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## **Chapter 20 - Marking**

### **2001 Marking Standards**

A uniform security classification system requires that standard markings be applied to classified information. Except in extraordinary circumstances, or as approved by the Director of the Interagency Security Oversight Office (ISOO), the marking of classified information created after October 14, 1995, shall not deviate from the prescribed formats indicated in paragraph 2002 below. If markings cannot be affixed to specific classified information or materials, the originator shall provide holders or recipients of the information with written instructions for protecting the information. The Department of Commerce National Security Classification Guide (Appendix J) prescribes the markings that shall be uniformly and conspicuously applied to ensure the classified status of the information, the level of protection required, and the duration of the classification.

### **2002 Marking of Classification Level**

**A. Overall Markings.** Documents shall be marked with the highest classification level (Top Secret, Secret, or Confidential) of information contained in the document. The markings shall be printed or stamped in bold letters at the top and bottom of the outside front cover (if there is one), on the title page (if there is one), on the first page, and on the outside back cover (if there is one).

**B. Page Markings.** Each interior page is typed or stamped at the top and bottom according to the highest classification of the contents of the page, including the designation, **Unclassified** when appropriate, or according to the overall classification of the document. The three authorized classification designations (Top Secret, Secret, or Confidential) may be used in conjunction with approved Intelligence Community compartmented information code words.

#### **C. Portion Marking.**

1. Each subject line, title, paragraph, subparagraph, section (i.e., classified diagram, map, drawing, etc.) or similar portion of a classified document shall be marked to show the level of classification of that portion or to indicate that it is unclassified. Classification of portions of a document must be shown by placing the appropriate classification symbol immediately before or after the portion. In marking portions, the parenthetical symbols, "TS" for Top Secret, "S" for Secret, "C" for Confidential, and "U" for Unclassified will be used. Classified and unclassified subjects and titles will be marked with the appropriate symbol



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placed immediately following or to the right of the subject or title. An unclassified short title will be used for reference purposes. See Appendix J for examples of the use of these markings.

2.If parenthetical portion marking is not practicable, the document must contain a statement sufficient to identify the information that is classified and the level of such classification, and the information that is not classified. To identify lengthy classified text in the body of a document, markings such as "Begin Confidential, and "End Confidential" can be used provided that all other portions of the text are marked the same. If an entire document is classified at the same level, an introductory paragraph can indicate the level of classification of the entire document. The classifier must ensure that all portions are classified at the same level before exercising either of the above options. These provisions do not eliminate the need to portion mark subjects or titles, if applicable.

3. The Director of the Information Security Oversight Office (ISOO) may grant and revoke waivers of the foregoing portion marking requirement. A request for such a waiver must be made through the Director for Security to the Director of ISOO. The written request must identify the information or class of documents for which the waiver is sought and a declaration that the circulation of the document and its potential as a source for derivative classification determinations will be kept to a minimum. The increased administrative burden of portion marking may not be used as the sole justification for the waiver. Currently, all portion marking waivers throughout the Executive Branch of government have been rescinded, requiring portion marking requirements throughout Executive Branch agencies.

4. When elements of information in one portion require a different classification, but segregation into separate portions would destroy continuity or context, the highest classification required for any element to that portion shall be used.

### 2003 Original Classification Primary Markings

**A. Required Markings.** At the time of original classification, the following information shall appear on the face of each classified document, or shall be applied to other classified media in an appropriate manner:

1. One of the three classification levels defined in paragraph 1802 of the Security Manual;
2. The identity, by name or personal identifier and position, of the original classification authority and the agency and office of origin, if not otherwise evident;
3. A concise reason for classification which, at a minimum, cites the applicable classification category in



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paragraph 1805 and

4. Declassification instructions, which shall indicate one of the following:

- a. The date or event for declassification (see paragraph 1806);
- b. The date that is ten years from the date of original classification;
- c. The date that is 25 years from the date of original classification; or
- d. The exemption category from declassification (see paragraph 2004).

**B. Marking Examples.** On the face of each originally classified document, the original classifier shall apply the following markings:

1. **Classified By.** The original classifier shall cite a personal identifier such as name, position or office symbol when performing original classification.

- a. An example of a personal identifier is shown below.

**Classified By:** Charles Daniels, Director, Office of Security  
or

**Classified By:** Director, Office of Security

- b. If not otherwise evident, the agency and office of origin shall be identified and placed below the name on the "Classified By" line. An example of this information is shown below.

