

# **Marking Special Categories of Classified Information**

## **Student Guide**

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*Center for Development of Security Excellence (CDSE)*  
March 2024

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## Marking Special Categories of Classified Information

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## Course Introduction

### Introduction

Today you are starting a new job. One of your new responsibilities will be to work with and develop classified information. Here is your desk. You already have two new emails.

This email is from your new supervisor Vicki Johnson:

Hi!

Welcome to your first day in our department. I wanted to welcome you and let you know what your first assignments are. You'll be working with Alex Ahn on a project that will involve some derivative marking of classified information. He should be coordinating with you to bring you up to speed on how to mark the materials.

Let me know if you have any trouble or need more information.

Sincerely,  
Vicki Johnson  
Supervisor

This email is from your new colleague Alex Ahn:

Good morning,

Vicki asked me to introduce myself when I get a chance. I'll be swinging by your desk soon with some practice materials to get you up to speed on how to derivatively mark the classified information we will be working with later. If you aren't too familiar with marking, you will be after today!

Talk to you soon,  
Alex

It looks like your first day will be a busy one! Welcome to the Marking Special Categories of Classified Information course.

### Course Objectives

As part of your position working for or with the federal government, you may come into contact with classified information. Ensuring that the classified information is properly marked and carries the proper level of classification and instructions helps to protect national security. In this course, you will learn why classified information is marked, who can apply markings and make classification determinations, and how to identify and apply the standard markings according to the regulatory guidance.

Here are the course objectives. Take a moment to review them.

- Identify federal and DOD policies related to marking classified documents.
- Identify marking requirements for special types of documents and materials, such as electronically transmitted messages, websites, and letters of transmittal.
- Identify marking requirements for special categories of information and from sources external to the Department of Defense.

## **Course Menu**

Select a topic from the course menu options to continue:

- General Marking Requirements
- Marking Special Types of Information and Materials
- Marking Special Categories of Information
- Course Conclusion

## General Marking Requirements

### Scenario

You receive a phone call from your co-worker Alex. See what he has to say:

Good morning! It's Alex. I hope you're all settled in. I was wondering if I could drop a document off at your desk. I think it could be really helpful to get you started. See you soon.

Your coworker thinks this document might help you understand standard classification markings. Let's look at it more closely and examine the general marking requirements and standard markings.

**TOP SECRET//FGI//IMCON/RELIDO**

Department of Good Works Washington, D.C.

10 April 2030

Subject: (U) Marking Instructions

(U) This paragraph contains Unclassified information; portion marked with the designation "U."

(//FGI C) This paragraph contains Confidential, foreign government information from a concealed country; portion marked as "//FGI C."

(S) This paragraph contains Secret information; portion marked with the designation "S."

(S//IMC) This paragraph contains Secret Controlled Imagery information; portion marked with the designation "S//IMC."

(TS//RELIDO) This information contains Top Secret information and whose further release is determined by a designated official.

**TOP SECRET//FGI//IMCON/RELIDO**

### Objectives

When you encounter a piece of classified information, you should immediately be alerted to the presence of classified information and the level of classification. You may be alerted by the bold banner line at the top and bottom of the document declaring the document is Top Secret. Or you might notice a few lines at the bottom of the page that indicate when the information will be declassified. These are both examples of markings applied to classified information.

**TOP SECRET//FGI//IMCON/RELIDO**

Department of Good Works Washington, D.C.

10 April 2030

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(TS//RELIDO) This information contains Top Secret information and whose further release is determined by a designated intelligence disclosure official; portion marked as “TS//RELIDO.”

Classified By: D. Bottemly, DoGW Analyst

Reason: 1.4(a)

Downgrade To: Confidential on 20450220

Declassify On: 20550410

**TOP SECRET//FGI//IMCON/RELIDO**

Take a moment to review the lesson objectives.

- Identify the purpose of marking classified information.
- Identify the policy and regulatory foundations for marking classified information.
- Identify standard markings.
- Apply standard markings to the correct locations on a document.

**Why Mark?**

In an era when information is more accessible to more people than at any other time in history, it is vital to the safety and security of the nation to understand the need to limit access to certain types of information. Information may become classified when national security could be jeopardized by its ready availability. Information that, in the wrong hands, could be used to endanger the safety of our intellectual property, our military operations, or even American lives, must be protected. When release of the information no longer poses a threat, it is declassified and may be released to the public if appropriate under law. So what role does marking play?

The purpose of marking is to provide required information about classification. This includes alerting the holder to the presence of classified information and specifically identifying what information needs

protecting and the level of protection required. Marking also identifies who classified the document and provides guidance for future downgrading or declassification. It identifies the reason for the classification, and alerts the holder to any special access, dissemination, or safeguarding requirements.

The standard markings applied to all classified information keeps the holder of the information aware of the sensitivity of the items in his or her care. Looking at the document Alex left on your desk, you can see how the markings provide this important information.

### **TOP SECRET//FGI//IMCON/RELIDO**

Department of Good Works Washington, D.C.

10 April 2030

Subject: (U) Marking Instructions

(U) This paragraph contains Unclassified information; portion marked with the designation “U.”

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Classified By: D. Bottemly, DoGW Analyst

Reason: 1.4(a)

Downgrade To: Confidential on 20450220

Declassify On: 20550410

### **TOP SECRET//FGI//IMCON/RELIDO**

The highest level of sensitivity is clearly displayed right at the top. If you have questions about why the document was classified or whether all the markings are correct, you can find the information regarding who classified the information, and why, in the classification authority block at the bottom. By learning to identify and apply these markings, you help to protect this vital information.

### **Definitions and Regulatory Guidance**

To ensure that marking standards stay current with advances in technology and changes in policy, the markings and restrictions on classified information are constantly monitored and updated. Let’s examine how these standards are established.



In 2009 the President issued Executive Order 13526, which established new standards for the classification of national security information. This order prescribes the marking information you will learn in this course.

The Information Security Oversight Office, or ISOO, develops, coordinates, and issues implementing directives and instructions that bind Executive Branch agencies. The ISOO released specific guidance regarding Executive Order 13526 in the form of Code of Federal Regulations or CFRs. After releasing its Final Rule, ISOO then released a visual guide to marking.

To effectively and efficiently facilitate the marking of classified information under the new order the Department of Defense issued DOD Manual 5200.01, Volumes 1 through 3. These manuals contain the DOD procedures for marking classified information. The intelligence community may have additional marking and handling requirements. These resources are available to you to advance your understanding of the principles and standards of marking classified information.

## **Overall Classification Process**

Who makes the determinations about what should or should not be classified? A limited number of people can make that decision. The person who makes the decision is called an Original Classification Authority, or OCA. The authority to originally classify information is associated with the position, not the individual holding that position.

To become an OCA, one must be authorized in writing by the President, the Vice President, secretaries of military departments, or other, delegated United States Government officials designated by the President. OCAs have a lot of responsibility. In addition to making the initial determination on whether information should be classified and why, they are also responsible for ensuring that information is properly marked and that information is maintained at the proper level of security for the proper length of time.

At least once per calendar year, all OCAs must receive training in proper classification, including the avoidance of over-classification, and declassification as provided in the Executive Order and its implementing directives. OCAs must follow a defined process to create an originally classified document. Once an OCA determines that information should be classified, the OCA can proceed to apply the necessary markings. But OCAs are not the only people who are able to create classified information. When a newly developed document is created that incorporates, paraphrases, restates, or otherwise generates in a new form information from authorized sources which are already classified, it is called derivative classification.

Derivatively classified documents may be produced by personnel whose duties involve handling classified information. The person who produces this new document is called a derivative classifier. A derivative classifier will need to ensure the transfer of the proper markings from the original document or documents to the newly created or derived piece of information. The derivative classifier must also be concerned with properly citing his or her sources, so that all source information is clear and readily verifiable.

## What Can Be Classified?

How did the information you will be working with become classified? What information can and should be classified? For information to be considered for classification, an OCA must determine that its release would cause damage to national security. Only information that falls into at least one of eight categories can be eligible for classification.

These categories are defined by Executive Order 13526. They include military plans, weapons systems, or operations; foreign government information; intelligence activities (including covert action), intelligence sources or methods, or cryptology; foreign relations or foreign activities of the United States, including confidential sources; scientific, technological, or economic matters relating to national security; United States government programs for safeguarding nuclear materials or facilities; vulnerabilities or capabilities of systems, installations, infrastructures, projects or plans, or protection services relating to the national security; and weapons of mass destruction or WMD.

