



PEACE CORPS MANUAL

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	RESPONSIBLE OFFICE Special Services VS/SS	
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1. PURPOSE

This Manual Section describes the administrative procedures to be followed in cases of Trainee or Volunteer disappearance or death. References to Trainees or Volunteers include dependents except where specifically indicated otherwise.

2. BACKGROUND

Since the establishment of the Peace Corps a number of Trainees and Volunteers have disappeared or died overseas. In each case, personnel both in the field and at Peace Corps/Washington (PC/W) have made every effort to handle these emergencies sensitively and efficiently. Attention to detail and the provision of specific information will result in reducing delay and anxiety for the next-of-kin, concerned family members and friends. To facilitate transmission of information and performance of necessary administrative procedures, overseas employees must familiarize themselves with this Manual Section. For specific information not treated here, refer to the following chapters of the Foreign Affairs Manual (FAM) or superseding regulations or transmittal letters for guidance and request advice from the Office of Special Services (VS/SS):

- Death of U.S. citizens abroad: 7 FAM 200-269
- Inventorying and appraising effects: 7 FAM 640
- Compensation for injury, disability or death: 3 FAM 689, Transmittal Letter (TL): Personnel (PER)-272 of October 2, 1969

- Death in service: 3 FAM 752, (TL): (PER)-237 of June 10, 1968
- Travel and transportation expenses authorized in connection with deaths of U.S. citizens and their families: 6 FAM 126.5, TL: GS-191 of November 4, 1973

Note: Cases involving employee deaths must be referred to the Office of Human Resource Management (M/HRM) and those related to private U.S. citizens under contract to Peace Corps abroad must be referred to the U.S. consulate.

3. PROCEDURES

3.1. Notification In cases of death, the Country Director is responsible for advising the Ambassador, host country officials and all Peace Corps Trainees and Volunteers that no communications or condolences are to be sent to the family prior to the receipt, by the Country Director, of confirmation from VS/SS that the designated next-of-kin has been personally notified by the appropriate Peace Corps official (See Section 5.2.). It is imperative that such messages be sent only after the Country Director has received the above confirmation. Disclosure of information concerning disappearances and deaths is subject to the Freedom of Information and Privacy Acts (MS 893 and 897).

VS/SS makes every effort to assist families when a family member who is a Peace Corps Trainee or Volunteer has disappeared or died. It is not the practice of the Peace Corps that notification of such tragedies come through impersonal, commercial communication facilities (see paragraphs 4.2. and 5.2.). However, after receiving the above confirmation, the Country Director should encourage employees, other Trainees and Volunteers, host country government officials, co-workers or friends to write to the family of the individual who has disappeared or is deceased. Such personal communications mean a great deal to the family. As with all mail communication from overseas posts, Trainees and Volunteers must use the local postal service as they are not authorized to use the American Post Office (APO) or diplomatic pouch systems for such items.

3.2. Familiarity with Host Country Death Procedures Host Country regulations may be complicated and may require burial or shipment of remains within twenty-four hours. Overseas employees must become familiar with these regulations and the information listed in Attachment A.

3.2.1. Country Specific Death Procedure Each Peace Corps Country Director is responsible for developing a detailed written procedure (see Attachment A) which is country specific, taking into account host country laws, regulations, customs, hospitals, mortuary facilities and information contained in this Manual Section. A useful resource may be the annual "Disposition of Remains Report" required of each American Embassy by the State Department (see 7 FAM 260). Each Country Director is also responsible for annually reviewing this procedure.

3.2.2. Records of Disappearance or Death The Country Director is responsible for keeping a detailed log of all actions taken in country concerning a disappearance or death and forwarding a final narrative report

to VS/SS after all procedures delineated in this Manual Section have been completed.

3.2.3. Role of Peace Corps Medical Officer The Peace Corps Medical Officer (PCMO) has technical guidelines regarding autopsy, embalming, and pathological specimens, and will coordinate completion of necessary medical procedures. The PCMO should be present at both the autopsy and the embalming, if possible.

4. DISAPPEARANCE

4.1. Initial Report From the Overseas Post When there is evidence that a Trainee or Volunteer is missing, the Post must send a NIACT IMMEDIATE cable to VS/SS. VS/SS will acknowledge the receipt of this initial cable by a return NIACT IMMEDIATE cable.

