

Changing Perceptions

Review of Public Diplomacy

22 March 2002

Executive Summary

1. This review of public diplomacy arose out of a meeting between the Secretary of State and the Chief Secretary to the Treasury in the context of the 2002 Spending Review. They agreed to an outcomes-based review of the public diplomacy work of the FCO, the British Council, and the BBC World Service, using the events of 11 September as a peg.
2. The review team settled on a definition of public diplomacy as ‘that work which aims at influencing in a positive way the perceptions of individuals and organisations overseas about the UK, and their engagement with the UK’. In consequence, impact (or outcome) is the positive difference which the work makes to those perceptions and engagement.
3. Within that overall context, we sought to establish definitions of the Government’s broad public diplomacy aims, and the public diplomacy objectives for the three organisations under review which flowed from them. We had difficulty in finding an over-arching strategy. We have therefore made the creation of such a strategy the **core recommendation** of our review.
4. The public diplomacy spectrum extends from the immediate requirements of news management to the long term aim of influencing through campaigns and educational opportunities. The World Service, British Council and FCO focus on different parts of the spectrum. There is some overlap, but this is generally helpful in reinforcing the public diplomacy message about the UK.
5. Within the FCO, we found it hard to develop a clear picture of the broad lines of public diplomacy and the strategic direction. Officers working to produce public diplomacy output (publications, TV and radio programmes, the Internet, services to foreign journalists) were working professionally and producing high-quality product. But this was being done without any clear over-arching guidance on the core messages that we wish to put across to our target audiences. In addition, we found that Commands (with some exceptions) generally did not regard public diplomacy as an integral part of their daily policy work.
6. The picture overseas was rather better. Most Embassies had developed public diplomacy strategies; and the majority of staff recognised public diplomacy as a necessary and important part of their job. In addition, co-operation between the three organisations being reviewed seemed to work. This was less obvious in the UK.
7. The British Council work on the basis that all of its activity falls under the heading of cultural relations and is therefore a part of public diplomacy. Its planning and strategic direction has improved in recent years, as has the methodology it employs to evaluate output and impact. There were, however, question marks over the contribution made by some of its work to the broad message about the UK.
8. The World Service’s work is distinct from that of the other two organisations in that it is not a medium for the transmission of specific government messages about the UK. But its reputation for accuracy and objectivity make it enormously valuable in putting across a positive image of the UK. With the FCO, it is

reviewing its performance measures to ensure that they are on a sound impact-based footing.

9. Others, including the private sector, contribute to, and benefit from, public diplomacy work. Some could usefully contribute more. The work by DFID, for example, contains some powerful public diplomacy messages. But their policy concerns will need to be addressed first. We found that other home Ministries tended to take no account of the overseas public diplomacy impact of their work. Much more needs to be done to hook them in. Similarly, there could be some further useful synergies with the private sector, although its engagement is more likely to be in the fields of advice and planning than with financial support.
10. In financial terms, around £340 million of direct expenditure is allocated to the three organisations for public diplomacy activities. This covers the grants in aid to the British Council and the World Service, as well as the FCO's public diplomacy production costs and staffing costs in the UK. The FCO's public diplomacy costs overseas are harder to calculate, and more work would be needed to achieve precise figures.
11. The review team spent a good deal of time on the way the organisations measure the effect of their public diplomacy work. The picture was mixed. They tend to have reasonable systems in place to give a quantitative measure of output. But the systems for measuring and evaluating specific programmes and assessing the impact of public diplomacy work were not as robust. All three organisations have been looking at ways of addressing this. But more work is needed, and would most usefully be carried out jointly, to assess evaluation techniques, agree common standards and adopt similar approaches to measurement. This echoes the second **core recommendation** of the review which is that all the organisations concerned should be adopting a more joined-up way of working, especially in the UK.
12. Without such systems in place, the reviewers found it difficult to judge the extent to which the government was getting value for its current investment in public diplomacy work. There is much that is good. Our organisations enjoy an enviable reputation among our competitors and analogues. Our product is professionally produced. And work overseas appears to be done in a joined-up way. But we found that we returned time after time to the absence of that over-arching strategic direction that would give focus to our efforts.
13. We considered whether we might do things differently. We looked at hiving off the British Council's English language operations. Or contracting out its arts and science work. We considered whether the various parts of the World Service could be split up or carried out by other organisations. Our conclusion was that the synergies enjoyed by the two organisations in their present form are considerable. Replicating them in other organisations would be costly, time-consuming, and probably not worth the extra effort involved.
14. Our main conclusion is that we should develop an over-arching public diplomacy strategy. This will improve direction and encourage a joined-up approach by all those involved in public diplomacy work. The strategy should be based on target audience research to determine attitudes to the UK, which of those we wish to address, and the priorities for addressing them. We will need a system for monitoring over time changes in those perceptions.

15. We also looked at the FCO's structure for carrying out public diplomacy work, and made a number of specific recommendations (Appendix 5 of the review). In particular, we have suggested that synergies could be gained from a closer alignment of our domestic and our overseas-targeted public diplomacy work. Our recommendation that the FCO's outward-facing public diplomacy work should be drawn together under a Director of Communications will, we acknowledge, spark some debate.

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Introduction

1 Genesis of this review

- 1.1 This review arose out of a meeting between the Chief Secretary to the Treasury and the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs in the context of the SR2002 funding round. They agreed that an outcomes-focused review of HMG's public diplomacy was needed.
- 1.2 The Draft Terms of Reference¹ asked the reviewers to focus on the work of the FCO, British Council and BBC World Service and to use the events and aftermath of 11 September as a starting point.

2 Background

- 2.1 The growth of public diplomacy has taken place against a background of a massive growth in world wide communications channels and a subsequent increase in the number of people able and willing to engage in political debate. As a result, governments have been forced to seek new techniques to communicate their policies, and the values and achievements of their nations, to this broad audience as well as through the more traditional government-to-government channels.
- 2.2 Public diplomacy in the UK has had a heightened profile since 1997, stimulated in part by the publication of BritainTM, Mark Leonard's seminal pamphlet, and the work of Panel 2000 which reported in 1998. Both emphasised the need to communicate effectively with these new audiences arguing that positive foreign perceptions of the UK were essential in order to create an environment in which other activities could prosper, and that the creation of such an environment required a long-term commitment.
- 2.3 The events of 11 September 2001 emphasised the need for a clear strategy for public diplomacy. We are not alone in believing this. As we were completing the final draft of this report, the US Chairman of the House International Relations Committee announced a wide-reaching reform of US public diplomacy which mirrors many of our suggestions for the UK's public diplomacy work².

3 Framework and scope of this report

What we covered

- 3.1 In tackling the subject we start with a case study of public diplomacy activity: the aftermath of 11 September. This highlights the way in which different organisations act and the different time scales on which they operate.
- 3.2 We consider HMG's present strategic approach to public diplomacy, exploring its definition, policies and strategies. This is followed by brief reviews of the work of the three organisations but, because we believe that public diplomacy goes much wider than these three alone, we also look at the activities of some of the other organisations involved in public diplomacy work.

¹ See Appendix 1

² See Appendix 6

- 3.3 We examine the resources currently committed and measurement of outputs and outcomes. These are followed by a look at where there are areas of overlap and possible duplication.
- 3.4 We then look at where there might be gaps in provision and possible alternative ways of working.
- 3.5 Finally, we make a range of recommendations at both strategic and specific levels, highlighting a range of management issues.
- 3.6 Appendixes contain:
- The Terms of Reference for the review
 - FCO Objectives
 - British Council Purpose and Objectives
 - BBC World Service Aims
 - Recommendations for individual organisations
 - A news item dated 14 March 2002
 - Acknowledgements

What we have not attempted to cover

- 3.7 In line with the terms of reference, we have not dealt in detail with consideration of public diplomacy aimed at domestic UK audiences. But we have briefly looked at the work done in the UK by European Union Command in the FCO. We note that impact on the domestic audience of our foreign policies is an increasingly important issue for the FCO, British Council and other government departments with overseas remits.
- 3.8 Nor have we attempted to examine the work of other governments. Over the last few years several countries have been doing some very visible public diplomacy work. Spain, Ireland, New Zealand, Hong Kong and many of the new democracies of Europe have embarked on branding and presentation programmes designed to enhance perceptions of their countries around the world, as has the United States (as already mentioned). Interestingly, a number have turned to the UK for advice on creative approaches.
- 3.9 In general, we have not thought it appropriate to make detailed recommendations about individual organisations or their management structures. These would need to involve a wider cross-section of interviewees and require much deeper consideration than the study team has been able to give in the time available.

Method

- 3.10 The review was carried out through interview, discussion, reading and visits to three countries. The British Council and BBC World Service provided detailed written submissions and all Embassies³ and British Council Offices were invited to submit ideas and comments in writing. In addition, selected Other Government Departments - including Regional Administrations - and agencies were either visited or invited to contribute thoughts.⁴

³ The term 'Embassies' is used generically throughout the report to refer to the Embassies, High Commissions or Consulates managed by the FCO around the world

⁴ A list of those we consulted is attached at Appendix 7

- 3.11 Specific overseas visits were made as part of this review to:
- Italy (Rome) - as a representative EU country
 - Czech Republic (Prague) - as a representative EU Accession country which has recently been identified by the public diplomacy partners involved in Britain Abroad⁵ as being a national priority
 - Pakistan (Islamabad) - in order to see the work of a Coalition Information Centre at first hand and to assess the level of public diplomacy work currently being done in an important Islamic country
- 3.12 These were supplemented with experience from recent visits made by members of the team to discuss press and public affairs work in New York, Washington, Brazil, Paris, Berlin and Beijing.
- 3.13 We are conscious that several of our recommendations call for further studies or work. This is inevitable. Work is needed to establish a clear over-arching strategic framework for public diplomacy. We have therefore set out a suggested approach which we believe will lead to the creation of a model within which public diplomacy work can be given a much-needed focus.
- 3.14 This report has been produced in less than six weeks by a team of three people: Chris Wilton of the FCO, Jonathan Griffin of the British Tourist Authority and Britain Abroad, and Andrew Fotheringham of the British Council. The six week timescale has necessarily required us to deal with issues at a relatively broad and strategic level.
- 3.15 The Study Team is grateful to all those who have made time available and have contributed their thoughts or ideas.

