



# Meeting Planning Schedule

## ICASS Council & Budget Committees

Updated June 2023

When	Topic of Meeting <small>Click to view relevant training videos</small>	Who Attends	Proposed Dates
September	<b>#1 - Council and Budget Committee orientation.</b>	ICASS Council & Budget Committee	
November	<b>#2 - Initial Budget discussed and approved. Budget forwarded to ICASS Council.</b>	Budget Committee	
November	<b>#3 - Initial Budget ratified.</b>	ICASS Council	
February	<b>#4 - Workload Count Modification policy review, requests considered &amp; budget methodology review.</b>	Budget Committee	
April	<b>#5 - Annual Performance Assessment: Council/Service Provider evaluation of services.</b>	ICASS Council	
May/June	<b>#6 - Final Budget discussed and approved. Budget forwarded to ICASS Council.</b>	Budget Committee	
May/June	<b>#7 - Final Budget ratified. Strategic review and look ahead to next fiscal year.</b>	ICASS Council	
June	<b>#8 - Workload Counts and Time Allocations reviewed and approved for next fiscal year.</b>	Budget Committee	

- **Purpose:** The “ICASS Meeting Planning Schedule” is used to guide participants in their meeting discussions and to schedule key ICASS meetings during the year. This nine-page document includes detailed notes for each of the eight mandatory meetings held during the year.
- **Meetings and Reports:** Each meeting has a distinct list of reports that must be shared with the Budget Committee and/or the ICASS Council. Documents requiring signatures must be provided to the respective agency **at least 10 working days** prior the submission due dates. Other meeting reports must be distributed to the customer agencies **at least two days** prior to the meeting date. Post must create, distribute, and maintain approved meeting minutes.
- **Proposed Dates:** Enter your post’s targeted meeting dates in the column “Proposed Dates.” ICASS Council (IC) and Budget Committee (BC) Chairs, in partnership with ICASS service providers (SP), are responsible for convening the meetings and establishing the agendas. Post may schedule additional meetings as needed.
- **Videos:** The ICASS Service Center (ISC) offers “Just-in-Time” videos to assist posts in preparing for these critical meetings. Each video will be emailed directly to the list of ICASS Council, Budget Committee, and Service Providers right before the meeting occurs at post. To access these videos, using CHROME or MS-EDGE click on [ICASSTraining.com/Training-MPS](https://www.icasstraining.com/Training-MPS)

For more ICASS information, click on any of the following links: [ICASS OpenNet site](#), [ICASS Microsoft Teams](#), and ICASS internet [Max.gov](https://www.max.gov)

## Meeting #1 -- September

### Council and Budget Committee Orientation -- Joint ICASS Council and Budget Committee

The purpose of this meeting is to provide an orientation to Council and Budget Committee members, discuss current issues, elect new chairs, and advise agencies of withdrawal from services deadlines.

**The Service Provider (SP) distributes electronic copies of the following documents at least *two days* before this meeting:**

1. [ICASS Meeting Planning Schedule](#).
2. The post's Annual Performance Assessment and Action Plan
3. ["What Is ICASS?"](#)
4. Roles and Responsibilities for the ICASS Council ([6 FAH-5 H-222.3-3](#))
5. Roles and Responsibilities for the Budget Committee ([6 FAH-5 H-222.4-3](#))
6. Termination or Withdrawal from Services ([6 FAH-5 H-016.5](#))

**Optional:** SP can schedule to view a video called "MPS#1: ICASS Council and Budget Committee Orientation" before or during the meeting. To access, use **CHROME** or **MS-EDGE**.

