

6 FAH-5 H-300 ESTABLISHING THE ICASS FRAMEWORK AT POST

(TL:ICASS-2; 04-01-1998)

6 FAH-5 H-301 POST ICASS COUNCIL

(TL:ICASS-2; 04-01-1998)
(Applies to participating ICASS agencies)

The Council is key to everything else. Posts assume the responsibility and exercise the initiative to install the infrastructure and administer the system the way they think is right for their environment.

6 FAH-5 H-301.1 Who

(TL:ICASS-2; 04-01-1998)
(Applies to participating ICASS agencies)

a. Composed of agencies' senior representatives at post or their designees. Locally Engaged Staff, while not allowed to be members, can be allowed to attend and participate *ad hoc* at the discretion of the Council. The intent is to have the highest possible representation from each participating agency. Representation on the Council as a voting member is determined using **all** of the following criteria:

- (1) Senior representative or designee of an organizational entity at post;
- (2) Recipient of a separate ICASS bill; and a
- (3) Signatory to the Standard Charter and MOUs.

An autonomous organization administering multiple funds is entitled to only one vote.

b. Membership on the local council is not restricted to those agencies/organizations that are traditionally thought of as "permanent" presence at post. Autonomous organizations that may be in-country for a limited or specifically defined period (several months to a year or two but not a very short period of a few days or weeks) may subscribe to and pay for services and through this participation be qualified to serve on the local ICASS council should they so choose. As a general rule, separate individuals and very small groups that are in country on a temporary/non-permanent basis would not be members of the local ICASS council but they could opt to have their interests represented by a council member but with no added voting power. For example, the senior military official could

represent the interests of a military personnel exchange program (PEP) officer who is in country for a year to attend the host nation's military command and staff college.

c. In addition to the above criteria, the post council should ensure that representation on the council reflects the ICASS policy of giving all participating agencies an equal say regardless of their numbers or monetary contributions. That said, the council, in the spirit of fairness and collegiality, should guard against allowing a particular agency or group undue influence because of fragmented funding arrangements.

d. Councils should assure that means are developed to consider the interests of constituent posts in the formulation of Council decisions. Constituent posts are not entitled to Council membership, although agencies at constituent posts, not represented at the Embassy, are entitled to Council membership.

e. All heads of U.S. Government ICASS service provider operations participate in the ICASS Council as *ex-officio*, non-voting members, collaborating in the Council's responsibility as a change agent at post: reshaping the workforce, streamlining systems, reducing costs, improving services and, in general, seeking innovative and better ways of conducting business. These individuals should attend all Council meetings except for sessions discussing their service performance as determined by the Chair.

f. Heads of U.S. Government Agency provider operations overseeing provision of particular services may be designated by the senior representatives of their agency as voting Council representatives for agencies, but cannot sit as voting members for discussion of those services. Another representative of the service provider agency may be designated to vote on the service issue, in such cases.

g. Refer any questions concerning representation to the ICASS Service Center (FMP/ICASS).

6 FAH-5 H-301.2 Oversight

(TL:ICASS-2; 04-01-1998)

(Applies to participating ICASS agencies)

As with all Mission operations, the activities of the Council fall within the Chief of Mission's authorities.

6 FAH-5 H-301.3 Leadership

(TL:ICASS-2; 04-01-1998)

(Applies to participating ICASS agencies)

Council shall elect a Chair annually from among participating agencies. An acting Chair may be appointed or elected from the Council membership. The Chair's duties will include agenda setting, convening of Council meetings, and ensuring minutes of proceedings are maintained. The Chair is also responsible for facilitating the meetings, for ensuring that strategic objectives are set for the Council, and assuring that a service vision is developed. The Chair should strive for a team approach with the Council and the service provider in addressing issues. Follow up of recommendations, decisions, appeals and tasking of service providers is also expected. The Chair has responsibility to ensure that a consensus memorandum of provider performance is written.

6 FAH-5 H-301.4 ICASS Council Authority At Post

(TL:ICASS-2; 04-01-1998)

(Applies to participating ICASS agencies)

- a. Acts as Agent of Change.
- b. Adopts Standard Charter.
- c. Determines services to be provided, by whom and at what level.
- d. Defines specific service standards of performance, in consultation with service providers, serviced organizations, and customers
- e. Evaluates cost and staffing alternatives and establishes budget for post ICASS operation. In this process it gives appropriate attention to internal controls of the service provider.
- f. Monitors service performance and cost and requires changes if necessary. The Council is not involved in day-to-day operations of the service provider, but concentrates on overall performance against agreed standards. Administrative counselors, executive officers, etc. perform their traditional role as head of service provider operations.
- g. Provides an annual written assessment on the quality and responsiveness of the services furnished by the service provider to the customer, using the agreed upon service standards as the performance yardstick.
- h. Resolves disputes between participating agencies and service providers, or refers disputes to the Chief of Mission for resolution. Issues not resolvable at post may be appealed to the Washington, D.C. Executive

Board by the Chief of Mission, Post Council, or by any participating agency through its headquarters office.

6 FAH-5 H-301.5 Annual Assessment

(TL:ICASS-2; 04-01-1998)

(Applies to participating ICASS agencies)

a. As part of the accountability and feedback process, the Council chairperson, in consultation with the Council members (voting), prepares a comprehensive assessment memorandum for each service provider commenting upon the overall performance of the supervisor and the support provided in each of the service areas.

For example, if the State Department is the service provider in ten areas, a single assessment would be prepared addressing the overall performance of the administrative counselor/officer in meeting the customers' needs and commenting upon the quality and responsiveness of the services provided for each of the ten areas using the agreed upon service standards as an objective yardstick to measure performance. The Council members approve and give the consensus assessment, signed by the chairperson, to the overall service provider of operations, e.g., the counselor/administrative officer, with copies being provided to the Deputy Chief of Mission and the Chief of Mission.