Despite the sensitive nature of information generally associated with Trainee or Volunteer disappearance, any cabled reference to the Trainee or Volunteer should be in the form of the individual's name and social security number. Additionally, cables should be designated "Limited Official Use" (LOU) only if they contain highly sensitive and privileged information which warrants special protection. (This is information which the Country Director considers administratively sensitive or privileged and to be disclosed only to certain offices or personnel.)

4.1.1. Contents of the Initial Report The description of the disappearance should include the following:

- The name and social security number of the Trainee or Volunteer, time, place, and circumstances surrounding the disappearance;
- Any information, including information from the PCMO, which would indicate the state of health of a parent or next-of-kin, who must be identified by relationship only;
- Names of other persons involved directly or as witnesses, and the nature of their involvement;
- A medical report on each Trainee or Volunteer involved should be cabled separately by the PCMO to Medical Services (VS/MS) "Med Eyes Only";
- Whether or not the situation is public or is likely to be known by news media;
- Local reaction;
- Efforts made to locate the missing person (see paragraph 4.3.);
- When and where last seen, and by whom;
- Places where efforts to locate the person may be beneficial;
- Mental and emotional state when last seen;
- Possible or likely causes of disappearance;

- What personal belongings, if any, are missing;
- Likelihood of injury or death; and
- Assistance which PC/W or other posts or agencies might render in attempting to locate the individual.

4.1.2. Subsequent Reports The Post shall send IMMEDIATE follow-up cables to VS/SS at least once every 12 hours until all uncertainties about the disappearance have been resolved.

Country Directors must use their utmost discretion in designating these cables, depending on the information contained in them. Only those involving sensitive and privileged information are to be designated "LIMITED OFFICIAL USE." Otherwise, they must be designated "UNCLASSIFIED." All references to the Trainee or Volunteer must be in the form of social security number only.

4.2. PC/W Procedures Related to Notification of Disappearance

Immediately upon learning of the disappearance, VS/SS will contact the Peace Corps Director, the appropriate Regional Director, the Office of General Counsel, the Office of Congressional Relations, the Office of Medical Services, the Office of Communications, the Personnel Security Staff, the Inspector General and other Headquarters offices as appropriate.

When necessary, VS/SS will request the Director, M/Security, to assist in the investigation by enlisting the cooperation of the State Department Office of Security and other appropriate agencies.

VS/SS will review the Trainee or Volunteer's administrative records to determine names of the next-of-kin, their whereabouts, state of health and similar matters.

Each disappearance may involve extremely different circumstances. Therefore, whether notification to the designated next-of-kin is necessary and the actual timing of such notification are decisions left to the discretion of the Peace Corps Director based on the variable factors involved. Once notification is deemed appropriate, the Regional Director will telephone the designated next-of-kin and may notify the host country embassy in Washington. In the absence of the Regional Director, the Regional Chief of Operations or the person acting in that capacity, will assume these responsibilities or designate a senior Agency official to assume these responsibilities.

VS/SS will serve as the next-of-kin's contact throughout the emergency. In this role VS/SS will be in touch with responsible individuals at the scene of the emergency and will coordinate all activities in conjunction with the Peace Corps Director, the Region, and other involved offices as necessary. The Special Services Officer will provide the appropriate Region with "information" copies of all cables and briefing papers pertaining to the disappearance.

4.3. Reporting Requirements and Standard Investigative Techniques In the case of any Trainee's or Volunteer's disappearance the Country Director will conduct an investigation to determine the individual's whereabouts and the reasons for the disappearance. The following procedures should be used by the Country Director and other Peace Corps employees in investigating a disappearance.

When there is a likelihood that the Trainee's or Volunteer's absence is due to his or her own willful conduct or circumstances beyond his or her control, such as a transportation strike in another country, the Country Director may choose initially to conduct the investigation internally with the concurrence of VS/SS.

However, when there is an indication that a Trainee's or Volunteer's absence is due to an accident or act of violence, or has occurred under circumstances indicating a risk to the health and safety of the Trainee or Volunteer, the Country Director should immediately notify the U.S. Embassy and enlist either the Embassy Security Officer's or the Consular Section's assistance with the investigation. If there is no Embassy, the Country Director should enlist the aid of local authorities. The Country Director may provide the following available information to the Security Officer, Consular Section or local authorities to enable them to assist the Country Director in conducting an investigation as deemed necessary:

- Full name and nicknames;
- Race;
- Sex;
- Date of Birth;
- Place of Birth;
- Height;
- Weight;
- Color of hair;
- Build;
- Complexion;
- Scars and marks;
- Color of eyes;
- Copies of recent photographs;
- Social Security Number;
- Address (in country and home of record) and telephone numbers;
- Marital status;
- Drivers license(s) number(s) and country(s)/State(s) where issued;
- Passport number(s), date and place of issue, date of expiration;
- Host country visa number and date of expiration;

