

# MS 708 International Cooperative Administrative Support Services (ICASS)

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**Responsible Office:** Office of the Chief Financial Officer

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### 1.0 Purpose

This Manual Section describes the U.S. Department of State's International Cooperative Administrative Support Services (ICASS) system, outlines the responsibilities of the Country Director (CD) under ICASS, and states Peace Corps policies related to participation in the ICASS system. Procedures are set out in Chapter 28 of the Overseas Financial Management Handbook.

### 2.0 Authorities

- 6 FAH-5 ICASS Handbook

### 3.0 Responsibilities of Country Director

(a) The CD is responsible for negotiating and signing an annual ICASS Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Embassy within the guidelines established in this Manual Section. It is the responsibility of the CD to review and negotiate appropriate changes to the ICASS workload counts and modification factors with the Mission ICASS Council and budget committee. The CD should keep the Peace Corps Chief Financial Officer (CFO) apprised of any ICASS issues that arise at the Mission.

(b) The CD must monitor the ICASS services provided to ensure that they are in accordance with the MOU and uniform service standards; and that Peace Corps is receiving all services at a satisfactory level of performance.

(c) The CD must review the Subscription of Services document, usually attached to the MOU, to verify that workload factors attributed to Peace Corps are correct.

(d) The CD must periodically review alternative sources of services with the aim of possibly reducing the post's dependence on the ICASS system where possible and practicable.

#### **4.0 The ICASS MOU**

Peace Corps subscribes to ICASS services annually by signing a MOU with the service provider at the Mission where the services are provided. The Mission-specific MOU and its attachments describe the services offered by the service provider and contain the performance standards for each service. There is also an ICASS Charter that establishes the ICASS system at Post and describes the basic operating procedures, which do not change every year.

All ICASS MOUs must be in accordance with Peace Corps' limitations and restrictions so that only Peace Corps/Washington-authorized ICASS services are covered by the agreement. The CD's signature on the ICASS MOU indicates acceptance of the agreement.

### **5.0 Limitations**

To remain cost-effective, Peace Corps restricts the range of ICASS services to which Posts may subscribe. An updated list of these standardized services is maintained by the Budget Office in Washington and is distributed via a CFO Bulletin. Refer to the latest CFO bulletin on this subject for the current choices of ICASS services available.

Use of other ICASS services requires a written waiver from the CFO as explained below under Waiver of Limitations.

#### **5.1 Waiver of Limitations**

Under exceptional circumstances, a Post may identify a need for an ICASS service that is not on the authorized Peace Corps list. When this occurs, the CFO must first approve a waiver submitted by the Post's CD. In the absence of such a waiver, all Posts are expected to find alternative means to accomplish administrative functions such as maintenance, custodial services, travel services, etc., through either Peace Corps staff capability or local sources.

### **6.0 ICASS Authority and Dispute Resolution**

An Inter-Agency Council (Council) of the major participants serves as the policy board for ICASS which is managed by the State Department. Procedures and regulations are established by the Council. Funding requirements are jointly reviewed at the country level and in Washington. Mission ICASS Councils collaborate with agencies in exercising authority over ICASS resources and systems

at Mission, but final authority at Mission rests with the Chief of Mission. CDs should try to work out ICASS servicing problems at the Mission level. However, the Mission ICASS Council's authority does not supersede internal controls and regulations of either the service provider or the Peace Corps.

Unresolved problems may be raised with the CFO who, in turn, can bring them to the ICASS Executive Council's attention in Washington, if appropriate. The CFO also may bring ICASS problems to the attention of the ICASS Working Group which assists the Council in the day-to-day administration of the system. Peace Corps is represented on both the Council and the Working Group. For more information on resolving disputes, see 6 FAH-5, H-443 Procedures for Post-Initiated Disputes for Department of State Service Providers and H-444 Procedures for Post-Initiated Disputes for Alternate Service Providers.

## **7.0 Effective Date**

This Manual Section shall take effect on the date of issuance.