-03-2006)

In accordance with 3 FAH-1 H-2813.3, evaluations for IROs assigned to posts abroad with regional responsibilities will be conducted by the PAO or designee at the home post of the IRO. Rating officers will solicit input on the officer's performance for use in preparing the evaluation report from posts serviced by the regional IRO. The responsibility for reviewing field-based IROs is held by the Office Director of the IIP geographic office to which the IRO is assigned with input from the Office Director for Information Resources (IIP/G/IR). The rating officer for Washington, DC-based IROs is the geographic office director where the IRO is assigned. The Office Director for Information Resources (IIP/G/IR) serves as their reviewing officer.

10 FAM 363 INFORMATION RESOURCE CENTERS (IRCS)

10 FAM 363.1 IRC Purpose

(CT:PEC-011; 02-03-2006)

- a. Information Resource Centers (IRCs) make the most relevant use of information technology and content from a variety of sources to advance U.S. interests abroad. They belong to the PAS of U.S. embassies. IRCs may be, but are not necessarily, located in a chancery. Their primary purpose is to direct timely, authoritative information to targeted foreign audiences in support of U.S. policy goals. IRCs also serve as a resource for selected host country contacts, who use a variety of reference services within the IRC (e.g., automated catalog systems, supervised Internet access, print collections, and online services) to find information about the United States, its policies and values. At the discretion of PAS management, they also provide policy information to key mission members. In all cases, IRC resources should support the mission performance plan and public diplomacy strategy.
- b. For information on policies and procedures, (see the IIP procedures on the IIP Intranet web site).

10 FAM 363.2 IRC Audiences

(CT:PEC-011; 02-03-2006)

- a. Under the guidance of the PAO, IRC staff identify and prioritize audiences. The institutions, groups, and individuals they choose should be consistent with audiences identified by the mission's public diplomacy strategy. They include, but are not limited to, policymakers and those who shape public opinion. Primary, IRC audiences for external public diplomacy programs typically include the media, universities, think tanks, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), intellectuals, and public opinion leaders, as well as members of the host-country government. As appropriate, IRCs may also provide reference and information services to a broader audience including mission officials.
- b. Many IRCs have public access for targeted or general audiences (see 12 FAM 445.1 for further information on identification of visitors and establishment of mission policies on public access).

10 FAM 363.3 IRC Staffing

(CT:PEC-017; 03-01-2011)

IRCs are managed by locally employed staff (*LE staff*). They are trained as information professionals in the use of specialized online and print resources to promote awareness of U.S. policies and the context in which they are formed. Although IRC staff benefit from professional and technical guidance from regional Information Resource Officers (IRO), they are supervised by the PAO or a designated PAS official. IROs are regional officers and may on a case-by-case basis accept delegated authority to oversee tasks related to IRC development. However, they should not be designated as IRC supervisors without the approval of the Office Directors of IIP/G/IR and the relevant geographic office in IIP/G.

10 FAM 363.4 Specialized Training for IRC staff

(CT:PEC-017; 03-01-2011)

- a. The specialized nature of IRC work requires that its staff benefit from frequent professional training to keep their knowledge and skills current with changes in technology and information services.
- b. This training is a principal element of support provided by IROs in the field and by IIP/G/IR. IIP/G/IR coordinates, plans and designs expert training programs, specifically addressing the needs of IRCs and IROs. They include the following:
 - (1) Essentials of Public Diplomacy PY 225.
 - (2) Regional *Locally Employed Staff (LE Staff)* Training Programs—Workshops and conferences organized and conducted by Information Resource Officers and held at appropriate training facilities.
 - (3) Public Diplomacy *Locally Employed Staff (LE Staff)* Information Resource Center Program – an annual training program carried out in collaboration with the Foreign Service Institute (FSI) in the U.S. designed to enhance functional knowledge and skills on selected policy issues and other topics on which IRC staffers provide research and outreach services.
 - (4) Online Search and Reference Skills – specialized training in cost-effective use of specialized online databases supporting IRC reference and outreach.

10 FAM 363.5 Support to IRCs

(CT:PEC-011; 02-03-2006)

Support from IIP/G/IR consists of the following:

- (1) Standards and Guidelines – IIP/G/IR is the designated central point of contact and authority in the Department for establishing guidance and standards for IRCs and IROs worldwide.
- (2) Centralized Online Database Contracts – IIP negotiates and funds selected centralized contracts for major U.S. commercial and government online databases that are fundamental to the IRC program, and ensure these databases meet the business requirements of IRCs and the information professionals who support them.
- (3) Information Resources – IIP evaluates information resources relevant to IRC business requirements, providing guidance and training in using them effectively.
- (4) Procurement – IIP provides guidance and assistance with procurement of U.S. information resources for IRCs.
- (5) Bibliographic services – IIP provides bibliographic support to facilitate the identification of publications and electronic resources that are relevant to IRC business requirements.
- (6) Fee Recycling – IIP manages the program enabling IRCs to recycle funds collected for services (see 10 FAM 363.6).
- (7) Communications – IIP/G/IR maintains listserves and an Intranet web site for the Office of Information Resources (IIP/G/IR) for communicating with the field on standards, guidance, issues, and professional concerns affecting IRCs and IROs.