⁵ The Britain Abroad partners are: Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Department for Education and Skills, Department for Culture, Media and Sport (non-funding), British Council, British Tourist Authority, Design Council, Invest UK, Trade Partners UK

A Case Study in Public Diplomacy

4 11 September and other crises of 2001

- 4.1 11 September was the last crisis of what was a crisis-packed year. Train crashes and later problems on the railways, floods and the foot and mouth outbreak all had serious effects on the perceptions of the UK overseas. We were asked to look at the action the three organisations took and how this should inform future public diplomacy strategies and activities.
- 4.2 The following is a select timetable of activities in the immediate aftermath of the World Trade Centre disaster:
- Within hours, BBC World Service started a 45 hour news programme – their longest ever
 - Within weeks No 10 and the FCO had established Coalition Information Centres (CICs) in Washington, London and Islamabad in cooperation with major coalition allies. They had also set up the Islamic Media Unit
 - In just over one month, *UKwithNY*, a previously planned major event opened in New York having been re-branded to suit the revised message
 - Within three months, the British Council had identified £2m savings and developed initial ideas for *Connecting Futures* (then *Open Minds*), a programme of action specifically aimed at connecting the Muslim and Christian worlds.
 - Within three months the BBC World Service increased its listenership in Urdu, Arabic, Pashto, Persian and Uzbek by between 18% and 104%
 - Over the next three months, the British Council continued to operate in Pakistan and processed 20,000 exam candidates and 5,000 Chevening scholarship applications as usual. In contrast, the USIS in Islamabad closed and handed over its theatre to CIC
 - Within four months the British Tourist Authority launched UKOK as a way of re-assuring people about tourism to the UK
- 4.3 This schedule is significant and reflects the different purposes and time-horizons of the organisations mentioned. No one doubts that the events of 11 September caught everyone off-guard. A few months earlier, COBRA had been activated to manage the outbreak of Foot and Mouth disease and, by September, most organisations were relieved that the worst appeared to be over and were reviewing their contingency plans against future disasters. Work was still continuing when disaster struck again.
- 4.4 In the immediate aftermath of the September events, No 10 took over direct control of news management, working closely with the FCO to create an incident room to manage the day to day control of the crisis. In due course, the Coalition Information Centres (CIC) and the Islamic Media Unit were created to coordinate messages and provide a direct information response in Arabic. Public Diplomacy Department of the FCO produced a publication, *Never Again*, which echoed an American web site with a similar purpose, and its Broadcasting and Allied Media Unit started producing regular news updates through its radio and British Satellite News networks. In addition, it embarked on a programme of targeted news articles and press briefings.
- 4.5 The CIC's objectives were 'to coordinate and improve communication in relation to the current military, diplomatic and humanitarian campaign against terrorism'.

We judge that the activities of the main public diplomacy players generally contributed to those objectives, some with a short timescale and some with longer horizons. The system showed it responded well to a crisis, although the time taken to kick start the CICs was longer than it should have been.

- 4.6 We draw some conclusions from the various crises of the year.
- 4.7 Firstly, it is vitally important to recognise both the domestic and international dimensions of any crisis, and to draw the management of the crisis quickly into the centre. The crises in the early part of the year were essentially domestic and yet they had adverse repercussions on international opinion. This was particularly true of Foot and Mouth Disease, images of which were broadcast world wide.
- 4.8 There were a number of examples of Embassies abroad having great difficulty getting clear and simple messages out of domestic government Departments. According to one senior public diplomacy manager, 'the lines MAFF produced may have been fine in the UK but they failed to address concerns overseas. The "formal" end of Foot and Mouth was announced at midnight with no notice to overseas Embassies and no apparent discussion between DEFRA and FCO about how to deal with it in public diplomacy terms.'
- 4.9 Both the Foot and Mouth crisis and 11 September demonstrate the vital importance of making and maintaining contact with the London correspondents of major overseas media. Over 1700 foreign correspondents are based in London, perhaps more foreign journalists than any other city except Washington. Soundly-based evidence suggests that articles written by foreign correspondents have the greatest impact in their home countries. The role of the London Correspondents' Service is therefore crucial to our public diplomacy effort.
- 4.10 The handling of these crises exposed some other flaws in the system. For instance, the British Tourist Authority was not involved directly in the COBRA discussions despite the impact of the disease on tourism, and the British Council was not brought into round-table discussions after 11 September.
- 4.11 However, both crises undoubtedly helped organisations to develop solid working relations at operational levels. We **recommend**, in the context of the CICs, that these relationships be kept in good repair against (sadly inevitable) future crises.

Strategic Context

5 What is Public Diplomacy?

- 5.1 Public diplomacy is a term that has come to the fore in recent years. But it has proved hard to find a commonly-agreed definition.
- 5.2 The term public diplomacy was invented in the USA in the mid 1960s and was described as dealing with '... the influence of public attitudes on the formation and execution of foreign policies. It encompasses dimensions of international relations beyond traditional diplomacy; the cultivation by governments of public opinion in other countries; the interaction of private groups and interests in one country with those of another; the reporting of foreign affairs and its impact on policy; communication between those whose job is communication, as between diplomats and foreign correspondents; and the processes of inter-cultural communications'.
- 5.3 By 1997 this had been reduced to one sentence:

 'Public diplomacy seeks to promote the national interest of the United States through understanding, informing and influencing foreign audiences'.
- 5.4 Robin Cook, when Foreign Secretary, defined public diplomacy as:

 'The projection and promotion of the UK's image, values and policies overseas'
 (*Robin Cook: Introduction to FCO Public Diplomacy Best Practice guide*)
- 5.5 It could be argued that this definition neglects the contribution of organisations such as the BBC World Service, the British Council, and the work of other players, such as British Trade International (Trade Partners UK and Invest UK) who are tasked with projecting British business. In addition, it focuses on outputs rather than outcomes or impact.
- 5.6 We agree that any definition must encompass image, values, achievements and policies. But it should also seek to define the impression these leave on the target audience. We therefore suggest the following definition:

 'That work which aims at influencing in a positive way the perceptions of individuals and organisations overseas about the UK and their engagement with the UK.'
- 5.7 The impact is then the positive difference which public diplomacy work makes to those perceptions and engagement.
- 5.8 Public diplomacy addresses overseas audiences – mainly general publics - and, in order to reach them, influencers and intermediaries such as the media, decision-makers and opinion-formers. At the heart of public diplomacy is communication with the public as a means to an end and it uses many of the marketing, public relations and public affairs skills of the commercial sector.

6 HMG's strategy for Public Diplomacy

- 6.1 We struggled to find a formal statement of HMG's public diplomacy strategy and objectives. No 10 set the broad context with the overall strategic aim of 'presenting a UK that is modernising, changing and defining for itself a new role in the world' coupled to the foreign policy objective of making the UK a 'Force for Good in the World'.
- 6.2 At the next layer down, we would expect there to be a two-part strategy: an over-arching national policy or strategy with local strategies for each country. There might even be regional strategies between these two. In practice we found only country strategies.
- 6.3 The FCO has nine Objectives⁶ which collectively are designed to promote internationally the interests of the UK and to contribute to a strong world community in line with the No 10 definition of being a force for good in the world.
- 6.4 Within these, the nearest thing to a central public diplomacy Objective is No 5, which states
- 'Pivotal influence worldwide over decisions and actions which affect UK interests; **positive foreign perceptions of the UK**; authoritative, comprehensive information on foreign issues for UK decision-takers'
- 6.5 Only the highlighted part of this refers to public diplomacy. It is this element to which both the British Council and BBC World Service refer in their corporate plans and the FCO's main Service Delivery Agreements for this Objective refer to these two organisations in delivering outcomes.
- 6.6 The desired outcome is clear:
- Positive foreign perceptions of the UK
- 6.7 The benefit of such work spreads well beyond the named organisations. As well as contributing to the political influence of the UK, it underpins the climate for inward investment, trade, and the attraction of tourism and talent.
- 6.8 All this suggests that the list of organisations with a major stake in the outcomes from, and potential involvement in, public diplomacy activity includes others such as:
- The Department for Education and Skills (especially recruitment of students)
 - The Department for Culture, Media and Sport (tourism, sport and the arts)
 - Trade Partners UK
 - Invest UK
 - Design Council
 - British Tourist Authority
 - No 10
 - The Department for International Development (DFID)
 - The Devolved Administrations and their relevant Westminster Departments some of whom are doing specific public diplomacy work of their own - such as the Friends of Scotland initiative

⁶ See Appendix 2

- Other Government Departments which have short-term crises of an international scale eg DEFRA, DETR, Home Office (BSE, Foot and Mouth, Trains, Floods, Asylum)
 - Other Government Departments whose responsibilities cover some international work eg Office of Science and Technology
- 6.9 Publicity and promotion contribute to success in other fields. We find the sole use of Objective 5 as the rationale for public diplomacy rather limiting. Positive perceptions are not only an end in themselves but contribute to the successful achievement of projects in other areas of work. Any strategy and assessment needs to recognise this broader context.
- 6.10 Outside government, there is a general 'background noise' of news about the UK which has resonance internationally and against which pro-active work must be set. This includes things like the opening of the Tate Modern, Oscar and sporting winners as well as, on a more negative note, the problems of football hooligans and high profile court cases

7 Public Diplomacy Strategies overseas

- 7.1 Embassies in most major countries now have Public Diplomacy Strategies and meetings of Public Diplomacy Committees. Standards vary.
- 7.2 The FCO's *Public Diplomacy Best Practice Guide* recommends an outline for a strategy document but not everyone follows it. The review of public diplomacy strategies carried out by Britain Abroad in 2001 showed that some strategies were limited to the work of certain sections of Embassies, some appeared to contain a set of policies but no action plan for effecting change, while others were simply compilations produced for bureaucratic neatness.
- 7.3 Few demonstrated an in-depth analysis of existing perceptions, reviewed competitive pressures or activities, or set out which particular topics were to be worked on or how. Most attempted to include a wide range of messages rather than adopting the ones outlined in the guidance note or concentrating on a relatively few key ones. Perhaps the most striking feature was that few demonstrated that they were clearly derived from a shared overall sense of purpose for UK activity in the country in question.
- 7.4 Despite this general unevenness, there are examples of good practice and we found in our visits a desire to make such strategies practical working tools for planning and coordination.

Strategic Positioning

In Italy, there is a clear sense of the importance of being an active and committed EU partner.

In the Czech Republic EU Candidacy overlies all other messages.

In China there is a clear determination to concentrate on two key messages: 'Building the future together' with a competitive proposition for the UK based on its originality (creativity and innovation). The latter clearly seeks to establish a competitive positioning for the UK as the partner of choice and credible to decision-makers, opinion-formers, business people and individuals.

- 7.5 We acknowledge that the task of developing country strategies and action plans is not as simple as it may seem. Competing pressures and constraints exist. Although the British Council and BBC World Service plans for each country are informed by advice and direction provided by the FCO and support the key FCO Objective No 5, they each march to different organisational drums.
- 7.6 Broad objectives flow down through two different routes. FCO priorities flow from Objective No 5, through Commands to Heads of Mission and thus to the Public Diplomacy Strategy for the country concerned.
- 7.7 The British Council also works within Objective No 5 but has additional drivers. Country Directors thus receive strategic direction from British Council headquarters and discuss the content of their Country Plans with the local Head of Mission.
- 7.8 Public Diplomacy Strategies in country should inform the development of the British Council Country Plan. In practice, at the moment, few strategies appear to be broad enough to provide this sense of direction.

Best Practice?

The Public Diplomacy Strategy in Italy consists of four pages giving a context to working in Italy, identifying key themes and messages, and advocating a coordinated approach. It then has seven annexes including ones on Italian perceptions of the UK, FCO Objectives, commercial priorities in Italy, a summary of the British Council Country Plan and information on measurement and evaluation.

In Prague the Public Diplomacy Committee amazed itself when it produced a grid showing the activities of all the players including target audience, project objective and impact. A version of this will now be used for planning and regular coordination.

8.5 These are reached through a variety of means including important multipliers such as media.

9 The Public Diplomacy work of the FCO

9.1 We found it difficult to develop a clear picture of the broad lines of public diplomacy policy, the strategic direction, and how these were agreed. At the specific regional level, policy for each country is managed and coordinated by the relevant geographical Command.

9.2 At the centre, Public Services Command contains two departments with public diplomacy responsibilities: Public Diplomacy Department and Cultural Relations Department. There is also a separate News Department reporting directly to the PUS.