- Internet: [ICASSTRAINING.COM/TRAINING-MPS](https://ICASSTRAINING.COM/TRAINING-MPS)

#### Meeting agenda:

- The Deputy Chief of Mission (DCM), as an ex-officio member of the ICASS Council, presents a Front Office view of ICASS for the coming year including Mission-level policies, trends, and events that will have an impact on ICASS.
- The SP reports on current issues in ICASS including the status of ICASS funding at the close out of the current fiscal year, projected carryover, recoveries, and pending requests for:
  - Contingency funds;
  - Partial year invoices; and,
  - TDY invoices.
- The SP reviews the Annual Performance Assessment of ICASS Services and its Action Plan and discusses plans to maintain the quality ICASS services and improve the services that were low ranked by ICASS customers.
- The outgoing ICASS Council and Budget Committee Chairs and the SP brief attendees on the work of the ICASS Council and Budget Committee.
- SP reviews and discusses distance learning tools available to IC and BC members, including recorded webinars, the IC and BC Toolkit and other resources available on the ISC websites.
- SP provides guidance on submitting withdrawal from services requests and the deadlines:
  - October 1 to be effective on April 1 (the upcoming fiscal year).
  - April 1 to be effective on October 1 (the following fiscal year).

#### Action Items:

- Elect new BC and IC chairs.
- Establish dates for IC and BC meetings for upcoming year and note them on the first page of the Meeting Planning Schedule that has been distributed to IC and BC members.
- Enter the names and contact information for new IC and BC Chairs, Management Counselor/ Officer(MC/MO), Financial Management Officer (FMO), and senior LE Financial Specialist for ICASS, the Regional Security Officer, and the DS Accountant into the ICASS Initial Budget Post Profile.
- Update the Key Officer's List for your post, if necessary.

## Meeting #2 -- November

### Initial Budget Review (Budget Committee)

This meeting is scheduled for the BC to conduct an in-depth budget review based on the reports provided by the SP. When the BC approves the Initial Budget, it is forwarded to the IC for ratification in Meeting #3.

**The SP distributes electronic copies of the following reports to the ICASS agency representatives/BC at least two days before this meeting.** The ICASS software generates these reports using the batch feature.

1. [Seven Simple Questions](#) to ask Your FMO.
2. Budget Summary (Report #17) with all optional report sections.
3. ICASS Data Summary (Report #13).
4. Cost Center Detail by Agency (Report #11) for all cost centers and agencies grouped by cost center.
5. Agency Invoice Comparison (comparing prior year Final Budget [a] to current year Initial Budget [b]) (Report #16).
6. Workload Detail Trend for all cost centers for **all agencies** (comparing the prior year Final Budget [a], the current year Data Call plan [b], and the current year Initial Budget plan [c]) (Report #6).
7. Budget Summary by Cost Center Comparison (comparing the prior year Final Budget [a] and the current year Initial Budget [b]) (Report #27) for all cost centers.
8. Workload Detail Trend for **each individual agency** (comparing the prior year Final Budget [a], the current year Data Call plan [b], and the current year Initial Budget plan [c]) (Report #6) for all cost centers.

**Optional:** SP can schedule to view two videos before or during the meeting. The “MPS#2 &3: Approve and Ratify the Initial Budget” and the “Seven Simple Questions” video. To access both, use **CHROME** or **MS-Edge**.

- Internet: [ICASSTRAINING.COM/TRAINING-MPS](https://icasstraining.com/training-mps)

#### Meeting agenda:

- SP explains and discusses the reports.
- SP discusses the Initial Budget, highlighting how priorities established by the ICASS Council at the Final Budget meeting the previous April, and by the Mission in the “[Mission Resource Request](#)” (MRR), are reflected in the Initial Budget. SP may distribute a draft of the Initial Budget invoices for informational purposes (Report #12). Once the budget is approved by the BC and ratified by the IC, invoices are distributed.
- Using the **Seven Simple Questions** as a guide, FMO presents information on the current year Initial Budget. The SP explains the purpose of the “Seven Simple Questions”. The SP then provides information related to each of the questions that is obtained from Report #17 Budget Summary. Discussions include:
  - ICASS targets, non-target funds available for the budget and major cost components of the budget.
  - Major issues impacting management operations, such as inflation, security environment, NECs, etc.
  - Significant cost increases such as customer growth, new contracts, vehicle replacement, etc.
  - ICASS staffing to include increases, decreases, new positions, and impact on budget.
  - Non-target funds, amounts applied in the budget, and amounts held for future requirements.
  - Unfunded Priorities.
  - Cost Saving Initiatives and status of prior year’s Initiatives.
- SP and BC members discuss, modify as needed, and approve the proposed Initial Budget and use of Non-Target Funds.