- Location of bank account(s), type of account(s) (checking/savings), account number(s), name(s) used on the account(s), if obtainable under local law;
- Relevant medical information if authorized for release by the Peace Corps Medical Officer or Contractor;
- Information about any transportation tickets or GTR's to which the missing individual might have or have had access;
- Names, addresses, and phone numbers of friends, co-workers, host country sponsoring Agency supervisor or counterpart, and other persons who might have information about the missing individual;
- Location of cafes, bars, nightclubs, hotels, etc., that the missing individual frequented and hotels or guest houses where he/she might have stayed; and
- Any other information requested by the Security Officer, or other authorized investigators, which would be relevant to the investigation and search for the missing individual.

If Embassy support is not available, the Country Director shall proceed as follows:

- Notify the police or local authorities and determine whether the individual may be in jail someplace in the country; enlist their assistance in checking all morgues to determine whether an unidentified body has been found which may fit the description of the individual.
- Use the following photographic identification procedure in interviewing all persons or checking with any host country officials or establishments. Collect photographs of between five and seven other Trainees or Volunteers who resemble the missing individual in age and general appearance. Include the missing individual's picture with these photographs. When interviewing any person, show all photographs to that person without identifying which one is the missing individual. Ask if any of the photographs is or resembles the "foreigner" whom that person saw.
- Check all hospitals to determine whether or not the individual or someone fitting the individual's description has been admitted.
- Identify and interview the host country sponsoring Agency supervisor and/or host country national (HCN) counterpart, HCN co-workers, neighbors and friends including other Trainees or Volunteers who are close to the missing individual to determine their knowledge of the disappearance, the dates the individual was last seen or heard from, and any other pertinent information.
- Information about the individual may be developed from his or her bank accounts, if obtainable under local law. However, if there is no Embassy Security Officer available to advise the Country Director as to how to proceed, the Country Director should cable VS/SS (information copies to GC) for advice and instructions.

- Identify cafes, bars, restaurants, nightclubs and residences that the individual frequented as well as hotels or hostels where the individual might have resided and determine from the owners whether the individual was seen recently.

4.3.1. Missing Persons Report Within the limitations of country law, if there are no major developments within the first twenty-four to forty-eight hours, the Country Director, in consultation with the Security Officer, the Consular Officer, or both, and with the cabled concurrence of VS/SS and D/GC should file, or request the Embassy to file, a formal missing persons report with the local authorities.

4.3.2. Rewards Only the Peace Corps Director may elect to offer a reward for information regarding the missing individual. No reward offer should be made public until it has been officially authorized by the Peace Corps Director. If the Country Director deems such a reward advisable, the Country Director must cable VS/SS (information copies to the Regional Director and D/GC) stating the reasons for a reward, the amount to be offered either in cash or in goods according to accepted cultural practice, and requesting the Peace Corps Director's authorization to offer such a reward. After consultation with the Regional Director, D/GC and the Country Desk Officer, the Director of Special Services will present the request in a decision memorandum to the Peace Corps Director. VS/SS will then cable the decision to the Country Director.

4.3.3. Cost of Search Any costs incurred by the search effort, such as the use of a helicopter or payment for the assistance of a local host country search team, must be authorized by the Country Director with the concurrence of the Regional Director. The Country Director will request reimbursement from the Region as part of the normal budget review process.

4.4. Administrative Procedures

4.4.1. Securing Missing Individual's Living Quarters and Personal Effects Nothing in the living quarters will be disturbed or moved until law enforcement authorities have made their investigation and obtained evidence, i.e. photographs, fingerprints, etc. However, the Country Director in consultation with the Embassy's Security Officer and the Consular Officer, after considering the advice of local authorities including the police, will determine whether the living quarters of the missing individual should be secured and whether the personal effects should be left as is, pending further investigation, or inventoried, packed and removed to a secure place. At this time the Country Director should determine, if possible, whether any personal effects are missing (See paragraph 5.4.6.).

4.4.2. Missing Individual's Unclaimed Mail The Country Director shall arrange to collect and secure the individual's unclaimed mail. Return addresses and postmark information should be released only to authorized investigative authorities.

4.4.3. Living Allowance The Country Director shall arrange to place a hold on all undisbursed payments to the missing individual (see the procedure in MS 221 to adjust the living allowance payment if a single check system is used).

