

2018 President's Budget
Office of the Secretary
Office of Communications

Contents

Purpose Statement	5-1
Available Funds and Staff Years	5-2
Permanent Positions by Grade and Staff Years Summary	5-3
Salaries and Expenses	
Appropriations Language	5-4
Lead-off Tabular Statement	5-5
Summary of Increases and Decreases.....	5-5
Project Statement.....	5-5
Justifications	5-6
Geographic Breakdown of Obligations and Staff Years.....	5-6
Classification by Objects	5-7
Shared Funding Projects	5-8
Status of Programs.....	5-9
Summary of Budget and Performance	
Key Performance Outcomes and Measures	5-16

Office of the Secretary
Office of Communications

Purpose Statement

The Office of Communications (OC) was established on June 7, 1913, when the Secretary of Agriculture established an Office of Information. The purpose of this office was to act as a news service to communicate possible recommendations of USDA scientists and specialists to the widest audience possible. Section 7 CFR Subtitle A delegates authority for public affairs activities from the Secretary to the Director of OC. The activities of OC have expanded as new technology has become available and as additional segments of the public have become constituents. The basic purpose of the office, however, remains constant: to provide leadership, expertise, management, and coordination to develop successful communication strategies and products that advance the mission of USDA and priorities of the Administration, while serving and engaging the public in a fair, equal, transparent, and easily accessible manner.

The mission of OC is to provide leadership, expertise, counsel, and coordination for the development of communication strategies, which are vital to the overall formation and awareness of USDA programs and policies. OC serves as the principal USDA contact point for dissemination of consistent, timely information to the public.

OC is located in Washington, D. C. As of September 30, 2016, there were 57 full-time permanent employees all stationed in Washington, D.C.

OC did not have any Office of Inspector General or Government Accountability Office evaluation reports during the past year.

Office of the Secretary
Office of Communications

Available Funds and Staff Years (SYs)
(Dollars in thousands)

Item	<u>2015 Actual</u>		<u>2016 Actual</u>		<u>2017 Estimate</u>		<u>2018 President's Budget</u>	
	Amount	SYs	Amount	SYs	Amount	SYs	Amount	SYs
Salaries and Expenses:								
Discretionary Appropriations.....	\$7,750	55	\$7,500	50	\$7,486	54	\$7,261	52
Lapsing Balances.....	-57	-	-87	-	-	-	-	-
Obligations.....	7,693	55	7,413	50	7,486	54	7,261	52
Obligations under other USDA appropriations:								
Agency Photo Services.....	10	-	30	-	48	-	50	-
Employee Details.....	-	-	90	-	134	-	-	-
Executive Scheduling.....	364	-	128	-	32	-	-	-
Total, Other USDA.....	374	-	248	-	214	-	50	-
Working Capital Fund ^{a/}:								
Creative Media and Broadcast Center (USDA).....	5,228	16	4,171	15	5,184	26	7,325	28
Creative Media and Broadcast Center (Non-USDA)....	585	2	922	3	560	1	1,254	1
Total, Working Capital Fund.....	5,813	18	5,093	18	5,744	27	8,579	29
Total, OC.....	13,880	73	12,754	68	13,444	81	15,890	81

^{a/} This section only includes WCF activities managed by OC. Please refer to WCF President's Budget for more details about the WCF.

Office of the Secretary
Office of Communications

Permanent Positions by Grade and Staff Year Summary a/

Item	2018 President's			
	<u>2015 Actual</u>	<u>2016 Actual</u>	<u>2017 Estimate</u>	<u>Budget</u>
	Wash. D.C.	Wash. D.C.	Wash. D.C.	Wash. D.C.
SES.....	2	2	2	2
GS-15.....	10	10	9	9
GS-14.....	13	12	12	12
GS-13.....	11	11	11	9
GS-12.....	11	10	9	9
GS-11.....	5	5	4	4
GS-9.....	5	5	5	5
GS-7.....	2	2	2	2
GS-4.....	-	-	-	-
Total Perm.				
Positions.....	59	57	54	52
Total, Perm. Full-Time				
Employment EOY.....	59	57	54	52
Staff Year Est.....	55	50	54	52

a/ Positions shown are appropriated only. For WCF financed positions, refer to the WCF Explanatory Notes for more details.

Office of the Secretary
Office of Communications

The estimates include appropriation language for this item as follows (new language underscored; deleted matter enclosed in brackets):

Salaries and Expenses:

