

Counting Apples and Oranges: Report on the Post Website Inventory Jan 2004

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Executive Summary

Secretary Colin Powell's vision for the use of technology in U.S. foreign affairs and the State Department intensifies the need for scrutiny of assets already in use. Leveraging knowledge and expediting the dissemination of critical information to those with a need to know are critical to the Department's mission. To this end, it is only natural to exploit information technology, especially websites.

For many embassies, missions, consulates and other posts, the Internet site is the window to the world; the intranet site delivers administrative efficiencies; and the SIPRNet site is the most expedient deliverer of current classified news.

For those peering into the window, seeing a house in order should be the goal of each post. With information at the heart of State's mission, Ambassador James H. Holmes, Deputy Chief Information Officer, believes the newly realigned Bureau of Information Resources Management (IRM) should be exploiting State's technology infrastructure to create a New Diplomacy and to serve a 21st Century foreign affairs enterprise.

In reflecting the interests and needs of the current Administration, the Office of eDiplomacy is intensely interested in how information technology is used to further the Department's mission. The website inventory, conducted at the turn into the calendar year 2004, is the first such overview of all Department post sites. Since then, the Office of eDiplomacy has initiated a more extensive review of SIPRNet sites, called the Active Report Card, that periodically evaluates all SIPRNet post sites.¹

A goal of New Diplomacy is to apply a unified, consistent approach to diplomatic efforts. This applies to websites, too.

Findings

Like comparing apples and oranges, comparing embassy, consulate, mission and other post websites does not appear feasible or fair. But the review was not designed to be dunning. Instead, we believe it is valid to take a look at these assets and to offer encouragement as well as suggestions for improvement. Findings include the following:

A wide range of design and content dominates post websites. While creative and artistic enthusiasm flourishes at some posts, it languishes at others. Adherence to existing federal and State policies and guidelines appears to be at will, or sporadic at best. Content refreshed daily seems to be a function of post size and interest, rather than to adherence to a preordained schedule.

Post SIPRNet sites are being introduced on CLASSNET at a rapid pace, but quality and content is uneven. A robust classified or unclassified site should be well-organized and content rich. Given the vagaries of assignments, post priorities and funding levels, it is understandable that some posts place less priority on their websites.

Here are a few more specific conclusions.

¹ An example of the ranking with explanation of the evaluation methodology is contained in the Excel spreadsheet that accompanies this report.

Recommendations and Further Findings

1. Comprehensive Oversight. As the Department adopts more central command and oversight of important State assets, consideration should be given to maintaining, at minimum, oversight of the post websites. These websites are a valuable tool in communications and in information dissemination.

Several offices and committees that may have an interest in assisting with comprehensive oversight include the Office of eDiplomacy, its New Diplomacy Global Task Force, , the Internet Steering Committee, and the Model for Overseas Management Support (MOMS) Committee.

Most Virtual Presence Posts (VPPs) have yet to be registered on the State's Internet portal. Some sit on servers in the host country. Until a plan is endorsed to "license" the establishment and management of these sites, it will be difficult to oversee and inventory these.

Recommendation 1: An inventory of all post websites should be conducted quarterly, or at least semi-annually. The results should be posted on iNet for all State to see.

2. Guided Design and Templates. Imposing strict design criteria on all posts, regardless of mission, strategic plan, or personnel skills, is senseless. However, following established standards and tailoring high-level guidelines to fit the post's image should not prevent the production of a rich, attractive and useful website. Further, using and understanding these guidelines and standards should enhance the website's ability to communicate important information. At a minimum, post websites should include the web elements of this first inventory.

The SIPRNet Portal X templates are designed for low-cost, easy-to-do implementation and maintenance of these classified websites. With the new well-conceived embassy templates, designed by the Bureau of International Information Program (IIP), embassies have a source for professionally designed websites and content management. IIP has also produced a templates for virtual presence posts that include a content management system and training.

Recommendation 2: At a minimum, the post websites should include the standard web elements surveyed in the January 2004 inventory. Posts with a more extensive web presence can consult with the Office of eDiplomacy about alternatives. Fully committed posts can engage with IIP, which has templates available for varying needs.

3. Training. Web development and web maintenance training is limited to a few courses available only occasionally from SAIT (see a summary at Appendix C: FSI/SAIT Web Development Courses. More may be available through FastTrac Distance Learning.).

Given the speed with which web theory and application have developed over the last few years, trying to keep up with this moving target is not easy. In the [SIPRNet ALDAC 64964 - SIPRNET Website Rollout - Update 5](#), the disparities among websites is recognized: "Large, medium and small posts produce excellent homepages, just as others produce inadequate ones."

But the need for more indepth training in the field has been usually underestimated. Committing scarce resources to supporting the content management system and training is difficult for most small and medium-sized posts.

Recommendation 3: FSI/SAIT sanction approved distance learning courses for web development and management of post websites.

4. New Diplomacy Tool. As one of the more dynamic tools in the New Diplomat's arsenal, the post websites can be powerful and focused if used well. Websites can be a strategic communication tool. Costs of maintaining a website can be minimal, especially when offset against savings in administrative budgets.

Recommendation 4: Include websites in the mission's strategic mission program plan.

Background

Secretary Colin Powell's vision for the use of technology in U.S. foreign affairs and the State Department intensifies the need for scrutiny of assets already in use. The ability to leverage knowledge and expedite the dissemination of critical information to those with a need to know establish excellent reasons for exploiting information technology, especially websites. In a recent speech, he documented the importance of making information accessible to every State worker.

When I arrived here in 2001, most of our employees did not yet have desktop Internet access. Last year, we completed the upgrade of our unclassified system so that every employee in the department, not only here in the State main building, in the Truman building, but every one of our embassies around the world, now has access to the Internet with broadband capability. And over these three years, we have put in place over 44,000 computers with that capability.²

In remarks made recently to the Senate Appropriations Committee, Secretary Powell said:

We have also had tremendous success with our information technology upgrade, and I'm very proud of what we have done to put the Internet in every office everywhere in the world that a State Department officer is located in.³

Window to the World

So it's no surprise that before traveling to a U.S. embassy, consulate or mission, it is rumored that the Secretary first looks at the post's websites. In the new world where electronic information reigns, the Internet site is the window to the world, an intranet site attests to its administrative hardiness, and a SIPRNet site is the most expedient deliver of classified information. As such, putting the best effort forward should be the goal of each post.

Likewise, intranet sites are important for sharing information among personnel that helps in completing their tasks. Forms, bulletin boards, office functions and staffing are likely candidates for the post's intranet site.

The Office of eDiplomacy announced the global availability of classified websites on SIPRNet (Secret Internet Protocol Router Network) in December 2002 for publishing intelligence, sharing graphics and images, and for reaching a broader audience. In addition, storing the files on the website eliminates duplication of effort and lost files. By the end of CY 2003, more than 50 SIPRNet websites had been launched by posts.

This website inventory is the first overview of all the sites. Since then, the Office of eDiplomacy has initiated a more extensive review, called the *Active Report Card*, that periodically evaluates all SIPRNet post sites.⁴

²Remarks at Ceremony in Recognition of the Partnership Between the Department of State and the National Archives, **Secretary Colin L. Powell**, Benjamin Franklin Room, Washington, DC. April 13, 2004 , (1:30 p.m. EDT). <http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/31387.htm>.

³ President's Budget Request for Fiscal Year 2005, Secretary Colin L. Powell, Opening Remarks before the Subcommittee On Foreign Operations, Senate Appropriations Committee, April 8, 2004 , (2:35 p.m. EDT)

⁴ An example of the ranking with explanation of the evaluation methodology is contained in the Excel spreadsheet that accompanies this report.

Bureau of Information Resource Management's Role

With information at the heart of State's mission, Ambassador James H. Holmes, Deputy Chief Information Officer, believes the new realigned Bureau of Information Resource Management (IRM) should be exploiting State's technology infrastructure to create a New Diplomacy and to serve a 21st Century foreign affairs enterprise. The Office of eDiplomacy in IRM focuses on using technology to modernize and improve business processes. As part of its role in facilitating the alignment of technology with diplomacy State-wide, the Office of eDiplomacy is conducting initiatives that cross organizational boundaries.

One of the Office's functions is to advise IRM about the information technology needs of State's workforce. The primary goal of the Office of eDiplomacy's **FY 2004 Work Plan** is to conduct and publish studies on current business practice and technology.

It is within this context that the inventory was conceived and executed.

Purpose

Leveraging knowledge to lead government on foreign affairs starts first with understanding what assets State has. In keeping with the FY 2004 Work Plan, the Office conducted a first-ever inventory embassy, consulate, and mission websites.

The purpose of this report is to establish a benchmark for one of the new diplomat's tools— websites generated by, for and about embassies, consulates and other posts around the world.

Further, this report assesses the state of these assets and advises short term actions with an eye to long-term planning. Such advice is centered on providing design and content guidance with the ultimate goal of unifying State's—and therefore, the U.S.'s—presence overseas.

Apples and Oranges—Disclaimers, with a Twist

Like comparing apples and oranges, comparing embassy, consulate, mission and other post websites does not appear feasible or fair. But the review was not designed to be dunning. Instead, we believe it is valid to take a look at these assets and to offer encouragement as well as suggestions for improvement.

