



# WORKING EFFECTIVELY WITH THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARIAT (ES): A GUIDE FOR AGENCY STAFF

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## ACRONYMS

AA	Assistant Administrator
A/AID	Office of the Administrator
AID/A	USAID Administrator
ACTS	Agency Correspondence Tracking System
ADS	Automated Directives System
AID/DA	USAID Deputy Administrator
AMS	Administrative Management Services
CCC	Correspondence Control Contact
CEA	Council of Economic Advisors
CEQ	Council on Environmental Quality
COOP	Continuity of Operations
DC	Deputy Committee
DOS	Department of State
DPC	Domestic Policy Council
EOP	Executive Office of the President
ERS	Emergency Relocation Site
ES	Executive Secretariat
IC	Intelligence Community
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IP	Internet Protocol
IPC	Interagency Policy Committee
IO	Independent Office
JWICS	Joint Worldwide Intelligence Communications System
KSC	Knowledge Services Center
MCC	Millennium Challenge Corporation
MOA	Memorandum of Agreement
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NSC	National Security Council
NSC	National Security Staff
OFBNP	Office of Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships
OMB	Office of Management and Budget
ONDCP	Office of National Drug Control Policy
OPIC	Overseas Private Investment Cooperation
OSTP	Office of Science and Technology Policy
OVP	Office of the Vice President
PC	Principal Committee
PD	Presidential Determination
PII	Personally Identifiable Information
PIO	Public International Organization
SBU	Sensitive But Unclassified
SCI	Sensitive Compartmented Information
SCIF	Sensitive Compartmented Information Facility
SDAA	Senior Deputy Assistant Administrator
SOC	Summary of Conclusion

SVTC	Secure Video Teleconference
TS	Top Secret
TSCO	Top Secret Control Officer
unDC	Deputy-level meetings other than DCs (see DC above; i.e. Economic Deputies)
USAID	U.S. Agency for International Development
USG	U.S. Government
USTR	Office of the United States Trade Representative



# **1 INTRODUCTION**

## **1.1 Manual Overview**

This manual provides guidance to USAID staff in the preparation of taskers and the timely and effective movement of documents from drafters to decision makers. USAID uses the term “taskers” to refer to written or verbal requests for executive correspondence or memos going to or coming from the Administrator, Deputy Administrator, or Counselor to the Agency (hereafter referred to as Agency Principals). They also include all correspondence and memos going to Members of Congress, The Department of State (DOS) and other USG agencies, and the White House. All of the information gathered to respond to a tasker is referred to as a folder, and includes memos, documents for signature, clearance pages, and any supporting documentation.

To enable Agency Principals to work efficiently and make fully informed decisions, and to manage information for official record keeping purposes, all taskers going to them must go through the Office of the Executive Secretariat (ES). All taskers from them should also be submitted to ES to ensure that decisions are implemented, all relevant bureaus/IOs are consulted, appropriate people are notified, and proper records are maintained.

This manual includes the following:

- Procedures for the preparation and submission of taskers (Section 2-3);
- Guidance for writing effective executive letters and memos (Sections 4-6);
- Guidance for interagency and White House coordination (Sections 7-9);
- Guidance for press and press contacts (Section 10); and
- Guidance for handling of classified and sensitive information (Section 11).

Please read these procedures carefully and refer to them as needed. This manual is a guide, not a cure-all—we realize that situations and needs vary. When in doubt, consult ES; we welcome the opportunity to speak with you.

## **1.2 Office of the Executive Secretariat (ES) Mission**

The ES mission is to facilitate and expedite the Agency’s decision-making process, ensuring that the Office of the Administrator (A/AID):

- Receives information and recommendations needed to make informed and timely decisions on Agency policy, programs, and management; and
- Is able to defend those decisions in the Executive and Legislative Branches, and in the public fora.

ES functions as A/AID’s coordination and communications mechanism. It is the official channel for communications within USAID and between USAID and the interagency community, including information and recommendations from the Agency to the White House, the National

Security Council (NSC), the Department of State (DOS), and other federal departments and agencies. ES identifies matters or problems that require the attention of the Administrator and Deputy Administrator and alerts them accordingly. ES also initiates action to resolve issues at the bureau/independent office (IO) level and raises irreconcilable issues to the Administrator or Deputy Administrator for a decision.

### **1.3 ES Overview**

#### **Background**

In 2010, a new National Security Strategy and a Presidential Policy Directive on Global Development introduced an elevated and expanded role for development in achieving national security, placing development instruments and capabilities on par with those of diplomacy and defense. The new focus on USAID as a premier development agency, its increased interagency engagement, and activist Agency leadership required USAID's Office of the Executive Secretariat dramatically expand the scope, complexity and capacity of its operations. The Executive Secretariat responsibilities changed from principally coordinating executive communications to managing the Agency's fast-paced front office operations, facilitating USAID's expanded participation in high-level interagency policy deliberations, increasing Agency access and use of classified information to support these deliberations, and introducing innovations in the use of space and technology to enable the Executive Secretariat to serve the Agency in a variety of policy, program, management, and administrative functions.

#### **Office Function**

The Office of the Executive Secretariat (the Executive Secretariat) functions as the Office of the Administrator's (A/AID) coordination and communications mechanism. It is also the authoritative channel for official communications within USAID and between USAID and the interagency community, including information and recommendations from USAID to the White House, the National Security Council, the Department of State, and other government departments and agencies.

The Executive Secretariat staff advises, facilitates and expedites the Agency's decision-making processes. The Executive Secretariat ensures A/AID receives information and recommendations to make informed and timely decisions on Agency policy, programs, organization and management; and is able to defend those decisions in the Executive Branch, Congressional, and public forums.

The Executive Secretariat also provides administrative and management services to approximately 100 individuals comprising the Office of the Administrator and the units housed within it, including the Counselors Office (Agency Counselor and Counselor for Innovation), Office of the White House Liaison, Office of the Chief Operating Officer; Office of Budget, Resources, and Management, the Center for Faith Based and Community Initiatives, and the Chief Economist.

## Office Vision

Provide an effective executive communications and decision-making capacity to enable the Administrator and Deputy Administrator to successfully articulate, advance and defend the U.S. Government's development agenda in national and international forums.

## Office Goals

- Support expanded availability and access by the Office of the Administrator and Agency staffs to quality information and expertise from across the Agency to efficiently and effectively inform executive-level decision-making.
- Facilitate the effective exchange of information between USAID, other USG departments and agencies, and other external (private and non-government) organizations to shape interaction and inform decision-making.

## Scope of Office Responsibilities

*The Executive Secretariat Front Office:* The management team, comprising the Executive Secretary, the Deputy Executive Secretary, and an Executive Assistant/Office Manager, has overall responsibility for managing the Executive Secretariat operations. The Executive Secretariat Front Office team serves as Agency point of contact for Congressional oversight requests and service of notice authorities. It manages the Executive Secretariat external relations, including staff exchanges with the NSC and State Department, and coordinates and supports Agency details to the staff of the National Security Council. The team also directly supports Front Office management and special initiatives, ensuring that the Administrator, Deputy Administrator, and Agency Counselor are receiving critical and timely support. The team manages the Agency's website, and conducts customer service surveys. The Executive Secretary is a core member of the Administrator's senior management team and Administrator's Leadership Council, and serves on the Agency's Executive Management and Crisis Management committees, as well as the Management Operations Council and similar governance bodies. In addition, the Administrator delegates to the Executive Secretary authority to (a) classify, downgrade, and declassify Secret and Confidential information and (b) administer oaths of office.

*Office Management Support (OMS):* The OMS team is led by the Executive Assistant/Office Manager, and provides essential executive support to the Executive Secretariat and Deputy, and carries out the following functions:

- **Reception:** Manages the Executive Secretariat main telephone line, receives visitors to the Executive Secretariat suite, records time and attendance for the Executive Secretariat staff, and schedules the Point IV conference room.
- **Communications:** Receives, processes, and confirms USAID attendance at NSC convened meetings, including clearing visitors and vehicles. Also manages the Executive Secretariat owned mail lists, listservs, and contact/telephone rosters.

- **Correspondence and Records:** Receives, tracks, and processes incoming executive correspondence, invitations, and meeting requests (internal and external) for A/AID and DA/AID in cooperation with the Executive Secretariat Liaison Team and the Front Office Scheduling Team. Serves as the Executive Secretariat files custodian, responsible for maintaining the official Executive Secretariat records and files, including vital records.

*Secure Communications and Safety:* This team coordinates the Executive Secretariat participation in the Agency’s Crisis Management Team and Continuity of Operations (COOP) planning and response efforts. The Team plays a lead role in facilitating engagement with the intelligence community to support achievement of development policy priorities, and coordinates with the Office of Security to expand access and use of classified material. It manages secure spaces and secure communications, including intelligence briefings for senior staff. The Executive Secretariat serves as the Agency’s Top Secret Document Control Point. The Executive Secretariat also serves as the Special Security Officer, managing the sixth floor SCIF (Sensitive Compartmented Information Facility) and providing approval for SCI-level classified access. The Executive Secretariat supports Agency principals for high-level White House policy deliberations.

*Administrative and Management Services (AMS):* the Executive Secretariat provides administrative and logistical support to the Office of the Administrator which includes OCRD, BRM and the Office for Faith-Based Initiatives. It carries out the following functions:

- **Financial Management:** Manages the budget for all A/AID units and the Executive Secretariat and manages all procurement, funding, and expenditure actions (services, expendable and non-expendable items). Also determines legality and appropriate use of government funds.
- **Personnel:** Manages recruitment, training, staffing and support for the Executive Secretariat and A/AID units (contract and direct hire).
- **Travel:** Manages all domestic and international travel for the Executive Secretariat and A/AID units, including the executive vehicle fleet and drivers, and the administrative support of a “mobile Executive Secretariat” to support the Administrator when in a travel status.
- **Administrative Support:** Provides administrative support for the Executive Secretariat and A/AID units including purchasing and managing equipment and supplies, managing inventory, providing IT support, space planning, processing security clearances, and managing payroll.
- **Accountability:** Ensures accountability by managing audit, internal control, ethics and financial disclosures, and other legal requirements on behalf of the Executive Secretariat and A/AID.

*The Liaison Team:* This team serves as a liaison between the Office of the Administrator and the rest of the Agency:

- ensuring A/AID's access to the fullest information for decisions and meetings;
- assisting the Agency's bureaus and offices to craft effective and fully cleared communications to A/AID and the interagency as efficiently as possible;
- assisting bureaus and offices to advance A/AID's and the Agency's priorities, while also recognizing their work on bureau and office priorities; and
- managing executive communications, including developing and enforcing Agency standards and instructions for the receipt, preparation, review, dispatch, and control of all written communications to and from the Administrator and Deputy Administrator, including memoranda and executive correspondence.

The Team comprises Special Assistants, who staff the Administrator's and Deputy Administrator's meetings and travel. Special Assistants lead teams of analysts who liaise with Agency bureaus and offices to facilitate internal and external executive communications, policy guidance and decisions. The Liaison Team manages strategic outreach to bureaus including outreach and training for the Correspondence Control Contacts (bureau and office liaisons to the Executive Secretariat). The Liaison Team works closely with the Chief of Staff, Front Office Projects Team, Confidential Assistant and Special Events and Trip Director. The Team specifically handles the following:

- **Staffing the Administrator and Deputy Administrator:** The team assists with scheduling meetings, telephone calls and public appearances. They task and develop agendas and other meeting materials to prepare principals for meetings and draft summaries of conclusions. The team carries out these functions for internal and external meetings and for principals while they are on travel. The team also advances trips, providing substantive and logistical support for Agency principals, and supports the principals on the ground in a "mobile Executive Secretariat" capacity.
- **Memoranda:** the Executive Secretariat tasks and reviews Agency-prepared documents for the Administrator and Deputy Administrator, ensuring that (a) the information supplied is sufficient for decision-making or briefing purposes, (b) the views of concerned bureaus and offices have been incorporated, and (c) the documents are appropriately structured.
- **Correspondence:** the Executive Secretariat is responsible for tracking and assigning action on all executive correspondence, including congressional communications received by USAID personnel and all public communication addressed to the Administrator and Deputy Administrator.
- **Daily Briefing Books and Trip Books:** The team provides the documents that comprise the daily electronic briefing books for the Administrator, Deputy Administrator and other senior staff in the Front Office. The Executive Secretariat develops special briefing books in support of A/AID travel.

## 2 FLOW OF DOCUMENTS TO/FROM A/AID

All documents prepared for Agency Principals should follow the path illustrated and described below to ensure thorough coordination and thoughtful review. This chapter provides in-depth guidance on each step of the tasker and document workflow process.

### 2.1 Assigning and Tracking of Documents

#### Originating from A/AID

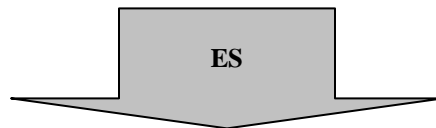
A/AID requests information, briefer, memo, correspondence, etc., either verbally or in writing. Details of request communicated to ES **prior** to proceeding.

#### Originating from Bureau/IO

Bureau/IO initiates action or information for A/AID, or receives correspondence from external source for response. Bureau/IO consults with ES **prior** to proceeding.

Every day, Agency Principals make decisions, represent the Agency publicly, and respond to internal and external queries. ES facilitates the Principals' ability to accomplish these core tasks in an informed and timely manner by assigning, tracking, and evaluating executive correspondence and memos throughout the Agency on behalf of Agency Principals. An assigned action can originate from multiple sources:

- A/AID requests information or an action either verbally or in writing to immediate staff or other Agency employees;
- The Agency receives a letter or request for the Administrator or Deputy Administrator from an external entity;
- A bureau/IO decides that there is information that should be brought to the attention of A/AID.



For all requests to or from A/AID, the first step is to communicate with ES prior to tasking. This initial step can save time and prevent misunderstanding down the road. For each situation requiring a response, ES does the following:

- Determines which bureau/IO will take action, the required input, and appropriate due date;
- Logs into ACTS;
- Tasks to bureau/IO CCC with instructions.

### 2.1.1 Determination of an Action

ES determines which bureau/IO will take action on an assignment (referred to as the Action Office). The Action Office provides any required input on the tasked topic, including input from other bureaus/IOs with equities in the subject matter, by the appropriate due date.

### 2.1.2 Agency Correspondence Tracking System (ACTS)

ACTS is an electronic document management and workflow application that facilitates the efficient processing of correspondence and actions via electronic folders. It is used by ES to manage and respond to executive correspondence and memos. Authorized Agency users access ACTS via an icon on their desktop. ES works with designated bureau/IO staff known as Correspondence Control Contacts (CCCs), who act as daily liaisons with ES to coordinate tasker responses and document submission for Administrator and Deputy Administrator review and approval.

ES and bureau/IO CCCs use ACTS to assign and track taskers. The system has built-in capabilities that facilitate coordination between ES and bureaus/IOs to ensure timely, responsive, and quality correspondence. These capabilities include secure access and storage of files, easy search tools, auditing, late notifications, and reporting.

### 2.1.3 Assignment of an Action

All bureaus/IOs have a CCC designated to review all executive correspondence and memos, and act as a point of contact for ES. A list of current CCCs is available on the ES website. ES sends action assignments to CCCs with the following instructions:

**ACTS Folder No.:** [A unique identifying number assigned to a tasker in ACTS.]  
**Action Office:** [Bureau/IO responsible for drafting, clearing, and finalizing document.]  
**Deliverable(s):** [Type of document requested, e.g., action, info, or briefer.]  
**Topic(s):** [Key questions/issues/topics to be addressed.]

**Clearances Required Prior to Submission to ES:**  
[Mandatory clearances required prior to submission to ES. The Action Office is responsible for determining any additional clearances based on the subject matter of the document.]

**Deadline to ES with Final AA Approval:**  
[The deadline for submission to ES with final clearance from bureau/IO front office.]

**Background** [Any relevant background information, including the following specifics for briefers.]

Event: [Meeting/event/call.]  
Date: [Scheduled date of the meeting/event/call.]  
Location: [Scheduled location of the meeting/event/call.]  
Time: [Scheduled time of the meeting/event/call.]  
Participants/

Audience: [For meeting/calls: participant list; for public events: audience.]  
 Notes: [Available information on the purpose and origin of the request.]

**2.1.4 Document Deadlines**

ES commits to maximizing the time available to bureaus/IOs to draft and clear documents, while also requiring that bureaus/IOs leave enough time for review and comment on documents by Principals, their staffs, and ES. The chart in the next section summarizes common documents and their deadlines to ES. You are encouraged to submit documents earlier than the deadline. Deadlines provide the minimum time necessary for review. All due dates refer to working days. Weekends and holidays are not counted as working days for document review, so you will need to schedule your timing accordingly. For example, if the Administrator has a meeting on Monday, the briefer must be submitted to ES by 3:00 p.m. on the previous Friday.

**2.1.5 Urgent Requests**

When ES assigns a tasker that requires immediate attention and is due within 24 hours, the email subject line is marked “URGENT.” When necessary, ES can arrange expedited handling of urgent packages generated by a bureau/IO for an Agency Principal. If your package needs urgent action, please notify ES as early as possible and state the reason for the urgency, e.g., an imminent deadline. “The Administrator needs this” is insufficient. Please do not overuse requests for urgent action as their urgency will diminish.

