



CDSE Pulse

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THIS MONTH'S FOCUS

Navigating the Need-to-Know: Essential Training for SAP Personnel

Although Special Access Programs (SAP) have existed for decades, their existence has only been publicly acknowledged since the 1980s.

Previously referred to as “**Black Programs**” for being close hold and conducted by a tight-knit organization, Special Access Programs are classified programs intended to safeguard America’s most treasured national security secrets.

SAP programs help ensure mission readiness and provide a tactical and strategic advantage against adversaries.

Without them, national security and the safety of Americans could face grave damage.

As a premier provider of security education, training, and certification products, the Center for Development of Security Excellence (CDSE) helps ensure those entrusted with access to these vital programs have the proper training and resources to prevent that from happening.

CDSE has made a conscious effort to expand SAP training availability beyond the Maryland-based campus and virtual



classrooms, with instructors traveling to offer courses in new locations such as Hawaii, California, Ohio and even Canada.

This spring, **Introduction to Special Access Programs** (SA101.01) will be offered April 21 - 24 and May 12 - 15 in Linthicum, Md. Another iteration of the same course will be offered virtually from June 1 - 9.

Later in the year, the **Orientation to SAP Security Compliance Inspections** (SA210.01) course will be offered in Cincinnati, Ohio.

CDSE develops and tailors each course curriculum to ensure SAP professionals have the training to properly safeguard information and access to classified information.

In all, CDSE offers nearly 50 SAP-related **resources**. From courses and job aids to videos and webinars, security professionals are bound to find the right resources to keep America safe.



SAP recently visited Canada to present several courses to members of the Canadian Government. Students successfully took part in the Intro to SAP's course from February 3 - 6, 2026.

INDUSTRIAL SECURITY

Upcoming Virtual Getting Started Seminar for New Facility Security Officers (IS121.10)

The virtual "Getting Started Seminar for New Facility Security Officers" (FSO) introduces new FSOs and security personnel to National Industrial Security Program (NISP) requirements in a collaborative environment. If you are an FSO, contractor security personnel, DOD Industrial Security Specialist, or anyone else working in the security environment, **register** today to attend the upcoming sessions.

Virtual classes are offered on the following dates:

- March 24 - 27, 2026
- May 12 - 15, 2026
- July 21 - 24, 2026

INFORMATION SECURITY

Activity Security Manager for InfoSec Course (IF203.10)

Information is not just data— it's a strategic asset critical to mission success and national security. Transform from compliance to mission readiness with the virtual instructor-led "**Activity Security Manager for InfoSec**" course from April 19 to May 17.

During this mid-level four-week course, participants will gain expertise in mitigating and managing risks associated with developing, implementing, and evaluating an Information Security Program (ISP).

This training is designed for civilian, military, and contractor personnel who manage an ISP and have a working knowledge of its functions. Transform your security management knowledge and secure your spot!

CYBERSECURITY

Instructor-Led Training: Assessing Risk and Applying Security Controls to National Industrial Security Program (NISP) Systems (CS301.01)

A new training opportunity from the cybersecurity team is available: **“Assessing Risk and Applying Security Controls to NISP Systems.”**

This course is designed to provide guidance on applying policies to protect information within the Risk Management Framework (RMF) process. The course also offers a comprehensive review of contractor requirements under the NISP.

This training is highly recommended for:

- Information System Security Managers (ISSM)
- Information System Security Officers (ISSO)
- Facility Security Officers (FSO)
- Personnel involved in the planning, management, and execution of security programs for cleared industry.



In-person sessions will be held in Linthicum, Md., on the following dates:

- May 4-8, 2026
- Aug. 17-21, 2026

Register for this valuable training via STEPP [here](#).

PERSONNEL VETTING

New Personnel Vetting Courses

CDSE released three new eLearning courses for security practitioners responsible for personnel vetting. The new introductory courses include:



Trust starts with knowledge. **Introduction to Federal Personnel Vetting Policy for Security Practitioners** provides a foundational overview of federal personnel vetting policy and Trusted Workforce 2.0 (TW 2.0). Understand what it is, why it matters, and how it directly supports trust and mission readiness. Start building your vetting knowledge today!