This report does not make any claims to be definitive. The inventory reflects a “moment” in time. In the interim, between the time of the observations and of the publication of the report a site may have improved, or conversely, become stagnant.

However, the inventory does put a “stake in the sand” in establishing a State-wide assessment of post websites. Websites are as much an asset as hardware and software. Precious time and energy is invested in the construction and maintenance of them. Properly conceived, the website is a tool that has a vast range of utility and function. Sites can save time and provide efficiencies in post management. Sites also broaden the availability of important information. Further,

- Websites for the general public should invite repeat visits for purposes as mundane as passport information and student research.
- Intranet websites should provide basic information about the post offices and functions.
- SIPRNet publishing should broaden the availability of intelligence generated or unearthed at a post.

This survey did not attempt to critique design, even though design is intrinsic to how well a website works for those who need to know, regardless of bandwidth, type of computer, security profile (intranet and SIPRNet), or physical disabilities.

New Diplomacy Initiatives

There is another reason for making an inventory besides seeing what is in the cupboard and to lay the groundwork for standards and expectations. The Office of eDiplomacy wants to provide a structure for the newest diplomatic outreach tools: Virtual Presence Posts (VPPs). Cities with no physical U.S. presence are given a digital presence via Virtual Consulates, American Presence Posts, and American Corners. These are explained as follows:

American Presence Posts

A site that is supported by one American officer in an important region to further commercial and public diplomacy goals.

American Corners

A public diplomacy outpost – library – is supported by the host country with assistance of equipment from DoS. This type of

virtual presence offers a forum for discussions, program venues and Internet.

Virtual Consulates

A locally branded product that may be able to handle up to 50 percent of a physical consulate's workload in order to communicate with local publics and Americans.

Except for a few American Presence Posts and American Corners, most VPPs are not on state.gov or iNet. Therefore, they are not yet inventoried.



Methodology:

At the turn of CY 2003-2004, baseline information was collected and recorded on the following **461** sites:

- Each **Internet** website listed at State's portal (<http://www.state.gov/>) for U.S. Embassies and Consulates (<http://usembassy.state.gov/>). Total: **226**
- Each **intranet** (iNet through OpenNet) website listing of Embassies, Consulates, & Missions (<http://intranet.state.gov/posts/>). Total: **164**
- Each **SIPRnet** website (through ClassNet), existing and planned. Total: **71**

Description of Spreadsheets Compiled

The data is compiled in an Excel file that has the following tabs:

Tab	Description
Public Summary	226 Internet websites. Total incidents per region of web elements and corresponding percentage of total.
Public	226 Internet websites. Data on web elements, homepage length, date audited.
Public-Chart (A)	Internet Summary data in bar chart format. Incidents per region.
Public-Charts (B)	Internet Summary data in bar chart format. Percentages per region. 2 identical charts, one with data table shown.
Combo Charts	3 charts for Internet, intranet and SIPRNet sites comparing length of homepage per region 3 charts comparing regions by number of sites.
iNet Summary	164 intranet websites. Total incidents per region of web elements and corresponding percentage of total.
iNet	164 intranet websites. Data on web elements, homepage length, date audited
iNet-Chart (A)	iNet Summary data in bar chart format. Incidents per region.
iNet-Charts (B)	iNet Summary data in bar chart format. Percentages per region. 2 identical charts, one with data table shown.
SIPRNet Summary	71 SIPRnet websites. Total incidents per region of elements identified by eDiplomacy and corresponding percentage of total.
SIPRNet	71 SIPRnet websites. Data on elements identified by eDiplomacy.
SIPRNet Chart (A)	SIPRnet summary data in bar chart format. Incidents per region.
SIPRNet Chart (B)	SIPRnet summary data in bar chart format. Percentages per region. 2 identical charts, one with data table shown.

Tab	Description
SIPRNet Active Report Card	20 elements rated and commented on by eDiplomacy.
Column Explanations	Explanation of the Report Card columns.
Activation Baseline	Explanation of the Report Card criteria.

Description of Data Collected - Unclassified

To help in analyzing the design and content of the unclassified websites, the presence of these web elements were tallied by region:

- State nameplate
- Dual language
- Search
- Last update
- About
- US citizens
- Business
- Students
- Contact info
- FAQs
- Site index
- Privacy statement
- Visitor counter
- Feedback

In addition, the length of the homepage in printed pages was tallied per website.

Description of Data Collected – SIPRNet

When collecting data on the SIPRNet sites, we surveyed fewer elements but were more discerning. Improving State’s classified connectivity with our partners in foreign affairs is at the forefront of issues facing our nation’s security.

- Contact information with classified email addresses
- INR link
- DS link
- Clock
- Relevant bio information
- Mission-wide content provider
- Comment and feedback POC
- Daily Reports last update
- Comments

Analysis: Website Elements

Encouraging similarity among State's decentralized technology activities is intrinsic to eDiplomacy's mission. *A goal of New Diplomacy is to apply a unified, consistent approach to diplomatic efforts.* This applies to websites, too. Whether communicating classified or unclassified information via a website, success is measured by how well the user experience is as they visit the site. Website design and content that is similar across the embassies and consulates facilitates ease of use and accelerates information gathering.

Further, having a common look-and-feel across all public Department, embassy, consulate and virtual presence posts web sites is a matter of "branding" State's efforts.

When the www.state.gov site was re-organized at the beginning of 2001, these nine sections were identified as essential information for the homepage:

About the State Department

Press and Public Affairs

Travel and Living Abroad

Business Center

Other Services

Countries and Regions

International Topics and Issues

History, Education and Culture

Employment

In keeping with this priority and those set forth in the award-winning **www.firstgov.gov** site, the elements chosen for inventorying unclassified post sites are, as follows:

About the post and the region

For US Citizens traveling to or residing in the region

For businesses

For students

Search functionality

Last update

Visitor counter

Quick links to:

- Language(s)
- Contact Information
- Frequently Asked Questions or help section
- Site Index
- Privacy Statement

Length of the homepage (in 11-inch printed pages):

The two charts below summarize the number of incidents per category found in each region.