9.3 Cultural Relations Department manages specific policy areas such as sport and Chevening scholarships and provides funds for the British Council. Public Diplomacy Department produces and distributes resource materials, arranges briefing and training for Press and Public Affairs Officers, manages the London Correspondents' Service and funds the BBC World Service. In addition, it spreads best practice and works with Commands and Embassies on public diplomacy strategies, and manages the FCO web sites.

9.4 Public Diplomacy Department has produced a draft strategic framework for public diplomacy work. This assesses the problems and opportunities for FCO work but does not touch on the wider work of the British Council, the BBC World Service or the other players, except to remark that there needs to be greater coordination.

Activity at Embassies

9.5 Overseas the ambassador will generally take a leading role in public diplomacy. Support will come from a key member of staff who has public diplomacy as part of their job description. In larger Embassies there will be a Press and Public Affairs unit, usually located in the Political Section. These units also play a dual role: leading on public diplomacy activities and providing services to colleagues. Sometimes these internal information activities can account for 50% of the work.

9.6 Public diplomacy is increasingly being recognised as an integral part of the core strands of work in Embassies and staff are being tasked with public diplomacy activities as part of their work. There are three broad types of public diplomacy work:

- As a benefit arising from other activities: many UK projects have good news value and help to explain to a wider public the investment that the UK is making in the country concerned. We return to a discussion of this later.
- As an integral part of another project: public diplomacy activity which is a necessary part of some other project or as a means of effecting that project. In the Czech Republic the Action Plan work is increasingly using public diplomacy techniques as an integral part of its work
- As an end in its own right: projects specifically designed to promote the UK, its values, achievements or policies. Some of these may be paid for from the small projects budget. Queen's Birthday Party celebrations, and minor grants scheme donations are classic examples of this type of activity.

- 9.7 Our enquiries showed just how minimal programme budgets are for public diplomacy activities overseas. Sums of less than £30,000 per annum are common in Embassies, meaning that proactive campaigns are inevitably going to be on the small side. Imaginative use of even limited funds can produce considerable results, but any desire to develop major new initiatives is likely to be stifled because of lack of funds and pressures of existing programmes.
- 9.8 Priorities for Press and Public Affairs work appear to be broadly: crisis management, ambassadors' programmes, news management, the provision of information and internal services, and finally commercial activities. The choice of audiences reflects this sense of priority.
- 9.9 There are advantages when all staff within Embassies are engaged in public diplomacy as a tool of project delivery as the overall level of activity increases. However, there can be weaknesses if there is not good coordination of the activity and the staff.
- 9.10 Measurement and evaluation is carried out through the objective-setting process and we found it to be largely output related. We noted that some Embassies had conducted customer surveys. But these were the exception, and there was little evidence that the results had been incorporated into planning or used as benchmarks for future monitoring.

Commercial work

- 9.11 Commercial work can contribute significantly to the projection of the UK's image. But the public diplomacy aspects of commercial work take place alongside competing priorities.
- 9.12 British Trade International - Trade Partners UK and Invest UK - is jointly managed by the DTI and FCO with commercial sections being integral parts of Embassies and a large proportion of the staff being drawn from within the FCO complement. Policy drivers and objectives for commercial work flow from the FCO Objectives but, as with the British Council and BBC World Service, are given specific direction by the British Trade International head office.
- 9.13 Commercial staff generally seem to manage successfully to incorporate public diplomacy aspects into their individual work programmes. We found that some commercial sections relied more heavily than others on the Embassy Press and Public Affairs Officers (PPAO) for promotional work. As commercial work tends to be regarded as a relatively low priority within the work programme of many Press and Public Affairs Officers, commercial public diplomacy work can sometimes be neglected.
- 9.14 Where a Consulate-General is operating as the commercial centre for a country - for example in Rio de Janeiro, Shanghai or Milan - the commercial section is, not surprisingly, better served by the PPAO.
- 9.15 We believe that the level of support currently given to the public diplomacy aspects of commercial work would repay further study.

Activity directed from the UK

- 9.16 Geographical Commands in the FCO are responsible for setting public diplomacy policy priorities for their areas. It is not clear how active they are or how far they are engaged in identifying key messages. The public diplomacy

aspects of their work do not seem to be a high priority for them. There is also a fairly widespread belief that Embassies, not Commands, are best placed to identify local public diplomacy requirements.

- 9.17 Although outside the original scope of the review, we note that two EU Departments are running public diplomacy campaigns - one promoting the benefits of HMG's policy of EU membership, the other in support of EU enlargement. We wondered whether these campaigns were being as well-coordinated (both with each other and with the broader public diplomacy work) as they might be. And to what extent their impact was being systematically assessed. We note that the UK remains firmly amongst the least enthusiastic Europeans in the Euro-barometer chart produced by the European Commission, suggesting that such public diplomacy work undoubtedly has a solid rationale.

The work of Public Diplomacy Department

- 9.18 Public Diplomacy Department is both a service department and an exponent of public diplomacy. Its printed publications are distributed to Embassies who use them in response to general enquiries. Its film and television output on the other hand, is sent world wide direct to radio and television stations and generally, though not always, bypasses Embassies.
- 9.19 Public Diplomacy Department has systems in place to assess where publications go in terms of its initial customers. It knows which Embassies take which publications. We found it much more difficult to track on a systematic basis what happened to the output from that point on.

Publications

In one Embassy we were told that requests come in by post. Phone calls are made to each enquirer to solicit further information on what they actually want. Addresses are then hand-written onto envelopes without information being captured on a database. The addresses of educational establishments are not passed to the British Council.

The most frequently used publication was said to be the 100 Facts About the UK. This information has not yet been translated for the Embassy web site.

The British Tourist Authority has had a simple database-driven system for such enquiries for a number of years. All addresses are entered onto a database, with a record of the publications requested. This is used to print labels and the information is re-cycled for further marketing efforts and evaluation purposes.

- 9.20 Television and radio resources are given or sold to stations. Information is available on where they are sent, but information on how they are used is patchy. The fact that these resources are unbranded and generally bypass Embassies means that they find them difficult, if not impossible, to track and assess. Companies were recently asked to bid for a project to assess the impact of the most high profile television output. It became clear at an early stage that the companies could not meet the requirements of the brief because of the difficulty of identifying consumers who had actually seen the items.
- 9.21 More can and should be done to identify the use made of these materials and to relate them to materials produced by other government departments.

- 9.22 Another important strand of Public Diplomacy Department work is the briefing and training of Press and Public Affairs staff. Most Press and Public Affairs staff around the world are non-specialists and receive only basic training in communication skills. Given the importance of the activity and the resources being devoted to it, we believe that training for it should be enhanced. We pick this up in our recommendations.

News Department

- 9.23 News Department is responsible for the presentation in the UK of HMG's foreign policy.
- 9.24 The terms of reference of the review do not include a study of News Department's objectives and activities. But there are aspects of the FCO's public diplomacy work that inevitably involve areas in which News Department is active. It is interesting to note, in the context of the review, that News Department's remit was considered sufficiently distinct from Public Diplomacy Department for it not to be included in the review. The review team found that this reflected reality, and that although there are routine exchanges, there is very little strategic coordination of public diplomacy work between the two.
- 9.25 One area that warrants particular study is the handling the London correspondents of the major overseas news media.

London Correspondents' Service

- 9.26 The London Correspondents' Service, tasked with looking after foreign correspondents based in London, is part of the Public Diplomacy Department. But its work has many overlaps with the work of News Department.
- 9.27 Research suggests that overseas correspondents have two main priorities: access to ministers and the ability to talk direct to subject and geographical experts. Evidence also suggests that an article written by a foreign correspondent in London has a greater impact than any of our other public diplomacy outputs. Feedback from Embassies, when asked to give views for this review, overwhelmingly identified more attention to foreign correspondents in London as the one thing that could improve our public diplomacy work. At present, there is a belief (justified in our view) that foreign correspondents are not given the attention they warrant, either in the FCO or in other Ministries.
- 9.28 We also note the anomalous situation in which diplomats who are able to talk to members of the press when overseas face much stricter constraints when posted in the UK.

Working with others

- 9.29 The FCO plays several roles in Public Diplomacy: it is at the same time the funder of the other two bodies, the lead body in public diplomacy, a supplier of services, and an actor in its own right. These roles are not always handled with clarity which can be a source of frustration for other bodies and makes joint working difficult.

10 The Public Diplomacy work of the British Council

- 10.1 The British Council is an independent charity whose purpose⁷ is to win recognition for the UK's values, ideas and achievements and nurture lasting, mutually beneficial relationships between the UK and other countries. It defines all of its work as being cultural relations and thus part of public diplomacy.
- 10.2 About 1/3 of its work is funded through grant-in-aid while 2/3 is funded from earned income. It maintains strict accounting walls between its grant-funded and revenue-funded activities. The British Council aims to maximise the synergies between its various activities, and revenue-funded work of English language teaching and contract management are used as media for the promotion of the UK and its values.
- 10.3 It has done much to improve its planning procedures in recent years and has embarked on its new Strategy 2005 which is re-prioritising its activities in the light of changing needs and communication channels.
- 10.4 Country Directors have a relatively high degree of devolved responsibility to determine the operational priorities in their country, in discussion with the Head of Mission and within a context set by the UK head office. Its activities therefore vary widely between countries. This is a strength but it can also be a source of confusion for outsiders trying to understand the big picture of what the Council does around the world.
- 10.5 Programme funding is devolved to the Country Director to support the agreed Country Plan. Unlike the FCO, most of its work is project- or campaign-based with materials such as publications mainly being produced for specific programmes rather than for general distribution.
- 10.6 It has worked at improving its definition of audiences in recent years. The British Council has developed a definition of the range of its audiences, based on the desired level of impact. These range from 'Awareness' through 'Appreciation' and 'Engagement' to 'Influence (or Advocate)'. Interestingly, this mirrors the British Tourist Authority categories which identify people on the basis of the depth of knowledge they have about Britain, ranging from 'no knowledge' to 'committed to travelling'.
- 10.7 The Council is also developing improved measurement and evaluation systems. Evaluation of outputs is being carried out at a project or campaign level. In addition, the British Council is developing a performance scorecard and other tools for measuring the impact of activities over a longer period.
- 10.8 *Through Other Eyes* - a review of opinions of young professionals in 30 countries in 1999 and 2000 - remains the only major comparative international study done on the views of overseas audiences and is being increasingly used in planning by all players.
- 10.9 The review team has not had the time to explore the activities of the British Council in detail. We are very aware, however, that there are concerns in some quarters about the nature of some of its work and its ability to contribute to a

⁷ See Appendix 3

wider message about the UK. Its work in the arts, for instance is seen as being too specialised and focused on particular art forms at the expense of more mainstream and visible media and it can sometimes appear to be supporting an agenda set by the arts community rather than one set by the needs of public diplomacy.

- 10.10 These views are generalised rather than specific. Some may be informed by the cultural differences between organisations but the acid test must be whether the projects concerned are delivering the agreed mission within each country. There is certainly scope for the Council to consider how it might clarify the purpose of some of this work and demonstrate a more joined-up approach to projects as it helpfully indicates it wishes to do in its evidence document.
- 10.11 The British Council has occupied a distinctive niche which is recognised around the world. The balance of its effort is very much at the middle to left hand end of the spectrum and, by being quasi-independent of government, it is able to do things which government bodies cannot.
- 10.12 Its role can cause confusion for others which can load it with some unreal expectations. For instance, in the immediate aftermath of 11 September there was a desire and expectation that the Council would deliver specific news messages about the UK. Its reluctance to do so, stimulated by its charitable status and the nature of their work at the left-hand side of the spectrum, simply compounded criticisms of it as a government-funded body which was not prepared to take instructions.

