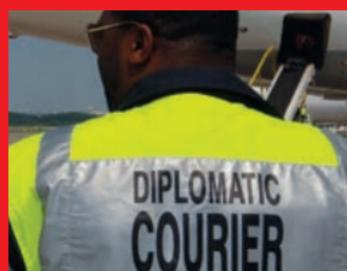


UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
BUREAU OF *DIPLOMATIC SECURITY*

# DIPLOMATIC SECURITY PROTECTS





*DS special agents protect His Holiness the Dalai Lama of Tibet during a visit to the United States.*

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## DIPLOMATIC SECURITY PROTECTS

The Bureau of Diplomatic Security is the security and law enforcement arm of the U.S. Department of State.

**Diplomatic Security’s mission is to provide a secure environment for the conduct of American diplomacy by protecting people, property, and information.** DS is a global force more than 35,000 strong, and protection is central to our mission.

### DS Protects People

Diplomatic Security provides protection to visiting foreign dignitaries during approximately 200 visits to the United States each year. DS special agents provide continuous security for the U.S. Secretary of State and the U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations. Diplomatic Security also protects visiting cabinet-level foreign dignitaries, foreign ministers, royalty, and many former heads of state who visit the United States. Among the noteworthy dignitaries we have protected are Great Britain’s Prince Charles, Burma’s Aung San Suu Kyi, President Mahmoud Abbas of the Palestinian Authority, and His Holiness the Dalai Lama of Tibet. DS provides this security throughout the year and at special events, including inaugurations and the annual United Nations General Assembly in New York City. The security DS provides to visiting dignitaries is based on the level of potential threat they face in the United States.

**DS provides protection in some of the most dangerous countries in the world—including Afghanistan, Iraq, Pakistan, and Yemen.** Diplomatic Security provides security for U.S. ambassadors and embassy staff, and in a few exceptional cases, for foreign leaders in their own countries, such as the presidents of Liberia and Afghanistan.



Diplomatic Security has been involved in security for the Olympic Games for nearly three decades, and has been the U.S. government's security coordinator for every Olympics since 2004. When the Olympic Games are held in the United States, DS provides security to visiting foreign dignitaries. For games held overseas, Diplomatic Security works with the host country and other U.S. law enforcement agencies to ensure U.S. athletes, spectators, and sponsors experience a safe event.

Diplomatic Security works with other law enforcement agencies, including the Uniformed Division of the U.S. Secret Service, to provide security for foreign embassies, consulates, and other missions in the United States. DS consults regularly with foreign mission officials on issues such as personal security, emergency action plans, physical security standards, crime prevention, and surveillance detection.

### **DS Protects Property**

American embassies overseas are often targets of terrorists, criminals, and spies. They have sustained hundreds of significant and high-profile attacks in recent years, such as the 1998 bombing of U.S. facilities in East Africa that left hundreds dead. Because of these persistent and deadly threats, overseas security is at the heart of the DS mission. To protect employees, the Department of State has invested billions of dollars to enhance security measures at every U.S. embassy and diplomatic mission abroad.

Each U.S. mission has an extensive security program, developed and overseen by a Regional Security Officer (RSO) who is the senior Diplomatic Security agent at the mission. Each RSO is thoroughly familiar with the host country—its politics, economy, culture, society, and history. The RSO establishes official contacts with the



host government's security services, police, and others who provide credible information and support.

Under the direction of regional security officers, U.S. Marine Security Guards secure access to most U.S. embassies. They help ensure that classified material, government property, and personnel at U.S. diplomatic missions remains safe and secure, especially in times of crisis. Marine Security Guards have protected embassies during riots, terrorist strikes, and other emergencies. In the event of an attack, Marine Security Guards delay the aggressors long enough to help safeguard the lives of diplomatic personnel and to destroy classified information. In times of crisis, they often help evacuate Americans living in the region.

Marine Security Guards control access within U.S. missions, conduct inspections to ensure that classified

information is secure, and monitor surveillance devices, fire alarms, and communications systems.

**A force of 32,400 local guards protects the perimeters of U.S. overseas buildings.** The guards, managed by a Regional Security Officer, patrol the grounds and inspect vehicles, visitors, and packages. The guards also respond to alarms and requests for assistance. Specially trained local guards also protect many U.S. ambassadors and other personnel as necessary. Local guards are usually citizens of the host nation.

In the United States, nearly 1,000 uniformed security officers protect more than 100 Department of State buildings and locations. They patrol the facilities, screen visitors and packages, and monitor communications and security systems through the state-of-the-art



Security Control Center. From the Center, which operates around the clock, officers can detect intrusions, control access, and dispatch other officers to emergency situations. When an emergency occurs, they are often first on the scene, taking control of the situation and, when necessary, providing first aid or calling for assistance.

**A specially trained explosives-detection security canine team helps protect State Department domestic employees.** With security officers, the dogs patrol buildings and check vehicles. As part of the protection that Diplomatic Security provides to foreign dignitaries, security officers with dogs frequently inspect hotels and other sites for explosives.

### **DS Protects Information**

Although many foreign intelligence groups regularly try to spy on Department of State buildings worldwide, Diplomatic Security uses advanced technical security programs to thwart them. Security engineering officers (SEOs) design, install, and manage technical equipment and computer systems that are sophisticated and effective.

Using high-tech instruments, SEOs can find hidden “bugging” devices and determine if anyone is using electronic equipment to conduct surveillance against the United States. Engineers also develop, install, and maintain state-of-the-art systems to keep out intruders and protect against physical attacks.

Security Technical Specialists and U.S. Navy Seabees help SEOs fortify U.S. missions. Seabees construct buildings, rooms, and locks that shield State Department employees and sensitive information from espionage attempts. Security technical specialists work with the SEOs to install and maintain explosives detectors, metal detectors, closed-circuit television cameras, emergency alert systems, electromagnetic door locks, vehicle barriers, and other special equipment.

Classified documents also receive special protections. When the State Department sends classified documents or government equipment to its overseas missions, the materials could be vulnerable to those who might try to access them, plant surveillance devices, or otherwise compromise them. Diplomatic couriers travel with all classified and sensitive materials sent to U.S. missions and the U.S. government to ensure security, whether a diplomatic pouch containing papers and files, or heavy equipment and construction materials.

Diplomatic couriers also protect sensitive materials by escorting them within the United States and across international borders. Every year, couriers ensure the secure delivery of millions of pounds of materials, including classified pouches.

The cybersecurity of the State Department's classified and sensitive information is a top priority. DS computer security specialists continually monitor classified and unclassified information systems. They develop strict security measures to prevent cyber-attacks and high-technology crimes.

Diplomatic Security conducts as many as 32,000 background investigations each year on U.S. government employees who have access to classified and sensitive information, and on Department of State job applicants. DS trains employees to handle, store, and destroy classified and sensitive information. If the State Department suspects an information security violation, Diplomatic Security, along with other U.S. government agencies, conducts an investigation.

It is Diplomatic Security's job to protect United States diplomats overseas, foreign dignitaries in the United States, State Department buildings worldwide, and the information essential to conducting U.S. diplomacy.

For more information, visit DS at [www.diplomaticsecurity.state.gov](http://www.diplomaticsecurity.state.gov)



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