These categories are listed on the Reason line of originally classified information and are formatted as they appear here with the number “1.4” followed by one or more of the letters A through H, or they may be spelled out. Select Eligible Categories to view the list of categories from the Executive Order.

## Eligible Categories

### Categories of Information Eligible for Classification Under E.O. 13526, Section 1.4:

- 1.4(a) Military plans, weapons systems, or operations
- 1.4(b) Foreign government information
- 1.4(c) Intelligence activities, (including covert action), intelligence sources or methods, or cryptology.
- 1.4(d) Foreign relations or foreign activities of the United States, including confidential sources.
- 1.4(e) Scientific, technological, or economic matters relating to national security.
- 1.4(f) United States government programs for safeguarding nuclear materials or facilities 1.4(g) Vulnerabilities or capabilities of systems, installations, infrastructures, projects or
- plans, or protection services relating to the national security.
- 1.4(h) Weapons of mass destruction (WMD)

## Levels of Classification

Classifying information protects national security from damage or danger posed by the inappropriate use of the information. Different levels of protection are applied based on the potential damage the information might cause if it fell into in the wrong hands. The three levels of classification in the United States are:

- Confidential—unauthorized disclosure would cause damage national security.
- Secret—disclosure to the public would cause serious damage to national security.
- Top Secret—disclosure to the public would cause exceptionally grave damage to national

security.

You may encounter markings that identify all three classification levels in a single classified document. In addition to the classification levels, unclassified information will also be marked as such. Proper markings alert holders to what level of security clearance an individual must have to access the information. The more sensitive the information, the higher the security clearance needed.

## Portion and Banner Markings

Now let's look at the standard markings you will see on classified documents. Look closely at the document Alex gave you.

**TOP SECRET//FGI//IMCON/RELIDO**

Department of Good Works Washington, D.C.

10 April 2030

Subject: (U) Marking Instructions

(U) This paragraph contains Unclassified information; portion marked with the designation "U."

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(TS//RELIDO) This information contains Top Secret information and whose further release is determined by a designated intelligence disclosure official; portion marked as "TS//RELIDO."

Classified By: D. Bottemly, DoGW Analyst

Reason: 1.4(a)

Downgrade To: Confidential on 20450220

Declassify On: 20550410

**TOP SECRET//FGI//IMCON/RELIDO**

This document contains what we call banner markings, portion markings and a classification block. All classified documents contain these markings. Banner markings provide information about the overall document, portion markings provide information about each paragraph, and the classification authority block details who classified the information, why it was classified, and how long the information must

remain classified. Markings denote the classification level of each portion. They indicate the highest level of classification in the document. They state whether any dissemination controls apply to the document. And finally, they alert the holder to who classified the document, the reason why, applicable downgrading, and the duration of classification.

## **Portion Markings**

Portion markings identify the classification levels of individual sections of a document. If you look at the document Alex gave you, you will see that each line starts with a different mark. Every portion in every classified document is marked to show the highest level of classification that it contains. This includes the subject, title, paragraphs, sections, tabs, attachments, the classified signature block, bullets, tables, and even pictures.

There are four portion markings: U for Unclassified, C for Confidential, S for Secret, and TS for Top Secret. All these abbreviations appear in parentheses before the portion to which they apply. They are always capital letters.

## **Banner Lines**

Take a look at the top of your document. These are the banner line markings. The banner indicates the highest overall classification level of information contained in a document. Banner lines on interior pages may either have the highest overall classification of the document or the highest classification level of information on that page. The banner includes the most restrictive control markings and apply to the overall document. There are four banner markings: UNCLASSIFIED, CONFIDENTIAL, SECRET, AND TOP SECRET.

These markings show the correct formatting for a banner line. The markings always appear in uppercase letters in English, with the full classification level spelled out. The classification designation is never abbreviated. For example, you will see TOP SECRET written out, not TS. Only one level of classification per document may appear in the banner line.

## **Review Activity 1**

Read the partial document and then answer the question that follows. Check your answer in the Answer Key at the end of this Student Guide.

- (U) This paragraph contains Unclassified information; therefore, it will be marked with the designation “U.”
- (S) This paragraph contains Secret information; therefore, it will be marked with the designation “S.”
- (C) This paragraph contains Confidential information; therefore, it will be marked with the designation “C.”

Based on the portion markings, what is the correct level of classification to indicate in the banner?

- UNCLASSIFIED
- CONFIDENTIAL
- SECRET
- TOP SECRET

## **Control Markings and Dissemination Controls**

Now that you have learned about banner markings and portion markings to indicate classification level, let's look at some ways to further control information. In addition to the highest level of classification displayed in the banner line of a classified document, there are other markings that must appear if applicable. These abbreviations, separated by double forward slashes, are known as control markings and dissemination control markings.

These markings alert you to any special instructions regarding its contents. Control markings are also used to identify the presence of special categories of information such as Sensitive Compartmented Information, or SCI, Foreign Government Information, or FGI, or Restricted Data, or RD. You will learn more about these special categories of information later. The banner line of the document you are holding shows the correct use of control markings. These markings are required in both the banner line and portion markings, where applicable.

When applying control markings to a document, use double forward slashes to separate the classification level from the control markings and dissemination markings.

Example: TOP SECRET//FGI//LIMITED DISTRIBUTION

If you need more than one control marking, use a double forward slash to separate the different marking categories and use a single forward slash to separate multiple types within the same marking category. Dissemination controls appear in the last portion of the banner line and portions. They are special handling caveats that apply to items, elements, or categories of information. Dissemination controls identify the expansion or limitation on the distribution of information. Sometimes the distribution might be limited. Other times distribution may be prohibited. These markings address the special concerns of how to handle the information or to whom it can be transmitted.

## **Review Activity 2**

Select which type of marking each banner contains. Check your answers in the Answer Key at the end of this Student Guide.

Banner: SECRET//REL TO

- Control Markings
- Dissemination Control Markings
- Both

TOP SECRET//RD//NOFORN

- Control Markings
- Dissemination Control Markings
- Both

TOP SECRET//FGI

- Control Markings
- Dissemination Control Markings
- Both

### **Classification Authority Block**

The last set of markings that must appear on classified information is the Classification Authority Block. This block of text tells who classified the information, for what reason, and how long it must remain classified. On the document your coworker provided to you, this block of information appears at the bottom of the first page.

**TOP SECRET//FGI//IMCON/RELIDO**

Department of Good Works Washington, D.C.

10 April 2030

Subject: (U) Marking Instructions

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**Classified By: D. Bottemly, DoGW Analyst**

**Reason: 1.4(a)**

**Downgrade To: Confidential on 20450220**

**Declassify On: 20550410**

**TOP SECRET//FGI//IMCON/RELIDO**

The information that will appear in this block is the name and position or identifier of the original or derivative classifier (if not otherwise evident, the agency, and the office of origin). If this document is originally classified, it must state the reason for classification. If it was derivatively classified, it must identify the source documents from which it was derived. Finally, it must include the downgrade instructions, if applicable, and the declassification instructions, unless the information is Restricted Data or Formerly Restricted Data or otherwise exempted information.

### **Review Activity 3**

Read the document and then answer the question that follows. Check your answer in the Answer Key at the end of this Student Guide.

**TOP SECRET**

April 10, 2035

Subject: (U) Marking Instructions

(U) This paragraph contains Unclassified information; therefore, it will be marked with the designation “U.”

(TS) This paragraph contains Top Secret information; therefore, it will be marked with the designation “TS.”

Classified By: D. Bottemly, DoGW Analyst

Reason: 1.4(a)

Downgrade To: Confidential on 20390410

Declassify On: 20440515

**TOP SECRET**

How many years will this document be classified as Top Secret?

- 2 years
- 4 years
- 9 years
- 10 years

### **Review Activity 4**

Which document is the original source for the categories of information that are eligible for classification?

Check your answer in the Answer Key at the end of this Student Guide.

- Executive Order 13526

- DODM 5200.01, Vol. 2, Marking of Information
- ISOO Classified National Security Information, Final Rule
- ISOO Marking Classified National Security Information Booklet

**Review Activity 5**

An OCA is marking an originally classified document. Determine the correct portion and banner markings. Check your answers in the Answer Key at the end of this Student Guide.

(1)\_\_\_\_\_

Department of Good Works Washington, D.C.