11 The Public Diplomacy work of the BBC World Service

- 11.1 The work of the BBC World Service⁸ is very different from that of the other two organisations. It stoutly defends its editorial independence which results in news coverage that is in line with the traditions of BBC journalism - objective and international. It is not a medium for the transmission of specific government messages about the UK but nevertheless contributes to the image of the UK as its reputation for accuracy and objectivity is enormously valuable in portraying an image of the UK.
- 11.2 It addresses a wide range of audiences. As well as 'cosmopolitans', it includes the 'information poor', an audience which is not addressed by the other players and is arguably not of prime importance in delivering outcomes of immediate benefit in terms of the FCO Objectives. It is an audience which has longer-term benefit however, in establishing among as broad a base as possible the concept of the UK as an honest, open and objective supplier of news.
- 11.3 A key result of this position is that the BBC World Service is renowned world wide for the quality and objectivity of its coverage and this brings clear benefits to the UK as a whole in contributing to its reputation for free speech and fair play⁹.
- 11.4 It is not represented overseas in the same way as other bodies, as management and activities are largely centrally directed from London with news-gathering

⁸ See Appendix 4

⁹ Free Speech and Fair Play was one of the 'stories of the UK identified by Panel 2000. The others were: Tradition and Heritage, Integrity and Reliability, Openness to the World, and Creativity and Innovation

being the main task overseas. As far as we could judge, it also tends not to be represented on Public Diplomacy Committees overseas.

- 11.5 The BBC World Service has developed a set of indicators to measure performance based on size of audience, reach, reputation and impact. The last of these tends to be more qualitative, including testimonials from opinion formers, awards, mentions in the press, and response to interactive programmes on the Internet.

12 Work by other organisations

- 12.1 Other partners are both contributing to, and benefiting from the general public diplomacy effort. For instance, the British Tourist Authority is spending over £50m a year on attracting tourists to visit Britain. A large part of this work involves advertising, promotion, publications and branding for the UK. This work is an integral part of HMG's overall public diplomacy effort.
- 12.2 The British Tourist Authority's work is effectively well to the right of the Public Diplomacy Spectrum as its commercial driver is to provide a return on investment which involves getting people to travel. It cannot afford to do the essential image development. At present its priorities are concentrated on heritage, countryside, the Jubilee and sport. These do not necessarily accord with the needs or wishes of other partners.

Department for International Development (DFID)

- 12.3 The work carried out by DFID could provide a powerful source of public diplomacy output.
- 12.4 In recent years DFID has eschewed any publicity as a matter of policy. With their focus on poverty alleviation, they have set their face firmly against 'plaque-ism' or 'logo-itis' to forestall accusations that aid is being given for reasons other than poverty alleviation.
- 12.5 We acknowledge the logic underlying the position, but note that:
- in many countries the UK's main involvement is in the provision of developmental assistance. Without a degree of publicity, local opinion-formers and decision-takers might assume the UK has little interest in their country.
 - Sensitive publicising of developmental assistance to a country can enhance the effect of that assistance

What does the UK do for my country?

In Pakistan we were told that the UK's development work was largely invisible to an informed public despite the fact that it is one of DFID's largest programmes.

- 12.6 There is no easy way through this. Development work is a major story for the UK in many countries, especially as it is focused on the least developed countries. It clearly supports core foreign policy objectives.
- 12.7 We noted that while this review was taking place, DFID was beginning to develop local communication strategies. We should look for ways to encourage

this, and the development of a wider strategy of sensitive public diplomacy work on the UK's developmental assistance programmes.

- 12.8 Other organisations working overseas tend to do so through other bodies. For example, DFES manages its education marketing work through the British Council. The Design Council has worked with the British Council, Embassies and Commercial sections in recent years although it has not found a natural home in any of them because of varying local priorities.

The Private Sector

- 12.9 The private sector has a great interest in how the UK is perceived overseas despite the apparent increase in the number of major companies presenting themselves as global rather than British. Research by Britain Abroad suggested that major companies expected that national identity would actually become more important in future years as companies sought to establish differences in a global world, especially if the country concerned is seen to be successful.
- 12.10 The same research enquired about the private sector's likely enthusiasm for participating in, or funding public diplomacy activities. Here the message was less positive. Their prime interest is in selling goods and services, and they expect (perhaps not surprisingly) the work of national image promotion to be carried out by the public sector. They expressed an interest in being involved at a strategic level, with advice and in the development of projects, but would not be happy to fund these themselves unless there was a clear business benefit to their own companies.
- 12.11 A similar attitude applied to the possibility of sharing costs for research exercises. A survey like *Through Other Eyes* or of the sort done in some Embassies is not seen as being sufficiently detailed to meet the needs of a business. Information about the perceptions of the UK among young people may be of interest to a company in positioning their brands but does not deliver the hard information they require for developing their marketing plans.
- 12.12 The private sector is willing to sponsor activities overseas where these meet their objectives. The British Council raises over £13m in sponsorship for events from companies keen to achieve a profile amongst local consumers, opinion-formers or decision-takers. The British Tourist Authority raises over £15m a year in partnership funding for joint activities which deliver direct advertising coverage for the companies concerned.
- 12.13 The private sector does of course contribute significantly to the image of the UK overseas. Any product or service which is obviously British helps to build a picture of the UK and any commercial music, film or stage performance says something about the UK. The work of the Really Useful Group and Cameron Mackintosh, for instance, have given the UK an enviable reputation for contemporary musical theatre. Similarly, the activities of leading British personalities reflect on the national identity.
- 12.14 In looking at potential synergies with the private sector, research therefore suggests that they are likely to be most willing to engage with the government through the provision of advice, involvement in planning, and in donating their experience rather than their chequebooks.

Areas of overlap or possible duplication

13 Overlap vs duplication

- 13.1 There are a number of areas in which the activities of the organisations appear to overlap. Overlap is probably inevitable in public diplomacy work. But we do not believe this is necessarily damaging. The trick is to ensure that any such overlap is recognised as adding to the overall effort rather than wasting resources. This argues for close alignment of strategies and joint working.

Overlap of audiences

- 13.2 A single person may play several roles: member of the public, potential customer, opinion-former in one area, decision-maker in another. Different media will address the person in different ways and with different messages which together combine to present a picture of the UK and what it can offer.
- 13.3 Overlap of messages from different organisations is a fact of life. We do not necessarily see this as a problem. On the contrary, it may add texture to the range of messages, each being delivered in an appropriate way and so building an overall picture of the UK. The British Tourist Authority's focus on heritage during 2002 is as valid to them as is the British Council's work in promoting cutting-edge dance. Both are genuine aspects of the UK. Taken in isolation neither is complete. Taken together they 'reflect the traditional and project the contemporary' in the words of the British Tourist Authority's branding statement.

Overlap of subjects

- 13.4 The work of the organisations also appears to overlap in certain subject areas. Science and governance provide useful examples of the way in which coordinated working can take place, but may also indicate areas where duplication is a danger.
- 13.5 Governance is a sensitive area with a risk that governments will see it as interference in the internal affairs of a country. Organisations operating at one remove from Embassies can usefully play a role as honest brokers, reducing the potential for embarrassment to the host country.

The role of an independent body

In Italy the British Council manages a conference on governance issues at Pontignano despite the fact that the Embassy might seem the natural lead body for such an event. The conference is held under Chatham House rules and involves speakers from across the political spectrum.

The Embassy is very happy with this arrangement as the British Council is able to invite a much wider range of politicians and opinion-formers to the conference because of its perceived independence. It would be difficult for the Embassy to invite leading opposition speakers in the same way that the British Council can.

Other governance work within Italy is managed by the Embassy.

- 13.6 Some overlap is also apparent in the promotion of science. The British Council has a programme of work, extending into areas of interest to Trade Partners UK and Invest UK. Research by the British Council has demonstrated that views on the UK's science capability has a direct read-across to the views on the UK for

business. It is therefore a critical 'left hand side' public diplomacy element of the business agenda.

- 13.7 In recent years the FCO has funded additional overseas staff posts for science. The Office of Science and Technology has also shown increased interest in being involved in science work overseas.
- 13.8 We believe the decision on who should lead on such work should be relate to the purpose of the activity being planned and the skills required to carry it out, rather than on the audience or subject. It is a question of comparative advantage. The Public Diplomacy Committee and its Strategy discussions are the forums for discussion of such allocations and of any problems that may arise.
- 13.9 We concluded that these overlaps are not duplicating work and that Embassies and other organisations are generally working well overseas through a process of discussion and shared planning to ensure that duplication does not take place. Some minor improvements can probably be made, for example through more sharing of contacts, but there are generally too few people involved to require the establishment of formal processes such as Memoranda of Understanding.
- 13.10 The FCO Director of Public Services has suggested that working groups on governance work should be established overseas bringing together interested parties to ensure that policy planning is joined-up. We commend this approach and suggest that it might also be extended to other areas such as science and sport with mirror committees in the UK.

Overlap of media

- 13.11 A rather more obvious area of overlap is the choice of communication media. Publications are produced by the FCO, the British Council and several other bodies – notably Trade Partners UK, Invest UK and the British Tourist Authority - providing information about the UK at a national level. Many other bodies produce publications on parts of the UK. Each publication is no doubt serving a specific purpose - giving background information on an aspect of the UK, promoting sales in a particular sector – but the general impression is that there is a degree of duplication.
- 13.12 Public Diplomacy Department and the British Council have established a working party to review such publications and discuss possible joint productions. This is not as straightforward as it may seem: the Public Diplomacy Department publications are produced in a central department while the British Council ones are produced in different parts of the British Council by different project managers. This is just one example of the different organisational cultures and structures which make intra-organisation communication difficult.
- 13.13 Public Diplomacy Department has found it rather easier to establish joint working with Trade Partners UK and some publications have already been produced for joint use.
- 13.14 There is also an overlap in the television and radio areas. Public Diplomacy Department produces film, radio and television material for use free of charge by stations around the world in a variety of languages. This is similar to the material being put out by the BBC World Service but does not compete with it

since it appears on different channels. Indeed, this overlap is helpful since the different sources disguise the fact that both are raising the profile of the UK in a discreet way.

- 13.15 There is also some overlap in the area of video production. Most videos are produced to achieve very specific purposes and again, the overlap is largely helpful rather than competitive provided they are supporting the same underlying messages. There are isolated examples where closer working would have been helpful, particularly in sharing of 'raw material'.

The London Eye

Soon after the London Eye opened three separate government bodies independently 'decided to promote it' as a feature of the Millennium year. Each arranged a separate film crew.

- 13.16 Closer working would also be useful in other areas too. Most organisations retain a photographic library of their own, often with copyright limited to their own use. This is neither cost-effective nor helpful in achieving a coherent and consistent identity for the UK and work is needed on ways of sharing of these resources.
- 13.17 No one who has visited an Embassy can have failed to notice the multiplicity of posters – both in content and style – which adorn staircases and corridors. These are generally borrowed from other organisations but copyright problems has prevent some of these being shared even with other public sector partners in more public work. This is clearly a lost opportunity and requires early liaison and discussion.

The Jubilee

Golden Jubilee posters have been produced by two organisations, apparently without reference to each other. Both aim to celebrate the Jubilee and yet they cover completely different subjects and have completely different styles.