Office of the Secretary

1 For necessary expenses of the Office of the Secretary, [~~\$45,555,000~~] \$42,064,000, of which not to exceed
2 [~~\$5,051,000~~] \$4,859,000 shall be available for the [immediate] Immediate Office of the Secretary [, of
which not to exceed \$250,000 shall be available for the Military Veterans Agricultural Liaison;]; not to
exceed [~~\$502,000~~] \$501,000 shall be available for the Office of Tribal Relations; not to exceed [~~\$1,496,000~~]
\$1,448,000 shall be available for the Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Coordination; not to
exceed [~~\$1,209,000~~] \$1,171,000 shall be available for the Office of Advocacy and Outreach; not to exceed
[~~\$25,928,000~~] \$23,303,000 shall be available for the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Administration, of
which [~~\$25,124,000~~] \$22,501,000 shall be available for Departmental Administration to provide for
necessary expenses for management support services to offices of the Department and for general
administration, security, repairs and alterations, and other miscellaneous supplies and expenses not otherwise
provided for and necessary for the practical and efficient work of the Department; not to exceed [~~\$3,869,000~~]
\$3,521,000 shall be available for the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Congressional Relations to carry
out the programs funded by this Act, including programs involving intergovernmental affairs and liaison
within the executive branch; and not to exceed [~~\$7,500,000~~] \$7,261,000 shall be available for the Office of
Communications: *Provided*, That the Secretary of Agriculture is authorized to transfer funds appropriated for
any office of the Office of the Secretary to any other office of the Office of the Secretary: *Provided further*,
That no appropriation for any office shall be increased or decreased by more than 5 percent: *Provided further*,
That not to exceed \$11,000 of the amount made available under this
3 paragraph for the [immediate] Immediate Office of the Secretary shall be available for official reception and
representation expenses, not otherwise provided for, as determined by the Secretary: *Provided further*, That
the amount made available under this heading for Departmental Administration shall be reimbursed from
applicable appropriations in this Act for travel expenses incident to the holding of hearings as required by
5 U.S.C. 551-558: *Provided further*, That funds made available under this heading for the Office of the
4 Assistant Secretary for Congressional Relations may be transferred to agencies of the Department of
Agriculture funded by this Act to maintain personnel at the agency level[: *Provided further*, That no funds
made available under this heading for the Office of Assistant Secretary for Congressional Relations may be
obligated after 30 days from the date of enactment of this Act, unless the Secretary has notified the
Committees on Appropriations of both Houses of Congress on the allocation of these funds by USDA
agency: *Provided further*, That within 180 days of the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall
submit to Congress the report required in section 7 U.S.C. 6935(b)(3)].

The first change is to correct grammar within the language.

The second change is to delete language specific for the Military Veterans Agricultural Liaison. Funds are available within the Immediate Office.

The third change is to correct grammar within the language within the Immediate Office.

The fourth change in language is for the purpose of deleting restrictive language that requires Congressional notification prior to funds being obligated after 30 days from the date of enactment.

Office of the Secretary
Office of Communications

Lead-Off Tabular Statement

Budget Estimate, 2018.....	\$7,261,000
2017 Annualized Continuing Resolution.....	7,486,000
Change in Appropriation.....	-225,000

Summary of Increases and Decreases

(Dollars in thousands)

	2015 Actual	2016 Change	2017 Change	2018 Change	2018 President's Budget
Discretionary Appropriations:					
Office of Communications.....	\$7,750	-\$250	-\$14	-\$225	\$7,261

Project Statement

Adjusted Appropriations Detail and Staff Years (SYs)

(Dollars in thousands)

	<u>2015 Actual</u>		<u>2016 Actual</u>		<u>2017 Estimate</u>		<u>Inc. or Dec.</u>		<u>2018 President's Budget</u>	
Program	Amount	SYs	Amount	SYs	Amount	SYs	Amount	SYs	Amount	SYs
Discretionary Appropriations:										
Office of Communications...	\$7,750	55	\$7,500	50	\$7,486	54	-\$225 (1)	-2	\$7,261	52
Lapsing Balances.....	-57	-	-87	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Obligations.....	7,693	55	7,413	50	7,486	54	-225	-2	7,261	52

Project Statement

Obligations Detail and Staff Years (SYs)

(Dollars in thousands)

	<u>2015 Actual</u>		<u>2016 Actual</u>		<u>2017 Estimate</u>		<u>Inc. or Dec.</u>		<u>2018 President's Budget</u>	
Program	Amount	SYs	Amount	SYs	Amount	SYs	Amount	SYs	Amount	SYs
Discretionary Obligations:										
Office of Communications..	\$7,693	55	\$7,413	50	\$7,486	54	-\$225 (1)	-2	\$7,261	52
Lapsing Balances.....	57	-	87	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Appropriation.....	7,750	55	7,500	50	7,486	54	-225	-2	7,261	52

Office of the Secretary
Office of Communications

Justification of Increases and Decreases

The base funds will continue to support the mission of the Office of Communications (OC), which is to provide leadership, expertise, counsel, and coordination for the development of communication strategies, which are vital to the overall formation, awareness, and acceptance of USDA programs and policies. OC serves as the principal USDA contact point for dissemination of consistent, timely information to the public. In addition to Departmental Administration funding used for human resources operational services, current year and budget year base funds may also be used to support expedited and enhanced classification, staffing and processing efforts.

(1) A net decrease of \$225,000 and 2 staff years for the Office of Communications (\$7,486,000 and 54 staff years available in 2017).

The funding change is requested for the following items:

a. An increase of \$135,000 for pay costs (\$36,000 for annualization of the fiscal year 2017 pay raise and \$99,000 for the anticipated fiscal year 2018 pay raise).

This increase is needed to ensure that OC staff can provide necessary services of leadership, expertise, counsel, and coordination for the development of communication strategies to USDA programs.

b. A decrease of \$360,000 and 2 staff years for unfilled vacancies.