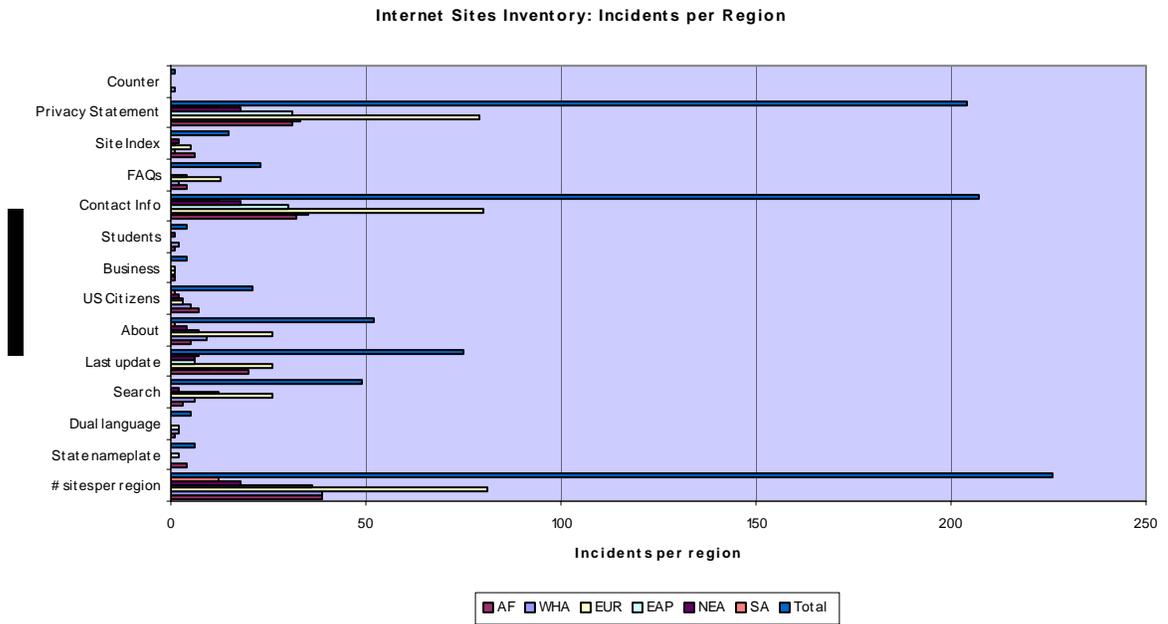


Fig. 1: Internet state.gov standard web elements Incidents per Region

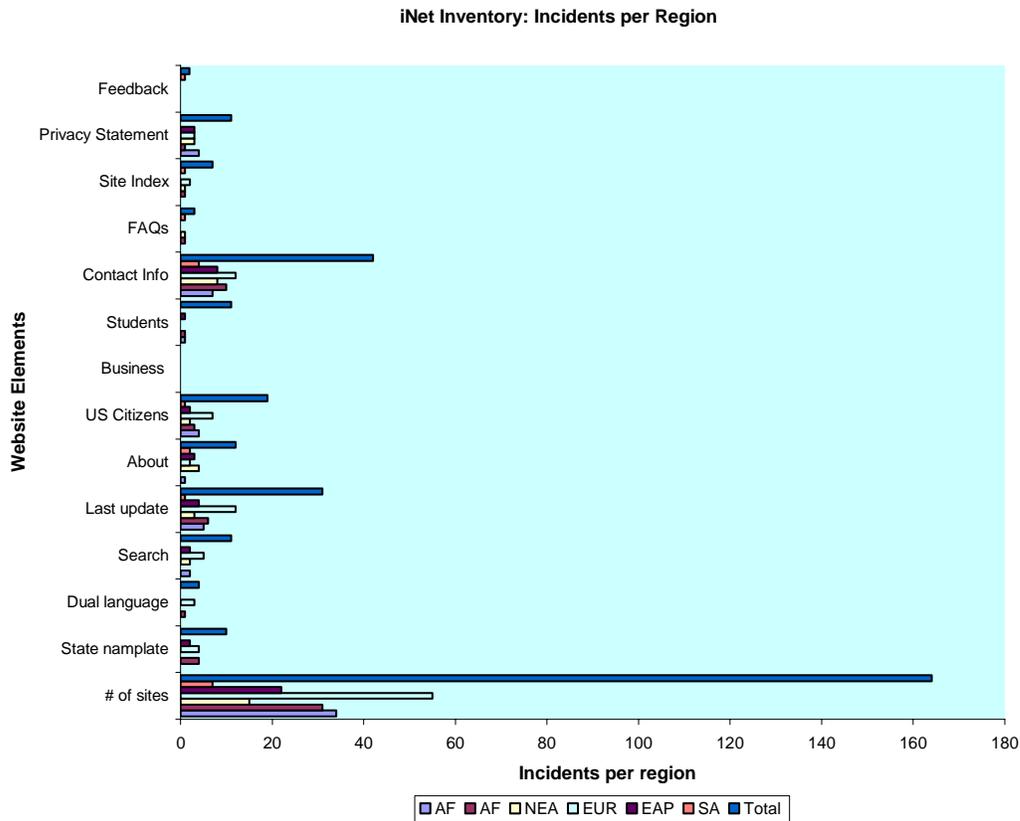


Fig. 2: iNet standard web elements Incidents per Region

Elements on post SIPRNet websites were identified by the Office of eDiplomacy. On January 8, 2004⁵, in addition to Comments, the existence of the following information was collected for each URL on the SIPRNet sites:

- Contact information with classified email addresses
- INR link
- DS link
- Clock
- Relevant bio information
- Mission-wide content provider
- Comment and feedback POC
- Daily Reports last update

⁵ Since then, the Office of eDiplomacy has rated each SIPRNet post on the following information: *Key Contacts, Country Notes, Country Map, Link to Home Bureau, Links to INR & DS, Extra Credit Content, Updated Reports, Cables, Extra Credit Reports, Head of State, Head of Govt, Foreign Minister, Military Leader, Econ/Fin Minister, Extra Credit Bios, Navigation, Visual Design, Functionality, Creativity, Extra Credit Functions, Total Points, Comments.*

The chart below summarizes the data collected on the post SIPRNet websites:

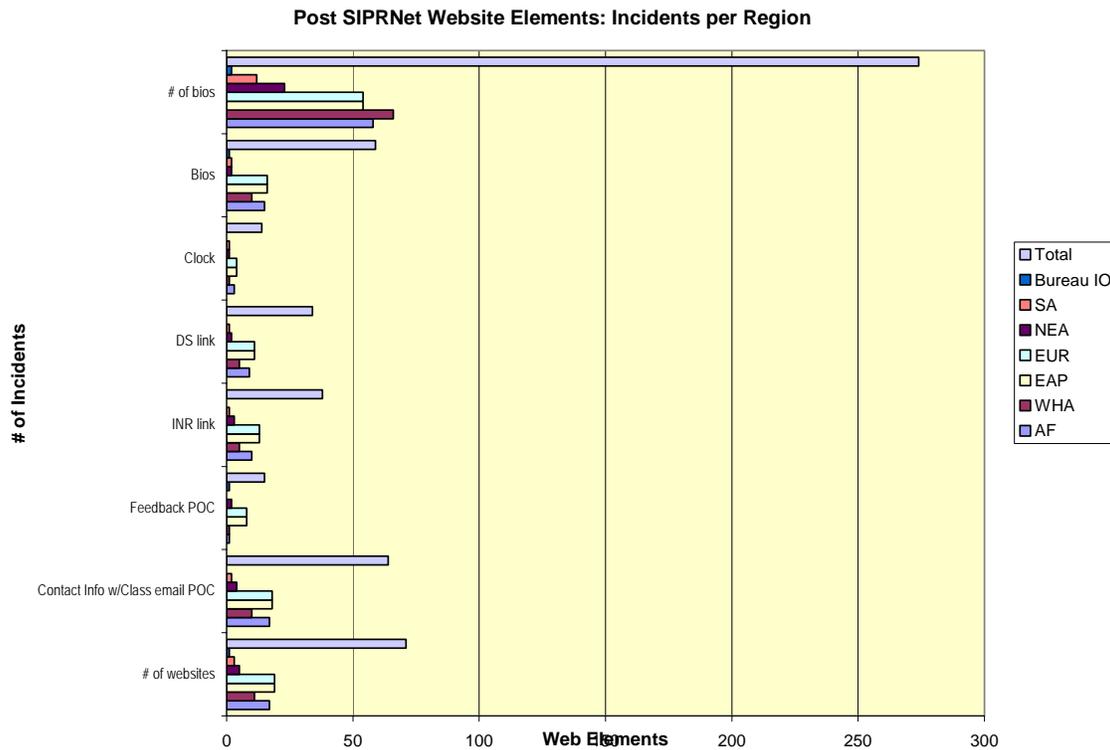


Fig. 3: Post SIPRNet website standard elements Incidents per Region

Based in the Department of Defense, SIPRNet furnishes the backbone for secret-level network connectivity. CLASSNET uses the SIPRNET addressing convention for email so that Department of State users can send and receive classified emails with other connected agencies. The items below that are asterisked (*) refer only to the SIPRNet site inventory.

The Office of eDiplomacy firmly advocates content that is current, organized and searchable.

State nameplate

The State nameplate refers to a header that resembles the flag backdrop that is used on the homepage for **state.gov**, as shown here:



Fig. 4: State nameplate.

The Bureau of International Information Programs, The Office of Electronic Media (IIP/T/EM) designed the template last year that is slowly being adopted. Besides usage on State’s Internet site, only 10% and 6%, respectively, of the African Affairs and East Asia and Pacific sites use the standard template. This represents only six sites out of 224. On the intranet side, the usage is a

little higher: 10 sites, or 6% of all 164 sites use the template. They are in the Americas (WHA), East Asia and Pacific (EAP), and Europe and Eurasia (EUR).

Dual language

From what we saw, only five Internet (Berlin, Bishkek, Ottawa, Matamoros, Nouakchott) and four intranet (Athens, Bishkek, Bogota, Warsaw) sites duplicate their site in two languages and clearly indicate the option on the homepage. However, some Internet sites offer portions in two languages. A few sites, like Bogota and LaPaz, are only in the host country language.

Search

As a website grows and content gets richer, one of the most valuable tools is the ability to search the site. On the Internet, one-fifth or 48 State sites have the ability to search. One-third of EUR and EAP sites have a search function. On the **iNet**, 7% of the Internet sites offer a search function. Five of the 11 sites are in EUR, two in Africa, two in NEA, and two in EAP. No South Asia or WHA site has a search function.

Note: No assessment of the search tool was made. Whether or not the search tool turned up useful results was not the focus of the inventory.

Last update

Knowing that content is fresh and not stale is extremely useful to the user in analyzing content. Placing a “Last Update” token on the site aids confidence and ease of use. Fresh content is critical for SIPRNet web publishing.

One-third of the Internet sites indicate when it was last updated. However, only 18 percent of the **iNet** sites indicate their last update.

On the SIPRNet sites, we looked at the date of the last Daily Reports. Some, like Cairo, Tokyo, and Suva, were fresh the same day we dropped in. On the other hand, Riga, for example, was last updated in July 2003.

About

As essential as having a HOME button is, an About section should appear on every homepage. Who owns the site? Who is generating content? What is the point of reference for the website? This is also a perfect place to include information about the region in which the post is located.

Yet only 23% of all the Internet post sites have this on their homepage. Given the advanced nature of most sites in EUR, it's not surprising that more than a one-third of these sites had an About section. In comparison, less than 10% of SA sites had this section on their homepage.

Posts felt even less compelled to state their reason for being on the **iNet** side. Less than 7% provided their sites with an About section. Oddly, less than 4% EUR sites had this section, while 27% of NEA sites had it.

US Citizens

One reason for the existence of an Internet site for a post is to provide information for U.S. citizens traveling or residing in the region.

Surprisingly, only 21 of 244 or 9% of the Internet sites owned by posts had some type of information for U.S. citizens on their homepages. Yet, 12% of the **iNet** sites had information for U.S. citizens.

