



USAID
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ADS Chapter 560

News Releases and Services

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ADS 560 – News Releases and Services
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This chapter has been revised in its entirety.

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ADS 560 – News Releases and Services

560.1 OVERVIEW

Effective Date: 01/26/2018

This chapter contains the policy directives and required procedures for:

- Outlining the division of responsibilities for media-related activities;
- Promoting timely and accurate media coverage of USAID activities and programs;
- Responding promptly and fully to news media inquiries; and
- Providing daily news summaries to USAID senior staff.

560.2 PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES

Effective Date: 01/26/2018

a. The **USAID Press Office, in the Bureau for Legislative and Public Affairs, (Press Office)** serves as the principal media point of contact for USAID and is responsible for coordinating USAID’s media relations. The Press Office is responsible for:

- Working to ensure USAID’s messaging is consistent with Administration foreign policy aims, and coordinating with the Department of State, National Security Council, and other federal agencies;
- Speaking on behalf of USAID senior leadership and the Agency as a whole;
- Directly supporting the USAID Administrator and Front Office in coordinating press engagements for senior USAID leadership, as well as issuing statements on behalf of the Agency;
- Managing, clearing, and distributing USAID press guidance and press releases in coordination with USAID/Bureaus/Independent Offices (B/IOs);
- Leading Agency engagement with American media outlets, wire services, and leading international outlets in coordination with USAID/Bureaus/Independent Offices (B/IOs);
- Supporting USAID/Bureaus/Independent Offices (B/IOs) in their efforts to provide timely and accurate responses, via the Press Office, to media inquiries including providing all relevant information concerning the inquiries and being available throughout the media inquiry drafting and clearance process;

- Coordinating with USAID Bureaus/Independent Offices (B/IOs) and Missions to support media engagement in the field; and
- Providing daily news clip summaries of significant USAID and development-related stories to USAID senior leadership.

b. USAID Bureaus/Independent Offices (B/IOs) are responsible for:

- Coordinating responses to media inquiries with the Press Office and providing necessary information to the Press Office for a timely, accurate, and full response;
- Promptly notifying the Press Office of open press events and activities that occur in the United States, and overseas events that will be open to international press;
- Responding fully, accurately, and quickly to inquiries from the Press Office regarding news/press releases and media queries; and
- Obtaining clearance from the Press Office for press guidance.

560.3 POLICY DIRECTIVES AND REQUIRED PROCEDURES

560.3.1 Division of Responsibilities

Effective Date: 01/26/2018

As mandated in the [Foreign Affairs Reform and Restructuring Act of 1998](#), the October 2000 Memorandum of Understanding transferred the press function of USAID and its press officers to the Bureau of Public Affairs at the U.S. Department of State.

- a.** The Press Office is staffed by press officers employed by the U.S. Department of State. These officers are permitted to:
- Speak to the media on behalf of USAID and its leadership;
 - Coordinate Agency media outreach strategies;
 - Respond to press inquiries and discuss policy and programs with journalists;
 - Staff interviews with U.S. Government officials;
 - Set up and staff press events;
 - Draft and clear press guidance;

- Draft, clear, and distribute press releases, statements, and other press materials; and
- Coordinate release of press materials on behalf of the Agency.

b. USAID Spokespeople: The USAID Spokesperson and Deputy Spokesperson serve as the principal spokespeople for the Agency. No USAID officer or employee, except the Administrator and Deputy Administrator, can act as a spokesperson for USAID or speak to media on behalf of USAID, unless cleared by LPA/Press. Overseas, Mission Directors may act as spokespeople for the Mission on local issues, in coordination with the Chief of Mission and the Embassy Public Affairs Section.

560.3.2 Media Inquiries

Effective Date: 01/26/2018

All USAID Bureaus/Independent Offices (B/IOs) and Missions must provide complete, timely, and accurate information that meets media deadlines when contacted by the Press Office. The Press Office will support USAID Bureaus/Independent Offices (B/IOs) and Missions in this process as they serve as the technical experts for responses to the media.

