



**USAID**  
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## ADS Chapter 108

### USAID Policy in Response to Fallen Colleagues

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**POCs for ADS 108: See [ADS 501maa, ADS Chapters and Point of Contact List](#)**

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## ADS 108 - USAID Policy in Response to Fallen Colleagues

### 108.1 OVERVIEW

Effective Date: 11/08/2024

This chapter provides guidance on how the Agency responds to incidents where personnel have died, or have been killed while on assignment and/or working on behalf of USAID. This includes deaths in the line of duty, and those not considered in the line of duty. The term “personnel” includes all categories of direct hire employees and personal services contractors (PSCs) of USAID [to include the Office of Inspector General (OIG)], including Cooperating Country National PSC (CCNPSC) staff, Foreign Service Nationals (FSNs) direct hire, Third Country National PSC (TCNPSC) staff, and U.S. PSCs whether locally engaged or offshore. It applies to staff overseas as well as those working on behalf of USAID in the United States or in travel/transit.

This chapter may apply in part to institutional support contractors (ISCs) on a case-by-case basis. When such staff members have died, the impacted Bureau/Independent Office/Mission (B/IO/M) must contact the cognizant Contracting Officer (CO) within the Bureau for Management, Office of Acquisitions and Assistance (M/OAA), and the Office of the General Counsel or Resident Legal Officer (GC/RLO), to determine legal authorities or restrictions.

### 108.2 PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES

Effective Date: 11/08/2024

- a. The **Office of the Executive Secretariat (ES)** is responsible for:
  - Establishing a whole-of-Agency response to the death of USAID staff and communicating effectively during a response to all internal and external stakeholders, support staff, those communicating with the family of the deceased, and interagency;
  - Coordinating the flow of information to/from the Office of the Administrator (AID/A) and assisting in the tasking of key requirements.
  - Providing casualty response training initiatives to Agency stakeholders.
- b. The **USAID Command Center (USAID/CC)** is the first contact point for all deaths reported by the B/IO/M. This includes all deaths abroad and in the United States. The Command Center must receive all initial notifications of an employee’s death at the onset.
- c. **Regional Bureaus** and **Pillar Bureaus** are responsible for assisting and responding to the event when the deceased includes staff assigned to them. B/IO/M leadership and operational points of contact (POCs) (i.e., office director, AMS) are expected to participate in the response.

- d. The **Bureau for Management (M Bureau)** is responsible for:
- Coordinating logistical support,
  - Tasking response measures within the affected bureau in USAID/Washington (USAID/W) or the mission,
  - Assisting with casualty response training initiatives, and
  - Reporting safety issues if related to the cause of death.

If the fallen colleague is a PSC, the cognizant CO and supervisor must follow the terms of contract that govern in the event of the contractor's death, including emergency locator information, and the complementary policies and procedures of this chapter. Additionally, if the fallen colleague is an ISC, the Bureau for Management, Office of Acquisition and Assistance (M/OAA), including the cognizant CO and GC/RLO, must be informed and consulted on applying applicable portions of this policy. The program manager of the ISC contract and the Contracting Officer's Representative (COR) should also be informed.

e. The **Bureau for Legislative and Public Affairs (LPA)** provides assistance when necessary, including but not limited to staging a Memorial Table in the 14th Street lobby when a staff member is Killed in Action (KIA), assist B/IO/M and pillar bureaus with supplies needed for staging memorial tables in regional B/IO space, communicate clear, accurate, and appropriate messaging to Congress surrounding the circumstances of the event, and to address congressional and media inquiries. The LPA internal communications team also plays a key role in coordinating the fallen colleagues' USAID ceremonies, remembrance activities, and additions to the memorial wall.

f. The **Office of Human Capital and Talent Management (HCTM)** coordinates alongside ES, and the mission and/or bureau to identify and review the benefits and services afforded to the Next of Kin (NOK) through HCTM's Human Capital Services Center, Employee Services and Benefits Team (HCTM/HCSC/ESB).

g. The **Office of Human Capital and Talent Management (HCTM), Staff Care Center (HCTM/SCC)** provides critical psychosocial assistance, counseling, and other services to the victim's family, co-workers, and staff across the Agency. The Staff Care Center is also able to provide support for those affected at the mission or USAID/W.

h. The **Office of the General Council (GC)** is responsible for providing legal oversight and guidance to Casualty Response Task Team (CRTT) members throughout the response, ensuring the Agency's equities are protected without liability implications.

i. The **Office of Security (SEC)** is responsible for leading the Command Center unit responsible for providing 24/7 coverage on incident reporting from USAID/W and

missions on staff deaths, or illnesses that may result in death. This includes staff members of all hiring mechanisms, both overseas and domestic.