#### Action Items:

- BC approves the Initial Budget

#### After meeting Action Items:

SP forwards the Initial Budget to the IC for ratification. Agencies review the various documents distributed. Contact the MGT/FMO with any questions. Identify any potential errors and advise MGT/FMO.

## Meeting #3 -- November

### Initial Budget Ratification (ICASS Council)

This meeting is held to ratify the Initial Budget, and is held only after the BC has reviewed and approved the IB.

**Optional:** SP can schedule to view a video called “MPS#2 & 3: Approve and Ratify the Initial Budget” either before or during the meeting. To access, use **CHROME** or **MS-Edge**.

- Internet: [ICASSTRAINING.COM/TRAINING-MPS](https://www.icasstraining.com/training-mps)

#### **Meeting agenda:**

**SP presents a summary report** on the year just ended and discusses the outlook for the year ahead, highlighting the following sections in the Initial Budget Summary:

1. Financial Summary and Key Issues.
2. Budget Funding Summary and Non-Target Funds Applied.
3. Top Unfunded Priorities.
4. Cost Saving Initiatives.

SP and Budget Committee Chair brief the Council on the Budget Committee discussions and decisions from the recent Budget Committee’s detailed review of the Initial Budget.

#### **Action Items:**

- IC ratifies the Initial Budget that has already been approved by the BC.
- FMO reminds agencies that IB invoices will be distributed soon after the meeting, based on approval of initial budget, and that agencies have 10 days to sign/approve. Also explain new de facto process.

#### **After Meeting Action Items:**

- SP distributes Initial Budget invoices with signature sheets (Report #12) to ICASS customer agency representatives for review and approval, and includes information about deadlines, approval process, de facto approvals, and disputes.
- FMO submits the approved Initial Budget to the ICASS Service Center by assigned due date.

## Meeting #4 -- February

### Modification Criteria and Budget Methodology Review (Budget Committee)

The February Budget Committee meeting addresses modifications, budget issues, and provides agencies with the policy on “Withdrawing” from Services.

**The SP distributes electronic copies of the following reports to the ICASS agency representatives/BC at least *two days* before this meeting.** The ICASS software generates these reports using the batch feature.

1. Post’s policy on modifications.
2. Workload Detail (Report #4) which shows existing modifications.
3. Post’s ICASS Service Matrix Detail Report for the current year.
4. Requests for new modifications not currently in post’s Modifications Policy, if any.
5. Budget Analysis Detail (Report #21) that provides Budget Summary by Cost Center for current year including sub-cost centers and Lite post’s activated General Services cost centers.
6. Lite posts: New or changes to up to three proposed Cost Centers in General Services group of services (optional).
7. Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and Subscription of Service documents for the upcoming year for each agency.
8. [6 FAH-5 H-016.5](#) Termination or Withdrawal from Services.

**Optional:** SP can schedule to view a video called “MPS#4: Modification Criteria and Budget Methods” either before or during the meeting. To access, use **CHROME** or **MS-Edge**.

- Internet: [ICASSTRAINING.COM/TRAINING-MPS](https://ICASSTRAINING.COM/TRAINING-MPS)

#### Meeting agenda:

- SP explains and discusses the reports.
- BC reviews post policy on Workload Count Modifications including the criteria for granting modifications, documenting any changes. Any modification policy issues are reviewed and resolved.
- BC reviews existing customer agency modifications shown on the Workload Summary or Service Matrix to assure they are still justified. It then reviews requests for new Workload Count Modifications that are not covered by post’s Modification Policy, if any, and approves or denies requests.
- If applicable, SP presents and discusses post-specific budget methodologies (i.e., sub-cost centers, budgeting by location, etc.) already adopted or under consideration.
- At posts using the Lite method, if applicable, the FMO discusses the option of activating up to three new Cost Centers from the group of General Services Cost Centers used in the Standard method.
- SP introduces/discusses the Subscription of Service document and explains the April 1 deadline for Agencies to notify the SP of intentions to withdraw from services.
- SP provides guidance on withdrawing from services and highlights the deadline of October 1 for submitting withdrawal requests to be effective on April 1.

