

International Events and Security Consultants:

THE COMPANY THAT COUNTRIES AND DIPLOMATS DON'T KNOW THEY NEED.

By: Lawrence Dunham



As the President-elect prepares to take his oath of office and move into the White House, he'll soon enjoy numerous benefits. He will be able to walk to work in the morning, and when he travels, he will have a small army of highly-skilled professionals at his disposal to manage every detail.

Imagine having your every movement orchestrated and scheduled down to the minute, having a staff person at your side with the answers to your questions, having contingencies planned for and having every meeting and trip executed with professionalism.

...IESC provides to diplomats, foreign officials, CEOs and other high-powered executives a level of executive protection, event management, and trip coordination rivaled only by that which U.S. Presidents enjoy.

Few executives and diplomats have that kind of precision organization with the experience to deliver a level of service reserved for the President of the United States. But now they can.

International Events and Security Consultants (IESC) is a partnership of former White House staff who for the past 21 years have worked for five Presidents and numerous Cabinet secretaries managing security operations, producing global summits, conferences, Heads of State visits, and thousands of other high-profile meetings.

Debra Schiff worked as a member of Oval Office Operations for President Bill Clinton for 5 years before

transferring to the Department of State, where she managed the Ceremonial Division of Protocol.

Susan Ralston worked in the President George W. Bush White House for 6 years coordinating the operations of five major offices, and served as the White House liaison to the 2004 Presidential campaign. Ralston was the coordinator for Presidential events for two years.

Joe Funk is a 21-year veteran of the U.S. Secret Service, serving on the team that protected five Presidents, their families, and was responsible for Presidential travel to over 20 countries.

Debi, Susan and Joe have now formed a partnership to provide to diplomats, foreign officials, CEOs and other high-powered executives a level of executive protection, event management, and trip coordination rivaled only by that which U.S. Presidents enjoy.



Firm Founded on an Identified Need for Executive Support

A revelation came to Joe Funk as he managed the multi-day visit of a foreign minister from a Near East country. “As the trip began to develop, it became clear that the trip staff didn’t have the assets or the experience to coordinate multiple meetings and venues over the course of their visit. They didn’t receive State Department protocol support but they definitely would have benefited from an experienced staffer who knew the city and could pay attention to the little details,” says Joe.

Working with IESC is like flying first class, or even better, on Air Force One.

“They survived the trip but the logistical problems hindered the intended outcomes of the meetings.” Having worked on Presidential protective details and coordinated closely with the offices managing the President’s schedule, Joe is familiar with how a high-level foreign visit should be run. “If you don’t get State Department support, you manage because you don’t know there’s an alternative. Something as simple as a briefing book’s in-depth information, and contacts with local know-how would make a big difference.”

Joe talked with Debi and Susan about the need for high-level trip support, which is not being satisfied in Washington, DC. This led to the idea for the formation of IESC. IESC is a division of the J Street Group, a full-service special event firm.

IESC is unique in its founders’ ability to advise and plan events, meetings and trips, as well as executive protection, security and transportation logistics at a level and understanding that is unique in Washington. They not only manage the details with precision and professionalism, but also understand the major players in this town where knowledge and access are power.

...in DC an understanding for getting things done is a valuable commodity.

It is like flying first class, or even better, on Air Force One. It is fine to fly coach, but once you fly first class, it is hard to go back.

Debi and Susan hail from opposite sides of the political spectrum but that gives them an edge. “The power base will continue to ebb and flow between the two parties and our partnership allows us to offer a tremendous depth of

knowledge in how leaders in both parties operate no matter who controls the White House,” says Debi

Bipartisan cooperation is nothing new in Washington, DC. As the two parties experience a rise and fall in power, the people who need to get the business of Washington done understand the value of networks on both sides of the aisle.

As much as relationships matter in DC, an understanding of how the Executive Branch makes its decisions, how it operates and the processes for getting things done is just as valuable a commodity.



Each President brings to the White House a unique culture and style. But what does stay the same is an environment that is fast-paced, high-stress, and high-stakes, with an overwhelming amount of work that requires a lot of precision and professionalism to manage. Few people can understand and appreciate the level of work and detail that goes into organizing a Presidential event. An army of people must closely coordinate every aspect: city, venue, backdrop, staging, light and sound, type of podium, type of remarks, audience, transportation, greeters, hotels, food, attire, press shots, briefing papers, security, entertainment, photo lines and more! It is a complex operation and one that needs to operate like a well-oiled machine. Producing hundreds of events for the President of the United States every year brings a tested asset and level of training that is unparalleled.

In the next year, many foreign officials, diplomats and CEOs will be making the trip to Washington, DC to meet and build relationships with the new Administration and Congress. Many of the diplomats arriving will be new in their posts, and IESC gives any embassy an edge to negotiate the halls of power.

For more information about IESC call 202-337-3877.

Lawrence Dunham is a former Assistant Chief of Protocol at the Department of State.