Student Guide

International Visit Requests

International Visit Requests Short Information

Objectives

- Describe the basic outgoing visit request process and timeline
- Identify types of visit requests and common reasons for rejection
- Estimated completion time: 15 minutes

Introduction

As part of their contract work, U.S. cleared contractors in the National Industrial Security Program, or NISP, sometimes have to travel to foreign countries to perform classified work. This work may include providing educational outreach and training, testing defense equipment or weapons systems, selling defense articles or services, attending meetings in support of a joint venture, or negotiating on a proposed bid.

In performing this work, contractors may require access to foreign military sites, government sites, or cleared facilities.

One of the mission-essential functions of the Defense Counterintelligence and Security Agency, or DCSA, is to provide security assurances to the Designated Security Authority, or DSA, of the country being visited. The security assurance informs the foreign DSA that the visiting U.S. contractors have valid clearance eligibility, access, need-to-know, official justification, and that they have been appropriately briefed to travel to classified sites or to view classified information in other countries.

Overview of International Visit Request Process

DCSA processes outgoing international visit requests for cleared U.S. contractors traveling to foreign classified sites and/or accessing classified information up to Top Secret in overseas locations. Access to proscribed information, such as Special Access Programs, or SAPs, and Sensitive Compartmented Information, or SCI, is the responsibility of the sponsoring government customer.

Note that DCSA only processes requests to non-U.S. locations. Visit requests for overseas U.S. locations, such as U.S. embassies, U.S. military sites, or U.S. naval vessels docked overseas, must be coordinated with the appropriate Government Contracting Activity, or GCA, or the applicable Site Security Manager.

The international visit request process generally follows five steps.

- First, the Facility Security Office, or FSO, or the FSO's designee will download the appropriate visit request template from the DCSA website and work with the traveler to complete the Request for Visit, or RFV. Note: The foreign government will reject RFVs on outdated templates. When the FSO or designee is satisfied that the RFV is completed accurately, completely, and in compliance with regulations, the FSO or designee signs the request and submits it to DCSA.
- Next, DCSA reviews the RFV for completion and verifies each traveler's personnel security clearance, or PCL. The visit request will be rejected by DCSA if the request contains errors, requires additional information, or fails to provide the required processing and lead times. Individuals without a PCL should not be listed on the RFV. Interim PCLs are not recognized by most foreign governments; therefore, visitors should have a final PCL at the time the visit is submitted to DCSA.
- DCSA then transmits the visit request to the DSA of the country where the visit will take place.
- Once the request has been submitted to the foreign government agency, DCSA notifies the FSO of the submission by sending a confirmation email, including the visit reference number, traveler name and number of additional travelers, and the country the visit request was transmitted to.
- The foreign government agency or facility then approves or denies the request. To verify the status of the visit, the FSO or designee follows up with the point of contact, at the foreign government agency or facility to confirm that the request was received and approved.
- The FSO is responsible for following up with the foreign POC to confirm that the visit request has been approved.

.

Lead Times for Processing Visits

One factor FSOs must keep in mind in planning outgoing international classified visits is the lead times required by DCSA and the country where the visit will take place. Each country has specific lead time requirements for processing an RFV. In most countries, the lead time required to process a visit is 30 calendar days. However, there are several notable exceptions.

In addition to the required foreign government lead times, DCSA requires a minimum of five business days to process a visit request. Note that all foreign government lead times are subject to change at the government's discretion without notice.

In order to ensure your request is processed in time for your trip, it will be necessary for you to check the current lead times for the country of your visit as soon as you know that you may be traveling.

The latest lead time requirements are posted on the Outgoing Classified Visits Process web page of the DCSA website.

Additional Lead Time Requirements

For the most current information on lead times and requirements associated with international classified visits:

- Visit Outgoing Classified Visits Process on the DCSA International Programs webpage: https://www.dcsa.mil/mc/ctp/int/visits/

- Contact the DCSA Visit Request Mailbox:

  o E-mail: DCSA.RFV@mail.mil

Review Activity 1

How well do you understand the overall visit request process?

Select the best response for each statement. Then, check your answers in the Answer Key on the following page.