If an agency other than State provides a service, then the head of that agency at post would receive a copy of the assessment report on the supervisor of the services provided by that agency. The timing of the assessment should coincide with the service provider's formal annual agency evaluation cycle. During the year the Council chairperson should meet with the service provider supervisor at four month intervals to discuss service performance issues. The Council's annual assessment should not contain any surprises.

b. Rating and reviewing officers are highly encouraged to consider the use of this material in the formal agency evaluation process, but inclusion is left solely to their discretion. It is assumed that ICASS responsibilities are included in an officer's work requirements statement to reflect the support provided to other agencies. In that regard, it should be noted that the instructions for the preparation of the State Department's Foreign Service Employee Evaluation Report (DS-1829) state that "In discussing performance, work done for other agencies or outside the rater's personal supervision may be cited, drawing as appropriate on any evaluations submitted by the beneficiaries of the employee's work." For USAID, the Council input represents an important part of the 360 degree evaluation process.

6 FAH-5 H-301.6 Decision-Making

(TL:ICASS-2; 04-01-1998)

(Applies to participating ICASS agencies)

a. Decision-Making is done by consensus. While “consensus” does mean “general agreement,” this is interpreted here to mean that all parties have had a chance to air their views and can live with the result, even if they don’t fully agree.

b. In those few instances where the Council is unable to achieve consensus in a timely fashion and must vote, each agency which is a party to the Standard Charter has one vote. In such instances a two-thirds majority of those present and eligible to vote is sufficient to decide any matter. When voting on a particular service issue, only organizations subscribing to that service should vote. Voting for another agency by proxy is not allowed. However, the local Council may have to make accommodations in exceptional circumstances. The Council Chair and the COM should be sensitive to any vote where the concerns of the major stakeholders are not sufficiently addressed.

6 FAH-5 H-301.7 Meetings

(TL:ICASS-2; 04-01-1998)

(Applies to participating ICASS agencies)

a. Councils are encouraged to meet periodically—monthly or quarterly—and should focus on broad management issues. Minutes of meetings will be prepared, cleared with all participants, and maintained as a permanent record of proceedings.

b. Please refer to 6 FAH-5 H-700 for suggestions on conducting effective meetings.

6 FAH-5 H-302 POST ICASS WORKING GROUP

6 FAH-5 H-302.1 Role

(TL:ICASS-2; 04-01-1998)

(Applies to participating ICASS agencies)

a. The post ICASS working group is an organization that may be established by the Council and is strongly recommended, particularly for medium-to-large posts. The IWG serves as staff to the Council, drafting documents for review, studying proposals, making recommendations, and proposing meeting agendas to the full Council.

b. The Working Group should conduct cost and operational studies of services as requested by the Council or request through the Council that

they be done by the service provider for the Council. The Working Group should also take the initiative to conduct studies, keeping the Council informed.

6 FAH-5 H-302.2 Who

(TL:ICASS-2; 04-01-1998)

(Applies to participating ICASS agencies)

a. Membership is optional but generally consists of participating agency administrative personnel and officers directly responsible for providing ICASS service. Participation of Foreign Service National (FSN) staff is encouraged.

b. Councils should involve different levels and categories of employees including FSN and other Locally Engaged Staff on the Working Group. Besides the added value of having knowledgeable and experienced personnel staff out issues, the working group is an excellent vehicle for promoting greater involvement of the local staff in ICASS. Council members may also serve on the Working Group.

6 FAH-5 H-303 ICASS STANDARD CHARTER

(TL:ICASS-2; 04-01-1998)

(Applies to participating ICASS agencies)

The text of the Standard Charter is in 6 FAH-5 H-303 Exhibit H-303 . The Standard Charter may not be amended at post.

6 FAH-5 H-303.1 What

(TL:ICASS-2; 04-01-1998)

(Applies to participating ICASS agencies)

The Standard Charter legitimizes the Council and reaffirms Chief of Mission authorities. It establishes operating guidelines, including rules of procedure (the rules of consensus and delegations of responsibility by Council members to their subordinates in operational matters), terms under which agencies can withdraw from services, terms under which service providers can cease to provide stated services, and frequency of meetings.

6 FAH-5 H-303.2 Chief of Mission

(TL:ICASS-2; 04-01-1998)

(Applies to participating ICASS agencies)

Reaffirms authority of the Chief of Mission and agreement with and support of the Charter through his or her signature.

6 FAH-5 H-303.3 Signature

(TL:ICASS-2; 04-01-1998)
(Applies to participating ICASS agencies)

The agencies' senior representatives at post sign the Charter. Representatives of new agencies sign the Charter upon arrival at post.

6 FAH-5 H-303.4 Resource Commitments

(TL:ICASS-2; 04-01-1998)
(Applies to participating ICASS agencies)

States that participating organizations have a direct commitment to provide funding resources under this new system.

6 FAH-5 H-304 MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (MOU)

(TL:ICASS-2; 04-01-1998)
(Applies to participating ICASS agencies)

More details are provided in 6 FAH-5 H-700 , ICASS Financial Procedures. The standard MOU is in 6 FAH-5 H-304 Exhibit H-304 .

6 FAH-5 H-304.1 What

(TL:ICASS-2; 04-01-1998)
(Applies to participating ICASS agencies)

a. The MOU establishes the terms and conditions of the agreement between the ICASS Council and the U.S. Government service providers. It specifies services to be provided, to whom, and by whom. The **standard MOU form serves as a cover document** for an attached subscription of services and service standards, which are mutually developed by the Council and the service provider. **There will be one MOU for each service provider organization.**

b. Each service provided by a given service provider will appear on the subscription of services, including the following elements:

(1) Description of the service provided, i.e., the scope of work to be delivered; and

(2) Service performance standards that are detailed, specific, relevant, and time-sensitive.

c. The MOU and subscription of services should focus on standards and should reflect mission-wide priorities.