Are you prepared to make critical vetting decisions with confidence? **Introduction to Suitability and Fitness for Security Practitioners** provides the foundational training related to the Non-Sensitive Public Trust (NSPT) population and TW 2.0 requirements.



Go behind the scenes of national security in this new self-paced eLearning course, **Introduction to National Security for Security Practitioners**. This training unpacks the core principles of TW 2.0 and national security trust determinations. Discover the strategies used to manage risks and protect our nation's people, property, information, and mission.



New Personnel Vetting Game

Test your knowledge with the Personnel Vetting [crossword game](#).

The crossword game is a good way to refresh your memory, stay current on best practices, and sharpen vetting concepts, scenarios, and adjudicative guidelines. Challenge yourself and see how you score!



INSIDER THREAT

Misconduct to Resolution: Planning to Prevent Unintended Consequences

If you missed the “[Misconduct to Resolution: Planning to Prevent Unintended Consequences](#)” webinar, we have you covered. Watch the 90-minute recording at any time to learn how disciplinary actions can impact insider threats. While disciplinary action is a common organizational response to workplace misconduct, it may introduce new stressors such as humiliation and perception of unfair treatment. Tune in to this webinar to learn best practices to avoid unintended consequences.



Insider Threat Detection Analysis Course (ITDAC)

CDSE’s ITDAC five-day course enables attendees to apply critical thinking skills and structured analytic techniques to potential insider threat indicators. Participants use holistic data to apply critical pathway theory to simulated cases, covering initial intake of a potential threat to mitigation.

The course uses extensive real-world practical exercises that allow students to work together to collect information, identify gaps, request additional data, and analyze the big picture. Designed for insider threat professionals, ITDAC is open to all Executive Branch departments and agencies.

This course fills up fast, so sign up today for the March 16-20 class by visiting the [course webpage](#).

New Case Study: Gokhan Gun

CDSE released a new insider threat case study covering illegal retention committed by Gokhan Gun, a dual citizen of Turkey and the United States. A 51-year-old civilian electrical engineer for the Department of Defense (DOD), Gun held a top-secret/sensitive compartmented information (TS/SCI) clearance. In 2024, Gun printed batches of documents from the Top-Secret network while at work on multiple occasions.

On March 20, 2025, Gun pled guilty to one count of unauthorized removal and retention of classified material and was sentenced on June 17, 2025, to 18 months imprisonment, three years of supervised release, and a fine of \$25,000.

Learn more about the crime, the sentence, the impact, and the potential risk indicators that, if identified, could have mitigated harm. Access the [case study](#) to review this case.

COUNTERINTELLIGENCE

New Poster

Update your workspace with CDSE's new CI poster titled, "**See What Others Miss.**" The poster is a good reminder to promote security awareness in the workplace and for staff to remain vigilant and recognize the signs and indicators of insider threats. View all available security posters [here](#).



BEHAVIORAL THREAT ANALYSIS CENTER

BTAC Bulletin

Stay informed about evolving threats with the latest edition of the Behavioral Threat Analysis Center (BTAC) Bulletin.

The monthly **bulletin** is a go-to resource for relevant insider threat guidance. The bulletin is crafted by a multidisciplinary team of experts in threat assessment and management, law enforcement, counterintelligence, behavioral science, employee management relations, and cyber security.

View the latest BTAC Bulletin today and empower your team with the knowledge to identify, mitigate, and manage insider risks effectively.



SPECIAL ACCESS PROGRAMS

Introduction to Special Access Programs (SAP) Course (SA101.01)

Sharpen your skills in paradise! CDSE's SAP team is hosting an exciting training opportunity to attend the "Introduction to SAP" course March 10-13 at Hickam AFB, Hawaii.