4.4.4. Leave Without Allowance (LWOA) As soon as possible after learning of a disappearance, the Country Director shall place the Trainee or Volunteer on leave without allowance status (see MS 220, paragraph 6.5) as of the date the individual was last reported to be at his or her project site. Leave without allowance status will stop the living allowance, but will permit Peace Corps to continue to spend appropriated funds for further investigation and search.

In cases of disappearance, LWOA will not stop the readjustment allowance. If the Trainee or Volunteer is located and his/her disappearance was caused by conduct which would be grounds for administrative separation under MS 284, the Country Director may stop the accrual of the readjustment allowance retroactive to the date of the reported disappearance or other appropriate date. (Any monthly payments to a third party will be charged against the Trainee or Volunteer's final payment of his/her readjustment allowance.) The Country Director shall cable Volunteer and Staff Payroll Services (M/FM/A/VSPS) the effective date that LWOA begins.

4.4.5. Extensions of Service During Disappearance If a Volunteer is still missing on the Close of Service (COS) date, the Volunteer will be extended by the Country Director for an additional three months or until his/her location is established. At the expiration of the initial extension of service, the Country Director may cable the Regional Director and Director of VS/SS, with an information copy to M/FM/A/VSPS, for their concurrence to authorize a second extension of service not to exceed another three months. Extensions of service beyond six months may be authorized only by the Peace Corps Director.

If a Volunteer is located, and is found to have been absent without leave during the period of his/her disappearance, he/she may be administratively separated retroactive to the date of the reported disappearance at the discretion of the Country Director (see MS 284, "Early Termination of Trainee and Volunteer Service").

5. DEATH

5.1. Initial Report From the Overseas Post When a Trainee or Volunteer dies, the Post must send a NIACT IMMEDIATE cable to VS/SS. VS/SS will acknowledge the receipt of this initial cable by a return NIACT IMMEDIATE cable. Designate the cable "LIMITED OFFICIAL USE" (LOU) if it contains highly sensitive information which warrants special protection. (This is information which the Country Director considers administratively sensitive, to be disclosed only to certain offices or personnel.) If such protection is not warranted, the LOU designation is not necessary. The fact of a death, by itself, is insufficient to warrant a LOU classification.

5.1.1. Contents of the Initial Report The report of the death must include:

- The name and social security number of the Trainee or Volunteer, time, place, and cause of death;
- Name, addresses and phone numbers of next-of-kin;
- Any information, including information from the PCMO, which would indicate the state of health of a parent or next-of-kin;

- Names of other persons involved directly or as witnesses, and the nature of their involvement;
- A medical report on each Trainee or Volunteer involved must be cabled separately by the PCMO to VS/MS "Med Eyes Only";
- Whether or not the news is public or is likely to be known by news media;
- Local reaction to the death;
- Whether an autopsy must or should be performed, and who will perform it. Include the reasons why an autopsy is necessary (e.g., required by law, cause of death is undetermined, or there is a suspicion of foul play);
- Possible problems regarding recovery, preparation, or disposition of remains, including whether the condition of the remains is such that the next-of-kin should consider cremation or host country burial;
- Facilities available if host country disposition of remains is necessary (see paragraph 5.4.3.);
- Whether the remains are suitable for viewing at a funeral, and whether the casket or other container to be used is suitable for use at a funeral; and
- An inventory of the personal effects, including cash and clothes which are on or with the remains, paying particular attention to jewelry. If time does not permit a detailed list of these items to be included in the initial cable, this inventory must be cabled immediately after it is compiled to enable VS/SS to discuss with the next-of-kin whether any of these items will be casketed with the remains or returned to the family along with other personal possessions (see paragraph 5.4.6. and 5.4.6.1.).

5.1.2. Subsequent Reports Send IMMEDIATE follow-up cables to VS/SS at least once every 12 hours, when possible, until all uncertainties about the death are resolved. Country Directors must use their utmost discretion in designating these cables, depending on the information contained in them. Only those involving sensitive and privileged information are to be designated "LIMITED OFFICIAL USE." Otherwise, they must be designated "UNCLASSIFIED."

5.2. PC/W Procedures Related to Notification of a Death Immediately upon learning of the death, VS/SS will contact the Peace Corps Director, the appropriate Regional Director, D/GC, D/CR, VS/MS, D/MR, the Office of Volunteer Recruitment and Selection (VRS/Placement/Marketing), the Office of Inspector General and other PC/W offices as appropriate.