**j. Missions** are responsible for establishing and implementing a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) to respond to fallen colleague incidents at the singular and mass scale. Missions will use this ADS chapter and other resources available from ES and M/OMD to develop and implement their SOP. Missions are to seek guidance from ES to help prepare and train for fallen colleague incidents.

**k. The Agency Counselor (C/AID)** is responsible for issuing Executive Notices announcing a staff member's death to the USAID workforce. This includes deaths across all staffing mechanisms, both overseas and domestic.

**l. The Casualty Response Task Team (CRTT)** is a dedicated group of USAID employees from key B/IOs, and impacted Missions (when applicable) assigned to support and coordinate the Agency response under the direction of the Fallen Colleague Response Director (FCRD), who is housed in ES.

### **108.3 POLICY DIRECTIVES AND REQUIRED PROCEDURES**

#### **108.3.1 Establishing a Casualty Response Task Team**

Effective Date: 11/08/2024

Upon notification that a USAID staff member has died, ES must convene the CRTT chaired by the FCRD. The CRTT must:

- Designate roles and responsibilities across the task team,
- Communicate critical information up/down the chain and coordinate the necessary actions with the impacted B/IO/M's and the interagency, when applicable, to ensure a complete and effective response;
- Support the family of the fallen colleague(s); and
- Support staff at the impacted B/IO/M.

##### **108.3.1.1 Composition**

Effective Date: 11/08/2024

The CRTT accounts for all critical stakeholders while maintaining a size that ensures discretion, speed, and effective communication. Depending on the impact and scope of the incident, the size and duration of the CRTT will vary at the discretion of ES, and multiple POCs will coordinate on different issues and actions.

Based on the scope of the response, the CRTT is generally composed of the following representatives, or their designate:

**Agency:**

- ES;
- Office of the Administrator (AID/A) and C/AID;
- AID/A Representative and/or Advisor(s);
- AID/A Speechwriter;
- A Representative from the Bureau for Management, Office of Management Services (M/MS), and the Bureau for Management, Office of Acquisition and Assistance (M/OAA), as appropriate;
- HCTM Representative (HCTM Lead);
- Staff Care Representative;
- Director of SEC and Command Center;
- GC Representative;
- LPA Representative; and
- Internal Communications Team Representative (LPA).

**Bureau/Independent Offices:**

- Bureau Assistant Administrator (AA) or designee (regional and/or pillar);
- Regional Bureau Administrative Management Services (AMS) Office Director;
- Mission Director and Executive Officer (EXO), or designee;
- Bureau sub-Regional Office Director; and

- RLO.

**The CRTT members may also include:**

- HCTM/HCSC/ESB Representative, if the employee is a direct hire;
- Chief of Staff or Deputy Chief of Staff;
- Bureau for Legislative and Public Affairs, Legislative Affairs (LPA/LEG) Representative;
- Press Officer (LPA);
- Contracting Officers (COs) in instances involving a PSC or ISC;
- Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (BHA); and
- Office of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (DEIA) Representative.

**108.3.1.2 Roles, Responsibilities, and Checklists**

Effective Date: 11/08/2024

The first line action for ES is to assign roles and responsibilities for respective members. CRTT activities are governed by a set of checklists that guide response to an incident. The checklists correspond to the respective members who make up the CRTT and are updated to reflect changes in approach, needs, and training. The checklists are a guide—not an exhaustive list—of actions that should be taken and of requirements that must be met when addressing each incident (see [ADS 108maa, Fallen Colleague Response Checklists and Resources](#)).

[ADS 108maa](#) guides the respective members through the checklist to assign roles and responsibilities. CRTT members utilize their respective staff to take on some of these actions. Clear accountability and reporting is a critical component to the CRTT's success.

**108.3.1.3 Point of Contact (POC) with NOK**

Effective Date: 11/08/2024

It is critical to identify a primary POC for the fallen colleague's NOK at the onset. Given the emotional trauma involved, it is important that only one individual in the Agency engages with the NOK. This will assure communications are streamlined, and mitigate mixed messaging. ES, in coordination with the impacted B/IO/M, must identify a POC for the NOK during this period.