6 FAH-5 H-304.2 Mission-Wide Priorities

(TL:ICASS-2; 04-01-1998)

(Applies to participating ICASS agencies)

a. Because not every post will have the resources necessary to provide an unlimited range of service options, Council and service provider(s) should achieve a mutual understanding of mission-wide priorities, which will then be reflected in the level of services offered. Defined priorities permit focused use of resources.

b. For example, if there is general consensus that the quality of housing at a given post needs significant improvement and should become a mission-wide priority, the customer service standards and resulting cost center budgets should reflect this. This means that standards set forth for a service of lesser priority may need to reflect smaller cost center budgets. Clear communication between the Council and service provider(s) is essential.

6 FAH-5 H-304.3 When

(TL:ICASS-2; 04-01-1998)

(Applies to participating ICASS agencies)

Begin review of MOUs and negotiation of subscription of services as early as possible in the fourth quarter of each fiscal year. Service subscriptions should be signed in October of each year. Additional agencies may subscribe to a service by mutual agreement with the service provider and the Council at any time during the fiscal year.

6 FAH-5 H-304.4 Who Drafts

(TL:ICASS-2; 04-01-1998)

(Applies to participating ICASS agencies)

a. Ultimately the Council is responsible for ensuring the MOU is reviewed and service subscriptions prepared each year. Preparation is the responsibility of the service provider in consultation with the Council.

b. Service subscription drafting is a consultative process involving the provider agency and the customer. The post ICASS Working Group, when one exists, should also be involved.

6 FAH-5 H-304.5 Who Signs

(TL:ICASS-2; 04-01-1998)

(Applies to participating ICASS agencies)

A representative of the service provider and the ICASS Council chairperson sign the MOU. Annually, a representative of the service

provider and each organization subscribing to the service sign the subscription of services. This signature does not constitute approval of the budget.

6 FAH-5 H-305 CUSTOMER SERVICE STANDARDS

(TL:ICASS-2; 04-01-1998)
(Applies to participating ICASS agencies)

A major principle of ICASS is that the users—the customers—set service standards mutually with the service provider and evaluate how well they are met.

6 FAH-5 H-305.1 Purpose

(TL:ICASS-2; 04-01-1998)
(Applies to participating ICASS agencies)

Standards establish a mutually agreed upon level of service (quality and timeliness) that the customer can expect to consistently receive; and a basis for the evaluation of service quality by the Council. Standards also help to educate customers to resource requirements and other constraints for the provision of services; and can improve the understanding of the provider staff regarding their responsibilities and expected level of performance. They therefore represent an important aspect of ICASS.

6 FAH-5 H-305.2 Authorities

(TL:ICASS-2; 04-01-1998)
(Applies to participating ICASS agencies)

Executive Order 12862, "Setting Customer Service Standards", directs that all executive departments and agencies which serve the public shall identify their customers, survey customers to determine kind and quality of service, post service standards and measure results against them, benchmark performance, survey employees to improve service, provide customers with choices in service, make information easily accessible, and address customer complaints.

6 FAH-5 H-305.3 Determining Standards

(TL:ICASS-2; 04-01-1998)
(Applies to participating ICASS agencies)

The Council and the service provider are responsible for ensuring acceptable standards are established and that these standards are used as the basis for evaluating performance. Standards are developed through a cooperative effort involving the provider, the individual customer, and the

Council or its working group. Standards should be considered as part of the Council's resource decisions, with the understanding that changes in standards have resource implications. These standards will be used in the MOU and will be the basis for evaluating service performance.

6 FAH-5 H-305.4 When

(TL:ICASS-2; 04-01-1998)
(Applies to participating ICASS agencies)

The standards should be reviewed at least annually. The standards can be changed during the year with the consent of both the Council and service provider. There should be a continuous attempt to improve the standards as baselines are developed and to reflect changing requirements.

6 FAH-5 H-305.5 Customer-Driven System

(TL:ICASS-2; 04-01-1998)
(Applies to participating ICASS agencies)

a. Under ICASS there may be more than one service provider and the focus is on the customer. The service providing organizations should follow these principles:

(1) **Know your customer.** Identify the customers who are, or should be, served by the agency.

(2) **Recognize customers as colleagues.** Performance standards are agreed through dialogue. Dialogue should continue throughout the year over how standards are being met and about problems of the customer and provider. Emphasize what can be done, not what can't be done.

(3) **Engage all staff (U.S. citizen employees and Locally Engaged Staff) and customers in developing and accomplishing reasonable performance standards which are best suited to achieve the post objectives.** "Reasonable" means within the resources of the provider and within the expectations of the customer. Standards are set and change by mutual agreement as resources, priorities and requirements change.

(4) **Be committed to quality service and customer satisfaction. Communicate performance standards to all levels and all personnel providing service support.** Evaluate individual performance on basis of those standards. Strive for excellence and always doing the job better. This must be a continuous process.

(5) **Communicate with customers in a timely, clear, courteous and accurate manner.** Regular, scheduled face-to-face communications are important for customer satisfaction and consistently high quality. Periodic surveys are also helpful, providing data and alerting managers to problems.

(6) **Ask customers for new ideas.** Open communication facilitates new ideas for better service. Providers should also contribute. The best ideas often come from those who do the job. Establish a systematic process for regular discussion. Refer to 6 FAH 5 H-600 for a sample survey.

(7) **Establish a mechanism for dealing with customer complaints.** This will provide the service provider and personnel with information for improving service over time.

b. For help in developing a customer service strategy, see 6 FAH-5 H-700 .