VS/SS will review the Trainee's or Volunteer's records to determine names of the next-of-kin, their whereabouts, state of health, and similar matters.

NOTE: Responsibility for the procedures following a Trainee's or Volunteer's death is assigned to Special Services Officers on a rotating basis regardless of regional association.

The Peace Corps Director will telephone the designated next-of-kin and may notify the host country embassy in Washington. In the absence of the Peace Corps Director, the person acting in that capacity, will assume these responsibilities or designate a senior Agency official to assume them.

VS/SS will serve as the next-of-kin's contact throughout the family emergency. In this role VS/SS will be in touch with responsible individuals overseas and will coordinate all activities in conjunction with the Region and other involved offices as necessary.

5.3. Peace Corps Support of Family Although the Peace Corps cannot pay transportation and travel costs of next-of-kin to go to the site of the death, VS/SS will provide advice for personal arrangements when such travel is advisable or desired by the next-of-kin.

5.3.1. Funeral Arrangements VS/SS, in consultation with appropriate PC/W offices, will assist the family with funeral arrangements by:

- Ensuring that the Office of Workers' Compensation Programs (OWCP) Liaison is notified and that the family is aware of applicable Federal Employees' Compensation Act (FECA) funeral and burial benefits; the Office of Volunteer Services OWCP Liaison will prepare Form CA-5 or CA-5b (Claim for Compensation by Widow, Widower, and/or Children or Claim for Compensation by Parents, Brothers, Sisters, etc., respectively) and Form CA-6 (Official Superior's Report of Employee's Death);
- Acting as the contact for the funeral home designated by the family;
- Arranging for ground transportation, as necessary, for the remains and the escort from the appropriate airport to the funeral home;
- Arranging suitable housing for the escort;
- Purchasing a suitable floral arrangement of behalf of Peace Corps; and
- Determining if the family wishes to use an American flag in the funeral ceremony and arranging to obtain the flag.

VS/SS assumes costs associated with the following:

- Preparation of remains;
- Transportation of remains;
- Casket (including recasketing, if necessary);
- Transportation of effects;
- Escort to place of burial; and
- Escort's travel to PC/W for debriefing with VS/SS.

Extraordinary expenditures must be cleared with VS/SS. Information copies of all bills should be forwarded to VS/SS as quickly as possible.

5.3.2. Correspondence Following the death of a Trainee or Volunteer, VS/SS will:

- Prepare a written memo to the Peace Corps Director, with copies to the offices listed in 5.2., as soon as possible following the notification of death to the next-of-kin. The memo should contain the circumstances of death and other pertinent details. In cases where the information pertaining to the death is highly sensitive, VS/SS will communicate such to the Peace Corps Director in a separate memo, designating it "Director's Eyes Only."
- Prepare a draft of a condolence letter from the Peace Corps Director to the next-of-kin.
- Prepare drafts of condolence letters from the President of the United States and from the Secretary of State to the next-of-kin (both drafts should be accompanied by cover memos); and
- Request Form PC-505 be sent to M/FM/A/VSPS (see MS 223, Attachment H) from the field, prepare Form PC-440 (Notice of Volunteer or Trainee Action) and forward to the designated representative the balance of the Volunteer's Readjustment Allowance account.

5.3.3. Press Response or Release VS/SS will notify the D/MR who will prepare, in coordination with the Regional Director, a press response or a press release for clearance by the Peace Corps Director (see paragraph 5.4.1.). The press response or release will be made available upon request to any organization or newspaper.

5.4. Field Procedures Following Notification of Death As soon as possible after the designated next-of-kin has been notified, VS/SS will inform the Post of the family's instructions for disposition of the deceased Trainee's or Volunteer's remains and personal effects, appropriate fiscal coding for expenses incurred, and any other details as required.

5.4.1. Summary of Deceased's Peace Corps Service The Post will prepare and cable IMMEDIATE, within 24 hours, a summary of the deceased's job, program/project information, the sponsoring ministry, site, accomplishments, secondary activities, etc., for response or release to the press and/or for use at the funeral services (see paragraph 5.3.3.).

5.4.2. Autopsy The next-of-kin must give consent before an autopsy can be performed, unless host country regulations or laws require the autopsy.

