

d(ii) A comprehensive examination of information dissemination effectiveness would require extensive expenditure of resources. However, certain aspects of the issue can be addressed fairly economically. One part of the recommended approach would analyze existing data, supplemented where necessary by a survey of posts, to find out the inventory and turnover of information materials (publications, films, etc.) in the field, to whom they are distributed, and some indication of the use to which the material was put.

Using a small sample of representative posts, attempts will thus be made to estimate the degree to which material provided reaches its target audience, and to assess subjectively the extent to which this may contribute to meeting broader program objectives (i.e. the effects of distributing the information material). Alternatives will be identified and comparatively assessed as an input to possible program redesign, or as confirmation of the current design.

The other part of the approach would involve a readership questionnaire survey of recipients of post periodicals. The aim is to gauge whether the periodical is considered useful by its readers (and by implication merits continued publication).

This part of the evaluation is suggested because of the large amount of resources devoted to producing and distributing publications (nearly two million dollars), about half of which is for post periodicals. There also appears to be little concrete evidence of the worth and impact of publications. The steps outlined would provide some initial evidence and perhaps spur program redesign for greater economy or effectiveness.

4.5 Resources

Overall responsibility for the design and execution of the evaluation will be that of the Director of Evaluation, within EAP. A team approach will be used. The project team will be led by an experienced evaluation project manager, and staffed by a combination of EAP staff and program evaluation consultants contracted from the Bureau of Management Consulting or from the private sector. Some involvement of program managers and line staff will also be required, of course, and part-time coordinating officers will be requested from program resources to ensure close liaison with the evaluation team.

The total elapsed time required to carry out an evaluation of Public Affairs: Abroad, as proposed in outline form above, is estimated to be six to eight months.