#### Action Items:

- BC minutes should include:
  - updates to the modification policy;
  - any changes to current Modifications;
  - decisions on new requests for Modifications;
  - any changes in budgeting methodology including Budgeting by Location, Sub-Cost Centers; and
  - the activation of any Standard General Services Cost Centers (up to 3 may be activated) by post if the Lite software method is being used.
- **After meeting action:** BC members must notify the SP of any intention to withdraw from a service by April 1 to become effective on October 1 for the upcoming fiscal year. SP distributes agency MOU and SoS for signature. See guidance in [6 FAH-5 H-211.2 Annual Memorandum of Understanding](#).

## Meeting #5 -- April

### Annual Performance Assessment (ICASS Council)

This meeting is the annual review of the ICASS system at post. The post's Annual Performance Assessment (APA) provides the opportunity for a thorough, collaborative review of ICASS services. See [6 FAH-5 H-222.3-4 Annual Performance Assessment](#). Quality of service provision and customer satisfaction are the responsibility of both the Service Providers and the customer agencies. In this meeting, the ICASS Chair leads a discussion with Council members, including Ex Officio service providers, to discuss and plan the assessment of post's ICASS platform.

#### Resources available to post to conduct the Annual Performance Assessment include:

1. Last year's ICASS Annual Performance Assessment
2. The most recent scores from the annual [Worldwide ICASS Customer Satisfaction Survey](#) and the comments, both positive and negative. Comments are e-mails to the MGT Officer. If not received, email [ICASSServiceCenter@state.gov](mailto:ICASSServiceCenter@state.gov).
3. Reports from the [Management Analytics Portal Landing Page \(msapproxy.net\)](#) to include the satisfaction and performance data that comes from that system.
4. The resources available from the [ICASS SharePoint Data and Metrics page](#) to enable the council and service providers to use management information to guide their decision making as they develop their APA action plan.
  - **Sources:** LE Staffing Analysis, Post Growth Analysis, and other analytical tools.
5. Various reference materials on the ISC SharePoint site [Annual Performance Assessment](#).

**Optional:** To view a very detailed video called "MAP Automated APA Training" click on the link below and then locate and click on "MPS#5: Annual Performance Assessment". The video is approximately 70 minutes long. To access, use **CHROME** or **MS-Edge**.

- Internet: [ICASSTRAINING.COM/TRAINING-MPS](https://www.icasstraining.com/training-mps)

Policy guidance for preparation of the APA can be viewed, along with a sample assessment report, in [6 FAH-5 H-222.3-4 Annual Performance Assessment](#).

#### Action Items:

- Identify the individuals who will review the performance and satisfaction data; develop the action plan using the resources available in the MAP 3.0 and the ICASS SharePoint; and draft the APA.

#### After Meeting Action Items:

- Post may share a draft of the APA with the BC and IC for comments and edits prior to finalization.
- The final APA report must be sent by the ICASS Council Chair, through the DCM, to the Chief of Mission (COM) by July 1. No later than August 1, posts are asked to send a certification via e-mail to [icassservicecenter@state.gov](mailto:icassservicecenter@state.gov); Subject Line: (Post Name) - Certification of Annual Performance Assessment. In the email, post should provide a link to the report posted on the Mission's website. Posts may also email a copy of the APA report to the ISC. (Note: A sample APA is included in [6 FAH-5 Exhibit H-222.3-4](#) and additional examples are available on the ICASS website.)
- It is recommended that the post hold a town hall meeting to report to all customers and service providers the results of the survey, the findings in the Annual Performance Assessment, and any actions recommended. This is also an opportunity to thank everyone who participated in the survey and to address issues raised in survey comments.

## Meeting #6 – May/June

### Final Budget Review (Budget Committee)

This meeting is scheduled after the Final Budget target is released by the ISC. During this meeting, the Budget Committee will conduct an in-depth review of the Final Budget, which includes discussion of any recommended changes incorporated into the budget since the Initial Budget was approved in November of the previous year. The BC-approved Final Budget is presented to the IC for ratification in meeting #7.

