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Job Aid: Marking Syntax for U.S. Classified Information

Introduction

Per Department of Defense Manual (DODM) 5200.01, Volume 2, *DOD Information Security Program: Marking of Information*, U.S. classified material must show, as clearly as is possible, which information in it is classified and at what level.

The *Marking Syntax for U.S. Classified Information* Job Aid reviews:

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This job aid supports civilian and military personnel within the Department of Defense (DOD) and across the Federal Government and employees of U.S. Government contractors.



Part 1: Required Markings for U.S. Classified Information

In addition to the classification authority block (CAB), U.S. classified documents and products are required to have:

- **Banner lines:** Specify the highest level of classification (Confidential, Secret, or Top Secret) of information in the document, or product, or individual page, and the most restrictive control and dissemination control markings applicable for the document or product. In documents, place banner lines in the header, footer, and center the banner line markings.
- **Portion marks:** Specify the highest level of classification the portion of the document or product contains, and applicable control and dissemination control markings. Portion marks must be included at the beginning of each respective portion. In U.S. classified documents or products that contain unclassified portions, these portions will be marked with (U).
 - If an exceptional situation would make individual portion markings unworkable, a statement may be substituted that describes the classification level of each portion. This statement must identify the information as specifically as a parenthetical portion marking would.

Figure 1: Example U.S. classified document with classification authority block, banner lines, and portion marks

The diagram illustrates a U.S. classified document template with the following elements and annotations:

- Header:** Includes the Department of Defense seal, the text "INTELLIGENCE", and a "date" field.
- Classification Authority Block (CAB):** Located at the top right, it contains the text "SECRET//REL TO USA, GBR" and "OFFICE OF THE UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE". An arrow points to this block from the "Banner Line (overall classification marking)" annotation.
- Memorandum:** The main body of the document, starting with "MEMORANDUM FOR XXXXXXXXXXXX XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX".
- Subject:** "SUBJECT: (U) Delegation of SECRET Original Classification Authority (OCA)".
- Portion Markings:** A box on the left with the text "Portion Markings" has arrows pointing to the classification markings in the memorandum body:
 - (U) You are hereby delegated authority to classify information up to SECRET for information under your area of responsibility in accordance with Executive Order 13526, "Classified National Security Information" (the Order).
 - (S) As an OCA you are required to receive training in original classification as provided by the Order and implementing directives prior to your exercising this authority. Your Security Manager will facilitate this training.
 - (S//REL) The Order also provides that OCAs shall prepare classification guides to facilitate the proper uniform derivative classification of information. Request that you provide a copy of your guide(s) to this office by December 31, 2012.
- Signature Block:** Located at the bottom of the memorandum.
- Classification Block:** At the bottom left, it contains the text: "Classified By: John Doe, Director", "Derived From: SecDef Memo, dtd 20101024, Subj: _____", and "Declassify On: 20201024".
- Banner Line (overall classification marking):** A box on the right with this text, with an arrow pointing to the "SECRET//REL TO USA, GBR" text at the bottom of the document.
- Footer:** The text "SECRET//REL TO USA, GBR" is repeated at the bottom center of the document.



Part 2: The Marking Syntax

The marking syntax for classified U.S. documents and products outlines the hierarchy and order of classification and control markings and places them into categories.

- Both banner lines and portion marks use the marking syntax for classified U.S. documents.
- In banner lines and portion marks, double forward slashes (//) separate the different categories of classification markings, control markings, and dissemination control markings from each other.

Figure 2: Marking Syntax for Classified U.S. Documents and Products

CLASSIFICATION//SCI//SAP//AEA//FGI//DISSEM//OTHER DISSEM

The four categories in the marking syntax are:

- **Classification level:** All banner lines and portion marks contain, at a minimum, an overall classification marking of Confidential, Secret, or Top Secret.
 - **Control markings:** Identify special control systems that provide additional access control or physical protection for the information or items covered by the program (e.g., SCI).
 - **Dissemination control markings:** Identify the expansion or limitation on the distribution of information.
- Other dissemination control markings:** An additional category of dissemination control markings.