Business

Less than 2% of the Internet sites had a section specific to business needs and interests. None was expected on the Intranet side; none was found.

Students

Students researching and exploring the world might assume that the official U.S. presence in a region would be able to provide information about it. A section and links targeted to students' interests is natural for embassy websites on the Internet. Less than 2% of the **state.gov** sites have such a section. Less than a handful of intranet sites had some information of relevance to students.

Contact Information

Every site should have a means for contacting someone responsible for the website. One hundred percent of the Internet sites and 92% of the **iNet** sites have contact information.

Because information on these websites must be more critical and time-sensitive, we looked for contact information that included name, section, phone number, classified email address and portfolio.

FAQs

Whether for internal purposes or for the public, a site is richer if frequently asked questions are collected and made available on the site. Twenty-two sites on the Internet, or almost 10%, had FAQs, thanks to EUR, AF, and EAP. Less than 2% of the **iNet** sites have FAQs.

Site Index

A site index or map is a useful tool for users since it distills the information on the site to a single outline. For State's **iNet** site the site map looks like this:

Site Map

- Intranet Central Home
 - Alerts
 - Forums
 - iNET Headlines
 - Information Technology
 - Key Programs
 - Messages & Notices
 - OpenNet Plus Sites (Internet)
 - Publications
 - State Department
 - Training
 - Travel
 - Weather
 - What's Hot?
 - Work Place Issues

Bureaus & Offices
Embassies, Consulates, & Missions
Training
FOIA

Feedback

Publications

 Commercial

 Federal

 State

Archive

Privacy Policy

General Announcements

Only six percent of the Internet sites have a site index, perhaps reflecting the fact that the **state.gov** portal has no site index. Even fewer **iNet** sites have a site index. The absence of such an index is not crucial to a well-functioning site. But the presence of one does indicate good discipline in organizing the site. A site index gives users just one more tool in understanding the site organization.

Privacy Statement

A Privacy Statement is required on all U.S. government websites. Ninety-one percent of the Internet post sites have a link to such a statement. Less than 10 percent of the **iNet** sites do.

Visitor Counter

The presence of a counter is controversial in Internet websites. But it is a quick way of measuring hits to the site. Only Bolivia had one. We did not track counters on the **iNet** sites.

Feedback

Almost half the Internet sites, or 108, had a feedback link. Some linked back to the webmaster, some to an individual, and some to the embassy general information email address.

Homepage Length

Visiting a homepage for the first time, a user should not have to work hard to see the entire homepage. Subordinate material should be relegated to subpages. [A good rule of thumb is to avoid any scrolling on the homepage or at the most have only one page down.]

The inventory included assessing the homepage length by printing it.⁶ For Internet homepages, the overall average length was a quite acceptable 1.4 pages.

The **iNet** page average was slightly shorter at 1.3 pages. Some less-complicated sites consisted solely of one page. But even some more complex sites had very long homepages. Vilnius had 5 and Dakar had 4 pages on the **iNet** in comparison with Warsaw's half a page.

In addition, the printed pages, which are captured in two binders stored in the Office of eDiplomacy, serve as a record for future reference when reviewing sites for improvements.

⁶ The printed page is 11 inches long.

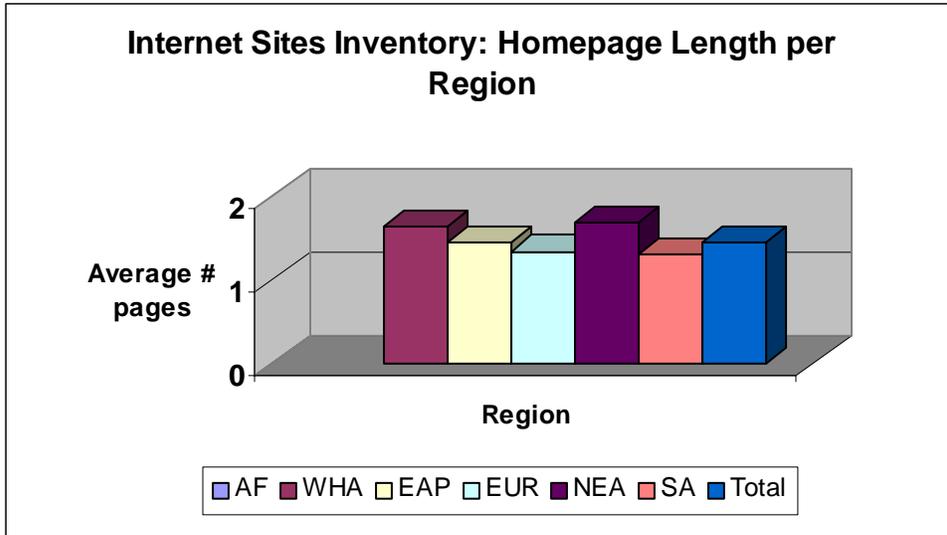


Figure 5: Internet sites Inventory: Homepage Length per Regions

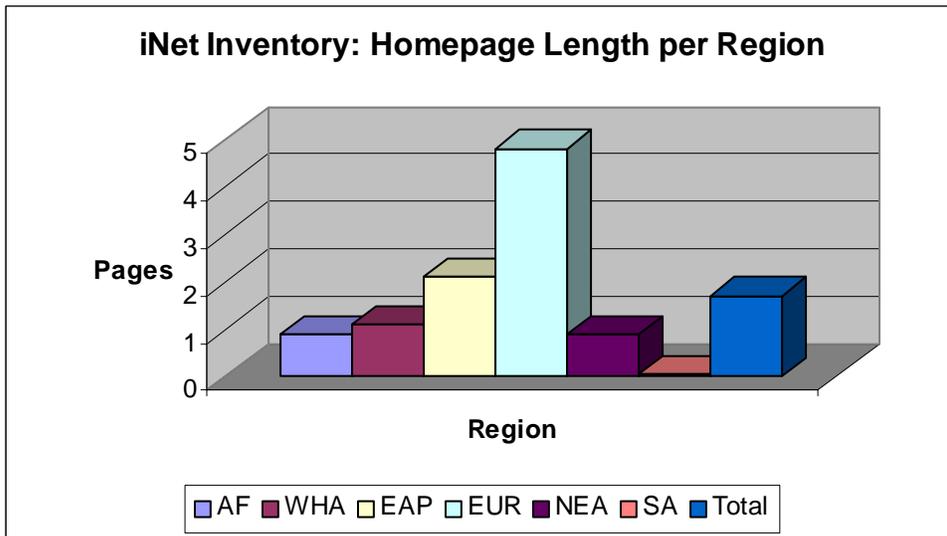


Figure 6: iNet sites Inventory: Homepage Length per Region

***INR Link**

Having a link to the Bureau of Intelligence and Research (INR) is essential.

***DS Link**

Likewise, having a link to Diplomatic Security (DS) is essential for quick access to security requirements.

***Clock**

When analyzing a site’s material from afar in other time zones, being able to synchronize with the current clock setting, helps determine if any action is required.

*Relevant Bio Information

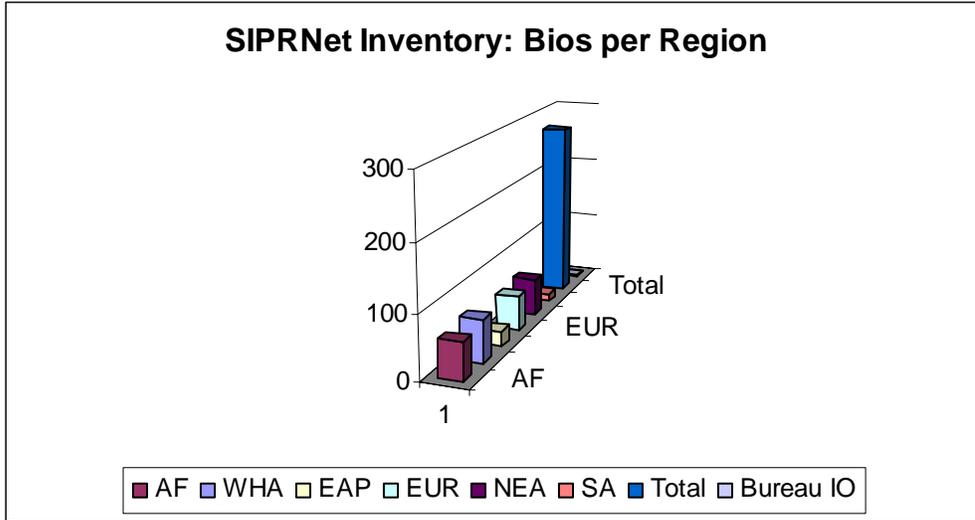


Fig. 7: SIPRNet Inventory: Bios per Region

*Mission-wide content provider

One of the goals of publishing on SIPRNet sites is to provide one place where analysts can find information from all State bureaus and foreign affairs agencies and safely exchange information to gain knowledge. To satisfy this measure, content must be contributed from a wide variety of sources and ranks, including the DAO, Consulate, FCS, and so on.