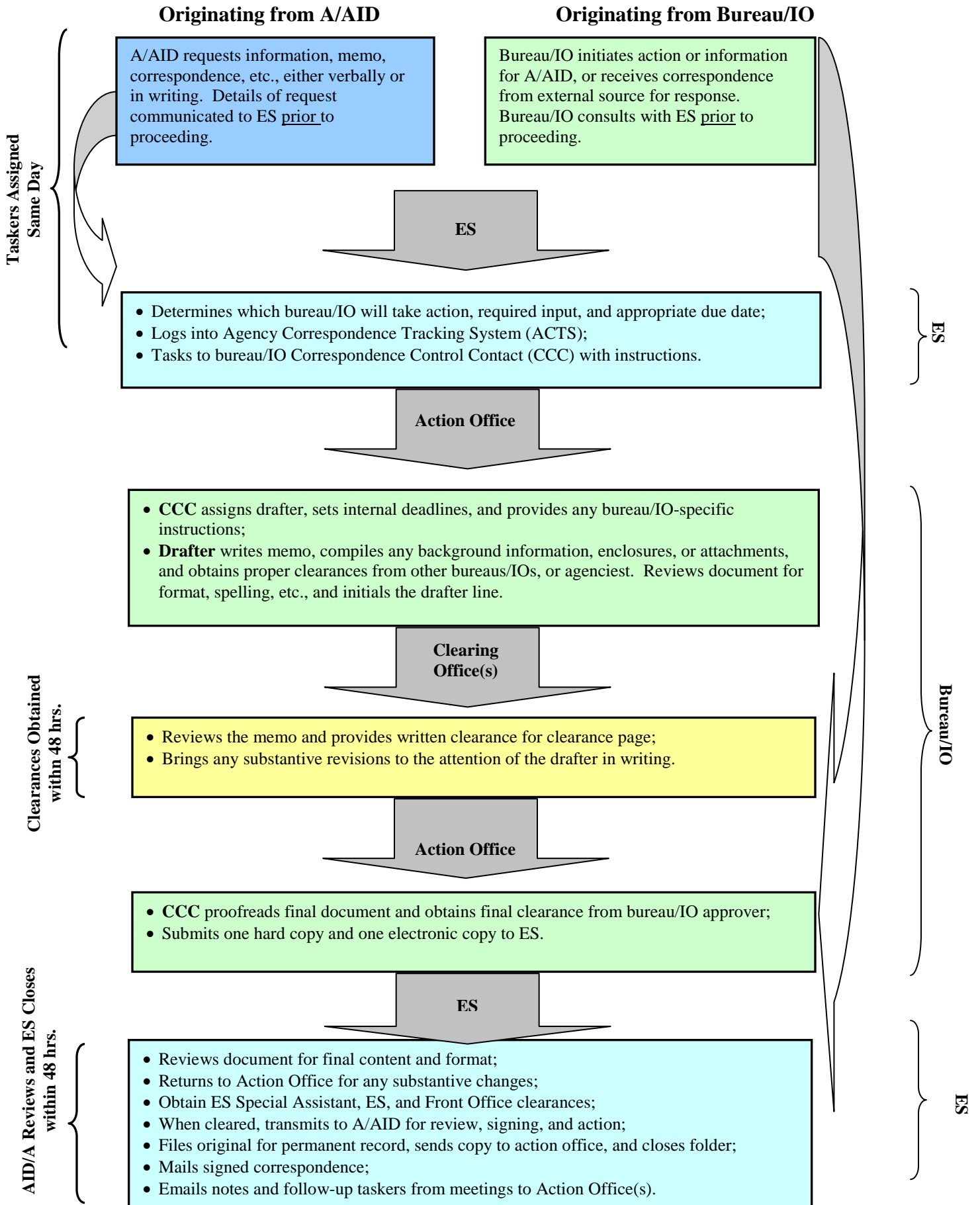
**2.1.6 Table of Documents and Deadlines**

Document Type	Deadline to ES
<b>Internal Documents</b>	
Briefer	3:00 p.m. two days prior to meeting/event
Briefer with Building Blocks	3:00 p.m. three days prior to meeting/event
Information Memo	3:00 p.m. for inclusion in the briefing book the next business day
Action Memo	3:00 p.m.; at least three days prior to requested action
Action Memo for Agency Notice	Three days prior to send date for Administrator Notices and for Executive Messages
Trip Papers	3:00 p.m. two days prior to trip
Schedule Request	14 days prior to meeting/event
<b>External Documents</b>	
Routine Public Letters	Within 14 days of receipt of original correspondence
Congressional Correspondence	Within three days of receipt of original correspondence



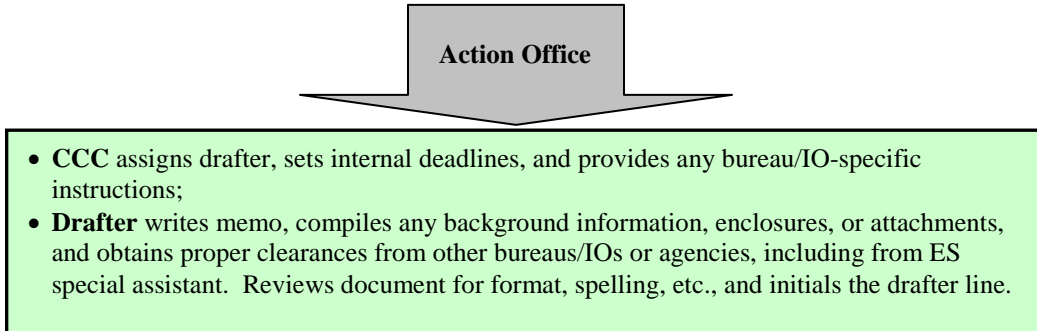
Reports to Congress	One week before due to Congress
VIP Correspondence	Within seven days of receipt of original correspondence
Thank You letters	Within 48 hours of event or trip
Condolence Letters	Within 24 hours
Remarks, Speeches, and Testimony	One week prior to the event
<b>Interagency Documents</b>	
Cabinet Affairs Reports	5:00 p.m. every Tuesday
PC, DC, and NSC Briefers	Two days prior to meeting for standard meetings; Within 24 hours of meeting for priority topics
NSC-tasked Policy Papers	Three days prior to NSC due date
NSC-convened meeting Debriefing Notes	Within two days of meeting; Within 24 hours of meeting for priority topics
Interagency Letters/Board Decisions/etc.	Three days prior to interagency due date

## OVERVIEW OF FLOW OF DOCUMENTS TO/FROM A/AID



### 3 Document Flow

#### 3.1 Drafting Documents



ES assigns correspondence and memos to Action Offices through the Bureau/IO CCCs. It is the responsibility of the Action Office to work through the CCC to do the following:

- review all requests promptly;
- notify ES when more time is required to submit a response;
- determine the drafting office/staff and forward the incoming tasker;
- contact ES immediately when a tasker needs reassignment;
- recommend clearances within the bureau/IO or other bureaus/IOs.

##### 3.1.1 Transfer of a Tasker Assignment

When a bureau/IO feels that a tasker assigned to them is best answered by another bureau/IO, they should contact ES immediately. When there is an agreement for a transfer, ES will initiate the change of action assignment. You are encouraged to request a transfer well in advance of the due date.

##### 3.1.2 Change in Due Dates

Each bureau/IO is responsible for completing taskers within the deadline set by ES. A timely response is essential to ensuring that Agency Principals are fully informed in a timely manner. When a response cannot be completed by the due date (for example, when information is required from overseas), contact ES as soon as possible to revise the deadline.

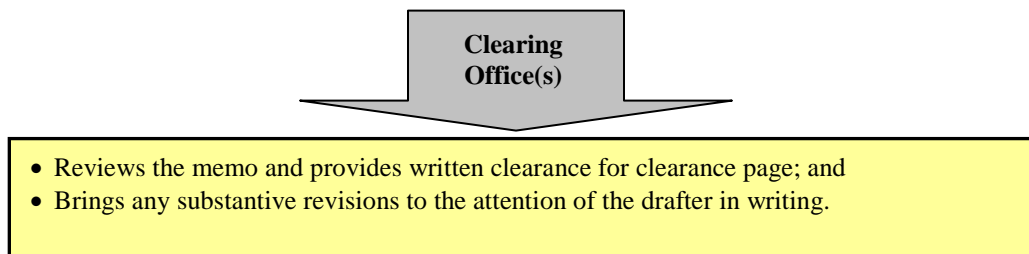
##### 3.1.3 Format and Style

A significant amount of paper passes through the Administrator's office on any given day. To enable leadership to process and digest the maximum amount of information in the most efficient

manner, drafters are strongly encouraged to adhere to ES formats and templates. Please see the ES website for document templates.

Upon initiating any internal paperwork or external correspondence, your first step should be to refer to the ES Style Guide where you can find guidance on format, style, grammar, and other issues pertaining to official documents. The Style Guide is available on the ES website at [http://inside.usaid.gov/es/word/style\\_guide.doc](http://inside.usaid.gov/es/word/style_guide.doc).

### 3.2 Clearing Documents



The office responsible for drafting a document is also responsible for obtaining clearances and should apply a common-sense standard in seeking and granting clearances. The purpose of clearances is to ensure that the Office of the Administrator has sufficient and accurate information that represents USAID's interests as a whole when making a decision. While memos are prepared by the bureau/IO primarily responsible for the subject matter, they should include views of other bureaus/IOs with equities in the matter in order to provide an Agency perspective.

#### 3.2.1 Clearance Process

Please refer to the following guidelines when obtaining clearances.

- **Include all relevant entities.** All bureaus/IOs and, as appropriate, other USG agencies, that have equities in a subject matter should clear. To expedite the process, the drafter should distribute electronic copies to all clearing offices simultaneously. Drafters should consult other offices at an early stage in the drafting process.
- **Set reasonable clearance deadlines.** All clearance requests should specify a deadline that provides adequate time for review, while still allowing for document completion in a reasonable time frame. *The standard deadline should allow clearers 48 hours.* A slow response from a bureau/IO is not sufficient reason to omit a clearance. If you have trouble getting a clearance, contact ES for assistance.
- **One clearance per bureau/IO.** One authoritative clearance per bureau/IO is sufficient; authoritative defined as at the AA or DAA level. Multiple clearances within the same bureau/IO should not be shown. Each bureau/IO front office should establish its own internal document review and clearance process (see USAID Clearance Matrix next

page). The staff member clearing for a bureau/IO assumes responsibility for clearing internally with other relevant stakeholders within the unit.

- **Communicate clearly about clearances.** Comments on an original draft do not automatically constitute clearance unless specifically noted. It is the drafter's responsibility to incorporate comments. If substantive changes are made after a staff member clears, you must re-clear the package.

### USAID Clearance Matrix

Subject	Clearances
Administrative Policies/Issues	M, GC (if authorities)
Afghanistan/Pakistan	OAPA
Agriculture	BFS
Aid Effectiveness	PPL, LPA
Climate Change	E3
Civilian-military Affairs	DCHA
Congress	LPA, GC
Conflict and Reconciliation	DCHA
Contract and Grant Policies/Actions	M, OSDBU
Counterinsurgency, Counterterrorism	DCHA, SEC
Country Programs, Visits, Pilots	Regional Bureau depending on country
Delegations of Authority	GC, M
Democracy, Human Rights and Governance	DCHA
Development Credit	E3
Disability Policy	PPL, DCHA
Donor Engagement	PPL
Economic Growth	E3
Education and Higher Education	E3
Employee Benefits and/or Pay	HCTM, GC
Energy	E3, AFR (for Power Africa)
Entrepreneurship	E3, C/AID (for Local Solutions)
Environment, Natural Resource Management	E3
External Outreach	LPA, other offices depending on subject
Financial Documents (reports, audits, etc.)	M
Food Aid	DCHA, LPA (Food Aid Reform)
Food Security, including Feed the Future	BFS
Foreign Assistance/Development Policy	PPL, LPA
Funding and Budget Requests	BRM (if program expense), M (if OE), LPA (Congressional Notifications), F (funding requests), LPA
Gender Issues	E3, PPL, AID/A Gender Coordinator
Global Engagement	CFBCI, C/AID

Global Health, including GHI	GH, Ebola Task Force Secretariat (as appropriate)
Guest Lists	LPA, GC
Haiti	LAC
Humanitarian Assistance	DCHA
Infrastructure and Engineering	E3
Innovation	Global Development Lab
Interagency Coordination and Communication	PPL, , GC, E3, BRM (if OMB)
Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs)	DCHA
International Organizations	PPL
IT Systems, Policies, Actions	M
Legal Authority	GC
Legislative and/or Regulatory Proposals	GC, LPA (if legislative)
Litigation	GC
<b>Subject</b>	<b>Clearances</b>
Millenium Development Goals (MDGs)	PPL
New Media	LPA, M/CIO, LAB
Overseas Missions	M (if Admin), Regional Bureau depending on country
Operational/Management Policy	M, LPA
Personnel	HCTM, M, LPA (if announcement), OCRD
Press, Media	LPA
Private-Public Partnerships	LAB, E3, GC (if external communications)
Procurement	M, OSDBU, GC (if reform)
Public Events	LPA, GC (if WAG needed)
Presidential Policy Directive	PPL
QDDR	PPL
Regional Programs	Appropriate Regional Bureau
Religion, Interfaith Collaboration	CFBCI, LPA (if external group)
Reorganization(s)	BRM, HR, GC, OCRD, M
Science and Technology	LAB
Security Policies/Procedures	SEC
Space/Facilities	M
Speeches/Testimony	LPA, PPL (if policy-related), AID/A Speechwriters
Agency Strategic Planning/Policy, Strategy Reviews	PPL, LPA, BRM, M
United Nations	PPL
USAID Forward (agency reforms)	C/AID, GC (if procurement), HCTM (if talent management)
Volunteer Programs	E3 (PVO Registrar)
White House Correspondence/Communications	WHL, other bureaus as appropriate per substance

- **Agree where possible, agree to disagree elsewhere.** Every attempt should be made to reconcile differing opinions prior to consulting the Administrator. Where there are differences, the different opinions or options should be noted. In those instances where clearing offices are unable to incorporate differing views in one memo, the drafting office should indicate that a Dissenting Memo is being forwarded on the same subject by another bureau/IO. Both memos must be forwarded simultaneously.
- **Use the clearance page to save time.** Clearance pages should accurately reflect the document drafter and those that have cleared. ES and A/AID will often call the drafter and/or clearers of documents to provide feedback or ask a follow-up question directly. ES and A/AID may return documents without completed clearance pages.

### 3.2.2 Guidance for Seeking Clearances

ES taskers indicate the clearances required prior to final submission to ES. Action Offices should determine any additional clearances required based on the subject matter. The following top line guidance will help determine the necessary clearances:

- Pillar and regional bureaus clear on all documents pertinent to their programmatic or geographic portfolios (i.e., E3 for papers dealing with economic growth; AFR for papers dealing with programs or missions in Africa).
- BRM clears on all documents that include program budget or resource requirements. M/MPBP clears on all documents that include Operating Expense (OE) budget or resource requirements.
- M clears on documents dealing with any of the issues housed under Management (M/CIO, M/CFO, M/MPBP, M/AS, M/OAA). This includes papers that deal with operational, financial, or administrative policy-related issues.
- LPA clears on all documents which may have Congressional or public interest, including external and media engagement ramifications. Schedule requests (except for internal USG meetings) must be cleared, even if no media coverage is proposed.
- PPL clears on all documents that have strategic or operational policy implications.
- HCTM and M clear on issues with personnel implications, including reorganizations, changes to office structures, or mission openings or closings.
- GC clears on all documents with potential legal, legislative, or ethical implications.

### **3.2.3 Guidance for Granting Clearances**

Clearance by a bureau/IO indicates concurrence on the action and content of a memo or letter. Just as a common sense standard should be applied in seeking clearances, a common sense standard also applies in granting clearances. Clearers are not expected to make stylistic, format, or grammatical changes to a document as these edits are the responsibility of the action office and ES.

Input from a clearing bureau/IO adds the most value when a bureau/IO reviews a document from its particular area of expertise to ensure consistency with Agency policy and practice, uncovers blind spots or omissions, and identifies critical issues. Helpful clearance comments address the following questions:

- Does the document reflect Agency-wide equities, particularly from your unit's perspective?
- If not, what needs to change for your bureau/IO to agree?
- What difference do you have with the content and how can that difference be addressed?
- Do you clear, clear contingent upon suggested changes, or clear with comments upon which your clearance is not contingent?

The goal of the clearance process is collaboration and coordination to provide Agency Principals with the full information needed to make informed decisions. The goal is not consensus, as consensus may not always be possible, particularly on complex issues. Bureaus/IOs may disagree from time to time because they represent different perspectives. In these instances, the drafting bureau/IO should present all sides of the disagreement in a fair and transparent manner.