Figure 3: Marking Syntax for Classified U.S. Documents and Products with Category Definitions

CLASSIFICATION//SCI//SAP//AEA//FGI//DISSEM//OTHER DISSEM

Classification	SCI	SAP	AEA	FGI	DISSEM	Other DISSEM
Classification level	Sensitive Compartmented Information	Special Access Program control markings	Atomic Energy Act information control markings	Foreign government information control markings	Dissemination control markings	Other dissemination control markings
Highest level of classification of information contained in document.	Classified information concerning, or derived from, intelligence sources, methods, or analytical processes requiring handling within formal access control systems.	Classified information with safeguarding and access requirements exceeding what is normally required for classification level.	Classified information as defined and regulated by Atomic Energy Act of 1954 and Implementing Directive 10 CFR Part 1045, Nuclear Classification and Declassification.	Foreign-controlled information.	Identify special distribution requirements and can limit or expand distribution of the marked information; markings that fall in the other dissemination control markings category follow any markings that fall in the dissemination controls category.	



Part 3: Categories in the Marking Syntax

For the markings in the syntax; in a banner line or portion mark:

- List in order in which they appear in Enclosure 4 of DODM 5200.01, Volume 2.
- Double forward slashes (//) separate classification markings, control markings, dissemination control markings, and other dissemination control markings.
- Single forward slashes (/) separate multiple markings within the same category
- Hyphens (-) separate markings and any sub-controls.

For comprehensive DOD marking guidance, consult DODM 5200.01, Volume 2, *DOD Information Security Program: Marking of Information*; For SAP information guidance, consult DODM 5205.07, Volume 4, *Special Access Program (SAP) Security Manual: Marking*; For Intelligence Community (IC) information guidance, consult Intelligence Community Directive (ICD) 710, *Classification Management and Control Markings System* and the *Intelligence Community Markings System Register and Manual*.

Figure 4: Commonly Used Control and Dissemination Control Markings in DOD

Control Marking Categories	Control Marking Category Examples
SCI	HUMINT Control System (HCS), TALENT KEYHOLE (TK)
SAP	In banner line: The level of classification, the caveat Special Access Required (SAR), the program nickname or code word, and dissemination control if applicable (use MULTIPLE PROGRAMS when information from three or more SAPs apply in one document)
	In portion mark: The level of classification, SAR, and the program's assigned program identifier (PID)
AEA	RESTRICTED DATA (RD), FORMERLY RESTRICTED DATA (FRD), DOD UNCLASSIFIED CONTROLLED NUCLEAR INFORMATION, DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY (DOE) UNCLASSIFIED CONTROLLED NUCLEAR INFORMATION, TRANSClassified FOREIGN NUCLEAR INFORMATION
	Sub-controls: Critical Nuclear Weapon Design Information (CNWDI), -SIGMA#
FGI	The syntax for FGI markings varies from that of U.S. Information. Refer to DODM 52000.01, Volume 2, Enclosure 4, section 9, for guidance
DISSEM	Originator Controlled (ORCON), Controlled Imagery (IMCON), Not Releasable to Foreign Nationals (NOFORN), Caution-Proprietary Information (PROPIN), Authorized for Release to [USA, LIST] (REL TO), Releasable by Information Disclosure Official (RELIDO), Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (FISA), Display Only
OTHER DISSEM	Alternative Compensatory Control Measures (ACCM), EXCLUSIVE DISTRIBUTION (EXDIS), NO DISTRIBUTION (NODIS), SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED (SBU), SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED-NOFORN (SBU-NF)



Figure 5: Example of banner line containing control markings, a dissemination control marking, and another dissemination control marking