This is a valuable opportunity to enhance your expertise, especially with the recent updates to the DOD Special Access Program Security Manual 5205.07 signed last year. This course provides a comprehensive overview of SAP fundamentals. Click [here](#) to register.

Special Access Programs Webinars

Increase your SAP knowledge in less than an hour by viewing the recordings of two new webinars:

- **SAP Facility FAQs:** This 35-minute webinar features Alison Goldsmith from the Navy SAPCO office to discuss FAQs related to the implementation of the DOD Special Access Program Security Manual 5205.07 concerning SAP facilities. This webinar is geared to SAP security specialists, Program Security Managers (PSM), Program Security Officers (PSO), Government SAP Security Officers (GSSO), and Contractor SAP Security Officers (CSSO).
- **SAP Visit Certifications FAQs:** This 17-minute webinar hosts Alison Goldsmith from the Navy SAPCO office to discuss FAQs related to the DOD Special Access Program Security Manual 5205.07 as well as visit certifications. This webinar is geared to SAP security specialists, PSMs, PSOs, GSSOs, and CSSOs.

Have a topic you would like to see as a future webinar? Send an email to the [CDSE front office mailbox](#).



Special Access Programs Courses

Ready to master the world of Special Access Programs (SAP)? New SAP training opportunities are your roadmap to success.

Kickstart your journey with the foundational “Introduction to Special Access Programs” course. Designed specifically for new SAP security professionals, this course is an essential guide to the core security requirements outlined in DoD Manual 5205.07.

Be prepared to dive into practical, hands-on exercises that bring the material to life, building confidence and skills to excel in your role.

Introduction to Special Access Programs (SA101.01)

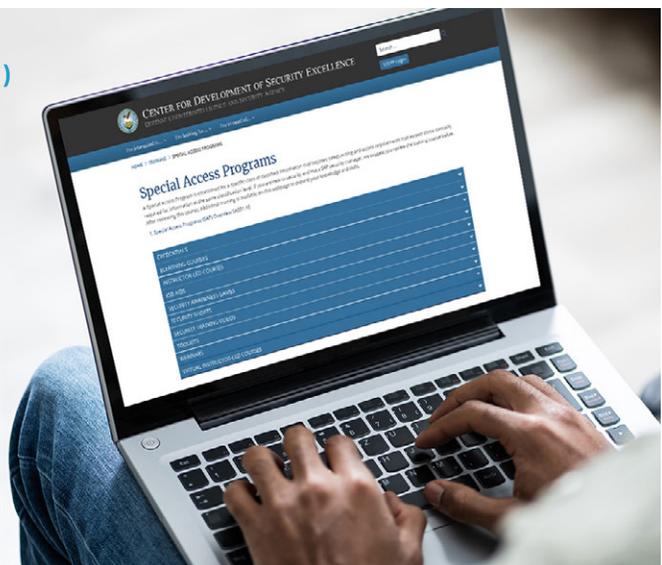
- March 10 - 13, 2026 (Hawaii)
- April 21 - 24, 2026 (Linthicum, Md.)
- May 12 - 15, 2026 (Linthicum, Md.)
- June 1 - 9, 2026 (Virtual)
- Aug. 4 - 7, 2026 (San Diego, Calif.)
- Aug. 25 - 28, 2026 (Cincinnati, Ohio)

Orientation to SAP Security Compliance Inspections (SA210.01)

- Aug. 31 - Sept. 1, 2026 (Cincinnati, Ohio)

SAP Mid-Level Security Management (SA201.01)

- July 13 - 17, 2026 (Linthicum, Md.)



FY 2026 UPCOMING COURSES

Registration Now Open

CDSE courses are a great way to gain security knowledge, gain awareness, and expand skill sets. Secure your spot now as classes fill quickly! **Available** instructor-led training (ILT)/virtual instructor-led training (VILT) courses are listed below.

Cybersecurity

Assessing Risk and Applying Security Controls to NISP Systems (CS301.01)

- May 4 - 8, 2026 (Linthicum, Md.)
- Aug. 17 - 21, 2026 (Linthicum, Md.)