14 September 2030

Subject: (2)\_\_\_Subject is Unclassified

(3)\_\_\_ This paragraph contains Unclassified information.

(4)\_\_\_ This paragraph contains Confidential information.

(5)\_\_\_ This paragraph contains Secret information.

The banner line at the top center of the document (Field 1) should be marked with the following:

- UNCLASSIFIED (U)
- CONFIDENTIAL (C)
- SECRET (S)
- TOP SECRET (TS)

The Subject line (Field 2) should be marked with the following:

- (U)
- (C)
- (S)
- (TS)

The first paragraph (Field 3) should be marked with the following:

- (U)
- (C)
- (S)
- (TS)



The second paragraph (Field 4) should be marked with the following:

- (U)
- (C)
- (S)
- (TS)

The third paragraph (Field 5) should be marked with the following:

- (U)
- (C)
- (S)
- (TS)

### **Review Activity 6**

An OCA is marking an originally classified document. Determine the correct markings for each line of the classification authority block.

Check your answers in the Answer Key at the end of this Student Guide.

(1)\_\_\_L. Woodsman, DoGW Analyst

(2)\_\_\_1.4(e)

(3)\_\_\_20170211

The first line of the Classification Authority Block (Field 1) should be marked with the following:

- UNCLASSIFIED
- Classified By:
- Declassify On:
- DoGW Analyst

The second line of the Classification Authority Block (Field 2) should be marked with the following:

- Reason:
- Declassify On:
- Derived From:
- Military Plans

The third line of the Classification Authority Block (Field 3) should be marked with the following:

- SECRET
- FOUO

- Declassify On:
- L. Woodsman

### **Lesson Summary**

In this lesson you learned about why we mark classified information and what regulatory guidance to follow when doing so. You learned about the classification process. And finally, you learned about standard classification markings.

### **Rollovers:**

#### **Purpose**

- Clearly alert to the presence of classified information
- Identify what information needs protecting and the level of protection.
- Provide guidance for downgrading or declassifying.
- Identify the reason for classification.
- Alert the holder to any special access, dissemination, or safeguarding requirements.

#### **Regulatory Guidance**

- Executive Order 13526
  - Establishes new standards for marking classified information.
- ISOO, 32 CFR Parts 2001 and 2002, Final Rule
  - Provides implementing guidance.
- DODM 5200.01, Vol. 2
  - Contains DOD procedures for marking classified information.
- ISOO Marking Classified National Security Information Booklet
  - Contains visual guidance.

## Marking Special Types of Information and Materials

### Scenario

You have received another voicemail. See what it says.

Hey, it's Alex.

I'm not sure if you've worked with anything other than documents before, but I'm going to drop off some examples of other items that require classification markings. Bye.

Let's look at some other items that you will encounter that require classification markings.

### Lesson Objectives

Classified information can be contained within a wide range of materials and media, beyond simple paper or even electronic documents. Information that needs protection and requires marking could be the email you send your colleague or the CD on which he or she might save the information.

Hi there.

Attached is a document that I'd like you to use to practice creating a derivatively classified document.

Sincerely,  
Vicki

How are these items marked? Take a moment to review the lesson objectives.

- Identify special types of information and materials.
- Identify how markings vary for different types of material.

### Special Types of Information and Materials

Classified information may be contained in a variety of material and media formats. If information is classified and is being recorded in some fashion, that record must be marked. Materials and media like your notes taken during a classified meeting or a CD containing classified information must be marked.

During the course of your work, you will see working papers, letters of transmittal, emails, websites, and other media formats. If these types of material and media contain classified information, then they require classification markings including the standard classification markings: portion markings, banner markings, and even a Classification Authority Block. In some cases, the material or media has more parts or intricacies than a document. And in other cases, the media will have less space and even fewer parts than a document. With these considerations in mind, let's explore how to mark the most common special types of classified information.

## **Marking Special Material**

Two of the most common special types of material you will encounter are working papers and transmittal documents. Working papers are documents and materials accumulated or created in the preparation of finished documents and materials. For example, if you are taking notes on classified information during a meeting or are working on a draft of a classified document, you are creating a working paper.

Any classified information must be protected and marked properly. A transmittal document is a document like a memo, letter, or a staff summary sheet that serves to accompany an enclosure or attached document. These items usually include a little information about the contents of the enclosure.

Now let's look at how these two types of documents are marked.

### **Working Papers**

How do you mark a working paper? Even if the working paper is just for your use, it still contains information that must be protected, which must be safeguarded according to its classification level. Therefore, the highest level of classification contained in the document appears on the top and bottom of the working paper as a banner marking. The date of creation must be prominently marked. And lastly, the working paper is annotated on the face of the page, prominently "Working Paper."

After you are done using the working paper, it must be destroyed. The working paper must be marked in the same manner as a finished document if it is released by the originator outside of the originating activity, is retained for more than 180 days, or contains Special Access Program, or SAP, information and is retained for more than 30 days. This means portion markings, banner markings, and a Classification Authority Block must appear on what was the working paper and is now a finished document.

### **Letters of Transmittal**

There are specific markings associated with transmittal documents. Let's look at a letter of transmittal. If the letter itself does not contain any classified information, then no portion markings or Classification Authority Block are required. Banner markings are required and reflect the level of classification of the attachment and contain any control or dissemination markings from the attachment. Instead, the transmittal document will be marked with an appropriate instruction indicating that it is unclassified when separated from the classified enclosures.

If the letter itself contains classified information, it must be marked with all of the standard markings just like any other classified document.

## **Marking in the Electronic Environment**

You have a voicemail from Vicki.

Hey, it's Vicki.

I know Alex has been sending you emails with practice documents attached.

I'm going to send you a practice classified email. See if you can properly mark your response. Watch your inbox. Bye!

Vicki has sent you an email. Let's talk about marking information that is not strictly in document format.

FROM: Vicki Johnson  
TO: New Employee  
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

(U) This URL is Unclassified, but it could point to information that is of a higher classification:  
<http://www.center.xyz/filename2.html>

Vicki Johnson  
Supervisor

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

**SECRET**

(S) Attachment

## Electronically Transmitted Messages

Let's get started by examining some of the most common ways we communicate, through electronic channels. All day your coworkers have been sending you practice exercises via an electronic interface. What if these items were not for practice? How would they differ?

Electronically transmitted messages include emails, instant messages, chats, and chat rooms, and attached files. All of the standard markings such as portion markings, banner markings, and a Classification Authority Block are necessary when marking these items.

### Email Markings

How are emails marked? Let's look at the message that Vicki just sent you.

FROM: Vicki Johnson  
TO: New Employee  
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

(U) This URL is Unclassified, but it could point to information that is of a higher classification:  
<http://www.center.xyz/filename2.html>

Vicki Johnson  
Supervisor

**SECRET**

(S) Attachment

Classified emails are transmitted on or prepared for transmission on classified systems or networks. The banner markings appear in the body of each message at the top and bottom, just as they would for a typical document. For example, this marking appears as a single linear text string showing the overall classification in this email at the top and bottom.

Each portion is marked to reflect the highest level of information contained in that portion. This includes the subject line, attachments, and any links. A text portion containing a uniform resource locator, or URL, or a link to another document is portion marked based on the classification of the content of the URL or link text, not the content to which it points. For example, this URL is unclassified. Sometimes URLs themselves contain classified information. We'll discuss marking URLs later in the lesson.

The subject line is treated like the subject line of any other classified document. It is portion marked to reflect the highest level of classification that it contains. Although it appears above the body of the email, the subject is not the banner line of the email; it is simply another portion.

The Classification Authority Block appears at the bottom of the email, after the signature block but before the bottom banner line. If there is an attachment to the email, the name of the attachment must be portion marked, according to the level of classification of the name of the attachment, not the level of classification of the attached material. The email then functions as a letter of transmittal.

Like any transmittal document, the banner markings of an electronic message will account for the classification level of any attachments. All of the emails your coworkers have sent you thus far have been unclassified for training purposes only, but if any of these attachments had been actual classified documents, their classification level would appear in the banner like the example shown earlier.

Like a paper letter of transmittal, an email will contain all of the standard markings when the email itself contains classified information. Otherwise, like a letter of transmittal, if the email itself does not contain any classified information but the attachment does, the email must account for the classification level of the contents of any attachments in the banners and contain a statement indicating the email's overall level of classification when separated from its enclosures.

