



## Arrangements for the Final Departure of your Head of Mission

### **Notification of departure**

When your Head of Mission is about to terminate their appointment in London they **must notify** the Marshal of the Diplomatic Corps as well as the Vice-Marshal of the Diplomatic Corps and Ceremonial Section in writing (see [Annex A](#) for contact details). The letter should appoint a Chargé d’Affaires or Acting High Commissioner from the date of departure (see [Annex B](#) for suggested text).

### **Farewell Audience**

Please contact the office of the Marshal of the Diplomatic Corps (see [Annex A](#) for contact details) to arrange a time when he will call on your Head of Mission to bid farewell on behalf of The King.

### **Farewell calls on FCDO Ministers and senior officials**

It is not usual to pay farewell courtesy calls at the FCDO, but if the Head of Mission wishes to do so they should arrange these through the geographical department.

### **Other farewell calls**

Your Head of Mission should arrange other farewell calls directly with the people concerned.

### **Appointment of a Chargé d’Affaires or Acting High Commissioner**

Your Head of Mission should appoint a Chargé d’Affaires or Acting High Commissioner from the date of departure, in accordance with Article 19 of the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations. Details of the appointment should be included in the letter to the Vice-Marshal. Please note that once your Head of Mission has departed, the appointment of the Chargé d’Affaires or Acting High Commissioner must be authorised in writing by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and not solely by the Embassy or High Commission.

### **Departures**

Please let the Protocol VIP Arrivals & Departures team know, as early as possible, the departure date for your Head of Mission, even if initially the date is provisional. See [Annex A](#) for contact details.

For your Head of Mission’s final departure, they have the option to use a VIP Suite when departing on a commercial flight from [Heathrow Airport](#) at no cost to your Mission (depending on availability). The booking must be made by the FCDO Protocol VIP Arrivals & Departures Team.

In order for the VIP Arrivals & Departures team to make a VIP suite booking, you will need to provide the following information, along with a completed [advanced passenger information \(API\) form](#), and send to [VIParrivals.departures@fcdo.gov.uk](mailto:VIParrivals.departures@fcdo.gov.uk), **no later than 7 working days before departure**.

Please include a copy of the Head of Mission's CV / Biography.

1. Name of VIP:
2. Airport/ Terminal:
3. Total number of passengers (including Head of Mission):
4. Date:
5. Time:
6. Flight Number:
7. Mission Greeters & Mobile Numbers (2 maximum):  
*\*Please provide confirmation if they have operational airside IDs*  
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8. The details of the Drivers and Vehicles as per the table below:

Driver Name	Driver Number	Vehicle Make	Vehicle Model	Vehicle Colour	Vehicle Registration

If your Head of Mission is departing on a private flight, regardless of airport, the VIP suite will be included in the handling fees you pay to the UK flight handler. The VIP Arrivals & Departures Team should be made aware of all details relating to the private flight arrival, including receiving a copy of the API form.

We can also arrange for a Special Representative of the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Affairs to bid farewell to your Head of Mission at the VIP Suite (dependent on their availability). **Representatives are only provided at your request, and when a VIP Suite is used.** So please confirm when requesting the VIP Suite or notifying of private departure if you wish to have an FCDO Special Representative present.

**Please note:**

- It is with regret we are unable to provide a complimentary VIP suite for your Head of Missions departure at other airports / ports.
- We will only be able to arrange for a Special Representative of the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs to bid farewell to your Head of Mission, if the VIP Suite at Heathrow is used.
- Health Measures may apply at UK airports / VIP Suites.

**Miscellaneous**

If the Head of Mission intends to leave any family members temporarily in the UK (e.g. for schooling) they should consult Diplomatic Missions Unit (DMIOU) in Protocol Directorate well in advance of departure, so that they can provide advice on procedures.

## **Annex A**

### **Ceremonial Section**

[ceremonial.section@fcdo.gov.uk](mailto:ceremonial.section@fcdo.gov.uk)

### **Director of Protocol and Vice-Marshall of the Diplomatic Corps**

Office of Ms Victoria Busby OBE, Director of Protocol and Vice-Marshall of the Diplomatic Corps  
020 7008 0989

[Jonathan.Greensted@fcdo.gov.uk](mailto:Jonathan.Greensted@fcdo.gov.uk)

### **Marshal of the Diplomatic Corps' Office**

Georgina Harford

Assistant to the Marshal of the Diplomatic Corps

020 7024 5591

[Georgina.Harford@royal.uk](mailto:Georgina.Harford@royal.uk)

### **Protocol VIP Arrivals & Departures Team**

[VIParrivals.departures@fcdo.gov.uk](mailto:VIParrivals.departures@fcdo.gov.uk)

## **Annex B**

### **Suggested text for the letter to the Vice-Marshal of the Diplomatic Corps**

[Address and Date]

Madam,

I write to inform you that, on the instructions of my Government, I shall be terminating my mission as Ambassador/High Commissioner of [country] on or around [date].

I should be grateful if you would inform the Marshal of the Diplomatic Corps.

Upon my departure and pending the arrival of my successor, I have appointed [name and position] to act as Chargé d’Affaires/Acting High Commissioner ad interim.

With the assurance of my highest consideration I have the honour to be, Madam,

[usual signature of Head of Mission]

[typed name of Head of Mission]

Ms Victoria Busby OBE  
Vice-Marshal of the Diplomatic Corps  
Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office  
King Charles Street  
London SW1A 2AH