

Appendix 2. Minimum protections and handling of TOP SECRET information¹

Business Impact Levels (BIL) 5	TOP SECRET—exceptionally grave damage to the national interest, organisations or individuals
Protective marking	<p>Apply text-based protective marking TOP SECRET to documents (including emails). It is recommended that text markings be in capitals, bold text, large fonts and distinctive colours (red preferred) and located at the centre top and centre bottom of each page.</p> <p>If text-based markings cannot be used, use colour-based markings. For TOP SECRET a red colour is recommended. If text or colour-based protective markings cannot be used, apply the entity's marking scheme for such scenarios.</p> <p>If marking paragraphs, it is recommended that TOP SECRET is written in full or abbreviated to (TS) and placed either in brackets at the start or end of the paragraph or in the margin adjacent to the first letter of the paragraph.</p>
Access	<p>The need-to-know principle applies to all TOP SECRET information.</p> <p>Ongoing access to TOP SECRET information requires a Negative Vetting 2 security clearance or above.</p> <p>Any temporary access must only be provided to personnel with at least a Negative Vetting 1 security clearance and must be supervised.</p>
Use	<p>TOP SECRET information can only be used in Zones 3-5.</p> <p>Outside entity facilities (including at home)</p> <p>Do not use outside entity facilities (including at home).</p>
Storage	<p>Do not leave TOP SECRET information, or a mobile device that processes, stores or communicates TOP SECRET information, unattended. Store securely when unattended.</p> <p>When storing TOP SECRET information, or a mobile device that processes, stores or communicates TOP SECRET information:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. inside entity facilities: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Zone 5, store in Class B container ii. Zones 3-4, store in exceptional circumstances only for a maximum of 5 days, Zone 4 (in Class B container) or Zone 3 (in a Class A container). b. outside entity facilities: do not store TOP SECRET information, or a mobile device that processes, stores or communicates TOP SECRET information, outside entity facilities (including at home).
Carry	<p>When carrying physical TOP SECRET information always retain it in personal custody</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. inside entity facilities: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Zones 3-5, in an opaque envelope or folder that indicates classification ii. Zones 1-2, not recommended, if required, in an opaque envelope or folder that indicates classification and place in a security briefcase, pouch or satchel. b. outside entity facilities (including external meetings) and between entity facilities: not recommended, if required:

¹ Refer to the online version of the PSPF for most up to date minimum protections and handling guides. <https://www.protectivesecurity.gov.au/information/sensitive-classified-information/Pages/default.aspx>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. obtain written manager approval ii. place in tamper-evident packaging within a security briefcase, pouch or satchel. <p>Mobile devices that that process, store or communicate TOP SECRET information require explicit approval by the Australian Signals Directorate (ASD). When carrying an approved TOP SECRET mobile device always retain it in personal custody</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. inside entity facilities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Zones 3-5, carry in secured state; if in an unsecured state apply entity procedures ii. Zones 1-2, carry in a secured state; if in an unsecured state, place inside a security briefcase, pouch or satchel. b. outside entity facilities (including external meetings) and between entity facilities – not recommended, if required: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. obtain written manager approval ii. carry in a secured state; if in an unsecured state, place in tamper-evident packaging within a security briefcase, pouch or satchel.
Transfer	<p>When transferring physical TOP SECRET information</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. inside entity facilities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Zones 3-5, transfer by hand or entity safe hand and apply requirements for carrying; can be uncovered if in close proximity and the office environment presents low risk of unauthorised viewing ii. Zones 1-2, transfer by hand or entity safe hand and apply requirements for carrying with written manager approval. b. to another officer in a different facility <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. obtain written manager approval ii. apply requirements for carrying outside entity facilities (including using tamper evident packaging) iii. transfer by hand, entity safe hand, safe hand courier rated BIL 5, or DFAT courier. <p>Any transfer requires a receipt.</p>
Transmit	<p>When transmitting electronically, communicate information over TOP SECRET secure networks. Use ASD’s High Assurance Cryptographic Equipment to encrypt TOP SECRET information for any communication that is not over a TOP SECRET network.</p>
Official travel	<p>TOP SECRET information and mobile devices that process, store or communicate TOP SECRET information must not be stored or used outside appropriate entity facilities.</p> <p>Travel in Australia</p> <p>Travelling domestically with physical TOP SECRET information is not recommended, if required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. obtain written manager approval b. apply requirements for carrying outside entity facilities and any additional entity procedures c. for airline travel, retain as carry-on baggage and do not travel if the airline requires it to be checked at the gate. <p>Do not leave TOP SECRET information unattended. Do not store while travelling (eg in a hotel room). If storage required, store in an Australian entity facility.</p> <p>Travelling domestically with a mobile device that processes, stores or communicates TOP SECRET information is not recommended, consider alternative options to access information at destination. If required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. obtain written manager approval b. apply requirements for carrying outside entity facilities and any additional entity procedures

c. for airline travel, retain as carry-on baggage; if airline requires carry-on baggage to be checked at the gate, try to observe entering and exiting the cargo hold and reclaim as soon as possible.

Do not leave device unattended. **Do not** store device while travelling (eg in a hotel room). If storage required, store in an Australian entity facility.

Travel outside Australia

Do not travel overseas with TOP SECRET information or a mobile device that processes, stores or communicates TOP SECRET information, seek DFAT advice on options to access information or mobile devices at overseas destination.

If access to TOP SECRET information or mobile device provided at overseas destination:

- a. apply requirements for carrying outside entity facilities and any additional entity procedures
- b. retain in personal custody or store in an Australian entity facility.

Do not leave TOP SECRET information unattended. **Do not** store while travelling (eg in a hotel room). If storage required, store in an Australian entity facility.

Disposal

Dispose of TOP SECRET information using a Class A shredder – supervise and document destruction