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U. S. Department of State
Office of Information Access Liaison, A/SKS/IAP/IAL
2201 C Street N.W., Suite B266
Washington, D.C. 20520-0000
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[Electronic Request Submission](#)

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United States Department of State

Washington, D.C. 20520

January 7, 2025

F-2013-01650

Sent via email

This letter responds to your January 19th, 2013, request submitted to the Department of State (“the Department”), pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), 5 U.S.C. § 552 for a:

“Copy of the State Department Sequestration Plan.”

The U.S Department of State’s Office of Information Programs and Services received your request on the same day it was submitted and assigned case number F-2013-01650, for tracking purposes. Please include the tracking number in all future communications concerning this FOIA request.

The Department conducted a search for information responsive to your request and located the enclosed record(s). After careful review, we have determined that all are appropriate for release in full.

This action closes your request in this office. For further assistance or to discuss any aspect of your request, you may contact our FOIA Requester Service Center or our FOIA Public Liaison via email to FOIAstatus@state.gov or telephone at (202) 261-8484.

If you are not satisfied with the Department’s determination in response to your request, you may administratively appeal by writing to: Appeals Officer, Office of Information Programs and Services, U.S. Department of State, A/GIS/IPS, HST Room B266, 2201 C Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20520, by emailing to FOIAAppeals@state.gov, or by faxing to (202) 485-1718. Appeals must be

postmarked within 90 calendar days and include a copy of this letter, clearly stating why you disagree with the determination set forth in this response.

Finally, if you are not satisfied with the Department's determination in response to your appeal you may contact the Office of Government Information Services at the National Archives and Records Administration to inquire about the FOIA Mediation Services they offer. The contact information is as follows: Office of Government Information Services, National Archives and Records Administration, 8601 Adelphi Road-OGIS, College Park, Maryland 20740-6001, email address: ogis@nara.gov; telephone: (202) 741-5770; toll free number: 1-877-684-6448.

Sincerely,

Sarah A Westenberg

Digitally signed by Sarah A
Westenberg
Date: 2025.01.07 13:54:55 -05'00'

Sarah A. Westenberg
Supervisory Government Information Specialist
A/SKS/IAP-Charleston, South Carolina
Bureau of Administration

Enclosures

State Operations

FY 2013 Sequestration Plan

Section I. Describe anticipated furlough impact

U.S. Direct Hires:

Anticipated Actions and Impact Statement

The future funding uncertainties pose considerable workforce planning challenges within the Department.

Furloughs

Diplomatic and & Consular Programs (D&CP): Under a five percent reduction, the American Salaries account would be cut \$114 million. The Department is instituting actions to mitigate the need to furlough Foreign and Civil service staff overseas and domestically. Since enactment of the current six-month continuing resolution (CR), the Department has been constraining administrative spending so resources could be prioritized to avert the need for furloughs in the first two months after sequester. However, the Department will be closely tracking the need to issue furlough orders. There is ongoing review of the appropriate timing of bargaining and implementation should the sequester cuts be sustained. The Department will also be reviewing the cost impacts of exempting personnel with critical security, safety, and medical responsibilities, and what such exemptions would mean in terms of accelerating furloughs.

Other Bureaus and Offices: Bureaus with payroll costs outside of D&CP (including ECA, OBO, OIG, and the American sections of international commissions) will have varying abilities to absorb the sequester reduction. However, there will be an attempt made to mitigate furlough impacts within each account similar to the actions identified for D&CP identified above.

Hiring Freezes

D&CP: In order to mitigate the impact of reductions to the American Salary account, hiring will be slowed in March; and by April the Department will institute a plan to reduce attrition hiring to 1 for 2 hiring; in effect, 50 percent attrition replacement. If sustained for the full year, this action would leave 290 attrition replacements vacant, including 142 Foreign Service and 148 Civil Service positions. This action will directly impact the progress has made over the past four years to close the gaps in hiring and training to meet the mission requirements of the Department.