When you forward or reply to an email, you are responsible for ensuring the new or forwarded message is marked appropriately. In addition, to ensure the proper markings are carried on the material from the previous email and attachments, you must portion mark any new material included in the email, as well as update the overall classification indicated in the banner line, as appropriate.

## **Other Electronic Messages**

Emails aren't the only electronic messages that require classification markings when they contain classified information. But they are a good template for understanding the marking requirements for other electronic messages like instant messages, chats, and chat rooms, and attached files. Take a moment to look over some of the requirements for marking these other electronic message formats.

Message type or component and requirements.

### **Instant Messages:**

Conversations that have been captured for retention will be:

- Banner marked at top and bottom of each page.
- Portion marked for each portion, including links and graphics.
- Marked with a Classification Authority Block.

### **Chats and Chat Rooms**

Conversations that have been captured for retention will be:

- Banner marked at top and bottom of each page.
- Portion marked for each portion, including links and graphics.

- Marked with a Classification Authority Block

Chat rooms contain:

- A system-high overall classification designating the highest level of classified conversation that can occur in the room.
- Instructions informing users that the information may not be used as a source for derivative classification unless it contains all of the standard markings.

### **Attached Files**

- The subject line is portion marked; it contains the highest level of classification in the subject line.
- The overall classification of the attachment will affect the classification level of the message to which it is attached.
- If an attachment contains classified information, the banner line of the email will indicate the highest classification within the email, including attachments.
- The classification of the attachment title does not indicate the classification of the file itself. Most titles are unclassified even though the file itself contains classified information.

### **Electronic Documents and Web Pages**

Electronic classified information isn't just transmitted via electronic message. It may also be posted in secure areas of the Internet and this information must be marked. The most common examples of information in the electronic environment are web pages, the address of web pages like URLs, bulletin board postings, blogs, wikis, and dynamic documents.

With some exceptions, standard markings apply to classified information existing on the web. Look for banner markings, portion markings, and a Classification Authority Block. Let's look at the specific marking requirements for these types of information now.

### **Web Page Markings**

How is information marked on the web? Let's look at a sample web page.

#### **SECRET**

Classified By: Vicki Johnson, Supervisor

Derived From: Training Documents dated May 9, 2012, Subject: Classified Emails

Declassify On: May 10, 2025

(U) Web Page

(S) This information is Secret.

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

(U) Bulletin Boards & Blogs (U) Wikis



## **SECRET**

Since gathering information via the web allows you to view information without going through a classified cover page or title page, banner and portion markings are what alert you first to the presence of classified information and the level of protection it requires.

The banner markings appear as a linear string of text across the top and bottom of the page. They contain the highest level of classification on the web page and any control or dissemination controls.

Every item of content is portion marked with its corresponding classification level. A portion containing a URL or reference to another document is portion marked based on the classification of the content of the URL, not the page or document to which it points. So even if a web page links to a document of higher classification, the markings on this page only reflect the content you find in the URL.

The Classification Authority Block will appear either at the top or bottom of the page inside the banner lines. This block might look like the traditional three lines of text, or it might appear like the banner markings as a single linear string of text that still contains all the necessary information.

Graphics are portion marked. Any multimedia like videos, audio, or slides that appear on the website will carry their own overall classification and Classification Authority Block.

Other than the content on the web page itself, you might also see markings in the URL. URLs are developed at an unclassified level whenever possible. When a URL is classified, a portion mark appears in the text of the URL string in a way that does not make the URL inoperable to identify the URL as a classified portion. For example, this URL is Secret and is marked with an underscore followed by an S in parentheses. This is just one example of a classified website.

Bulletin boards and blogs are marked similarly to a simple website with a few more considerations because of the way in which content is added. Similar to the dynamic nature of a blog, wikis have their own marking considerations.

### **Bulletin Boards and Blogs**

A blog, short for web log, is a website made up of a series of entries. The entries are chronological. As new information and new posts are added to the leading page of the bulletin board or blog, older information is archived and removed from the primary page. Because the website is dynamic, but the content of individual posts is generally static, there are special marking considerations. For example, a bulletin board or blog's title, entry subjects, and entry content will be portion marked according to their respective levels of classification.

Each entry or post is banner marked with the overall classification of the post. The banner markings of the web page reflect the highest level of classified information that appears on that page. As entries move off the main page, being superseded by newer content, the banner markings must change to reflect the new state of the page. Because of the dynamic nature of the content, bulletin boards and blogs are not eligible as sources of derivative classification.

### **Wikis**

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Wikis are websites whose users have authoring control. They can create, add to, update, or edit content. This is useful for knowledge sharing and collaborative note taking. When the initial information of the wiki is created, banner markings, portion markings, and the classification authority box are applied. When users modify existing entries, altering the classification level of the content, or adding new content, the markings must change to reflect the classification markings for the resulting information.

The IT system that manages the classified wiki provides a means to log the identity of each user, the changes made, and the date and time of each change to the wiki, which helps keep information properly marked. Because of the dynamic nature of the content, wikis are not eligible as sources of derivative classification.

## **Graphics**

In addition to being portion marked, a text equivalent of the graphic's classification marking string is included in the hypertext statement and its metadata. This means that someone who is not using a graphical interface can read the text string and know there is an image on the website classified at a certain level.

## **Dynamic Documents**

A dynamic document is a document containing electronic information derived from a changeable source or ad hoc query, such as a database. Dynamic document markings depend on the database request. If a mechanism exists for determining the actual classification for the data included in the document, the appropriate classification markings are applied. Alternately, if such a mechanism does not exist, the document will simply be marked with the highest classification level of information within the database.

In this case, the document must include a warning that the document cannot be used as a basis for derivative classification.

## **Additional Requirements**

If a mechanism does not exist to determine the actual classification of information contained within a dynamic document, follow these steps listed to avoid unnecessary over-classification of information:

- Mark the document with the highest classification level of information within the data source
- Apply a warning at the top of each page of the document, stating that such content is not to be used as a basis for derivative classification.
- Consult classification guides, the data source owner, or the point of contact for classification of individual elements.
- If there is doubt about the correct markings, contact the data source owner for guidance.

## **Marking Special Types of Media**

You come across a lot of media in an office environment, like audio, visuals, images, and briefings or presentations. Additionally, you'll find these media items in different formats: electronic or paper

photographs, digital audio recording on a CD, or even an analog cassette tape.

Let's examine how these different media items and objects are marked when they contain classified information.

## **Briefing Slides**

Frequently, a briefing slide involves an assortment of media not limited to text, including charts, images, and even audio and video. How do you mark these media-rich items?

All of the standard markings that apply to classified documents apply to briefing slides. The banner markings on the first or title slide will include the highest overall classification level. On the remaining slides, the banner markings will contain either the highest overall classification of the briefing, or the highest classification level seen on the individual slide. All of the content in the slides require portion markings, including all bullets, captions, titles, embedded graphs, charts, images, video, and figures. The Classification Authority Block may be placed on the first or last slide of the presentation, though it is preferred that it appear on the first slide.

## **Photographs and Sound Recordings**

Because you are familiar with the markings of classified information on documents, it is easy to identify the presence of classified information. The markings of media items are just as prominent. Everything from photographs and audio recordings to microfiche and DVDs is marked if it contains classified information.

The main objective with these items is to inform the holder of the presence of classified information. So a photograph will be marked with the standard markings of banner markings, portion markings, and a Classification Authority Block. If the photo is packaged in a box, the box will display the level of classification and control of the items in the box. If the photo is electronic, it might be stored on a CD. The CD will also be marked with the classification level and controls of the images contained on it. If the CD is stored in a box, then that package is also marked with the highest level of classification and control markings.

The same conventions apply to audio recordings, with the additional requirement for the recording to include an audible version of the classification level and controls at the beginning and end of the recording. The storage markings are the same. The storage medium is marked and if that medium is stored, so too is the packaging in which it resides. Now let's look at the requirements for some other special types of media.

## **Other Types of Media**

In addition to images and audio, other media items require special marking treatments. Things like blueprints and other engineering materials, DVDs and video tapes, microfiche, and removable storage will be marked specific to the overall classification of the information they contain and considerations as to their size and shape.

You may review those requirements and special considerations here.

## **Media and Special Considerations**

Blueprints, Engineering Drawings, Charts, and Maps:

- If stored rolled or folded, markings appear in areas that are visible when folded.

