"Before you go"

Pre-Departure Checklist

Ensuring you are personally prepared to deploy during an emergency will enable you to focus on providing logistics support for your organization. Responding to a disaster is difficult enough without the additional stress of preventable issues like renewing a passport at the last minute, not having the correct vaccinations, or needing a new laptop. The following checklists are provided as a guide to help improve your preparation process.

**Customization to suit your personal/organizational needs and adapting to the operational environment is strongly encouraged.**

General Personal Items

- **Valid passport** (and photocopy). Ensure there are several blank pages for additional visas. Check that the passport is current and that it will not expire within the next six months (an entry requirement for some countries). It is also a good idea to bring several passport sized photos for potential official paperwork in the country.
- **Required visas**: Confirm you have all required visas to enter the country. Information can be found in your organizations travel or protocol office. If you are planning your own trip consult the embassy webpage for the destination country. There are also webpages like- Project Visa, which can provide some non-official guidance.
- **Airplane Tickets**: Ensure your organization books your travel and you have the relevant tickets and a current itinerary.
- **Driver’s license**: And any other vehicle related documents, if required for the country.
- **Cash**: Adequate amount of relevant currency. You should ensure you have enough cash to sustain yourself during the first few days; keep in mind there may be limited accessibility to banking facilities or finance offices. At the same time, keep cash amounts limited for security reasons. It is also recommended that you bring at least one credit card. It is a good idea to look up the relevant exchange rates before departure in case there is limited connectivity.
- **Contact Information**: It is very important to bring essential contact information. You should have multiple ways of contacting your local office and should establish communication, before you depart, so they know your travel plans. It is recommended to also have contact information for your transportation from the airport, and your initial place of lodging.
- **Photocopies**: It is recommended that you have photocopies and/or scanned electronic copies of all your important documents you are taking with you. This should include a signed copy of your contract, especially if you are a consultant.
- **Updating and Maintaining Personal Documents**: Keeping your essential personal documents updated designation of beneficiaries, salary allotment instructions, emergency contact information, organizing the payment of your utilities, rent and other expenses, informing family/friends of your plans and contact details, updating any wills and power of attorney, keeping current insurance, etc.
- **Security training**: Make sure you have completed any security training required by your organization. Check with your security officer before departure.

Personal Health Items

- **Current Vaccinations**: Bring your vaccination record. In some countries the yellow booklet (immunization record) may be required. Ensure that this booklet includes your blood group and that your vaccination status is valid for the destination.
- **Prescription Medication**: Make sure you have refills of any prescription medication that you may require for the time that you are deployed, plus an emergency back-up supply. Include prescriptions of medicine for endemic/communicable diseases (prevention and treatment). In order to avoid problems at customs always carry a signed prescription from your doctor for your medication.
- **Eyeglasses**: Make sure you have an extra set and sufficient contact lens supplies.
- **Medicine**: Common over the counter medicines, as required- pain killers, medication for colds, allergies, diarrhea, athlete’s foot, etc.
- **Medical Consultation**: If there is time, book a pre-travel medical appointment to ensure you have the current vaccines and other health advice for the area you will be traveling.

Technical and Administrative Items

- **Laptop**: If you have a corporate laptop make sure it is properly checked out and updated with the most recent software. You will want to confirm access to email by testing to make sure that you can send/receive emails when outside your office.
- **Electronic Equipment**: If required, check out VHF radios, satellite telephones, PDA, GPS, digital camera, cellphone, or other specialized electronic equipment. Remember to check if there are any restrictions for bringing this equipment into the destination country. Ensure you know how to use the equipment before you get to the field.
- **Miscellaneous IT Equipment**: Check that you have all the cables, chargers and power supplies you need for your electronic equipment. This can include universal/travel power adapters, USB cables, and extra batteries.
- **Mobile Devices**: If you do not have a local sim card for your destination keep yourself updated on the costs involved before calling, texting, or using data. It is recommended to disable your data roaming on your mobile device until you determine your in country data requirements.
- **Electronic maps**: Of the affected country/region. The Logistics Cluster website would normally have them available within the first 72 hours of an emergency.
- **Digital Documents**: Most recent version of the of the Logistics Operational Guide (LOG), Logistics Capacity Assessments, Reliefweb Briefing Kit for the country, electronic publications and manuals, and any other important electronic documents on a USB, laptop, and/or tablet.
Links

- Logistics Cluster - Everything logistics.
- Reliefweb - Current information on the emergency and background information for a briefing kit.
- WHO International Health and Travel Information - Excellent source for country, safety, and health information.
- WHO Country Profiles
- WFP Generic Traveler Checklist
- US State Department Travel Information - Good source for country specific advisories and information.
- France Diplomatie Conseils aux Voyageurs (French) - Good source for country specific advisories and information in French.

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Microsoft Word Document Recommendations for a basic first aid kit.docx | Aug 11, 2015 by Justin White