Conclusions & Recommendations

A wide range of design and content prevails at embassies, consulates, missions sites, and even virtual presence posts (not inventoried). While creative and artistic enthusiasm flourishes at some posts, it languishes at others. Adherence to existing federal and State policies and guidelines appears to be at will, or sporadic at best. Content refreshed daily seems to be a function of post size and interest, rather than to a preordained schedule.

The size of the post certainly plays a role in the sophistication of the design and the maintenance of a site. However, the lack of a sole point of accountability within the Department may also explain the disparities among State's websites.

Although most post Internet sites have at least a Privacy Statement and Contact Information, these two elements should be part of every post site—Internet, intranet, SIPRNet – at the minimum. See Appendix B: References for supporting regulations and other important guidelines.

Post SIPRNet sites are being introduced at a rapid pace. To help in assessing their usefulness in communicating, the Office of eDiplomacy has developed a scorecard. Those that have shown talent for building and continuously maintaining their websites are Budapest and London. Granted, these are large, well-funded posts. But, using PortalX software, homegrown in IRM's Business Center, even analysts on CLASSNET can quickly learn how to post information to SIPRNet.

A robust classified or unclassified site should be well-organized and content rich. Given the vagaries of assignments, post priorities and funding levels, it is understandable that some posts place less priority on their websites. Here are a few more specific conclusions.

Comprehensive Oversight

As the Department adopts more central command and oversight of important State assets, consideration should be given to maintaining, at minimum, oversight of the post websites. These websites are a valuable tool in communications and in information dissemination.

Several offices and committees that may have an interest in assisting with comprehensive oversight include the Office of eDiplomacy, its New Diplomacy Global Task Force, , the Internet Steering Committee, and the Model for Overseas Management Support (MOMS) Committee.

Most Virtual Presence Posts (VPPs) have yet to be registered on the State's Internet portal. Some sit on servers in the host country. Until a plan is endorsed to "license" the establishment and management of these sites, it will be difficult to oversee and inventory these.

Recommendation 1: An inventory of all post websites be conducted quarterly, or at least semi-annually. The results should be posted on iNet.

Guided Design and Templates

Imposing strict design criteria on all posts, regardless of mission, strategic plan, or personnel skills, is senseless. However, following established standards and tailoring high-level guidelines to fit the post's image should not prevent the production of a rich, attractive and useful website. Further, using and understanding these guidelines and standards should enhance the website's ability to communicate important information.

Templates

With the new well-conceived embassy templates designed by the Bureau of International Information Program (IIP), embassies have a source for professionally designed websites and content management. A pilot program of templates for 12 embassies is being rolled out this year (FY04) by IIP. Backend support, testing, and training (including regular workshops) are part of the program. IIP has also produced a templates for virtual presence posts that include a content management system and training. IIP has found that there is nothing that cannot fit into the structure. Nevertheless, training and change management are requiring more resources than originally committed.

As an alternative, IIP has at least 10 pilot embassy programs using static websites (Panama, Manama, Gaborone, Port of Spain, Abu Dhabi, Jerusalem, Warsaw, Dublin, Sana'a, Berlin).

It yet another solution, initiated at the request of the Office of eDiplomacy, is to provide the virtual presence posts with a template and content structure.

Virtual presence posts, or virtual consulates, that provide a U.S. presence in key strategic city otherwise unrepresented by a continual U.S. physical presence. The core of this strategy is the establishment and maintenance of a post website, the virtual presence a website template was constructed to aid in the rollout of more such posts.

The SIPRNet Portal X templates are designed for low-cost, easy-to-do implementation and maintenance of these classified websites.

Recommendation 2: At a minimum, the post websites should include the standard web elements surveyed in the January 2004 inventory. Posts with a more extensive web presence can consult with the Office of eDiplomacy about alternatives. Fully committed posts can engage with IIP, which has templates available for varying needs. At a minimum, post websites should include the web elements of this first inventory.

Training

Web development and web maintenance training is limited to a few courses available only occasionally from SAIT (see a summary at Appendix C: FSI/SAIT Web Development Courses. More may be available through FastTrac Distance Learning.).

Given the speed with which web theory and application have developed over the last few years, trying to keep up with this moving target is not easy. In the [SIPRNet ALDAC 64964 - SIPRNET Website Rollout - Update 5](#), the disparities among websites is recognized: "Large, medium and small posts produce excellent homepages, just as others produce inadequate ones."

But the depth of need for training in the field has been usually underestimated. Committing scarce resources to supporting the content management system and training is difficult for most small and medium-sized posts.

Recommendation 3: FSI/SAIT sanction approved distance learning courses for web development and management of post websites.

New Diplomacy Tool

As one of the more dynamic tools in the New Diplomat's arsenal, the post websites can be powerful and focused if used well. Websites can be a strategic communication tool. Costs of maintaining a website can be minimal, especially when offset against savings in administrative budgets.

Recommendation 4: Include websites in the mission's strategic mission program plan.

Appendix A: Internet and iNet portals

<http://usembassy.state.gov/>

The screenshot shows a Microsoft Internet Explorer browser window displaying the U.S. Department of State website. The address bar shows <http://usembassy.state.gov/>. The page features a navigation menu with links like Home, Contact Us, and FOIA. Below the header, there is a section titled "Websites of U.S. Embassies and Consulates" with a sidebar for "REGIONS".

REGIONS

- ▶ Africa
- ▶ The Americas
- ▶ East Asia and Pacific
- ▶ Europe and Eurasia
- ▶ Middle East and North Africa
- ▶ South Asia
- ▶ Key Officer Listing

Websites of U.S. Embassies and Consulates

AFRICA

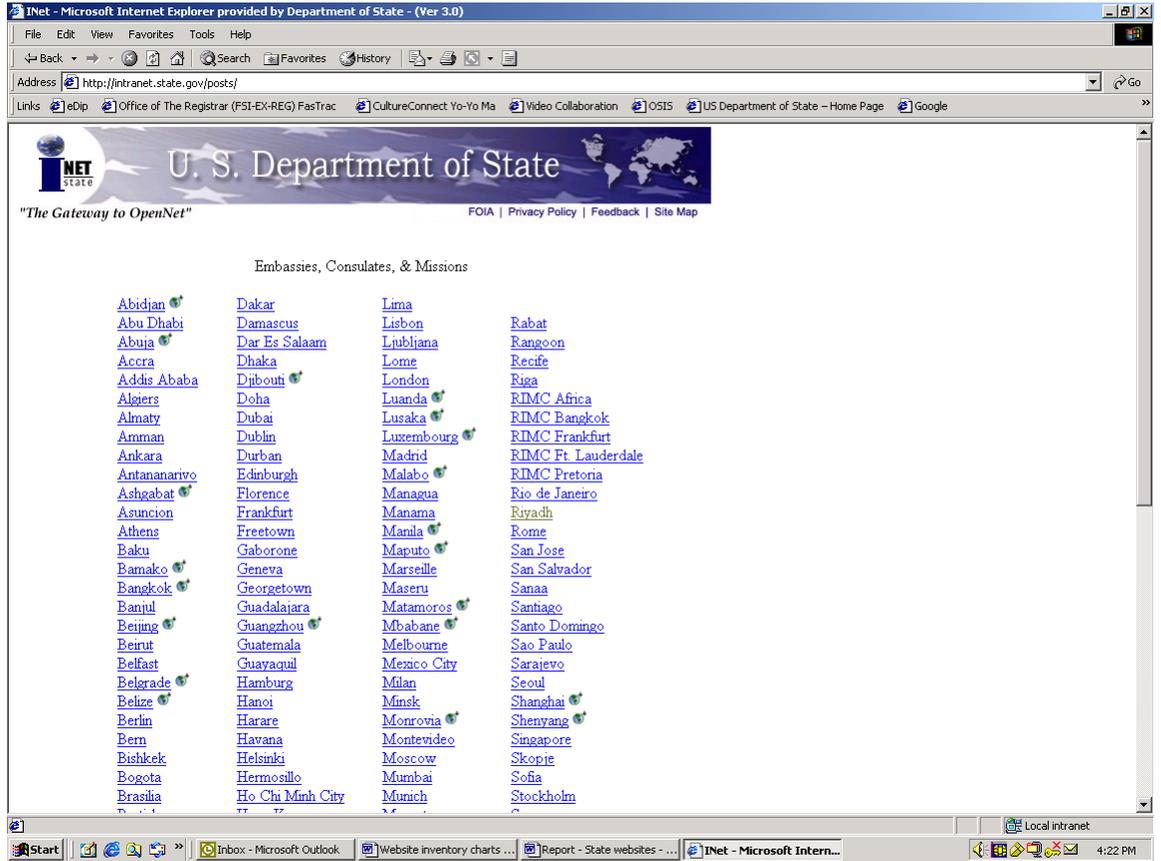
- ▶ Africa Regional Services - Paris
- ▶ Luanda, Angola
- ▶ Cotonou, Benin
- ▶ Gaborone, Botswana
- ▶ Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso
- ▶ Bujumbura, Burundi
- ▶ Yaounde, Cameroon
- ▶ Praia, Cape Verde
- ▶ Ndjamena, Chad
- ▶ Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of the Congo
- ▶ Abidjan, Côte D'Ivoire
- ▶ Djibouti, Republic of Djibouti
- ▶ Malabo, Equatorial Guinea
- ▶ Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
- ▶ Libreville, Gabon
- ▶ Accra, Ghana
- ▶ Conakry, Guinea
- ▶ Nairobi, Kenya
- ▶ Maseru, Lesotho
- ▶ Monrovia, Liberia
- ▶ Antananarivo, Madagascar
- ▶ Lilongwe, Malawi
- ▶ Bamako, Mali
- ▶ Nouakchott, Mauritania
- ▶ Port Louis, Mauritius
- ▶ Maputo, Mozambique
- ▶ Windhoek, Namibia
- ▶ Niamey, Niger
- ▶ Abuja, Nigeria
- ▶ Kigali, Rwanda
- ▶ Dakar, Senegal
- ▶ Freetown, Sierra Leone
- ▶ Pretoria, South Africa
- ▶ Mbabane, Swaziland
- ▶ Dar es Salaam, Tanzania
- ▶ Lome, Togo
- ▶ Kampala, Uganda
- ▶ Lusaka, Zambia
- ▶ Harare, Zimbabwe