Digital Video Discs (DVDs), Video Tapes, Motion Picture Films, and Web Videos

- Marked with overall classification and classification authority block unless the addition of such information would render them inoperable.
- Audio and audiovisuals are marked at the beginning and end of the presentation.
- The storage device on which the information appears is marked.

Microfilm, Microfiche, and Similar Microform Media

- Marked so that the unaided eye can see the markings on this media.
- When the item is stored in packaging, the packaging is marked.

Removable Electronic Storage Media

- Items are marked with the highest level of classification and control markings.
- When the item is stored in packaging, the packaging is marked.

## **Review Activity 1**

Consider which markings apply to each special type of information.

Check your answers in the Answer Key at the end of this Student Guide.

Special Type: Unfinished working paper

- Banner Markings
- Portion Markings
- Classification Authority Block
- Other Required Markings

Special Type: Unclassified letter of transmittal

- Banner Markings
  - Portion Markings
  - Classification Authority Block
  - Other Required Markings
- Special Type: Email containing Secret information
- Banner Markings
  - Portion Markings
  - Classification Authority Block
  - Other Required Markings

Special Type: URL

- Banner Markings
- Portion Markings

- Classification Authority Block
- Other Required Markings

**Review Activity 2**

You are taking notes during a classified meeting. Your notes include information that is classified. What do you have to do after the meeting if you do not immediately destroy your notes?  
Check your answer in the Answer Key at the end of this Student Guide.

- Mark the notes as a finished document, with banner and portion markings and a classification authority block and annotate them as working papers.
- Mark the highest level of classification at the top and bottom, date the notes, and annotate them as working papers.
- Mark the notes with the date and annotate them as working papers.
- Do nothing. These are just notes for your use.

**Review Activity 3**

Vicki asked you to respond to her sample classified email. Review your response and then answer the question that follows. Check your answers in the Answer Key at the end of this Student Guide.

FROM: (1)\_\_\_\_ Your email address  
TO: New Employee  
CC:  
SUBJECT: (2)\_\_\_\_ Subject of the email

(3)\_\_\_\_ Hi Vicki,

(U) This is my response to your email from this morning.

(4)\_\_\_\_ Thanks for working with me today.

(C) This line contains Confidential information.

(5)\_\_\_\_ This line also contains Confidential information.

(6)\_\_\_\_ Sincerely,  
Your Name

(7)\_\_\_\_ Classified By: Your name, DoGW Analyst  
Derived From: Training Documents dated May 9, 2012,  
Subject: Classified Emails  
Declassify On: 20250510

Which of the following parts of the email are portions that are currently missing portion markings?

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- (1) Your email address
- (2) Subject of the email
- (3) “Hi Vicki,”
- (4) “Thanks for working with me today.”
- (5) “This line also contains Confidential information.”
- (6) “Sincerely, Your Name”
- (7) Classification Authority Block

## Review Activity 4

Vicki asked you to respond to her sample classified email. Review your response and then answer the question that follows. Check your answers in the Answer Key at the end of this Student Guide.

FROM: Your email address  
 TO: New Employee  
 CC:  
 SUBJECT: (1)\_\_\_\_\_ Subject of the email

(2)\_\_\_\_\_ Hi Vicki,

(U) This is my response to your email from this morning.

Thanks for working with me today.

(C) This line contains Confidential information.

This line also contains Confidential information.

Sincerely,  
 Your Name  
 (3)\_\_\_\_\_

Classified By: Your name, DoGW Analyst  
 Derived From: Training Documents dated May 9, 2012,  
 Subject: Classified Emails  
 Declassify On: 20250510  
 (4)\_\_\_\_\_

Where do the banner markings belong? Review each corresponding field from the email above and indicate *yes* or *no*.

(1) In the Subject Line (Field 1).

- Yes

- No

(2) Above Greeting in body of email (Field 2).

- Yes
- No

(3) Below signature block, above Classification Authority Block (Field 3).

- Yes
- No

(4) Below Classification Authority Block (Field 4).

- Yes
- No

## **Lesson Summary**

This lesson introduced you to special types of information that, when classified, require markings. This includes special types of materials, electronically transmitted messages, items on the web, and other media. All classified items in the electronic environment, whether they appear in messages or on the web, require all of the standard markings.

Special materials used in developing or transmitting classified information require modified versions of the standard markings. And other media items are limited by their contents and size as to their markings.

### **Messages:**

#### Emails

- Marked as finished documents, including all standard markings.
- Portions to be marked include Links, subject line, attachments, and all content

#### Chats and IMs

- Marked as finished documents when retained for later use including portion markings, banner markings, and Classification Authority Block

#### Chat Rooms

- Marked as finished documents, including all standard markings.

### **On the Web:**

#### Websites, blogs, wiki:

- Marked with all standard markings.
- Portions to be marked include Links, subject lines of posts or titles of website, attachments, and all content
- Banner markings appear at the top and bottom of each post, be it a single entry in a series or a single website.

#### URLs

- Portion marked according to the level of classification of the address's content, not the information to which it points.
- Marked so as not to render the string inoperable as a link.

**Working Paper**

- When marked as a finished document, all standard markings apply.
- When used for development of finished document, annotated as working papers, with the date of creation, and the highest level of classification at the top and bottom of the papers.

**Letter of Transmittal**

- When a letter of transmittal contains classified information, all standard markings apply.
- When a letter of transmittal does not contain classified information, it will contain a notice that it is unclassified when separated from its enclosures.

**Briefing Slides**

- Marked with all standard markings.
- Portions to be marked include Images, bullets, titles, and all content.
- Banner markings appear on top and bottom of each slide.
  - Title slide – Reflects highest overall classification in slide deck.
  - Interior slides – reflect either highest overall classification in slide deck or on individual slides.
  - Classification Authority Block appears on title slide or last slide.

**Images**

- Markings appear on the face of the image when possible.
- Include banner markings and Classification Authority Block

**Audio**

- An audible overall classification level appears at the beginning and end of the sound recording along with declassification instructions.

**Other Media**

Other media include:

- Blueprints, engineering drawings, charts, and maps
- Digital Video Discs (DVDs), videotapes, motion picture films, and web videos
- Microfilm, microfiche, and similar microform media.
- Removable electronic storage media



## **Marking Special Categories of Information**

### **Objective**

Special categories of information are categories of information that are so sensitive that they require special access and dissemination controls, beyond those for typical classified information. These special categories of information run the gamut from international to domestic, from special access programs within the Department of Defense or the DOD to the intelligence community, from information regarding nuclear devices to local law enforcement agency information.

Here is the lesson objective. Take a moment to review it:

- Identify common special categories of information and recognize their markings.

### **Marking Format**

The markings that apply to the special categories of information covered in this lesson often denote specific protection requirements, handling instructions, and dissemination controls. As you have learned, certain characters are used in markings to separate the various kinds of information protection requirements, and dissemination controls. Forward slashes and hyphens are used in markings to separate different items in the banner lines and portions. Double forward slashes separate both the classification level from the control markings, and the different level control markings from each other.

**TOP SECRET//SAR-RED WAGON//FGI**

Department of Good Works Washington, D.C.

April 13, 2035

Subject: (U) Marking Instructions

(C//FGI) This paragraph contains Confidential, foreign government information; therefore, it will be marked with the designation “C//FGI.”

(S) This paragraph contains Secret information; therefore, it will be marked with the designation “S.”

(TS//SAR) This paragraph contains Top Secret information that requires special access; therefore, it will be marked with the designation “TS//SAR.”

Classified By: D. Bottemly, DoGW Analyst

Reason: 1.4(a)

Downgrade To: Confidential on 20161115

Declassify On: 2052131 (per FSE dated 20050330)

**TOP SECRET//SAR-RED WAGON//FGI**

For example, in this document TOP SECRET is the classification level. It is separated from two different control markings, SAR and FGI, by double forward slashes. A single forward slash shall be used to separate multiple types within the same marking category. In this document SAR and FGI are different control markings that both apply to the information in the document. They are separated by a double forward slash. Hyphens without interjected spaces separate control systems from their sub-control requirements.

In this example, SAR is the control marking that appears on Special Access Required information. The specific name of the program, RED WAGON, also appears in the banner line. RED WAGON is separated from the marking SAR by a hyphen to indicate that it further defines the limits on access to information.

There is a specific syntax that defines the order in which markings must appear in U.S. classified information. For more information on the order of markings in U.S. classified information, see the Marking Structure for U.S. Documents job aid available through the course resources.

