

Student Guide

Classified Meetings and Conferences Short

Introduction

Welcome to the Classified Meetings and Conferences Short! This Short will help you determine what a classified meeting or conference is and what procedures you need to follow to maintain the security of that meeting or conference and the information presented.

Meetings and Conferences that involve classified information present special vulnerabilities to unauthorized disclosure.

Take a moment to review the learning objective.

This Short should take about 15 minutes to complete.

Learning Objective:

- Identify the procedures to follow prior to conducting a classified meeting or conference, the requirements for conducting a classified meeting or conference, and the related security and potential risks.

What is a Classified Meeting or Conference?

Classified meetings or conferences as defined by DOD Manual 5200.01, Volume 3, Enclosure 3, are those types of meetings that are conducted primarily at workshops and conferences, but it could also be at symposiums, seminars, exhibits, training courses, conventions, and other such gatherings where classified information is disseminated.

We discussed what is a classified meeting or conference, but it is just as important to recognize what is not.

“Classified meeting” does not refer to:

- In-house or routine gatherings of U.S Government officials
- Operational meetings conducted in combat situations
- Classes that are conducted by DOD schools
- Gatherings of DOD Component personnel and foreign government representatives, or
- Gatherings for U.S. or foreign contractor personnel matters that are actually related to specific government contracts, programs, or projects

Preparing for a Classified Meeting or Conference

A classified meeting or conference must be sponsored by a DOD Component. U.S. Government contractor personnel may provide administrative support and assistance, but the DOD

Component has the overall responsibility for all security requirements. The DOD Component requesting the meeting will adhere to an approval process outlining specific requirements in order to mitigate risks.

Consider some of these questions when planning a classified meeting.

- Why are we holding the meeting?
- Where will the meeting be held?
- Who will be attending the meeting?
- What classified information will be disseminated during the meeting, and how will it be disseminated?
- When the meeting will be conducted?
- How will that information be protected?

Why Hold the Meeting?

The DOD Component must justify that the meeting or conference serves a specified U.S. Government purpose, and the use of any other approved method or channels for disseminating classified information or material is insufficient or impractical.

Before a classified meeting can take place, the DOD Component has the overall responsibility to appoint a security manager who will be responsible for the development and implementation of minimum security requirements to ensure the protection of classified information.

Take note of the phrase “minimum security requirements.” Regulatory guidance outlines what the minimum requirements are. Agencies may have to implement additional security measures according to their policy or their DOD senior agency official.

Where will the meeting be held?

The meeting, conference, or classified session must take place at an appropriately cleared U.S. Government facility or a U.S. contractor facility that has an appropriate facility clearance.

An exception may be requested to permit use of facilities other than the appropriately cleared U.S. Government or U.S. contractor facilities. The request for exception must be submitted to the DOD Component Head or senior agency official in accordance with Component procedures. The request must include a security plan that describes how the requirements of DODM 5200.01, Volume 3, shall be met. The plan must address the access, safeguarding, and physical control of the classified information.

Classified meetings or conferences that are conducted outside of the U.S., such as at foreign installations or foreign contractor sites, are often subject to the rules and regulations of the host country, thus presenting additional security risks. Prior to approval of the conduct of these meetings, the DOD Component shall obtain assurances, in writing, that the responsible foreign government will agree to use security measures and controls that are at least as stringent as those required by DODM 5200.01, Volume 3.

Who will attend the meeting?

Classified sessions will be segregated from unclassified sessions. Access is limited to only those persons who possess an appropriate security clearance and need-to-know.

Any participation by foreign nationals or foreign representatives should go through the foreign disclosure office. The office must assure, in writing, that the information to be presented has been approved for disclosure to the represented foreign countries.

The conference announcement should be kept unclassified and limited to general descriptions of topics, speakers, and requirements for security, logistics, and administration.

What classified information will be disseminated and in what form?

Any information system used during the event that supports the creation or presentation of classified information shall meet all applicable requirements for processing classified information, including, as appropriate, considerations of Technical Surveillance Countermeasures (TSCM).

Unclassified laptop computers and any handheld technology, such as personal electronic devices (PEDs), shall not be used for note-taking during classified sessions.

Recording or taking notes, including notes on classified electronic devices, during classified sessions shall be permitted only when it is determined that such action is necessary to fulfill the U.S. Government purpose for the meeting.

How will classified information be protected?

To protect the classified information being disseminated, the security manager is responsible for ensuring that all attendees are briefed on safeguarding procedures. This should occur throughout the sessions over the course of the entire meeting or conference—typically before, during, and after.

In addition, the security manager controls entry so that only authorized personnel are allowed access to the area. Entrance is denied to all unauthorized individuals.

The perimeter must also be controlled to ensure unauthorized personnel cannot overhear classified discussions or introduce devices that would compromise classified information.

