

Department of the Interior Departmental Manual

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Series: Organization

Part 112: Policy, Management and Budget

Chapter 31: Office of International Affairs

Originating Office: Office of International Affairs

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31.1 Office of International Affairs. The Office of International Affairs facilitates, supports, and coordinates international activities of the Department of the Interior to advance the Department's mission and support complementary U.S. foreign policy priorities.

31.2 Functions.

A. Initiates, coordinates, and promotes international initiatives that support and enhance the Department's mission, including transboundary programs and scientific/technical exchanges.

B. Promotes and facilitates efforts to marshal the Department's expertise in support of complementary U.S. foreign policy priorities.

C. Serves as principal contact for requests from outside the Department for international cooperation and provides guidance in the development of responses to requests.

D. Coordinates international activities involving more than one bureau, or which involve policy priorities for the Department or significant U.S. foreign policy interests.

E. Provides substantive support for international meetings, diplomatic interactions, or other engagements with foreign officials for the Office of the Secretary or other high-level officials of the Department as well as diplomatic and protocol guidance to Departmental officials regarding international activities.

F. Identifies international policy issues relevant to the Department, consults with Department experts, and analyzes and facilitates the development of the Department's positions on international policy issues.

G. Represents the Department in interagency forums on international policy issues (such as interagency work groups and policy committees) and in international diplomatic meetings that are relevant to the Department's mission or that can benefit from Departmental expertise.

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H. Reviews and concurs on all bureau and office international agreements with foreign countries. Facilitates, as appropriate, consultations with Department of State and other Federal agencies.

I. Coordinates with bureaus and offices to provide technical assistance to foreign countries to further Departmental priorities and complementary U.S. foreign policy objectives.

J. Administers agreements with other Federal agencies, international organizations, and foreign governments to provide technical assistance to foreign countries in areas of Departmental expertise, consistent with the Foreign Assistance Act, 22 United States Code Chapter 32, as amended.

K. Reviews and approves foreign travel of bureau and office employees to ensure (1) the number of travelers and number of trips to foreign countries is held to the minimum necessary for the conduct of essential business and to accomplish Departmental objectives, and (2) that the travel is appropriate in light of international political conditions.

L. Facilitates coordination and sharing of information among bureau and office international staff, including chairing regular meetings of bureau international directors.

M. Approves J-1 visa waiver requests for the Department.

N. Processes official passport and visa requests in support of foreign travel of bureau and office employees.

31.3 Organization. The Office is headed by a Director who reports to the Deputy Assistant Secretary - Policy and International Affairs. The Director carries out the responsibilities of the office with assistance from three divisions: Policy, Technical Assistance, and Passport and Visa Operations, as well as support staff (see attached organization chart). The Policy and Technical Assistance Divisions are each led by a chief and all three divisions report to the Director.

A. Policy Division. The Policy Division identifies and analyzes relevant international policy issues, consults with Department experts, and facilitates the development of Departmental positions to advance the Department's mission and complementary U.S. foreign policy objectives. The Division plays a lead role for the Department on those issues that relate to more than one bureau or that require specialized expertise that may not exist in most of the bureaus. The Division also advises Departmental officials on consistency of Departmental international activities with U.S. foreign policy.

B. Technical Assistance Division. The Technical Assistance Division coordinates with bureaus and offices to provide technical assistance, seeks funding for, and carries out the development and implementation of technical assistance to advance the Department's mission and complementary U.S. foreign policy goals. The Division manages the Department's International Technical Assistance Program, which provides technical assistance to foreign countries on matters for which the Department has expertise. The Division identifies and

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prioritizes requests for assistance, evaluates needed expertise, facilitates and manages the provision of expertise from the Department, and, as appropriate, integrates and coordinates the engagement of multiple bureaus, to ensure effective responses.

C. Passport and Visa Operations Division. The Division includes the passport and visa staff, which supports Departmental international operations through issuance and processing of official passports and visas.