**Special Category Marking Format:**

// Separates classification, control, and dissemination control markings

/ Separates categories of control markings

- Separates a control marking from its even more specific sub-control

The syntax for marking special categories and other control markings:

CLASSIFICATION//SCI/SCI-SUBCONTROL//SAP// FGI//DISSEM/DISSEM//OTHER

## **International Information**

While the United States generates its own classified information, we also obtain information from international sources. Through agreements and treaties with foreign governments and international organizations, we share our classified resources.

Let's look at the two most common examples of international special categories you will see: foreign government information, or FGI, and information related to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, or NATO.

## **Foreign Government Information**

Foreign government information or FGI, is information a foreign government has provided to the U.S. with the expectation that the U.S. holders of the information will hold both the information itself, as well as its source, in confidence.

What does that mean? The U.S. has agreed to provide FGI with an equivalent U.S. level of protection as the originating country would provide for that information. Many foreign governments use the same levels of classification as the U.S.: Top Secret, Secret, and Confidential. Most foreign governments have a fourth level of classification the U.S. does not have: Restricted, which we treat as in confidence and mark "CONFIDENTIAL – Modified Handling".

## **FGI Markings**

When FGI is included in a U.S. controlled document, how is it marked? In the banner line, the overall classification level shown reflects the highest level of classification of all of the information, including the FGI. After the classification level, you will see two forward slashes and FGI, followed by the three-letter country code or four-letter international organization code. This document contains information from two countries—Germany and Great Britain.

**TOP SECRET//FGI DEU GBR**

(TS) This is the marking for a portion which is classified TOP SECRET. This portion shall contain only US classified information.

(//DEU S) This is the marking for a German SECRET portion within a US classified document. This portion shall contain only German SECRET FGI.

(//GBR U) This is the marking for a British UNCLASSIFIED portion within a US classified document. This portion shall contain only British UNCLASSIFIED FGI.

Classified By: J. Jones, Dir., Ofc of Good Works  
Derived From: Multiple Sources  
Declassify On: 20321215

**TOP SECRET//FGI DEU GBR**

The markings for these appear in alphabetical order. Portion markings in FGI reflect the country of origin of each portion and the originating country's classification designation for the information. Sometimes the identity of a specific government needs to be concealed. In these cases, you will see in the banner marking only FGI, with no country codes.

Portion markings will contain FGI and the appropriate classification level after the two slashes instead of a specific country code. In this example, if both Germany and Great Britain needed to conceal their identities, the banner line would look like this: TOP SECRET//FGI.

The portion markings would look like this.

- Banner: //FGI
- Portions: (//FGI S)

In the classification authority block, the Derived From line must identify U.S. as well as foreign sources.

**NATO Information**

NATO information, another category of international information, is information relating to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, or NATO. NATO is a political and military alliance among several member nations, and NATO information contains specific information relating to the treaty agreement. As a member of NATO, the U.S. has agreed to abide by NATO's requirements and markings for protecting NATO's information.

What are those protection requirements? NATO uses three levels of classification that the U.S. employs, a Top Secret, Secret, and Confidential level. COSMIC is the NATO designation for Top Secret. NATO information has two additional classification levels: Restricted and NATO Unclassified. Although the word “NATO” is used in the designations NATO Secret, Confidential, and Restricted, the word “NATO” is never used with NATO information classified at the Top Secret level.

### **Member Nations:**

NATO countries include Albania, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Montenegro, the Netherlands, North Macedonia, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Turkey, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

### **NATO Information Markings**

What do markings look like when a U.S. classified document contains NATO information? In the banner line, the overall classification level shown reflects the highest level of classification of all of the information, including the NATO Information. After the classification level, you will see two forward slashes and FGI NATO designating the presence of NATO information in the document or material.

The portions of the document that contain NATO information are marked with the NATO-specific portion markings. For example, this document contains NATO Secret level information.

**SECRET//FGI NATO**

**THIS DOCUMENT CONTAINS NATO-SECRET INFORMATION**

October 9, 2012

Subject: (U) Mixed NATO/U.S. Marking Instructions

(C) This paragraph contains Confidential information; therefore, it will be marked with the designation “C.”

(S) This paragraph contains Secret information; therefore, it will be marked with the designation “S.”

(//NS) This paragraph contains NATO Secret information; therefore, it will be marked with the designation “//NS.”

(C) This paragraph contains Confidential information; therefore, it will be marked with the designation “C.”

**SECRET//FGI NATO**

Finally, documents containing NATO information must be labeled to clearly identify the presence of NATO classified information and its level of classification within the U.S. document. Here are further examples of banner and portion markings for NATO information:

**NATO Banner Line**

//COSMIC TOP SECRET

COSMIC is applied to TOP SECRET material that belongs to NATO

**NATO Portion Marking**

(//CTS)

//COSMIC TOP SECRET BOHEMIA (//CTS-B)

BOHEMIA is used only with NATO TOP SECRET information that is SIGINT derived.

//NATO SECRET (//NS)

//NATO CONFIDENTIAL (//NC)

//NATO RESTRICTED (//NR)

//NATO UNCLASSIFIED (//NU)

//COSMIC TOP SECRET ATOMAL (//CTS-A)\*

// SECRET ATOMAL (//NSAT)\*

//CONFIDENTIAL ATOMAL (//NCA)\*

\*ATOMAL applies to U.S. Restricted Data or Formerly Restricted Data, or UK ATOMIC information, that has been officially released to NATO

*Note: Examples from DODM 5200.01, Volume 2, Enclosure 4, Figure 28*

**Marking Atomic Energy Information**

Atomic energy information is information regarding nuclear weapons and special nuclear materials. Only the Department of Energy, or DoE, may originally classify or declassify atomic energy information. The three most common types of atomic energy information are: Restricted Data, or RD, Formerly Restricted Data, or FRD, and Critical Nuclear Weapon Design Information, or CNWDI.

RD documents contain information about the design, manufacture, or use of nuclear weapons; the production of special nuclear material, or SNM; and the use of SNM for production of energy. FRD is information that was formerly RD and relates primarily to the military use of atomic weapons. CNWDI is a subset of RD. It is a DOD designation for Top Secret RD or Secret RD weapons data. CNWDI involves the theory of operation or the component design of thermonuclear or fission bombs, warheads, demolition munitions, or test devices.

While both RD and FRD contain the word “restricted” in their designations, these are still special categories of information and not to be confused with dissemination controls such as “limited distribution.” For more information on RD, FRD, and CNWDI, refer to the Nuclear Classification and Declassification information in 10 C.F.R. Part 1045, available through the Course Resources.

## RD Markings

What kinds of markings does RD carry? As with all classified information, the banner and portion markings on RD include the highest level of classification in the document or on the page. Banners in RD are also marked with the control marking RESTRICTED DATA. Portions that contain RD information are also marked. Portions are marked with the classification level followed by double forward slashes and RD inside the parentheses.

All documents containing RD information carry a warning notice on the face of the document.

*This document contains RESTRICTED DATA as defined in the Atomic Energy Act of 1954. Unauthorized disclosure is subject to administrative and criminal sanctions.*

RD is not subject to automatic declassification. Therefore, a declassification instruction is never annotated on RD documents, even if the document includes other classified information. If the document only contains RD, the “Declassify On:” line states “Not applicable” or may not be present. If the document contains both RD in addition to other classified information, the “Declassify On:” line states, “Not applicable to RD/FRD portions” and references declassification instructions for the other classified information.

## CNWDI Markings

What do markings on CNWDI look like? The marking rules for CNWDI are the same as RD, except CNWDI has an additional element. For CNWDI, a “-N” is appended to both the portion and banner markings. The “-N” identifies CNWDI as a sub-control of the Restricted Data control group.

CNWDI requires two warning notices. One warning is the one that applies to all RD information. The other is a warning notice specific to CNWDI. That notice reads, “Critical Nuclear Weapon Design Information DOD Directive 5210.2 applies.”

## FRD Markings

FRD also carries specific markings. FRD markings are similar to RD markings. After the level of classification in the banner line, the control marking FORMERLY RESTRICTED DATA appears. Portions that contain FRD information are marked with double forward slashes and FRD after the classification, inside the parentheses. All documents containing FRD must carry a specific warning notice on the face of the document. Like RD, FRD is not subject to automatic declassification. The “Declassify On:” line in a document containing FRD states “Not applicable” or it may be left off altogether.

**Marking SAP Information and SCI**

Two other special categories of information are Special Access Programs, or SAP, information, and Sensitive Compartmented Information, or SCI.

