UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE
BUREAU OF DIPLOMATIC SECURITY

REGIONAL SECURITY OFFICE
INTRODUCTION

The Bureau of Diplomatic Security (DS) is the security and law enforcement arm of the U.S. Department of State. DS dates back to 1916 with the appointment of a single Chief Special Agent who reported directly to the U.S. Secretary of State on special matters. Today, Diplomatic Security is a global force of more than 40,000 professionals dedicated to ensuring that the United States can conduct foreign policy safely and securely.

Diplomatic Security conducts criminal investigations of passport and visa fraud; protects the U.S. Secretary of State, the U.S. Representative to the United Nations, and official representatives of foreign governments while in the United States; secures information systems; and safeguards U.S. diplomatic facilities throughout the world.

Operating from a worldwide platform in more than 175 countries, Diplomatic Security is a world leader in international investigations, threat analysis, cyber security, dignitary protection, security technology, counterterrorism, and more.
The Regional Security Office:

- Protects U.S. diplomatic facilities, personnel, and information.
- Serves as the U.S. embassy’s law enforcement liaison to the host nation.
- Arranges training for foreign police and security officers to combat terrorism.
- Advises Americans about safety and security abroad and assists U.S.-related schools and organizations in obtaining security grants.
- Shares security information with the U.S. private sector through the Overseas Security Advisory Council.

Law Enforcement and Security Services

Diplomatic Security is represented throughout the world by Diplomatic Security Service (DSS) special agents and other security professionals assigned to Regional Security Offices in every U.S. embassy and in most U.S. consulates.

The Regional Security Office provides a range of services to U.S. citizens, the U.S. private sector, U.S. domestic law enforcement, and foreign law enforcement organizations. Each office is managed by a senior DSS special agent who also serves as the U.S. Ambassador’s principal U.S. law enforcement and security advisor, and assumes the title Regional Security Officer (RSO).

Facilities, Personnel, and Information Protection

U.S. diplomatic facilities overseas can be targets of terrorists and other criminals. To mitigate threats, the Regional Security Office develops, implements, and manages a range of physical, cyber, and personnel security programs. For example, during the dangerous and unstable conditions of the 2011-2012 Arab Spring, and during the 2013 attack on the U.S. Consulate in Herat, the DSS special agents and personnel assigned to the Regional Security Office played an integral role in the defense, protection, and—where necessary—the safe evacuation of U.S. diplomatic personnel.
Visa and Passport Fraud

Travel document fraud represents a serious and growing threat to the security of all nations. Criminals who obtain a fraudulent travel document often use it to commit crimes such as terrorism, financial fraud, narcotics trafficking, alien smuggling, and identity theft. Fugitives often seek to change their identities and travel internationally as part of their criminal activities. DS Regional Security Office special agents conduct international document fraud investigations. Working with foreign law enforcement agencies, Regional Security Offices investigate and coordinate hundreds of international visa and passport fraud cases each year. Cases include allegations of corruption by American and locally employed staff, fraudulent document vendors, bribery, alien smuggling, and trafficking of U.S. visas.
Two DSS special agents, one with a night vision device, watch from a balcony at the Kenyatta International Conference Center in Nairobi, Kenya, during the 6th Global Entrepreneurship Summit.

Major International Events
Diplomatic Security is the lead U.S. law enforcement organization working with foreign law enforcement and security agencies to protect American citizens and U.S. interests at major public events overseas, such as international trade expos and sports competitions.

For example, Diplomatic Security personnel have worked with their foreign counterparts to coordinate protection at the World Cup, the Pan American Games, and all overseas Olympic Games since 1984.
Training for DS Personnel and Partner Nations

Many Regional Security Office personnel who live and work in hostile environments overseas now undergo special training that includes a basic high-threat operations course for DSS special agents. The training includes how to deal with complex attacks against protective details and diplomatic facilities—including in high-stress scenarios at a simulated U.S. consulate.

Diplomatic Security’s Antiterrorism Assistance (ATA) program builds the counterterrorist capacity of America’s partner nations by enhancing the skills and abilities of their civilian law enforcement personnel. ATA programs are tailored to meet the needs of the host country by developing courses and providing training on topics such as bomb detection and disposal, crime scene investigation, VIP protection, and cyber security.

Participants in the ATA program have used their new skills to deter and prevent terrorist attacks, rescue hostages, dismantle terrorist cells, and apprehend terrorist operatives and leaders.

Since its inception in 1983, the program has trained and assisted more than 150,000 foreign security and law enforcement personnel from more than 150 countries.

International Law Enforcement Academy

Each year hundreds of police officers from member countries are invited to participate in training at the International Law Enforcement Academies in Bangkok, Budapest, Gaborone, and San Salvador.