6 FAH-5 H-305.6 Developing “S M A R T” Standards

(TL:ICASS-2; 04-01-1998)

(Applies to participating ICASS agencies)

a. For standards to prove effective, they must be developed jointly by the provider and customer(s). It is essential that both **timeliness** and the **quality** of the service be measured. One without the other will rarely achieve the desired level of customer satisfaction. In addition, standards should be:

Specific
Measurable
Achievable
Relevant/results oriented
Timely

b. **Examples:**

- At least 75% of the respondents to an annual customer survey will rate the service provided as good or excellent. (A goal may be to improve that to 90% by the next year.).
- Operate 95% of all official vehicles within 10 minutes of scheduled departure/arrival times.
- Nonexpendable property requisitions will be approved/disapproved within 2 days of receipt and delivery of approved services completed within 3 workdays of approval (5 days total) if necessary items are in local stock. Emergency replacement of non-functioning ranges or refrigerators will be completed within xx hours.
- Customer satisfaction with services provided will be rated good or better 85% of the time based upon customer feedback forms filled out at the time of delivery.
- Payroll submissions will be on time and the error rate limited to no more than 5 cases per month.

- Residential generator failure shall not occur more than once in 200 operating cycles.
- Approved payment vouchers will be processed accurately and payments made within 30 days at least 95% of the time.
- Satisfaction with the quality of Training Office courses will be rated “highly satisfactory” by 75% of participants and quality of instructors rated acceptable or better 90% of the time.
- Satisfaction with in-processing procedures and services will be rated as excellent in 8 of 10 cases.

c. See 6 FAH-5 H-305 Exhibit H-305.6 for examples of service standards. These standards are provided as examples for Councils and service providers. Refer to them only as examples. Posts must develop their own service standards.

6 FAH-5 H-306 THE SERVICE PROVIDER

6 FAH-5 H-306.1 Who

(TL:ICASS-2; 04-01-1998)
(Applies to participating ICASS agencies)

U.S. Government Agencies (or local vendors contracted by a U.S. Agency) selected by the post ICASS Council to provide services defined in a standardized ICASS cost center, or a portion of the services defined within a cost center.

6 FAH-5 H-306.2 Responsibilities

(TL:ICASS-2; 04-01-1998)
(Applies to participating ICASS agencies)

a. U.S. Government Agencies selected as service providers have the following responsibilities in support of the administrative platform and Council operation at post:

(1) Participate on Council;

(a) All heads of U.S. Government ICASS service provider operations (for example, State Admin Officer or AID/USIS Exec Officer) participate in the ICASS Council as *ex-officio*, non-voting members, collaborating with the Council as change agents at post: reshaping the workforce, streamlining systems, reducing costs, improving services and, in general, seeking innovative and better ways of conducting business. These individuals should attend all Council meetings except for sessions discussing their service performance, as determined by the Chair. The service provider must take a proactive role in improving ICASS service.

(b) Heads of U.S. Government provider operations overseeing provision of particular services may be designated as voting Council representatives for agencies but cannot sit as voting members for discussion of those services. Another representative of the service provider agency may be designated to vote on the service issue, in such cases.

(1) Draft the Memorandum of Understanding subscription of services portion and negotiate with Council for services assigned;

(2) In consultation with the Council, prepare and implement performance standards;

(3) Establish costs for services, develop budget and staffing requirements and present to council for review and possible negotiation; participate in ICASS Council initial, quarterly and mid-year budget reviews and approvals;

(4) Suggest modified workcounts in consultation with agencies receiving partial services, for Council consideration and approval;

(5) Provide cost, staffing and operational studies as requested to assist the Council in examining costs and exploring alternative methods;

(6) Advise and coordinate with the Council on personnel or acquisition decisions having major impact on ICASS costs;

(7) Furnish an overview and brief analysis of ICASS cost distribution reports (by the Financial Services Provider); and

(8) Maintain quality services at reasonable cost.

b. For further details on process improvement and reengineering, see 6 FAH 5 H-700 . For more detailed description of financial responsibilities, refer to 6 FAH-5 H-800 .

6 FAH-5 H-306.3 Non-State Service Provider

(TL:ICASS-2; 04-01-1998)

(Applies to participating ICASS agencies)

The authority of the local ICASS Council to select service based on quality and cost of service is key to local empowerment. The element of competition is critical in this customer-driven system to reduce costs and improve service. Councils are encouraged to take a hard look at existing services and consider the selection of other agencies which may be in a cost-effective position to provide quality service. Outsourcing should also be considered.

6 FAH-5 H-306.3-1 Other Agency Billings and Collections for ICASS Services

(TL:ICASS-2; 04-01-1998)
(Applies to participating ICASS agencies)

Other agencies offering to provide services will cost out their proposals for Council review in any manner acceptable to the Council. If approved as the service provider, an MOU would be negotiated with the Council. Charges would then be assessed for all ICASS agencies receiving the service. An advance payment may be made to the service provider agency from the Working Capital Fund, with reimbursements collected from all customer agencies using the ICASS mechanism. The provider agency would retain the advanced funds for use in service provision. Other agencies may issue more explicit guidance for field offices contemplating performance as an ICASS service provider.

6 FAH-5 H-306.3-2 Use of Working Capital Fund (WCF) for Non-State Provider

(TL:ICASS-2; 04-01-1998)
(Applies to participating ICASS agencies)

When selected by the Council as service providers, non-State agencies will be paid from the WCF for the cost of ICASS services in a manner similar to that used for payment to an ICASS commercial service provider. Since the worldwide WCF used for ICASS is established under State Department authorization, other service provider agencies will not be able to directly charge costs to the Fund, without losing agency resource identity. However, the State WCF may be used to advance funds to other provider agencies for ICASS purposes, if required. Under this provision, agencies must have reimbursement authority.