**Classified By:** Charles Daniels, Director  
Office of Security, Office of the Secretary

2. **Classification Reason.** The original classifier shall state the reason for the decision to classify the information. At a minimum, the classifier shall include a brief reference to the pertinent classification category or the number 1.5 plus the letter that corresponds to that classification category noted in E.O. 12958.

- a. These categories, as they appear in E.O. 12958 include:



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- 1) 1.5(a) Military plans, weapons systems, or operations;
- 2) 1.5(b) Foreign government information;
- 3) 1.5(c) Intelligence activities (including special activities), intelligence sources or methods, or cryptology;
- 4) 1.5(d) Foreign relations or foreign activities of the United States, including confidential sources;
- 5) 1.5(e) Scientific, technological, or economic matters relating to the national security;
- 6) 1.5(f) United States Government programs for safeguarding nuclear materials or facilities;
- 7) 1.5(g) Vulnerabilities or capabilities of systems, installations, infrastructures, projects, plans, or protective services relating to the national security; and
- 8) 1.5(h) Weapons of mass destruction.

b. An example of these classification reasons is as follows.

**Classified By:** Catherine Anderson, Director

Office of Security

Office of the Secretary

**Reason:** Vulnerabilities or capabilities of plans relating to the national security, or 1.5(g)

c. When the reason for classification is not apparent from the content of the information (e.g., classification by compilation) the classifier shall provide a more detailed explanation of the reason for classification.

**3. Declassification Instructions.** The duration of the original classification decision shall be placed on the "Declassify On" line. The classifier shall apply one of the following instructions.

a. The classifier shall apply a date or event for declassification that corresponds to the lapse of the information's national security sensitivity, which may not exceed ten years from the date of the original decision. When linking the duration of classification to a specific date or event, mark that date or event



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as follows:

**Classified By:** Catherine Anderson, Director  
Office of Security  
Office of the Secretary

**Reason:** 1.5(g)

**Declassify On:** October 14, 2004

or

**Declassify On:** Completion of Operation

b. When a specific date or event is not apparent, the classifier shall apply the date that is ten years from the date of the original decision. For example, on a document that contains information classified on October 14, 1995, mark the "Declassify On" line as follows:

**Classified By:** Charles Daniels, Director  
Office of Security  
Office of the Secretary

**Reason:** 1.5(g)

**Declassify On:** October 14, 2005

c. If the original classifier determines at a later time that the information requires protection beyond the original date, the "Declassify On" line shall be revised to include the new declassification instructions, and shall include the identity of the original classification authority authorizing the extension and the date of the action. The office of origin shall make a reasonable attempt to notify all holders of the information. Classification guides shall be updated to reflect the revision. An example of an extended duration of classification is as follows:

**Classified By:** Catherine Anderson, Director  
Office of Security  
Office of the Secretary

**Reason:** 1.5(g)

**Declassify On:** ~~December 1, 2000~~

Classification extended on December 1, 2000

Until December 1, 2010, by Catherine Anderson,  
Director, Office of Security



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### 2004 Exemption from Declassification

**A. Exemption.** If circumstances or the sensitivity of the information prevents the original classifier from determining the date, an applicable exemption category from the list below may be used to allow a 20-year maximum classification under Department of Commerce guidelines, or continued exemption from automatic declassification in 25 years under Section 3.4 (b) of E.O. 12958. The "Declassify On" line shall be marked with X1, X2, ... X8 as specified in this section of the guide.

**B. Declassification Exemption Categories.** An OCA may exempt from automatic declassification specific information, which, if released, should be expected to:

1. (X1) Reveal the identity of a confidential human source, or a human intelligence source, or reveal information about the application of an intelligence source or method;
2. (X2) Reveal information that would assist in the development or use of weapons of mass destruction;
3. (X3) Reveal information that would impair U.S. cryptologic systems or activities;
4. (X4) Reveal information that would impair the application of state of the art technology within a U.S. weapon system;
5. (X5) Reveal actual U.S. war plans that remain in effect;
6. (X6) Reveal information, including foreign government information that would seriously and demonstrably impair relations between the United States and a foreign government, or seriously and demonstrably undermine ongoing diplomatic activities of the United States;
7. (X7) Reveal information that would clearly and demonstrably impair the current ability of United States Government officials to protect the President, the Vice-President, and other officials for whom protection services, in the interest of national security, are authorized;
8. (X8) Reveal information that would seriously and demonstrably impair current national security emergency preparedness plans or reveal current vulnerabilities of system, installations, infrastructures, or projects relating to the national security; or



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9. (X9) Violate a statute, treaty, or international agreement.