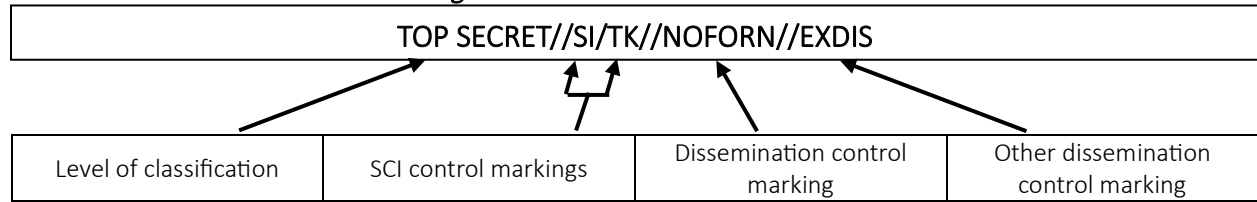
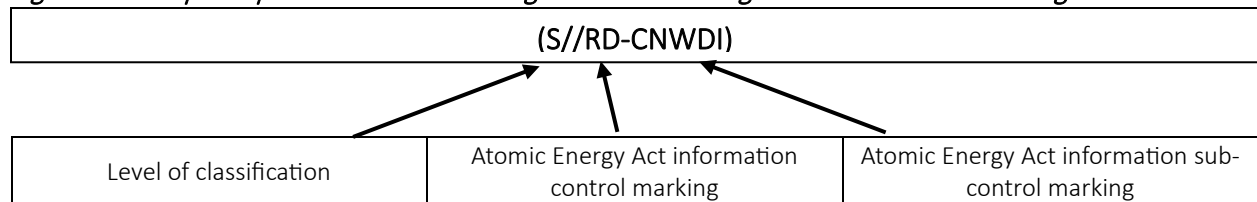


Figure 6: Example of portion mark containing a control marking and a sub-control marking



Part 4: Formatting Structure for Banner Lines and Portion Marks

Formatting structure for banner lines:

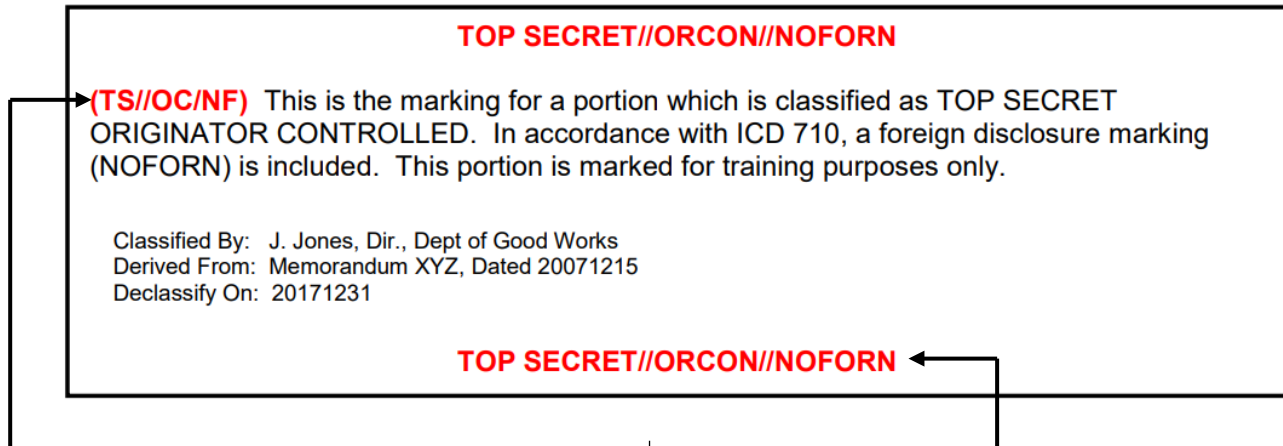
- Classification level (CONFIDENTIAL, SECRET, or TOP SECRET) in all uppercase letters and spelled out in English.
- Control markings, dissemination control markings, and other dissemination control markings must be in all uppercase letters either spelled out completely in English or utilizing authorized abbreviations as determined by Enclosure 4 of DODM 5200.01, Volume 2. (For Intelligence Community Markings not addressed in Enclosure 4, consult the Intelligence Community Markings System Register and Manual.)

