

STANDARD INTERNATIONAL VISIT PROCEDURES

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. When an international visit involves access to information subject to government approval or when access to security areas is necessary, a visit request will be submitted by the visitor through his/her security officer, certifying/requesting NSA/DSA and receiving NSA/DSA to the agency, organisation, or facility to be visited. These visit requests are formalized in the standard Request for Visit (RFV) procedure.
- 1.2. Unless required by the laws/regulations of the countries involved as per paragraph 10 of this document, no certification of security clearance will be necessary unless a visit involves access to information or areas within sites classified CONFIDENTIAL or above.

2. SCOPE

- 2.1. The attached standard procedures have been approved by the MISWG participants for visits by military, government, international organisations, and contractor personnel to military, government, international organisations (e.g. NATO, EU, etc.), or industrial facilities of another country. The MISWG participants also have agreed to include the procedures in their national regulations that govern international visits. Notwithstanding the procedures agreed in this document NSAs/DSAs may for national security reasons refuse a RFV for a visit to one of its facilities. NSAs/DSAs may adopt less stringent bilateral visit procedures if mutually agreed.
- 2.2. This document describes the complete instructions on Standard International Visit Procedures and contains the following Annex and Appendices:
 - a) Annex 1: Standard Form for Request for Visit;
 - b) Appendix A: Instructions for Use and Completion of a Request for Visit; and
 - c) Appendix B: Request for Visit Form (and Annexes thereto).

3. TYPES OF VISITS AND PROCEDURES

- 3.1. There are four types of international visit requests. They are as follows:
 - a) one-time;
 - b) recurring;
 - c) emergency; and
 - d) amendment.

4. ONE-TIME VISIT

- 4.1. A one-time visit is a single visit for a specific purpose and to a specific site or sites, which is not anticipated to be repeated within the same calendar year. The duration of the visit will never be longer than the validity of the personnel security clearance of the visitor(s).
- 4.2. Depending on the laws/regulations of the countries involved, a one-time visit request which is issued for the posting of personnel may require additional information/documents to be included with the RFV Form.

5. RECURRING VISIT

- 5.1. A recurring visit is for intermittent visits over a specified period of time to a specific site or sites and for a specific purpose. A recurring visit covers normally the duration of a government approved programme, project or contract that requires participating personnel to make intermittent (recurring) visits to military, government, international organizations (e.g. NATO, EU, etc.), or industrial facilities of another country participating in the programme. Visits covering a period of more than one year may be subject to annual review, as agreed by the participating countries NSA/DSA. The duration of the visit will never be longer than the validity of the personnel security clearance of the visitor(s).

6. LEAD TIMES FOR ONE-TIME AND RECURRING VISITS

- 6.1. The lead time to process one-time and recurring visits is depicted in paragraph 10 of this document. Paragraph 10 identifies the number of working days to the starting date of the one-time or the starting date of the first of the recurring visit that the request should be in the possession of the receiving NSA/DSA.

7. EMERGENCY VISIT

- 7.1. An emergency visit is for a one-time visit that must take place as a matter of urgency and importance and as such that the normally required lead time identified in paragraph 10 of this document cannot be met.
- 7.2. Such unplanned or emergency visits should be arranged only in exceptional circumstances. To qualify as an emergency visit at least one of the following conditions must be met:
 - a. the proposed visit is related to an official military, government, international organizations (e.g. NATO, EU, etc.) request for proposal/request for tender offer (e.g. submission of, or amendment to, a bid or proposal; attendance at pre-contract negotiations or bidder's conference);