**C. Marking Information Exempted from Automatic Declassification at 25 years.** The original classifier must request a determination by the Director for Security to exempt information from automatic declassification after 25 years.

**D. Statement of Original Classification.** The original classifier shall include a statement underneath the "Declassify On:" classification line that indicates that the document is an "Original Classification Decision."

### 2005 Citing Information Classified Under Prior Executive Orders

Unless declassified earlier, the information marked with a specific date or event for declassification is automatically declassified upon that date or event. However, if the information is contained in records with a prescribed date or event that will take place more than 25 years from the information's origin, the declassification of the information will instead be subject to the automatic declassification provisions of E.O. 12958.

### 2006 Derivative Classification Blocks

**A. Required Markings.** When a classified source document is used as the basis for derivative classification, the markings on the source document determine the markings to be applied to the derivative document.

1. **Derived by:** Derivative classifiers should identify themselves by personal identifier such as name, position, or office symbol.
2. **Declassify on:** Derivative classifiers shall carry forward the date of declassification specified by the original classifier or use the declassification instructions contained in the classification guide from which the classification was derived. When more than one date is specified, the date or event for declassification that corresponds to the longest period of time among the sources shall be used.
3. **Derived from:** Derivative classifiers shall identify the title and date of the classification guidance used (source document or classification guide). If more than one source document, classification guide, or combination of the two is used, the line shall read "**Multiple Sources.**" If "Multiple Sources" is used, each source used shall be identified on a list maintained with the file or record copy of the document.



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**B. Duration of Classification.** For information marked "Originating Agency's Determination Required," its acronym "OADR," or with some other marking indicating an indefinite duration under a prior order, the duration of the classification status may be limited, as follows.

1. A declassification authority may declassify the information having gained the consent of the original classifier.
2. An executive with original classification authority who has jurisdiction over the information may re-mark the information to establish duration of classification consistent with requirements of the original classification.
3. Unless declassified earlier, the information contained in historical records determined to be permanently valuable shall remain classified for 25 years from the date of its origin, at which time it will be subject to automatic declassification provisions of E.O. 12958.

### C. Derivative Classification Block Examples.

1. Department of Commerce National Security Classification Guide:

**Derived From:** U.S. Department of Commerce  
Classification Guide, dated, January 1, 2000  
**Declassify On:** January 1, 2010

2. A single reference (source) from the Department of State:

**Derived From:** Memorandum dated, January 1, 2000  
Subject: Foreign Relations  
U.S. Department of State  
Office of Security  
**Declassify On:** X7

3. Information from several sources or references:

**Derived From:** Multiple Sources\*  
**Declassify On:** X7





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\*When using multiple sources, list those sources and attach to the official file copy.

4. The source document is marked OADR:

**Derived From:** DIA Report dated, 20 October 1989

Subject: New Weapons

**Declassified On:** Source marked OADR, date of source: 20 October 1989

**D. Foreign Government Information.** When foreign government information is being considered for declassification or appears to be subject to automatic declassification, ordinarily the declassifying agency or the Department of State, as appropriate, should consult with the foreign government prior to declassification.

### 2007 Downgrading

When a classification level of a document is to be downgraded automatically, a notation to that effect must be printed or stamped on the face of the document as follows.

**Downgrade To:** (classification) **on** (date or event)

**Abbreviation:** DNG (classification) **on** (date or event)

### 2008 Changes in Classification Markings

Whenever classified information is downgraded or declassified or the initial classification changes, the information should be marked to reflect the change as well as the authority for and date of the action. However, when the volume of information is such that remarking each classified item would interfere with operations, the custodian can attach downgrading, declassification, or upgrading notices to the storage unit. The notice should indicate the change, the authority for the action, the date of the action, the identity of the person taking the action, and the storage units to which it applies. When individual documents or other materials are withdrawn from such storage units, they should be promptly remarked or have the old markings canceled.

### 2009 Transmittal Documents

**A. Unclassified Transmittal Documents.** A transmittal document that does not contain classified information shall be marked with the highest level of classification of the attachments. The classification markings should appear at the top and bottom of the first page of the transmittal document and the following marking shall be



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placed at the bottom of the transmittal page as follows:

**"Unclassified when separated from classified attachments."**

**B. Classified Transmittal Document.** Transmittal documents containing classified information must be marked on the top and bottom with the highest classification of the information contained in the transmittal or the attachments. If the information contained in the attachment is classified at a higher level than the transmittal itself, the transmittal document shall be marked as follows:

1. Secret transmittal with Top Secret attachment.

**"Secret when separated from classified attachment."**

2. Confidential transmittal with Secret attachment.

**"Confidential when separated from classified attachment."**

3. The transmittal must also be portion marked as prescribed for other classified documents.

## 2010 Other Markings

### A. Foreign Government Information.

1. Documents that contain foreign government information shall be marked:

**"This Document Contains [indicate country of origin] Information."**

2. The portions of the document that contain the foreign government information shall be marked to indicate the government and classification level (e.g., "UK-C").