10 FAM 363.6 Fee Recycling

(CT:PEC-011; 02-03-2006)

- a. Public Law 100-204, section 203 , amended by Public Law 101-246, section 208 (22 U.S.C. 1475e), authorizes IRCs at U.S. missions abroad to charge and retain fees for certain services to such extent as may be provided in advance in appropriations acts (see [4 FAH-3 H326](#) for more information on recycling funds).
- b. Guidelines for fee recycling include:

- (1) **Membership Fees**—Membership fees cannot under any circumstances be charged for the use of the IRC;
- (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 sale 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 364 AMERICAN CORNERS (AC)

10 FAM 364.1 American Corners Purpose

(CT:PEC-011; 02-03-2006)

While IRCs are an integral part of the Public Diplomacy program, American Corners provide a multi-functional programming platform for engaging a broad range of audiences. American Corners magnify Public Diplomacy's capacity to support understanding of U.S. policy and exposure to U.S. values through information services similar to those available in American Public libraries and through an ongoing series of post supported programs and exhibits.

10 FAM 364.2 American Corners Role

(CT:PEC-011; 02-03-2006)

- a. American Corners are partnerships between the Public Affairs sections of U.S. Embassies/Consulates and host institutions. They provide access to current and reliable information about the United States via book collections, CD-ROMs, the Internet, and through local programming to the general public. The multi-media, book and periodical collections ideally should be open and accessible to all interested citizens of the host

country. An American Corners also provides facilities to host program events and activities (e.g., author readings, films, speaker programs, workshops, meetings, and exhibits).

- b. The fundamental function of the American Corners is to make information about the United States available to foreign audiences at large. At a minimum, an American Corners should consist of a collection of American books. The book collection may include reference titles, works of fiction, business and government publications. American Corners also provide access to U.S. information through supervised Internet access, audio and video products, CDs, and CD-ROMS. No American Corners is to be connected to the Department computer network (OpenNet).

10 FAM 364.3 American Corners Support

(CT:PEC-011; 02-03-2006)

Through the office of IIP/G/IR and the network of IROs, IIP provides oversight, policy coordination, and support for American Corners as follows:

- (1) Establishes core elements and standards of American Corners and related definitions.
- (2) Maintains a centralized database that aggregates American Corners statistics and examples of best practices and serves as the officially designated source for statistical reports required by the Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs (R).
- (3) Designates an American Corners Coordinator to liaise and work with IROs, regional bureaus, R, and other elements in the Department in support of American Corners.
- (4) Develops a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) template to be used by posts with each American Corners thereby standardizing minimum requirements. Posts may further customize MOU in accordance with local conditions.
- (5) Oversees the training programs supporting American Corners, designing content, and conducting and coordinating resource sharing among posts, regional bureaus, and IIP. Resources supporting programs run from the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA), such as English Teaching, Student Advising, and study of the United States are often essential components of many American Corners collections.
- (6) Designs and conducts American Corners training programs, sharing costs with regional bureaus.

- (7) Maintains Web resources used by American Corners staff and U.S. Government employees to identify multimedia products and services appropriate for American Corners programs.
- (8) Coordinates and oversees IRO field activities that support American Corners programs.

10 FAM 364.4 American Corners Audience

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American Corners generally reach a younger and broader self-selecting audience than other Mission public diplomacy programs. As American Corners are frequently located outside of capital cities, American Corners reach audiences who have little or no exposure to American culture or ideals.

10 FAM 364.5 American Corners Staffing

(CT:PEC-011; 02-03-2006)

The host institution provides staff and pays for salaries as agreed in the Memorandum of Understanding. American Corners staff are not U.S. Government employees, but Posts should select partner institutions that are able to provide staff fluent in English and who demonstrate management and programming skills.

10 FAM 364.6 American Corners Funding

(CT:PEC-011; 02-03-2006)

Funding for American Corners is provided by post funds, by regional bureaus, by R, or through special funding. IIP does not provide funding for establishing, equipping, or staffing American Corners.

10 FAM 365 DATABASES AND OTHER INFORMATION PRODUCTS

10 FAM 365.1 Article Alert

(CT:PEC-011; 02-03-2006)

- a. Article Alert (AA) is a compilation of abstracts of significant articles from

current periodicals that is sent via e-mail listserv to the field every two weeks. The IIP/T Thematic Programs Offices (Democracy & Human Rights; Economic Security; Global Issues /Information & Communication; International Security; U.S. Society & Values) select material for the AA from journals.

- b. Most of the articles are by American authors and are from U.S. publications. The AA is designed to provide a range of viewpoints on current issues, and the authors' views don't necessarily reflect U.S. Government policies.
- c. Material can be used by the field for a variety of purposes, including in-house informational reading, outreach to local contacts and identifying potential interlocutors for speaking programs or DVCs. The summaries are staff-written, so they can be freely reproduced; some IRCs post them on embassy Web sites or reprint them in pamphlets. However, IIP's agreement with the Copyright Clearance Center allows IRCs to distribute full articles (as paper copies, not e-mail attachments) only to those individuals who request them. Distribution of full articles in limited numbers for speaker events or seminars is permitted; however, copyright permission for large-scale reproduction is required. Contact the Office of Copyright and Publishing (IIP/T/CP) for guidance (see 1 FAM 354.1).

10 FAM 366 THROUGH 369 UNASSIGNED