

## Student Guide

# Marking in the Electronic Environment Short

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### Introduction

Today we use computers and other electronic devices to generate more information than ever. Information previously occupying entire file cabinets is now stored on chips smaller than a dime.

In the course of your work, you will come across different forms of electronic information, some of which may be classified. It is important to recognize the classification markings on this electronic information so you can be sure you handle it properly. You must also be able to apply classification markings correctly. This will help ensure the safeguarding of the information at the proper level.

This Short will examine the special marking considerations for five types of electronic media: emails, URLs, instant messages and chats, web pages, and dynamic documents. You can review the specific guidance about classification markings in the electronic environment in Volume 2 of the DoDM 5200.01.

### General Marking Requirements

Just like paper documents, classified computer-generated information requires classification markings. Classification markings identify what information needs protecting, the level of needed protection, and any additional requirements needed for its protection.

Whether you place the markings manually or use an automated tool, it is your responsibility to correctly mark the document. The required markings for most electronic information will be familiar. Required standard markings include: portion markings, banner line markings, and classification authority blocks. All of these appear in this sample:

**Sample General Marking Requirements****Required markings:**

- Portion markings
- Banner line markings
- Classification authority block

From: Your Name  
To:  
Cc:  
Subject: (U) Sample Classified Email

SECRET

(U) This is a sample email to show you how classified email is marked.

(S) This paragraph would contain Secret information

Vicki Thompson  
Supervisor

Classified By: Vicki Johnson, Supervisor  
Derived From: Training Documents dated May 9, 2012, Subject: (U) Classified Emails  
Declassify On: 20250510

SECRET

(U) Attachment

## Email

Emails are messages sent and received through an electronic mail system. To mark an email containing classified information, you must apply all the standard markings. On emails, the Classification Authority Block may be on a single line instead of three. And while the subject line of an email appears outside the banner line markings, it always requires a portion marking. In the banner line markings, the overall classification level of the email is determined by the highest level of classification of any of its contents. This includes any classified information in an attachment. Like the subject line of the email, an attachment's title is also portion marked.

### Sample Email

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>Subject line:</b> marked as a portion  | From: Your Name<br>To:<br>Cc:<br>Subject: (U) Sample Classified Email   |
| <b>Overall classification:</b> banner line reflects highest classification level in email, including attachment content | SECRET<br><br>(U) This is a sample email to show you how classified email is marked.<br>(S) This paragraph would contain Secret information                       |
| <b>Classification authority block:</b> may be single line   | Vicki Thompson, Supervisor<br><br>Classified By: Vicki Johnson, Supervisor, Derived From: Email 20120106, Subject: (U) Classified Emails, Declassify On: 20250510 |
| <b>Attachments:</b> portion-marked based on classification level of   | SECRET<br><br>(U) Attachment  |

## Uniform Resource Locators

A Uniform Resource Locator (URL) is a unique address for content on the Internet. To mark a URL containing classified information, you must apply the standard markings. Mark URLs inside the string according to the highest level of information in the URL, and not the information to which it links. When marking the URL, be sure to mark it so it does not break the link. If the URL appears inside other content, for example on a web page or in an email, you must place a portion mark in front of it.

### Sample URL

|  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| <b>Portion marking:</b> include if URL is embedded in another document | Mark inside the string according to classification level of the URL | Markings inside URL must not render the link inoperable |
|--|---|---|

(S) [http://www.center.xyz/SECRET/filename \(S\).html](http://www.center.xyz/SECRET/filename (S).html)