Formatting structure for portion marks:

- Format in all uppercase letters.
- Use authorized abbreviations or acronyms as determined by Enclosure 4 of DODM 5200.01, Volume 2.
(For Intelligence Community Markings not addressed in Enclosure 4, consult the Intelligence Community Markings System Register and Manual.)
- Enclose in parentheses.



Figure 7: Example U.S. Classified Document with Properly Formatted Banner Lines and Portion Marks



Properly formatted portion mark:

- Authorized acronyms in all uppercase letters and enclosed in parentheses
- Dissemination control marking “ORCON” is the authorized abbreviation for “Originator Controlled” for portion marks in accordance with Enclosure 4 of DODM 5200.01, Volume 2, section (10)(c)(4).
- Dissemination control marking “NOFORN” is the authorized abbreviation for “Not Releasable to Foreign Nationals” for portion marks in accordance with Appendix 1 of Enclosure 4 of DODM 5200.01, Volume 2, section 2.

Properly formatted banner line:

- Classification level (TOP SECRET) in all uppercase letters and spelled out in English and control markings in all uppercase letters.
- Dissemination control marking “ORCON” is the authorized abbreviation for “Originator Controlled” for banner line markings in accordance with Enclosure 4 of DODM 5200.01, Volume 2, section (10)(c)(4).
- Dissemination control marking “NOFORN” is the authorized abbreviation for “Not Releasable to Foreign Nationals” for the banner line markings in accordance with Appendix 1 of Enclosure 4 of DODM 5200.01, Volume 2, section 2.



Part 5: Marking Requirements for Controlled Unclassified Information (CUI) in Classified Documents

DOD's Controlled Unclassified Information (CUI) policy is Department of Defense Instruction (DODI) 5200.48 *Controlled Unclassified Information*. Per DODI 5200.48, for U.S. classified documents or products that also contain Controlled Unclassified Information (CUI):

Portion marks:

- CUI portion marks in classified documents appear only in portions known to contain only CUI; the authorized portion mark for CUI is "(CUI)."
- Portions containing both CUI and classified information do not have "CUI" added to the portion mark.

Banner lines:

- "CUI" is not added to the banner line.

Designation Indicator block:

- The CUI Designation Indicator (DI) block must appear on the first page of classified documents to alert users of the presence of CUI in the document.

Figure 8: Example U.S. Classified Document Containing CUI

SECRET	
(U) Marking Requirements for CUI Commingled with CNSI	
1. (S) This paragraph contains information classified at the Secret level.	
2. (CUI) This paragraph contains CUI, but no classified information. "CUI" is not included in the banner line.	
Classified By: Scott Smitt, Program Analyst Derived From: DGW Memo, 20200620, same subj Declassify On: 20300605	Controlled By: OUSD(I&S)/IAP CUI Category: BUDG LDC: FEDCON POC: 703-555-7412
SECRET	

DI block



Part 6: Marking Requirements for Legacy Information

For guidance on handling legacy markings, including the dissemination control marking For Official Use Only (FOUO), consult DODI 5200.48 *Controlled Unclassified Information*, section 3.2.

- DOD legacy material does not need to be re-marked or redacted if it remains under DOD control or is accessed online and downloaded for use within DOD. However, when shared outside DOD or used to create new documents or products, it must be reviewed against the DOD CUI Registry. If the information qualifies as CUI according to the registry, it must be marked as CUI.
- If it is determined that specific legacy information meets the CUI requirements, it will be marked in accordance with DODI 5200.48 and the DOD CUI Registry.

Access DODI 5200.48 and the DOD CUI Registry via the DOD CUI Program website at:

<https://www.dodcui.mil>.

Figure 9: Image of DOD CUI Registry Page on dodcui.mil