These programs offer non-U.S. mid-level civilian police officers courses on management skills and a variety of other specialized classes. Core programs are conducted by Diplomatic Security and other U.S. federal law enforcement agencies.

Members of the Dhaka Metropolitan Police’s ATA-trained Counterterrorism and Transnational Crime Unit leave the premises of a five-story building in Dhaka, Bangladesh, where officers killed nine terrorist suspects and captured another in a gun battle. (AP/Wide World Photos)
Rewards for Justice Program

Diplomatic Security administers the Rewards for Justice (RFJ) program, a key weapon in the U.S. war on terror. Through this program, the U.S. Secretary of State may offer substantial rewards for information that leads to the arrest or conviction of anyone who plans, commits, or attempts international terrorist acts against U.S. persons or property; that prevents such acts from occurring in the first place; that leads to the location of a key terrorist leader; or that disrupts terrorism financing.

Since the program began in 1984, the United States has paid more than $145 million to at least 90 persons who provided information that put terrorists behind bars or prevented terrorist acts against Americans.

Some of the RFJ program’s notable successes include the DSS–assisted arrest of international terrorist Ramzi Yousef, convicted for the 1993 bombing of the World Trade Center, as well as developing a source who was ultimately able to provide the location of Saddam Hussein’s sons, Uday and Qusay Hussein. All were located with information provided by RFJ sources. The identities of RFJ sources and the information they provide are kept strictly confidential.

Rewards for Justice campaigns are internationally advertised with posters; matchbook covers; newspaper, radio, and television ads; and on the Internet at

www.rewardsforjustice.net and
https://twitter.com/Rewards4Justice

Transnational Crimes

The Regional Security Office works with its law enforcement counterparts abroad to pursue investigative leads on U.S. fugitives wanted for crimes such as homicide, pedophilia, narcotics trafficking, parental kidnapping, and financial and Internet fraud.

The close working relationships between DSS special agents and their foreign counterparts—combined with the expertise of locally hired investigators—have resulted in locating U.S. fugitives worldwide. These fugitives are often found to have continued their criminal activities in their newly adopted countries.

In 2003, the U.S. Congress passed the PROTECT Act, making it a crime for U.S. citizens to sexually exploit or abuse children in a foreign country. As a result, demand for Regional Security Offices’ investigative assistance overseas has increased, as U.S. law enforcement seeks to apprehend U.S. pedophiles who prey on children around the globe.

Two DSS special agents escort a fugitive through Los Angeles International Airport upon his return to the United States.
People wishing to provide information to the Rewards for Justice program should contact the Regional Security Office at the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate, or use the following contact information:

Mailing address:
RFJ, Washington D.C. 20522-0303, USA

Toll-free telephone number:
(for callers in Canada and the United States only):
1-800-US-REWARDS

E-mail:
Info@RewardsforJustice.net

Safety for Americans Abroad

Working closely with the U.S. embassy’s consular affairs office, the Regional Security Office is a resource for U.S. citizens living, working, and traveling overseas. Regional Security Offices provide the latest information on safety and security conditions specific to the country of residence, as well as recommendations on how to protect against crime, civil unrest, terrorism, or other threatening situations. Regional Security Office personnel may also be called upon to provide assistance to U.S. citizens before, during, or after emergencies overseas.

Emergency Response

To improve the delivery of assistance and information to U.S. citizens during or following terrorist attacks, natural disasters, civil disorder, and other emergencies, the State Department encourages all Americans abroad to register with the closest U.S. embassy or consulate.

When the embassy is aware of an impending emergency, the Regional Security Office assists in producing “warden messages” and other advisories or warnings that are disseminated to registered American citizens via e-mail, fax, or telephone by American Citizen Services within the embassy.

If an emergency requires the evacuation of Americans, the Regional Security Office assists in disseminating information on evacuation times and locations. Regional Security Office personnel may also coordinate with host nation law enforcement and security agencies to ensure safe passage of Americans to evacuation points and to provide and coordinate security at the points of departure.

The U.S. embassy’s consular affairs office uses its notification system to invite registered U.S. citizens to U.S. embassy town hall meetings at
The Regional Security Office shares security information with the U.S. private sector through the Overseas Security Advisory Council (OSAC). OSAC is a public-private partnership that promotes security through cooperation and information-sharing between the State Department and U.S. companies, educational institutions, religious groups, and nonprofit organizations overseas.

OSAC has more than 150 country councils in the Middle East, Africa, Europe, Asia, and the Western Hemisphere. These country councils provide a forum for effective communication between the U.S. embassy and the American private sector in a given country.

They also provide participants with timely unclassified safety and security information, educational seminars, and, in some cases, training exercises to confront today’s security threats.

For more information: www.osac.gov
Contact Us

For more information about Regional Security Offices or Diplomatic Security, contact your nearest U.S. embassy or consulate or visit:

www.diplomaticsecurity.state.gov

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