3. If the specific foreign government must be concealed, the documents shall be marked:

**"This Document Contains Foreign Government Information."**

and pertinent portions shall be marked "FGI" together with the classification level (e.g., "FGI-C"). In such



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cases, a separate record that identifies the foreign government shall be maintained in order to facilitate subsequent declassification actions.

4. If foreign government information must be concealed, the markings should not be used. The document should then be marked as if it were of U.S. origin.

5. When classified records are transferred to the National Archives and Records Administration for storage and archival purposes, the accompanying documentation shall identify the portions that contain foreign government information.

6. Documents need not be remarked as foreign government information when they bear foreign government or international organization's markings such as "NATO."

**B. Intelligence Sources or Methods.** For classified information relating to intelligence sources or methods, the marking, "**WARNING NOTICE – Intelligence Sources or Methods Involved,**" (WNINTEL) shall be applied. Information bearing this marking shall not be disseminated in any manner to employees who do not have a need to know as determined by the special security officer (SSO) from the Office of Security.

**C. Restricted Data.** For classified information containing Restricted Data (RD), as defined in Section 142 d. of the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, as amended (42 U.S.C. § 2162, 2163, 2168, and 7383), the following shall be marked:

### ***RESTRICTED DATA***

***This document contains Restricted Data as defined in the Atomic Energy Act of 1954.  
Unauthorized disclosure is subject to Administrative and Criminal Sanctions.***

**D. Formerly Restricted Data.** For classified information containing Formerly Restricted Data (FRD), as defined in Section 142 d. of the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, as amended (42 U.S.C. § 2162, 2163, 2168, and 7383),

### ***FORMERLY RESTRICTED DATA***

***Unauthorized disclosure subject to  
Administrative and Criminal Sanctions.  
Handle as Restricted Data in Foreign Dissemination Section 144.b.,  
Atomic Energy Act, 1954.***



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**E. Special Notations.** Any appropriate notations (e.g., special handling requirements, dissemination limitations, etc.) shall be noted on the face of the document. Common notations are illustrated below.

1. Not Releasable to Foreign Nationals (**NOFORN**). This marking is used with a security classification to identify intelligence information that may not be released in any form to foreign governments, foreign nationals, or non-U.S. citizens without the permission of the originator.
2. Not Releasable to Contractors/Consultants (**NOCONTRACT**). This marking is used with a security classification to prohibit the dissemination of intelligence information to contractors or consultants without the permission of the originator.
3. Dissemination and Extraction of Information Controlled by Originator (**ORCON**). This marking is used with a security classification to enable the originator to supervise the use of the information.

### 2011 Telegrams and Cables

**A.** Printed copies of electrically transmitted telegrams and cables that contain classified information shall be marked at the top and bottom of the page with the assigned classification. Portion markings shall be marked also. When a telegram or cable is printed by an automated system, the classification markings can be applied by that system provided the markings are clearly distinguishable from the printed text. All required classification blocks for original or derivative classification authority must be listed on the telegram using abbreviations prescribed in this chapter.

**B.** Outgoing electrically transmitted classified telegrams and cables that contain information requiring original classification must be approved by an individual designated as an Original Classification Authority prior to transmitting. The transmission date of the document will be considered to be the date of classification.

### 2012 Files, Folders, and Binders

Classified cover sheets, SF-703 (Top Secret), SF-704 (Secret), or SF-705 (Confidential), shall be affixed to the exterior cover of files, folders, and binders that contain classified information. Each standard form shall be used according to the highest classification of the contents. Classified cover sheets shall be affixed to classified documents when stored in a storage container, upon receipt of a document that may be without one, and at any time a classified document is handled. The only occasion when a cover sheet does not need to be affixed to an individual document is when the document is placed in a folder or binder with other classified documents where



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the appropriate cover sheet is affixed to the exterior cover to identify the highest level of the documents contained within a folder or binder. Files and folders shall be marked or stamped with the highest level of classified material contained in the folder. Binders shall have the appropriate classified cover sheet attached to the binder.