Separately, for direct hire employees, ESB must engage with the NOK as soon as possible after ES has convened the CRTT, and only after the NOK has received formal notification of the death. HCTM/PPIM will assist on offboarding.

For a PSC by regulation, the contractor's emergency locator information will contain NOK information for a USPSC, but not necessarily for a CCN or TCN PSC. For ISCs, the employer should have the contact information for NOK on file and is responsible for discussing with the NOK regarding different phases of the response (i.e., repatriation of the fallen colleague, travel with the family, etc.).

With permission from NOK, the CRTT must determine as a group who will accompany the family at different phases of the response (i.e., accompanying the fallen colleague on movements, in particular but not limited to repatriation to the Continental United States [CONUS], traveling with the family to the airport where the fallen colleague will be repatriated, accompanying the family to the memorial service, etc.) (see [Executive Secretariat \(ES\)—Checklist for Escorting a Fallen Colleague](#) on escorting fallen colleagues for movements).

### **108.3.2 Managing the Casualty Response Task Force**

#### **108.3.2.1 Coordination with the Department of State's Office of Casualty Assistance (OCA)**

Effective Date: 11/08/2024

Following an incident, the FCRD must immediately contact the State Department's Office of Casualty Assistance (OCA). OCA serves as a conduit to the State Department's resources and as an advisor to USAID on all matters related to responding to a fallen colleague on deaths overseas and in the United States from the beginning of the response to its conclusion.

#### **108.3.2.2 Internal Communications**

Effective Date: 11/08/2024

To ensure effective and rapid lines of communication, the CRTT must establish:

- **A Casualty Response Task Team Listserv** for centralized updates with POCs. The ES Fallen Colleagues ListServ for large scale responses is **fallencolleagues@usaid.gov**.
- **Set Check-In Meeting Cadence:** The CRTT must schedule and designate a time for CRTT meetings, as required. These meetings serve as an opportunity for CRTT members to review progress, identify new action items, and pool resources to resolve outstanding challenges.

- **An Action Log:** The CRTT must maintain an action log, provided by the FCRD, that triages and tracks all actions taken at the onset of the response until the conclusion of the immediate phase. All CRTT members must update the action log on a daily basis.

### **108.3.2.3 Liaising with the Front Office**

Effective Date: 11/08/2024

Once notified of a death, the FCRD must immediately inform A/AID and Regional Bureau leadership of the death via a Situational Report (SITREP). The FCRD must provide daily/recurring updates to the Administrator unless otherwise directed. Major obstacles or areas where the Agency's senior leadership can assist the CRTT should be highlighted.

### **108.3.3 Initial Engagement and Coordination with Key Stakeholders**

#### **108.3.3.1 Initial Phone Calls with Family**

Effective Date: 11/08/2024

Upon notification that an Agency staff member has died, the CRTT must coordinate with the impacted B/IO or post, HCTM, and A/AID to place an initial call from a designated official to the family. At a later time and if appropriate, the CRTT must coordinate with A/AID and arrange a call from the Administrator to the family.

#### **108.3.3.2 Establishing and Managing Contact with the Family**

Effective Date: 11/08/2024

The Agency POC for the family must consider the following (this list includes common themes and is not exhaustive):

#### **Information To Convey**

- Explaining the role of the POC to the family;
- Explaining circumstances of the death or latest updates;
- Providing information for designated Staff Care POC, if not on the line;
- Provide contact information to the family and agree on communication modes/times;
- Determine if NOK wishes for any other family members/friends to be included in informational and decision-making conversations; and

- Communicate to the family that the Agency has established guidelines and protocol in place to respond to deaths of staff members in the line of duty; however, consideration will be given to the wishes of the family if they differ from protocol.

### **108.3.3.3 Providing Support Services**

Effective Date: 11/08/2024

The CRTT must immediately convey to the family the availability of applicable support services through USAID's Staff Care Program. The Staff Care representative (one of USAID's direct hire clinical social workers) on the CRTT must work with the Staff Care Program to mobilize support for the family by:

- Ensuring family members know what services Staff Care provides in the immediate, short-term, and long-term; examples include support for children, surviving partners, parents, siblings, etc.;
- Communicating the availability of individual consultations, if requested by family members; and
- Being present for memorials, gatherings, etc., as requested.

