HAROLD MARTIN III

- Age 54 at time of sentencing
- From Glen Burnie, MD
- Held a security clearance for 28 years and a Top Secret security clearance for 13 years.
- Served on active duty in the U.S. Navy before working as a government contractor

CDSE

Center for Development of Security Excellence

CASE STUDY

Unauthorized Retention of National Defense Information

WHAT HAPPENED

In 2012, Harold Martin III was an IT specialist at a large defense contractor. He was assigned to the National Security Agency where he worked with the elite Tailored Access Operations unit. In 2015, Martin moved to the Pentagon's Office of Acquisition, Technology and Logistics (AT&L) where his duties required a security clearance. Martin held security clearances up to Top Secret and Sensitive Compartmented Information (TS/SCI) at various times.

On August 27, 2016, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) conducted a search of Martin's residence — including two sheds located on the property — and his car. Investigators located hard copy documents and digital information stored on various devices and removable digital media. A large percentage of the materials recovered from Martin's residence and vehicle bore markings indicating they were property of the United States and contained highly classified information of the United States, including Top Secret and SCI.

Six of the documents had been obtained from sensitive intelligence and through sensitive government sources, methods, and capabilities, which are critical to a wide variety of national security issues. The disclosure of the documents would reveal those sensitive sources, methods, and capabilities.

Martin knew the stolen documents contained classified information that related to U.S. national defense, and that he was never authorized to retain these documents at his residence or in his vehicle. Martin knew the unauthorized removal of these materials risked their disclosure, which would be damaging to U.S. national security and highly useful to its adversaries.

Harold Martin, III, was sentenced to nine years in federal prison, followed by three years of supervised release.

INDICATORS

- **Access Attributes –** Martin had a TS/SCI clearance and access to classified material.
- **Mental instability** - Defense attorneys argued that he suffered from mental health issues, of which his hoarding was a symptom.
- **Substance/Alcohol issues -** Court detention order cited mental health issues, including suicide threats, binge drinking, and alcohol abuse.
- **Technical Activity –** He copied classified documents to removable drives
- **Security Violations** Unauthorized removal and retention of classified information

IMPACT

- "Harold Martin took an oath to preserve and protect the nation's secrets, and violated that oath repeatedly over many years, causing damage with his unlawful mishandling of classified information," said Special Agent in Charge Jennifer C. Boone, FBI Baltimore Field Office. "Martin's actions harmed Intelligence Community sources and methods. The vitality and integrity of the Intelligence Community requires the strictest adherence to the law for handling classified information. The FBI will be tireless in investigating cases like the Martin case."
- "For nearly 20 years, Harold Martin betrayed the trust placed in him by stealing and retaining a vast quantity of highly classified national defense information entrusted to him," stated U.S. Attorney Robert K. Hur. "This sentence, which is one of the longest ever imposed in this type of case, should serve as a warning that we will find and prosecute government employees and contractors who flagrantly violate their duty to protect classified materials."

ADDITIONAL INFO

- Over his many years of holding a security clearance, Martin received training regarding classified information and his duty to protect classified materials from unauthorized disclosure.
- The Espionage Act also prohibits taking or possessing national security-related information from the government and keeping it in an unauthorized location.
- According to the government, Martin kept twelve NSA documents, five USCYBERCOM documents, one National Reconnaissance Office document, and one CIA document.

Questions to consider:

- Why is the unlawful retention of classified material considered to be damaging to our national security?
- What safeguards are used in your organization to ensure that National Defense Information cannot be removed from a secure location?

Resources for further exploration:

- National Industrial Security Program Operating Manual (NISPOM) (https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-32/subtitle-A/chapter-I/subchapter-D/part-117)
- Insider Threat Video Lesson: Mishandling Classified Information (https://www.cdse.edu/Training/Security-Training-Videos/Insider-Threat/Mishandling-Classified-Information/)
- Unauthorized Disclosure: DNI Testimony (https://www.cdse.edu/Training/Security-Training-Videos/Insider-Threat/Unauthorized-Disclosure-DNI-Testimony/)

Supporting Through Reporting!

Contact the appropriate POC to report any observed potential risk indicators:

Name: _____ Agency/Department: _____
Title: Supervisor/Security Officer/ITP Senior Official/ITP Manager