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## Espionage and Foreign Travel

The Intelligence Community has assessed that a number of foreign countries, to include some traditional U.S. allies, continue their collection activities against the United States. These foreign collection efforts continue to be driven by military force modernization, economic competition, and commercial modernization using technologies with dual-use applications. Foreign individuals, businesses, government entities, and intelligence-affiliated personal continue to employ collection techniques against U.S. targets both abroad and in the United States.

## As a Traveler, Why Should You Be Concerned About Espionage?

First, your employment with DOE gives you actual and/or potential access to information of value to foreign governments. Foreign intelligence services will perceive you this way, whether you agree or not.

Second, when you travel, you are most vulnerable to the devices of a foreign intelligence service. You are in their country. They control it. Even in countries with a long democratic tradition, the local intelligence/security services can control much of your environment – it is to their benefit.

## Such As?

Intelligence Services may:

- Surveil your movements
- Surreptitiously enter your hotel room or other quarters at will

- Tap your telephone and fax machine
- Arrange audio and video coverage of your hotel room, conference room, dining facilities, and in some cases, local restaurants
- Monitor your conversations and behavior through interpreters and tour guides
- "Bug" selected seats of national airlines
- Download information from your laptop computer or other electronic information devices

These intrusions can be as extensive as the foreign intelligence service's determination to learn about you while you are in their country.

## Who is Most Likely to Be Targeted?

Some factors that increase the possibility that you, or any other person, will be targeted and assessed include:

- Your access to information, people, or places of active intelligence interest
- Overseas locations where foreign intelligence operatives can gain access to you on the home turf
- Work in a position or geographic location in the U.S. where it is easy for foreign nationals to gain access to you
- Ethnic, racial, or religious background that may attract the attention of a foreign intelligence operative

It is important to note that all the above factors that increase the chances of a person selected or initial targeting and assessment are circumstances you have little or no control over.

Most foreign contacts are perfectly legitimate and well meaning. Your ability to recognize the few who are not will help you avoid problems. It will also help your security officer help others avoid problems.

## The Recruitment Cycle

All intelligence services follow some version of the recruitment cycle in seeking sources. It is simply a logical, systematic plan to find and then exploit people for information. Think of it as the spy version of marketing! The recruitment cycle has five basic steps:

**Spotting:** The identification of potential sources

**Assessing:** Learning as much as possible about the potential source

**Recruitment:** Actually enticing the potential source to provide information

**Handling:** Continuing a relationship

**Termination:** Ceasing the relationship

This process is very flexible. It can go very quickly, or take many months or years.

## How are you Affected By the Recruitment Cycle?

As a DOE traveler, especially if you have a government passport and/or have applied for a visa, you can assume that you have at least been spotted. Most security services review visa applications from official travelers as a matter of routine.

Those deemed interesting may then be subject to the next step, that of assessment; or to put it another way – getting to know you! An intelligence service will likely start by debriefing your foreign contacts. Certainly, some of your contacts may be talking about you to their intelligence services, and refuse their requests. But experience tells us that most will cooperate, for any number of reasons. And depending on the country involved, some may not have much choice.

After being spotted and assessed, if you continue to be of interest, you will become a candidate for the most delicate phase, that of recruitment. Recruitment in its simplest terms means persuading you to divulge privileged information, whether it is classified or unclassified. The key is **PRIVILEGED!** It can be about your work, your organization's work, or personal information about you or your colleagues.

The remaining phases of the recruitment cycle, handling and termination simply refer to the ongoing relationship – and its eventual end.

## Elicitation

In today's world of increased contact between DOE personnel and foreigners, we need to make a special mention of elicitation. Because elicitation appears simply as normal, non-threatening conversation, we believe it is the technique most likely to be used by foreign intelligence services to extract information from DOE travelers.

In many instances we could use the terms elicitation and recruitment interchangeable since they accomplish the same objective – the acquisition of privileged information. (Some intelligence purists may object to equating the terms since, strictly speaking, a recruited person knows he or she is working for a foreign government, whereas elicitation implies gaining information under the guise of innocent conversation.) Regardless of the definition, DOE travelers may be pressed for information that should not be shared with foreigners.

**Remember:** If you feel uncomfortable discussing anything with a foreign contact, you have no obligation

to continue. Change the topic or stop the conversation.

## Points to Remember:

- The world has changed, but the need for information has not
- Spies look and act like normal people
- You do not control the foreign environment – They do!
- All travelers are subject to foreign intelligence scrutiny!
- Even unclassified information may require protection
- Report suspicious situations to the nearest U.S. diplomatic facility while overseas, and/or to your facility counterintelligence officer upon return to the U.S.

## Finally

Have a productive and enjoyable trip!

Should you wish further information on the above, please contact your Facility Counterintelligence Officer at (630) 252-5500 or the DOE Headquarters Office of Counterintelligence at (202) 586-1247.

**U.S. Department of Energy  
Office of Counterintelligence**