### **108.3.3.4 Collecting and Presenting Benefit Options**

Effective Date: 11/08/2024

Upon mobilization of the CRTT, for a direct hire employee, ES and HCTM/HCSC/ESB must determine a sole ESB representative (if direct hire), or benefits POC specific to the fallen colleague's staffing mechanism (the POC will be an EXO for a direct hire FSN, or cognizant CO for a PSC of any type) to immediately gather all information related to the applicable benefits afforded to the family and NOK. For ISCs, the employer is responsible for following its policies in regards to benefits.

The benefits POC must ensure that the applicable benefits are reviewed and prepared for the family within 24 hours. The benefits POC should be prepared to discuss death benefits, life insurance, assistance for funeral arrangements, among actions that are and are not listed.

## **108.3.4 Engaging Agency Staff**

### **108.3.4.1 Providing Support and Counseling Services**

Effective Date: 11/08/2024

In recognition of the trauma and grief that will befall members of the Agency's workforce, the Staff Care Center should immediately communicate the Agency's methods of support for their well-being and advise them of the wealth of services available through the Staff Care Program.

The Staff Care representative(s) should be prepared to mobilize this support through:

- Providing materials and/or telephone/on-line support to promote healthy coping after this sudden loss;
- Providing Agency, Mission, and Bureau leadership with assistance in crafting communications with surviving family members, at internal and external Agency gatherings, or in other interactions;
- Offering virtual emotional support group or individual sessions for impacted staff in the short- or long-term;
- Developing and providing written educational materials for distribution to staff;
- Providing customized referrals to service providers for all members of the workforce, regardless of hiring category, and their Eligible Family Members (EFMs) on a range of life event matters to include legal services, estate planning, etc.;
- Providing help navigating the [Staff Care Program Web site](#), as it offers a wealth of helpful information; and
- Ensuring appropriate Staff Care support is available to all CRTT members.

#### **108.3.4.2 Communicating with Mission Staff**

Effective Date: 11/08/2024

HCTM Staff Care and the relevant Bureau AAs will coordinate Staff Care services for the field. This may include supplementing the field with local clinician services in certain cases.

#### **108.3.4.3 Agency Notice**

Effective Date: 11/08/2024

The impacted B/IO/M representatives must work with the Regional Bureau to draft the Executive Message recognizing the loss of the fallen colleague. Once the NOK are

formally notified of the death, the C/AID must inform the workforce via issuing the Executive Message as soon as possible.

Before the message is published, the NOK must be given the opportunity to have a final review of the Executive Message, via their primary USAID POC, to ensure details are captured accurately and to the family's wishes.

#### **108.3.4.4 Capturing Ceremonies or Memorials at Post**

Effective Date: 11/08/2024

To the extent possible, the Mission/Bureau should capture memorial ceremonies via video, photography, and/or audio recordings in CONUS and Outside the Continental United States (OCONUS). The Mission, Bureau, and/or LPA will compile the stories, statements, and reflections offered during these services and pass them on to the NOK.

#### **108.3.5 Engaging Interagency, Congressional, and Media Stakeholders**

##### **108.3.5.1 Outreach to the Interagency**

Effective Date: 11/08/2024

There are a number of critical interagency stakeholders that may be engaged early on:

- **Department of Defense (DOD):** To assist with the transport, tracking, and processing of the fallen colleagues' remains if, in limited cases, Military air transport (MILAIR) is utilized. M/MS and the Bureau for Conflict Prevention and Stabilization (CPS) must coordinate outreach if military assets are needed for repatriation actions.
- **Department of Justice (DOJ) and/or the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI):** To assist in cases involving acts of terrorism, violence, or other criminal acts requiring DoJ involvement.
- **Department of State (State):** In addition to OCA, updating individuals on security and Staff Care issues in the relevant regional and/or technical Bureau(s).
- **National Security Council:** To ensure clear communication with relevant regional directors and to facilitate a submission of request for a President of the United States (POTUS) condolence letter.

FCRD will bridge and coordinate outreach. Depending upon the specifics of the fallen colleague's country and portfolio of work, the CRTT should conduct outreach accordingly to other agencies where the fallen colleague worked to offer them opportunities to sign the condolence books and attend memorial services. Additionally, the CRTT should include USAID SEC and the Bureau for Management, Office of

Management Services, Overseas Management Division (M/MS/OMD) for coordination efforts with DoJ and the FBI.