5.4.3. Burial and Transportation Expenses The Peace Corps will pay for the transportation of a deceased Trainee's or Volunteer's remains to the home of record or designated place of burial. The Office of Volunteer Services will, when provided with the appropriate documentation by VS/SS, arrange for the OWCP to pay funeral, burial and related administrative expenses including the costs of such items as obituaries, death certificates, etc. (see MS 266, "Post Service Medical Benefits for Trainees, Volunteers, and Dependents"). OWCP will pay up to \$800.00 of the funeral and burial expenses and up to \$200.00 administrative expenses. VS/SS will provide assistance if the Post cannot obtain a casket locally. If, according to the next-of-kin's wishes, burial is to be in the host country, VS/SS will inform the Post and provide specific information regarding the family's instructions. If compensation is due immediately, either stateside or at the Post, and the documentation of expenses has been

delayed, the family may pay the burial expenses and subsequently seek reimbursement from OWCP.

5.4.4. Casket and Transportation of the Remains If burial is to take place in the U.S., VS/SS will provide the name of the individual to whom the shipment is to be consigned. Hermetically sealable caskets and transfer cases are available at most Embassies and at many Consulates, USAID Missions, and U.S. military installations.

If a Volunteer or Trainee is among a group of American citizens who have died, the embassy will be involved in transferring the remains to the U.S. It is State Department practice to make a direct transfer of remains from a mortuary in the host country to a mortuary in the U.S. In such a case it may not be necessary to follow the procedures below which indicate use of a despatch agent, but OSS will make the final determination. In all other cases to avoid delays, the post shall adhere to the following procedures:

- Have a through airway bill made out to the final destination (NOTE: A through airway bill expedites movement of the remains from an international carrier to a domestic carrier at the port of entry) including the following:

FOR CUSTOMS CLEARANCE NOTIFY UPON ARRIVAL

U.S. PORT OF ENTRY, U.S. DESPATCH AGENT

(Name of U.S. Despatch Agent)

(Complete Address of Despatch Agent)

(City, State Zip Code)

(Complete phone number)

FFT CONSIGNEE:

(Name of Funeral Director)

(Name of Funeral Home)

(Complete Address of Funeral Home)

(City, State, Zip Code)

(Complete Phone Number)

- The addresses of the U.S. Department of State, U.S. Despatch Agents can be obtained from the Office of Special Services.
- Mail copies of the U.S. Government Bill of Lading and the through airway bill to the appropriate Despatch Agent as soon as possible.
- Arrange for CONFIRMED AIR FREIGHT space and CONFIRMED SEATING FOR ESCORT from the host country to final destination on the earliest available flight(s).

NOTE: VS/SS will assist as requested in arranging the transfer of the remains from an international airport to a domestic airport, for example, JFK, NY to LaGuardia, NY, but there must be approximately five to six hours between the arrival time of the international flight and the departure time of the domestic flight to accomplish the transfer. For the transfer of remains from an international carrier to a domestic carrier at the same port of entry airport there must be a minimum layover of four hours.

- Send documents described in 7 FAM 254.2. with the shipment.

- Inform VS/SS by NIACT IMMEDIATE cable (NOTE: the U.S. Despatch Agent should be an information addressee on all cables concerning shipping arrangements) of the following as it becomes available:
 - Complete shipping schedule including the names of all airline carriers, all flight numbers, all departure/arrival times and dates, and the name of each airport that is a transfer point. If air freight space and/or escort seating is not confirmed, point this out and request assistance from VS/SS.
 - Through airway bill number.
 - Complete dimensions of shipping container, including weight, height, length and depth.
 - Name of person who will escort the remains, the nature of the escort's relationship to the deceased and a physical description of the escort to facilitate being met by the U.S. Despatch Agent at the port of entry.
 - Confirmation of the departure of the escort and the remains according to schedule. If time is a critical factor, the escort may choose to confirm departure by an international phone call to the Special Services Officer.

If necessary, VS/SS will arrange routing within the U.S.; however, to avoid confusion, this routing must be confirmed prior to the departure of the escort and the remains from the host country.

- Request the airline carrier accepting the shipment to telegraph all information regarding the shipment, the through airway bill number, and the complete flight schedule to the appropriate person(s) at the transfer points and to the carrier making the final delivery to the destination. Included will be instructions to advise the final delivering carrier if the shipment is delayed or re-routed for any reason. The carrier accepting the shipment also must confirm that all connecting flights can accommodate the weight and size of the shipping container.
- Determine any difficulties which might be anticipated in transporting the remains through a third country en route to the U.S., and as necessary enlist the aid of the American Embassy or any Peace Corps Country Director there to resolve the problem(s). Be certain that information copies of any cable traffic arising from such a situation are also addressed to VS/SS and the U.S. Despatch Agent.