This decrease will be achieved by reviewing vacancies currently on hold to identify only priority vacancies for potential recruitment.

Geographic Breakdown of Obligations and Staff Years
(Dollars in thousands and Staff Years (SYs))

State/Territory	2015 Actual		2016 Actual		2017 Estimate		2018 President's Budget	
	Amount	SYs	Amount	SYs	Amount	SYs	Amount	SYs
District of Columbia.....	\$7,693	55	\$7,413	50	\$7,486	54	\$7,261	52
Lapsing Balances.....	57	-	87	-	-	-	-	-
Total, Available.....	<u>7,750</u>	<u>55</u>	<u>7,500</u>	<u>50</u>	<u>7,486</u>	<u>54</u>	<u>7,261</u>	<u>52</u>

Office of the Secretary
Office of Communications

Classification by Objects
(Dollars in thousands)

	2015	2016	2017	2018
	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Estimate</u>	<u>President's Budget</u>
Personnel Compensation:				
Washington D.C.....	\$5,042	5,017	\$5,444	\$5,283
11 Total personnel compensation.....	5,042	5,017	5,444	5,283
12 Personnel benefits.....	1,694	1,533	1,665	1,601
13.0 Benefits for former personnel.....	126	-	-	-
Total, personnel comp. and benefits.....	<u>6,862</u>	<u>6,550</u>	<u>7,109</u>	<u>6,884</u>
Other Objects:				
21.0 Travel and transportation of persons.....	73	103	55	55
22.0 Transportation of things.....	1	1	5	5
23.1 Rental payments GSA.....	3	3	4	4
23.3 Communications, utilities, and misc. charges..	288	240	207	207
24.0 Printing and reproduction.....	22	2	5	5
25.2 Other services from non-Federal sources.....	95	47	35	35
25.3 Other purchases of goods and services				
from Federal sources.....	306	427	46	46
26.0 Supplies and materials.....	31	12	5	5
31.0 Equipment.....	3	28	15	15
42.3 Litigation Fees.....	9	-	-	-
Total, Other Objects.....	<u>831</u>	<u>863</u>	<u>377</u>	<u>377</u>
99.9 Total, new obligations.....	<u><u>7,693</u></u>	<u><u>7,413</u></u>	<u><u>7,486</u></u>	<u><u>7,261</u></u>
DHS Building Security Payments (included in 25.3)...	-	\$32	\$33	\$33
Position Data:				
Average Salary (dollars), SES Position.....	\$159,000	\$157,000	\$174,500	\$161,000
Average Salary (dollars), GS Position.....	\$92,000	\$90,920	\$91,120	\$98,096
Average Grade, GS Position.....	13.2	12.8	13.2	13.5

Office of the Secretary
Office of Communications

Shared Funding Projects
(Dollars in thousands)

	2015	2016	2017	2018
	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Estimate</u>	<u>President's Budget</u>
Working Capital Fund:				
Administration:				
Material Management Service Center.....	\$22	\$26	\$20	\$27
HR Enterprise System Management.....	-	1	1	1
Mail and Reproduction Management.....	78	75	94	106
Procurement Operations.....	7	11	29	42
Integrated Procurement System.....	8	7	7	8
Subtotal.....	<u>115</u>	<u>120</u>	<u>151</u>	<u>184</u>
Administrative Support Cost:				
ASC - Working Capital Fund Controller.....	62	60	53	53
Communications:				
Creative Media & Broadcast Center.....	231	64	193	559
Finance and Management:				
National Finance Center.....	20	22	21	19
Financial Management Services.....	51	52	126	126
Subtotal.....	<u>71</u>	<u>74</u>	<u>147</u>	<u>145</u>
Information Technology:				
Client Technology Service.....	154	150	564	528
NITC/USDA.....	820	688	662	723
Telecommunications Services.....	90	72	46	46
Subtotal.....	<u>1,064</u>	<u>910</u>	<u>1,272</u>	<u>1,297</u>
Correspondence Management.....	2	2	2	2
Total, Working Capital Fund.....	<u>1,545</u>	<u>1,230</u>	<u>1,818</u>	<u>2,240</u>
Departmental Shared Cost Programs:				
1890's USDA Initiatives.....	2	2	3	3
Classified National Security Information.....	1	1	1	1
Continuity of Operations Planning.....	2	2	2	2
Emergency Operations Center.....	2	2	2	2
Hispanic-Serving Institutions National Program.....	2	2	1	1
Human Resources Transformation (inc. Diversity Council).....	2	1	1	1
Identity and Access Management (HSPD-12).....	6	5	5	5
Medical Services.....	7	6	7	7
People's Garden.....	1	1	1	-
Personnel and Document Security.....	3	3	2	1
Pre-authorizing Funding.....	3	3	3	3
Retirement Processor / Web Application.....	1	-	-	-
TARGET Center.....	1	1	1	1
USDA 1994 Program.....	1	1	1	1
Virtual University.....	2	1	2	1
Total, Departmental Shared Cost Programs.....	<u>36</u>	<u>31</u>	<u>32</u>	<u>29</u>
E-Gov:				
Enterprise Human Resources Intigration.....	2	2	2	2
E-Training.....	2	2	-	-
Integrated Acquisition Environment - Loans and Grants....	2	-	-	-
Integrated Acquisition Environment.....	1	1	-	-
Total, E-Gov.....	<u>7</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>
Agency Total.....	<u>1,588</u>	<u>1,266</u>	<u>1,852</u>	<u>2,271</u>