THE AMERICAS

- ▶ Buenos Aires, Argentina
- ▶ Nassau, Bahamas
- ▶ Bridgetown, Barbados & Eastern Caribbean
- ▶ Belize City, Belize
- ▶ La Paz, Bolivia
- ▶ Brasília, Brazil
- ▶ Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
- ▶ São Paulo, Brazil
- ▶ Ottawa, Canada
- ▶ Toronto, Canada
- ▶ U.S. Interests Section Havana, Cuba
- ▶ Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic
- ▶ Quito, Ecuador
- ▶ Guayaquil, Ecuador
- ▶ San Salvador, El Salvador
- ▶ Guatemala City, Guatemala
- ▶ Georgetown, Guyana
- ▶ Port-au-Prince, Haiti
- ▶ Tegucigalpa, Honduras
- ▶ Matamoros, Mexico
- ▶ Monterrey, Mexico
- ▶ Puerto Vallarta, Mexico
- ▶ Tijuana, Mexico
- ▶ Curacao, Netherlands Antilles
- ▶ Managua, Nicaragua
- ▶ Panama City, Panama
- ▶ Asuncion, Paraguay
- ▶ Lima, Peru
- ▶ Paramaribo, Suriname
- ▶ Port of Spain, Trinidad & Tobago

The browser's taskbar at the bottom shows several open applications, including Microsoft Outlook and a report titled "State websites...". The system clock indicates the time is 4:23 PM.

<http://intranet.state.gov/posts/>



Appendix B: References

- SIPRNet Reporting Presentation (ppt) April 2003 [IRM/BPC/eDIP website]
- SIPRNet ALDAC
- Department Notice 2002_01_018 (January 8, 2002) M/FSI/SAIT
- Department Notice 2002_12_045 (December 20, 2002) M/EDIP
- Getting Started with Web-Based Reporting: A Guide for Post Management
- SECSTATE 083523
- 5FAM 770 Federal Websites
- Interim Guidance on Public Web Site Hosting
<http://isc.state.gov/publications/guidance.htm>
- Web Development Software in use by the Department of State (Compiled by IRM for the Internet Steering Committee) <http://isc.state.gov/projects/DevTools.htm>
- Internet Steering Committee advice: [Website Design Do's and Don'ts](#)
- [Department of State Website Listings](#)

SIPRNet ALDAC 64964 - SIPRNET Website Rollout - Update 5

04 State 64964 - SIPRNET Website Rollout - Update 5

[back to directory](#)

UTE7710

ORIGIN IRM-00

INFO LOG-00 MFS-00 MFA-00 NP-00 AF-00 AEX-00 A-00
 CA-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 CCOE-00 INL-00 USNW-00 DODE-00
 DOTE-00 WHA-00 DS-00 EAP-00 EB-00 EUR-00 OIGO-00
 FAAE-00 UTED-00 CSEP-00 FDRE-01 FOE-00 VC-00 H-00
 TEDE-00 INR-00 IO-00 VCE-00 MMP-00 M-00 WTC-00
 NEA-00 DCP-01 NSAE-00 OIG-00 EPAU-00 CAEX-00 PC-01
 PER-00 SSO-00 SS-00 MR-00 TEST-00 TRSE-00 SA-00
 FMP-00 EPAE-00 DSCC-00 PRM-00 DRL-00 G-00 ALM-00
 SAS-00 /003R

064924

SOURCE: KODAKD.024084

DRAFTED BY: IRM/BPC/CST/BC:MSALOMON:ACC -- 03/24/04 202-736-7236

APPROVED BY: IRM/BPC/EDIP:JBJOHNSON

IRM/BPC/BC:RDERRICO; RM/IRP:FHASSANI;

IRM/BPC/EDIP:HPONTING; IRM/BPC/EDIP:BBURTON

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Internal Use Only

R 241640Z MAR 04
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO SIPRNET HOME PAGE COLLECTIVE
SPECIAL EMBASSY PROGRAM
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
AMEMBASSY KABUL
AMEMBASSY DUSHANBE
AMEMBASSY BUJUMBURA
AMEMBASSY PORT AU PRINCE
USMISSION UNESCO PARIS

UNCLAS STATE 064924

PARIS FOR USOECD ROME FOR FODAG

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: AADP, AMGT, ECON, PREL, CMGT

SUBJECT: SIPRNET WEBSITE ROLLOUT - UPDATE #5

FOR POL AND ECON ALSO Y

DCMs PLEASE ENSURE WIDEST DISTRIBUTION OF THIS MESSAGE

1. Summary. This message offers advice and updates posts and bureaus on recent accomplishments and developments in the department's program for each classified connectivity program post (CCP) to host a content-rich website on the SIPRNet Intelink-S network. The quantity of our post homepages - and interest in them - are taking off. Since our last update in January, ten more posts have activated homepages on SIPRNet, bringing the total to 71 bureau and post homepages. However, a gap is emerging in the quality of the homepages, and we are developing standards to close it. The front office, content producers and information specialists all have roles to play in making the homepage a success. (See para. 11 for this point.)

2. Topics

- WHO'S IN AND WHO'S GETTING READY TO CREATE A HOMEPAGE?
- MORE THAN CABLES: COMMUNICATING ON THE CLASSIFIED WEB

- QUALITY OF CONTENT - SEEKING EXCELLENCE
- QUALITY OF CONTENT - RECOGNIZING EXCELLENCE
- INNOVATION AND FEEDBACK
- PORTAL X SOFTWARE MIGRATION TO VERSION 1.2
- HORIZONTAL FUSION
- IMPROVING CONNECTIVITY
- INFOCENTER STAFF TRAINING TO HELP
- HOW DO I GET STARTED ON A POST WEB SITE?

WHO'S IN AND WHO'S GETTING READY TO CREATE A HOMEPAGE?

3. Currently, nine bureaus and 62 posts host homepages that provide classified reporting, analysis and other important content to the worldwide SIPRNet foreign affairs intelligence and defense communities.. Congratulations to the following posts and organizations that have gone live since our last update: Ashgabat, Asmara, Asuncion, Bangkok, Harare, Karachi, Munich, Port au Prince, Pretoria and Santo Domingo.

4. By regional bureaus, the following are the active sites to date: AF=16, EAP=8, EUR=16, IO=1, NEA=13, SA=6, WHA=9, INR and RM.

5. As of March 23, the following homepages are in the final stages of development before going active: Abu Dhabi, Ankara, Baku, Brasilia, Buenos Aires, Caracas, Dubai, Dublin, Dushanbe, Frankfurt, Hong Kong, Lima, Lusaka, Managua, Panama, Quito, Riga, Rome, Sanaa, San Jose, Seoul, Tegucigalpa, The Hague, Tirana, USEU Brussels, Vientiane and Zagreb.

6. As of March 23, the following posts have provided signed Project Development Plans (PDPs) to the IRM Bureau and are ready to begin or are already loading content: Addis Ababa, Almaty, Auckland, Beirut, Chengdu, Chiang Mai, Dhaka, Doha, FRC Ft. Lauderdale, Guangzhou, Guatemala, Hamilton, Helsinki, Jakarta, Jerusalem, Kigali, LD/CST, Madrid, Manila, Maputo, Maseru, Montevideo, Moscow, Nairobi, Munich, Naples, Niamey, Nicosia, Nouakchott, Port of Spain, Praia, Pristina, Santiago, Sarajevo, Shanghai, Singapore, Skopje, Sofia, Stockholm, Taipei, Tirana, US NATO, Vienna, Vilnius and Wellington.

7. As of March 23, the following sites are structured but post has not yet submitted a Project Development Plan for rollout support:

Abuja, Antananarivo, Bamako, Banjul, Barcelona, Belize, Bratislava, Embassy Brussels, Calgary, Casablanca, Chisinau, Copenhagen, Fukuoka, Georgetown, Kuala Lumpur, Melbourne, Minsk, Paris, Perth, Peshawar, Reykjavik, Rio de Janeiro, Tallinn, Toronto and USUN.