General Security

DOD Security Specialist (GS101.01)

- March 17 - 25, 2026 (Linthicum, Md.)
- June 2 - 10, 2026 (Linthicum, Md.)
- Aug. 11 - 19, 2026 (Germany)
- Sept. 15 - 23, 2026 (Linthicum, Md.)

DOD Security Specialist VILT (GS101.01)

- April 6 - May 3, 2026 (Virtual)
- July 6 - Aug. 2, 2026 (Virtual)

Industrial Security

Getting Started Seminar for New Facility Security Officers VILT (IS121.10)

- March 24 - 27, 2026 (Virtual)
- May 12 - 15, 2026 (Virtual)
- July 21 - 24, 2026 (Virtual)

Information Security

Activity Security Manager VILT (IF203.10)

- April 19 - May 17, 2026 (Virtual)
- July 26 - Aug. 23, 2026 (Virtual)

Insider Threat

Insider Threat Detection Analysis Course VILT (INT200.10)

- March 16 - 20, 2026 (Virtual)
- April 13 - 17, 2026 (Virtual)
- May 11 - 15, 2026 (Virtual)
- June 8 - 12, 2026 (Virtual)
- July 13 - 17, 2026 (Virtual)
- Aug. 17 - 21, 2026 (Virtual)
- Sept. 21 - 25, 2026 (Virtual)

Personnel Vetting

Advanced National Security Adjudication VILT (PS301.10)

- June 1 - 11, 2026 (Virtual)
- Sept. 14 - 24, 2026 (Virtual)



Fundamentals of National Security Adjudications VILT (PS101.10)

- April 20 - 29, 2026 (Virtual)
- July 20 - 29, 2026 (Virtual)

Physical Security

Physical Security and Asset Protection (PY201.01)

- April 6 - 10, 2026 (Linthicum, Md.)
- May 11 - 15, 2026 (Linthicum, Md.)
- June 8 - 12, 2026 (Linthicum, Md.)
- Sept. 14 - 18, 2026 (Linthicum, Md.)

GENERAL SECURITY



DOD Security Specialist Course (GS101.01)

Elevate your expertise in risk management with our in-person “DOD Security Specialist” course in Linthicum, Md., from March 17 - 25. This course provides the fundamentals of security practices in industrial, personnel, information, and physical security disciplines. Certain prerequisites apply. Check out the [course page](#) for alternative dates and more information.

DOD Security Specialist Course (VILT GS101.10)

Need expert security training that fits your schedule? CDSE offers the perfect solution. Sign up for our virtual “DOD Security Specialist Course,” running from April 6 to May 3. This online training provides flexibility of attending just a few hours a day over four weeks, covering the same fundamental security tasks and practices as the in-person course. Sign up today on the course page [here](#).

UPCOMING WEBINARS AND CONFERENCES

View all upcoming CDSE events [here](#).

CHASING CHI: The Historic Pursuit and Capture of Insider Threat Actors Webinar

March 19 | 1:00 pm to 2:30 pm ET

Cybersecurity: Understanding Basic Malware

March 26 | 10:00 am to 11:00 am ET

SAVE THE DATE: DCSA Security Conference for Industry

Planning for the 2026 Virtual DCSA Security Conference for Industry is underway. The conference will be held May 6 - 7. More details are coming soon!

STAFF SPOTLIGHT

Staff Spotlight: Charles Buck, Security Specialist, Security Training Branch, CDSE

By Tammi Bush



When it comes to the logistical work of preparing annual courses and course material, Charles Buck is at the center of the planning. Buck is a security specialist within CDSE Security Training Division. As a SAP course instructor, he is an expert on the intricate processes and substantial

effort involved in successful course development and delivery.

Buck began his career with CDSE in October 2021, where he assumed a position as a security specialist in the Security Professional Education Development Program Management Office, before transitioning to the training division as an instructor.

