



Common Sense and Ad Hoc Requests

A Mandatory Reference for ADS Chapter 508

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Procedures for Ad Hoc Requests

Repeatedly our Missions have requested relief from unnecessary, ad hoc requests for information that can be found in Washington, are relatively less important to their core mandates, or fail to recognize priority issues for the Missions and Agency. Repeatedly, senior management agrees that something should be done, but to date no serious follow-up has resulted from these discussions.

The most recent effort in this regard was undertaken by the Small Mission Task Force which recognized that these ad hoc requests for information are particularly burdensome to our small Missions, which now constitute nearly 60 percent of all overseas Missions. General Notice #96 of June 2000, "Addressing Problems of Small Missions," endorsed the recommendations of the Small Mission Task Force. Recommendation 7 is particularly relevant and reads as follows:

"7. Limiting Small Mission Requirements. All central and regional Bureaus should take explicit steps to provide a central individual, normally an experienced Officer, who together with M and PPC will be responsible for overseeing, coordinating, and monitoring the needs, tasks, and requirements placed on small Missions. Included in these responsibilities will be ascertaining the best source for meeting significant USAID/W one time/ad hoc requests for information. Every attempt should be made to reduce ad hoc and unplanned reporting requirements that our survey of small Missions revealed to be a major management difficulty for them.

This central focal point might be a Bureau Coordinator or perhaps Regional Coordinators in central Bureaus. In addition, a Notice from the Administrator should be issued directing USAID/W units to look first to non-Mission sources of information (R4s, CPs, strategic plans, evaluations, desks, CDIE, etc.) before going to field Missions for ad hoc information needs. Discipline in Washington is at least as important as these formal steps."

This approach makes sense for all Missions, so it is hereby implemented, except that the word "small" is deleted. PPC/PC will have implementing responsibility for this Notice. As a start, the Senior Development Program Officer or appropriate alternate in each Bureau will be designated as the central point of contact with responsibility for limiting ad hoc requests related to technical, administrative, budgetary or other information. These individuals should be kept apprised of any potential request to the field. Requests should state why the information is required; the date by which the information is due; and the date by which the requestor will provide feedback to the Missions on how the information was utilized. Each Bureau is required to put into place any supplemental, Bureau-specific operating procedures within 45 days of this Notice.

Each Mission is hereby requested to advise its respective Bureau's DP Office Director, copying PPC/PC, of any requirements levied upon it that it believes violates this Notice. PPC/PC will be responsible for coordinating with all Bureaus to help alleviate the requirement. For cases in which a consensus cannot be reached on the

appropriateness of a given request/requirement, the Counselor will make a final decision.

PPC/PC will prepare a progress report, due 60 days after the date of this Notice, on the implementation of these recommendations, to include all requirements challenged by the field posts and the disposition thereof.

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