Basic Marking Requirements for E-Mails

32 CFR Part 2001, "Classified National Security Information"

§2001.23(a), Classification marking in the electronic environment, states:

General. Classified national security information in the electronic environment shall be:

(1) Subject to all requirements of the Order.
(2) Marked with proper classification markings to the extend that such marking is practical, including portion marking, overall classification, "Classified by," "Derived from," "Reason" for classification (originally classified information only), and "Declassify On."

§2001.23(b), Marking on classified e-mail messages, states:

(1) E-mail transmitted on or prepared for transmission on classified systems or networks shall be configured to display the overall classification at the top and bottom of the body of each message. The overall classification marking string for the e-mail shall reflect the classification of the header and body of the message. This includes the subject line, the text of the e-mail, a classified signature block , attachments, included messages, and any other information conveyed in the body of the e-mail.
(2) Classified e-mail shall be portion marked. Each portion shall be marked to reflect the highest level of information contained in that portion.
(3) A classified signature block shall be marked to reflect the highest classification level markings of the information contained in the signature block itself. (NOTE: most signature blocks are unclassified.)
(4) Subject lines shall be portion marked to reflect the sensitivity of the information in the subject line itself and shall not reflect any classification markings for the e-mail content or attachments. Subject lines and titles shall be portion marked before the subject or title.
(5) For a classified e-mail, the classification authority block shall be placed after the signature block, but before the overall classification marking string at the end of the e-mail.
(6) When forwarding or replying to an e-mail, individuals shall ensure that, in addition to the markings required for the content of the reply or forward e-mail itself, the markings shall reflect the overall classification and declassification instructions for the entire string of e-mails and attachments. This will include any newly drafted material, material received from previous senders, and any attachments.

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These are the __basic__ marking requirements for classified e-mails.

Step 1 – Portion Marking
Step 2 – Overall Classification
Step 3 – Classification Authority Block

Example 1

Example 2

To: Joe Smith
From: Carla Brown
Date: January 2, 2015
Subject: (U) How to Mark Classified E-Mails

SECRET

1. (U) This is an example of how to mark a classified e-mail.

2. (S) All e-mail transmitted or prepared for transmission on classified systems shall display the overall classification at the top and bottom of the body of each message. The overall classification shall reflect the classification of the entire e-mail, to include the subject line, the text, and attachments.

3. (C) Classified e-mails shall be portion marked to reflect the highest level of information contained in that portion.

4. (S) Subject lines shall be portion marked to reflect the sensitivity of the information in the subject line itself and shall not reflect any classification of the e-mail contents or attachments.
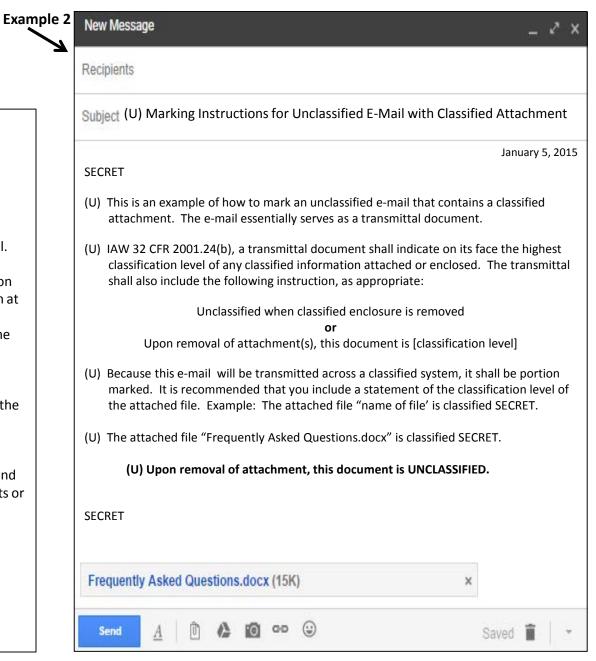
Classified by: Carla Brown, Program Analyst
Derived from: DPW SCG, "How to Mark Classified Documents," dated December 11, 2013
Declassify on: January 2, 2025

SECRET

New Message — ⤢ ✕

Recipients

Subject (U) Marking Instructions for Unclassified E-Mail with Classified Attachment

January 5, 2015

SECRET

(U) This is an example of how to mark an unclassified e-mail that contains a classified attachment. The e-mail essentially serves as a transmittal document.

(U) IAW 32 CFR 2001.24(b), a transmittal document shall indicate on its face the highest classification level of any classified information attached or enclosed. The transmittal shall also include the following instruction, as appropriate:

Unclassified when classified enclosure is removed
or
Upon removal of attachment(s), this document is [classification level]

(U) Because this e-mail will be transmitted across a classified system, it shall be portion marked. It is recommended that you include a statement of the classification level of the attached file. Example: The attached file "name of file' is classified SECRET.

(U) The attached file "Frequently Asked Questions.docx" is classified SECRET.

(U) Upon removal of attachment, this document is UNCLASSIFIED.

SECRET

Frequently Asked Questions.docx (15K)   ✕

Send   A   🗋 ⬙ 📷 ∞ ☺   Saved 🗑 ▾

Classification markings are for training use only!