14 The internet

- 14.1 The internet is a key area of growth in the future as a medium for communicating messages about the contemporary UK. It is not an alternative to other media but is a reactive delivery mechanism which requires considerable marketing effort even to get people to the home page, let alone become loyal surfers of a particular site.
- 14.2 It is a publishing medium and needs to be kept very fresh if it is to retain credibility and this requires dedicated staff resources. While it is unlikely to replace the need for printed publications, it can be used effectively to support and, to a certain extent, replace the need for large quantities of printed paper.
- 14.3 All three organisations have corporate web sites which are going through a period of rapid transition. They have also produced an imaginative range of smaller sites. Some of these overlap and probably duplicate each other. A degree of experimentation at this stage of internet development may be a good

thing. But there are dangers of duplication in the future if the processes are not carefully coordinated. We hope they will be.

- 14.4 We applaud the thinking behind the joined-up i-UK site which has changed very significantly since it was conceived as a series of kiosks. This demonstrates the rate at which change is taking place. The management of this as a joint project, with a project board, has been a model of best practice.
- 14.5 However, we are less clear on the realistic cost-benefit of the project. Sophisticated programming may be required to knit together the offerings of the various players who are contributing information but the cost of the system looks high compared to the cost of portal sites developed in Japan, Italy and the USA.

15 Confusion of language

- 15.1 One area in which we would like to see greater consistency is that of naming. On our visits we frequently heard the words 'HMG', 'FCO', 'the Embassy' (as entity, place or staff) and 'UK' used interchangeably. 'Britain' is also used frequently without any explanatory footnote¹⁰.
- 15.2 It makes it harder to put across coherent and consistent messages if the organisational title keeps changing.
- 15.3 A different, but highly important aspect on languages is the fact that, to be effective, publications and web sites should, wherever possible, be in the language of the reader. Also, media interviews tend to be more effective if they are conducted in the language of the listeners, as the Islamic Media Unit has demonstrated. As things stand, the FCO is the sole British Government organisation with the resources to conduct media interviews in the range of world languages. We note this as an important and valuable resource.

Do we need organisations?

The Japanese portal web site is entitled UK Now. It has buttons for Study, Business UK, Visit UK which are probably far more logical to new users than ones entitled: British Council, Trade Partners UK or British Tourist Authority. The team in Japan has taken this one step further by branding their thematic promotions of 2002 under the same title: UK Now.

16 Thematic Promotions

- 16.1 In its recommendations, Panel 2000 called for the establishment of a 'rolling programme of World Events'. This grew out of the success of *New Images*, a joined-up promotion in Australia in 1998. Since then, *UkwithNY* was planned and executed in New York in October 2001 and planning is under way for China in 2003. Separately, Embassies and the British Council in a number of countries have developed major joint activity themes on a more modest scale such as *Wired Islands* in Singapore in 2001 and *UKNow* in Japan in 2002.
- 16.2 There have been problems assembling funds to support these thematic campaigns. New York was fortunate in being able to raise large sums of money

¹⁰ The work of the British Council covers the whole UK while the British Tourist Authority uses the word legitimately as its legislation only tasks it with work in support of England, Scotland and Wales

from the private sector but the public sector also had to make a contribution at relatively late stages in the planning. The inability to commit funds early in the planning process and the difficulty in extracting such funds made planning additionally difficult.

- 16.3 Meanwhile, little in the way of major promotions is being done in many important countries around the world because of lack of programme money and over-stretched resources. Views differ on the cost-effectiveness of such major events and promotions. Major promotions suck in vast levels of resource for planning and executing the campaign for an effort the impact of which may be forgotten fairly quickly.
- 16.4 Alternatively, some argue that the first priority should be to bring a number of key countries up to a similar level of pro-active work rather than focus all resources on one country at a time. Perceptions can be changed through drip-feeding in a sustained campaign communicating a consistent set of messages.
- 16.5 There will be different arguments in different countries depending on factors such as the amount of information interchange, the ability to collect a meaningful level of resource and the information channels available for communicating a message pro-actively.
- 16.6 The Prime Minister's Initiative for the recruitment of higher education students has demonstrated well how a single thematic campaign can be given an international brand and be effective in getting the same message out across the world.

Resources committed

17 Resources

- 17.1 Something in the region of £340m of direct expenditure is currently allocated to the named organisations for identified public diplomacy activities all of which flows through the FCO. This is broken down into three broad groups.
- 17.2 The largest share goes to the BBC World Service whose adjusted SR2000 baseline was £180.9m. It is bidding for additional expenditure in the 2002 Spending Review to modernise and reprioritise. This is funded through the Public Diplomacy Department of the FCO.
- 17.3 The British Council's Grant in Aid for FY 2001/02 is £143.1m. Its 2002 Spending Review proposals contain its bids for additional funding for new programmes and delivery of new services as part of its 2005 Strategy. The Funding is channelled through Cultural Relations Department of the FCO.
- 17.4 The FCO spends in the region of £20m a year on the UK staffing and production costs of its public diplomacy work within Public Diplomacy Department.
- 17.5 FCO overseas costs are broken down by overall FCO Objective. However, as public diplomacy is covered by one part of one Objective, it is extremely hard to calculate the real cost of public diplomacy work overseas. The calculation is made all the harder by the current absence of any detailed definition of what constitutes public diplomacy work. As a result, the percentage of time spent by officers on such work varies widely. It is likely that further work will be needed to achieve more precise figures.
- 17.6 The detailed submissions from the FCO, British Council and World Service within SR2002 contain full breakdowns of expenditure proposals. We have not seen it as our place to comment on these in advance of detailed discussions. Instead, we concentrate on assessing whether the current public diplomacy work effectively delivers the outcomes we want from our public diplomacy programme and how we can improve it.

Measurement and evaluation

18 Measuring the effectiveness of public diplomacy work

- 18.1 *Through Other Eyes* established a baseline of data to inform planning and monitoring of perceptions of the UK amongst young people. At present this is the only contemporary study of its kind that has been carried out. Similar studies carried out in future years will give some indication of how these perceptions are changing. But it should be noted that ascribing the extent of change to specific public diplomacy activity will always be difficult to carry out with any precision, since there are any number of other stimuli impacting on the target audience at the same time.
- 18.2 Monitoring perceptions through such longitudinal studies must, however, form a key part of our efforts to build up impact-based evidence of the effectiveness of our public diplomacy work. If the Euro-barometer can produce regular statistics on attitudes towards the EU, we should aim to have the same sort of indicators for perceptions of the UK. This will not tell us the effectiveness of any element of the mix but will at least provide, over time, an indication of overall changes in attitude and opinions.
- 18.3 At a practical level, the British Council and BBC World Service have established more or less straightforward methods for evaluating their work, mostly concentrating on direct outputs rather than outcomes.
- 18.4 The review team noted proposals currently under discussion between the FCO and the World Service to move the World Service's targets, measurement processes and reporting onto a more impact-focussed footing from 2003/4. The World Service has acknowledged the need to demonstrate its real successes more robustly, and to move on from the present overly process-based targets. The proposal under discussion is that the World Service should have as its headline target the aim of retaining/enhancing its position as the best known and most respected voice in international broadcasting (at present this is a subsidiary measure). It would show that it had achieved this through deeper and wider-ranging comparative information than is currently available on its performance in relation to that of its main competitors. There would be a more varied group of measures in support, which would include for the first time the extent of interactive participation in key programmes and online activity, as well as audience response to extreme events. Global audience would remain a measure, but would no longer be a headline target.
- 18.5 More work is needed across the organisations on the general measurement of perceptions and the evaluation of specific programmes. It will not be simple. The private sector is lucky in having sales figures and a much wider collection of independent surveys to assess the outcomes of any initiative.
- 18.6 Different activities will need different assessment tools. For instance, long-term relationship building will only have an outcome in the long term. A Chevening scholar may take years before they become a leader and are able to bring to bear their full knowledge and commitment to the UK. Any evaluation needs to recognise this.

- 18.7 At the other end of the spectrum, measuring news management is also difficult. The traditional measure is 'column inches' or 'advertising equivalent' but these give no indication of quality and can be easily affected by short-term bad news. How would one measure the coverage of the foot and mouth crisis? Often a successful outcome of a news activity can be no coverage in the media, when a potential problem story has been buried.
- 18.8 Much effort can be put into achieving a feature article or television piece but no one has yet worked out a way of assessing the impact this has or the outcome of the cumulative effect over time. If they had, the advertising world would be a duller place.
- 18.9 The FCO work is not, as far as we can see, evaluated in the same way as the work of the British Council or BBC World Service. This is partly a result of the type of work and partly a result of having so many different members of staff engaged in public diplomacy as a side activity.
- 18.10 The practical ideal is a mix of project evaluation and monitoring of long-term perception changes through a series of independent surveys. This is the direction that the British Council is going with its scorecard although the perception studies that this will require are currently not funded.
- 18.11 We note that all three organisations are presently looking at the best ways to monitor and evaluate the impact of their public diplomacy programmes. We strongly **recommend** that the organisations should work jointly to assess evaluation techniques, in order to agree common standards and similarity of approach to measurement.
- 18.12 We also **recommend** that consideration be given to establishing an FCO in-house Operational Research capability (long planned and intended) to introduce objective mapping techniques. These could provide a more robust model of assessment which could help to inform decision-making and resource allocation.

Strategic Discussion

19 Summary of current provision

- 19.1 It is hard to say whether HMG is getting value for its existing investment in public diplomacy work as there is presently no agreed over-arching public diplomacy strategy identifying anticipated outputs, impact or outcomes beyond the desire to improve perceptions of the UK around the world. We really have only the one survey – *Through Other Eyes* – as a measure of perceptions and that only looked at the attitudes of young people rather than the full range of target audiences.
- 19.2 It is also hard to say whether HMG is investing too much or too little in this work. Without systems of measurement and greater use of evaluation information it is not possible to draw meaningful conclusions on levels of investment or on cost-effective means of delivery. Like much communication, this will rely heavily on judgement.
- 19.3 The organisational picture is better. If our competitors are to be believed, the British Council and the BBC World Service have reputations as being among the best in the world at what they do. They are looked at with envy by other nations and their work enhances the overall image of the UK for being open and objective. Certainly, comparisons with some of the proposals coming from the USA suggest that we are ahead of the game.
- 19.4 Both organisations have established planning processes which involve clear objectives and are evolving ways of measuring the outputs – if not the outcomes – of their work. In the case of the British Council, the outcomes are likely to be long term and regular short term output and quality measures may be the best one can hope for. In the case of the BBC World Service, reach and listener figures must be taken as the best proxy we will ever have to the effectiveness of their work.
- 19.5 Both organisations have a level of independence which gives them certain advantages while creating constraints over their ability to deliver specific HMG messages on demand. In South Africa during Apartheid and in Eastern Europe before 1989, the British Council was able to reach people who were outside the purview of traditional diplomatic organisations like the FCO. The same is true today even in EU states with conferences like that at Pontignano.
- 19.6 Embassies are mostly working at the sharp end of news management. Having very little programme money, they are resource constrained and unable to take specific initiatives to improve perceptions unless these can be done as part of other activities, or using resources provided by others. Staff are not always trained communicators.
- 19.7 The Public Diplomacy Department of the FCO is producing a wide range of generic materials to support Embassies' work and for general broadcast purposes. Tracking of the publications beyond its intermediate customer in Embassies has not been done systematically and so one can have little idea of the effectiveness of the material. Broadcast data is available but it has not yet been possible to determine the actual impact achieved.

