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The Secretary of State presents his compliments to Their Excellencies and Messieurs and Mesdames the Chiefs of Mission and has the honor to inform them of new policies and procedures with regard to airport screening courtesies for senior officials of cabinet minister rank or above departing from U.S. airports for either domestic or international destinations. The new program replaces the screening courtesies program outlined in the Department's circular diplomatic Note 03-69, dated May 4, 2003, which is hereby rescinded.

The new program provides a Department of State escort officer for eligible senior officials, accompanying spouses, and their children under the age of twelve, who are not already being escorted by a United States Secret Service or Diplomatic Security Service Protective Detail. The presence of an escort officer confers the same screening courtesies and exemptions currently received by senior officials under armed escort. If the senior official is traveling with an entourage, members of the entourage below the level of cabinet minister will be subject to customary screening, which will be expedited whenever possible.

DIPLOMATIC NOTE

The following paragraphs explain the policies and procedures applicable to the new Escort Screening Courtesies Program:

1. Requests shall be filed on-line with the Office of Foreign Missions. The form is located at the website for the Office of Foreign Missions, <http://www.state.gov/ofm> (<http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/28793.doc>). Complete instructions regarding the information needed and the submission procedure can be found there as well.
2. Requests should be sent via e-mail to Escortscreening@state.gov at least three full business days prior to the date of the senior official's first departure from a U.S. airport. A request submitted less than three full business days in advance will be considered, but it may not always be possible to accommodate such a request.
3. A separate request must be submitted for each person for whom screening courtesies are being sought: the senior official, accompanying spouse, and each of their children under the age of twelve.
4. The request must give the name of the point-of-contact (POC) designated by the Mission for the trip, a daytime telephone number, and an after-hours telephone number. The POC and the assigned escort officer must be in contact regarding the details of the senior official's itinerary prior to the departure. Failure to confirm the details of the request with the escort officer will prevent the Office of Foreign Missions from being able to provide this courtesy to the senior official.

5. Upon receipt of a request, the Department either: (a) will respond with the details of the arrangements being made for providing an escort, including the name and contact information of the escort officer; or (b) will inform the Mission that the request cannot be accommodated. If it is not possible to accommodate the request and provide an escort officer, the traveling dignitary will be subject to customary passenger screening.

6. Upon receipt of approval, all subsequent arrangements should be made directly between the Mission POC and the escort officer(s) assigned to the senior official at the particular airport(s). The escort officer will meet the departing senior official at a designated location at the airport and will remain with the senior official until departure, in order to facilitate any last-minute changes in plans.

The new program described above, which addresses departures from airports, does not affect the existing program of "Expedited Port Courtesies" for arriving dignitaries that is administered by the Office of Protocol.

The procedures and requirements outlined above shall be effective as of the date of this Note.

Department of State

Washington,

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