A memo should not be held up due to a lack of consensus. Instead, the Action Office and clearing offices should utilize one of the following options:

- Use the "Background" section of the memo to detail alternate courses of action/differing viewpoints and the implications of each; or
- Prepare a "Split Memo" that provides the Agency Principal with more than one recommendation to choose from; or
- Prepare dissenting memos to be submitted simultaneously when a solution is not negotiable.

These options allow opportunities to negotiate differences when they arise. Do not avoid difficult clearances—utilize the options and contact ES when assistance is needed.

### **3.2.4 Clearance Page**

Clearances are submitted on a separate page at the end of a document that includes the following:

- Drafter (full name, bureau/IO, phone extension, after-hours phone number);
- Approver (bureau AA/IO Director full name, approval, date); and



- Clearer (bureau/IO, full name, clearance, date for each person clearing)

Each clearance should be listed on a separate line with the response (i.e., clear, clear with edits, do not clear) or list as Info, per the following template:

**CLEARANCE PAGE FOR** [copy title from first page of memo]

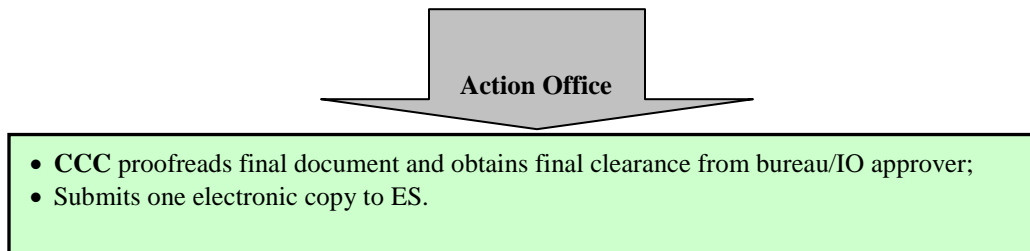
**Draft**

Drafter: [Bureau/IO]: [Name]:[Phone extension]; [After hours phone number.]

Approved: [Bureau/IO]: [AA/Office Director Name] Approved Date: [M/D/YY]

<b><u>Clearances</u></b>	<b><u>Initials</u></b>	<b><u>Clearance Status</u></b>	<b><u>Date</u></b>
		<i>(Not Cleared, Info, Clear, Clear w/ comments)</i>	
[Bureau/IO]: [Name]	XX	[Clear, Info, etc.]	M/D/YY
[Bureau/IO]: [Name]	XX	[Clear, Info, etc.]	M/D/YY
[ES Special Assistant]: [Name]	XX	[Clear, Info, etc.]	M/D/YY

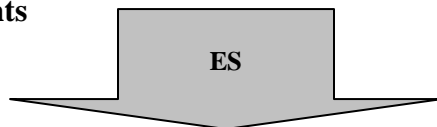
**3.3 Submitting Documents to ES**



Bureau/IO CCCs should follow up on overdue taskers and prompt drafters and clearing offices to complete the work on time while keeping ES informed of the status. Once a document has been drafted and cleared, the CCC should proofread the final document and obtain final clearance from the authorized bureau/IO approver. An electronic copy should be submitted as an editable Word document to [AID.ESTaskerMailList@usaid.gov](mailto:AID.ESTaskerMailList@usaid.gov). The e-mail should include the following components in the order listed:

- Action, Info, or Briefer;
- Document to be signed, if any, at first tab;
- Documents referenced in the memo in subsequent numbered tabs;
- Any other relevant information in numbered tabs; and
- Clearance page.

### 3.4 Finalizing Documents



- Reviews document for final content and format check;
- Returns to Action Office for any substantive changes;
- When cleared, transmits to A/AID for review, signing, and action;
- Files original for permanent record, sends copy to action office, and closes folder;
- Either mails signed correspondence or returns it to bureau/IO for mailing;
- Emails notes and follow up taskers from meetings to action office(s).

#### 3.4.1 Document Review and Revisions

Taskers are not complete when they are submitted to ES. ES is responsible for reviewing and editing documents before submitting them for final review or use by the A/AID. ES Correspondence Analysts review materials for completeness, clarity, correctness, form, and tone. ES Special Assistants ensure that they are ready substantively for review by Agency Principals. Memos and letters often contain technical language, which to a specialist is clear and correct, but to others may be confusing. In many instances, it is appropriate for ES staff to clarify the meaning. To do this, a discussion with the drafter may be necessary. This often saves time and prevents misunderstandings.

In performing these functions, it is never the intent of ES to dilute the responsibility of memo drafters. The drafting office clearly has the primary responsibility and ES staff only makes changes with good reason. To this end, ES analysts and special assistants consult the drafter concerning any substantive questions about a document.

#### 3.4.2 A/AID Review and Revisions

Most briefing and info memos are provided to Agency Principals electronically in their nightly briefing book. Hard copies of action memos and time-sensitive info memos are provided to A/AID for review and, when necessary, signature.

When A/AID has further questions or comments on a document before approving it, ES will follow up with bureaus/IOs as necessary. If substantive edits are requested, ES will send an updated addendum to the original tasker, labeled “Revision” in the subject line and including information on new requirements and due date. Taskers that are returned for substantive edits (“**revisions**”) are due back to ES by the specified deadline, usually 24 hours.

When A/AID approves a document, a pdf file of the signed document is sent to the Action Office CCCs, all the entities who cleared and drafter for filing. For documents or correspondence signed by A/AID that require transmittal outside the Agency, ES will deliver to the intended recipient and provide a copy to the action office. For meetings or events for which a briefer was

prepared, ES will send notes of the meeting/event and any required follow-up to the Action Office afterwards.

### **3.4.3 Recordkeeping**

ES is responsible for maintaining all official records, copies, and tracking logs for all executive correspondence and taskers passing through the office. Original signed documents are filed in ES for the permanent record, signed copies are sent to the action office for filing, and the folder is closed in ACTS.

## **4 INTERNAL DOCUMENTS**

### **4.1 Writing Effective Memos**

Agency Principals have a multitude of meetings, phone calls, and events every day, almost all of which require preparation, usually through a briefer. To save time and assist Agency Principals in devoting more time to substantive issues, memos should be brief and the following guidelines for format and content should be adhered to. A standardized format for memos allows Agency Principals to quickly identify and digest needed information when reviewing multiple documents.

#### **4.1.1 Format**

- Use USAID logo, Times New Roman 12 pt. font, one-inch margins, and indent each paragraph 0.5 inches. Use Times New Roman 10 pt. font in the Briefer “Fact Box.”
- Information should be brief, substantive, and to the point.
- Memos should not exceed one page. For particularly complex issues, a two-page memo may be allowed. Longer memos require prior approval from ES.
- Key points should be indicated in bold type.
- Write out all acronyms the first time they appear in a document, even if you think the reader knows them, and use the acronym thereafter (refer to page 24 of the ES Style Guide for a list of common acronyms that do not need to be spelled out).
- Memos should be able to stand alone without attachments. When necessary, attachments should be kept to a minimum and numbered in tabs. The memo should fully inform the reader of the issue by summarizing relevant information contained in the attachments.
- Drafting and clearance information are to be printed on the last page of the package. Memos without a clearance page will be returned.

#### **4.1.2 Content**

Agency Principals are often expected to speak and make decisions as the bilateral donor representative of the United States and as an official U.S. foreign policy representative. This is particularly true when Principals meet with foreign government officials or attend high-level state meetings or receptions. This means that briefing information cannot be restricted to the status of USAID relationships with the country in question, but must include the full range of U.S. interests with that country, including both interagency and private enterprise involvements, relationships, and implications. To be in a position to respond to specific issues regarding USAID assistance levels and programs, a principal must be apprised of the full range of economic issues and involvements in that country. Drafters should make every effort to provide the best-rounded picture of matters with which the Principal will be potentially faced.

Agency Principals must also be able to deliver on decisions that they are asked to make. Therefore, they must know the resource implications, both funding and staffing, of a proposed decision, and how the necessary resources to implement the decision will be identified and deployed. Memos requesting decisions by the Administrator or Deputy Administrator will not be forwarded for decision until resource implications are adequately addressed.

## 4.2 Types of Internal Documents

\*Templates can be found at on the ES Website (<https://sites.google.com/a/usaid.gov/es-liaison/home/templates>).

Document Type	Description	Guidance
4.2.1 Action Memo	Action Memos are internal documents that require a signature and/or recommend an action to an Agency Principal. They fall into two main categories: (1) requests from a bureau/IO to establish a policy or obtain a decision from Principals; (2) requests for the Principal’s signature on an official document, e.g., Agency Notices from the Administrator, Congressional correspondence, letters, etc.	<i>Pg. 21</i>
4.2.2. Briefer	Briefers are used to prepare the Agency Principals for meetings, participation in ceremonial events, certain social occasions, trips, and speaking engagements. Their essential purpose is to alert Principals to what is to take place, what is hoped to be accomplished, what is expected to be said or done, and by whom. After a meeting, event, or phone call, ES will follow up with bureau/IO contacts to provide a summary of the conversation and taskers for any related follow up.	<i>Pg. 21</i>
4.2.3 Info Memo	Info Memos can either be initiated by a bureau/IO or be requested by the Administrator, Executive Secretariat, or others in the Office of the Administrator. The memos convey important and timely information to the Agency Principal that they would not learn through other means (meetings, intelligence briefings, etc.) Info Memos should <i>not</i> be used to make policy recommendations or elicit decisions, even indirectly. Recommendations or requests for decisions must be submitted in an Action Memo.	<i>Pg. 21</i>
4.2.4 Agency Notice from A/AID	Request to send Agency Notice with an Agency Principal’s signature.	<i>Pg. 24</i>
4.2.5 Trip Book	Whenever an Agency Principal travels, a trip book is compiled of all the documents prepared in preparation for the trip, including the strategic planning memo, overview info memos, and specific event briefers.	<i>Pg. 26</i>
4.2.6 Night Notes	Night Notes should be provided to Agency leadership after a major event or interagency meeting that principals should be aware of. Night Notes are sent via email from the bureau AA or DAA to a list serve that includes Front Office leadership.	<i>Pg. 27</i>

#### **4.2.4 Agency Notice from the Office of the Administrator**

Agency Notices are the official means of communicating with the entire Agency. In general, M/MPBP manages the process for creating, clearing, and sending Agency Notices as outlined in ADS Chapter 504. However, Agency Notices from the Administrator are managed and issued by ES. There are two categories of Agency Notices that may come from the Administrator:

##### **Administrator**

“Administrator” messages convey official information to the Agency from the Administrator and/or the Administrator’s Office. Examples include the acknowledgement of a holiday or event, or readout of a recent event in which the Administrator participated.

##### **Executive Message**

“Executive Messages” are time-sensitive and critical Notices that must be issued immediately. They contain information that must be received in less than 24 hours and, therefore, cannot wait for the daily distribution of Agency Notices. A common mistake is thinking that all Executive Messages come from the Administrator. Executive Messages will be issued by the Administrator or the Administrator’s Office when an announcement is high-priority and/or high-level. To determine if a message merits issuance by A/AID, consider the following questions:

- Is it a priority issue (e.g., pandemic flu)?
- Is it time-sensitive (e.g., weather-related release of USAID employees)?
- Does it announce an Agency-wide decision made by the Administrator (e.g., establishment of a new bureau)?
- Does it announce information or an event related to the White House, President of the United States, and/or the Secretary of State (e.g., a Presidential Policy Directive)?

##### **Process**

Agency Notices from the Administrator require approval by A/AID and clearance from the Administrator’s speechwriting team. Requests for an Agency Notice to be sent out from the Administrator or Administrator’s Office should be submitted as an Action Memo recommending that the notice be issued, with the proposed notice attached at Tab 1. If the Notice is announcing a decision made as a result of an Action Memo approved by the Administrator, then the proposed Notice should also be included in the original Action Memo for approval.

For example, if a bureau/IO submits an Action Memo recommending that the Administrator form a new office, they may anticipate that the Administrator will subsequently want to announce this decision to the Agency. In this case, the bureau/IO should submit the Action Memo recommending the decision together with an Agency Notice announcing the decision. Both the memo and the notice must contain proper clearances. The Action Memo should recommend that the Administrator approve both the recommended action and issuance of the Notice.

**Formatting**

All Notices must be formatted in accordance with the Agency standards outlined in ADS 504. Please refer to these guidelines on proper content, format, and distribution before submitting Notices to ES.



#### **4.2.5 Trip Books**

Whenever an Agency Principal travels, a trip book is prepared that includes all papers necessary for the trip. As soon as a trip is confirmed, a bureau/IO is assigned the lead for coordinating, collecting, and reviewing all memos prior to submission to ES. When the trip covers more than one region or topic, the lead bureau/IO should coordinate with other relevant bureaus/IOs and other agencies (if appropriate) on all documents. All trip book components follow the standard ES procedures, flow, and format for executive documents. ES is the final office for all trip papers and is responsible for providing documents (hard and electronic copies) to the Agency Principal. Briefing books consist of the three distinct stages and iterative sections, as outlined below.

#### **Strategic Planning Memo**

The most important memo in the trip planning process is the Strategic Planning Memo that provides an overview of the trip's purpose, including a description of the deliverables for the trip, how the proposed deliverables advance the strategic goals of the Agency, and key proposed meetings/events in support of said deliverables. The Strategic Planning Memo is drafted by the lead bureau/IO, cleared through the relevant bureaus/IOs and the Director for Trips and Events prior to submission to ES. ES submits to the traveling Principal for approval. Memos should be prepared in Action Memo format for the Agency Principal's approval, with supporting documents provided in tabs as needed.

Strategic Planning Memos should be prepared and submitted as soon as a trip is being actively considered, but no less than four weeks in advance of international trips and two weeks in advance of domestic trips in normal circumstances. For short-fuse trip planning, Strategic Planning Memos should be submitted as early as possible, but no later than a week in advance of the proposed trip. Trip Book taskers begin once the Strategic Planning Memo has been approved by the Office of the Administrator.

#### **Trip Overview Memos**

An important component of the trip book is the Overview Memos that provide all relevant background information on the country and individuals being visited. Overview Memos are drafted by either the lead bureau/IO, or the Knowledge Services Center (KSC) in coordination with the lead bureau/IO, and cleared through the relevant bureaus/IOs prior to submission to ES. Overview Memos typically cover the following areas:

##### Bureau/IO Lead:

- *Mission Overview:* Summary of mission priorities by sector, program, and metrics, USAID and Embassy organizational charts and staffing, and analytic and evaluation reports;
- *Country Strategies:* USAID Country and Sector Strategies, other USG and/or bi/multilateral foreign assistance strategies for the past three years;
- *Biographies:* Bio-sketches of key individuals, including foreign dignitaries, Ambassador, and Mission Director; and

- *Country Overview*: Country context, including economic, political, social, and other background information.

Knowledge Services Center Lead:

- *Economic Overview*: Compilation and summary of World Bank, IMF, and regional bank reports on state of the economy and economic prospects;
- *Intelligence Overview*: Compilation of intelligence reports, including relevant National Intelligence Estimates;
- *Academic Overview*: Reading list of last six months of prominent articles, books, and independent studies on country and sectors identified in Strategic Planning Memo;
- *Economist Intelligence Unit Reports*: Compilation of country report, forecast and data; and
- *Country Backgrounder*: Produced by the Department of State.

Trip Overview Memos are tasked once the Strategic Planning Memo has been approved by the Office of the Administrator. They are due to ES one week in advance of international trips and one day in advance of domestic trips. Memos should be prepared in Info Memo format.

**Trip Briefers**

Trip Briefers provide the traveler with specific itinerary information and briefing materials for each meeting, event, or visit scheduled during a trip. Trip Briefers are drafted by the lead bureau/IO and cleared through the relevant bureaus/IOs prior to submission to ES. Trip Briefers typically cover the following areas:

- Trip itinerary, including full schedule information;
- Briefer for every meeting/event on the schedule. Briefers should be prepared in the standard Briefer format, including purpose, background information, asks, points for discussion, scene setters, participants, and talking points as needed. Bios are required for all mission leadership and other staff and officials that the Principal will interact with in the course of the trip.
- Press guidance/public statements as needed;
- Trip contact list.

Trip Briefers are tasked once the trip agenda is approved and are due to ES at least 36 hours in advance of international trips and 24 hours in advance of domestic trips.

**4.2.6 Night Notes**

Night Notes should be provided to Agency leadership after a major event or interagency meeting that Agency Principals should be aware of.

Any IPC that is attended by a bureau, and which bureau believes could become a DC or PC, should have a Night Note sent up immediately following the IPC. Only AA's or Office Directors should send up Night Notes. If an AA or Office Director is unavailable, it may be sent by their designated alternate.

Night Notes should be sent to the Night Note distro list: NightNotes@usaid.gov no later than 6 p.m. The distro list includes the Administrator, Deputy Administrator, Counselor, Front Office, ES, LPA/AA and GC. Any others who bureau believes need to be included in the Night Note, should be copied separately. If bureau prefers, or is not accustomed to sending, Night Notes can be sent to ES for ES to review and distribute in bureau's name.

Night Notes should be typed up as an email message, and generally be no longer than 1-2 paragraphs. They should not include attachments or documents, just brief descriptions of the major event or meeting that has taken place. Additional material, as necessary, should be sent up by bureaus to ES through regular channels.