SAPs are DOD programs created for a specific class of classified information that require enhanced safeguarding and access protection beyond what is normally required for information at the same classification level. SAP information requires special access and is often protected with a nickname or code word.

Sensitive Compartmented Information, or SCI, is information that concerns or is derived from intelligence sources, methods, or analytical processes. SCI must be handled within formal access control systems established by the Director of National Intelligence.

**Special Access Program (SAP) Markings**

How is SAP information marked? SAP information contains all the standard markings such as banner markings, portion markings, and a classification authority block. SAP information is marked in accordance with the security classification guide developed for each program. In this example, the program nickname is Red Wagon.

**SECRET//SAR-RED WAGON//FGI**

Department of Good Works Washington, D.C.

April 13, 2030

Subject: (U) SAP Marking Instructions

(C//SAR-RW) This paragraph contains Confidential SAP information; therefore, it will be marked with the designation “C//SAR-RW.”

(S) This paragraph contains Secret information; therefore, it will be marked with the designation “S.”

(S//SAR-RW) This paragraph contains Secret SAP information; therefore, it will be marked with the designation “S//SAR-RW.”

Classified By: Moira James, DoGW Analyst

Reason: 1.4(a)

Declassify On: 20521231 (per FSE dated 20050330)

**SECRET//SAR-RED WAGON//FGI**

In the banner lines for SAP information, after the classification level you will see the control markings Special Access Required or its abbreviation, SAR. Following that control marking, you will see a marking that designates the specific SAP involved. This is a hyphen followed by the program’s nickname or code word.



Portions containing SAP information are marked with the level of classification, and SAR, followed by a hyphen and the program identifier. For example, this line includes Confidential information from the Red Wagon SAP.

DOD SAP information is exempt from automatic declassification at 25 years and is reviewed for declassification 50 years after the date of original classification. Information shall be reviewed for declassification prior to December 31 of the year that is 50 years from the date of origin of the records.

For more information, see DODM 5205.07, Vol. 4, SAP Security Manual: Marking.

## **Sensitive Compartmented Information (SCI) Markings**

What do markings on SCI look like? Like standard classified information, SCI carries banner markings, portion markings, and a classification authority block. Because it is so sensitive, SCI is protected under some specific control systems. Here are some examples.

Examples of SCI control systems:

- HCS
- COMINT (SI)
- TALENT KEYHOLE (TK)

You can recognize SCI information because the portion and banner markings identify the control system that the information is using. Some SCI information may be exempt from automatic declassification within 50 years.

### **Review Activity 1**

You have been given a Secret document containing information from Great Britain and another country that prefers to remain anonymous. Which of the following would be the correct banner markings you would expect to see? Check your answer in the Answer Key at the end of this Student Guide.

- SECRET//GBR
- SECRET//DEU GBR
- //NATO SECRET
- SECRET//FGI GBR

### **Review Activity 2**

Another document you are working with contains this banner marking: SECRET//FGI NATO and the label CONTAINS NATO CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION. Which of the portion markings below must you see? Check your answer in the Answer Key at the end of this Student Guide.

- //NR
- S//DEU
- //NC

- //CTSA

### **Review Activity 3**

You are working with Critical Nuclear Weapon Design Information. Which notice(s) will appear on the front of the information? Check your answer in the Answer Key at the end of this Student Guide.

- **RESTRICTED DATA.** This document contains RESTRICTED DATA as defined in the Atomic Energy Act of 1954. Unauthorized disclosure subject to administrative and criminal sanctions.
- **FORMERLY RESTRICTED DATA.** Unauthorized disclosure subject to administrative and criminal sanctions. Handle as RESTRICTED DATA in foreign dissemination. Section 144b, Atomic Energy Act of 1954.
- **Critical Nuclear Weapon Design Information DOD Directive 5210.2 applies.**

### **Review Activity 4**

The following portion marking appears on a document you are working with: (S//SAR-TG). What does the –TG imply? Check your answer in the Answer Key at the end of this Student Guide.

- TG is a dissemination control.
- TG is a control system for SCI.
- TG is the nickname or code word of a SAP.
- TG is a country code.

**Lesson Summary**

This lesson introduced you to special categories of information including the definition and markings of: FGI, NATO, RD, CNWDI, FRD, SAP, SCI, and CUI.

**Special categories of information require their own markings.**

**Foreign Government Information (FGI)**

- Sensitive information foreign governments share with the U.S.
- U.S. must afford FGI equivalent protection as originating country.
- Generally, uses equivalent classification levels as U.S.; some countries have additional level of Restricted.

**FGI Markings**

- Banner markings contain highest level of classification, FGI, and country code: SECRET//FGI GBR
- Portion markings contain country code and classification level: (//GBR S)
- Classification authority block lists all U.S. and foreign sources.
- To protect country identity, do not use country codes in banner: //FGI, or portion: (//FGI S)

**North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)**

- A political and military alliance of member nations
- Has its own markings for protection of NATO information.
- Uses equivalent classification levels as U.S., with addition of Restricted and NATO unclassified.

**NATO Markings**

- Banner markings contain highest level of classification and FGI NATO: SECRET//FGI NATO
- Portion markings contain NATO classification level: (//NS)
- Document must include statement warning of the presence of NATO information

**Restricted Data (RD)**

- Information about:
  - the design, manufacture, or use of nuclear weapons
  - the production of special nuclear material, or SNM
  - the use of SNM for production of energy

**RD Markings**

- Banner markings contain highest level of classification and Restricted Data: SECRET//RESTRICTED DATA
- Portion markings contain classification level and RD: (S//RD)
- Classification authority block does not contain declassification instruction
- Document must carry RD warning notice

**Critical Nuclear Weapon Design Information (CNWDI)**

- A DOD designation for Top Secret RD or Secret RD weapons data
- Involves the theory of operation or the component design of thermonuclear or fission bombs,

warheads, demolition munitions, or test devices.

### **CNWDI Markings**

- Banner markings contain highest level of classification and CNWDI marking: SECRET//RESTRICTED DATA-N
- Portion markings contain classification level and CNWDI marking: (S//RD-N)
- Classification authority block does not contain declassification instruction.
- Document must carry RD warning notice and CNWDI warning notice.

### **Special Access Programs (SAP)**

- DOD classified programs with enhanced safeguarding and access requirements.

### **SAP information**

- Information concerning one of these programs.
- Often protected with a nickname or code word
- Exempt from automatic declassification at 25 years; reviewed at 50 years.

### **SAP Markings**

- Banner markings contain highest level of classification, Special Access Required or SAR, and SAP nickname or abbreviation (SECRET//SAR-RED WAGON)
- Portion markings contain classification level, SAR, and nickname abbreviation: (S//SAR-RW)

### **Special Compartmented Information (SCI)**

- Information that concerns or is derived from intelligence sources, methods, or analytical processes
- Must be handled within formal access control systems established by the Director of National Intelligence
- Control systems include:
  - HCS
  - KLONDIKE
  - COMINT (SI)
  - TALENT KEYHOLE (TK)
- May be exempt from automatic declassification.

### **SCI Markings**

- Banner markings contain highest level of classification and identify applicable SCI control systems (SECRET//SI-TK)
- Portion markings contain classification level and identify applicable control system (S//TK)

### **Formerly Restricted Data (FRD)**

- Information that was formerly RD
- Relates primarily to the military use of atomic weapons.

### **FRD Markings**

- Banner markings contain highest level of classification and Formerly Restricted Data: SECRET//FORMERLY RESTRICTED DATA
- Portion markings contain classification level and RD: (S//FRD)

- Classification authority block does not contain declassification instruction.
- Document must carry FRD warning notice.

## **Course Conclusion**

### **Scenario**

It looks like you have one more email.

Congrats on a successful first day!

I know Alex and I have thrown a lot at you, but you hung in there. There is a lot to consider when marking classified information but once you've mastered the basics, much of the marking criteria become easier to recognize and easier to decipher.

You've worked hard today. Rest up, and we'll see you tomorrow.

Thanks,  
Vicki

### **Summary**

In this course, you have learned about the general requirements for marking classified information, including all of the standard markings, as well as who can classify information. You have a further understanding of the considerations that go into marking special types of materials and media, as well as the special categories of classified information.

