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was residing at the time of death to take possession and dispose of the decedent's personal estate;

(3) The next of kin, if authorized in the country where the death occurred or in the country where the deceased was residing at the time of death to take possession and dispose of the decedent's personal estate; or

(4) An authorized agent of the individuals described in paragraphs (b)(1), (b)(2) and (b)(3) of this section.

(c) *Department* means the United States Department of State

§ 72.2 Consular responsibility.

When a consular officer learns that a United States citizen or non-citizen national has died in the officer's consular district, the officer must—

(a) Report the death to the Department; and

(b) The officer must also try to notify, or assist the Secretary of State in notifying, the next of kin (or legal guardian) and the legal representative, if different from the next of kin, as soon as possible. See § 72.3 for exceptions to this paragraph.

§ 72.3 Exceptions.

If a consular office learns that a United States citizen or non-citizen national employee or dependent of an employee of a member of the United States Armed Forces, or a United States citizen or non-citizen national employee of another department or agency or a dependent of such an employee, or a Peace Corps volunteer as defined in 22 U.S.C. 1504(a) or dependent of a Peace Corps volunteer has died while in the officer's consular district while the employee or volunteer is on assignment abroad, the officer should notify the Department. The consular officer should not attempt to notify the next of kin (or legal guardian) and legal representative of the death, but rather should assist, as needed, the appropriate military, other department of agency or Peace Corps authorities in making notifications of death with respect to such individual.

§ 72.4 Notifications of death.

The consular officer should make best efforts to notify the next of kin (or legal guardian), if any, and the legal representative (if any, and if different from the next of kin), of the death of a United States citizen or non-citizen national by telephone as soon as possible, and then should follow up with a written notification of death.

§ 72.5 Final report of death.

(a) *Preparation.* Except in the case of the death of an active duty member of the United States Armed Forces, when there is a local death certificate or finding of death by a competent local authority, the consular officer should prepare a consular report of death (''CROD'') on the form prescribed by the Department. The CROD will list the cause of death that is specified on the local death certificate or finding of death. The consular officer must prepare an original Report of Death, which will be filed with the Vital Records Section of Passport Services at the Department of State. The consular officer will provide a certified copy of the Report of Death to the next of kin or other person with a valid need for the Report within six months of the time of death. The next of kin or other person with a valid need for the Report may obtain additional certified copies after six months by contacting the Department of State, Vital Records, Passport Services, 1111 19th St., NW., Rm. 510, Washington, DC 20036.

(b) *Provision to Department.* The consular officer must sent the original of the CROD to the Department, with one additional copy for each agency concerned, if the deceased was:

(1) A recipient of continuing payments other than salary from the Federal Government; or

(2) An officer or employee of the Federal Government (other than a member of the United States Armed Services); or

(3) A Selective Service registrant of inductable age.

(c) *Provision to next of kin/legal representative.* The consular officer must provide a copy of the CROD to the next of kin (or legal guardian) or to each of the next of kin, in the event there is more than one (e.g. more than one surviving child) and to any known legal representative who is not the next of kin.

(d) *Transmission of form to other consular districts.* If the consular officer knows that a part of the personal estate of the deceased is in a consular district other than that in which the death occurred, the officer should send a copy of the CROD to the consular officer in the other district.

(e) The Department may revoke a CROD if it determines in its sole discretion that the CROD was issued in error.

§ 72.6 Report of presumptive death.

(a) *Local finding.* When there is a local finding of presumptive death by a competent local authority, a consular officer should prepare a consular report of presumptive death on the form prescribed by the Department.

(b) *No local finding.* (1) A United States citizen or non-citizen national may disappear or be missing in circumstances where it appears likely that the individual has died, but there is no local authority able or willing to issue a death certificate or a judicial finding of death. This may include, for example, death in a plane crash where there are no identifiable remains, death in a plane crash beyond the territory of any country, death in an avalanche, disappearance/death at sea, or other sudden disaster where the body is not immediately (or perhaps ever) recoverable.

(2) *Authorization of issuance.* The Department may authorize the issuance of a consular report of presumptive death in such circumstances. A consular report of presumptive death may not be issued without the Department's authorization.

(3) *Considerations in determining whether the Department will authorize issuance of a Report of Presumptive Death.* The Department's decision whether to issue a Report of Presumptive Death is discretionary, and will be based on the totality of circumstances in each particular case. Although no one factor is conclusive or determinative, the Department will consider the factors cited below, among other relevant considerations, when deciding whether to authorize issuance in a particular case:

(i) Whether the death is believed to have occurred within a geographic area where no sovereign government exercises jurisdiction;

(ii) Whether the government exercising jurisdiction over the place where the death is believed to have occurred lacks laws or procedures for making findings of presumptive death;

(iii) Whether the government exercising jurisdiction over the place where the death is believed to have occurred requires a waiting period exceeding five years before findings of presumptive death may be made;

(iv) Whether the person who is believed to have died was seen to be in imminent peril by credible witnesses;

(v) Whether the person who is believed to have died is reliably known to have been in a place which experienced a natural disaster, or catastrophic event, that was capable of causing death;

(vi) Whether the person believed to have died was listed on the certified manifest of, and was confirmed to have boarded, an aircraft, or vessel, which was destroyed and, despite diligent search by competent authorities, some or all of the remains were not recovered or could not be identified;

(vii) Whether there is evidence of fraud, deception, or malicious intent.

(c) Consular reports of presumptive death should be processed and issued in accordance with § 72.5.

(d) The Department may revoke a report of presumptive death if it determines in its sole discretion that the report was issued in error.

Disposition of Remains

§ 72.7 Consular responsibility.

(a) A consular officer has no authority to create Department or personal financial obligations in connection with the disposition of the remains of a United States citizen or non-citizen national who dies abroad. Responsibility for the disposition of the remains and all related costs (including but not limited to costs of embalming or cremation, burial expenses, cost of a burial plot or receptacle for ashes, markers, and grave upkeep), rests with the legal representative of the deceased. In the absence of a legal representative (including when the next of kin is not a