When classified presentations or discussions are not in session, the security manager must provide escorts for uncleared personnel providing services to the meeting or conference, such as cleaning staff or food vendors.

At the conclusion of the meeting or conference or at the end of each day of a multi-day event, the security manager will conduct an inspection to ensure that all classified materials have been properly stored. Additionally, check to ensure that no Common Access Cards (CACs) or other personal items have been left behind; all Information technology (IT) devices are turned off; and that the area is secured.

How will classified information be protected? (continued)

When facilities other than appropriately cleared U.S. Government or contractor facilities are utilized for a classified meeting or conference, additional considerations should be implemented:

- The meeting shall not be open to the public.
- Identification card check should be 100 percent.
- Classified sessions should be held away from public areas.
- Authorized means to secure information must be provided.
- Antiterrorism standards specified by DOD Instruction O-2000.16, which is designated as CUI, must be met.
- TSCM requirements and appropriate protection must be met when the use of classified computers and other electronic devices are permitted.

Conducting a Classified Meeting or Conference

Any meeting where classified information is disseminated will inherently pose risks. Some of those risks can be foreseen and some cannot. It is critical to be prepared to address those risks.

During a classified meeting or conference, focusing on executing the security plan in the areas of physical, personnel, and information security will help you be more prepared.

Physical Security

Ensure your staff is monitoring all exits during the meeting or conference as well as securing areas during the event and after-hours.

Personnel Security

Verify clearance level and need-to-know access for all meeting participants.

Information Security

- Ensure a General Services Administration (GSA)-approved security container is in place for safeguarding classified information.
- Classified information is protected from inadvertent disclosure by the use of cover sheets and media labels.
- Staff is conducting security oversight and following end-of-the-day check procedures.
- Provide continuous security education to presenters and attendees on handling classified information throughout the meeting or conference.

Security and Potential Risks

As a security official in charge of a classified meeting or conference, you must be mindful of attempts to gain information through unauthorized access or unauthorized disclosure.

There could be potential elicitation of attendees in the form of outsiders trying to find out what is going on through casual conversation, or an unauthorized individual with a listening device or someone milling about at the end of the meeting looking for notes or handouts that have been left behind.

Employing countermeasures, such as verifying clearance and need-to-know, patrolling internal and external perimeters, using secure information systems, and restricting note-taking/electronic recording reduces the risk of unauthorized access and unauthorized disclosure.

Knowledge Checks

Question 1

Read the question below and select the best response.

Which of these is considered a classified meeting?

- Classes conducted by DOD schools
- Meeting of DOD Component personnel
- Operational meeting held in a combat situation
- Training course that includes classified information

Question 2

Read the question below and select the best response.

True or False: The DOD Component requesting the meeting must follow an approved process outlined with specific requirements including determining where the meeting will be held and who will attend.

- True
- False

Question 3

Read the question below and select the best response.

Which of the following is NOT a focus of the security plan for a classified meeting or conference?

- Information security
- Physical security
- Transportation security
- Personnel security

Question 4

Read the question below and select all that apply.

Potential risks at a classified meeting or conference include:

- Meeting sponsor is unable to attend
- Elicitation of individuals attending the meeting
- Meeting does not serve a specified U.S. Government purpose
- Information presented at the meeting is obtained through a listening device

Summary

You should now be familiar with Classified Meetings and Conferences.

You can identify the procedures required prior to a classified meeting or conference, requirements for conducting a classified meeting or conference, as well as security and potential risks associated with classified meetings or conferences.

For more information on classified meetings or conferences, please visit the Course Resources.

Conclusion

You have completed the Classified Meetings and Conferences Short.

Select Exit to leave the Short.

Knowledge Check Answers

Question 1

Read the question below and select the best response.

Which of these is considered a classified meeting?

- Classes conducted by DOD schools
- Meeting of DOD Component personnel
- Operational meeting held in a combat situation
- Training course that includes classified information**

Feedback: A training course that includes classified information is considered a classified meeting.

Question 2

Read the question below and select the best response.

True or False: The DOD Component requesting the meeting must follow an approved process outlined with specific requirements including determining where the meeting will be held and who will attend.

- True**
- False

Feedback: The DOD Component requesting the meeting must follow an approved process outlined with specific requirements including determining where the meeting will be held and who will attend.

Question 3

Read the question below and select the best response.

Which of the following is NOT a focus of the security plan for a classified meeting or conference?

- Information security
- Physical security
- Transportation security**
- Personnel security

Feedback: Transportation security is **NOT** a focus of the security plan for a classified meeting or conference.

Question 4

Read the question below and select all that apply.

Potential risks at a classified meeting or conference include:

- Meeting sponsor is unable to attend
- **Elicitation of individuals attending the meeting**
- Meeting does not serve a specified U.S. Government purpose
- **Information presented at the meeting is obtained through a listening device**

Feedback: Elicitation from individuals and information obtained through a listening device are potential risks at a classified meeting or conference.