### **108.3.5.2 Briefing Congressional Staff**

Effective Date: 11/08/2024

The CRTT/LPA/LEG representative is responsible for working with ES to gather all the necessary information for congressional outreach. This may include proactively reaching out to congressional offices with constituent or regional interest where the incident occurred and/or fielding congressional inquiries on the incident. These duties include, but are not limited to, briefings on the incident and Agency response, facilitation of condolence letters to the family, Congressional attendance at memorial ceremonies or for repatriation arrival, and any required follow-up.

The POC should inform the NOK of any Congressional wishes to attend memorial services or conduct outreach as early as possible.

### **108.3.6 Coordinating and Tracking the Return and Burial of Remains**

#### **108.3.6.1 Initiating Contact with Relevant Interagency Contacts**

Effective Date: 11/08/2024

One of the most important functions of the CRTT is to actively track the transportation of the fallen colleague's remains and provide advanced notice to the family and USAID senior leadership regarding arrival times to ensure timely attendance for the fallen colleague's return. To effectively track transportation movements, the M/MS representative must engage contacts at both the headquarters and field levels. Generally, commercial air is the preferred means to manage transportation of the body. MILAIR is a secondary option in limited cases, including an act of terrorism, a death occurring in an area of war operations, or where natural disasters have rendered commercial air use inoperable.

At the headquarters level, ES can make the following contacts to facilitate the transportation and arrival of the fallen colleague's remains:

- **U.S. Transportation Command:** USTRANSCOM can assist by tracking the scheduled flight departure and arrival times, as well as providing real-time updates on delays or changes. M/MS will coordinate with CPS if MilAir is used.
- **Air Force Mortuary Affairs Operations:** The key team to contact at the receiving Air Force Base is the Mortuary Affairs Operations. They will be able to provide details on mortuary services and assist with any specific preferences or requests from the family and NOK. In addition, they will be able to confirm flight arrival times.

- **State Department Operations Center:** The Senior Watch Officer State Operations Center (OPS) should sync with their counterparts at the USAID Command Center.

At the field level, staff at post must handle the logistics of transporting the remains. The following contacts can be helpful in confirming the flight details and departure of the fallen colleague's remains:

- **Theater Mortuary Affairs Officer:** In the case that the fallen colleague is killed in an active military theater, the Theater Mortuary Affairs Officer is responsible for handling the preparation of the remains for transportation and will be able to provide confirmation on departure details.
- **Embassy and Mission Staff:** As the individuals responsible for facilitating the departure of the fallen colleague's remains, Embassy and Mission staff must coordinate with the CRTT to ensure clear communication on the transportation logistics.

#### **108.3.6.2 Return of Employee Remains to U.S. Soil**

Effective Date: 11/08/2024

When return to the United States is necessary, the CRTT must ensure immediate and smooth transport of the fallen colleague's remains. If military transport is warranted, ES, the M/MS representative, and CPS must engage with DoD and Mission/post where the incident occurred to facilitate MILAIR support. The [Department of Defense Instruction \(DoDI\) 4515.13](#) regarding civilian transport on a military aircraft is available for guidance and direction.

Once approvals are received, the M/MS or Mission representative must ensure real-time tracking of the remains and brief the CRTT on any changes in arrival times, to facilitate participation from the family and USAID senior leadership in the Fallen Colleague Ceremony at the arrival location.

#### **108.3.6.3 Expediting Logistics for Transport of the Remains**

Effective Date: 11/08/2024

The nature of the incident and hiring mechanism will determine the scope of logistical operations if the fallen colleague will be repatriated to CONUS.

In cases where the fallen colleague is to be repatriated to the United States, ES must work with the impacted Mission via the EXO and M/MS leadership on communicating with relevant interagency stakeholders to expedite the return. M/MS must further engage with the EXO at post, cognizant CO for a PSC, employer for ISCs, and any additional involved parties regarding the logistical aspects of the repatriation at origin and destination. Commercial air should be utilized for the method to transport remains.

The logistical coordinator(s) must make every attempt to expedite arrangements. The POC to the NOK must flag related to specifications (ceremonial rights/preparations) and/or requests from the family regarding the preparation of the remains for processing, autopsy, and/or burial, to include any religious practices as best as possible.

Should the incident occur in an unsafe environment (disaster zone, theater of war, or when commercial air is not a viable option, use of MilAir) the CRTT will facilitate support. In instances where DOD transport is used, the [Department of Defense Instruction \(DoDI\) 4515.13](#), regarding civilian transport on MILAIR, is available for guidance purposes (see section **108.3.6.1**).