Office of the Secretary
Office of Communications

Status of Programs

The mission of the Office of Communications (OC) is to provide leadership, expertise, management and coordination, to develop successful communication strategies and products that advance the mission of the U. S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and priorities of the government, while serving and engaging the public in a fair, equal, transparent, and easily accessible manner. OC delivers information about USDA programs and policies to the American people. To fulfill that mission, OC disseminates information concerning USDA's programs, policies and activities through various media outlets and often directly, to farmers, consumers, environmentalists, the business community, and other interest groups. The success of the Department's initiatives is directly aided by the effectiveness of communication, and public education campaigns, and the ease of public access to information on the Department's programs. OC has also taken on an increasingly important role in coordinating USDA's communications during emergencies or other incidents that potentially affect large segments of the public or industry.

Current Activities:

Branding Events Exhibits and Editorial Review Division (BEEERD): The branding component within BEEERD provides strategic planning and oversight for the use of the USDA brand across all media. Implementation of the "One USDA" brand has increased visibility for USDA's wide-ranging products and services. Brand management also ensures that the logo is used only where authorized, providing assurances to the public that the Department stands behind products and services that carry the USDA logo. The Constituent Affairs component within BEEERD manages briefings at USDA headquarters with major stakeholders, including numerous national and international delegations. They work to provide farm, trade, consumer associations, natural resources and environmental groups with opportunities to hear from key USDA officials in Washington D.C. and across the country. Editorial Review (ER) provides Departmental oversight for USDA's publishing activities. ER reviews manuscripts and authorizes final clearance for traditional and online publications from the Department's 35 agencies and offices, and 7 mission areas. The Division ensures compliance with Federal regulations and USDA Departmental Regulations and guidelines.

Creative Media & Broadcast Center (CMBC): The CMBC is a central resource for high-quality and cost-effective communications products and services. CMBC is an integral part of the OC Strategic Communications Planning Team, providing creative communication strategies and solutions for the USDA Secretary and the agencies. The CMBC is responsible for the creation and oversight of a wide range of communication products, including illustrations, posters, brochures, banners, trade-show exhibits, visitor centers, information campaigns, informational videos, radio and TV public service announcements, web cast, satellite media interviews, and audio and video conferences. Users can reduce travel costs through video teleconferencing while still providing mission outreach and training between headquarters and field offices, program participants, and the public.

The CMBC creates daily and weekly radio and TV feature packages for broadcast and cable outlets, including a weekly radio feature service covering five consumer and five agricultural topics and a five minute radio feature which are all available online. Stories are also posted on USDA's web site as well as on the USDA YouTube channel. The CMBC creates a variety of multimedia products, utilizing new technologies, such as audio and video web streaming of Secretarial events (live and archived) via the Internet. The CMBC's combined capabilities, technology, and collaboration supports the Secretary's goal of a coordinated and centralized approach to the development of communication and training products and provides an essential service in the immediate dissemination of communications for the Secretary, Deputy Secretary, and Sub-Cabinet. The CMBC promotes the integrated use of traditional media in social media outreach. The CMBC has a role in the USDA's continuity of operations and emergency response communications plans. Services are provided to international, national, regional, State, and local USDA offices, as well as to other government agencies, upon request.

USDA radio provides technical support and covers the radio news conferences with the Secretary, Deputy Secretary, and other top government officials.

Office of the Secretary
Office of Communications

Digital Communications Division (DCD): The DCD manages and maintains the USDA.gov web portal and ensures content is available, accessible, and relevant to the Department's diverse stakeholders. DCD contributes to digital communication efforts in coordination with the press office, providing expertise in web communications, online community engagement, and social media tactics. Web and social media analytics are evaluated for USDA.gov and agency websites to better understand our users and their access of the Department's information and services. Analytic trends are incorporated in ongoing communication planning efforts and web content strategies. The DCD team manages the USDA.gov search tool and seeks to optimize web content for search engines. The DCD team manages the Department's official social media assets such as the USDA Twitter, Facebook, Google+, Instagram accounts, and the USDA Blog. DCD works collaboratively with agency web and communication teams, and chairs the Web Council within the Department, communicating best practices, Federal and USDA web initiatives, USDA web design and functionality, and the use of emerging tools or technologies. Additionally, DCD works collaboratively with the Office of the Chief Information Officer, public affairs directors, and program employees to ensure our web communication and social media programs effectively support the Department's mission. The DCD develops and maintains current policy on the official use of social media, new media, and digital communications, and provides the standards and guidance to all USDA digital efforts.