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- b. the visit is to be made in response to the invitation of a host government, military, international organisations (e.g. NATO, EU, etc.) official or host contract official and is in connection with an official military, government, international organisations (e.g. NATO, EU, etc.) project, programme or contract;
 - c. a programme, project, contract opportunity or otherwise significant financial interest will be placed in jeopardy if the visit request is not approved; or
 - d. operations and/or personnel are placed in direct jeopardy if the visit is not approved.
- 7.3. Emergency visit requests must be critically reviewed, fully justified and documented by the Security Officer of the requesting military, government agency, international organisations (e.g. NATO, EU, etc.) or industrial facility. Therefore, the requestor must complete the remarks portion in item 16 of the RFV Form to fully explain the reasons behind the emergency RFV.
- 7.4. When the Security Officer is satisfied that the conditions cited in paragraph 7.2 of this document have been met, the Security Officer will contact a knowledgeable person at the government agency, organisation, or industrial facility to be visited (host facility), directly by telephone, facsimile or email, to obtain tentative agreement for the proposed visit. If tentative agreement is provided to proceed with the visit request, the Security Officer of the military, government agency, international organisations (e.g. NATO, EU, etc.), or industrial facility to be visited (host facility) shall then immediately notify its NSA/DSA that an emergency visit request will be submitted by the government agency, organisation, or industrial facility requiring to make the visit (requesting facility) and explain the reason for the emergency. Furthermore, the Security Officer will then follow regular RFV procedures and send the emergency RFV to his/her NSA/DSA.
- 7.5. As there are no lead times for emergency RFV procedures, it is assumed that mutual understanding between the involved countries about the importance of the emergency RFV will result in adequate processing terms.

8. AMENDMENT

- 8.1. When an already approved or pending RFV needs to be changed regarding dates, visitors and/or locations, an amendment referring to the original RFV must be submitted.
- 8.2. Amendments to approved or pending one-time and recurring visits are authorized, provided that the amendments are limited to:
- a) change of dates of visit;
 - b) addition and/or deletion of visitors; and

c) change of location.

8.3. For amendments, the standard RFV Form should be used. The type of visit cannot be changed via the amendment procedure. Amendments should refer to the original request that is still pending or already approved by the receiving NSA/DSA.

8.4. Changes to the dates of a visit, the addition or deletion of visitors or a change of location to be visited should be reported immediately to the receiving NSA/DSA via the standard procedure. Amendments will be accepted by the receiving NSA/DSA up to the number of working days (assuming that there are 5 working days in one calendar week) prior to the approved or pending visit. The lead time to process amendments is depicted in paragraph 10 of this document.

9. USE OF THE STANDARD REQUEST FOR VISIT FORM

9.1. For all types of visit, the standard RFV Form (Annex 1 to this document) should be used.

9.2. This RFV Form has been designed for automated as well as manual use; however, the use of an electronic form and the transmission via e-mail are strongly encouraged. It is therefore essential that the detailed instructions for completion of a RFV Form described at Appendix A to Annex 1 of this document be used to fill in each data element. To fulfill this requirement it is advised that Annex 1 with its two Appendices be used as a hand-out to the visitor through the Security Officer of the agency, organisation or facility. Furthermore, it is advisable to translate those instructions for the use and completion of the RFV Form in the language of the user.

9.3. Unless otherwise required by the laws/regulations of the countries involved as per paragraph 10 of this document, the RFV shall be used in classification levels of CONFIDENTIAL or above.

9.4. Unless otherwise required by the laws/regulations of the countries involved, the NSAs/DSAs will certify the security clearance level of the visitors only in case of visits with access to information/material and/or areas within sites classified CONFIDENTIAL or above.

9.5. The completed RFV is normally an Unclassified document. However, in some exceptional cases, the completed RFV could be classified and must therefore be marked with an appropriate security marking and transmitted via secure channels.

9.6. Completion of the RFV Form should be in the language of the receiving country or in English.

10. INTERNATIONAL VISITS PROCESSING TIMES/LEAD TIMES

- 10.1 The following table depicts the number of working days prior to the date of the one-time visit or the date of the first recurring visit that the request should be in the possession of the receiving host NSA/DSA.

- 10.2 The “RFV Required” column identifies MISWG participants that require by their laws/regulations a RFV submission for Unclassified and/or RESTRICTED visits to their country.