### **108.3.6.3 Agency Representation at the Fallen Colleague Return Ceremony** Effective Date: 11/08/2024

A combination of USAID senior leadership, Bureau leadership, and staff will need to be considered for representation at a Fallen Colleague Ceremony at the identified arrival location. The CRTT and the Administrator's Office must determine the size and composition of the Agency delegation. Recommended representatives include:

- Administrator, Deputy Administrator, or Agency Counselor;
- Bureau AA;
- CRTT POC for the family and NOK; and
- M/MS Logistical Coordinator.

### **108.3.6.4 Assisting with Transport of the Remains and/or Family to Final Burial Site** Effective Date: 11/08/2024

The impacted B/IO/Mission must support the family by managing and funding the transportation of the fallen colleague from the arrival location to the final location for release to the family. United States Government (USG)-funded movements include but are not limited to: all shipping and handling costs, customs clearance fees, preparation of the remains, and cremation (if applicable). USG chain of custody and funding concludes once handover to the family is complete.

Interagency partners are also able to assist in the transportation of the remains, dependent upon their role in the particular case.

If the final burial site is overseas, the Agency is also able to provide support to the family through various means. The Agency will upon request purchase airfare for the family to travel to the final burial site through the Administrator's discretionary account.



The Mission and/or Embassy can facilitate the expedition of the fallen colleague's remains through the host country's customs and immigrations process, as well as meet the family upon their arrival in country.

### **108.3.7 Managing Outreach and Institutional Measures**

#### **108.3.7.1 Condolence Letters**

Effective Date: 11/08/2024

ES is responsible for coordinating the formal tasking and transmittal of the condolence letter on behalf of the Administrator. The ES representative is also responsible for coordinating with colleagues at the State Department and the National Security Staff for letters from the Secretary of State and President of the United States, if applicable.

The Regional Bureau, with input from impacted Mission if the death occurred overseas, must draft the condolence letter from the Administrator and send it to LPA Speechwriters for final editing and clearance. In the case where the President of the United States and/or Secretary of State are transmitting letters of condolence to the family and NOK, the ES representative must ensure that the Administrator's letter is delivered after the previous two, in accordance with proper protocol.

#### **108.3.7.2 Submission of Request to Lower Flags**

Effective Date: 11/08/2024

As a sign of respect in honoring the fallen colleague if killed in the line of duty, the CRTT must work with M/MS' Headquarters Management Division (HMD) to organize the lowering of the Agency and U.S. flag. The Civilian Service Recognition Act (see [Public Law 112-73](#)) authorizes an agency to furnish a United States flag on behalf of employees who die of injuries incurred in connection with their employment under specified circumstances. An agency may give a beneficiary a flag to recognize a federal civilian employee who loses their life under certain conditions while serving the public.

- **USAID Headquarters at the Ronald Reagan Building (RRB):** The Division Chief, M/MS/HMD is tasked with submitting a formal request to the General Services Administration (GSA) to lower the flags at RRB and the UA. Since the RRB and International Trade Center is a GSA-owned facility, GSA controls the Agency and U.S. flags at headquarters. In addition to the lowering of the flags, M/MS/HMD must request that the flag pole banners on the corresponding flagpoles be removed. ES and LPA will coordinate any video taping and/or photographs taken of the lowering of the flags. The period of time during which the flags will be lowered can be negotiated by M/MS/HMD and GSA. M/MS/HMD will engage LPA to arrange the filming of the event.

- **Post:** Arrangements can also be made to lower the Mission and/or Embassy flags in-country. These requests will be made at the post level with additional assistance from the Bureau representative.

### **108.3.7.3 Recovery of Flag and Presentation to Family**

Effective Date: 11/08/2024

If the staff member was assigned overseas when death occurred, the Mission can request receipt of the flag that was flying at the Embassy on the date of their passing. The flag should undergo proper flag folding and presentation protocol per United States Department of Veterans Affairs [protocol](#).

### **108.3.7.4 Condolence Books for the Family**

Effective Date: 11/08/2024

To honor the memory of the fallen colleague, the impacted B/IO or Mission should stage the condolence books on a memorial table and/or virtually via an easily accessible platform for contribution of Agency staff. For staff who pass overseas, condolence books in both USAID/W and the Mission are appropriate. Once closed, the POC of the NOK will ship the books via mail, or delivered in person, when appropriate. The FCRD and ES will procure physical condolence books for Memorial Table arrangements in USAID/W.

**Killed in the Line of Duty:** The impacted B/IO or Mission and LPA should stage the condolence books in the 14th St. Lobby at USAID/W if the death is considered in the line of duty.

