



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

TraiNet/VCS Newsletter

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USAID/EGAT/ED, PARTICIPANT TRAINING TEAM

News

Hints & Tips

TraiNet and VCS Updates

VCS: Verifiers and Approvers, take note: The most recent version of the Visa Compliance System was released March 18, 2005. The latest updates include:

- Verifiers and approvers can now request that a new DS-2019 form be printed. This new option appears at the bottom of the Verify and Approve screens.
- Approver List: Verifiers now can call up a list of Approvers and their email addresses in the VCS. The list can be sorted by country, name or email address.

TraiNet Desktop v. 2.2.1: The latest version of TraiNet for the desktop was released March 14, 2005. All users of the TraiNet desktop software are encouraged to upgrade to this version. You'll find it on our support web site at <http://usaidtraining.devis.com/Downloads/>.

The main features include:

- For users of MS Office 2003 (Office XP), you can now run TraiNet reports from within TraiNet.
- You can now enter Group Training Status from within the Training Group Wizard.
- An enhanced Report Control Panel with filtering by TraiNet Site ID.
- Additional financial reports that show budgeted and actual amounts.

The download file is a full installation of TraiNet, and is quite large. If the download takes too long over your internet connection, contact the TraiNet/VCS Help Desk at jvisa@devis.com so an installation CD can be mailed to you. Please follow all installation and setup instructions as outlined on the download page.

TraiNet/Web v. 1.7.1: The latest version of TraiNet/Web was released April 4, 2005. TraiNet/Web is the U.S. Agency for International Development's internet-based tool for gathering and reporting data on USAID exchanges, training and education, and for maintaining compliance with U.S. Government Visa requirements. It requires no installation or setup, unlike the desktop version, with the exception of the assignment of a username and password for

J Visa Category Instructions: Recently, an email was distributed to VCS Approvers by Jim Nindel of USAID/W explaining the J visa categories as defined by the Departments of State and Homeland Security. We would like to provide further guidance on how the VCS is programmed to accept Exchange Visitors defined under these categories.

In addition to the limitation of stay cited in the email, most of these categories have a *minimum* duration of stay as well. In consultation with USAID and based on the duration of stay guidelines (both minimum and maximum) provided by DHS and DOS, the Visa Compliance System was programmed to validate the categories as follows:

The Trainee, Government Visitor, Specialist, Researcher and Student categories can be used when an exchange visitor is entering the U.S. for a period of at least 22 days up to the limitation of stay described in Mr. Nindel's email. This is to recognize the minimum duration of stay requirement of 3 weeks imposed on these categories.

The Short-Term Scholar category is required when an exchange visitor is entering the U.S. for a period of 21 days, *or less*. The VCS imposes a maximum duration of 21 days on Short Term Scholars, after which one of the other categories should be selected.

Please keep this additional information in mind when selecting a visa category for Exchange Visitors.

Validating Participant Arrival in the U.S.:

In past newsletters we have provided information regarding status updates. It is important that program and participant status fields are up-to-date and accurate in TraiNet and the VCS at all times. While it is important to maintain this information for in-country and third-country

log-in.

The main features of this latest release include:

- Tailored data entry wizards for US, In Country (IC) and Third Country (TC) events.
- US program wizards for single and multiple-participant events.
- Within the multiple-participant US program wizard, the user can elect to save a participant's contact address and apply it to all participants in the program.
- Within the data entry wizards, the user can create a new Training Provider, if the Provider is not already in the system.
- Validation performed on all required fields within the system.
- A simple breakdown of the funding for each program
- A status bar within each program to give a quick visual reference as to the current state of the program.
- Simplified management of participant statuses.
- Helpful warning messages that let the user know if the program and participant statuses don't match.
- Role-based user management, with roles for Trainet Users and Site Administrators.
- Data sharing between sites.
- Reporting of data.
- Immediate data checking for VCS submissions.
- Immediate submission of data to VCS.
- On-screen help.

For questions or information regarding any of the TraiNet products, or the Visa Compliance System, please contact the Help Desk at jvisa@devis.com, or phone +1.703.527.4340.

training, it is critical to keep the status updated for U.S. training.

After a participant arrives in the U.S., USAID is required to send an acknowledgement to SEVIS to confirm that the participant arrived at the site of training. This is called validating the participant. Like most steps of the visa process, this validation can be done in the VCS by Verifiers and Approvers, and is triggered by the value in the Participant Status field.

Within three days of the participant's arrival in the United States, the TraiNet Operator should update the Participant Status field to "In-Training" and transfer that update to the VCS (Note: For TraiNet/Web users, after you activate the program in TraiNet/Web, the update gets automatically posted to the VCS). Verifiers and Approvers will be notified of the update. The participant status will appear as "validate". Verifiers and Approvers should not delay in verifying and approving this status update if it is accurate. A delay in updating participant status to reflect program participation may result in the SEVIS system flagging this participant as a NO-SHOW and jeopardize current and/or future program participation.

For a more thorough explanation of TraiNet/VCS status updates, please refer to Newsletter Volume 1, No. 7 on our web site at <http://usaidtraining.devis.com/Newsletters>.

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