

PART 306-4--Country Clearance Cables

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306-4.1 What are country clearance cables?

Cables (or telegrams) are a means of communication within the foreign diplomatic network. Country clearance cables notify the Department of State officials in Washington, D.C., and embassy and post officers abroad, of a traveler's presence in a foreign country.

306-4.2 Why is there a need to prepare country clearance cables?

- 1) Department of State policy. Department of State policy requires embassy clearance for official travel to a foreign country;
- 2) Embassy information. Consular offices are required to know about all scientific activities conducted during official foreign travel. In some cases, the embassy will provide a contact at the embassy for the traveler. The embassy may request a meeting or report from the traveler;
- 3) Traveler safety. For travelers who have received country clearance, Department of State will provide assistance in situations including, but not limited to, political unrest, health emergencies, and crime;
- 4) Traveler's convenience. Travelers can receive consular assistance for lost or stolen passports as well as general assistance with hotel accommodations; etc...
- 5) Potential for clearance to be refused. The embassy may have knowledge of reasons or situations which would prohibit the visit during the proposed period, and may therefore refuse to provide clearance. In such cases, travelers would reschedule the visit to accommodate embassy recommendations.

306-4.3 When is a country clearance cable prepared?

Country clearance cables are prepared for employees traveling on official government business abroad and are sometimes processed for invitational travelers as well. Each Line/Corporate Office has either a Foreign Travel Coordinator (FTC) or an International Activities Office (IAO) that prepares country clearance cables for their employees. Contact your servicing FTC or IAO for more information.

306-4.4 Who prepares country clearance cables?

The FTC or IAO in your Line Office **is required** to prepare all country clearance cables. Each Staff Office within the Office of the Administrator is required to prepare all country clearance cables with the assistance, when needed, of the Office of International Affairs.

306-4.5 What are the processing-time requirements for country clearance cables?

At least 2-weeks processing-time is required for processing country clearance cables. Contact your servicing FTC or IAO immediately if 2 weeks processing-time is not possible.

306-4.6 What information is required for a country clearance cable?

- 1) Traveler's name, title, and affiliation;
- 2) Purpose of travel - Include names of workshops/meetings and titles of all papers and presentations. Include names of institutional affiliations, and spell out acronyms;
- 3) Travel destination and flight itinerary. Specify dates in each city within each country;
- 4) A contact name in the foreign country, name of the inviting office, hotel name and address and phone numbers;
- 5) Indication of whether embassy assistance is requested. In most cases, there is no need to ask for embassy assistance and a simple closing paragraph that states that "no embassy assistance is requested" will suffice. However, if required (usually for high-level officials), the cable should be clear and specific about what is needed. The traveler should be aware that there may be an embassy charge for some services. Please note: Contact your Line or Staff Office for other internal requirements;
- 6) Current Official Passport Information; and
- 7) Emergency Contact Information.