- 19.8 Embassies are also responsible for publicity for commercial work and are not able always to give this attention it demands because of other priorities.
- 19.9 The degree of joined-up working at Embassies appears to be generally good. Public diplomacy strategies do exist but their usefulness is questionable unless they articulate the big messages for the UK in the country and genuinely act as an umbrella under which all the players can operate.
- 19.10 The system appears to be largely designed as a system suited to long-term work. When there is a crisis, as there was in September, the BBC World Service was able to react instantly as is the nature of news radio but the rest of the information and news management operation did appear to creak somewhat as it moved into action. News evolves all the time but the size of the problem in September, and the direction from which it came, caught people out. It is questionable how far we can resource for a worst-case scenario given that for much of the year we are in a more steady state.
- 19.11 Each organisation is carrying out its particular remit more or less successfully. These are complementary as there are both long and short term elements, and a wide selection of audiences are being addressed but they do not add up to the most coherent picture possible. This is inevitable when there is no over-arching strategy within which people can work and the basis for the present levels of investment is historical rather than strategic.

20 Gaps in the current Public Diplomacy activity

- 20.1 Identifying gaps in public diplomacy activities and suggesting alternative approaches depends very much on how the UK wishes to be seen and where its priorities lie. This is presently unclear.
- 20.2 Research in a number of countries suggests that the UK can legitimately claim the ground of 'authority', reliability and tradition. These support the country's image as being a major world political player, a source of advice on governance and legal issues and as having a high quality education system. Our facility with the English language underpins this. But the UK is not seen as being a 'contemporary culture or society', a place of change or dynamism and, as *Through Other Eyes* demonstrated, we are seen as undynamic in our pursuit of business opportunities and unable to turn our fundamental science into practical technological products.
- 20.3 In competitive terms, France dominates for 'high' culture and the USA for popular culture, while the USA and Germany are first choice for business.
- 20.4 Our positioning on international relations is clear: to be a force for good in the world. This is a credible positioning given the research findings. The Panel 2000 conclusions listed five stories of modern UK of which 'creativity and innovation' is the one which most obviously contributes to the business and tourism agendas. This has been the focus of public diplomacy activities by the British Council. Other partners have lacked the resources to do much pro-active work in this field.
- 20.5 If there is a desire to present the UK as an evolving contemporary society which is creative then three areas stand out where we could usefully put in more effort.

- 20.6 The first of these is science. Trade Partners UK's emphasis on trade development has left a gap in the promotion of UK science. Other organisations are also engaged. The FCO's Science and Technology Unit and its overseas network promote science generally. The British Council's work in science focuses primarily on academics, students and the wider, informed public (for example in its recent Science Festival in India). The Design Council has attempted to fill the gap with its Millennium Products and the award-winning Great Expectations touring exhibitions but finds it difficult to engage a willing overseas partner with resources to manage in country provision. More effort needs to be made, however, to promote science to business audiences and potential investors.
- 20.7 The second obvious gap is in the promotion of current British popular culture. *Through Other Eyes* demonstrated the importance of popular culture and the personalities associated with it, in conveying an identity for the UK and yet no agency presently manages this work, arguing that it is impossible to add value to the activity. This may be so, but we are left wondering whether value might be gained from the activity.
- 20.8 *Through Other Eyes* also demonstrated that most modern popular personalities – with the possible exception of Mr Beckham – were automatically seen as being 'American' and this remains the biggest threat in presenting a believable picture of the contemporary UK.
- 20.9 We wonder whether the government could make more of an area of activity which is so high profile and thus important in terms of demonstrating the reality of the contemporary UK. Perhaps there is a genuine feeling of discomfort, either with the content, because popularity is so transient or because it markets itself effectively. The USA government has no such scruples and is a strong advocate for Hollywood despite the obvious commercial nature of its output.
- 20.10 The third area is in the changing media that people use. The BBC World Service has a very well deserved reputation around the world but its regular audience in the more developed countries is increasingly not amongst young professionals - the successor generation - who tend now to obtain their news and information from television.
- 20.11 The impact of CNN and more recently Al-Jazeera needs no underlining. Yet we have nothing that can compete with them to provide the sort of rounded and objective message about the world today which the World Service does on radio. This would undoubtedly be a benefit. BBC World Television is not supported by the tax payer and does not currently have the funds to extend its coverage.
- 20.12 Television is increasingly the medium of choice for news and opinions. It is inevitable that this will continue to be the case. We believe that a television service, particularly in some other languages of influence, may well soon become a necessary part of any international public diplomacy strategy. We should ensure that we do not end up behind the curve.

21 Options Analysis

- 21.1 We were asked to consider whether conclusions could be reached about the most cost-effective means of delivery. We therefore examined how we might do our public diplomacy differently.

- 21.2 It would be possible to re-structure the work of the British Council allowing it to concentrate on a more limited range of work. For instance, the British Council could be asked to concentrate on Education and English Language teaching, relinquishing its arts, science and governance work to another body or bodies.
- 21.3 These last could be taken on by one of the other organisations or an agency. For instance, the FCO have offices overseas and, with their commercial work, already cover parts of these subjects. But the overall skill sets in these subjects are not readily available and there is unlikely to be a happy marriage between the very different cultures. The USIA and State Department merger which attempted something similar has not so far proved a happy or particularly successful union.
- 21.4 It would be possible for the UK host Departments - such as the DCMS and Office for Science and Technology – to take on leadership on these subjects but they would still need overseas offices and a cadre of staff to manage the work. This leads pretty quickly to the idea of the FCO or British Council managing the activities for them on contract.
- 21.5 Contracting out the arts, science and governance work to NGOs or agencies would mean a fairly significant loss of control and almost certainly a concentration on those countries where there were commercial advantages rather than ones where there were public diplomacy benefits.
- 21.6 A reverse scenario would be to sub-contract the British Council's revenue earning activities to an agency, leaving the Council to manage the arts, science and governance work. Although this would result in a streamlined British Council, it would nonetheless be likely to cost more than the present arrangements. The revenue earning operations presently make a significant contribution to British Council overheads. Without this, the British Council would be unable to spread itself as widely around the world as it is asked to do as a condition of its grant-in-aid. It would also militate against our using the English Language and Education work as tools of public diplomacy, as agencies would have little interest in anything other than the revenue earning aspects of the work.
- 21.7 We are not merely taking the easy path in arguing for the status quo. The present organisation does appear to have a mix of revenue-earning activities and grant-funded operations which have a synergy and which contribute to the overall public diplomacy effort.
- 21.8 The BBC World Service would be a harder organisation to split up. It already draws extensively on the BBC news gathering systems without which any other solution would be difficult, if not unworkable.
- 21.9 None of the arguments for re-ordering things seem to us to provide substantial extra benefits without major cost implications. Nor are they sufficiently strong to justify re-balancing workloads in a way which might upset the current largely satisfactory arrangements. If we were starting from scratch we might not come up with the present solution. But it does appear to work. As we outline elsewhere, we believe that choice of activities on the basis of subject, audience or media is simplistic. We should play to the organisations' strengths.

- 21.10 We do think that the private sector has a bigger role to play in the planning and advice. Such help would not come for free but might help to suggest new approaches to tackling existing activities and improve quality in some areas.
- 21.11 A survey of competitive activity would also help to bring in new ideas and suggest alternative approaches. Information on competitive activity and expenditure on public diplomacy activities is not systematically collected at present. There are good examples around in both the branding fields and the organisation of major festivals and events. We need a body of knowledge both to act as a benchmark and as a source of best practice.
- 21.12 Innovative ideas can be attractive but should not be developed in isolation. Resources are already stretched. Proposals to divert resources towards new areas may do little more than bleed existing projects to the point that they are unable to survive. Re-allocations should be possible within existing programmes through adopting more flexible approaches, especially as internet usage increases and the i-UK portals are rolled out, but new means of communicating rarely replace existing means; experience suggests that they tend to demand increased resources.
- 21.13 A major programme of re-balancing resources either within or between existing activities would require a more detailed study than has been possible here. For this to be based on fact rather than prejudice would require proper evaluation of existing means of delivery and further audience research, although we do make some suggestions below.

The Way Forward

22 Our broad conclusions

- 22.1 There are two significant strategic priorities for the UK's public diplomacy work. An over-arching strategy for public diplomacy work is currently lacking. We consider below ways of drawing one up.
- 22.2 Secondly, and following directly from the first strategic priority, the introduction of mechanisms to create a more joined-up approach among all the public sector organisations concerned with public diplomacy. In particular, we need to look at how to foster in the 'home' Ministries an appreciation of the considerable impact that domestic events can have on the international stage.

23 Developing an over-arching Public Diplomacy strategy

- 23.1 The core of our proposals is that there needs to be an over-arching public diplomacy strategy, initially for the FCO, but followed by one for the government more broadly. The strategy should focus on outcomes, provide a means of measuring effectiveness of effort in the short and long terms and involve all the players.
- 23.2 This sounds simple but will in fact require careful handling if the various objectives and needs of the various organisations are to be incorporated. It will need to be at sufficiently high level to allow the various organisations the space to operate within it, and yet sufficiently detailed to provide direction.
- 23.3 There are some obvious basic steps:
- Deciding the priority audiences
 - Establishing what these audiences already think or know about the UK
 - Agreeing priority countries, themes and messages for public diplomacy over the coming period based on the output of these surveys
 - Agreeing priorities for public diplomacy activities over the immediate planning period
 - Identifying delivery mechanisms for these activities
 - Encouraging and enabling the allocation of resources behind these priorities
 - Monitoring the success of initiatives through further surveys and feedback
- 23.4 We **recommend** that this be produced as a priority.
- 23.5 Developing the wider government strategy should properly be led by the FCO as the senior partner but must include all the main players. We therefore **recommend** a Strategy Board representative of all the main players should own this document as a means of achieving joined-up working.
- 23.6 The national strategy will need to consider a number of questions including the allocation of resources right between the various players and between the different stages on the spectrum.
- 23.7 It will need to be couched in suitably inclusive terms if we are to secure buy-in from organisations who value their independence in developing strategies and tactics. Given that the British Council and the World Service both contribute to the UK's public diplomacy work, the national strategy should be couched in

terms that provide a significant degree of policy direction for these two organisations.