Night Notes should always be sent at the SBU-level. No classified content should ever be sent via unclassified e-mail.

## **5 External Documents**

### **5.1 Writing Effective Correspondence**

Correspondence from the Office of the Administrator is an important means of communicating with the public, Congress, and our stakeholders. Please refer to the specific guidance in this section to help you determine whether or not a document is appropriate for the Agency Principal's signature and for guidance on format and content. The ES Style Guide is also one of the most useful correspondence tools available to letter drafters. Upon initiating any external correspondence, your first step should be to refer to this manual to find time-saving guidance on proper format, content, tone, and forms of address and salutations. When all executive correspondence is in the same basic format, drafters and signers can devote more time to substance and the Agency can uphold professional standards in external communications.

#### **5.1.1 Format**

- Use Times New Roman 12 pt. font. Side and bottom margins should be one inch; the top margin should be 3 ½ inches to allow for the letterhead. Each paragraph should be indented 0.5 inches.
- Official correspondence is printed on executive stationery by ES (see [Section 5.1.4](#)).
- Write out all acronyms, even if you think the reader knows them, and use them thereafter.
- Refer to the ES Style Guide for proper forms of address.
- Always check the spelling of names. Refer to the incoming letter to verify the spelling.
- Leave letters for signature by Agency Principals undated. ES dates executive letters after they are signed.
- The standard closing for all USAID letters is always “Sincerely.” Do not type the Agency Principal's title below the name, except for an Acting Administrator.
- Drafting and clearance information are to be printed on the last page of the package. Correspondence without a clearance page will be returned.

#### **5.1.2 Content**

- Letters should be clear, concise, and fully responsive to the incoming correspondence.
- Use a clear structure stating the purpose first with each supporting point following logically. Use transitional sentences between paragraphs.
- In a letter responding to questions, answer fully without rephrasing the questions.
- Keep sentences short and uncomplicated and use short paragraphs. Limit letters to one page when possible. When lengthy details are required, use an enclosure or list points in bulleted format.
- Use the active voice.

### 5.1.3 Tone

Recognizing that mail is the primary means by which USAID communicates with Congress and the public at large, USAID letters should create a favorable impression by being sincere, polite, responsive, and candid.

- All letters should be courteous and respectful.
- Keep the letter focused on the reader by emphasizing what he/she gets from your message rather than what you plan to give or do, according to the following guidelines:
  - Clearly state what the reader needs to know and what he/she needs to do with that information up front by stating the purpose of the letter;
  - Speak directly to the reader, where appropriate, and avoid the third person;
  - Connect directly to the reader by using the word “you,” or by referring to the understood second person when giving instructions.
- Avoid a hyper-formal or pompous tone by using a professional, natural language that engages your reader.
- Avoid bureaucratic jargon, technical words, foreign phrases, complicated sentence structure, and long and stilted expressions.
- Respond to all questions raised, but do not get involved to the detriment of the real issue(s) of the letter.
- Take particular care not to convey a derogatory or condescending attitude toward the views expressed by the writer. Limit your reply to the facts and avoid contradicting or arguing with the opinions of the writer.
- Refrain from using “USAID” or “the Agency” too often. Use words or phrases that imply a team, such as “our policy” or “we think.” Do not use the singular possessive form, such as “my team” or “my staff”; instead, use “our team” or “our staff.”
- When referring to an overseas mission, say “our USAID Mission in [country].”
- Do not commit the Agency to anything without approval. Do not give empty referrals or promise follow-up correspondence.

### 5.1.4 Stationery

ES will print letters on the Administrator’s official letterhead using bond paper. Drafters should prepare the electronic document with letterhead logo (as provided on the ES website) to allow for proper spacing. Letters should be limited to one page whenever possible including signature line and copy line. Bureaus should add appropriate parties on the copy line (i.e. Ambassador, Assistant Administrator, Mission Director, Assistant Secretary, etc). The date does not need to be included. ES will add that once the letter is signed. When a longer letter is required, subsequent pages should be printed on bond paper without letterhead, and with a one-inch top margin. The following official stationery letterheads are used for executive correspondence:

<b>Type of Letterhead</b>	<b>Signature</b>
<i>The Administrator</i>	Use only for the Administrator.
<i>Office of the Administrator</i>	Use when a USAID officer is serving as the Acting Administrator. Type “Acting Administrator” after the typed name in the signature block. Use also when preparing a response on behalf of the Administrator from ES or a Special Assistant to the Administrator.
<i>Deputy Administrator</i>	Use only for the Deputy Administrator.

### 5.1.5 Envelopes

The Action Office should prepare and forward to ES official Agency envelopes with typed addresses for the original and all copies of letters designated for addresses outside of USAID. Envelopes are to be large enough to accommodate all enclosures.

### 5.1.6 Multiple Addresses or Signees

- *Multiple Signed Letters:* When an incoming letter has been signed by more than one person or Member of Congress, prepare an identical original reply to each co-signer. When 10 or more letters are being packaged together for signature, include in the package to ES a list of names and addresses of all people receiving the letter.
- *Multiple Inquiries:* When letters on the same subject are received from more than one person or Member of Congress, identical letters should be written to all of them. Do not mention the fact that others have written. When multiple letters on the same subject are received as part of a public advocacy campaign, identical responses should be sent to all of them. After the advocacy campaign has ended, an official response should be written to the leading organization.
- *Twin Letters:* When a constituent writes to USAID and a Member of Congress who, in turn, sends the letter to USAID, the reply should be written to the Member; a brief letter should be written to the constituent informing him/her that we have responded to the Member. When a letter is addressed to multiple USG officials, please contact ES to coordinate our response with the other agencies. Depending on the topic, agencies may choose to write individual responses but coordinate on the content, or write a joint response addressed from the most appropriate official with reference to the other officials contacted.

LPA responds to Members of Congress when they write USAID on behalf of their constituents. Bureaus/IOs respond to constituent letters addressed to the Administrator. Twin letters, as defined above, rarely if ever occur. Usually, the constituent writes to the Member; the Member writes a letter to USAID and attaches the constituent letter. The

member letter often includes instructions to USAID as to whom to respond. If no instructions provided, USAID practice is to respond to the Member only.

### **5.1.7 Joint Signatories**

USAID may receive incoming letters co-addressed to multiple agency heads. In these instances, USAID ES will immediately contact the ES of each entity receiving the letter to determine whether one jointly signed response or individual agency responses are preferred. In some instances, OMB may need to be consulted to determine the most appropriate response.

For jointly signed responses, ES will work to identify a lead agency. Unless there is an obvious subject matter lead, the lead should be determined by order of precedence. The order of precedence changes by Administration. The lead agency should prepare a plan that specifies the required joint clearance process. It should specify who from each agency needs to clear and at what point in the drafting process, the order, and a target time frame. Clearance points may include a subject matter expert, congressional office, general counsel, public affairs, budget office, program office, or others as appropriate. The plan should also describe the signature process: how the letter will be signed by each principal (i.e., by hand, autopen, or electronic signature); the order it will be signed; and the method of transporting the letter between agencies, if necessary (i.e., if each principal needs to sign the original letter). The plan should also state how the final, signed letter will be sent to the intended recipient.

It is recommended that each agency work through its respective ES to transmit drafts to ensure timely transmission and version control. Once each agency is satisfied with the draft, it must be cleared internally by each agency. If one agency makes significant modifications during its internal clearance process, the document may need to be reviewed and cleared again by each agency.

When possible, letterhead reflecting the logo and official name of each signing agency should be used. The logos should follow the order of precedence from left to right. The order of the signature blocks should correspond to the logos. Some agencies have conflicting policies which do not allow their secretary to jointly sign a letter on any letterhead other than its own. In these cases, plain bond may be used and the signature blocks should include the name of the signing principal, his/her title, and the name of the agency.

Once the final letter has been fully cleared and signed by each agency principal, the lead agency will date it and send it to the recipient. The lead agency will pdf the letter with any enclosures, and email it to the ES of each signing agency for their official records. USAID ES will send the pdf to the appropriate USAID bureau/IO as an informational copy.

### **Separate Responses**

In those instances when each agency prepares its own response to an incoming jointly addressed letter, it may be necessary for each to clear its response with the other agencies prior to releasing

it. This should be decided during the initial discussions with the ES of each agency. As a courtesy, each agency's response should be provided to the ES of the other agencies.

### **5.1.8 Info Copies**

Info, or courtesy, copies are provided to individuals within or outside the Agency who should have knowledge of the correspondence. Show that you are sending the correspondence to people other than the addressee by typing "cc:" aligned with the left margin two lines below the signer's title or any other notation. List each recipient on a separate line below the "cc." You may use alphabetical listings rather than rank order protocols.

### **5.1.9 Interim Responses**

Interim responses are sent when a substantive response will require considerable research or overseas collaboration. They are particularly used for time-sensitive correspondence, such as Congressional correspondence. Interim responses are the exception, not the rule, and should be sent by the letter's due date. The Action Office that prepares an interim response is also responsible for the final response.

### **5.1.10 Endorsements**

Occasionally, the Administrator will be asked to endorse a paper or publication. The defining question for whether an official USG endorsement can be provided is whether or not the document being endorsed aligns with, and supports, USG policy. Different administrators have different preferences for how frequently or seldom they prefer giving a public endorsement. Bureaus/IOs should apply the same criteria as for recommending meetings. For example, does the endorsement pertain to an Agency and USG high-level priority area that cannot be addressed at a lower level? LPA and GC should review and clear all endorsement recommendations.

### **5.1.11 Autopenned Signatures**

ES maintains an autopen machine with signatures of Agency Principals. The autopen is to be used judiciously when the signing Principal is not available to personally sign a document, e.g., when on travel. It is only to be used after authorized approval has been granted. Since these documents are being signed on behalf of Agency Principals, the signing Principal should be aware of, and approve, the substance before they are autopenned.

The autopen may be used to sign form letters and other routine correspondence, including letters to the public and invitations sent to multiple addressees. When practicable, the Administrator prefers to personally sign all thank you letters. Action Memoranda and other documents may be



authorized for autopenning if the signing Principal has been briefed on the substance and has provided verbal or written consent approving use of the autopen.

ES must receive written authorization in the form of an email or an initialed note on the document clearance page from A/AID, the Chief of Staff (CoS), Deputy CoS, or ES leadership to use the autopen. Written authorizations are included in the official record.

## 5.2 Types of External Documents

Document Type	Description	Guidance
5.2.1 Routine Public Letters	Public correspondence addressed to Agency Principals. Most public correspondence is tasked to bureaus/IOs for response; letters from significant individuals or concerning significant topics may merit a response from the Principal.	<i>Pg. 29</i>
5.2.2 Congressional Correspondence	Congressional correspondence addressed to anyone at USAID. All incoming letters should be sent immediately to ES. ES tasks all response letters to LPA which, in turn, reassigns the taskers to relevant bureaus/IOs to draft responses. The ES tasker will indicate whether the response letter should be signed by the Administrator or the AA/LPA. The Administrator normally signs in the case of one of the following: (1) when the incoming letter is from a key Member of Congress (i.e., the Chair of a committee whose jurisdiction impacts USAID operations); or (2) when the incoming letter concerns a USAID priority (i.e., Food Aid Reform). The AA/LPA normally signs if the incoming letter requests a USAID response to a Congressional constituent. Copies of response letters signed by the AA/LPA should be submitted to ES for the official record.	<i>Pg. 29</i>
5.2.3 VIP Correspondence	VIP correspondence, e.g., to a Foreign Minister or Head of State, to be signed by an Agency Principal.	<i>Pg. 29</i>
5.2.4 Thank You Letters	Post-event or trip thank you letters for the Agency Principal's signature. Courtesy thank you letters should be sent to significant individuals that a Principal met with during a trip or major event. Missions should provide a list of staff and other local individuals who played a crucial role in the success of the visit. These individuals may not be known in advance of the trip, so their thank you letters need to be tasked within one day of the Principal's return.	<i>Pg. 29</i>
5.2.5 Condolence Letters	Condolence letters for an Agency Principal's signature. Criteria for determining when a letter should be signed by a Principal include the following: (1) Current USAID direct hires (USDH)—death due to any cause; (2) Current USAID staff of any other employment status (non-USDH)—killed in the line of duty or, when compelling justification exists, death due to another cause; or (3) non-USAID employees—killed in the line of duty (compelling justification required). Compelling justification in the latter two instances is when the work of a non-USDH directly supported USAID's mission in some manner. All requests for condolence letters to be signed by an Agency Principal must be attached to an Action Memo providing the justification.	<i>Pg. 29</i>

4.2.6 Remarks, Speeches, and Testimonies	Prepared public remarks, speeches, and testimony for the A/AID or DA/AID.	<i>Pg. 37</i>
4.2.7 Memoranda of Understanding	Memoranda of Understanding for the A/AID's or DA/AID's signature.	<i>Pg. 38</i>
4.2.8 Letter of Instruction	Letter from AAID to new Mission Director articulating the leadership vision, country priorities, and expectations.	<i>Pg. 29</i>

## 5.2.6 Remarks, Speeches, and Testimonies

The Office of the Administrator has a dedicated speech writing team that drafts remarks and speeches for external events in coordination with, and review by, all relevant bureaus/IOs.

### Remarks

Routine remarks for public events are included in event briefers. The process for drafting routine remarks can be found in the section of this document on briefers ([Section 7.3.1](#)). Appropriate subject matter experts draft building blocks that are used by the speech writing team to finalize remarks for the Office of the Administrator.

### Major Policy Speeches

When the Administrator or Deputy Administrator delivers major policy speeches, the drafting of remarks requires more time and substantive input and is thus done separately from the event briefers. The speech writing team aims to initiate this process a month or more in advance of the speech date in order to provide ample time to review and revise draft speeches. After conferring with the Office of the Administrator on the subject, theme, and direction of a major policy speech, the speech writing team conducts initial research through consultation with Agency subject matter experts.

The speech writers will consult Agency experts on the following:

- **Context:** Why is the speech being given now? What is happening in the legislative/regulatory/international arenas? Is the speech being held in advance of an international meeting or to mark an important anniversary or milestone?
- **Essential Points to Make:** What are the two to four main points the Administrator or Deputy Administrator should make? What is to be achieved? What philosophy underlies this approach?
- **Background Facts:** What facts are relevant to the event and the audience? For events with foreign governments, how are the United States and the foreign government linked (culturally and government-to-government)? What have we accomplished together? What has USAID, and the United States more broadly, done in concrete terms to address the priority issues raised in the speech?

The speech writers use the information from these consultations to develop an outline which is reviewed with the Administrator. Any resulting feedback is incorporated into a rough draft. Drafts of the Administrator's speeches are sensitive documents and their final content and direction may be altered up to the moment of delivery.

For major policy speeches with USG/interagency equities, as drafts are developed, the speech writing team coordinates with the National Security Staff (NSC) and relevant external stakeholders to inform speech content and direction. Final versions are submitted to ES for official recordkeeping, fact checking, and for review by the Office of the Administrator. Any required clearances will be handled by ES.

## 5.2.7 Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)

An MOU is a document that sets forth an understanding or statement of intent between participants. It may also be referred to as a Statement of Intent, Letter of Intent, or Shared Statement of Goals/Principles. MOUs may be entered into with other government entities, private sector partners, or other bilateral or multilateral institutions to indicate high-level concurrence to work together (see inset box for examples). They typically cover a range of topics including results to be achieved, activities to be implemented, and the respective roles and responsibilities of each participant. There are two defining characteristics of the MOUs used by USAID: (1) they are not used for obligating funds; and (2) they are not legally binding. To obligate funds or establish a legally binding document, bureaus/IOs should consider an Interagency Agreement, Letter of Agreement, Memorandum of Agreement (MOA), or another procurement-related mechanism that is signed at the bureau/IO level in accordance with delegations of authority. An MOU may be used to confirm an agreement with a host government or other entity on a program that USAID will fund directly through a separate obligating instrument.

Type of MOU Signatory	Example MOU	Purpose
Private Sector (corporate and philanthropic)	World Food Programme and Pepsi Co.; DSM Nutritional.	To leverage resources and establish a joint framework for coordination.
USG Department or Agency	National Science Foundation; NASA.	To leverage resources and establish a joint framework for coordination on interagency issues.
Government-to-Government	Republic of Korea; Qatar; AusAid.	To outline donor-to-donor areas for coordination, document key relationships, or memorialize shared perspectives between or among the signatories.
Multilateral/Public International Organization (PIO)	World Bank.	

### Guidance

MOUs are signed routinely by Agency representatives as an important means of collaboration and outreach. MOUs should only be signed by the Administrator or Deputy Administrator when they advance a key USAID or USG strategic interest and are co-signed with a counterpart of similar stature. Please refer to the guidelines on the following page when considering whether or not to recommend an MOU be signed by the Administrator or Deputy Administrator.

An important general guideline for all MOUs, regardless of the level at which they are signed, is that they should adhere to our core development best practices, particularly by strengthening country ownership. While MOUs are often initiated and signed at the Washington headquarters level, they should be consistent with host country priorities and systems. This is especially true when MOUs specify particular implementing countries. While the parties entering into an MOU may be USAID and another entity, drafters should keep in mind that the implementing country

will be an equal partner in the success of the deliverables. MOU language should be drafted accordingly to align with country realities.