**The SP distributes electronic copies of the following reports to the ICASS agency representatives/BC at least two days before this meeting.** The ICASS software generates these reports using the batch feature.

1. [Seven Simple Questions](#) to Ask Your FMO.
2. Budget Summary (Report #17) with all optional report sections, including Cost Savings initiatives.
3. ICASS Data Summary (Report #13).
4. Cost Center Detail by Agency (Report #11) for all cost centers and all agencies grouped by cost center.
5. Agency Invoice Trend (Report #16). Prepared at the final budget stage and shows the prior year final invoice by agency, with the current year Initial and Final budget invoice amounts.
6. Budget Summary by Cost Center Comparison for all cost centers (comparing Initial Budget [a] to Final Budget [b]) (Report #27).
7. Workload Detail Trend for **all agencies** (trend report listing the Data Call plan [a], Initial Budget plan[b], and Final Budget [c]) (Report #6) for all cost centers.
8. Workload Detail Trend for **each individual agency** (trend report listing the Data Call plan [a], Initial Budget plan [b], and Final Budget [c]) (Report #6) for all cost centers shall be run for each individual agency.

**Optional:** SP can schedule to view either before or during the meeting two videos. One named “MPS#6 and &: Approve and Ratify the Final Budget” and the other is “Seven Simple Questions”. To access, use **CHROME or MS-Edge**.

- Internet: [ICASSTRAINING.COM/TRAINING-MPS](https://ICASSTRAINING.COM/TRAINING-MPS)

#### Meeting agenda:

- SP explains and discusses the reports and responds to any questions.
- Using the **Seven Simple Questions** as a guide, the FMO presents the current fiscal year Final Budget to BC for discussion.
- SP explains significant increases or decreases and changes in Final Budget compared to the Initial Budget.
- SP reviews and explains post budget targets, noting any significant changes since the Initial Budget.
- SP and BC members discuss, modify as needed, and arrive at consensus to approve the proposed Final Budget and use of Non-Target Funds (formerly called “Available Funds”). Changes to the amount of non-target funds available should be noted.
- SP explains any changes in workload counts from those included in the Initial Budget. This is especially important for changes related to post growth in the current fiscal year.
- SP may distribute draft copies of the Final Budget invoices for informational purposes only (Report #12). Once the budget is approved by the BC and ratified by the IC, final invoices are distributed.

#### Action Items:

- BC approves the Final Budget.
- SP forwards the Final Budget to the IC for ratification.

## Meeting #7 – May/June

### Final Budget Ratification & Setting Priorities for the Year Ahead (ICASS Council)

This meeting has two parts that can be addressed in one meeting or in two. The first part is the ratification of the Final Budget. The second part is a focus on setting priorities for ICASS for the next fiscal year. The meeting on Final Budget ratification must be scheduled early enough to allow **at least 10 working days** for agencies to review and approve their invoices prior to post's budget submission to the ISC.

**Optional:** SP can schedule to view either before or during the meeting a video named "MPS#6 and 7: Approve and Ratify the Final Budget". To access, use **CHROME or MS-Edge**.

- Internet: [ICASSTRAINING.COM/TRAINING-MPS](https://ICASSTRAINING.COM/TRAINING-MPS)

#### Part #1 – Final Budget Ratification

- The Budget Committee Chair along with the FMO present the findings of the recent Budget Committee meeting that examined and approved the Final Budget, highlighting changes in unfunded priorities, use of Non-Target Funds (formerly called "Available Funds"), Cost Saving Initiatives, and other important budget items from the Initial to the Final Budget.
- SP presents to Council a summary report of the current status of ICASS and the outlook for the remainder of the year.