"We are responsible for CDSE training which is essential to the success of security and overall missions. The larger picture is that by us maintaining training procedures the government is up to date on security training and practices within the DOD," Buck said.

SAP programs help ensure mission readiness and Buck stands ready to serve the mission. He stays busy preparing for SAP courses and ensuring students receive the latest updates on SAP policy, and information on the categories of SAPs, roles and responsibilities in the SAP approval process, and the SAP lifecycle.

Buck particularly enjoys the student interactions and keeping up-to-date with policies, which he considers key aspects of his job.

"I am a policy nerd; interacting with students who are seasoned professionals and hearing their experiences and how it relates to mine is what I really enjoy," he said. "I am always looking for how their experience relates to what we are teaching."

Since SAP is geared to a specific audience, Buck explained that while there is not much fluctuation in the type of customer, challenges can arise when

participants register and are not prepared for the training.

"Students would do themselves a big favor to take the time to prep. When students show up prepared, everything goes more smoothly," Buck recommended. According to Buck, adaptability is an essential element of this work, a principle he became familiar with during his upbringing in a military family.

"Constant change comes with the territory. The principles of security are steady and standard so the way we teach something may change slightly with policy updates," he said.

Buck served in the U.S. Army from 1996 until 2002. His military assignments were all located in Germany. Following his military service, Buck served in various contracting positions, supporting various agencies before becoming a federal civilian as a security specialist and command cyber readiness inspection team member with the U.S. Navy Fleet Cyber Command in 2016.

Buck earned a bachelor's degree in international relations in 2011, and a master's degree in intelligence analysis in 2013, both from American Military University. He is also a member of the Golden Key Society and Sigma Iota Rho.

When Buck isn't immersed in SAP training, he enjoys spending time outside in his garden, by his fire pit and bicycling. He also studies linguistics.

"Outside of work, I generally like to stay away from a computer as much as possible and spend every weekend from March through October outside," he said.



ABOUT DCSA

The Defense Counterintelligence and Security Agency (DCSA) provides industrial security engagement and counterintelligence support to secure the trustworthiness of the U.S. government's workforce, contract support, technologies, services, and supply chains.

Our Role

We protect America's trusted workforce, trusted workspaces, and classified information. To do so, we have two fundamental missions: personnel security and industrial security. Supporting these two core missions are counterintelligence and insider threat and security training. For over 50 years, our agency has used each of these missions to meet the threats of our nation's adversaries.

How We Serve

DCSA is the largest investigative service provider in the federal government, supporting over 100 federal entities. We oversee 12,500 cleared facilities under the National Industrial Security Program (NISP). We rely on the following directorates to ensure the security of our nation's technologies and information.

Personnel Security

We deliver efficient and effective background investigations, continuous vetting, and adjudications. In doing so, we safeguard the integrity and trustworthiness of the federal and contractor workforce. We conduct background investigations for 95% of the federal government, including 105 departments and agencies. We also adjudicate 70% of the federal government's adjudicative determinations.

Industrial Security

At DCSA, we oversee 12,500 cleared facilities under the National Industrial Security Program (NISP). We make sure companies are protecting their facilities, personnel, and associated IT systems from attacks and vulnerabilities.

Counterintelligence and Insider Threat

Counterintelligence and insider threat supports both our personnel security and industrial security missions. Counterintelligence focuses on foreign insider threat while insider threat is focused on internal threat. In this mission center, we identify and stop attempts by our nation's adversaries to steal sensitive national security information and technologies.

Security Training

Our agency is comprised of nationally accredited training centers. These centers provide security training, education, and certifications for security professionals across the federal government and industry.

CDSE CONTACT LIST

Mailing/Postal Address

938 Elkridge Landing Road
Linthicum, Md 21090

STEPP (Learning Management System) Help Desk

Submit an online support request ticket or call the Help Desk at 202-753-0845 within the Washington, DC area or toll free at 833-200-0035 on weekdays from 8:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Eastern Time.

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