MORE THAN CABLES - COMMUNICATING ON THE CLASSIFIED WEB

8. The SIPRNet homepage program figured prominently in the March 9-10 conference of the Global Task Force on New Diplomacy. Sponsored by the Office of eDiplomacy, the conference considered best practices for the use of new technology to underpin and improve diplomatic effectiveness. Under Secretary for Management Grant Green cited the homepage program in his opening remarks as a means "to share State's reporting and analysis - our knowledge - with a broad and crucial audience in the USG." In a presentation entitled "More than Cables: Communicating via the Web," a five-member panel discussed progress and challenges in the classified homepage program.

9. The panelists underscored the program's central intent - to better manage and use State's knowledge in exercising foreign affairs leadership. They also noted that a well- managed, content-rich homepage benefits mission staff as well as external readers. Representatives from both Washington and the field emphasized that the heart of the homepage is a summary report that distills foreign policy developments for target audiences inside and outside the Department. This, they said, is key to cutting through the information glut that besieges policy-makers. Other panelists stressed the homepage's value as a means to better use post resources, to increase the post's profile within the foreign policy community, and to provide a permanent and easily accessible repository of valuable information. The participants also discussed the different and important roles that the front office, content producers and information management office must play to achieve a successful homepage (see Para 11 below). The slides used in the presentation are posted on the Community of Practice website at www.state.gov/portalxcp.

QUALITY OF CONTENT - SEEKING EXCELLENCE

10. As the homepage program has taken off, so has interest in what the homepages have to

offer - but what they have to offer varies widely. In part, this reflects the diversity of environments and issues among our posts. However, uneven commitment to updating the pages and uneven use of the homepage features that add the most value for our readers are factors. One thing the quality gap does not reflect is mission size: Large, medium and small posts produce excellent homepages, just as others produce inadequate ones. 11. To ensure that all homepages meet minimum requirements, the Department has developed basic activation criteria for new homepages. These criteria are posted on the SIPRNet homepage Community of Practice website. They set out standards for information on the post, host country, contacts, biographic material, links, and foreign policy content. In line with the SIPRNet panel's strong emphasis on the importance of the "daily" report, the activation criteria require the post's commitment to producing the "daily" report from the outset. (As we have noted in past messages, the "daily" report can actually be published once or twice a week, depending on post resources and output, so long as the homepage specifies when readers can expect it to be updated.)

Experience shows that a high quality page also requires active involvement and teamwork by the front office, policy officers and information management personnel:

-- Chiefs of Mission and DCMs should check their homepages on a regular basis to ensure that the content fully reflects high standards of information and aggressively projects the post's image and perspectives to the SIPRNet community.

-- The principal content providers, usually the political and economic sections, must take responsibility for selecting and adapting the information, and for uploading it to the homepage on a day-to-day basis. Many Office Management Specialists are learning the web skills required to upload and present information provided by embassy staff.

-- Information Management Personnel ensure that the network and software work correctly. They also provide technical assistance and troubleshooting (also, the rollout team in Washington will assist new users). However, Information Management personnel are not intended to provide or post material to the homepage.

QUALITY OF CONTENT - RECOGNIZING EXCELLENCE

12. The classified homepage team (eDiplomacy, the IRM Business Center, and the Resource Management Bureau) has developed an approach to identify sites of distinction. The award

criteria are posted on the Communities of Practice site. The team welcomes feedback.

13. We will identify Sites of Distinction in the first week in April. The COP website will also include an evaluation of all active homepages for content, navigation, visual design, functionality and creativity. The COP website provides guidance to posts on raising their homepages to sites of distinction.

INNOVATION AND FEEDBACK

14. Demonstrating the flexibility and practicality of the homepage for meeting new situations:

--Port au Prince activated its site in late February and is using it to publish critical information for post handling of the political and security situation. For example, the post uses its homepage to publish emergency radio frequencies, thus ensuring that all mission personnel and U.S. Marine peacekeeping forces know how to communicate with each other. To obtain the Radio Frequencies for your post go to www.state.sgov.gov.

-- Embassy Cairo has established a "Libya" portlet on its homepage that links to a new Tripoli website that provides current reporting and background information on the growing dialogue with Libya.

-- If posts have not already done so, we urge them to display a link to the Cable Archive Retrieval System (CARS) in the State Only cables dating back to January 1990. Simply place a link to the cars.state.sgov.gov.

PORTAL X SOFTWARE MIGRATION TO VERSION 1.2

15. On February 24, Portal X was successfully upgraded to version 1.2. We strongly urge posts to begin using new features that make it easier to:

- Categorize reports;
- Convert documents in different formats into the HTML format used on web pages;
- Make information accessible only to people on the Department's network, if so desired.

16. Version 1.1 is still in use on the unclassified side and on OSIS. The Portal X software on the unclassified side will be soon migrated to Version 1.2. If users are interested in developing a site on the unclassified side, please contact Earl Underwood in the IRM Business

Center.

HORIZONTAL FUSION

18. As noted in Update Number 4 (State 27346), DoD has provided funds for State to participate in a project called Horizontal Fusion that is intended to promote information sharing. State's funding will be used to help posts increase the amount and quality of data on their websites. (Posts can get additional details from the Horizontal Fusion project page on the RM/IRP-CIP website on SIPRNet.) Information on how posts can participate in the program will be provided septel.

IMPROVING CONNECTIVITY

19. The Technical Working Group continues its effort to improve network connectivity and performance for users of the Portal X program. The latest results and actions are being reported septel. Out thanks goes out to those posts that participated in the survey.

INFOCENTER STAFF BEING TRAINED TO HELP

20. All customer service personnel in the IRM InfoCenter are attending formalized Portal X training. If you should have a connectivity problem accessing SIPRNet or individual home pages, contact the IRM InfoCenter and open a technical request ticket. They will work with ENM, ITI and OPS in resolving the issue.

After May 1, once a site is activated, the staff in the IRM InfoCenter should be able to answer your operational questions including updating your post or bureau site. If they cannot satisfy your questions in a timely manner, they will refer the technical request to the rollout team or software/hardware developers.

The Rollout Staff currently continuing to help in the rollout include:

Ronnie D'Errico: Project Manager 202-203-7715
derricorj@state.gov, d'erricorj@state.sgov.gov

Max Salomon: Team Lead 202-203-7713
salomonmx2@state.gov salomonam@state.sgov.gov

Mike Cole: Technical Lead 202-203-7719

colemg@state.gov colemg@state.sgov.gov

Joni Taylor: Content Lead 202-203-7708

taylorjd2@state.gov taylorjd@state.sgov.gov

LaVoncy Mallory: Content Manager 202-203-7717

mallorylh@state.gov mallorylh@state.sgov.gov

FAX NUMBER: 202-203-7724

HOW DO I GET STARTED IN DEVELOPING A POST WEB SITE?

21. If your post is not yet developing a site, contact Portal X Rollout Team, as listed above. The team will send a PDP form. This easy to understand document establishes the work to be performed, provides the details of the process, lists the post's technical and non-technical contacts, and accounts for the time the rollout team dedicates to helping the post build the site and put it into operation. Once the SIPRNet rollout team receives and finalizes the signed PDP, it will assign a content manager, ready a site for content loading, and provide training materials.

22. Minimize considered.

POWELL

NNNN

Sent: Wednesday, December 17, 2003 10:24 AM
Subject: **Web Rules and Regulations**

Web-Site Style Guide: Standards and Policies:

Official State Dept. Public Information Dissemination Guidelines
<http://usinfo.state.gov/iip/content.htm>

5 FAM 700 Internet and Intranet (<http://foia.state.gov/REGS/Search.asp>)

- * 710 General
<http://foia.state.gov/masterdocs/05fam/05m0710.pdf>
- * 720 General Policies
<http://foia.state.gov//masterdocs/05FAM/05M0720.PDF>
- * 730 System Security
<http://foia.state.gov//masterdocs/05FAM/05M0730.PDF>
- * 740 Cookies
<http://foia.state.gov//masterdocs/05FAM/05M0740.PDF>
- * 750 E-Mail Policy
<http://foia.state.gov//masterdocs/05FAM/05M0750.PDF>
- * 760 Classification of Web Based Documents
<http://foia.state.gov//masterdocs/05FAM/05M0760.PDF>
- * 770 Federal Websites
<http://foia.state.gov//masterdocs/05FAM/05M0770.PDF>
- * 780 Internet Access
<http://foia.state.gov//masterdocs/05FAM/05M0780.PDF>

Official Seals

Foreign Affairs Manual & Foreign Affairs Handbooks: FAH:
<http://foia.state.gov/masterdocs/05fah07/Grp0120.pdf>

Section 508 & Accessibility

Section 508 requires that Federal agencies electronic and information technology is accessible to people with disabilities. Successful implementation of Section 508 requires the support of each and every federal employee who is involved in the design, development, procurement, or use of electronic and information technology (EIT). All federal employees should understand the requirements of Section 508 and how they may apply to their business operations and processes. To find out more about what the Department is doing, contact the IMPACT program office (OpenNet: <http://impact.state.gov>).