### *Strategic Guidelines*

An MOU merits an Agency Principal's signature if it furthers the Agency's mission and strategic objectives by meeting at least three of the following four criteria:

- 1) Has global implications, specifically:
  - Private sector MOUs that are global in nature generally represent a broad, overall agreement to work together that is not limited to a particular country or project. An MOU at this level may set the broad strategic framework for smaller, more specific regional, country, or project-level MOUs to be established under or consistent with it. The purpose of an A/AID-level MOU is to establish leader-to-leader agreement at the highest level so that missions and sector leads do not have to start from scratch in negotiating partnerships.
  - USG, government-to-government, or multilateral/PIO MOUs may also be global in nature if they address an issue that is either a key priority area (e.g., food security, global health, innovation, science and technology) or a crosscutting issue (e.g., women and girls, water, climate change) and will be applied in multiple countries or regions.
- 2) Furthers a relationship with a key high-profile entity, specifically:
  - Private sector MOUs should further a relationship with a Fortune 500 company or equivalent;
  - USG MOUs, by nature, further key interagency relationships;
  - Government-to-government or multilateral/PIO MOUs that advance a key strategic or political bilateral relationship or are of a sensitive political nature.
- 3) Leverages significant resources, specifically:
  - Private sector MOUs should leverage significant financial or in-kind resources, (at least \$1 million), and offer an especially significant level of impact and return on USAID's investment;
  - USG, government-to-government, and multilateral/PIO MOUs may be more symbolic in nature, but the areas for coordination described within them should entail a significant leveraging of financial or in-kind resources from the partner entity, e.g., funds to work in a non-presence country.
- 4) Generates significant media or public interest, specifically:
  - Private sector MOUs should be noteworthy enough to garner press coverage, highlighting new ways of doing business or efforts in a priority area;
  - USG, government-to-government, or multilateral/PIO MOUs may be newsworthy in and of themselves, or in cases of political sensitivities, may be noteworthy internally within the USG for precedential or symbolic purposes.

## *Signatory Guidelines*

In addition to strategic guidelines, a key determinant of whether or not an MOU rises to the A/AID's level is the level of the person signing from the other party. The A/AID should sign MOUs that are co-signed at the secretary, deputy secretary, head of state, or ministerial level. When signing with a private sector entity, the co-signer should be one of the top three executives of the company, whether president, vice president, chief executive officer, or chief operating officer. The DA/AID should co-sign an MOU with assistant secretaries, deputy heads of state or deputies at the ministerial level, and top private sector executives.

## **Process Clearances**

All MOUs should be cleared through pillar and regional bureaus with equities in the implementation of MOU activities. In addition, private sector MOUs should be cleared through the Global Development Lab; government-to-government and multilateral MOUs should be cleared through PPL/DE. USAID staff may be involved in drafting an MOU to be signed by a principal of an entity other than USAID. In these cases, if the MOU has significant implications for USAID, it must be cleared through the relevant internal bureau/IOs and ES before USAID clearance is provided to the other agency. GC should review MOUs to ensure that they are appropriately non-binding from a legal perspective. If there are potential resource implications and references to future resources, BRM should review and clear.

## **Writing Guidance**

While the contents of each MOU will be somewhat unique, below is a list of elements that are typically included. As a best practice, it is advisable to include, at a minimum, the following starred items:

- ★ Purpose (goals, objectives);
- ★ Partner Roles and Responsibilities;
- Implementation:
  - Operating principles or governance structure (how decisions under the MOU are made, e.g., through a meeting, steering committee, implementing partner, etc.);
  - Funding (in-kind, other mechanisms);
  - Audits;
  - ★ Communications (roles, individual policies, key messages, branding, etc.);
- Reporting and Evaluation;
- ★ Effective Date, Duration, Amendments, and Termination;
- Other Topics (as needed).

While a common understanding of communications is essential to include in a private sector MOU, it may or may not be applicable in a government-to-government MOU where a country may have its own domestic messaging concerns, priorities, and practices. However, this topic is starred since, at a minimum, it is worth discussing and agreeing to, whether or not specific language is ultimately included in the MOU. The same holds true of reporting and evaluation

requirements. While formal requirements may not always be included in MOUs that are intended as general statements of understanding, drafters should still consider plans for monitoring and evaluating the intended outcomes during the drafting process.



## 6 Scheduling

### 6.1 Scheduling Request for Agency Principals

USAID and Agency Principals receive a multitude of correspondence requesting Agency Principal attendance and/or engagement from a diverse number of individuals and organizations both internally and externally. In order to effectively prioritize and respond to correspondents, bureaus/IOs must submit a Scheduling Proposal Memo for any official engagement with an Agency Principal before the scheduling team will consider further action. This includes invitations, meeting requests, etc. received from external correspondents and scheduling requests generated internally. Scheduling proposals are processed through ES and acted on by Front Office Scheduling Team, not by ES.

#### Guidance

USAID and Agency Principals support any participation in engagements that would provide for the advancement of the USAID mission and USG strategic interests. However because Agency Principals regularly maintain an active and exhaustive schedule, the availability of Agency Principals are at times limited. Therefore, in addition to stressing the importance that all scheduling requests for Agency Principals advance the USAID mission or a USG strategic interest, requests should also be with an interlocutor at an appropriate level. Please refer to the following guidelines when considering whether or not to recommend a meeting:

#### Strategic Guidelines

Attendance furthers the Agency mission and strategic objectives by meeting at least one of the following criteria:

- Addresses a priority area (democracy and governance, food security, global health, sustainable economic growth, humanitarian assistance, gender empowerment, multilateral engagement);
- Promotes an operational priority (procurement reform, talent management, policy capacity, monitoring and evaluation, budget management, innovation, or internal meetings and events);
- Furthers relationship with key constituencies (congressional, interagency, public);
- Advances Agency leadership and provides a leadership role (key speaking/hosting role or strategic participation);
- Requires Principal engagement because engagement at a lower level would be insufficient.

#### Attendance Guidelines

Attendance for Agency Principals is appropriate at the following levels:

- A/AID – Deputy Secretary, CEO, Head of State, Ministerial Level;

- DA/AID – Assistant Secretary, CEO/Deputy CEO or Vice President/Director, Deputy Head of State, or Ministerial Level.

Exceptions include prior existing relationships, subject matter experts, and meetings with partners (implementing partners, multilaterals, etc.) where a Principal’s participation will advance a specific strategic priority.

## **6.2 Scheduling Process for Agency Principals**

### **6.2.1 Internal USAID Scheduling Requests**

#### *Administrator Internal Scheduling Requests*

Bureaus/IOs proposing either internal or external meetings with the Administrator of USAID should submit a Scheduling Proposal Memo to the Administrator’s Scheduling Request Mailbox, [administrator\\_scheduling\\_request@usaid.gov](mailto:administrator_scheduling_request@usaid.gov). Senior staff, who report directly to A/AID, do not need to submit formal schedule proposals for their own one-on-one meetings. Recommendations provided in a Scheduling Proposal Memo should include input and clearances from any other bureau/IO that has equity in the matter, regardless of whether or not A/AID will attend. All external meetings should include LPA clearance and proposals should be submitted no later than two weeks prior to the meeting through bureau/IO CCCs. Once submitted, proposals are reviewed bi-weekly and decisions are then communicated from the Front Office Scheduling Team.

#### *Deputy Administrator Internal Scheduling Requests*

Bureaus/IOs proposing either internal or external meetings with the Deputy Administrator of USAID should submit a Scheduling Proposal Memo to the Deputy Administrator’s Scheduling Request Mailbox, [deputy\\_administrator\\_scheduling\\_request@usaid.gov](mailto:deputy_administrator_scheduling_request@usaid.gov). Senior staff, who report directly to DA/AID, do not need to submit formal schedule proposals for their own one-on-one meetings. Recommendations provided in a Scheduling Proposal Memo should include input and clearances from any other bureau/IO that has equity in the matter, regardless of whether or not DA/AID will attend. All external meetings should include LPA clearance. Proposals should be submitted no later than two weeks prior to the meeting through bureau/IO CCCs. Once submitted, proposals are reviewed bi-weekly and decisions are then communicated from the DA/AID Scheduling Team.

### **6.2.2 External USAID Scheduling Requests**

#### *Administrator External Scheduling Requests*

Any external request for engagement received by a bureau/IO that is addressed to the Administrator should be submitted to the Administrator’s Scheduling Request Mailbox,

[administrator\\_scheduling\\_request@usaid.gov](mailto:administrator_scheduling_request@usaid.gov), together with a Scheduling Proposal Memo as soon as possible. If you receive an external request for engagement (i.e. invitations, meeting requests, etc.) addressed to A/AID that is not appropriate for your bureau/IO to review, please forward to the Administrator's Appointments Mailbox, [appointments@usaid.gov](mailto:appointments@usaid.gov). ES and the Front Office Scheduling Team will review and task out to the appropriate bureaus/IOs for a recommendation. Requests for scheduling proposals are tasked according to the following:

- If the inviting/requesting organization or topic is issue/sector specific, scheduling proposals are tasked to the corresponding bureau/IO with clearance through LPA.
- If the inviting/requesting organization or topic is generic international development or covers multiple topic areas, scheduling proposals are tasked to LPA with clearance through the appropriate bureaus/IOs.

\*\*All tasked scheduling proposals should be uploaded into ACTS with the original ACT Folder No. and to the Administrator Scheduling Request Mailbox, [administrator\\_scheduling\\_request@usaid.gov](mailto:administrator_scheduling_request@usaid.gov), through the bureau/IO CCC, regardless of whether the recommendation is to accept or decline.

#### Deputy Administrator External Scheduling Requests

Any external request for engagement (i.e. invitations, meeting requests, etc.) received by a bureau/IO that is addressed to the Deputy Administrator should be submitted to the Deputy Administrator's Scheduling Request Mailbox, [deputy\\_administrator\\_scheduling\\_request@usaid.gov](mailto:deputy_administrator_scheduling_request@usaid.gov), together with a Scheduling Proposal Memo as soon as possible. If you receive an external request for engagement addressed to DA/AID that is not appropriate for your bureau/IO to review, please forward to the Deputy Administrator's Scheduling Request Mailbox, [deputy\\_administrator\\_scheduling\\_request@usaid.gov](mailto:deputy_administrator_scheduling_request@usaid.gov). ES and the DA/AID Scheduling Team will review and task out to the appropriate bureaus/IOs for a recommendation. Requests for scheduling proposals are tasked according to the following:

- If the inviting/requesting organization or topic is issue/sector specific, scheduling proposals are tasked to the corresponding bureau/IO with clearance through LPA.
- If the inviting/requesting organization or topic is generic international development or covers multiple topic areas, scheduling proposals are tasked to LPA with clearance through the appropriate bureaus/IOs.

\*\*All tasked scheduling proposals should be uploaded into ACTS with the original ACT Folder No. and to the Deputy Administrator Scheduling Request Mailbox, [deputy\\_administrator\\_scheduling\\_request@usaid.gov](mailto:deputy_administrator_scheduling_request@usaid.gov), through the bureau/IO CCC, regardless of whether the recommendation is to accept or decline.

### **6.2.3 Re-Tasking Of Scheduling Proposals**

Should the bureau/IO find that the tasked scheduling proposal would be better suited for another bureau/IO, the bureau/IO CCC may request to have the proposal re-tasked by replying to the

original tasker email and recommending another bureau/IO for consideration. The decision to re-task will be determined by ES and AID/A. Bureau/IOs will be notified of the outcome thereafter. Please note that if the bureau CCC does not submit the request to re-task within two business days of the deadline, the bureau tasked will be held responsible.

## 7 Coordination with the National Security Council (NSC)

### 7.1 NSC

The NSC is housed in the Executive Office of the President and has been the President's principal forum for deliberating national security and foreign policy matters since it was created in 1947. The Council convenes senior national security advisors and cabinet officials to advise and assist the President on national security and foreign policies. The Council also serves as the President's principal arm for coordinating these policies among the various government agencies involved in foreign affairs.

#### 7.1.1 NSC Structure

The NSC is chaired by the President of the United States and comprised of the following senior White House advisors and cabinet officials:

<i>Chair</i>	President of the United States
<i>Regular Attendees</i>	
	Statutory
	Vice President of the United States
	Secretary of State
	Secretary of Defense
	Non-statutory
	Secretary of the Treasury
	National Security Advisor
<i>Military Advisor</i>	Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff
<i>Intelligence Advisor</i>	Director of National Intelligence
<i>Invited to Attend Any Meeting</i>	Chief of Staff to the President
	Counsel to the President
	Assistant to the President for Economic Policy
<i>Invited to Attend Relevant Meetings</i>	Attorney General
	Director of the Office of Management and Budget
<i>Additional Participants</i>	Deputy National Security Advisor
	Secretary of Homeland Security
	Secretary of Energy
	Ambassador to the United Nations

The heads of other executive departments and agencies, other senior officials, and other White House staff are invited to attend NSC meetings based on the topic to be discussed. For example:

<i>Topic</i>	<i>Additional Invitees</i>
International Economic Issues	Secretary of Commerce
	United States Trade Representative
	Chair of the Council of Economic Advisors

Homeland Security/Counter-terrorism	Assistant to the President for Homeland Security
Food Security	USAID Administrator Secretary of the U. S. Department of Agriculture

The USAID Administrator is invited to meetings related to development and humanitarian assistance, and meetings where expertise is needed to ensure that development impacts are considered equally with other strategic priorities.

### 7.1.2 National Security Staff (NSC)

The NSC is supported by the NSC staff, who conducts the White House’s day-to-day management of national security affairs. The NSC is made up of both appointees and agency detailees divided into regional and functional areas.

## 7.2 NSC-led Meetings

The NSC regularly convenes interagency meetings of Council members and subordinate committees to discuss the development and implementation of national security policy. Committees meet on standing topics and special topics as needed. Council meetings are chaired by the President and called NSC meetings. Subordinate committees meet regularly to tee up issues for, and address taskings from, the NSC. The primary subordinate committees, in descending order, are Principal Committees (PCs), Deputy Committees (DCs), and Interagency Policy Committees (IPCs), each of which is explained in detail below. ES coordinates Agency participation in all DCs, PCs, and NSCs, and any meetings that are attended by Agency Principals. ES coordinates the exchange of documents and participant clearances with the NSC ES. USAID ES also manages participation when USAID officials participate in NSC meetings by secure video teleconference.

All NSC, PC, and DC meeting agendas and invitation lists are prepared by the National Security Advisor, at the direction of the President and in consultation with other Council members. With the support of the NSC, the National Security Advisor ensures that appropriate meeting materials are prepared and NSC actions recorded, including Presidential decisions. Communications regarding attendance at NSC, PC, and DC meetings are handled between USAID ES and NSC ES staff.

### **7.2.1 NSC Principal Committees**

PCs are the senior interagency forum below the Council. Their purpose is senior-level discussion and consideration of policy issues affecting national security.

PCs are chaired by the National Security Advisor; they are not normally attended by the President or Vice President. Regular members include all of the Council attendees and participants, in addition to the Deputy Secretary of State and Assistant to the Vice President of National Security Affairs. One exception is that the Assistant to the President for Economic Policy only joins, and may chair, when international economic issues are on the agenda. The heads of other executive departments and agencies are invited to attend based on agenda topics in the same manner as full Council meetings.

Agency Principals may represent USAID at PCs. Depending on the topic and level of discussion, they may take a “plus one” with them or send a representative in their place. Representatives are typically the Administrator or Deputy Administrator

### **7.2.2 NSC Deputy Committees**

DCs review and monitor the work of the NSC interagency process, including IPCs. DCs also ensure that issues brought forward to a PC or the NSC have been properly analyzed and prepared for decision. In particular, DCs focus significant attention on policy implementation, periodically reviewing the Administration’s major foreign policy initiatives to ensure that they are being implemented in a timely and effective manner. DCs are also responsible for day-to-day crisis management. Any NSC principal or deputy, as well as the National Security Advisor, can request a DC in their capacity as a crisis manager.

DCs are chaired by the Deputy National Security Advisor. Committee members mirror the PC participant lists, but at the deputy level (e.g., Deputy Secretary of the Treasury instead of the Secretary of the Treasury, etc.). The chair may invite representatives of other executive departments and agencies and other senior officials to attend meetings as appropriate.

As with PCs, Agency Principals may represent USAID at DCs. As appropriate, and with the approval or at the invitation of the NSC, they may take a “plus one” or send a representative in their place. In these cases, representatives are typically the Deputy Administrator, Counselor to the Agency, or an AA, or SDAA of the appropriate bureau(s). Participation in NSC meetings requires concurrence by the NSC Executive Secretariat.

### **7.2.3 NSC Interagency Policy Committees**

IPCs are the primary vehicle for interagency policy coordination on national security issues. They aim to bring agencies to consensus on policy issues by working to:

- Identify issues on the horizon that require interagency work;
- Create a forum for interagency creative thinking;
- Prepare decisions for consideration by Principals and Deputies as needed; and
- Fulfill PC, DC, and Presidential Policy Directive requirements.

