

Student Guide

Critical Program Information (CPI) Short

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Critical Program Information (CPI)

Introduction

The United States is the undisputed world leader in military technology. This is in large part due to our continuous research and development efforts to modernize weapons systems with advanced technology. But think about what could happen. Imagine that a U.S. military aircraft makes an unauthorized, emergency landing in a foreign country and has advanced technology on board. If the plane falls into foreign government possession, it could put critical, sensitive military capabilities, and U.S. strategic and/or tactical advantage, at risk. In fact, it has happened before.

Consider your program. Does it have Critical Program Information, or CPI? What would the consequences be if this CPI were compromised? How do you currently identify CPI and protect it from compromise?

This short will review the definition and types of Critical Program Information, as well as the steps required for CPI identification and protection.

What is CPI?

According to DoDI 5200.39, Critical Program Information, or CPI, is defined as U.S. capability elements that contribute to U.S. warfighters' technical advantage, and that, if compromised, could undermine U.S. military preeminence. CPI provides mission-essential capabilities, and can include, but is not limited to, software algorithms, specific hardware residing on the system, system training equipment, or maintenance support equipment.

There are two types of CPI: organic CPI and inherited CPI.

Organic CPI is unique, original CPI that is owned and generated by a Research Development Test & Evaluation, or RDT&E, program.

Inherited CPI is CPI that is owned and generated by one RDT&E program, subsystem, or project, but that is incorporated into or used by another.

If your program has approved CPI, the Program Manager will document it in the Program Protection Plan, or PPP.

Critical Program Information (CPI)

U.S. capability elements that contribute to the warfighters' technical advantage, which if compromised, undermines U.S. military preeminence.

U.S. capability elements may include, but are not limited to software algorithms and specific hardware residing on the system, its training equipment, or maintenance support equipment.

The CPI Identification and Protection Process

As you just saw, CPI refers to U.S. capability elements that must be protected. To do so, program managers will begin the process of CPI identification and protection planning early in the acquisition life cycle, and will also reassess CPI protection throughout the life of the project.

The program manager will carry out several steps to implement CPI protection. As security personnel responsible for protecting CPI, you should be aware of these steps so you can provide appropriate support.

First, with the support of various specialists and experts, program managers identify CPI. Next they select and implement appropriate CPI protection measures, and document it in their PPP, and finally, they monitor CPI.

Identify CPI

Purpose: Identify CPI

Initiate:

- Early in the acquisition life cycle (as soon as resources are expended)
- When a significant change or event occurs

The formal process begins prior to an acquisition milestone. A Program Protection Plan (PPP) must be completed by Milestone A and must include a Threat Assessment.

Output: An approved list of CPI

Select/Implement CPI Protection

Purpose: Determine and apply appropriate CPI protection measures

Initiate:

- After CPI has been identified
- When a significant change or event occurs

The formal process is executed prior to an acquisition milestone, contract solicitation, or systems engineering technical review.

Output: Protection measures that have been determined, applied, and are actively protecting CPI

Monitor CPI

Purpose: Determine if/when CPI identification and the selection/implementation of protection measures need to be reexamined

Initiate: When CPI has been informally and formally identified and protection measures have been implemented

Output: A determination that one or more of the CPI analysis processes require reexamination

For example, a program should monitor approved CPI to determine currency and adequacy when:

1. *Significant changes are made to the acquisition and/or contracting strategy*
2. *Significant changes are made to the system's design*
3. *A CPI compromise occurs*
4. *New CPI are identified; and/or*
5. *The CPI has become obsolete or no longer provides sufficient warfighter technical advantage to warrant AT or other protection for CPI*

Horizontal Protection

Sometimes different programs have the same or similar CPI technologies. Horizontal identification and protection ensures that these programs apply a similar level of protection to mitigate the risk of loss of their CPI. It also ensures that these similar protection efforts are aligned to maximize the CPI protection provided, and that the efforts of one program are not putting the same or similar CPI of other programs at risk of being lost.

CPI Policies

If you would like to learn more about CPI, see DoDI 5000.02, Operation of the Defense Acquisition System and DoDI 5200.39, CPI Identification and Protection within RDT&E.

DoDI 5000.02 establishes acquisition policy for programs, including the requirement for the identification and protection of CPI.

DoDI 5200.39 establishes policy and assigns responsibilities for the identification and protection of CPI.

Review Activity

Determine whether each statement is true or false. Check your answer in the Answer Key at the end of this Student Guide.

CPI refers to U.S. capability elements that contribute to U.S. warfighters' technical advantage and that, if compromised, could undermine U.S. military preeminence.

- True

- False

Only organic CPI – original CPI that is owned and generated within a program – requires protection.

- True
- False

Once CPI has been identified, the CPI for the program is fixed and cannot be modified.

- True
- False

Horizontal identification and protection ensures that programs with the same or similar CPI apply similar protection measures.

- True
- False

Summary

Congratulations! You have completed the CPI Short. You should now be aware of the importance of protecting CPI, and the basic steps required for CPI protection.

Answer Key

CPI refers to U.S. capability elements that contribute to U.S. warfighters' technical advantage and that, if compromised, could undermine U.S. military preeminence.

- True (correct)
- False

Feedback: *CPI refers to U.S. capability elements that contribute to U.S. warfighters' technical advantage and that, if compromised, could undermine U.S. military preeminence.*

Only organic CPI – original CPI that is owned and generated within a program – requires protection.

- True
- False (correct)

Feedback: *Organic CPI requires protection, but so does inherited CPI – CPI that is owned and generated by one program but incorporated into/used by another.*

Once CPI has been identified, the CPI for the program is fixed and cannot be modified.

- True
- False (correct)

Feedback: *CPI identification takes place early in a program, but must also take place when a significant change or event occurs, or when monitoring indicates the potential need to update the list of CPI.*

Horizontal identification and protection ensures that programs with the same or similar CPI apply similar protection measures.

- True (correct)
- False

Feedback: *Horizontal identification and protection ensures that programs with the same or similar CPI apply similar protection measures.*