True/False Statement	True	False
The traveler completes and submits his or her own RFV form	O	O
DCSA processes outgoing international visit requests	O	O
DCSA approves outgoing international visit requests	O	O
The foreign government sponsor notifies DCSA and the FSO when the request is approved	O	O
The standard lead time for most countries is 30 days	O	O

Answer Key: Review Activity 1

How well do you understand the overall visit request process?

True/False Statement	Feedback
The traveler completes and submits his or her own RFV form	False. The traveler may complete the RFV, but typically, the FSO or FSO's designee works jointly with the traveler to complete the RFV. Once completed, the FSO signs and submits the RFV on the traveler's behalf.
DCSA processes outgoing international visit requests	True. The DCSA International Division processes international outgoing visit requests for cleared U.S. contractors traveling to foreign classified sites or accessing classified information, up to Top Secret, in overseas locations.
DCSA approves outgoing international visit requests	False. The foreign government agency or DSA facility approves or denies visit requests after verifying the visit with the hosting foreign government agency or facility. However, DCSA may reject the initial request if the request contains errors, requires additional information, or fails to provide the required processing and lead times.
The foreign government sponsor notifies DCSA and the FSO when the request is approved	False. Although the foreign government agency or DSA facility approves outgoing classified visit requests, the FSO or the FSO designee must follow up with the foreign POC to confirm that the request was approved.
The standard lead time for most countries is 30 days	True. With several notable exceptions, the lead time required for most countries to process a visit is 30 days, which does not include the 5 business days DCSA requires for processing. Also, remember that all foreign government lead times are subject to change at the government's discretion without notice. It is incumbent upon the traveler to verify lead times as soon as they know about possible foreign travel.

Types of Visit Requests

Various types of visit requests are used for U.S. contractor classified visits. Most RFVs are standard requests. However, some countries have country-specific requirements, and some special circumstances also have additional requirements.

Standard Request for Visit (RFV)

The U-1201 is the standard RFV template that is used for all visit requests that do not require country-specific templates. The RFV must be typed and completed in its entirety, and it must be signed by the FSO or designee. Requests submitted without the FSO or designee's signature in block 10 will be rejected.

The FSO should submit one visit per project or contract and it should include all the visitors performing on the contract. Visits comprising of more than 30 visitors or 30 sites must be split into multiple requests.

When submitting multiple requests, the FSO should send one visit request per submission. Visits will not be accepted more than 90 days from the start date.

The Security Office must check with the travelers to determine whether they will be hand carrying classified to or from the site they are visiting and select the appropriate box in the specified area on the RFV. Visit requests without the appropriate box selected will be rejected. A hand carriage plan is required to be submitted to your DCSA Industrial Security Representative if visitors are couriering classified.

Note that some foreign countries may impose additional requirements for documentation, such as training records, a copy of the traveler's passport, or briefing certificates, to be submitted along with the visit request.

Note that due to personally identifiable information, or PII concerns, the preferred method of submission is a password protected pdf.

Visit the International Visits page of the DCSA website for the latest information.

NATO Site Requirements for RFV

All requests for NATO site visits require a standard U-1201 RFV template, but they also have several additional requirements. All visitors to NATO sites must be NATO-briefed annually, and NATO access must be updated in the DOD personnel security system of record.

Some NATO sites may also require a NATO Security Clearance Certificate, or NSCC, to accompany the RFV.

Note that visits to NATO sites require five business days for processing. Visit the International Visits page of the DCSA website for the latest information.

NATO Site Requirements for RFV
- NATO site visits require U-1201 RFV form
- All visitors must have annual NATO briefing
- NATO access must be updated in DOD personnel security system of record.
- Some NATO sites may require NSCC with RFV
    - For example: SHAPE and NCIA in Belgium

Additional Information
- View the NATO certificate form and instructions here: https://dcsa.mil/mc/ctp/int/visits
- To verify whether an NSCC is required, contact the DCSA Visit Request mailbox:
    - E-mail: DCSA.RFV@mail.mil

Emergency Visit Requests

DCSA typically processes only those visit requests that meet each foreign country's lead time requirements. However, in rare instances when the specified lead time cannot be met, some foreign governments may accept an emergency visit request that does not meet its standard lead time requirements.

To qualify as an emergency, the visit must relate to a specific government-approved contract, international agreement, or announced request for proposal, or RFP, and failure to make the visit could seriously jeopardize the contractor's performance on the contract or program or result in the loss of a contract opportunity.