5.4.5. Staff Escort of Remains of Trainee, Volunteer or Dependent ONLY

The Country Director will choose a staff escort to accompany the shipment of the remains and to act as the Peace Corps country representative at the funeral. If possible, the staff escort should be someone who knew the deceased well and who also knows the host country well. She or he must remain with the shipment through all transfer points to the final destination, unless there has been a direct shipment of remains arranged by the embassy from a mortuary in the host country to a mortuary in the U.S. as per paragraph 5.4.3.

The escort must be able to deal with any and all delays and logistical problems that may be encountered en route; therefore, he or she should not be an individual who was so closely associated with the deceased that his or her grief would preclude effective handling of any problems that could arise.

If ANY significant delays or difficulties, including missed connections, are encountered en route, the escort is responsible for enlisting the aid of the nearest American Embassy Consular Section in resolving the problem and notifying VS/SS and the U.S. Despatch Agent by NIACT IMMEDIATE cable.

The escort is responsible for reporting to VS/SS by telephone immediately upon arrival at the port of entry.

The U.S. Despatch Agent or an armed services mortician at the port of entry is normally responsible for safeguarding the remains during the transfer from an international to a domestic carrier. When neither of these individuals is available, the escort assumes these responsibilities. In extremely unusual cases when the escort does not accompany the remains during shipment, VS/SS may authorize the escort to proceed directly to the U.S. port of entry to assume duty.

VS/SS will authorize the escort to proceed to Washington for the purposes of debriefing following the discharge of his/her duties with the next-of-kin. The consultation will be done in coordination with the regional staff and transportation and per diem expenses for the escort will be paid by VS/SS.

5.4.6. Possessions of the Deceased Trainee or Volunteer ALL possessions of the deceased become the property of his or her estate, which passes to his or her heirs after debts and costs of the estate are satisfied. In some estates, the formalities of this principle are not always observed, but the liability for the loss to the estate is ever-present. Regardless of the legal implications, personal possessions take on a singular importance in the event of death.

VS/SS will determine from the next-of-kin whether the deceased left a will and the name of the executor. If there is no will, VS/SS will suggest that the next-of-kin seek legal counsel regarding the proper procedures to follow according to state law. If state law does not require appointment of an administrator, the next-of-kin will be responsible for informing VS/SS in writing of the legal procedures to be followed in disposing of the assets of the deceased. For the purposes of this Manual Section, the executor, administrator or designated next-of-kin under state law are collectively referred to as the "legally designated representative of the estate" or the "designated representative."

Immediately upon learning of a death, the Country Director will assign one Peace Corps employee, if necessary, in conjunction with host country authorities, to secure the individual's house or apartment and limit access to only Peace Corps employees, the Security Officer, the Consular Officer and host country authorities (see paragraph 4.4.1. and 4.4.2.).

The Consular Officer at the responsible U.S. Embassy will be contacted for information and assistance with respect to the inventorying and valuation of the personal effects of the deceased. In these matters, Peace Corps employees must operate at the direction of the Consular Officer and in accordance with the provisions of 22 USC 1175-79 and 22 CFR 72.15 et seq.

Any questions regarding the custody, inventorying or appraisal of such effects must be referred by cable through VS/SS to D/GC.

5.4.6.1. Possessions on and with the Remains A Peace Corps employee will inventory immediately the personal effects on and with the remains of the deceased. The Country Director will cable to VS/SS a detailed list of these effects which will be returned immediately to the family by the escort (see paragraph 5.1.1. last point). The Country Director will advise VS/SS of any possessions withheld due to their unpresentable condition.

An original and two typed copies of this inventory will be prepared. The Country Director will retain one copy and, upon delivery of these effects, the escort will give the original to the legally designated representative of the estate. The second copy will be signed and dated by the designated representative to acknowledge receipt of these personal effects. The signed copy will be returned to VS/SS by the escort.

5.4.6.2. Possessions of Value When securing the living quarters, the Peace Corps employee should collect and inventory, if possible (see paragraph 4.4.1.), a limited number of the deceased's personal effects to be returned immediately to the family by the escort. These personal effects should include, but are not limited to, the following: photographs, diaries, letters, and items of considerable monetary value, e.g., photographic equipment, jewelry, and cash. (If possible, the Country Director should arrange for the conversion of any foreign currency belonging to the deceased to U.S. dollars or a dollar-denominated check. If the conversion is not possible either in-country or in the U.S., the CD will consult the family via VS/SS regarding the disposition of the currency.) Any items determined to be illegal by the Country Director will not be returned.