Information Technology Management (ITM): The ITM staff coordinates and administers the use of Information Technology within OC and is responsible for all IT activities in support of OC's operations, to include: cyber security; network administration; application support; liaison with the Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO) units supporting OC; and oversight of contractors developing and maintaining applications for OC Centers and Divisions. The staff works cooperatively with other agencies and offices of the Department. It also works with other Departments at the Federal level such as the Department of Homeland Security and the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). Our Information Response team emphasizes maintaining effective relationships with the general public. This group answers via an online knowledgebase system, written, telephone, and in-person inquiries from Federal and State agencies, Members of Congress, non-governmental institutions, foreign embassies, and the general public. ITM staff also provide administrative support to OC management. Included in these services are facilities and property management, oversight of telecommunications services, and the processing of all training and travel requests.

Photography Services Division (PSD): The PSD provides various types of photography, including, but not limited to: photojournalism, editorial, portraiture, still life photography, multimedia productions, scientific, fireline (Red Card certified photographer on staff) and food photography, and photographic research for internal and external clients. PSD verifies photographic quality and subject content along with copyright and clearances for all USDA photography used externally, both in print and on the web. The PSD also provides imagery for internal and external requestors via USDA's Flickr photo stream web site: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/usdagov/>. The PSD provides photographic training for agency Public Affairs Specialists in documenting events, post production workflow and delivery. The PSD supports the Office of the Secretary with press and event photography, delivering both high quality prints and digital imagery (including multimedia products) as requested. PSD currently maintains the Department's comprehensive digital asset management archive collection using Flickr, a commercial off the shelf solution. PSD is working closely with OC/CIO to procure a digital asset management (DAM) solution in the common interest of a Departmental, industry standard enterprise-wide application.

Press Operations (PO): PO does outreach to media outlets and responds to questions from reporters as they relate to the overall mission of the Department as well as the Secretary's priorities. Communication Coordinators provide the leadership, expertise, counsel and coordination needed to develop communications plans and implement strategies vital to the overall formulation and awareness of USDA programs and policies. In addition, PO coordinates public and media communications for the Office of the Secretary and assists USDA mission areas and staff offices in developing plans for effective crafting and dissemination of information.

Printing Division (PD): PD has central printing authority and, therefore, is USDA's liaison with the U.S. Government Printing Office (GPO) and the Congressional Joint Committee on Printing (JCP). PD consults with,

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS

advises, instructs, and assists the agency printing specialists, administrative officers, editors, publications writers, and information specialists on the most economical and effective printing methods and procedures.

PD reviews publications submitted by the Department for conformity with printing, policy, and regulations of the Department, JCP, and OMB. PD writes all specifications for printing and binding of administrative printing procured through the GPO and commercial firms, including booklets, pamphlets, forms, posters, flyers, and specialty items, such as magnets, fans, and over 50 specialty products. Our main focus is to provide the Department with guidance on all GPO matters, in accordance with Title 44, JCP Printing and Binding Regulations.

Speechwriting: The Speechwriting section of OC compiles briefings and drafts speeches, Op-Eds, and other remarks for the Secretary and Deputy Secretary, and also provides message guidance to USDA staff.

Selected Examples of Recent Progress:

Branding Events Exhibits and Editorial Review Division (BEEERD): Highlights include:

- Assisted national constituent organizations by serving as the conduit for their events and providing current information about agricultural related briefings to a total of 1,800 people at USDA headquarters. The constituent team arranged briefings for international agricultural constituents from China, Italy and Germany;
- The editorial review and clearance team cleared 246 manuscripts and 316 camera-ready proofs for printing or web release; worked with agencies on the One USDA initiative, OIG Congressional Reports, USDA and Forestry Greenhouse Gas Inventory, Dietary Guidelines, Food Commodity Consumption by Demographic, OCE Report on How Agriculture is Responding to Climate Change and Federal Crop Insurance Options, etc;
- BEEERD was instrumental in the Departmental Equal Opportunity Public Notification Policy Task Force; one of the functions included updating the EEO Departmental Regulation that appears on all USDA information products;
- BEEERD represented OC on the Equal Opportunity Public Notification Policy Task Force through teleconferences until the final meeting in which the DR-4300-0003 was cleared for OCIO release. Once the new DR-4300-003, Equal Opportunity Public Notification Policy, was released in June 2015, the Office of the Secretary worked on the new “And Justice for All” posters, and BEEERD reviewed the final proofs in December 2015. Also, BEEERD sent an e-mail to agency editorial contacts notifying them about the USDA nondiscrimination statement that had been updated and linked at the bottom of USDA’s Homepage and referred them to OASCR’s DR-4300-003. Because BEEERD works so closely with agency writer/editors over the years regarding the USDA EEO statement, we responded to several queries from them about appearance of the statement in USDA external publications;
- BEEERD continues to provide leadership to define, protect and promote the One USDA Brand. This leadership includes reviewing partnership agreements and contracts to ensure appropriate commercial use of the USDA Brand; reviewing statements of work to ensure the incorporation of the USDA Brand is appropriate; monitoring social media for inappropriate use of the USDA Brand; and replying to inquiries from various entities, including the public, on inappropriate use of the USDA Brand, and providing guidance on issuance of cease and desist memoranda in the event the USDA logo is inappropriately used. This leadership of the USDA Brand included educating and informing, as well as enforcement of the newly established Departmental Directives, such as the USDA logo and seal DR 5160-001, and USDA Facility Signage Directive 5160-003. The agencies are now utilizing the USDA logo, and OC has successfully reduced public confusion by phasing out the use of individual agency logos;
- BEEERD was instrumental in the creation of the USDA wide Employee Art and Agricultural Competition as part of USDA’s Cultural Transformation. In its fifth year, numerous entries came from across the nation and the globe;
- BEEERD negotiated with U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) to bring an agriculture-related children’s display to USDA Headquarters. This involved development and final approval of the MOU between USDA and USAID. This exhibit is an international competition for children’s perspective on Food Waste. This stunning art helped to bring attention to this important issue as visitors and employees stopped to appreciate it;