Emergency visits are approved only as single, one-time visits, and they cannot exceed 30 days in duration. Emergency RFVs must be accompanied by a justification letter from the government agency or site to be visited.

Note that a letter of invitation from the foreign government does not equate to a letter of justification.

Take a moment to review these requirements:

Emergency Visit Requests
- Allowed by some governments in rare instances
- Visits must relate to specific government-approved contract, international agreement, or announced RFP
- Failure to make the visit could seriously jeopardize performance on the contract or result in the loss of a contract opportunity

Emergency Letter of Justification
- Written justification from GCA or site to be visited
- Must accompany RFV submission
- States reason for the emergency visit
- Explains why visit cannot be rescheduled for a later date

Review Activity 2

How well do you understand the various types of visit requests?

Select the best response for each statement. Then, check your answers in the Answer Key on the following page.

True/False Statement	True	False
Emergency visit requests require an Emergency Justification letter instead of an RFV template.	○	○
All types of visit requests require the standard U-1201 RFV template.	○	○
All countries have additional requirements to supplement the U-1201 RFV template.	○	○
All requests for NATO site visits require a standard U-1201 RFV template.	○	○

Answer Key: Review Activity 2

How well do you understand the overall visit request process?

True/False Statement	Feedback
Emergency visit requests require an Emergency Justification letter instead of an RFV template.	False. Emergency visit requests require an Emergency Justification letter in addition to an RFV template.
All types of visit requests require the standard U-1201 RFV template.	False. Most visit requests require the standard U-1201 RFV, but some countries require RFVs to be submitted on country-specific templates.
All countries have additional requirements to supplement the U-1201 RFV template.	False. Some countries have additional requirements to supplement the U-1201 RFV, some countries require RFVs to be submitted on country-specific forms, but most countries simply require the standard U-1201 RFV template.
All requests for NATO site visits require a standard U-1201 RFV template.	True. All requests for NATO site visits require a standard U-1201 RFV template.

Common Reasons for Rejection of Requests

In addition to knowing about the RFV process, timelines, and templates, it is also important to know why visit requests are often rejected so you can avoid having your visit request being rejected.

The following are the most common reasons for rejection:

Insufficient Lead Times	• Submitting a request with insufficient lead time for processing by DCSA and by the foreign country
Problems with RFV Forms	• Incorrect form submitted by FSO • RFV submitted directly by the visitor instead of by the company's security officer or FSO • Incorrect point of contacts (POCs) listed on the visit request • Incorrect or missing visitor personal information, such as social security or passport number
Missing documentation	• Missing copies of briefing or training certificates or additional requirements needed by the foreign site • Emergency visit requests not accompanied by a letter of justification endorsed by the GCA or foreign site POC
Problems with visitor access/clearance	• Visitor's access is not accurately reflected in the DOD personnel security system of record • Visitor's clearance does not match clearance level required for the visit

Review Activity 3

Which of the following are common reasons for rejection?

Select all that apply. Then, check your answers in the Answer Key on the following page.

☐ Submitting requests with insufficient lead time

☐ RFV submitted directly by the company's FSO

☐ Visitor cleared at higher level than required for visit

☐ Briefing and training certificates not included when required

Answer Key: Review Activity 3

Which of the following are common reasons for rejection?

- ✓ Submitting requests with insufficient lead time
- ☐ RFV submitted directly by the company's FSO
- ☐ Visitor cleared at higher level than required for visit
- ✓ Briefing and training certificates not included when required

Feedback*: Insufficient lead time and missing documentation are common reasons for rejection.*

Summary

In this day of increasing globalization across most industries, it should come as no surprise that U.S. cleared contractors sometimes require access to classified information in other countries.

DCSA supports this reality by providing security assurances to the foreign Designated Security Authority that cleared U.S. contractors have valid clearance eligibility, access, need to know, and official justification to travel to classified sites or to view classified information overseas.

Additional information on outgoing international classified visit requests can be found on the International Programs page of the DCSA website at https://www.dcsa.mil/mc/ctp/int/visits/.

Additional Information

- View the latest RFV guidance, templates, and instructions here:
  https://www.dcsa.mil/mc/ctp/int/visits/
- For more information, contact DCSA International Programs
  https://www.dcsa.mil/mc/ctp/int/visits/