The Office of Electronic Media uses the Web Accessibility Guidelines checklist provided by the W3C to check sites for Section 508 compliancy. It provides a list of

all checkpoints from the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 1.0 organized by concept, as a checklist for Web content developers. Check the W3C web site for more details. (<http://www.w3c.org>)

Classification Marking

In accordance with 5 FAM 760 - Classification of Web Documents (<http://foia.state.gov//masterdocs/05FAM/05M0760.PDF>) the requirements concerning the marking of classified information apply, regardless of physical format, to all document types including web pages and e-mails. Refer to the definition of "information" in E.O. 12958 Part I, Section 1.1b. Refer to 12 FAM 500 (<http://foia.state.gov/REGS/fams.asp?level=2&id=13&fam=0#500>) Information Security, for details on determining classification and classification markings.

Please refer to 5 FAM 774 - ClassNet Website Classification Marking (<http://foia.state.gov//masterdocs/05FAM/05M0770.PDF>) for more information.

Cookies

In accordance with 5 FAM 740 (<http://foia.state.gov//masterdocs/05FAM/05M0740.PDF>) if either persistent or session cookies are used for the purpose of collecting information, the requirements of 5 FAM 460 (<http://foia.state.gov/masterdocs/05fam/05m0460.pdf>) Privacy Act Requirements, must be met.

Both persistent and session cookies may be used on Department intranet web sites.

Use of cookies on internet web sites must be in compliance with 5 FAM 473 (<http://foia.state.gov/masterdocs/05fam/05m0470.pdf>).

Exit Notice

All web sites that provide links to external web sites are required to provide an exit notice before directing users to those sites. As OpenNet Plus is deployed globally, more users will be accessing Internet web sites. It is important for users to understand when they are leaving a Department web site/network and that views expressed on other sites do not necessarily represent the views of the Department of State or the US Government.

Listed below is an example of a valid exit notice:

"This site is produced and maintained by the [optional-list section, office or bureau] U.S. Department of State. Links to other sites are provided as a convenience and should not be construed as an endorsement of the views or products contained therein."

The exit notice may be provided in the form of a pop-up window or as a separate web page when external links are clicked. Compliance with this standard is

mandatory in accordance with 5 FAM 772.2 - Links to Internet Web Sites (<http://foia.state.gov//masterdocs/05FAM/05M0770.PDF>).

Meta Tags

The Guidelines to OpenNet Metadata (OpenNet: http://isc.state.gov/projects/meta_standards.rtf) document addresses one of these efforts, the definition and use of metadata on OpenNet. The World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) defines Metadata, as "...machine understandable information for the Web."

Metadata tags are intended to provide greater insight into the content and structure of information and, thereby, facilitate discovery by query and retrieval tools (e.g., search engines). In the future, as these query and retrieval tools are used in conjunction with sophisticated, "tailored" capabilities such as personalized user profiles, metadata will become even more important and useful.

Privacy Policy

In accordance with 5 FAM 772 (<http://foia.state.gov//masterdocs/05FAM/05M0770.PDF>), all US Government web sites are required to provide a disclaimer and/or privacy statement that describes how user information may be tracked as well as what is done with information collected from users.

Federal web sites must include a privacy policy statement, even if the site does not collect any information that results in creating a Privacy Act record. Every web site produced by the Department is required to provide a Privacy Act statement, regardless of what network the site resides on. A sample privacy statement is included the html templates provided.

Web Site Naming

All Department of State web sites (post, bureau, program offices, etc.) can register under state.gov on the unclassified Intranet (OpenNet), and classified Intranet (ClassNet). The structure of the state.gov follows a hierarchy based on localities, bureaus and offices (e.g., post.state.gov or web.bureau.state.gov). This structure provides for more unique names, more easily located names, and Department identification.

All post public Internet web sites are required to comply with the established web site naming standards as defined in the document titled Web Site Naming Standards (OpenNet: http://isc.state.gov/projects/DNS_STANDARDSv1-2.rtf) produced by the IRM Business Center for the Internet Steering Committee (ISC) (OpenNet: <http://isc.state.gov>). There are three top-level domain names approved for Embassy, Consulate, and Mission public Internet web sites. There are also domain

names and/or sites established for each country.

The same document (Web Site Naming Standards) also outlines suggested naming standards for other web sites on OpenNet and ClassNet. While compliance with these standards is not mandatory, it is recommended that all sites comply with the written standards, which provide for more easily located names and Department identification.

All websites are required to use the DS 3081 - Request for Registering New or Recurring Website Information Dissemination (OpenNet:<http://intranet.state.gov/ds3081>) in requesting a domain name.

Resources:

Bureau of International Information Programs, The Office of Electronic Media (IIP/T/EM): Martha Chaconas, Office Director, 202 619 4247; chaconas@pd.state.gov.
Internet Steering Committee: OpenNet: <http://isc.state.gov>.
WebX: Resources for Department Webmasters, OpenNet:
<http://Webx.irm.state.gov/>

Cables:

270359 09-23-2003 New Website Resource for Embassies: Easier Development, Better Design: <http://usinfo.state.gov/iip/irc/cables/03270359.htm>
118882 06-19-2002 Overseas Public Web Site Domain Name Policy:
<http://usinfo.state.gov/iip/irc/cables/02118882.htm>
052526 03-21-2001 Guidelines for Public Information Dissemination on the Internet <http://usinfo.state.gov/iip/irc/webdesign/0152526.htm>

Appendix C: FSI/SAIT Web Development Courses

School of Applied Information Technology (SAIT) web development courses:

PS418 - Web Development Fundamentals

Course Theme: Computer End-User Skills

- Understand the Internet's HTTP protocol.
- Use and recognize basic HTML tags.
- Use Microsoft FrontPage to create a web site with multiple web pages.
- Understand basic web site design.
- Understand the Department's regulations for Internet and Open Net sites.

Audience: Personnel assigned to creating or maintaining a web site for the Department's Intranet.

PS420 - Web Site Management Using FrontPage

Course Theme: Computer End-User Skills

Offered by: School of Applied

- To use an existing Web site.
- To create a structure for navigation.
- To work with borders and navigation bars.
- To understand what frames can do.
- To make a form and add controls.
- To position text and graphics.
- To use external style sheets.
- To use database in a Web.
- To publish a Web.

Audience: This course is intended for employees responsible for a Web site.

Prerequisite: Participants must have successfully completed Web Development Fundamentals (PS418) or provide a copy of a Web site that demonstrates equivalent expertise. That expertise includes formatting text, using hyperlinks, understanding page elements, and using tables. Participants should also have been actively working on Web sites for at least four weeks.

PS421 - Web Site Management Using Dreamweaver

Course Theme: Computer End

- Create dynamic user interfaces.
- Use libraries to manage repetitive elements.
- Make sites visible to automatic search engines.
- Use style sheets and layers to control the appearance of pages.

Audience: This course is intended for employees responsible for the development or maintenance of a Web site.

Prerequisite: Participants must have successfully completed Web Development Fundamentals (PS418) or provide a copy of a Web site that they created which demonstrates equivalent expertise. That expertise includes formatting text, using hyperlinks, understanding page elements, and using tables.

Recommended Preparation: Participants should also have been actively working on Web sites for at least four weeks.

YW258 - Intro Internet Web Site Design & Systems

Course Theme: Computer and Comm System Technical Skill

There are no upcoming courses scheduled.

PS618 - Web Site Development for Beginners

Course Theme: Computer End-User Skills

Offered by: School of Applied Information Technology

Division: Information Management Training

Delivery Method: Classroom

- • Markup language and hypertext hyperlinks
- • The creation of a Web page
- • The management of a simple Web site

Audience: This course is intended for employees responsible for the development or maintenance of a Web site. Required

Prerequisite: Participants must have essential computer skills, that is Windows and MOS skills, a high comfort level in creating folders, and the ability to format diskettes and copy files thereon. (PS201).

Recommended Preparation: Participants should also be accomplished users of Word or Power Point and be able to create and format documents. (PS330 and PS340).

There are no upcoming courses scheduled.

Appendix D: Virtual Presence Posts

Like the embassy template, the VPP template provides a common organizational structure with specified areas on the homepage for specified elements, such as standard headers and footers which include global navigation elements. Content is controlled by the embassy or mother (“managing”) post, which can eliminate or greatly reduce duplication of effort for the managing post. The template is also designed to allow posts to customize the VPP site with local flavor and to feature information/articles on the city/region as deemed appropriate. (Contact the Office of eDiplomacy for the *Virtual Consulate Site Structure* and the *Structure of the Index (Home) Page* as well as other VPP documents that will be useful in setting up a site.)

The virtual consulate site structure comprises five (5) main areas, which represent broad topics that are of interest to the user. These topics are then broken down into sub categories.

Through its customized features, a VPP can be part of a comprehensive engagement strategy for a city/region involving continuous contact via visits to the city/region and follow-up contact work. (See power point presentation on VPPs and article on Key Cities Engagement Strategy under New Diplomacy Initiatives at eDiplomacy site on the Department’s Open Net Plus web site.)

For posts that choose to use the IIP VPP template, the accompanying Content Management System (CMS) greatly facilitates updating the VPP web site and other links sharing the same information. For posts that use the IIP templates, IIP also provides/maintains the servers and web site security.