Other Bureaus and Offices: Consistent with the approach identified for furloughs, the Department intends to take a consistent approach to hiring constraints. However, there are specific areas where a freeze would undermine project oversight and implementation. For example, vacancies in the International Boundary and Water Commission will impact the Operation's Department hiring of security personnel for high crime areas along the Lower Rio Grande and the flood control personnel required to maintain the Lower Rio Grande levees. Additionally, the Office of Inspector General will be forced to not fill critical positions in the Office of Audits and Office of Inspections. As a result, OIG will be required to re-evaluate its projected assignments to fulfill its traditional mandate to prevent and deter waste, fraud and mismanagement.

LES Sequestration Plan:

Anticipated Actions and Impact Statement

The Locally Engage Staff including Personal Service Contractors, Personal Service Agreements, and Foreign Service Nationals are primarily funded through the Departments regional bureaus (AF, EAP, EUR, NEA, SCA, WHA, and IO). Sequestration will result in a \$49.1 million cut to these bureau LES payroll resources.

Instituting a 1 for 2 vacancy attrition hiring slowdown will directly impact 833 positions. In addition to the saving achieved from limiting attrition hiring, the Department will assess the availability of unobligated balances of prior year funds or current year recoveries to cover any remaining shortfall.

As referenced above, should sequestration cuts be sustained for the entire fiscal year, the Department will reassess the need for LES furloughs where legally permissible. In many countries in which the Department operates, the local law and hiring practices do not allow for furloughs without accruing significant severance costs. As a result, short term savings from furloughs would be unlikely for many overseas posts.

Section II. Describe anticipated contract actions

Anticipated Actions and Impact Statement

The Department does not anticipate instituting an agency-wide contract reduction action. However, some of the State Operations programs have significant impacts that are of concern to the Department:

- **Administration Bureau (A):** The A bureau will reduce contract oversight functions including for logistics, management, building operations, and overseas mail and pouch services. The Bureau will also defer preventive maintenance activities on domestic facilities, jeopardizing system performance in future years. Reduced funding will delay the Harry S Truman Building renovation by at least one year, which will have an overall increase in costs associated with longer need for swing space and leases.
- **International Information Programs (IIP) and Public Diplomacy (PD):** Contract support is critical to the Department's public diplomacy programs. Under sequestration, IPP would reduce contract support for new communication technologies to enable greater dissemination of global programs and information. Reductions to contracts would be impact the Department's American Spaces which provide information services at 850 world-wide locations. These Spaces link diplomatic posts to the host country public.
- **Office of Medical Services:** The office's largest expense is the cost of Medical evacuation for overseas employees and family members. Reduced contract funding may threaten life sustaining programs and limit critical medical evacuations.
- **Bureau of Overseas Building Operations (OBO):** Sequestration would reduce the OBO world-wide security upgrade program by \$39 million. When combined with other agencies reduced contributions, the resulting reduction of \$51 million would lead to deferral of planned contracts for two new diplomatic facilities. As the Department is working to safely house the US Government's overseas presence, these cuts will delay new projects at least one year, keeping several hundred employees in vulnerable facilities.
- **Information Resources Management (IRM):** A \$20 million sequestration cut would affect several contract funded initiatives including global IT modernization, share point services, and entire server operations centers. These enterprise systems facilitate internal and external collaboration. IRM would also eliminate a data sharing platform supporting SIPRNET and the Department's classified communications. IRM would also defer work on the OMB directed Data Center consolidation initiative. Over fifty percent of the Department's IRM funding is locked into a firm fixed price contract, which would require significant renegotiation.
- **Counterterrorism (CT):** CT could reduce the amount planned for the Bureau of Administration (A) for Navy Hill renovations. However, reducing this amount will likely delay the renovation and delay plans A Bureau has for additional space in SA-1 and HST that CT currently occupies. 100 percent of CT's Worldwide Security Protection (WSP) funding of the Counterterrorism Preparedness Program (CTPP) goes to an SAIC contract for support of this program. An \$80 thousand reduction could be achieved by reducing the level of effort on the contract.