**Not Killed in the Line of Duty:** The FCRD is responsible for working with the impacted B/IO to stage the condolence book in the space they designate for placement.

The memorial tables should include (but not limited to) a photograph of the fallen colleague chosen by their peers, a flower arrangement, and the condolence book with pens.

### **108.3.7.5 Tracking Related Press Stories**

Effective Date: 11/08/2024

The CRTT Press Affairs (in LPA) representative is responsible for tracking media feeds and capturing any press publications regarding the fallen colleague. If the death occurs overseas with USAID presence, the Mission can assist in this endeavor. The collection of stories and other media will serve as a component of any information memo to USAID senior leadership and will be compiled for the family (NOK), if appropriate.

For deaths that gain traction on a larger scale, the LPA representative should be prepared to draft and route cleared talking points for USAID leadership. Should the death gain national or international attention, ES will coordinate with the LPA Agency

spokesperson to prepare and potentially shield the NOK should they wish not to engage with media outlets.

### **108.3.7.6 Engaging the State Department Regarding Memorials and Awards**

Effective Date: 11/08/2024

Deceased staff are eligible for honors bestowed upon American diplomats. The CRTT should pursue all applicable awards and honors. Additional resources and guidance may be obtained through the State Department's Office of Casualty Assistance.

### **108.3.7.7 Thomas Jefferson Star Award**

Effective Date: 11/08/2024

The Thomas Jefferson Star Award recognizes those individuals who, while traveling or serving abroad on official business, are killed or incur a serious illness or injury that results in death, permanent incapacity, or disability. This is the highest award presented by the State Department and is signed by the President of the United States and Secretary of State. Further guidance on eligibility and award criteria can be found in [3 FAM 4825](#). The Bureau will prepare this request for submission to the State Department's Office of Casualty Assistance.

### **108.3.7.8 Federal Employee and Education Assistance (FEEA) Fund**

Effective Date: 11/08/2024

If a direct hire fallen employee leaves behind survivors, HCTM is tasked with immediately establishing a fund for the surviving children. This fund should be highlighted for staff who wish to offer their support to the family. Rapid establishment is critical to ensuring the greatest benefit for the NOK.

### **108.3.7.9 Arrangement of an Agency Memorial Service**

Effective Date: 11/08/2024

[ADS Chapter 492, The USAID Employee Memorial Program](#) covers the process, eligibility, and criteria to nominate an Agency employee for memorialization on USAID's Memorial Wall. The Agency Counselor will initiate the process while the CRTT is still mobilized to ensure submission, review, and approval ahead of the annual ceremony.

## **108.3.8 Providing Support for the Family**

### **108.3.8.1 Handling Information Requests**

Effective Date: 11/08/2024

LPA is responsible for managing any incoming information requests regarding the fallen colleague. Through the CRTT's Point of Contact with the (NOK, LPA will ensure that any information or messaging received from the Hill is aligned with the preferences of the NOK.

**108.3.8.2 Coordinating Family Travel**

Effective Date: 11/08/2024

The CRTT Point of Contact for the family, in coordination with the FCRD, impacted B/IO/M, and M/MS representatives, will notify the NOK regarding any memorial ceremonies organized by USAID and coordinate the family's attendance, should they choose to attend. This may include managing financial costs of travel and accommodations.

**108.3.8.3 Coordinating Travel of Escorts Accompanying the Fallen Colleague and/or NOK**

Effective Date: 11/08/2024

In cases where the fallen colleague will be repatriated to CONUS, the post must designate one to two escorts to accompany the deceased on their journey home. In cases where NOK accompanies the fallen colleague, the post must designate two escorts to travel with them. The advantages of having two escorts will assure one acts as an operator/logistical arm for movements of the fallen colleague and NOK, with the second escort providing physical and emotional support for their needs.

**108.3.8.4 Managing the Return of Personal Effects to the Family**

Effective Date: 11/08/2024

In certain cases where shipping and/or storage of personal effects under USG orders is in effect, the family's FCRD and CRTT Point of Contact will confirm with M/MS/TTD current statuses, locations, and timelines on movement or release of the effects. During this time, the manner in which the family prefers delivery of personal effects should also be confirmed. If personal effects of the deceased remain at Post, M/MS will coordinate with the EXO on the return of the belongings. Should export of the effects be necessary through diplomatic channels, the Mission will issue travel orders to authorize the action.