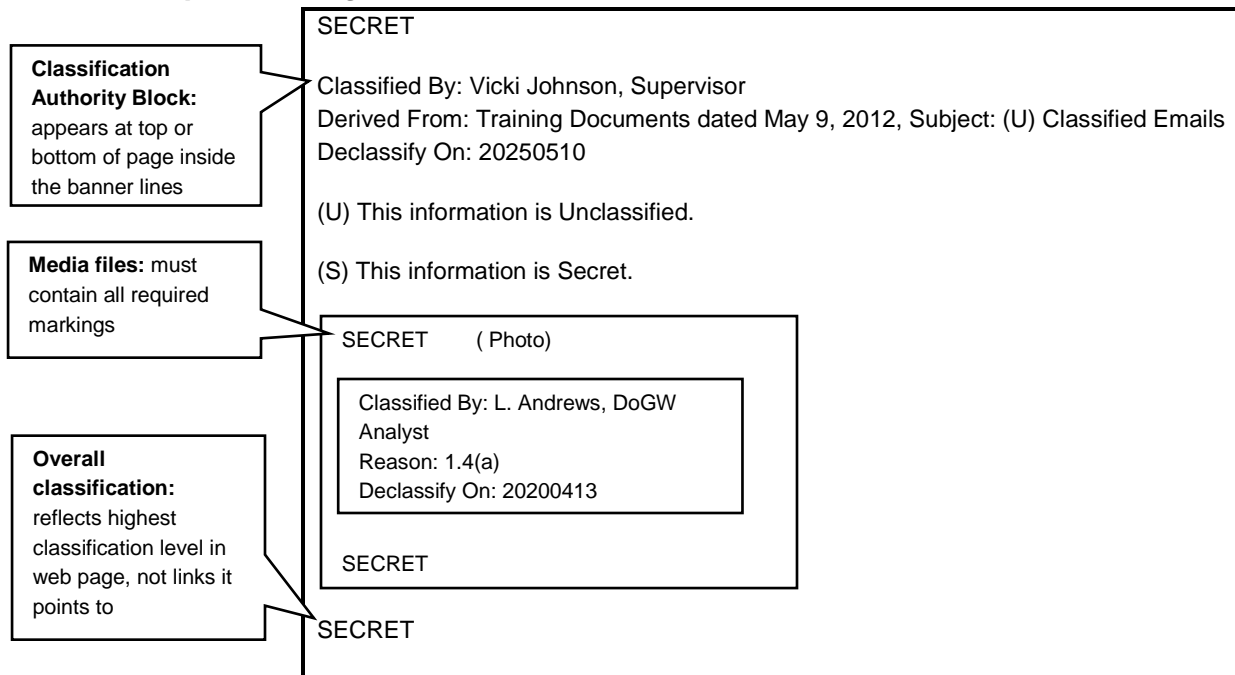
## **IM and Chat**

Instant messages and chats are brief, text-based message exchanges and conversations. If information within these conversations is classified, classification markings apply. Chat rooms that host classified conversations display the system-high overall classification level. This indicates the highest permissible classification level for information allowed in the chat rooms. Chat rooms also display any further instructions for the classification and protection of the information they contain.

Sometimes it is necessary to save an instant message or chat conversation. These saved files, or transcripts, must carry classification markings.

## **Web Pages**

A web page is a hypertext document accessible via the Internet. To mark a web page containing classified information, you must apply all of the standard markings. Determine the overall classification level of a web page according to the content on the page and not the information to which it links. Place the classification authority block inside of the banner lines on the page or at the top to eliminate the need for scrolling. Images, audio, video, and other media files embedded in the page require their own classification markings.

**Sample Web Page****Bulletin Boards/Blogs**

Blogs or “web logs” and bulletin boards are websites that are dynamic; they are made up of a series of entries. Often, these interactive web pages contain commentary. While both websites feature all of the standard markings, each individual entry on a blog or bulletin board requires proper markings according to its content. This includes the requirement to portion mark the subject line of each entry. Because of the dynamic nature of the content on a blog or bulletin board, you must mark the overall classification of the site according to the content currently on the page.

**Wikis**

A wiki is a dynamic web page that allows users to make changes, add content, and even correct information in existing entries. When marking the initial content in a wiki, you must apply all of the standard markings. As you add new content, or modify the existing content, ensure the markings reflect the updated content on the screen.