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Section III. Describe anticipated grant actions

Anticipated Actions and Impact Statement

The Department does not anticipate instituting an agency-wide grant reduction action. However, some of the State Operations programs have significant impacts that are of concern to the Department, specifically:

- Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA): Under sequestration, the Department's capacity to respond to educational and cultural opportunities will be diminished. The \$10 million reduction in funding for Professional and Cultural Exchanges will limit the Bureau's ability to reach the foreign audiences identified as critical to the success of the Department's public diplomacy and foreign policy goals, including youth, minorities, and populations who have little knowledge of the United States. The International Visitor Leadership Program (IVLP), which is currently unable to meet the demand from missions around the world, would be further reduced. More than 340 participants from this program (IVLP) have gone on to become the head of state or government in their home country. Many of the first women leaders of countries (e.g., Indonesia, Ireland, Brazil, Malawi) are IVLP alumni. The benefit to the United States of this early exposure to American society and values is incalculable.
- Sequestration cuts of \$16.3 million will result in the loss of approximately 1,500 U.S. and foreign exchange participants from Academic programs worldwide. ECE's ability to leverage cost-sharing from partner governments through our flagship Fulbright exchange for students and scholars will be significantly affected, magnifying the impact of the cuts. Fulbright is an essential component of strategic educational dialogues with priority countries, and the cuts will hamper our ability to deliver on the Department's commitments and flexibility to respond to emerging challenges and opportunities. ECE will be unable to sustain the full investment in educational advising, which is critical to maintaining the flow of international students that contribute more than \$23 billion a year to the U.S. economy.

Section IV. Describe Other Impacts on the Department of State's Mission

Regional Bureaus: The sequestration will be felt world-wide. The regional bureaus have a global impact on bilateral and regional relationships and serve as the essential platform for U.S. influence globally. The cuts will impact our diplomatic engagement on vital foreign policy and national security issues. At the embassy level these cuts will result in reduced engagement on issues of vital national interest.

Diplomatic Security: Combined reductions of nearly \$70 million to Diplomatic Security programs will have deleterious consequences to domestic and overseas security operations. DS

would prioritize cuts to domestic programs to mitigate impact on overseas programs by reductions in training and contract oversight. The Department would also reduce implementation of ARB and ISAT recommendations. However, the availability of carry over balances will allow for continued attrition replacement of personnel. For the frontline states, sequestration would most significantly impact Afghanistan for which technical security upgrades are required for the Kabul Embassy compound.

Bureau of International Organizations / Contributions to International Organizations (CIO): Through September 30, 2013, IO estimates there will be \$1.5 billion in FY 2013 US assessed contribution requirements, including the full UNESCO assessment and one-half of what were owed for FY 2012. At the projected sequester operating level the funding shortfall would be \$74 million. There are over 40 international organizations in the Contributions to International Organizations (CIO) account which could be impacted by this shortfall, and the U.S. could enter into arrears, contrary to the Administration's policy.

Bureau of International Organizations / Contributions for International Peacekeeping Activities: For FY 2013, the Administration requested \$2.1 billion for the Contributions for International Peacekeeping Activities (CIPA) account. The projected sequester reduction would be \$92 million from the current CR level of \$1,839 million. At this level the CIPA account will not be able to pay ongoing assessments in full for critical peacekeeping missions, or support any new potential missions, such as Mali, or Syria.

International Fisheries Commission (IFC): The sequestration would cause IFC to be in arrears with several commissions. This would jeopardize the ability to protect US interests, including access to commercial and recreational fisheries that generate between \$12 and \$15 billion annually, including thousands of jobs to the United States.

Protection of Foreign Missions and Officials (PFMO): Sequestration would impact the Department's ability to pay its projected invoices in FY 2013. The New York City invoices are likely to exceed \$26 million in FY 2013. The Department would have to determine whether to pay its invoices for New York City and surrounding areas, or to pay the other parts of the country. If it chooses the latter, the level it is in arrears, which already exceeds \$80 million, will increase.