6 FAH-5 H-306.3-3 Dual Service Providers

(TL:ICASS-2; 04-01-1998)
(Applies to participating ICASS agencies)

a. In some circumstances, the Council may determine that the use of dual service providers for the same service is the most effective means of obtaining the services required, considering span of control, geographical factors and agency excess capacity. The same service will be used for both agencies providing services in such a case to assure equitable service provision. Where an agency wishes to offer services on a limited basis, it will advise the Council accordingly. However, the agency may not preselect agencies to which it wishes to provide services, but will instead offer the services to the Council, indicating limitations to its capacity. The Council will then determine to whom the services will be provided.

b. For technical reasons, the WCF currently cannot be used to provide funding to a second provider of the same service. Assessments for services, in such cases, may be made either through direct charging or—where it is beneficial for the post to do so—through a contract arrangement, as described above, with the primary provider of that service. Under the latter arrangement, advantages offered by using the WCF may be realized and any savings obtained through the use of two providers will be shared by the entire post. This does not preclude agencies from making separate service arrangements with each other, but utilizing the ICASS mechanism is the preferred method.

6 FAH-5 H-306.4 Contract Service Provider

(TL:ICASS-2; 04-01-1998)

(Applies to participating ICASS agencies)

Councils selecting a contract vendor as a service provider will also select a U.S. Government Contracting Officer or Contracting Officer Technical Representative (COTR) to represent the Council on technical review panels and as an agent in negotiating rates and establishing performance standards for the particular service. Commercial vendors will not participate in post Council meetings.

6 FAH-5 H-307 COUNCIL RELATIONSHIPS WITH PROVIDERS

6 FAH-5 H-307.1 Team Approach

(TL:ICASS-2; 04-01-1998)

(Applies to participating ICASS agencies)

As the ICASS Council is a significant element in the post management team, it is useful to address separately how it does and does not interact with the providers. Primarily, the Council is empowered to proactively and creatively pursue better ways of doing business at post. Specific authorities of the Council are listed in 6 FAH-5 H-301.4 . However, it is essential that the Council function as a team with the active participation and partnership of the service providers to achieve improvements. Service providers will often be the largest resource customer for ICASS services and thus the largest beneficiary of reduced costs and improved service. **The Council and providers together share the responsibility and accountability for achieving the most cost efficient and streamlined quality administrative services at post.**

6 FAH-5 H-307.2 Council Empowerment

(TL:ICASS-2; 04-01-1998)

(Applies to participating ICASS agencies)

a. Customer agencies, as stakeholders with a greater voice in the management of shared administrative services, are empowered collectively to seek innovative ways to reduce costs and improve services. To these ends, the Council may streamline administrative processes or reshape the administrative workforce. Decisions might include downsizing, delayering and flattening of the staff organization; use of qualified local hire specialists in lieu of higher cost U.S. based staff; and alternative agency or contract service providers. The Councils may also consider use of the services of U.S. Embassies and Agencies in other countries where costs are lower.

b. These decisions should be formed in close consultation with the service providers, and in light of management or cost studies developed by or at the request of the Council. Rather than focus on the cost of all services at one time, Councils may wish to consider cost and staffing reviews which examine an individual cost center. To facilitate this process, the service provider will be expected to provide the Council financial breakdowns, staffing patterns, and operational studies as requested.

c. Since the decisions are forged in consensus or reflect the sense of a large majority of the customer community, they should be implemented expeditiously except for clearly compelling reasons, well understood by the post community.

d. In the event of a dispute between the service provider and the Council concerning a decision, the matter will be referred to the COM for a decision. Appeals of the COM decision may be submitted by the Council or an Agency to the ICASS Working Group for the Washington, D.C. ICASS Executive Board.

6 FAH-5 H-307.3 Avoid Micromanagement

(TL:ICASS-2; 04-01-1998)

(Applies to participating ICASS agencies)

a. Councils are empowered as change agents, and in collaboration with the service providers, are expected to push administrative quality, competitiveness and cost efficiencies to the maximum feasible for the benefit of all customers in the Mission.

b. However, Councils should avoid micromanagement of the service provider activities. The Council is not intended to serve as supervisor of the administrative service provider in the day-to-day details of operations. The Council Chairperson and ultimately the COM have a particular responsibility

to ensure that Council authorities, empowerment and accountability do not divert the Council from its principal focus, i.e., broad management issues.

c. **Mutually established performance standards are critical to the avoidance of micromanagement by the Council.** If quality and responsiveness criteria established in the standards are regularly met by the provider, that is the definition of "customer satisfaction." Although there should be continuous scrutiny of cost alternatives, carefully considered standards are key to establishing clear communication and collaboration by the Council and the provider as an effective management team.

d. Also, in exercising Council authorities to reshape the workforce, it is important to note that the service provider alone retains authority to establish salary and other hiring qualifications of authorized positions. ICASS Councils do not make individual assignments either of career or local hire staff. **Internal controls and regulations of the service provider and customer agencies apply in the administration of cost centers.**

6 FAH-5 H-307.4 Council Oversight of Local Guard Program

(TL:ICASS-2; 04-01-1998)
(Applies to participating ICASS agencies)

Unlike all other ICASS cost centers, the authority of the Council to establish priorities and adjust service in the security area is circumscribed. Since the post security program is maintained in accordance with worldwide policies established by an Interagency Security Policy Board in Washington, D.C. including the establishment of threat levels, minimum guard requirements, etc., the ability of the local ICASS Council to change security standards at post is limited. However, the Council should raise customer concerns regarding the performance of the local guard force. Any changes in local guard program staffing must be approved by the Bureau of Diplomatic Security (DS). A representative of the Council can and should participate in the technical evaluation of the contractor selection process. Performance standards mutually established by the Council and the service provider should be upheld.

6 FAH-5 H-307.5 Relations With Housing Board

(TL:ICASS-2; 04-01-1998)
(Applies to participating ICASS agencies)

The ICASS Council does not usurp existing administrative authorities as exercised by the post housing board under 6 FAM 700 .