IPCs are established under the direction of DCs and chaired by NSC staff. In general, each NSC Senior Director has one or two IPCs that meet regularly, with sub-IPC groups managing special topics as needed.

IPCs are chiefly convened by the heads of NSC directorates, called Senior Directors. In accordance with Presidential policy, each IPC must establish clear guidelines on participants, decision making processes, and decision time frames. Participants are obligated to fully consult on agenda items within the interagency prior to IPC meetings to enable a full understanding of the likely positions of other agencies.

USAID participants at IPC meetings are generally AAs or SDAAs while sub-IPCs are attended at the office director or division chief level. Participants are expected to represent official Agency positions, so it is important for bureau/IO leadership to be kept informed of upcoming meetings. When an IPC agrees that an issue should rise to Deputies for decision, the IPC identifies decisions for Deputies to make, describes options and their pros and cons, and clarifies the agencies' positions for each option.

IPCs are convened at the NSC Directorate level so they are not coordinated through the NSC ES or USAID ES. However, USAID ES should be kept informed of IPC processes and conclusions given the IPCs' role in providing policy analysis for consideration by the more senior fora of the NSC system.

#### **7.2.4 Other NSC-led Meetings**

PCs and DCs are not to be confused with other "Deputy-level" meetings or Small Group meetings convened by NSC staff. They are handled separately from PCs/DCs by front office staff or bureaus/IOs. They are chaired and convened by various individuals at the NSC, usually involving selected deputy-level participants, and are not coordinated through the NSC ES or USAID ES.

#### **7.2.5 Invitation Process**

ES oversees the invitation process for PCs and DCs. Individual bureau/IO attendees manage their participation in IPCs. USAID invitations to participate in PCs and DCs are managed as follows:

- ES receives official notification of invitation via a phone call, e-mail, or fax from the NSC ES.



- USAID ES simultaneously contacts the Agency Principals' schedulers and relevant bureau/IO leadership by an email marked Sensitive but Unclassified (SBU) to determine availability for the meeting. For PCs, the attendee must be an Agency Principal. For DCs, if the DA/AID or Counselor will not attend, the Office of the Administrator will recommend the appropriate AA or SDAA, based on the subject matter, or will request the relevant bureau/IO make a recommendation. ES notifies the appropriate bureau/IO of a meeting invitation via SBU e-mail on the USAID regular e-mail system. If the official NSC tasker and contents come through the classified system, the e-mail must go over ClassNet (up to the SECRET level) or over the Joint Worldwide Intelligence Communications System (for TOP SECRET level or above) to disseminate the classified information.
- If the Agency Principal is scheduled to attend a meeting that is chaired by the Deputy National Security Advisor, USAID may be granted approval for an appropriate AA or SDAA to attend as a "plus one." USAID may also request a "plus one" through ES channels if needed. If a "plus one" is offered by the NSC or requested by USAID, the Office of the Administrator recommends a senior staff member based on the subject matter or requests a recommendation. Attendance of "plus ones" is at the discretion of the NSC and all invitations are handled through ES.
- Bureaus/IOs and special assistants sometimes learn of DCs or PCs before USAID is formally invited through official channels. If you receive information about an upcoming meeting, remind the inviters that USAID is considered invited only when USAID ES receives official notification from the NSC and relay the information that you have received to USAID ES.
- NSC requests submission of participant names and clearance information 24 hours in advance of meetings, or by 3:00 p.m. the day before meetings scheduled with less than 24 hours' notice. NSC notifies USAID ES when participants are approved or disapproved. For USAID staff participating in DCs, PCs, and NSCs, ES is required to submit the following information:
  - Full Name;
  - Date of Birth;
  - Place of Birth (city, state, country);
  - Social Security Number; and
  - Clearance Level.

The above information must be transmitted via encrypted software. Please refer to the Automated Directives System (ADS) for detailed guidance on protecting personal information.

## **7.3 NSC Memo Guidance**

### **7.3.1 Briefers**

Once ES has confirmed that an Agency Principal is attending an NSC-convened meeting, ES formally tasks a briefer to the appropriate bureau/IO. Briefers should adhere to the standard format and include the meeting agenda, background, any suggested talking points, and attachments as needed, including any meeting papers. Drafters should mark memos appropriately for security classifications and follow guidelines for handling classified materials when submitting to ES. If the meeting is delegated to an AA or SDAA, the bureau is responsible for handling briefers and ES is not involved.

When the meeting agenda/paper arrives from the NSC via Washfax, ES calls and emails the tasked bureau/IO for pickup so that it can be included with the briefer and reviewed by the AA/SDAA (if attending). DC and PC Briefers follow the standard ES submission and clearance process, but with the proper transmittal of classified documents. Oftentimes, PC and DC Briefers are assigned with a very short turnaround time. Every effort should be made to adhere to assigned deadlines, and drafters should contact ES for assistance when needed. While we all have competing priorities, preparing a briefer for an Agency Principal to attend an NSC-convened meeting should take highest priority.

### **7.3.2 NSC-tasked Policy Papers**

At times, agencies are assigned papers by PC or DC committee chairs or by the NSC at the direction of the National Security Advisor or Deputy National Security Advisor. When USAID is responsible for such a paper, ES will task it to be prepared in accordance with NSC guidance. As NSC-tasked papers are presented to the interagency as Agency policy, it is important that they be thoroughly reviewed and cleared within USAID before being presented to the interagency. Questions about assigned papers should be directed to ES, who will liaise directly with the NSC.

When an IPC assigns a paper to USAID, ES will not task it out. However, all papers prepared for IPCs should be cleared by the appropriate AA(s) and copies provided to ES for record keeping purposes. The ES copy should include a one-page summary of the paper in Info Memo format to be shared with the Office of the Administrator.

### **7.3.3 Summaries of Conclusions (SOCs)**

NSC prepares a SOC for DCs and PCs or a Summary of Discussion for NSC meetings, typically within 24 hours of the conclusion of a meeting. SOC's contain both a summary of discussion and taskings to agencies, and are delivered from the NSC ES to the USAID ES after a meeting. USAID ES will distribute the SOC's to the Office of the Administrator and appropriate bureaus/IOs, ensuring that any required taskings are issued in a timely fashion.

SOCs are not required for IPCs, unofficial, or “small group” meetings of Deputies or Principals. However, NSC Directorates often prepare SOC or informal notes for meeting participants. When bureau/IO participants receive copies of SOC or informal notes, they should be included in the debriefing note prepared for the Office of the Administrator.

#### **7.3.4 Paper PCs and DCs**

In certain situations, the NSC may determine that it is more logical and efficient to have an issue for Deputies or Principals be reviewed in writing instead of a formal meeting. This is sometimes called a Paper PC or DC. This may occur when a decision paper needs to be reviewed and approved, but the NSC does not consider it necessary for participants to meet in person, or when there is interagency agreement on issues, but the issues are important enough to warrant PC or DC attention. When a Paper PC or DC is arranged, NSC ES issues a memo to agencies detailing the requested written responses and due date(s). It is important to adhere to these deadlines because, in many cases, concurrence is understood for agencies that do not respond by the deadline. Clearance for a paper produced as part of this process should follow the same procedure as with an in-person DC or PC.

## 8 Coordination with Other White House Offices

It is essential that all documents going to the White House be free of errors and of the highest quality. The reputation of the Agency is often reflected in the work we produce. To ensure high quality documents, please follow the standards outlined in this manual.

### 8.1 Cabinet Affairs Reports

Weekly Reports are a critical document for facilitating communication between USAID and the Administration. The content of Weekly Reports is used to develop Agency reports submitted to the White House Office of Cabinet Affairs. Cabinet Affairs consolidates all department and agency reports to provide the President, Chief of Staff, and senior White House officials with a report detailing agency activity for the upcoming week. This is a critical planning document for all White House offices and is used on a daily basis to coordinate press and policy rollouts with the agencies. It is important that submissions be well written, informative, and submitted in a timely manner. While content may be drafted at the staff level, it is expected that bureau/IO leadership be familiar with, and sign off on, submitted reports.

- *Content* – Reports should be brief summaries of bureau/IO actions in the requested areas, as detailed in the template on the ES website. It is not necessary to include something in each of these areas. Also, many items could fit into multiple categories. Please provide only one entry per item (e.g., if the Administrator is going to make a major announcement at an event, include that in either “Policy” or “Speeches/Travel/Meetings” but not both). Reports should cover the week(s) ahead as knowledge of upcoming activities allows both the Administrator and the White House to be prepared and support everyone’s efforts, under the theory of “no surprises.”
- *Distribution* – Copies of report submissions, in whole and in part, are shared with the Office of the Administrator and the White House, and are disseminated to all USAID staff. If a bureau/IO wishes to convey information that is not relevant for other audiences, please mark it accordingly.
- *Format* – The final Cabinet Report is written in a narrative form, and where appropriate, is presented in the following format:
  - On October 27, Administrator [NAME] will deliver remarks at [FORUM] about [SUBJECT MATTER]. [SENTENCE EXPLAINING SIGNIFICANCE.]
  - On October 27, Administrator [NAME] will announce [POLICY CHANGE/INITIATIVE/MILESTONE]. [SENTENCE EXPLAINING SIGNIFICANCE.]

## **8.2 White House Correspondence**

There are two types of White House correspondence prepared by USAID:

- Correspondence addressed to the White House and forwarded to USAID for a draft or direct reply;
- Correspondence originating in USAID for the signature of the President.

When responding to public mail forwarded by the White House, drafters should not convey the impression that the correspondence has been reviewed by the President, Vice President, or First Lady. Use phrases such as, “Your letter to the President concerning [topic] has been referred to the United States Agency for International Development.” When responding to Members of Congress, use phrases such as “The United States Agency for International Development has been asked to reply to your letter of [date] concerning [topic].”

Correspondence originating in USAID for the signature of the President is sent to the White House under cover of an ES-to-ES cover memo. Bureau/IOs drafting such correspondence should refer to the template on the ES Website when preparing an ES-to-ES memo.

## **8.3 Memos to the President or Other White House Principals**

Memos to the President are appropriate only in exceptional situations requiring the President’s personal attention. Memos for the President or other White House Principals should be as brief as possible and reflect the best the Agency has to offer in drafting skill and policy analysis. Avoid ambiguity and keep the memo clear, concise, and relevant. Memos for the President or other White House Principals are submitted under cover of an Action Memo cleared through ES and signed by the Administrator or Deputy Administrator.

## **8.4 Presidential Determinations**

When ES receives a Presidential Determination (PD), it is date stamped, processed, and routed to the Office of the General Counsel (GC). GC is responsible for taking any action necessary related to PDs, including advising relevant bureaus/IOs. All PDs issued in a given fiscal year are logged into ACTS and compiled into one folder.

## **8.5 Coordination with Other White House Offices**

In addition to the NSC, there are several White House offices that USAID staff may coordinate with. In all cases, it is important to represent Agency interests as a whole and work through ES as necessary. In general, when the issue being discussed has crosscutting, Agency-wide implications, or is being prepared for an official of corresponding rank to the Administrator or Deputy Administrator, USAID staff should coordinate with ES to ensure alignment with the Office of the Administrator and other Agency equities. Below is a partial list and brief

descriptions of offices within the Executive Office of the President (EOP) and the White House that USAID staff may come in contact with.

### **Executive Office of the President (EOP)**

- **Council of Economic Advisors (CEA)**  
CEA provides the President with economic advice on both domestic and international economic policy.
- **Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ)**  
CEQ coordinates federal environmental efforts and works closely with agencies and other White House offices in the development of environmental policies and initiatives.
- **Office of Management and Budget (OMB)**  
OMB is the largest and arguably most influential component of the EOP. OMB is the implementation and enforcement arm of Presidential policy government-wide, helping departments and agencies implement the commitments and priorities of the President, primarily through budget development and execution. In addition to budget oversight, OMB is also responsible for four core areas: management (oversight of agency performance, federal procurement, financial management, and information technology); coordination and review of all significant federal regulations by federal agencies; legislative clearance and coordination (review and clearance of all agency communications with Congress); and management of Executive Orders and Presidential Memoranda to agency heads and officials, used by the President to direct government-wide actions. ES reviews incoming OMB correspondence and proactively alerts relevant bureau/IOs if the correspondence has any implications for Agency efforts.
- **Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP)**  
ONDCP establishes policies for the nation's drug control program. They also oversee and coordinate both the international and domestic federal anti-drug efforts.
- **Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP)**  
OSTP provides the President scientific and technical advice; ensures that federal policies are informed by sound science; and coordinates department and agency scientific and technical work. The office includes four broad divisions: Science, Technology, Environment and Energy, and National Security and International Affairs.
- **Office of the United States Trade Representative (USTR)**  
USTR develops and coordinates U.S. international trade, commodity, and direct investment policy, and oversees negotiations with other countries. The head of USTR is a Cabinet member who serves as the President's principal trade advisor, negotiator, and spokesperson on trade issues.
- **Office of the Vice President (OVP)**  
The Vice President and his staff comprise the OVP. The Vice President is specifically tasked with advising the President on a multitude of international issues.

## **White House Offices**

- **Office of Cabinet Affairs**

Cabinet Affairs is the primary liaison between the President and his Cabinet. The Office coordinates communications, policy, and logistics between the White House and the Cabinet, and manages issues that affect multiple federal agencies. All departments and agencies, including USAID, submit weekly reports to Cabinet Affairs that are shared with the President and White House officials and used as a critical planning and coordination tool (see [Section 8.1](#)). The Office also holds regular meetings and calls with department and agency chiefs of staff for overall coordination and planning.

- **Office of the Chief of Staff**

The Chief of Staff's office oversees White House staff and coordinates with others to further the President's agenda. This office is both the nerve center for all activity and the final stop for all issues to be vetted and positions taken before being presented to the President.

- **Office of Communications**

The Office of Communications is responsible for crafting the President's message through speeches, news items, and online. It includes offices of Media Affairs, New Media, Research, and Speech Writing.

- **Office of the First Lady**

The Office of the First Lady aids the First Lady in all aspects of her official life and includes its own Policy, Communications, Scheduling, and Correspondence departments. Key policy priorities of the First Lady include supporting military families, helping working women balance career and family, encouraging national service, promoting the arts, and fostering healthy eating and living. The First Lady also oversees the Office of the Social Secretary, which is responsible for planning and hosting all official White House events, from musical performances to state dinners.

- **Office of Legislative Affairs**

The Office of Legislative Affairs is the President's primary liaison to the U.S. Congress. It is responsible for advancing the President's legislative agenda on Capitol Hill and coordinating department and agency legislative outreach.

- **Office of Public Engagement, Intergovernmental Affairs, and Council on Women and Girls**

The Office of Public Engagement is the primary channel through which the public engages with the White House. It is responsible for building relationships with advocacy groups and nongovernmental organizations on policy issues and coordinating the engagement efforts of federal departments and agencies, including USAID.

The White House Council on Women and Girls coordinates departments and agencies to ensure that they are taking into account the needs of women and girls in their policies and programs. The Council is comprised of executive branch members, including USAID.

The Office of Intergovernmental Affairs is responsible for coordinating White House and executive branch efforts with elected state, local, and tribal officials.

- **Office of Scheduling and Advance**

The Scheduling and Advance office coordinates travel itineraries for the President and the White House Press Corps, as well as the planning and preparation to support the President at domestic and international events. When USAID Principals travel as part of a White House delegation, their travel will be coordinated through this office.

- **Office of the Staff Secretary**

The Office of the Staff Secretary handles the flow of all documents to and from the President and includes an Executive Clerk, Records Management, and Presidential Correspondence divisions. The Office of Presidential Correspondence is a large office that handles all official correspondence on behalf of the President. It receives and responds to letters, produces presidential proclamations, messages, and greetings; and operates a Comment Line. The office includes an Agency Liaison Office that works with all federal agencies on correspondence management.

- **Office of the White House Counsel**

White House Counsel advises the President and White House staff on all legal issues and coordinates the efforts of all agency general counsels, including USAID.

- **Office of White House Policy**

The Office of White House Policy includes the Domestic Policy Council (DPC) and the National Economic Council. DPC plays a similar coordinating function as NSC, but for domestic affairs. It coordinates the domestic policy-making process and provides advice to the President. Three main sub-offices fall under DPC:

The **Office of National AIDS Policy** coordinates efforts to reduce the number of HIV infections across the country.

The **Office of Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships (OFBNP)** coordinates the efforts of Centers for FBNPs based at 12 federal departments and agencies, including USAID. Together, the centers conduct outreach to faith-based and community groups in priority areas.

The **Office of Social Innovation and Civic Participation** catalyzes action for community change in key priority areas through a social innovation fund and the coordinated efforts of federal agencies.

## 9 Coordination with the Department of State and Other USG Agencies

USAID staff is regularly asked to draft or clear on documents for other USG organizations. When preparing or clearing documents from other agencies, bear in mind that your clearance



may be interpreted as clearance for USAID as a whole. It is important to coordinate internally to ensure that all relevant bureau/IO equities are taken into account and a USAID perspective writ large is reflected. There are three instances in which documents should be processed through ES:

- If the document is being prepared for a non-USAID, USG principal, it must be processed through USAID ES for A/AID review and clearance before being transmitted to the outside agency. Principals at most agencies are defined as Secretary- or Deputy Secretary-level. State ES also defines the Under Secretary for Political Affairs as principal-level. Principal also refers to other USG officials with Cabinet rank, including the USTR and United States Ambassador to the United Nations.
- If the document has Agency-wide strategic or operational policy implications, it should be processed through USAID ES for A/AID review and clearance regardless of whom the document is being prepared for.
- If documents are being drafted in preparation for an upcoming trip or public event that a USAID Agency Principal will participate in, it should be processed through USAID ES for A/AID review and clearance regardless of whom the document is being prepared for.

