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ADS Chapter 555

Congressional Delegations

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POC for ADS 555: Sonali Korde, skorde@usaid.gov

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ADS Chapter 555: Congressional Delegations

555.1 OVERVIEW

Effective Date: 10/24/2017

This chapter establishes the policies and procedures to effectively coordinate and increase the impact of visits to Post by congressional Member delegations (CODELs), congressional staff delegations (STAFFDELS), or congressional delegations funded by entities other than the U.S. Government (commonly called NODELs), to ensure productive engagement and follow-up about USAID programs. Throughout this ADS chapter, the term “congressional delegation” will represent all forms of congressional travel, including CODELs, STAFFDELS, and NODELs unless otherwise indicated.

555.2 PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES

Effective Date: 10/24/2017

- a. The **Bureau for Legislative and Public Affairs (LPA)** is responsible for:
 - Coordinating pre-departure communications between the congressional delegation and USAID Mission staff;
 - Providing contextual information to USAID Missions on congressional delegations and their interests; and
 - Notifying Bureaus/Missions of relevant congressional delegations.
- b. The **USAID Mission in the country visited by the congressional delegation** is responsible for:
 - Notifying LPA and relevant regional Bureaus of forthcoming congressional delegations;
 - Contributing to the organizing and planning of the visit according to the objectives and requests of the visitor(s);
 - Following up with LPA after the congressional delegation departs;
 - Coordinating with technical Bureaus or Offices, as appropriate; and
 - Managing overtime costs for Mission staff who support visits.
- c. The **USAID Senior Development Advisor** at a Combatant Command visited by a congressional delegation is responsible for:

- Notifying LPA and relevant regional Bureaus of forthcoming congressional delegations;
- Contributing to the organizing and planning of the visit, in conjunction with Department of Defense staff, according to the objectives and requests of the visitor(s); and
- Following up with LPA after the congressional delegation departs.

555.3 POLICY DIRECTIVES AND REQUIRED PROCEDURES

555.3.1 Communications Between Missions and Congressional Delegations

Effective Date: 10/24/2017

The Bureau for Legislative and Public Affairs (LPA) clears on and must be copied on all outgoing communications to congressional staff regarding details of visits by a congressional delegation. Mission staff assigned to serve as the official Control Officer for the congressional delegation may have additional communication in the course of fulfilling such duties (see **555.3.5**).

To assist Missions in their communication with congressional delegations once in country, LPA should provide contextual information on the congressional delegation and their interests. This may include biographic information, topline messages on key initiatives, strategic guidance for communicating with key members and staff, and input on potential site visits. This information should be provided in writing or verbally (through pre-brief calls) in advance of the congressional delegation.

555.3.2 Preparation and Communication Between Missions and Headquarters

Effective Date: 10/24/2017

USAID Missions, Bureaus, and/or Offices must ensure that LPA is notified, in writing or verbally, of all congressional delegations that may visit a country receiving USAID assistance at the earliest opportunity prior to the dates of travel. When LPA becomes aware of a congressional delegation, LPA must:

- Ensure the relevant country desk and Bureau contacts are aware of the visit,
- Notify and facilitate coordination with the Mission(s), and
- Offer the assistance outlined in **555.3.1**.

The Mission will designate a point of contact to coordinate with LPA and the corresponding regional Bureau in Washington.

Congressional travel is classified as “sensitive but unclassified” information and United States Government (USG) employees are expected to use SBU protocols when communicating information concerning congressional travel and to keep its transmission limited to those individuals with a “need to know.”

555.3.3 Advance Materials for Congressional Delegations

Effective Date: 10/24/2017

LPA will coordinate with the desk and Mission to gather program and country information for congressional delegations before their departure, either through briefings or written materials. Such material could include country program overviews and descriptions of key projects. LPA will also offer to work with the congressional delegation and the visit control officer to provide additional background or advocate for site visits and meetings that have been proposed and/or cleared by the Mission. LPA will share relevant information garnered from these communications with the USAID Mission and corresponding regional Bureau prior to the delegation’s departure.

555.3.4 Report on Visit

Effective Date: 10/24/2017

As soon as practicable, upon the departure of the visiting congressional delegation that has engaged with USAID personnel or activities, the USAID Mission must provide a written summary to the LPA Congressional Liaison Officer that summarizes the visit and communicates relevant and specific information about the visit. Such reports should include the activities of the congressional delegation during the visit, any comments or questions by the congressional delegation that require follow-up, projects that appeared to capture the congressional delegation’s interest, and any other relevant information such as Embassy cables reporting on the visit.

555.3.5 Control Officer Duties

Effective Date: 10/24/2017

USAID Mission staff may serve as the official Control Officer for a congressional delegation, and therefore, may have additional duties. These obligations will include developing a schedule based upon the objectives and specific desires and requests of the visitors.

Expenses for travel, per diem, and related costs for congressional delegations traveling abroad on official business are funded under the provisions of Section 22 (see [22 USC 1754](#)) of Public Law 95-384 (International Security Assistance Act of 1978, signed into law September 26, 1978) governing the use of foreign currency and pertinent sections of other federal statutes. Control Officers,

however, must coordinate with the Department of State embassy budget and fiscal officers for the payment of per diem and within-country expenses for congressional delegations in accordance with instructions and guidance from the Department of State.

Expenses for Mission staff overtime that support visits must be addressed by the Mission and corresponding regional Bureau in Washington.

555.4 MANDATORY REFERENCES

555.4.1 External Mandatory References

Effective Date: 10/24/2017

- a. [4 FAM 468, Congressional Travel](#)
- b. [Section 22 \(22 USC 1754\) of Public Law 95-384 \(International Security Assistance Act of 1978, signed into law September 26, 1978\)](#)

555.4.2 Internal Mandatory References

Effective Date: 10/24/2017

There are no Internal Mandatory References for this chapter.

555.5 ADDITIONAL HELP

Effective Date: 10/24/2017

There are no Additional Help documents for this chapter.

555.6 DEFINITIONS

Effective Date: 10/24/2017

See the [ADS Glossary](#) for all ADS terms and definitions.

Congressional Delegation (CODEL)

A congressional delegation is an official visit abroad taken by a member or members of the United States Congress or by Congressional staff. (**Chapter 555**)

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