6 FAH-5 H-307.6 Change at Post

(TL:ICASS-2; 04-01-1998)

(Applies to participating ICASS agencies)

a. The introduction of **empowered local Councils** and the emphasis on **customer service** represents a major culture change in ways of doing business at post. Although ICASS participation by each agency for each service is voluntary, Council members and agencies are expected to **share ideas** for improvements with the entire ICASS mission team. Rather than simply withdrawing from an ICASS service to take advantage of better or cheaper service, agencies should bring the alternative to the attention of the full Council for consideration by all agencies. Factors such as the effect on career staffs or economies of scale can then be considered mission-wide.

b. Another change is that service provider costs are not a "given". For example, if a major customer withdraws from a service, costs to other agencies should not automatically rise. The Council and provider team will want to look at workforce needs given reduced service demand.

c. The Administrative Counselor/Officer has **broadened accountability** in this customer-driven system. While still reporting to the DCM or COM for day to day operations and evaluation purposes, this Officer has a shared accountability to serviced customers represented in the ICASS Council. Although an *ex-officio*, non-voting Council member, the Administrative Counselor/Officer of the Embassy must attend all sessions, except discussions covering their personal performance, and play an active role in the deliberations and workings of the Council. Council representatives have an oversight and evaluation role in the performance and support of the Embassy Administrative Counselor/Officer, support officers and other service providers.

6 FAH-5 H-308 CHIEF OF MISSION

6 FAH-5 H-308.1 COM Management Authority

(TL:ICASS-2; 04-01-1998)

(Applies to participating ICASS agencies)

a. **As with all Mission activities, ICASS operations fall under the authority and are the responsibility of the Chief of Mission. It is critical to the success of ICASS that COMs fully support this initiative of the President's Management Council. COMs have the ultimate responsibility to ensure that ICASS objectives are met.**

b. Communication and consensus building provide COMs two keys to success in implementing ICASS. Regular communication with the Mission community on ICASS progress as a change agent, emphasizing the team

aspect of the Council's role in reaching decisions, will enhance team-building efforts.

c. As the Councils take consensus action to reallocate resources to meet customer priorities, streamline the system, reshape the administrative workforce and reduce costs, COMs retain the ultimate oversight authority and responsibility. Nevertheless, **COMs should give Councils latitude to innovate and make resource decisions. COMs have the responsibility to ensure that actions are implemented.** ICASS Council decisions should not be overruled unless there are clearly compelling reasons which are well understood by the community.

6 FAH-5 H-308.2 Disputes

(TL:ICASS-2; 04-01-1998)

(Applies to participating ICASS agencies)

Although consensus is the preferred method of reaching decisions, in the event of a dispute between the service provider and the Council regarding a proposed action, the COM will make the determination. If the Council or an agency disagrees with the COM's decision, the matter may be appealed to the ICASS Executive Board in Washington, D.C.

6 FAH-5 H-308.3 NSDD-38 Issues

(TL:ICASS-2; 04-01-1998)

(Applies to participating ICASS agencies)

a. As the President's personal representative, one of the COM's major responsibilities is the administration of NSDD-38. NSDD-38 is intended primarily as a policy screen, not a resource screen for adding or deleting positions at posts. ICASS will better enable missions to address resource issues related to NSDD-38 requests.

b. Administrative support costs for new positions will be charged based on ICASS methodology.

c. No NSDD-38 approval "side deals" are allowed. Embassies will not devise special funding arrangements in return for NSDD-38 approval to add new agency positions at post. All administrative support costs required for new positions are covered under ICASS, and all previous NSDD-38 deals are now subsumed under ICASS in accordance with a standard worldwide methodology (See 6 FAH-5 H-608).

NOTE: The above restriction on NSDD-38 "side deals" does not conflict with Agencies' continued authority to establish direct charge arrangements with other Agencies for services outside of ICASS, or one-time start-up costs directly attributable to a new position. ICASS Councils can provide the COM with the cost implications of NSDD-38 decisions.

6 FAH-5 H-309 DEPUTY CHIEF OF MISSION

(TL:ICASS-2; 04-01-1998)

(Applies to participating ICASS agencies)

a. The Deputy Chief of Mission works directly for the Chief of Mission and assumes those duties during an absence, i.e., the DCM is second to the COM in the post chain of command.

b. **The participation of the DCM is critical to the success of ICASS at post.** The DCM will be an *ex-officio*, non-voting member of the Council representing the Ambassador in ICASS matters. **The use of post resources must be viewed in the context of U.S. policy objectives in the host country and overall post operations, a perspective the DCM can provide given the nature of the position which encompasses both policy and post management responsibilities spanning all agencies.** The presence of the DCM on the Council represents post management's commitment to ICASS and its role as a change agent in streamlining administrative operations and reducing costs. The DCM should keep the Ambassador fully informed on ICASS matters.

c. Recognizing the possible limitations imposed by minimal staffing and unique conditions that prevail at some of our smallest posts, the DCM may participate, on an exception basis, as the State representative on the Council contingent upon the approval of the Washington, D.C. Interagency Working Group. Requests for an exception are to be submitted to the ICASS Service Center (FMP/ICASS) including a justification describing the "unique circumstances" supporting the request.

6 FAH-5 H-310 THROUGH 399 UNASSIGNED

6 FAH-5 H-303 Exhibit H-303 ICASS STANDARD CHARTER

(TL:ICASS-2; 04-01-1998)

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATIVE ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT SERVICES (ICASS) CHARTER FOR U.S. EMBASSY

I Purpose

a. ICASS is a customer-driven, voluntary interagency system for managing and funding administrative support services abroad. It gives posts the authority to determine how services are delivered, at what cost and by whom. It has customer service standards established by the post, with the service provider formally accountable to the customer. It incorporates an equitable cost distribution system through a no-year working capital fund.

b. This charter establishes ICASS Council to promote cooperation, provide accountability, and ensure the equitable distribution of administrative services and their costs, for participating agencies at this post.

II Goals

It is the goal of the ICASS system to obtain quality services at the lowest cost; encourage use of the best and most economical service provider; provide participating agencies with more voice in the administrative decision making process; provide a transparent system of cost-sharing and reimbursement for services; and ensure user satisfaction.