## Dynamic Documents

While wikis and blogs are dynamic in nature, dynamic documents are a separate category of electronic information. A dynamic document is a page or document generated from a changeable source or ad hoc query; for example, an entry retrieved from a database.

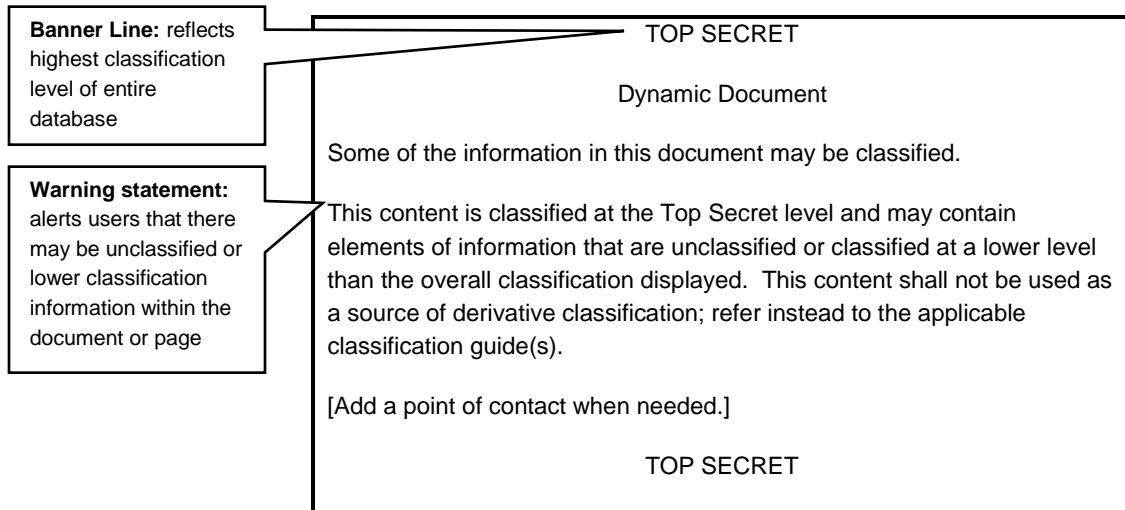
Some databases provide a mechanism for automatically determining the classification markings of an entry. In this case, the standard classification markings will appear.

Some databases do not provide a mechanism to determine the necessary markings. In this case, the banner line markings appearing on each page reflect the highest level of classification in the entire database. And a warning must display to alert users to the fact that within the entry there might be information that is unclassified or classified at a lower level than the banner line markings indicate.

### **Sample Dynamic Document (where database allows markings to be determined)**

| <b>SECRET</b>              |                 |
|----------------------------|-----------------|
| <b>(U) Pricing Sheet</b>   |                 |
| <b>(U) Line Items</b>      | <b>(U) Cost</b> |
| (U) Item A                 | (U) \$125.66    |
| (C) Item B is Confidential | (C) \$4,500.00  |
| (U) Item C                 | (U) \$600       |
| (S) Item D is Secret       | (S) \$4,000.00  |
| <b>SECRET</b>              |                 |

**Sample Dynamic Document (where database does not allow markings to be determined)**



## Summary

This Short examined the special marking considerations for five types of electronic media. Now you should be able to recognize and apply classification markings correctly, ensuring the protection and safeguarding of electronic information. And remember, Volume 2 of DoD Manual 5200.01 contains specific guidance for you to follow.