### **Lesson Review**

- Course Overview
- General Marking Requirements
- Marking Special Types of Information and Materials
- Special Categories
- Course Conclusion

### **Conclusion**

Congratulations. You have completed the Marking Special Categories of Classified Information course. You should now be able to perform all of the listed activities:

- Identify federal and DOD policies related to marking classified documents.
- Identify marking requirements for special types of documents and materials, such as electronically transmitted messages, websites, and letters of transmittal.
- Identify marking requirements for special categories of information from sources external to the

## Department of Defense

To receive course credit, you **MUST** take the Marking Special Categories of Classified Information examination. Please use the STEPP system from the Center for Development of Security Excellence to register for the online exam.

## Answer Key

### General Marking Requirements

#### Review Activity 1

Based on the portion markings, what is the correct level of classification to indicate in the banner line of a document that contains the below information?

(U) This paragraph contains Unclassified information; therefore, it will be marked with the designation “U.”

(S) This paragraph contains Secret information; therefore, it will be marked with the designation “S.”

(C) This paragraph contains Confidential information; therefore, it will be marked with the designation “C.”

- UNCLASSIFIED
- CONFIDENTIAL
- **SECRET**
- TOP SECRET

#### Review Activity 2

Select which type of marking each banner contains.

Banner: SECRET//REL TO

- Control Markings
- **Dissemination Control Markings**
- Both

TOP SECRET//RD//NOFORN

- Control Markings
- Dissemination Control Markings
- **Both**

TOP SECRET//FGI

- **Control Markings**
- Dissemination Control Markings
- Both

### Review Activity 3

**TOP SECRET**

April 10, 2035

Subject: (U) Marking Instructions

(U) This paragraph contains Unclassified information; therefore, it will be marked with the designation “U.”

(TS) This paragraph contains Top Secret information; therefore, it will be marked with the designation “TS.”

Classified By: D. Bottemly, DoGW Analyst

Reason: 1.4(a)

Downgrade To: Confidential on 20390410

Declassify On: 20440515

**TOP SECRET**

How many years will this document be classified as Top Secret?

- 2 years
- **4 years**
- 9 years
- 10 years

### Review Activity 4

Which document is the original source for the categories of information that are eligible for classification?

- **Executive Order 13526**
- DODM 5200.01, Vol. 2, Marking of Information
- ISOO Classified National Security Information; Final Rule
- ISOO Marking Classified National Security Information Booklet

## Review Activity 5

An OCA is marking an originally classified document. Determine the correct portion and banner markings.

(1)\_\_\_\_\_

Department of Good Works Washington, D.C.

14 September 2030

Subject: (2)\_\_\_\_\_ Subject is Unclassified

(3)\_\_\_\_\_ This paragraph contains Unclassified information.

(4)\_\_\_\_\_ This paragraph contains Confidential information.

(5)\_\_\_\_\_ This paragraph contains Secret information.

The banner line at the top center of the document (Field 1) should be marked with the following:

- UNCLASSIFIED
- CONFIDENTIAL
- **SECRET**
- TOP SECRET

The Subject line (Field 2) should be marked with the following:

- (U)
- (C)
- (S)
- (TS)

The first paragraph (Field 3) should be marked with the following:

- (U)
- (C)
- (S)
- (TS)

The second paragraph (Field 4) should be marked with the following:

- (U)
- (C)
- (S)
- (TS)



The third paragraph (Field 5) should be marked with the following:

- (U)
- (C)
- (S)
- (TS)

### Review Activity 6

An OCA is marking an originally classified document. Determine the correct markings for each line of the classification authority block.

(1)\_\_\_L. Woodsman, DoGW Analyst

(2)\_\_\_1.4(e)

(3)\_\_\_20170211

SECRET

The first line of the Classification Authority Block (Field 1) should be marked with the following:

- UNCLASSIFIED
- **Classified By:**
- Declassify On:
- DoGW Analyst

The second line of the Classification Authority Block (Field 2) should be marked with the following:

- **Reason:**
- Declassify On:
- Derived From:
- Military Plans

The third line of the Classification Authority Block (Field 3) should be marked with the following:

- SECRET
- FOUO
- **Declassify On:**
- L. Woodsman

## Marking Special Types of Information and Materials

### Review Activity 1

Consider which markings apply to each special type of information.

Special Type: Unfinished working paper

- **Banner Markings**
- Portion Markings
- Classification Authority Block
- **Other Required Markings**

Special Type: Unclassified letter of transmittal

- **Banner Markings**
- Portion Markings
- Classification Authority Block
- **Other Required Markings**

Special Type: Email containing Secret information

- **Banner Markings**
- **Portion Markings**
- **Classification Authority Block**
- Other Required Markings

Special Type: URL

- Banner Markings
- **Portion Markings**
- Classification Authority Block
- Other Required Markings

### Review Activity 2

You are taking notes during a classified meeting. Your notes include information that is classified. What do you have to do after the meeting if you do not immediately destroy your notes?

- Mark the notes as a finished document, with banner and portion markings and a classification authority block and annotate them as working papers.
- **Mark the highest level of classification at the top and bottom, date the notes, and annotate them as working papers.**
- Mark the notes with the date and annotate them as working papers.
- Do nothing. These are just notes for your use.

## Review Activity 3

FROM: (1)\_\_\_\_Your email address

TO: New Employee

CC:

SUBJECT: (2),Subject of the email

(3)\_\_\_\_Hi Vicki,

(U) This is my response to your email from this morning.

(4)\_\_\_\_Thanks for working with me today.

(C) This line contains Confidential information.

(5)\_\_\_\_This line also contains Confidential information.

(6)\_\_\_\_Sincerely,  
Your Name

(7)\_\_\_\_Classified By: Your name, DoGW Analyst  
Derived From: Training Documents dated May 9, 2012, Subject: Classified Emails  
Declassify On: 20250510

Vickie asked you to respond to her sample classified email. In your response, which other portions of the email must also be portion marked?

- (A) Your email address
- **(B) Subject of the email**
- (C) “Hi Vicki,”
- **(D) “Thanks for working with me today.”**
- **(E) “This line also contains Confidential information.”**
- (F) “Sincerely, Your Name”
- (G) Classification Authority Block

**Review Activity 4**

FROM: Your email address  
 TO: New Employee  
 CC:  
 SUBJECT: (1)\_\_\_\_ Subject of the email  
 (2)\_\_\_\_

Hi Vicki,

(U) This is my response to your email from this morning.

Thanks for working with me today.

(C) This line contains Confidential information.

This line also contains Confidential information.

Sincerely,  
 Your Name  
 (3)\_\_\_\_\_

Classified By: Your name, DoGW Analyst  
 Derived From: Training Documents dated May 9, 2012  
 Subject: Classified Emails  
 Declassify On: 20250510  
 (4)\_\_\_\_\_

Where do the banner markings belong? Review each corresponding field from the email above and indicate *yes* or *no*.

1. In the Subject Line (Field 1).
  - Yes
  - No
2. Above Greeting in body of email (Field 2).
  - Yes
  - No
3. Below signature block, above Classification Authority Block (Field 3).
  - Yes
  - No
4. Below Classification Authority Block (Field 4).
  - Yes

- No

## Marking Special Categories of Information

### Review Activity 1

You have been given a Secret document containing information from Great Britain and another country that prefers to remain anonymous. Which of the following would be the correct banner markings you would expect to see?

- SECRET//GBR
- SECRET//DEU GBR
- //NATO SECRET
- **SECRET//FGI GBR**

### Review Activity 2

Another document you are working with contains this banner marking:

SECRET//FGI NATO and the label CONTAINS NATO CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION.

Which of the portion markings below must you see?

- //NR
- S//DEU
- //NC
- //CTSA

### Review Activity 3

You are working with Critical Nuclear Weapon Design Information. Which notice(s) will appear on the front of the information?

- **RESTRICTED DATA. This document contains RESTRICTED DATA as defined in the Atomic Energy Act of 1954. Unauthorized disclosure subject to administrative and criminal sanctions.**
- FORMERLY RESTRICTED DATA. Unauthorized disclosure subject to administrative and criminal sanctions. Handle as RESTRICTED DATA in foreign dissemination. Section 144b, Atomic Energy Act of 1954.
- **Critical Nuclear Weapon Design Information DOD Directive 5210.2 applies.**

### Review Activity 4

The following portion marking appears on a document you are working with: (S//SAR-TG) What does the –TG imply?

- TG is a dissemination control.
- TG is a control system for SCI.
- **TG is the nickname or code word of a SAP.**
- TG is a country code.