- 23.8 The national strategy will also need to be applicable to all countries. Messages appropriate in one part of the world may not be appropriate or relevant in another. The strategy should deal with those that are applicable across an appreciable range of countries. For example: all EU Accession countries, EU Member countries or Islamic countries. It is likely therefore that the strategy will in practice comprise a series of regional strategies, since it is at that level that we see the greatest scope for synergies.
- 23.9 Prioritising between countries or regions will present difficulties. But provided that these choices are made on the basis of standardised target audience research, as outlined above, they will be aimed at the areas where we can have most impact in pursuit of the UK's broad objectives. And we will have the underlying rationale for those decisions. Recent discussions within Britain Abroad have suggested that greater attention should be given to three broad groups:
- Countries in economic and political transition where knowledge about the UK may be less complete and the number and width of the channels of communication are less well developed. This included Brazil, China, South Africa, India and Russia. Perceptions in these countries are perhaps less well formed than in, for example, EU countries where there is much interchange of information and people and thus a higher degree of knowledge about the contemporary UK. It should be possible to get a great 'bang for the buck' in the transitional countries
 - EU Accession countries – especially those likely to be in the first wave. This is really a subset of the previous category but a group which will shortly become 'family'
 - Islamic countries – in which the British Council's *Connecting Futures* project is clearly making a contribution

24 Developing Public Diplomacy strategies in countries

- 24.1 Improved public diplomacy strategies will also be needed overseas. The FCO Public Diplomacy Best Practice booklet gives guidance on the development of these but is in need of updating and needs to be re-drawn and re-issued in a way which is applicable to all public diplomacy players. We therefore **recommend** that it be reviewed by a group drawn from the main public diplomacy players
- 24.2 Country strategies should be framed within the context of key political, business and cultural messages for each country which would typically be set by the Head of Mission.
- 24.3 They might include:
- Identification of target audiences
 - Perceptions of target audiences in the country concerned
 - An analysis of key competition
 - The competitive positioning - which explains what relationship the UK wants with the country and the benefits the UK brings to the country
 - Key themes and messages

- Priorities for the period
- Action plan grid for managing projects

Annexes might cover the high level objectives of each of the partners

- 24.4 Strategies will only be effective in producing real outcomes if resources are committed to their realisation. Accompanying action plans are therefore essential and should be used for assessing programmes and projects.
- 24.5 Country strategies should include not only the public diplomacy activities being carried out by public diplomacy specialists but also demonstrate how public diplomacy benefits are being sought from wider activities in the country concerned.
- 24.6 Public Diplomacy Committees play a pivotal role in establishing, articulating and coordinating the public diplomacy work of the Embassy and the other players in a country. We **recommend** that strategic meetings should be chaired at the most senior level within the Embassy with coordinating meetings meeting more regularly to review progress against the action plans and targets. They should include all public diplomacy players in the country and, where appropriate, other private sector partners.
- 24.7 The work recommended here obviously has resource implications. It may be possible to cover some of the recommended work by re-prioritising. The extent to which this will be possible will only be clear after the initial strategic work has been done.

25 Elements of these strategies

- 25.1 The following recommendations apply to two or more organisations. A separate appendix¹¹ contains recommendations specific to individual organisations.

Monitoring perceptions

- 25.2 We **recommend** the creation of a system for monitoring perceptions of the UK in the countries concerned. This will inform the activities of all partners and the planning for this should therefore be shared. The Euro-barometer and the work of the British Council on *Through Other Eyes* provide useful test cases on how this might be done on a regular basis. A single method should be used world wide to provide comparative information. As a start, the three organisations being reviewed should undertake a study of evaluation techniques with the aim of agreeing common standards and similarity of approach.
- 25.3 In-depth studies will still be needed in individual countries to probe local perceptions and to assess the success of local initiatives.
- 25.4 Getting the messages right is not as simple as it sounds. Messages either end up as clichés – ‘to be a good neighbour’ – or are so specific that there are too many to handle. Panel 2000 recommended five stories of the UK but these have never been formally published to all players or incorporated into planning. Decisions will of course follow audience research.

¹¹ See Appendix 5

- 25.5 We **recommend** that the list of core stories be revisited and that the resulting list of key messages published with advice on how they should be used by all players.

Managing subject overlaps

- 25.6 We concluded that the apparent overlap of responsibilities for certain subjects was not a sign of duplication but had real value in providing a many faceted approach to a single theme. However, this will only be successful if coordination and discussion takes place at a strategic level. We therefore **recommend** that policy coordination groups should be set up in the UK for science and governance work initially.

- 25.7 We welcome the British Council proposal to strengthen its work in science and **recommend** that it should do this in close co-operation with Trade Partners UK and the other interested players such as the FCO's Science and Technology Unit, Office of Science and Technology, the Design Council and Royal Society.

Promotional themes:

- 25.8 We **recommend** that a programme of thematic promotions should be developed in support of core messages, by theme, by country or by region: for example: 'To show we mean business in Europe'. Where messages are regional, this would need a welcome increased involvement of regional Commands.

Consistency of language

- 25.9 Consistency touches on the sensitive question of nomenclature and visual images. We **recommend** that representatives of all the main organisations, with branding specialists, should seek to establish a set of principles which can be used by all players to avoid the sort of confusion which presently occurs between, for example, Britain, British, UK, United Kingdom and their translations into other languages.

Consistency of visual branding

- 25.10 We would like to recommend that the UK should adopt consistent, non-organisational branding across all its work, but this is probably unrealistic because of the difficulty of getting agreement and the interests of the various bodies involved.
- 25.11 Instead, we **recommend** that Public Diplomacy Committees should consider establishing non-organisational brands (like that in Japan) for joined-up activities and situations where the overall UK public diplomacy effort needs to be projected to target audiences. These should be relevant and accessible for the target audiences and give precedence to the country rather than the organisation.

Publications

- 25.12 We **recommend** that more work is done to plan and produce publications jointly both as a way of saving money and of achieving a consistency of message. This will only be successful if individual organisations are prepared to use the consistent branding and language that we refer to above. We welcome the work that has started on this.

Web sites

- 25.13 We **recommend** Public Diplomacy Committees in all countries use the i-UK content management system to develop organisation-independent web portals which draw together information about the UK in a consistent and coherent form in appropriate languages.
- 25.14 Despite the arrival of the internet, many players are continuing to provide large quantities of printed material in response to enquiries. While this has customer care implications it is also costly and we **recommend** that efforts should be made to increase the amount of information available as web-based FAQs so that people can access this information at their own cost, locally. It is true that internet access is not universal but it is a great deal better than we sometimes choose to think. We also **recommend** that PDD consider putting more material on websites in PDF format so that Posts can easily print off what they need.
- 25.15 We recommend that the policy coordination groups for governance and science should ensure that web developments in these sectors are planned in a strategic way to ensure that these are audience-focused, complementary and avoid duplication of effort.
- 25.16 The web can be used in other ways, however. The public diplomacy players all have separate intranet sites, some with useful advice and examples of best practice which is only available to those organisations. We **recommend** that an extranet – a password protected internet site – should be created to share this information more widely.

Popular culture

- 25.17 We need to find ways in which the UK can harness its highly visible popular culture, in a way which supports the overall proposition that the UK is a modern youthful, changing and contemporary society. There has to be a better way than the existing stand-off and earlier rather bland attempts. This is an area which needs greater discussion by all and we **recommend** that a group be convened to explore options and possibilities.

Appendix 1

Terms of Reference

Objectives

1. To examine the objectives of HMG's public diplomacy abroad; to consider whether these could be more tightly and effectively focussed; and to make recommendations.
2. To examine the extent to which the outcomes of HMG's overseas public diplomacy can be measured or evaluated; and whether (bearing in mind the diversity of the potential audience) meaningful conclusions can be reached about the most cost- effective methods of delivery.
3. To examine the public diplomacy objectives, organisation and activities of the FCO, the British Council and the BBC World Service; to consider the extent to which they contribute to HMG's objectives; and to make recommendations.
4. To assess the extent to which all three organisations share similar target audiences such as decision takers, opinion formers, the rising generation of 18-35 year olds, multipliers (teachers, educationalists) and the wider informed public overseas; whether there is greater scope for coordination and synergy between the three organisations; and to review the relative strengths of the outputs of the three organisations and other potential means of influencing the target audiences.

Scope

The review will focus initially on the extent to which the response of the FCO, British Council and BBC World Service to the events and aftermath of 11th September contributed to the achievement of HMG's specific public diplomacy objectives. It will then consider the questions outlined above in the broader context of HMG's general public diplomacy aims.

Timescale

A report should be submitted to the FCO Director Resources (who will be the customer for the review) and in parallel to the Director Public Services, by 22 March. Given the scope of the review, it will not be possible to produce detailed conclusions on every aspect of the Government's overseas public diplomacy output. Given the complexity of their contribution to public diplomacy, the review is likely to focus initially on the FCO (and particularly the organisation of its London-based public diplomacy operation) and the British Council. The role of the BBC World Service will be covered primarily at the strategic level. However, the review may act as a signpost to more detailed work in future.

Resources

The review will be led by an SMS grade FCO officer supported by a representative of the Britain Abroad Task Force and a member of the Government's Operational Research Service.

Appendix 2

FCO Objectives

FCO Aim

The aim of the FCO is to promote internationally the interest of the United Kingdom and to contribute to a strong world community.

FCO Objectives

1. A secure United Kingdom within a more peaceful and stable world
2. Enhanced competitiveness of companies in the UK through overseas sales and investments; and a continuing high level of quality foreign direct investment. (Through British Trade International, shared with DTI)
3. Increased prosperity for the UK through a strengthened international economic order
4. A strong international community; leading to an improved quality of life worldwide
5. Pivotal influence worldwide over decisions and actions which affect UK interest; **positive foreign perceptions of the UK**; authoritative, comprehensive information on foreign issues for UK decision-takers
6. A strong role for the UK in a strong Europe, responsive to people's needs
7. Effective Consular services to British nationals abroad.
8. Regulation of entry to, and settlement in, the UK in the interests of social stability and economic growth. (Shared with Home Office).
9. Secure and well-governed United Kingdom Overseas Territories enjoying sustainable development and growing prosperity.

Appendix 3

British Council Purpose and Objectives

Purpose

To win recognition abroad for the UK's values, ideas and achievements, and nurture lasting, mutually beneficial relationships with other countries

Strategic Objectives

1. To build appreciation of the UK's creativity and scientific innovation among people overseas, and strengthen their engagement with the diversity of UK culture
2. To increase international recognition of the range and quality of learning opportunities from the UK, to promote the learning of English, and to strengthen educational co-operation between the UK and other countries
3. To enhance awareness of the UK's democratic values and processes, and work in partnership with other countries to strengthen good governance and human rights

Brief Summary

The British Council connects people worldwide with learning opportunities and creative ideas from the UK and builds lasting relationships between the UK and other countries.

Appendix 4

BBC World Service Aims

Aims

The World Service's overall strategic aim is:

To be the world's best known and most respected voice in international broadcasting, thereby bringing benefit to Britain.

To support this objective, the World Service aims:

- To be the world's first choice among international broadcasters for authoritative and impartial news and information, trusted for its accuracy, editorial independence and expertise
- To be the world's reference point – a global hub for high quality information and communication
- Projecting Britain's values of trustworthiness, openness, fair-dealing and creativity, enterprise and community
- Providing a forum for the exchange of ideas across cultural, linguistic and national boundaries
- Promoting the English language, learning and interest in modern, contemporary Britain
- Offering a showcase for British talent across the world

Appendix 5

Recommendations for individual organisations

1 Unified management in the FCO

- 1.1 We noted that there is little regular interchange between Public Diplomacy Department (who fund the BBC World Service and provide internal services across the FCO), CRD (who funds the British Council and various thematic areas) and News Department, the main public diplomacy departments of the FCO. We believe that there are synergies to be gained from a closer alignment of our handling of foreign policy issues with the UK press, and our overseas-targeted public diplomacy work. This will particularly be the case if we establish, as we are recommending, the broad messages about the UK that we wish to put across.
- 1.2 We also noted the separate and important public diplomacy activities of European Union Command, the Coalition Information Centres and the Islamic Media Unit. Presentation of all these aspects of our outward-facing public diplomacy effort will also require excellent communication within the organisation to ensure that everyone sings from the same song sheet. This will be a key role for the Internal Communications Unit.
- 1.3 We **recommend** that consideration should be given to drawing together the outward-facing public diplomacy work under a Director of Communications. We note that there will be implications for the position of Head of News Department, who has contributed to the debate in his minute of 21 March to the PUS.