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS

- BEEERD represented OC on several committees and workgroups, including Civil Rights, Office of Operations Employee Engagement, Small Farmers Initiative, Women Farmers Committee, Plain Writing Initiative, and more;
- Creative Media and Broadcast Center (CMBC): Highlights include;
- CMBC provided creative collateral materials, including graphic design, video, webcasting and radio, in support of ongoing Farm Bill implementation outreach, as well as creative work for USDA's Food Safety and Rural Development, Bridges to Opportunity, Forest Service fire safety education, New and Beginning Farmer outreach efforts, and MyPlate nutritional messaging;
- Managed nine projects for Agencies, utilizing CMBC's new streamlined process for creation and contracting for communications and outreach;
- CMBC produced web broadcasts of diversity events for employees; and
- CMBC's audio conference service hosted 17,645 conferences.

USDA Radio: Highlights include:

- Our USDA Radio producers cover a diverse range of topics for the Office of the Secretary and USDA agencies, as well as provide technical support and a moderator for radio news conferences in our studio with the Secretary, Deputy Secretary and other top government officials;
- For fiscal year (FY) 2016, we created 2,238 news stories, and 572 radio features, including 52 five-minute Agriculture USA documentaries, 260 Consumer Time Features, and 260 Ag Update Features; and
- Created 24 audio segments for the USDA Results Medium web blog.

Digital Communications Division (CD): Highlights include:

- Completed the first phase and began the second and final phase of USDA gov's Drupal migration. (Drupal is an open-source web content management system OC will use to manage online publishing and page creation. OC's Enterprise platform allows for approved websites to share the same hosting and maintenance solution as USDA.gov.);
- Developed new taxonomy, information architecture, wireframes, designs, and content migration strategies. Worked closely with USDA Agencies to collaboratively develop new strategies and plans;
- Led the USDA Medium Results Project– a year-long storytelling effort to show the Department's recent significant investments and successes. Acquired the platform by managing the legal and privacy issues, and worked with Medium and the White House to develop a robust and dynamic springboard to create new digital content for USDA. Managed the creative direction for the project and managed the design strategies and new technologies for the tool, including cinemographs, dynamic graphing, and exciting new visuals. Month-to-month, the Medium stories increase in readership and currently generate 40K click-throughs to the chapter each month;
- Worked directly with the Secretary and White House Rural Council to develop additional Medium chapters dedicated to Rural Opportunities and Investments, the Opioid Epidemic, relationship building with Cuba, and additional Trans-Pacific Partnership focused stories;
- Led the Department-wide effort to redesign all Agency and Office websites to conform to the USDA Web Standards and Guidelines;
- Continued management of New Farmers, a website that provides a centralized collection of resources for new and beginning farmers and ranchers, with simple guidance on how to obtain grants/financing and other information needed to start farming or get back into farming;
- Led the Department's Digital Strategy effort, successfully meeting OMB's deadlines for delivering 21st century services and systems to customers;
- Led the ongoing USDA Search effort, a free open-source tool provided by GSA, resulting in a cost savings to USDA.gov and several agency web programs;
- Led efforts to streamline content publishing and management leading to more immediate digital publishing and more timely access for important information;
- Led the USDA Digital Analytics Program (DAP), implementing regular reporting and analytics assessments that

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS

include recommendations to improve outreach and content delivery across the USDA mission. In 2016, successfully opened the DAP to all USDA agencies and provided access to other Federal agency DAP metrics. Federal-wide analytics show USDA consistently in the top 10 most used websites;

- Convened a monthly Social Media Roundtable and Web Council, meeting monthly to discuss best practices and develop coordinated strategic communication plans; and
- Continued to support Office of Communications Press and Creative Operations with Digital strategy and collateral. Successfully helped strategize around monthly themes to deliver an impactful online engagement with USDA customers. Utilized web and social media to support monthly themes through various digital mechanisms including web, social media, and email distribution and strategized with teams and agencies to provide unique communications for different themes.