**Action Item for Part #1:** IC ratifies the Final Budget approved by the Budget Committee.

#### After-Meeting Action Items Part #1:

- SP distributes Final Budget invoices with signature sheets (Report #12) to ICASS customer agency representatives for review and approval.
  - Agency representatives must **sign and return** the signature sheet of the Final Budget Invoice **within 10 working days** from date distributed.
  - Any disputes regarding final invoices must be **resolved** in accordance with the guidance in [6 FAH-5 H-462.2](#), "Disputes Regarding Post Invoices."
- FMO submits ratified Final Budget to ISC by due date, detailing invoice totals and agency approvals. Built into the ICASS software is the Summary of Signed Invoices Worksheet that identifies the amount of each agency invoice and the approval status.

#### Part #2 – Setting Priorities for the Year Ahead

As planning begins on the ICASS budget requirements for the coming fiscal year, the SP briefs the Council on the budget climate, how post is likely to fare in the coming fiscal year Initial Budget process and any major issues that will have an impact on ICASS in the coming fiscal year. The briefing should focus on:

- **Top Priorities:** SP seeks Council concurrence on post's top unfunded priorities for the coming fiscal year, outlining the potential impact on post operations if these requirements are not funded.
- **Use of Non-Target Funds** (previously called "Available Funds"): SP presents the projected non-target funds for the upcoming fiscal year, including any fenced funding.
- **Cost Saving Initiatives:** SP and Council review suggestions for new Cost Saving Initiatives for next fiscal year and rank them in priority order.
- **Issues:** SP outlines and, as appropriate, seeks concurrence on major changes ahead: new ICASS positions, additional space requirements, NEC planning, expected changes in the post's customer base, the impact on customer invoices, and any other expected alterations to the current ICASS platform. The SP reviews the resource implications from the recent Annual Performance Assessment recommendations to improve the ICASS service platform.

#### Action Items for Part #2:

- IC and SP reach agreement on ICASS priorities for upcoming year.
- If applicable, IC Chair provides the BC with a list of items that need further review or action.



## Meeting #8 – June

### Workload Counts and Time Allocation Review (Budget Committee)

At this meeting, the Budget Committee reviews the process for validation of workload counts and time allocation, the building blocks for the upcoming fiscal year’s ICASS budget, and Agency invoices.

On or about June 1, the **Service Provider distributes to the Budget Committee** the May 1 workload count and time allocation reports for the upcoming fiscal year.

**The SP distributes electronic copies of the following reports to the ICASS agency representatives at least two days in advance of the meeting include.** The ICASS software reports are generated using the batch feature. These zipped documents are e-mailed to agency representative.

1. Time Allocation: USDH (Report #1) all locations grouped by section number.
2. Time Allocation: LE Staff (Report #2) all locations grouped by section number.
3. Time Allocation: DS LE Staff (Report #3) all locations grouped by section number.
4. Workload Detail (Report #4) all cost centers for all agencies.
5. Workload Summary (Report #5) all cost centers.
6. The Workload Detail Trend for **each individual agency** (comparing the workload from the prior year Final Budget [a], the current year Final Budget [b], and next year’s Data Call plan [c]) (Report #6) for all cost centers.
7. Agency ICASS Workload Approval Form for each individual agency.

**Optional:** SP can schedule to view a video called “MPS#\*: Workload Count and Time Allocation Review” either before or during the meeting. A new video named “MPS#8: To access, use **CHROME** or **MS-EDGE**.

- Internet: [ICASSTRAINING.COM/TRAINING-MPS](https://ICASSTRAINING.COM/TRAINING-MPS)

#### Meeting agenda:

- SP explains **workload counts** and how they are used to calculate agency invoices; SP explains major changes and their potential impact on the budget and agency invoices. SP outlines new features for the next fiscal year.
- SP explains the significance of employee **time allocation** in determining the cost of a service; SP explains major changes, if any, in time allocation and their impact on invoices and the budget.

#### Action Items:

- BC members review their agency **workload counts**. BC members must resolve any workload count disputes with Service Providers and return their signed Workload Approval form to the Service Provider **within 30 calendar days** from date distributed; (see [6 FAH-5 H-462.1](#) “Disputes Regarding Workload Counts and Time Allocations”).
- BC members review and approve the ICASS employees’ (USDH and LE Staff) **time allocation**. Address any questions to the FMO. Approval of time allocation is assumed with the agencies signed approval of workload counts. No separate signature is required to approve these reports.