When USAID ES receives documents for drafting or clearance from other USG agency executive secretariats, they will be assigned to an Action Office through the standard process. If a bureau/IO receives a request to draft or clear on a document from another USG agency that meets any of the above criteria, contact ES for consultation prior to proceeding.

## **9.1 Drafting Documents for Other USG Agencies**

USAID is sometimes asked to draft documents for use by other USG principals, most often from the Department of State (DOS). Usually these requests are to draft papers, briefers, or other documents in conjunction with an upcoming trip or meeting. In this case, there will be two sets of coordinators listed on the tasker: (1) DOS bureau coordinator; and (2) DOSTATE ES coordinators.

USAID ES assigns DOS taskers through the same process as internal taskers. Assigned Action Offices responsible for drafting documents should contact the DOS bureau coordinator with any questions regarding the tasker.

Once drafted, the Action Office must obtain all USAID clearances and submit to USAID ES. ES will review the document, obtain any needed clearances from A/AID, and transmit the final document to State coordinators. Please note that deadlines to USAID ES may differ from those on the original State tasker so as to allow time for ES to review and obtain A/AID clearances.

## **9.2 Clearing Documents from Other USG Agencies**

USAID is often asked to clear on memos, briefers, or trip papers for other USG principals, most often from DOS. For all memos, USAID ES will alert the appropriate Bureau/IO that it has DOS documents that need to be cleared. These often have very short turn-around deadlines.

For trip papers, USAID ES will alert the bureau/IO and request that they contact the DOS coordinator or appropriate State office (indicated on the tasker) to request a copy of the document for clearance. Bureaus/IOs should provide all clearances obtained to the AID.ES Tasker Mail List. ES will submit all clearances to DOS.

### **9.3 Memos to Other USG Principals**

All Memos to Principals at other USG agencies that are prepared or co-signed by USAID staff must be transmitted through USAID ES. This includes Action, Info, and Scheduling Request Memos. When sending a Memo to a USG principal, submit the following:

- Action Memo requesting that the Administrator approve the memo for the stated principal, including any relevant background information;
- The memo to the other USG principal attached as Tab 1;
- Clearance page showing any required USAID clearances and required clearances from the other agency.

Agency Principals are the only people of sufficient rank to send memos to USG principals at other agencies. USAID bureaus/IOs that wish to submit a memo to a USG principal should do so via the ES process. Bureaus/IOs should contact ES in advance to ensure that they have the correct clearances needed to avoid delays in processing, either within USAID or within the other agency.

### **9.4 Interagency Board Communication**

To facilitate close collaboration in Washington between USG development agencies, the USAID Administrator serves as a permanent member on both the Overseas Private Investment Cooperation (OPIC) and Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) boards. The OPIC Board of Directors, which meets quarterly, provides policy guidance and approves all major insurance, project finance, and investment funds projects. The Administrator's OPIC membership cannot be delegated in his absence.

The MCC Board of Directors selects countries eligible for MCC assistance. If the Administrator is unable to attend an MCC board meeting, a principal deputy or another official of appropriate rank can attend in his place. In this case, the responsible bureau/IO prepares an action memo to the Administrator requesting delegation of authority for the official to attend the meeting on his behalf. The memo should detail all decisions to be voted on at the meeting. The designated representative shall vote in accordance with the positions approved by the Administrator prior to the meeting.

## 9.5 State Department Cables and Crosshatches

### 9.5.1 Cables

Cables, sometimes called telegrams, are official records of DOS and USAID policies, program activities, post operations, and personnel management. USAID sends out cables via DOS as an important means of capturing and making official policy decisions and program activities that are pertinent to both development and diplomatic interests. Cables fall into one of two categories: routine or substantive.

**Routine cables** are pro forma announcements of routine business decisions and actions. These include personnel actions (assignments or reassignments, applications for benefits, separation cables, rest and recuperation, individual separation maintenance allowance, extension of tours, home leaves or transfers, medical clearance, security clearance, etc.), administrative finances (administrative audits, contracting support, U.S. or local payroll, administrative purchasing, etc.), and humanitarian disaster efforts (disaster declarations or responses, funding transfers, etc.). Routine cables are usually captioned ADM AID.

**Substantive cables** communicate guidance that impacts policy and budgetary decisions; has cross-cutting Agency implications, or is related to priority initiatives. Substantive cables are usually captioned AIDAC.

#### Distribution

The address line on a cable indicates who it will be sent to, including:

- Specific Foreign Service posts, e.g., Kabul for the Afghanistan Embassy and Mission;
- Collective addresses for a specific region or group, e.g., AIDAF for AFRICAN POSTS; AIDCO for AID controllers; or AWIDE for AID WORLDWIDE (contact the [Cable Room](#) for a list of collective addresses);
- ALLDP (All Diplomatic Posts) or ALDAC (All Diplomatic and Consular Posts) for broad dissemination to all posts;
- SIPDIS for cables to be shared with DoD, the Intelligence Community, and agencies with access to the Joint Worldwide Intelligence Communications System (JWICS). Drafters considering a SIPDIS cable should contact ES for further guidance.

#### Process

The USAID Cable Room, run by M/CIO, manages the process for transmitting routine cables to the DOS; ES manages the process for substantive cables. Routine cables should be submitted to

the USAID Cable Room at [Cable-Terminal@usaid.gov](mailto:Cable-Terminal@usaid.gov). The Cable Room will assist with formatting before submitting cables to the DOS Operations Center (State Ops) for transmittal. ADM AID cables should be submitted to the Cable Room.

Substantive cables should be sent to ES together with an Action Memo recommending that the cable be sent out, with the cable included as Tab 1. If the cable announces a decision made as a result of an Action Memo approved by the Administrator, then the original Action Memo should be included with the cable. All AWIDE, ALDAC, ALLDP, SIPDIS, and AIDAC cables should be submitted to ES.

All unclassified cables are processed electronically; all classified cables must be submitted in hard copy. Cables originating from missions are transmitted through the local embassy. Mission drafters should follow in-country procedures and do not need to submit through USAID/W.

### **Clearances**

All outgoing cables must be cleared through the appropriate regional bureaus before submission to the field. As all Washington cables are officially disseminated under the Secretary's name, cables also require State clearance where relevant. USAID drafters should contact the relevant State bureaus below the Deputy Secretary level for clearance prior to submission to ES. Substantive cables require approval by the Front Office prior to submission to State, in addition to clearance from relevant bureaus/IOs.

### **Formatting**

Adhering to proper formatting will ensure that your cable is cleared and transmitted as quickly as possible. All cables should be formatted in accordance with the Agency standards outlined in the [Cable Room Guidance](#) available online. Please refer to the sample template on the ES website or the online [cable form](#) available for download under Agency forms as a general reference. These templates describe the minimum fields that are mandatory in all cables. For detailed information on how to indicate additional requirements (info copies, collective addresses, exemptions, minimized addresses, split urgency, eyes only, etc.), please refer to the [Cable Room Guidance](#) online.

### **Writing Guidance**

Cables should be written in a formal tone and in the third person. Text is written in succinct, well-organized, and informative chunks. Remember your audience and write with non-USAID readers in mind, spelling out all acronyms the first time used and explaining internal terms. Since cables are often distributed to non-USAID readers, always include context on the origin and purpose of programs and policies that are referenced. Remember that information contained in cables becomes policy, so information must be factually correct. Drafters should be sensitive to policy implications and specific about the cable's intent.

Cables have a specific tone and writing style. The best way to learn how to write cables is by reading them. USAID staff can sign up to read and search cables through an online tool called SMART Search.

## **9.5.2 Crosshatches**

A crosshatch is a cable that requires NSC clearance prior to transmission. A crosshatch is normally required if the cable makes reference to the President, contains a routine Presidential message (e.g., for a national day); implements decisions from an NSC, PC, or DC meeting; requires broad interagency clearance; or addresses a subject of particular interest to the President. A “MUST GO” crosshatch is a time-sensitive communication that needs to be cleared and transmitted by a specified date and time, and is indicated as such in the subject of the email.

### **Process**

All crosshatches should be submitted to USAID ES for coordination with State. State/ES has requested that DOS deliver MUST GO crosshatches to them by no later than 5:00 p.m. the night the cable must be transmitted. USAID-originated crosshatches must be delivered to USAID ES in sufficient time to meet this deadline, ideally 48 hours in advance. Crosshatches are cleared through NSC directorates as appropriate before returning the cleared crosshatch to DOS for transmittal.

State ES sends cables to NSC for approval and calls the cable POC to notify them if the cable has been cleared with changes. If there are changes, State ES will work out clearances over the phone if possible. If there are no changes, State ES will immediately send the cable out through State Ops. State ES usually will not call the POC if no changes are made. Draft routine cables will be returned to the drafter with instructions on next steps.

### **Clearances**

Do not send a cable for crosshatching until it is fully vetted/cleared at all levels in both USAID and State. Bureaus/IOs are responsible for securing clearances from all relevant agencies except the NSCS prior to delivery of the cable to ES. The only exception is if the crosshatch is to be cleared by, or is part of an Action Memo to, S, DS, or P. In these cases, State ES will crosshatch it for NSC clearance before sending it forward with the Action Memo. If there are differences or disagreements on a draft crosshatch, they should be addressed early in the clearance process and elevated in individual agencies to a level at which they can be resolved. Drafters may sometimes share an advance draft copy of a crosshatch with their NSC counterparts; however, this is never a substitute for the final version. NSC will not give final clearance on a crosshatch until it has been received formally from State/ES and relevant directorates have reviewed that version.

APPR Initials of final approver](Date)  
DRAFT[Initials of drafter] (Date)  
CLEAR[Initials of clearer] (Date)  
[List all clearers, maximum of eight]

[CLASSIFICATION LEVEL]

[Bureau/Office Symbol]:[Drafter's Name]:[Drafter's Initial]  
[MM/DD/YYYY Drafted] [Drafter's telephone number]  
[Bureau/Office Symbol]:[Approver's Name]

[URGENCY: FLASH, NIACT/IMMEDIATE, IMMEDIATE, PRIORITY, ROUTINE]

[ADDRESSES: posts, collective, ALLDP, or ALDAC]

[URGENCY: repeat urgency level if above ROUTINE]

[CAPTION: AIDAC for cables on USAID programs, projects or other substantive matters; ADM AID for USAID administrative messages]

E.O. 13526: [enter N/A for unclassified and SBU cables]

TAGS: [Enter tags if known]

SUBJECT: [Be as precise as possible]

REF: [If in reference to another communication, include]

1. SUMMARY: [Include a summary paragraph if over three pages in length, starting with BEGIN SUMMARY and ending with END SUMMARY]

2. ACTION REQUESTED: [For cables requiring action, enter clear guidance on action needed]

3. TEXT: If there is more than one paragraph, number paragraphs and double space between them. Write in all capital letters, single space, and Courier New 12 point font. Note that cables do not support any special type, including hyperlinks, italics, underlining, quotes, or other symbols.

YY [Enter at the end of text to signify the end of the cable]

[Repeat classification level at the end of the cable]

[For cables more than one page, repeat classification level at the top and bottom of each page and include numeric page numbers]

## 10 Press Guidance and Press Contacts

The Bureau of Legislative and Public Affairs (LPA) Office of Public Affairs coordinates and produces all external media and press communications for the Agency. Due to the unique time sensitivities in dealing with the press, press strategies and guidance do not need to be coordinated through ES, but must be cleared through the Office of Public Affairs, which coordinates directly with the Office of the Administrator. The Office of Public Affairs also develops press strategies and prepares press guidance.

USAID staff must not have unauthorized contacts with the press corps. If a member of the press contacts you directly, refer them to the Press Office for follow-up. The Press Office will then determine whether contact is appropriate and whether it should be on-the-record, on background, or off-the-record. You should expect that someone from the Press Office will be at the meeting or on the call when you are speaking to a reporter. Should you be approached by a reporter unexpectedly at an event, notify the Press Office of the conversation. This is for your protection. You do not have to speak to the reporter. If you have any doubts or questions, contact the Press Office at [usaidpressofficers@usaid.gov](mailto:usaidpressofficers@usaid.gov).

## **11 Classified and Sensitive Information**

ES coordinates with the Office of Security (SEC) and the Management Bureau, which includes the Office of the Chief Information Officer, to facilitate access to, and use of, classified information and Agency outreach to the intelligence community. ES is responsible for:

- Receiving, dispatching (within and outside the Agency), and storing classified documents (e.g., Briefers for Agency Principals, policy papers, and intelligence community products).
- Serving as one of the Agency's Top Secret (TS) Document Control Points, which involves receiving TS documents, and dispatching, as appropriate, and storing hard copy TS documents received by USAID/Washington. SEC serves as a second TS Document Control Point.
- Coordinating classified briefings for Agency Principals, senior executives, and staff upon request, and maintaining classified briefing books on current events and topics.
- Managing the Sensitive Compartmented Information Facility (SCIF) located on the sixth floor of the RRB. The SCIF is used to receive and store classified information, and to host classified meetings and video teleconferences.
- Providing access to classified computer networks for Agency staff with appropriate clearances and email accounts. ES provides access to ClassNet (SECRET) terminals in the ES office suite and access to JWICS (TS/SCI) terminals in the sixth floor SCIF.
- Approving requests for USAID staff to receive Secret Compartmented Information (SCI)-level classified access, in collaboration with SEC.
- Serving on the Agency's Crisis Management Team and the Continuity of Operations (COOP) executive management team to coordinate planning and response efforts. This includes managing classified communications at the Agency's COOP site located outside of Washington, D.C.

The following provides additional detail about ES roles and responsibilities in managing classified information and secure space. Hereafter describes how ES can assist you in meeting your classified information and secure communications needs.

### **11.1 Classification Levels**

#### **11.1.1 Sensitive But Unclassified (SBU)**

SBU information is not classified; however, it requires administrative control and protection from public or other unauthorized disclosure. For instructions for access, dissemination, storage, and release of SBU materials, visit <http://arpsdir.a.state.gov/fam/12fam/12fam0540.html>. Use an SBU cover sheet to protect hard copy material from being inadvertently released to persons without a need-to-know. SBU information can be transmitted on the USAID and State intranet systems, but should never be left in the open, or sent to an account outside of the USAID and State intranet systems without encrypting the information. Encryption can be applied by saving a document as a pdf file, choosing the option to "secure," and choosing the "encrypt with



password option.” The document can then be sent to another government agency that can open the document using the password you provide. Please note that SBU material is not protected from Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) inquiries.

### **11.1.2 Personally Identifiable Information (PII)**

PII refers to personal data that can be used to distinguish or trace an individual’s identity. It is considered SBU and must be handled accordingly. PII can be a single piece of personal data such as a name, date of birth, social security number, address, or photograph. PII can also be a combination of personal data, such as date of birth and mother’s maiden name. In compliance with the Privacy Act of 1974, PII must be protected to the maximum extent possible. Anyone who holds or manages PII is responsible for safeguarding the information; this includes preventing unauthorized access, disclosure, and use of information. PII may not be sent without being properly encrypted. More information about how to encrypt PII is available at <http://spsinternal.usaid.gov/m/cio/CISO/Pages/FileEncryption.aspx>. For more about USAID information management, please refer to [ADS Chapter 541](#).

### **11.1.3 CONFIDENTIAL**

Material classified CONFIDENTIAL must be transmitted either on the ClassNet computer system, on printers, copiers, and fax machines authorized to process classified material, or delivered by courier. It cannot be transmitted on the USAID intranet. Always use a CONFIDENTIAL cover sheet to protect hard copy material from being inadvertently released to persons without appropriate clearances and a need to know. The cover sheet immediately notifies everyone that comes in contact with it that the information behind it is classified and should be handled and stored appropriately and only by those with appropriate clearances.

### **11.1.4 SECRET**

Materials up to the SECRET level can be transmitted and received on the ClassNet computer system. Such materials cannot be transmitted on the USAID intranet. Materials destined for ES or the Front Office staff can be sent to: [TTL-USAID@State.Sgov.gov](mailto:TTL-USAID@State.Sgov.gov). ES manages this account. USAID officers may request that materials be sent to this general USAID account. When requesting that information be sent to that account, always ensure that delivery instructions are provided, including the name and telephone number of the intended recipient. USAID officers requiring a ClassNet account should contact M/CIO through their bureau/IO AMS officer. There are ClassNet terminals located in various offices within USAID/Washington. Some are at users’ desks; some are located in separate areas and are for use by officers that require access to them in the course of their job. ES has ClassNet terminals available for use by officers that do not have them at their desk. Always use an appropriately marked cover sheet to protect your hard copy material from being inadvertently released to persons without a need to know. The cover sheet immediately notifies everyone that comes in

contact with it that the information behind it is classified and should be handled and stored appropriately.

