

OPSEC Glossary

Term/Acronym	Definition
Countermeasures	Employing devices and/or techniques that has as its objective the impairment of the operational effectiveness of an adversary's activities. Countermeasures may include anything that effectively negates or mitigates an adversary's ability to exploit vulnerabilities.
Critical Information	Specific facts about friendly intentions, capabilities, or activities vitally needed by adversaries for them to plan and act effectively so as to guarantee failure or unacceptable consequences for accomplishment of friendly missions.
Indicator	Anything that draws attention to critical information or gives an adversary a clue about what's going on.
Operations Security (OPSEC)	An analytic process used to deny an adversary information, generally unclassified, concerning intentions and capabilities by identifying planning processes or operations. Operations Security does not replace other security disciplines; it supplements them. The OPSEC process includes the following five steps: (1) identify critical information, (2) identify the threat, (3) assess vulnerabilities, (4) analyze the risk, (5) develop and apply countermeasures.
Operations Security Countermeasures	Methods and means to gain and maintain essential secrecy about critical information.
Risk	A measure of the potential degree to which protected information is subject to loss through an adversary's exploitation.
Risk Analysis	A method by which individual vulnerabilities are compared to perceived or actual security threat scenarios to determine the likelihood of compromise to critical information.
Risk Assessment	A process of evaluating the risks to information based on susceptibility to intelligence collection and the anticipated severity of loss.
Threat	A threat is an adversary that has the capability and intent to take any actions detrimental to the success of DoD activities or operations.
Vulnerability	A weakness an adversary can exploit to get critical information. Anything that might make critical information available to an adversary.