III Authority

a. This Council operates under the general authority of the Economy Act of 1932 as amended (31 USC. S1535), which provides for the provision of goods and services on a reimbursable basis from one agency to another and specifically under the authority of the Chief of Mission.

CONTINUATION—6 FAH-5 H-303 Exhibit H-303

b. Nothing in this charter shall be construed to supersede existing law or regulation. In executing the memoranda of understanding (MOUs) envisioned under this charter, care will be taken by the servicing agency to adhere to any special provision of law or regulation which may affect the customer agency.

c. The *ICASS Handbook* (6 FAH-5) is the primary reference document for all ICASS procedures.

IV ICASS Council

a. The Council shall consist of the head of each agency at post which is a partner to this charter, or his or her designee. An agency is defined as a permanent entity receiving a separate ICASS bill. No officer who is directly responsible for the provision of a service under this charter or any MOU thereunder shall be designated as a board member when discussing that service. Locally Engaged Staff (LES) are not permitted to participate as members of the Council. The DCM is an *ex-officio*/non-voting member of the council, representing the Chief of Mission. Appendix A to this charter lists those agencies at post participating in the ICASS system.

b. The Council shall elect one of its voting members as a chairperson on an annual basis. The chairperson retains the right to vote on all ICASS matters.

c. The Council may set up a "Working Group" which could be assigned such duties as shall be determined by the Council, such as drafting documents for review, studying proposals and making recommendations, and proposing meeting agendas to the full Council. LES may participate as members of Working Groups.

d. Decisions taken by the Council will generally be by consensus. For the purposes of this charter, consensus is when no member of the Council disagrees so strongly to the proposal under consideration that he or she poses an official objection and calls for a vote. This does not mean that each member of the Council is in total agreement with every element of the proposal. Rather, it suggests that individual Council members in a spirit of collegiality and cooperation are willing to move forward with a proposal that, while not ideal in every respect for their individual agency, is acceptable and beneficial for the community as a whole.

CONTINUATION—6 FAH-5 H-303 Exhibit H-303

e. In those few instances where the Council is unable to achieve consensus in a timely fashion and must vote, each agency which is a party to this charter will have one vote. In such instances a two-thirds majority of those present and eligible will be sufficient to decide any matter. When voting on a particular service issue, only organization subscribing to that service shall vote.

f. If the Council cannot reach agreement and/or any agency disagrees with a Council decision, an appeal may be made to the Chief of Mission (COM). If the Council and/or any agency/service provider disagrees with a COM decision, then it can appeal to the ICASS Executive Board in Washington, D.C.

g. The Council will meet at least quarterly. A quorum will be fifty percent of the signatories to the Charter. There will be no voting by proxy, i.e. one agency representing another. However, at the discretion of the local Council, written voting in absentia may be permitted.

h. Minutes of Council meetings and decisions will be recorded, published, and distributed to Council Members.

V Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs)

a. MOUs among the Council (on behalf of serviced agencies) and the service providers represent the principal vehicle for implementing ICASS. Service providers may be an organization providing services directly or an agency contracting for commercially provided services. There will be a separate MOU for each service provider, whether those service providers offer one or more services. The Council shall adopt criteria for MOU's which shall include but not be limited to:

1. Post specific objectives for the period of the MOUs,
2. Definition of specific services which may be provided,
3. A method for evaluating proposals to provide services, including price comparisons with alternate vendors where appropriate,
4. Clear cost allocations or resource commitments required of customer agencies,
5. Performance norms and measures, to be implemented in order to achieve post objectives, and
6. A method for periodic program evaluation and review.

CONTINUATION—6 FAH-5 H-303 Exhibit H-303

b. While the Council has the responsibility to facilitate the execution of MOUs, individual customer agencies should initially address concerns or questions to the provider organization. Disputes about the level, quality, or charges for services shall be addressed by the Council if the provider and customer agencies cannot resolve the difficulties among themselves.

VI Agency Responsibilities

a. As a party to this charter and any MOU's concluded here under, each agency pledges to provide the resources necessary to fulfill its commitments.

b. Agencies providing services agree to give the Council adequate notice of intention to withdraw any services, usually one year, and assist in an orderly transition to a new service provider. Similarly, customer agencies agree to provide 6 months notice of intention to withdraw from any service subscribed to under the MOU.

VII Effective Date

For each signatory (participating agency), this charter becomes effective upon its signature and its ratification by the Chief of Mission.

Signatures, dates, and titles of
all agency heads and the Chief of Mission

6 FAH-5 H-304 Exhibit H-304 MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

(TL:ICASS-2; 04-01-1998)

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN U.S. MISSION (POST NAME), ICASS COUNCIL, AND U.S. GOVERNMENT SERVICE PROVIDER

I Purpose

To establish the terms and conditions of an agreement between (the U.S. Government Service Provider: title and organization) and the serviced agencies represented by ICASS Council for the provision of services in accordance with the standards listed in 6 FAH-5 H-305 Exhibit H-305.6 .

II Scope

a. ICASS services shall be available to all U.S. Government agencies or elements which sign a subscription of services form attached to this MOU (as in 6 FAH-5 H-305 Exhibit H-305.6).

b. This document shall be the basis for all funding commitments and transactions incidental to the services provided. Subsequent arrangements and commitments may be added as a result of periodic review provided for in Section IV. Such additional arrangements and/or commitments will be documented, sequentially numbered, and signed by parties to this agreement and attached to this document as a permanent part.

III Effective Date and Period of Agreement

This agreement is effective upon the date of signing by the participating agencies and shall remain in effect indefinitely, subject to the availability of the services and the means of reimbursement, or until the result of any periodic review (see Section IV) recommends termination.

IV Periodic Review

a. This agreement is subject to review at any time upon written request of either party (the providing agency or the ICASS Council) but shall be reviewed on an annual basis to:

b. Determine the need for continuation, modification or termination of the agreement.