### **11.1.5 TOP SECRET (TS) and SENSITIVE COMPARTMENTED INFORMATION (SCI)**

TS and SCI material can only be sent and received by courier, WASHFAX, or through JWICS. The WASHFAX is an SCI-level approved fax machine. JWICS is the secure online intranet system used by the intelligence community, its partners, and customers to communicate via email, and is cleared to handle information up to SCI. Materials received by any of these modes of transmission are distributed by ES or SEC according to level of clearance and need to know. TS and SCI material can only be reviewed in the second- or sixth-floor SCIFs. Individuals with appropriate clearance may have a JWICS account, subject to availability of funds. There is an annual cost to maintain an account that is paid for by bureaus/IOs through SEC. ES and SEC have a group alias account on JWICS: [dva.usaidewash@usaid.csp.ic.gov](mailto:dva.usaidewash@usaid.csp.ic.gov). USAID officers may request that materials be sent to the general USAID account. When requesting that information be sent to that account, always ensure that delivery instructions are provided, including the name and telephone number of the intended recipient.

## **11.2 Classifying and Declassifying Documents**

### **11.2.1 Classifying Documents**

A document should be classified when it contains information that, if released, could be harmful to U.S. Government persons or interests. Documents can be classified in one of two ways: original or derivative classification.

An **originally classified** document is generated when the initial determination is that information requires protection in the interest of national security and requires protection against unauthorized disclosure. There are four USAID positions delegated authority to originally classify documents: the Administrator, Deputy Administrator, Inspector General, and SEC Office Director.

A **derivatively classified** document is generated when you incorporate, paraphrase, restate, or generate in new form, information that is already classified. All individuals who possess an appropriate security clearance have derivative classification authority. In addition, all individuals with a security clearance are now authorized by Executive Order 13526 to derivatively classify information following guidance published in classification guides. SEC maintains the classification guide for USAID and can make it available upon request. ES also has copies available for review and use in classifying information (the classification guide is classified CONFIDENTIAL). Please ensure that classified documents are drafted on the appropriate computer system. For assistance with access to the proper systems, please contact ES or SEC.

If the document you are preparing is UNCLASSIFIED, you must mark it as such. USAID materials are often included in larger packages of information that combine materials from interagency partners. If your document is marked UNCLASSIFIED and you are the originating authority, unless notified otherwise, you may continue to use your attachment as an unclassified document when it is separated from the interagency package.

### **11.2.2 Downgrading and Declassifying Documents**

Documents and information can be declassified or downgraded to a lower classification level in some cases. In all instances, you must consult the originator of the classified information to request that information marked classified be downgraded, marked releasable to certain countries or non-state actors, or declassified permanently. Contact ES or SEC for assistance if you seek to downgrade or declassify information.

### **11.3 Management of Classified Documents and Information**

All classified documents must be managed according to applicable USAID policies and procedures in [ADS Chapter 568](#), and must comply with Executive Order 13526 and 32 C.F.R Part 2001.

#### **11.3.1 SCI Access**

All requests for SCI access within USAID are processed for eligibility through SEC and then vetted by ES, which has delegated authority to approve access. Administrative Management Services Officers are responsible for completing the AID 6-106 Request for SCI Access Form and obtaining the approval of the relevant Assistant Administrator/IO Director. To request SCI clearance, you must already have a TOP SECRET clearance, and your position description must indicate that you require SCI access in order for you to carry out your duties and responsibilities. Once a request is approved by ES, SEC submits it to the CIA Office of Security, Clearance Division Community Program, which has responsibility for conducting background investigations and adjudicating requests.

#### **11.3.2 Production**

All classified documents originating from USAID must be produced on the appropriate computer system and must be portion marked. For guidance on required markup, refer to ADS Chapter 568 external reference, Marking Classified National Security Information (December 2010, Revised January 2012) found here: <http://www.archives.gov/isoo/training/markings-booklet.pdf>

#### **11.3.3 Carrying and Transportation**

Classified material must not be removed from USAID restricted spaces except when necessary in the conduct of official meetings, conferences, or consultations. Individuals carrying classified materials outside of restricted spaces within USAID offices and to offsite locations must have security clearance markings on their USAID badges that are at the same level or higher than the documents being carried.

When circumstances require individuals to carry documents outside USAID restricted spaces, materials must be placed in an appropriate security container, such as a lock-bag (special briefcase with a lock) or double wrapping. Documents must be stored in an appropriate container or storage unit upon conclusion of the event. If the documents are no longer needed at an offsite location and they can be destroyed appropriately at that location, then disposal is permitted. Depending on the facility, you may be able to shred the documents or place them in a burn bag. If documents cannot be stored or destroyed in an offsite location, they must be returned to USAID and stored or destroyed appropriately.

Individuals authorized to hand carry classified materials outside of restricted spaces must have a current Courier Authorization Card (Form AID 500-7). To obtain a courier card, please contact SEC. Individuals who courier materials are responsible for the lock-bag and the classified materials under their control. Loss of these items requires SEC to conduct an investigation to assess the damage that may result from the loss of classified material. ES can assist with receipt or delivery of classified materials as needed. For assistance, please contact: [ClassifiedInformationServices@usaid.gov](mailto:ClassifiedInformationServices@usaid.gov).

#### **11.3.4 Reproduction**

You may reproduce documents classified CONFIDENTIAL and SECRET only on photocopy equipment specifically designated for the reproduction of classified material. If you require assistance locating an approved copier, please contact SEC. Reproduction of TOP SECRET documents must be performed in the SCIF and approved by the Top Secret (TS) Control Officer.

#### **11.3.5 Destruction**

SBU, CONFIDENTIAL, and SECRET materials must be destroyed in accordance with Agency policy. Destruction of TS material is done with the consent of the TS Control Officer. Approved destruction methods include cross-cut shredding and use of the DOS burn bag program. Bureaus/IOs are responsible for purchasing approved shredders for destroying materials classified up to SECRET level. SEC maintains a list of approved shredders. Classified materials packed for destruction in burn bags must be identified with the highest level of classification of the contents, and must be stored in a General Services Administration-approved container until picked up. These bags are picked up and transported to the DOS by the Bureau for Management/Administrative Services, Facilities Management Division (M/AS/FMD). TS documents can be destroyed by shredding or burning. Destruction is done on the approved shredders located either in the second- or sixth-floor SCIFs. For those documents that are listed in the TS register, ensure that the destruction date is recorded.

### **11.3.6 Storage**

ES maintains a storage room in the ES suite with safes for storing materials up to the SECRET level. Those bureaus/IOs that do not have an approved storage facility for SECRET material may request ES to store materials.

## **11.4 Communication of Classified Information**

Classified information may only be discussed within appropriate facilities. In the USAID RRB spaces, the areas marked in red “Restricted Space, Classified Permitted” are appropriate discussion areas for information up to the SECRET level. Anything above SECRET must only be discussed in a SCIF.

### **11.4.1 Sensitive Compartmented Information Facility (SCIF)**

There are two SCIFs in USAID/Washington: one on the sixth floor that is managed by ES, and one on the second floor managed by SEC. The sixth-floor SCIF provides an on-site, accredited, and secure space for Agency staff to receive, store, and read classified documents (up to SCI), and to hold classified meetings and briefings up to the SCI level. A secure video teleconference (SVTC) link in the SCIF allows for participation in SVTCs.

SEC provides advice, assistance, and oversight to ES to ensure compliance with procedures and to reinforce appropriate SCI handling, storage, and accounting.

The sixth floor SCIF is used to:

- Host meetings, conference calls, and classified briefings up to the TS/SCI level.
- Research, read, and store documents classified up to the TS/SCI level, and
- Receive classified information via JWICS or WASHFAX.

To reserve the SCIF for a meeting, please email [6<sup>th</sup>FloorSCIF@usaid.gov](mailto:6thFloorSCIF@usaid.gov) and provide the following information:

- Time, date, and level of classification of the meeting.
- Number of attendees. If individuals from other agencies will be attending, and having access to USAID classified documents, their clearance and access (if required) must be passed through the office of Security. Send requests to [SecClearanceVerification@usaid.gov](mailto:SecClearanceVerification@usaid.gov).
- Internet Protocol (IP) address and/or alias to connect to a SVTC. This information can be obtained from the VTC technician who is managing the meeting from a remote location. The IP address for the sixth-floor SCIF is 172.28.195.100 and alias 1727819.

- With the exception of SVTCs and pre-arranged meetings, only individuals who possess a current TOP SECRET-level personnel security clearance with current indoctrination to SCI, and has been briefed on host responsibilities by ES can remain in the SCIF without an escort. In the absence of a host, a meeting can only take place subject to the availability of cleared ES staff who can host.

The sixth-floor SCIF is also used as the TS Control Point, with the second-floor SCIF as back-up. All hard copy TS material brought into the RRB must be brought to ES or SEC and stored within one of the SCIFs.

#### **11.4.2 Secure Video-conference (SVTC)**

USAID is capable of conducting video conferencing sessions with remote locations over unclassified and classified networks. Two primary, secure-level connection networks are used to establish connectivity: (1) Crisis Management Network (CMS to the SCI level); (2) DOS ClassNet (to the SECRET level. Video sessions are typically arranged as either a multi-user call or a point-to-point call setup. Multi-users are centrally connected by one of the controller sites [White House Situation Room or the DOS Communications Center]. Direct, point-to-point connection is conducted in the Secret (Collateral) mode. Point-to-point is more challenging to coordinate and connect because network information has to be accurate and the date and time carefully coordinated.

SVTCs can be held in two designated locations at USAID, the sixth-floor SCIF (TS/SCI or Secret) and the seventh-floor DCHA/CMC conference room (Secret only). Both locations are capable of conducting local and global video conferencing. Call (202) 712-4968 to schedule the CMC conference room, and send an email to [6thFloorSCIF@usaid.gov](mailto:6thFloorSCIF@usaid.gov) to schedule the SCIF. (Note: The 6<sup>th</sup> Floor SCIF CMS can also connect with JWICS for SVTS. Request for this connection is sent to State Video Program Office. They serve as our focal point to bridge calls between the JWICS and the CMS systems).

#### **10.4.3 Secure Phones**

Secure calls can be held up to the TS/SCI level on the following equipment in the sixth-floor SCIF:

- Top Secret Voice Over Internet Protocol (TSVOIP) phone, commonly referred to as the “gray” phone. It is located only in the sixth-floor SCIF. Discussions on this phone can be up to TS/SCI. This phone can also bridge to connect with other secure phone systems. State secure communications can provide support on this.
- Secure Telephone Equipment (STE). Calls up to the TS/SCI level can be made or received on this equipment when the equipment is located in a SCIF. There are two of these phones available in the sixth-floor SCIF. There are also STE phones located in various offices throughout the building, which require a KOV-21 key to operate. Outside of a SCIF, all conversations must be kept to SECRET or below. For assistance in operating these phones, please contact CIO (ClassNet Support).

### **11.4.3 Secure Faxes and Printers**

All ClassNet terminals have a common printer (designated by location). There are two terminals located in ES that are available to Agency personnel with ClassNet accounts. All material printed on the ES printer must be stored according to its classification. The ClassNet printer in ES also serves as the dedicated printer for all thin client (ClassNet) machines on the 6<sup>th</sup> floor. This printer is marked with red SECRET stickers that match the stickers on the ClassNet computers.

### **11.5 Classified Memos and Papers**

If you are preparing a memo or paper that includes classified material, you must ensure that it is done on the appropriate computer system and that the materials are classified and portion marked appropriately. If you require assistance with classifying your memo or paper that derives from material produced by another department or agency, please contact SEC. SEC can also assist you in navigating the USAID classification guide if you need to derive classification from it.

It may be possible to draft an unclassified paper in response to an incoming classified document. In these instances, do not include or refer to any classified information in the response. Simply include the ACTS number when you forward it to your ES POC and ES will prepare a classified cover sheet or transmit it using a similar reference number.

You or ES may determine that materials you prepare, including briefers for an Agency Principal, require inclusion of classified material. A template for a briefier that requires classification or includes classified material can be found on the ES website. There is also a template for an unclassified briefier that includes classified attachments.

Agendas for NSC interagency meetings, especially meetings of Principals and Deputies, are almost always classified. Combining the subject of the meeting with the date, time, and place makes the information classified. Please do not refer to this information in its totality in materials you prepare for the front office or your bureau/IO leadership. Moreover, the full information regarding the meeting must only be discussed in restricted space. In the rare cases where a DC, PC, or NSC meetings are unclassified, briefiers and papers prepared for these meetings should be marked Sensitive But Unclassified or Unclassified/For Official Use Only (U/FOUO).

### **11.6 Support for Continuity of Operations Program (COOP)**

The COOP was developed to overcome a crisis that renders USAID buildings unusable by deploying pre-selected personnel to a safe Emergency Relocation Site (ERS). The Management Bureau has overall responsibility for coordination of COOP preparedness and operations. ADS 500, Chapter 531 provides more detail about the program

<http://inside.usaid.gov/ADS/500/index.html#irm>). ES is responsible for coordinating plans and procedures to provide executive administration support at the ERS.



## 12 Glossary

**Action Office:** Bureau/IO that has the lead role in preparing materials requested in a tasker. (Section 2.1.1)

**Agency Correspondence Tracking System (ACTS):** The electronic document management and workflow application that facilitates the efficient processing of correspondence and actions via electronic folders. It is used by ES to task, track, and manage executive correspondence and memos. (Section 2.1.2)

**Administrator Agency Notices:** Electronic notices sent from the Administrator's Office to convey official information to the Agency. (Section 4.2.4)

**Agency Notices:** The official means of communicating with the entire Agency. (Section 4.2.4)

**Agency Principals:** The Administrator, Deputy Administrator, and Counselor to the Agency. (Section 1.3)

**ClassNet:** Computer system used to process information up to the SECRET level. (Section 11.1.4)

**Correspondence Control Contacts (CCCs):** Designated bureau/IO personnel that liaise with ES. (Section 2.1.2).

**Deputy Committees (DCs):** Deputy-level meetings convened by the NSC to solicit interagency decisions on high-level national security affairs. DCs also review and monitor the work of the NSC interagency process, and ensure that issues brought forward to a PC or the NSC have been properly analyzed and prepared for decision. (Section 7.2.2)

**Dissenting memos:** Memo prepared by bureaus/IOs when clearing offices are unable to incorporate differing views in one memo. (Section 3.2.1).

**Drafter:** Bureau/IO subject matter expert that prepares memos or executive correspondence for submission to ES. (Section 3.1)

**Executive Messages:** A time-sensitive Agency Notice that must be issued immediately as it contains information that must be communicated in less than 24 hours. (Section 4.2.4)

**Folder:** The electronic ACTS record kept for each memo or executive correspondence prepared for Agency Principals. (Section 2.1.2)

**Independent Offices (IOs):** Agency offices that report directly to the Administrator and are not subsumed under a bureau.

**Interagency Policy Committees (IPCs):** A type of NSC meeting that serves as the primary vehicle for interagency policy coordination on national security issues. (Section 7.2.3).

**Interim Response Letters:** A short-term response when a substantive response will require considerable research or overseas collaboration. They are particularly used for time-sensitive correspondence. (Section 5.1.9)

**Knowledge Services Center:** A library located in the Ronald Reagan Building that provides online and print resources to all USAID staff, both in Washington and at missions. (Section 4.2.5).

**National Security Council (NSC):** The President's principal forum for deliberating national security and foreign policy matters. (Section 7.1)

**National Security Staff:** Personnel who support the National Security Council and who conduct the White House's day-to-day management of national security affairs. It is made up of both appointees and agency detailees, and is divided into regional and functional areas called directorates. (Section 7.1.2)

**Paper PCs and DCs:** The process used to solicit Deputy- and Principal-level decision making by requesting agencies to provide comments and clearance in writing rather than through an NSC meeting. (Section 7.3.4)

**Presidential Determination:** A determination made by the White House that results in an official policy or position of the executive branch. Presidential Determinations must be reported to Congress, as directed by the President. (Section 8.4)

**Principles Committees (PCs):** The most senior interagency forum convened by the NSC. Its purpose is senior-level discussion and consideration of policy issues affecting national security. (Section 7.2.1)

**Strategic Planning Memo:** A memo prepared by a bureau/IO in advance of a trip that provides the Principal with an overview of the trip's purpose, including a description of the deliverables, how the proposed deliverables advance the strategic goals of the Agency, and key proposed meetings/events in support of said deliverables. (Section 4.2.5).

**Summary of Conclusions (SOC):** Read-out prepared by the NSC that contains a summary of discussion and taskings to agencies following a DC- or PC-level meeting. (Section 7.3.3)

**Tasker:** Official request for information from ES on behalf of an Agency Principal to be prepared by a bureau/IO. (Section 1.3).

**Trip Papers:** All trip materials, including briefers and background information, tasked for principal-level travel. (Section 4.2.5)

**Trip Overview Memos:** Memo prepared by a bureau/IO that provides all relevant background information on the country and individuals being visited. (Section 4.2.5)

**Washfax:** Classified fax machine that can be used to fax up to the TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE COMPARTMENTED INFORMATION level. (Section 11.1.5)