Information Technology Resource Management (ITRM): Highlights include:

- Worked with the Food Nutrition Service and OCIO to build out an Enterprise Open Source Drupal Platform Service offering at USDA. Implemented National Information Technology Center (NITC) Open Stack Infrastructure as a Service (IaaS) test-dev cloud service environment, implemented security components of Secure Socket Layer (SSL) technology support for all sites, Web Application Firewall through Akamai, and Traffic Filtering & Validation;
- Performed Assessment & Authorization (A&A) on both OC Systems and Continuous Monitoring (CM) of those systems. Final phase of Drupal Migration of USDA.GOV started in the final quarter of FY 2016;
- OC had zero Cyber Security Incidents. OC reported three United States Government Configuration Baseline control deviations weaknesses and two non-Personal Identity Verification enforcement weaknesses which have approved waivers from Agriculture Security Operations Center (ASOC). OC also had sixteen 800-53 control deficiencies which were identified and resolved in the Cyber Security Assessment and Management system;
- Our security staff performed annual Federal Information Security Modernization Act (FISMA) reporting activities for all of our systems. All of our activities comprised of reviewing and/or updating and testing approximately 150 controls on each system in Cyber Security Assessment & Management (CSAM). ASOC's Oversight and Compliance Division was kept apprised of all OC cyber statuses via bi-weekly Cyber liaison conference calls. All other deadlines have been met; and
- The Information Services staff responded to over approximately 82,000 requests for information during FY 2016, including:
 - 7,467 telephone/hotline requests;
 - 3,247 U.S. and foreign mail requests;
 - 685 direct e-mail requests;
 - 6 telephone and letter requests from Members of Congress;
 - 3,659 incidents/inquiries from Ask the Expert; and
 - 67,194 self-served information hotline.
- Coordinated implementation of *Ask the Expert*, a Customer Relations Management system for USDA.gov. This application provides self-service support for Web users to have questions answered 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The service was asked 500,170 questions; the system answered 491,709 for a self-service rate of 98.3 percent. There were 8,461 submitted questions to "Ask the Expert." This is a 0.3 percent increase in effectiveness since FY 2015. In FY 2016, there was an increase from 2,522 answers to 3,502 answers, which is a 38.9 percent increase, and contributed to approximately 43,000 more questions answered.

Photography Services Division (PSD): Highlights include:

- PSD had 9,520,368 hits on the Flickr site of agricultural subjects;
- Completed 802 work requests in 2016 for photographic services. Services included;
- Passports, portraits, both local and onsite assignments documenting Departmental and agency programs;
- Printing of photo exhibits and displays; printed a total of 1,217 finished products; and
- PSD also reviewed and cleared 182 photo requests for publication, resulting in review and approval of 1,953 images.

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS

Photography Services Division provided photographic coverage for the following events:

- 2016 Outlook Forum
- The State of Food & Nutrition in America
- 2016 Feds Feed Families Ceremony
- USDA Conservation Reserve Program
- Wallace Carver Leadership Symposium
- Governor's Conference on Chronic Poverty and Rural Poverty
- Abraham Lincoln Honor Awards
- DSNAP Relief in North Carolina and Michigan
- Cedar Fire Response, CA
- Food for Peace, Food for Education, FAS Recruiting in Guam and Costa Rica

- POTUS Visit to USDA
- Arbor Day Foundation Event
- Weekly Farmers Market and The Peoples Garden Events
- Global Food Security before the Senate Ag Committee

Press Operations (PO): Highlights include:

- Arranged and staffed interviews weekly for the Secretary during the fiscal year, averaging more than 5 outlets per week. Preparation work included writing briefing materials, identifying outlets, conducting pre-interview sessions with reporters, identifying appropriate announcements that amplify monthly themes, and following-up after the interview as appropriate. Staff performed similar services for the Deputy Secretary on a bi-weekly basis;
- Organized press activities to support the Secretary and Deputy Secretary when traveling, including identifying announcements and events, and on-the scene support;
- In conjunction with USDA senior leadership and agencies, drafted, edited, coordinated and issued 277 Department-level press releases, USDA announcements, and statements to inform and educate taxpayers about USDA programs and services. In addition to the Department-level press releases, the Press Operations performed similar review and coordination functions for more than 500 agency releases during the fiscal year; and
- Worked with agencies to respond to press inquiries, craft communications plans, and drafted and edited statements and other public information or press materials.

Printing Division (PD): Highlights include:

- Managed 12 direct deal printing contracts that were written by GPO for use by USDA. PD is the Contracting Officer's Representatives (CORs) who order the printing work with these contractors, determining printing schedules, specifications, and costs. These contracts allow USDA to achieve the most economical cost and meet critical deadlines required by USDA customers; and
- Managed and utilized the Program 960 Simplified Purchase Agreement (SPA) for OC and several customer agencies. PD is the liaison with the GPO to establish the contract and represent USDA customers when disputes occur. USDA customers are able to be involved hands-on in the selection and production process of their print jobs, thus saving time and allowing them to personally track their print procurements. Over 202 print jobs were placed on the SPA contract in 2016.

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS

Another important procurement activity is the use of the GPO Express program. The GPO has partnered with the Federal Express (FED-EX) Office for copier/duplicating services. This program works effectively with many of our customers who travel and require materials for meetings, seminars, etc. The program provides established prices, schedules, and the assurance of a standard product nationwide. In FY 2016, the Department had purchases totaling \$262,421, the retail price of which would have been \$784,810, resulting in a \$522,389 (66 percent) savings. There are currently 14 agencies enrolled in the program, and a total of 1,185 orders were placed. By using these contracts, USDA is in compliance with Title 44, U.S. Code, Public Printing, and all Government printing and binding regulations.

Listed below are figures showing publications and forms printed during FY 2016, with comparative figures for FY 2015. In FY 2016, GPO reported 4,541 USDA print orders processed, with 1,736 performed in the Washington, DC area, totaling \$3,404,550. (These figures do not include the USDA In-House facility.)