**108.3.8.5 Agency Attendance at Final Burial**

Effective Date: 11/08/2024

If the family is open to Agency attendance at funerals or family-led memorial ceremonies, some combination of the following individuals must plan to attend on behalf of the Agency: the Administrator, Deputy Administrator, C/AID, bureau AA, fallen colleague's office director, and the family's CRTT POC.

**108.3.9 Closure****108.3.9.1 Disbanding the Task Team**

Effective Date: 11/08/2024

ES makes the determination when to disband the CRTT and coordinates the completion of any outstanding tasks and ensures they are completed in a timely fashion.

**108.3.9.2 After Action Review (AAR) to Capture Lessons Learned**

Effective Date: 11/08/2024

After a CRTT is disbanded, the members will hold a final meeting primarily focused on lessons learned. The overall purpose is to discuss actions that were successful for the response, and note where improvements can be made to the guidance and checklist documents to ensure a continued learning process.

ES will place the action log and AAR in the Agency Correspondence Tracking System (ACTS) for record keeping. This will be a useful document for the after action review and to capture changes in approaches.

**108.3.9.3 Support for Task Team Staff**

Effective Date: 11/08/2024

Supporting Task team members is imperative to a successful response. Seeking Staff Care support is to be encouraged as a best practice to sustain the workforce and maintain morale. Staff Care can provide these services to reflect on the process and the stress from serving on the CRTT. Given the taxing responsibility of the CTRF, task force members may be affected in different ways. It is good practice to provide both individual and group opportunities to reflect on their experiences during the response and Staff Care can provide these services.

**108.3.9.4 Longer-Term Follow-On Care for Family and Agency Staff**

Effective Date: 11/08/2024

For the impacted family, the established POC to the NOK will check back in with the family to ensure their needs are being met. While in most cases, the contact will initially be frequent and ongoing, at a minimum, the NOK POC, will ensure that communication occurs at the following times:

- One month after the event;
- Three months after death;
- Six months after death; and
- At the one-year anniversary.

For our workforce, the Staff Care Center will continue to provide support to all members, regardless of hiring category.

Missions must use this ADS chapter and other resources available from ES and M/OMD to develop and implement their SOP. Missions should seek guidance from ES to help prepare and train for fallen colleague incidents.

**108.4 MANDATORY REFERENCES**

**108.4.1 External Mandatory References**  
Effective Date: 11/08/2024

- a. [3 FAM 4825](#)

**108.4.2 Internal Mandatory References**  
Effective Date: 11/08/2024

- a. [ADS 108maa, Casualty Response Checklist and Resources](#)
- b. [ADS 309, Personal Services Contracts with Individuals](#)
- c. [ADS 443, Special Assistance to Employees/Beneficiaries](#)
- d. [ADS 478, Payments to Missing Employees](#)
- e. [ADS 492, The USAID Employee Memorial Program](#)
- f. [ADS 496, Foreign Service National Health and Accident Coverage \(HAC\)](#)
- g. [USAID Acquisition Regulation \(AIDAR\)](#)

**108.5 ADDITIONAL HELP**  
Effective Date: 11/08/2024

- a. [Action Log Template](#)
- b. [Fallen Colleague Response Checklist](#)
- c. [Condolence Letter Template](#)
- d. [Command Center Incident Report Form](#)
- e. [Escort One Pager](#)
- c. [EXO GO Sheet](#)
- d. [SitRep Template](#)
- e. [SOP for Mission Response to a Fallen Colleague](#)

**108.6 DEFINITIONS**  
Effective Date: 11/08/2024

The terms and definitions listed below have been incorporated into the [ADS Glossary](#).

**Casualty Response Task Team (CRTT)**

A dedicated group of USAID employees assigned to support the Agency and family when an employee(s) dies or is killed in the line of duty. (**Chapter 108**)

**Fallen Colleague**

Includes all categories of direct-hire employees and Personal Services Contractors of USAID and the Office of Inspector General (OIG) including Cooperating Country Nationals (CCNs), Third Country Nationals (TCNs), and U.S. whether locally engaged or offshore. It applies to staff overseas as well as those working on behalf of USAID in the United States or in travel/transit. (**Chapter 108**)

**Mass Casualty Incident (MCI)**

Death of more than one staff member due to unnatural and/or violent circumstances (e.g., criminal element, act of terror, natural disaster, killed in action [KIA] in CONUS or OCONUS. (**Chapter 108**)

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