2 FCO London Correspondents' Service (LCS)

- 2.1 In acknowledgement of the strongly-held views of Posts overseas, and our own understanding of the impact of articles produced by foreign correspondents in London, we **recommend** that regular, high-level briefings of these correspondents be re-introduced, better access be given to ministers from all departments, and consideration be given to allowing freer access to officials at an appropriate level (probably Head of Department or higher).
- 2.2 We also **recommend** that LCS consider ways of bringing in other Whitehall departments to ensure that we maximise the international impact of positive stories in the UK.

3 Department for International Development

- 3.1 It is clear that the work of DFID contains stories which could have an extremely beneficial impact to the range of messages in key countries. We welcome the tentative steps being taken to develop communication strategies in certain countries and **recommend** that the FCO should consider ways to secure a still more active contribution from DFID to our public diplomacy work.

4 FCO Objectives

- 4.1 We have had difficulty identifying the resources presently committed to public diplomacy across the three named organisations. Conveniently, the British

Council and BBC World Service can be taken in total but the allocation within the FCO is not as easily arrived at.

- 4.2 We **recommend** that more work be done on refining the Objectives of the FCO so that there is a clear public diplomacy Objective and that guidance be given on completion of the appropriate returns so that an overall picture of current expenditure can be seen at headquarters.

5 Coalition Information Centres and Islamic Media Unit

- 5.1 The Coalition Information Centres took time to get up and running in the aftermath of 11 September. We need a system that can kick in fast when we face the next crisis. It need not necessarily be coalition-related. It should contain experts at handling the media. Since we can't predict which area it is likely to be, there is little point in keeping regional experts hanging around. But we should have a database of those we can bring in at very short notice. We **recommend** that contingency plans be put in place to support the creation of an appropriate work group very swiftly should a further crisis occur.
- 5.2 The Islamic Media Unit has clearly been a great asset in the recent crisis, providing news in fluent Arabic. We **recommend** that it should continue for as long as we see a value in having a specialist unit dealing with Muslim media questions. Our belief is that this is unlikely to move off the agenda in the near future. Decisions about where the Unit should be placed should be based on recommendation in the current Management Consultancy Service review of the Unit. Similar units may be appropriate in the future to support specific campaigns.

6 FCO translation budgets

- 6.1 Communicating effectively with overseas audiences is often best done in the language of the audience. The FCO has been through a process of devolving budgets for translation from Public Diplomacy Department to Commands. We applaud the spirit of this but it has led to the funds being reallocated for other purposes and is a cause of considerable unhappiness at Embassies who are unable to obtain quick translations of key texts and other material in the languages they want. We believe that this may have been one devolution too far. We therefore **recommend** that consideration should be given as to whether the funds should be returned ring-fenced to Public Diplomacy Department.

7 British Council

- 7.1 We **recommend** that the British Council should take active steps to engage other organisations in a debate about the strategy for its arts work, demonstrating its ability to deliver genuine added value for public diplomacy efforts.
- 7.2 We **recommend** that the British Council should increase the level of work that it does in promoting science to a wide audience, in conjunction with other organisations.

8 FCO Public Diplomacy Department

- 8.1 The FCO's Public Diplomacy Department plays a pivotal role in coordinating public diplomacy across all the players.

Public Diplomacy Products

- 8.2 We have not had to time to look in detail at the materials produced by the Department but there is common ground that they need to be reviewed. We therefore **recommend** that further work be done to look at all the present materials with a view to streamlining the output. This might best be done after initial audience research suggests the messages we wish to try to get across and the most appropriate means of doing so.
- 8.3 For the remainder, we **recommend** that Public Diplomacy Department establish systems for Embassies to track and evaluate usage of publications in a more systematic way.
- 8.4 We **recommend** that further work be done to explore the impact of all broadcast media output, in conjunction with specialist communicators.
- 8.5 We **recommend** that the Department explore the possibility of providing more of its basic materials on the web perhaps in pdf format.
- 8.6 There is a range of different web sites which provide routine support information and best practice for PPAOs overseas. We **recommend** that the Department explore ways of uniting these to provide PPAOs with a one-stop shop of support information and examples of best practice.

Developing skills

- 8.7 We **recommend** that the Department should develop its own communication expertise perhaps by recruiting some additional staff with specific communication policy experience so that it can credibly play the role of specialist advisor across the FCO.
- 8.8 The Department presently runs PPAO conferences around the world. We **recommend** that as broad a spectrum of players as possible be encouraged to attend to assist the process of joining-up activities.
- 8.9 Training for PPAOs is limited at present, being little more than a one day media course and a two week briefing on products and services available from London. We **recommend** that the Department should explore the possibility of creating much higher quality basic (before) and advanced (for higher level staff) training courses on communication management for all PPAOs, perhaps using a recognised qualification such as those provided by the Chartered Institute of Marketing or Institute of Public Relations.

Appendix 6

News Item dated 14th March 2002

Henry J. Hyde (R-IL), Chairman House International Relations Committee

Hyde Introduced Reform of U.S. Public Diplomacy; Will Improve America's Outreach to International Mass Audiences Legislation Expected to be Reported by Committee on March 20

(Washington) - The U.S. Government must do more to counter misinformation overseas about American policies and culture or risk undermining its influence in the world, the Chairman of the House International Relations Committee warned today.

On Thursday, U.S. Reps. Henry J. Hyde (R-IL) introduced the Freedom Promotion Act of 2002 to begin rebuilding a mass communications infrastructure to explain American policies and culture to the world.

'Public diplomacy - which consists of systematic efforts to communicate not with foreign governments but with the people themselves - has a central role to play in the task of making the world safer for the just interests of the United States, its citizens, and its allies,' said Hyde.

'If we are to be successful in our broader foreign policy goals, America's effort to engage the peoples of the world must assume a more prominent place in the planning and execution of our foreign policy,' Hyde said, adding, 'The task of countering misinformation and propaganda regarding the United States is a never-ending one, but we must go about this task more aggressively and more systematically, rather than simply reacting to crises as they occur.'

The legislation reshapes critical elements of the State Department, including new authority to the Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy, new requirements for the development of a comprehensive strategy for official communications overseas, and new requirements that hiring and promotions within the department be based in part on public diplomacy experience. It also reorganizes U.S. international broadcast services, including establishment of the International Broadcasting Agency to oversee the Voice of America.

Proposed Legislative Initiatives

Specific authorizing language. The State Department already possesses the authority to conduct public diplomacy. This legislation gives shape to the direction and manner in which public diplomacy is carried out by defining the statutory authorization more specifically in terms of standards, technologies, and target audiences. The legislation also creates a firewall around the budget for public diplomacy (\$497 million annually not including U.S. broadcasting) and authorizes an additional \$70 million for exchange and cultural programs and \$40 million for other public diplomacy programs over two years. Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy -

Created in 1999 with the consolidation of the Department of State and the United States Information Agency (USIA), the Under Secretary is given new authority over the

Department's public diplomacy programs and personnel and an enhanced role in coordinating its public diplomacy activities.

Establishment of the International Broadcasting Agency - The legislation reorganizes U.S. international broadcasting programs, now headed by a part-time Board of Broadcasting Governors, into an agency headed by a director. The reorganization is designed to ensure accountability by an identified decision maker while preserving the strengths of the Board. This reorganization will be accomplished with minimal disruption to existing broadcasting operations.

The director will be appointed by the President - with the concurrence of the Senate - for a term of five years, similar to that of the chairman of the Federal Reserve System, with safeguards to preserve journalistic integrity from political influence. The present board of governors will be reconstituted as the Board of International Broadcasting (BIB) which will retain operational control of grants to entities including Radio Free Europe, Radio Liberty, and Radio Free Asia.

The BIB will function in an advisory role to the International Broadcasting Agency. Mandates development of an annual strategic communications plan by the Department of State to advance U.S. foreign policy goals including a tactical communications plan for implementation worldwide. The development of this plan is to be coordinated with the many federal agencies active in international programs. Although the State Department is not given operational control over programs and activities conducted by other agencies, it is designated as the lead agency.

Establishment of the Public Diplomacy Reserve Corps - Includes a database of eligible experts in foreign policy and mass communication for temporary assignments to augment the Department during 'emergency and critical circumstances worldwide.'

Development of satellite television services. The legislation provides an initial amount of \$7.5 million annually to the Office of Broadcast Services at the Department of State to accelerate its outreach to the world. In addition to other provisions, the legislation mandates the development of a long-range plan for the use of satellite television and other new media, such as the Internet.

It also authorizes funds for discretionary use by the State Department to lease air-time on satellites and to develop other media channels serving key regions, such as the Middle East and East Asia, in order to dramatically expand unfiltered access to mass audiences. A key objective is to equip the State Department with the requisite facilities, including studios and satellite capability, to enable it to act as a command centre for a public diplomacy operations globally and in real time.

Enhanced training in media and advocacy skills for the Foreign Service and Ambassadors. The Foreign Service is encouraged to recruit individuals with experience in public diplomacy and to emphasize to all incoming officers the importance of their role in public diplomacy. As part of the overall effort to raise its importance throughout the State Department, public diplomacy should be included in the entrance examination and the performance review process. In particular, training for ambassadors will be amended to include public diplomacy, including the press, cultural and educational components. Ambassadors will be given a prominent role in the formulation of public diplomacy strategies for the country and regions to which they are assigned and be formally held accountable for the operation and success of the public diplomacy efforts at their posts.

Development of programming. The State Department is authorized to develop programming for foreign audiences separate and apart from the renamed International Broadcasting Agency and specifically authorizes the use of the private sector. State is encouraged to work with foreign television broadcasters and other media to produce and distribute programming.

Budget authority to undertake in-depth research on public and media attitudes in regions chosen at the discretion of the Department of State. This includes a requirement that analyses of the comparative effectiveness of the various efforts undertaken in the area of public diplomacy be provided annually, including the use of the private sector in the U.S. and overseas.

Translation services. To assist Public Affairs Officers in embassies worldwide, the legislation adds an additional \$4 million annually for document translation services. Alumni program. A database of international alumni of U.S. exchange programs will be created in order to expand and utilize the connections that have been established through exchange programs.

Library initiative. A demonstration program will examine the most effective way to augment resources in local public library systems overseas in order to 'familiarize participants with American values and society, particularly the importance of freedom and democracy.'

Language education for Americans. An authorization of funds for early learning language training in difficult languages, such as Arabic, Mandarin, and others, in targeted regions.

Reform of the U.S. Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy. Mandates a comprehensive biennial study by the Commission of the State Department's public diplomacy efforts. This study will be conducted in conjunction with the General Accounting Office. The legislation requires that at least four of the seven Commission members have 'substantial experience in the conduct of public diplomacy or comparable activities in the private sector.'

Initiatives Aimed at the Muslim World:

Youth Ambassadors - Authorizes a summer youth exchange program for young individuals from countries with a predominantly Muslim population. (Short- term exchanges of 3-4 weeks in length).

Journalism program - Authorizes an initiative to work with foreign journalists to enhance international standards of quality and objectivity. This program will be established and operated in cooperation with private sector sponsors, including universities and exchange programs.

English language training. Creates a pilot program to send Americans to middle schools in the Muslim world to provide English language instruction.

Sister Cities Initiative: Authorizes funds for an expanded 'sister cities' program to increase the number of US-sister city partnerships in countries with a predominantly Muslim population. (Currently there are 42 such partnerships). These partnerships are aimed at community level development and volunteer action and include non-federal support.

Appendix 7

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