Publications and Forms Printed	FY 2015	FY 2016
Dollars billed to USDA by GPO (nationwide)	\$7,968,903	\$8,318,675
Dollars billed to USDA by GPO (Wash. area)	\$2,811,723	\$3,404,550
Dollars billed to USDA by GPO Express Program (nationwide)	\$296,809	\$262,421
Print jobs processed through GPO and/or contract (Wash. area)	1,989	1,736

Note: The decrease in printing jobs from FYs 2015 to 2016 was due, in large part, to a congressional directive to reduce print volume and cost on printing for public distribution. Though not a significant drop, the agencies were focused on trying to cut cost; therefore fewer jobs were processed.

Speechwriting: Highlights include:

- Prepared speeches and briefings for use by the Secretary and Deputy Secretary;
- Wrote weekly radio messages and columns for the Secretary, along with additional columns as appropriate for the Secretary, Deputy Secretary, and Subcabinet; and
- Provided talking points and assisted Subcabinet members, Agency Heads, and their staff with speechwriting.

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS

Summary of Budget and Performance

The Office of Communications (OC) was established on June 7, 1913, when the Secretary of Agriculture established an Office of Information. The purpose of this office was to act as a news service to communicate possible recommendations of USDA scientists and specialists to the widest audience possible. Section 7 CFR Subtitle A delegates authority for public affairs activities from the Secretary to the Director of OC. The activities of OC have expanded as new technology has become available and as additional segments of the public have become constituents.

The Department will be revising the USDA Strategic Plan later in the spring and expects to release it with the FY 2019 President’s Budget.

Key Performance Measures:

Percent of prepared materials that are accepted for use by commercial media outlets and the public.							
	2012 Actual	2013 Actual	2014 Actual	2015 Actual	2016 Actual	2017 Target	2018 Target
Percent	95%	95%	95%	95%	95%	95%	95%
Cost (thousands)	\$7,137	\$7,385	\$7,051	\$6,847	\$6,603	\$6,666	\$6,466

Percent of ongoing and information campaigns timely completed and promoting unified accomplishment of USDA mission area in an effective manner.							
	95%	95%	95%	95%	95%	95%	95%
Percent	95%	95%	95%	95%	95%	95%	95%
Cost (thousands)	\$877	\$908	\$867	\$846	\$810	\$820	\$795

Selected Past Accomplishments Toward Achievement of the Key Outcome:

- Completion and launch of USDA.gov's Drupal migration and redesign initiative as well as the launch of USDA's Enterprise Drupal Platform. Drupal is an open-source web content management system OC now uses to manage online content publishing, page creation, and collaboration. OC’s Enterprise platform allows for approved websites to share the same hosting and maintenance solution as USDA.gov.
- Continued management of New Farmers, a website that provides a centralized collection of resources for new and beginning farmers and ranchers, with simple guidance on how to obtain grants/financing and other information needed to start farming or get back into farming. Website consistently ranked in the top 3 most viewed pages for all of USDA.
- Continued management of *Ask the Expert*, a Customer Relations Management system for USDA.gov. This application provides self-service support for Web users to have questions answered 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The service was asked 500,170 questions; the system answered 491,709, for a self-service rate of 98.3 percent. There were 8,461 questions submitted to “Ask the Expert.” This is a 0.3 percent increase in effectiveness since FY 2015. In FY 2016, there was an increase from 2,522 answers to 3,502 answers, which is a 38.9 percent increase, and contributed to approximately 43,000 more questions answered.
- USDA Radio created 2,238 news stories, and 572 radio features, including 52 five-minute Agriculture USA documentaries, 260 Consumer Time Features, and 260 Ag Update Features.
- Oversaw the GPO Express Program for the Department, which saved over \$522,389 in printing costs.

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS

Selected Accomplishments Expected at the FY 2018 Proposed Resource Level:

Commercial media outlets will receive the materials and information distributed by the Department; that there is a high acceptance and use of prepared materials; and that OC facilities can produce products meeting industry standards in ways that continue to enhance OC's ability to advance the mission of USDA and priorities of the Administration, while serving and engaging the public in a fair, equal, transparent and easily accessible manner.

Strategies for achieving performance in 2018:

- OC plans to continue to evaluate its strategic objectives and performance measures in light of revised budget authority to ensure it can provide the maximum support possible to agencies and the public.
- Continue to expand the use of appropriate open-source tools in support of USDA.gov to reduce costs to the Department and agencies.
- Continue to explore strategic sourcing strategies for the acquisition of communications products and services.
- Use audio and video teleconferences to assist USDA agencies in reducing their travel costs associated with regular meetings and training.
- Provide centralized operations for design and production, review/clearance, and distribution of messages and information (video, print, and broadcast) to USDA's primary constituencies and the general public to ensure that they get understandable and relevant information about USDA programs and services.
- Coordinate the development of communications plans for all USDA cross-cutting or interagency initiatives showing each mission's and/or agency's information role.
- Maintain capability to provide all of OC's basic services in a crisis situation even if it involves a relocation of senior Department officials from the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area.