## Activities

### Activity 1

You are composing the email on the left. Which portions still need portion marks?

|   |
|---|
| FROM: (1) ____ Your email address   |
| TO: New Employee  |
| CC:   |
| SUBJECT: (2) ____ Subject of the email  |
| (3) ____ CONFIDENTIAL   |
| Hi Mark,  |
| (U) This is my response to your email from this morning.  |
| (4) ____ Thanks for taking the time to respond to me.   |
| (C) This line contains Confidential information.  |
| (5) ____ This line also contains Confidential information.  |
| Sincerely,<br>Your Name   |
| (6) ____ Classified By: Your name, DoGW Analyst<br>Derived From: Training Documents dated May 9, 2012,<br>Subject: Classified Emails<br>Declassify On: 20250510 |
| CONFIDENTIAL  |

For each numbered area on the email, indicate whether it requires portion markings.

|   | Yes                   | No                    |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1 | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 2 | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 3 | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 4 | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 5 | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 6 | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |



**Activity 2**

Review this web page containing a URL. Which of the following statements is true?

Classified By: Vicki Johnson, Supervisor  
Derived From: Training Documents dated May 9, 2012, Subject: Classified  
Web Pages  
Declassify On: 20250510

(U) **Web Page**

(S) This information is Secret.

(S) <http://www.center.xyz/filename.html>

(C) This information is Confidential.

SECRET

*Select the best answer.*

- The web page is correctly marked except for the URL
- Only the URL is correctly marked
- Neither the web page nor the URL is correctly marked
- Both the web page and the URL are correctly marked

## Answer Key

### Review Activity 1

You are composing the email on the left. Which portions still need portion marks?

|   |
|---|
| FROM: (1) ____ Your email address   |
| TO: New Employee  |
| CC:   |
| SUBJECT: (2) ____ Subject of the email  |
| (3) ____ CONFIDENTIAL   |
| Hi Mark,  |
| (U) This is my response to your email from this morning.  |
| (4) ____ Thanks for taking the time to respond to me.   |
| (C) This line contains Confidential information.  |
| (5) ____ This line also contains Confidential information.  |
| Sincerely,<br>Your Name   |
| (6) ____ Classified By: Your name, DoGW Analyst<br>Derived From: Training Documents dated May 9, 2012,<br>Subject: Classified Emails<br>Declassify On: 20250510 |
| CONFIDENTIAL  |

For each numbered area on the email, indicate whether it requires portion markings.

|   | Yes                              | No                               |
|---|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1 | <input type="radio"/>            | <input checked="" type="radio"/> |
| 2 | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>            |
| 3 | <input type="radio"/>            | <input checked="" type="radio"/> |
| 4 | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>            |
| 5 | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>            |
| 6 | <input type="radio"/>            | <input checked="" type="radio"/> |

**Feedback:**

|   |  |
|---|--|
| 1 | Your name and email address are not portions that must be marked.  |
| 2 | The subject line is a portion and must be marked, even though it appears outside the body area of the email. |
| 3 | The banner line is already marked.   |
| 4 | This sentence is a portion and must be marked.   |
| 5 | This sentence is a portion and must be marked.   |
| 6 | The classification authority block does not need to be portion marked.                                       |

**Activity 2**

Review this web page containing a URL. Which of the following statements is true?

|   |
|---|
| <p>Classified By: Vicki Johnson, Supervisor<br/>         Derived From: Training Documents dated May 9, 2012, Subject: Classified Web Pages<br/>         Declassify On: 20250510</p> <p>(U) <b>Web Page</b></p> <p>(S) This information is Secret.</p> <p>(S) <a href="http://www.center.xyz/filename.html">http://www.center.xyz/filename.html</a></p> <p>(C) This information is Confidential.</p> <p>SECRET</p> |
|---|

Select the best answer.

- The web page is correctly marked except for the URL
- Only the URL is correctly marked
- Neither the web page nor the URL is correctly marked
- Both the web page and the URL are correctly marked

**Feedback:** *Neither the web page nor the URL is correctly marked. While the URL is portion marked, the string does not contain any indication as to its level of classification. The web page displays portion markings, a classification authority block, and a banner line marking, but it is missing a second banner line marking at the top of the page.*