



DIPLOMATIC IMMUNITIES AND PRIVILEGES (DIAP) CIRCULAR NO 03 OF 2026

The Department of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO) of the Republic of South Africa presents its compliments to Diplomatic Missions and International Organisations accredited to the Republic of South Africa and has the honour to refer to Diplomatic Immunities and Privileges (DIAP) Circular Note 3 of 2025 dated 13 February 2025 regarding the contact numbers for the Diplomatic Policing Unit (DPU), South African Police Service (SAPS), as well as the requirements for requesting security at diplomatic events.

Foreign Missions are reminded to follow the correct protocol and procedures when requesting the services of the DPU. Any request for the DPU must be forwarded to mogales@dirco.gov.za; masales@dirco.gov.za and copy maponyas@dirco.gov.za. No requests may be sent directly to the DPU, nor to the Tshwane Metro Police Department (TMPD).

When requesting DPU services, it must be done under cover of a Note Verbale containing the name of the event, date, expected number of guests, nodal contact including the landline and mobile numbers as well as an email address for the contact. Requests for the policing of diplomatic events hosted by the Mission must be submitted to DIAP at least 14 days in advance of the event taking place. Proper planning and allocation of logistical and human resources is needed. Short notice requests may lead to the DPU not deploying to the event.

The following contact numbers should be used by Foreign Missions whenever police assistance is needed in the event of an emergency or for the reporting of crimes related to the Mission or accredited diplomats and dependents **after hours**:

24-hour Control Room number: (012) 421-8063

24-hour mobile number: 082 778 9656

Emergency police contact number: 10111 or 112

All policing complaints by Foreign Missions must be reported directly to the Diplomatic Policing Operational Room for immediate dispatching of patrol vehicles. This will ensure that incidents / complaints are registered and attended to immediately. Foreign Missions may not contact operational members directly as it delays reaction time due to it not being procedurally correct. All incidents / complaints must be reported to the DPU and not local police stations. Complaints from the diplomatic community are only attended to / dealt with by the DPU. After having reported the matter to the DPU after hours, Foreign Missions to submit a Note Verbale to DIRCO informing of the incident on the next working day.

Criminal and security incidents should not be reported to the Tshwane Metro Police Department (TMPD) as they are only responsible for by-laws enforcement, road traffic policing, and crime prevention.

Requests for the policing of all high-profile visits or events, e.g. for senior visiting delegations and VIP's, are to be sent to the relevant Political Desk at DIRCO for the necessary attention and not to DIAP as the DPU are only responsible for accredited diplomats. These requests must also be sent well in advance as it needs to be forwarded by DIRCO to the office of the SAPS Component Head: VIP Operations for evaluation. Foreign Missions should arrange their own security for conferences, summits, meetings, etc. as this is not part of the DPU's mandate.

Foreign Missions are encouraged to put in place their own security measures at chanceries, official residences, and other diplomatic properties and to utilise said security companies for the transporting of cash and other high-risk movements. The DPU will not, for example, be deployed for community events and visits, or for safeguarding vehicles and property for meetings. The onus thus rests on the Foreign Missions.

The Department wishes to further remind Foreign Missions that SAPS escort services / outriders with blue lights are only provided to specific visiting delegations, e.g. Head of State / Government, and where a threat assessment requires it. The DPU and

TMPD have no authority to provide any police escorts outside of the State Visits Incoming Policy managed by DIRCO.

Foreign Missions are furthermore reminded that the usage of blue (white, red or any other colour) flashing lights and sirens by non-law enforcement agency vehicles or non-emergency vehicles is prohibited. Blue flashing lights and sirens are restricted for use only by emergency and South African law enforcement agency vehicles. Any vehicle fitted with or motorist that uses blue flashing lights or sirens is guilty of an offence.

Foreign Missions are advised that genuine South African Police vehicles are fitted with blue lights and the registration number plate ends with the letter "B". SAPS no longer utilises loose magnetic roof blue lights. When in doubt and as a precaution against being stopped by bogus police, motorists are advised to put on their hazard lights and to proceed with a normal speed to the nearest South African Police Station or a well-lit or populated area, e.g. a service station, to establish if they are being stopped by genuine police. Diplomats are advised to call the SAPS emergency number for any further clarity (10111).

Law enforcement officers will stop any vehicle that is fitted with lights and sirens, will issue a fine and will report the matter to DIRCO for further attention.

The Department further wishes to inform Missions that in terms of the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, 1961, Article 41.1. "Without prejudice to their privileges and immunities, it is the duty of all persons enjoying such privileges and immunities to respect the laws and regulations of the receiving State". There have been several cases in violation of the Road Traffic Act, 1996 (Act No. 93 of 1996). Missions are reminded to take note of the Policy on the Management of Diplomatic Immunities and Privileges which is available on the DIRCO website under State Protocol.

It should further be noted that any vehicle with diplomatic number plates may be stopped by law enforcement at any time. The occupants would need to identify themselves. There is a misconception that diplomatic vehicles may not be stopped.

If there are any transgressions in terms of the Road Traffic Act, for example speeding, parking transgressions, etc. it is incumbent of the diplomat / Foreign Mission to pay the fines.

Foreign Missions are requested to complete the attached **ANNEXURE A – FOREIGN MISSION CONTACT FORM**. Completed ANNEXURE A's are to be emailed to mogales@dirco.gov.za and copied to masales@dirco.gov.za. Missions are reminded of the importance of providing DIRCO with their latest After-Hours emergency numbers and to also ensure that the correct emails are registered for official communication. The forms are available on the DIRCO website, under Services, State Protocol, Circular Notes Verbales.

The Department of International Relations and Cooperation of the Republic of South Africa avails itself of the opportunity to renew to Diplomatic Missions and International Organisations accredited to the Republic of South Africa the assurances of its highest consideration.



PRETORIA
02 February 2026

**Diplomatic Missions and International Organisations
accredited to the Republic of South Africa
PRETORIA**