- a. Media Contact:** The Press Office is responsible for managing USAID engagement with American media outlets, wire services, and leading international outlets. The Press Office works to ensure timely, accurate responses to media queries. The Press Office leads on USAID press engagements that:
1. Take place in Washington (USAID/W) or elsewhere in the United States, and
 2. Involve American or major international media outlets, or involve the Administrator, Deputy Administrator, Counselor, or other senior USAID officials.

Bureaus and Independent Offices must refer media queries to the Press Office. Overseas, Missions may interact with local outlets in consultation with the Embassy Public Affairs Section. The Press Office may clear on other officials interacting with media, as appropriate, such as during a disaster response.

- b. Media Inquiries:** All U.S. or high visibility international media inquiries, whether in USAID/W or overseas, must immediately be referred to LPA/Press. USAID Missions overseas may field queries from local outlets, in coordination with the Embassy Public Affairs Section. Please note: While normally only USAID Press is authorized to speak to the press, after a rapid onset-disaster, the Press Office can authorize a member of the Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART) or Response Management Team (RMT) to coordinate with media on the ground, in

consultation with the Press Office. The Press Officer, who can engage with media on background, must 'Cc LPA/Press on any correspondence with journalists.

- c. Interviews:** The Press Office will work with USAID communicators to coordinate and support interviews with USAID personnel, in USAID/W or overseas. LPA/Press must clear all interviews that take place in USAID/W or that involve wire services, American outlets, or leading international media. Please note: When USAID deploys a Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART), the Press Office can authorize a member of the DART to conduct interviews on the ground. The DART Press Officer will clear media engagements through LPA/Press to the best extent possible given a dynamic disaster environment and time zone alignment.

560.3.3 Press Releases and Other Statements to the Media

Effective Date: 01/26/2018

The Press Office is responsible for all press releases and press statements produced by USAID Headquarters. Unless otherwise designated, only LPA is authorized to issue media releases from USAID Headquarters on behalf of USAID senior leadership. The Press Office is also charged with release transcripts for official remarks made by the Administrator or Deputy Administrator, as appropriate. For releases issued in the field, Missions must obtain clearance from the Mission Director and the Department of State's Public Affairs Office for press releases on local, in-country issues.

Bureaus and Independent Offices may request that LPA release a statement or fact sheet. The Press Office must evaluate these requests in a timely manner.

The Press Office serves as the primary conduit for clearance of press-related materials with the Department of State, National Security Council, and Interagency. The Press Office closely coordinates with USAID Bureaus and Independent Offices in this process

560.3.4 Daily News Summaries

Effective Date: 01/26/2018

The Press Office is responsible for providing regular news summaries from major media outlets to USAID senior staff on USAID and development-related material. The Press Office must also provide, when needed, video and/or audio recordings of any relevant major and/or scheduled media coverage of USAID or development issues.

USAID B/IOs that are aware of news items from other sources related to USAID may provide these items to the Press Office (**press@usaid.gov**) for inclusion in the next day's news summaries with the subject line "Add to Daily Press Focus".

560.4 MANDATORY REFERENCES

560.4.1 External Mandatory References

Effective Date: 01/26/2018

- a. [Foreign Assistance Act of 1961](#)
- b. [International Security Assistance Act of 1978](#)

560.4.2 Internal Mandatory References
Effective Date: 01/26/2018

There are no Internal Mandatory References for this chapter.

560.5 ADDITIONAL HELP
Effective Date: 01/26/2018

There are no Additional Help documents for this chapter.

560.6 DEFINITIONS
Effective Date: 01/26/2018

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

News Summaries

News items from major newspapers and wire services related to foreign affairs and USAID. (**Chapter 560**)

Press Guidance

Cleared language that may be used with the media, including information or materials regarding USAID activities and programs provided to the Department of State, White House, or other federal agency for their use in news media contact. (**Chapter 560**)

Press Releases and Statements

Statements of policy, comments from USAID officers, data, or other information regarding USAID activities and programs provided to members of the news media for publication or for use in reporting on the activities of USAID and related topics. (**Chapter 560**)

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