### 2013 Other Materials

Security classification and declassification instructions must be conspicuously stamped, printed, written, painted, or affixed by means of a tag, sticker, decal, or similar device on classified material other than paper copies of documents. If marking the material or container is not practicable, written notification of the security classification and declassification instructions shall be furnished to recipients. The following procedures for marking various kinds of material containing classified information are not all-inclusive and shall vary to accommodate the physical characteristics of the material containing the classified information. Safes and other security containers, which are routinely used to store classified documents, shall not bear a classification marking.

**A. Charts, Maps, Graphs, and Drawings.** Charts, maps, graphs, and drawings must bear the appropriate overall classification marking under the legend, title block, or scale. Portion marking shall be used to indicate the highest level of classification of the legend or title itself. The highest level of classification shall be inscribed at the top and bottom of each document. When charts, maps, graphs, or drawings are folded or rolled, the classifier must apply additional markings that are clearly visible when the document is folded or rolled.

**B. Photographs, Films, and Recordings.** Photographs, films (including negatives), recordings, and their containers shall be marked to alert a recipient or viewer that the material contains classified information.

1. **Photographs.** Negatives and positives shall be marked whenever practicable with the appropriate classification level, authority, and declassification instructions. The classification level shall be marked at the beginning and end of each strip. All markings shall be placed on containers of negatives and positives. When self-processing film or paper is used to photograph or reproduce classified information, the classifier must remove all parts of the last exposure from the camera and destroy them as classified waste, or the camera should be protected as classified material. Prints and reproductions must be marked with the appropriate classification level, downgrading, if applicable, and declassification instructions on the face side of the print if possible. Markings that cannot be applied to the face side shall be stamped on the reverse side or affixed by pressure tape label, stapled strip, or other comparable means.



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2. **Transparencies and Slides.** Classification markings shall be shown clearly on the image of each transparency or slide or on its border, holder, or frame.

3. **Motion Picture Films.** Classified motion picture films and video tapes shall be marked at the beginning and end of each reel with titles bearing the appropriate classification. Markings must be visible when projected. Reels must be kept in containers bearing conspicuous classification, declassification and, if applicable, downgrading markings.

4. **Recordings.** Sound, magnetic, or electronic recordings shall contain a clear statement of the assigned classification level at the beginning and end. Recordings must be kept in containers or on reels that bear conspicuous classification, declassification, and, if applicable, downgrading markings.

5. **Microfilm or Microfiche.** Microfilm or microfiche contains images in sizes too small to be read by the unaided eye. Accordingly, the classification must be marked conspicuously on the microfilm medium or its container so it is readable by the unaided eye. In addition, these markings must be included on the image so that when the image is enlarged and displayed or printed, the markings shall be conspicuous and readable.

**C. Automated Information Technology (IT) Storage Media.** Storage media (i.e., hard drives, diskettes, floppies, etc.) that contain classified information shall bear external classification markings and internal notations indicating the classification level, authority, and declassification instructions. Exterior labels shall be used to mark magnetic or digital media, other non-paper media, and equipment for which cover sheets are not feasible. The following standard forms shall be affixed to each item, depending on the classification: SF-706 (Top Secret), SF-707 (Secret), SF-708 (Confidential), and SF-710 (Unclassified). SF-710s for unclassified media are required for use in controlled environments, but are not required for unclassified media stored in uncontrolled office space. All media stored in storage containers used for the storage of classified materials must have the appropriate level of label affixed.

**D. Classified Documents Produced by IT Equipment.** Each page produced by IT equipment authorized to process classified information shall bear classification markings.

**E. Material Used for Training Purposes.** Unclassified materials used to simulate classified documents or materials for training purposes shall be marked:

**"[Classification] for training purposes only, otherwise Unclassified."**

**F. Classified Waste Materials.** Materials such as rejected copies, typewriter ribbons, carbons, floppy disks,



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and similar items shall be handled in a manner that assures adequate protection of the classified information contained in the media. When the materials are no longer needed, they shall be destroyed by approved methods (see paragraph 3703, Destruction Equipment).

**G. Classified Working Papers.** Classified working papers are drafts, notes, photographs, etc., used to create or assist in the preparation of a final classified document. They must be:

1. Dated when created;
2. Marked with the highest classification level of the information contained;
3. Protected in accordance with the assigned classification;
4. Portion marked;
5. Accounted for and controlled if transmitted, permanently filed, or retained for more than 180 days; and
6. Destroyed when no longer needed.

**H. Special Access Program Materials.** Additional markings as prescribed in directives, regulations, and instructions related to any applicable special access program shall be applied to materials containing information protected by a special access program. These additional markings should not serve as the sole basis for continuing classification of special access program information.