CONTINUATION—6 FAH-5 H-304 Exhibit H-304

c. Review performance and performance standards to evaluate the quality and timeliness of the services and to make any needed changes in performance standards.

d. Make adjustments in any of the areas covered in the terms of this agreement which includes the means of reimbursement.

e. Verify present costs and provide projected costs for the next fiscal year.

V Resource Commitments

a. (U.S. Government Service Provider) agrees that sufficient staffing, property, equipment and logistical resources are available to provide the ICASS agencies with the specified services.

b. The U.S. Mission (Post Name) ICASS Council agrees that funds equal to the projected costs for services, reflected in the charges discussed in Section IX paragraph b, will be made available to carry out (U.S. Government Service Provider's) responsibilities.

VI Servicing Organization

a. (U.S. Government Service Provider) will provide (description of service) to any other federal agency and/or organizational unit that participates in the U.S. Mission (Post Name) ICASS and has signed up for such services through a subscription of services form. See 6 FAH-5 H-305 Exhibit H-305.6 .

b. Any successor organization which may be established through reorganization will be responsible for carrying out this agreement.

VII Changes or Termination

a. Changes to this agreement resulting from reviews called by ICASS service provider or Council or at scheduled intervals will be documented as described in paragraph IIb., above. Additional resources, required for either party as a result of change, should be obtained within 120 days after: (1) this agreement is signed, or (2) changes are agreed upon. The approval authorities for (U.S. Government Service Provider) and the ICASS Council concerning these changes shall be the following:

(Name, Title and Address of Head or Providing Agency)

(Name, Title and Address of the Chairman of the ICASS Council)

CONTINUATION—6 FAH-5 H-304 Exhibit H-304

b. This agreement may be terminated, in whole or in part, as follows:

1. By (U.S. Government Service Provider) with one year advance notification for the Council to arrange for another service provider.
2. By the ICASS Council with six months advance notice to (U.S. Government Service Provider).
3. Should either party terminate this agreement, (U.S. Government Service Provider) will assist the ICASS Council in the orderly transfer of services to an ICASS designated facility.

c. A withdrawal effective either October 1 or April 1, will be at no additional cost to the withdrawing agency, provided 6 months notice was given to the Council. However, if withdrawals are effective at other times during the fiscal year, the Council may assess additional costs to the withdrawing agency related to the termination of services. Additional severance/separation costs will be handled in accordance with the *ICASS Handbook* (6 FAH-5).

VIII Staff Coordination

a. The individuals responsible for the administration and coordination of the terms of this agreement within and for their respective organization, shall be those identified in Section VII paragraph a. Copies of this document, pertinent correspondence, and changes or other transactions pertaining to this agreement shall be furnished to each of those individuals.

b. Responsible individuals identified in Section VII paragraph a may redelegate the functions of administration and coordination of this agreement. Those functions redelegated to (U.S. Government Service Provider) officer shall become part of his or her performance evaluation by the ICASS Council. Performance should be measured against the standards listed in Appendix A of this agreement. Approval of modifications to this agreement is delegated to the principals named in Section VII paragraph a, above.

IX Allocation and Cost Agreements

Costs shall be calculated, established, and distributed from the authorized cost distribution system as described in the *ICASS Handbook* (6 FAH-5).

CONTINUATION—6 FAH-5 H-304 Exhibit H-304

X Terms

(U.S. Government Service Provider) agrees to provide ICASS members with the same quality and quantity of services that are provided to its own organization using established procedures. However, (U.S. Government Service Provider) must be able to provide the specified services in accordance with the rules and regulations of the participating agencies.

XI Authority

The authority for entering into this agreement is the Economy Act of 1932, 31 USC. 1535, as amended, and the CASS Charter, signed by the Chief of Mission and agreed to by all agencies at post on (date of the charter).

XII Subscription of Services

a. Subscriptions of services are the key building blocks of the MOUs. See 6 FAH-5 H-305 Exhibit H-305.6 for a description and sample subscription of services.

b. Posts should attach a subscription of services statement to this MOU. These statements reflect the services offered and the subscribers for each offered service.

NOTE: Sign up of Subscription of Services does not constitute budget approval.

6 FAH-5 H-305 Exhibit H-305.6 SUBSCRIPTION OF SERVICES

(TL:ICASS-2; 04-01-1998)

SAMPLE SUBSCRIPTION OF SERVICE

(Format Not Mandatory)

POST: Accra

SERVICE/COST CENTER: GSO/Customs & Shipping

SERVICE PROVIDER: U.S. Embassy Administrative Section (STATE)

PERIOD COVERED: October 1, 1996 To September 30, 1997

DESCRIPTION OF SERVICE/PERFORMANCE STANDARDS: Attached

SUBSCRIBING AGENCIES:

USAID: _____
Bary Helpful
Exec. Officer

PEACE CORPS: _____
Tim Traveler
Director

USIS: _____
Frank Q. Public
PAO

DAO: _____
SGT A. Smith
Admin Asst.

SERVICE PROVIDER:

ADM: _____
Bernard B. Jones
Admin Counselor
U.S. Embassy

Attachment:

As Stated

CONTINUATION—6 FAH-5 H-305 Exhibit H-305.6

(TL:ICASS-2; 04-01-1998)

SUBSCRIPTION OF SERVICE

(Format Not Mandatory)

Performance Measures

SERVICE/COST CENTER: GSO/CUSTOMS & SHIPPING

DESCRIPTION OF SERVICE	STANDARD
1. Packing, crating, and forwarding of HHE, UAB, and POV shipments	Action will be initiated within 3 working days after receipt of a written request for shipment/customs service
2. Preparing documents necessary for customs clearances	For all valid clearances, within 2 working days after receipt of (ARO) shipping documentation
3. Request of diplomatic/official license plates for GOVs/POVs	For valid entitlements, within 5 working days after customs clearance
4. Request of official drivers' licenses	Within 2 working days of ARO required documents from employee