An original and two typed copies of this inventory will be prepared. The Country Director will retain one copy, and upon delivery of these effects, the original will be given to the legally designated representative to acknowledge receipt of these personal effects. The signed copy will be returned to VS/SS by the escort.

5.4.6.3. Inventory of Deceased Trainee's or Volunteer's Remaining Personal Effects Finally, an original and four typed copies of an inventory of ALL the remaining personal effects will be prepared by a Peace Corps employee.

The Country Director will keep one copy of the inventory of the remaining personal effects and forward the original and three copies by pouch/airmail to VS/SS. The Special Services Officer will keep one copy and forward the original and two copies to the legally designated representative of the estate.

The designated representative will note on the original and both copies the disposition he/she wishes to make of each item in the inventory, selecting the items to be returned, or those he/she prefers should be sold or given away and designating to whom they are to be given. The designated representative may choose to give some items to other Trainees or Volunteers who were close to the deceased, or to Host Country Nationals (HCNs) in the village or town where the deceased lived. He/she may wish to donate some items to the Peace Corps in country for use to be determined by the Peace Corps Country Director.

The legally designated representative of the estate will keep the original and return the two copies with the designations to VS/SS. The Special Services Officer will, in turn, keep one copy and forward one copy by registered pouch or air mail to the Country Director.

Upon receipt of this copy, the Country Director will cable VS/SS for final shipping instructions for all personal effects which the designated representative wants returned. The personal effects must be packed in air freight containers of the lightest weight material available, while substantial enough to withstand handling and weather conditions as well as the distance and time involved from origin to destination. Trunks, footlockers, etc. should be locked. All containers should be banded and strapped, steel-banded preferred. Containers for air freight may not exceed dimensions of 80" x 40" x 40". Those personal effects that will be carried personally by the staff escort should be secured and kept in the escort's presence at all times until the final destination is reached.

NOTE: When effects are shipped to the U.S., ship by air, regardless of weight. For customs purposes, indicate on all shipping documentation that the Trainee or Volunteer is deceased.

5.4.7. Deceased's In-Country Checking and Savings Accounts The responsible Peace Corps employee will assist in closing the Trainee's or Volunteer's in-country checking and savings accounts by implementing the following procedures:

- He/she must cable VS/SS with details of the bank's requirements for the closure of accounts of deceased individuals. (This may include the need to obtain a Power of Attorney or letters testamentary from the estate's legally designated representative.)
- VS/SS will coordinate obtaining the necessary Power of Attorney and/or letters testamentary and forward same to the designated in-country employee, who in turn will transact business with in-country bank officials.
- Upon receiving the funds from the account(s) the responsible employee will cable VS/SS indicating the amount(s) of the funds and what the check(s) are for. The check(s) will be sent by registered pouch or registered airmail to VS/SS to be forwarded to the estate's legal representative. (As a precautionary note, the CD may need to inform the next-of-kin or estate's representative in writing of the need to review all of the deceased's debts prior to forwarding any funds in the deceased's account(s).)

The responsible Peace Corps employee will also contact other major banks in the country to determine whether the Trainee or Volunteer had additional accounts of which Peace Corps may not have been aware. If any other accounts are located, they should be closed per the above.

5.4.8. Deceased's Debts or Debts Due the Deceased If the deceased Trainee or Volunteer has outstanding debts or there are debts due the deceased, cable VS/SS immediately for instructions.

5.5. Death of a Child Peace Corps overseas employees' and VS/SS' responsibilities in the event of the death of a Trainee's or Volunteer's child are essentially the same as above, with the following exceptions:

- VS/SS will notify members of the Trainee's or Volunteer's extended family only upon the specific cabled request of the Trainee or Volunteer couple.
- VS/SS will notify appropriate PC/W officials immediately upon receipt of the cable advising of the death; officials need not meet to arrange notification of relatives;
- Trainee or Volunteer parents may accompany the child's remains to the home of record at Peace Corps' expense; they are entitled to emergency leave in accordance with MS 220, "Leave for Volunteers/Trainees." Accompaniment of the parents does not preclude escort of the remains according to paragraph 5.4.5.

5.6. Accompaniment of Spouse of Deceased Trainee or Volunteer A Trainee or Volunteer spouse may accompany the remains of a deceased Trainee or Volunteer to the home of record; he or she is entitled to emergency leave in accordance with MS 220. Accompaniment of the spouse does not preclude escort of the remains according to paragraph 5.4.5.

6. EFFECTIVE DATE

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