

# Sending Churches: Areas of Responsibility

**Q: What parts of preparing, sending, and overseeing missionaries are the responsibility of the sending church, [or] Pioneers, or are things that we do together?**

A: That kind of is a tricky question. Who does what? Who controls what? How does that all happen? We definitely see this as a partnership.

We would say that you definitely have the spiritual authority and the role of spiritual authority in the life of that worker. You are really, truly, the sending entity. That's the Acts 13 model of sending out the first cross-cultural missionaries, Paul and Barnabas, to go to the unreached. Holy Spirit raises them up, the church affirms that, [and] there's a spiritual authority in that process.

We see Pioneers having more the administrative authority in their lives, really helping people with the expertise that a local church won't have in those spheres of cross-cultural ministry.

So, who controls what? We would hope there'd be a broad sharing of information and openness, and that there would be great communication from the worker especially to their church, talking about what their team looks like, what their team strategy is, really bringing them along in the process so it's really a three-way partnership of not only just the church and the agency but the local worker being part of that.

There are some things that we probably can do that you can't do very well. There are some training pieces, perhaps issues of church planting or cross-cultural pieces as you go to the field, or even security issues of how to handle your computer and what security protocols to have. If you're going to a Muslim unreached group you're going to have some things that are maybe defined for you. The church isn't [typically] capable of knowing that or doing that.

On the other hand, the church really is their spiritual oversight and authority. I'll give you one example, in the process of someone who was in deputation for a while, about three years. It was a family going to Turkey. It came to a point at which the church really felt very strongly that some things weren't in line the way that they needed to be. And the appointee came back to us saying, "Hey, my church wants me to – they're concerned about this, this, and this, but I am not concerned about it so you'll just send me anyway, right?" To which we replied, "Sorry, unless you change to a new sending church, we're going with what the church really believes about this."

So it's a way for us to really work together in partnership where we believe the church is honored and respected, rightfully so, and where we can share responsibility over the right things and not be duplicating over a bunch of things as well. So, it's going to depend a little bit from church to church, because we really contextualize to a church. A church that's sending 70 or 80 people out [and] who maybe has a very large staff is able to accommodate their workers in a far different way than a church of maybe 200 and this is the first person that they're sending out.