

## **5 FAH-1 H-900 ELECTRONIC MESSAGES**

### **5 FAH-1 H-910 CLASSIFYING E-MAILS**

*(CT:CH-22; 04-08-2008)*  
*(Office of Origin: IRM/BPC/PRG)*

#### **5 FAH-1 H-911 GENERAL**

*(CT:CH-22; 04-08-2008)*

This chapter contains guidelines for classifying e-mail. All e-mail messages that warrant classification for national security or foreign policy reasons must be properly marked, secured, and transmitted on systems classified at a level equal to or higher than the information being processed. Employees composing e-mail messages are to follow the requirements of E.O. 12958, as amended (see the U.S. Department of State Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Home Page and select FOIA Reference Guide and then Executive Order 13292) for handling classified information as described in 12 FAM 530. These requirements apply regardless of the physical format, to all document types, including e-mail. For further information about the management of e-mail, including guidance on identifying e-mail as a Federal record and preserving e-mail according to Federal regulations, see 5 FAM 443.

#### **5 FAH-1 H-912 CLASSIFICATION**

*(CT:CH-22; 04-08-2008)*

- a. Classified e-mail messages must be marked with an original or derivative classification authority. For general guidance on classification markings see 5 FAH-1 H-132.
- b. To avoid compromising e-mail material, ensure e-mail messages contain proper classification level and marking. Originators are responsible for ensuring that proper classification and markings have been executed on each message.
- c. It is a security "best practice" to mark wholly unclassified messages on the classified system as unclassified (top and bottom) so that there is no

question concerning a classification determination. Do not portion mark wholly unclassified material.

- d. If classified national security information, properly marked or not, is processed on the sensitive but unclassified (SBU) or unclassified (U) systems it must be reported immediately as a security violation. See 12 FAM 550.

## 5 FAH-1 H-912.1 Marking Classified E-Mail Messages

*(CT:CH-22; 04-08-2008)*

- a. Mark each element of a classified e-mail message to show its appropriate classification level using (S) for Secret, (C) for Confidential, (SBU) for Sensitive but Unclassified, or (U) for Unclassified. Top Secret e-mails may only be sent via a Department network authorized for that level (e.g., INRISS or IRIS). The overall classification reflects the highest classification level of the message (title, paragraph, table or graph) and must be shown at the top and bottom of each message.
- b. E-mail requiring classification will normally be classified derivatively on the basis of a Department of State Classification Guide (generally DSCG 05-01, which is located on ClassNet at <http://infoaccess.state.sgov.gov/Classification/>). E-mail may also be classified derivatively if it contains information from another document that has already been classified, in which case the new e-mail should be marked based on the marking of the source document. For either form of derivative classification (i.e., based on the Classification Guide or based on the incorporation of already classified material), briefly identify the source document(s) used as the basis for classification and carry forward the declassification information from the source document. The "reason for classification" as specified in the source document(s) is not required. Mark the document with portion markings and highest overall classification level. For information classified on the basis of the DSCG 05-01, the drafter must choose a duration/declassification date (see paragraph f of this section).
- c. The following are examples of classification markings to be entered for material containing information that is derivatively classified.

### Example

Derived from DSCG 05-01, B

DECL: 20160929

**NOTE:** The DECL number is derived from the abbreviation for the Department of State Classification Guide, edition, and

section, as well as the declassification date using the duration in the Classification Guide.

**Example**

Derived From: 2000 State 112345 dated 6/12/2002

DECL: June 12, 2004

**Example**

Derived From: Memorandum dated 6/14/2002, from  
WHA/CEN,

David Smith, Subj.: Chile Declassification Project

DECL: When project completed

**Example**

Derived From: Multiple Sources

DECL: [longest duration of any source documents'  
classification]

d. Enter the following information for original classification:

- (1) Name and position of the original classification authority (by name and position);
- (2) Agency and office of origin unless otherwise indicated;
- (3) Reason for classification, citing applicable category(ies) in Section 1.4, E.O. 12958, as amended (see Executive Order 13292); and
- (4) Duration/Declassification event or date (see paragraph f of this section).

e. The following are examples of duration/declassification markings:

**Examples**

DECL: 20091016 (preferred date format is YYYYMMDD)

DECL: End of Conference (event must be specific, not to exceed 25 years)

f. Classifiers must indicate one of four declassification options:

- (1) A date or event less than 10 years from the date of original classification when the national security sensitivity will lapse;
- (2) When a specific date or event in less than 10 years cannot be established, a date 10 years from the date of original classification;
- (3) Upon a determination that the information must remain classified more than 10 years, a date not more than 25 years from the date of original classification; and
- (4) For confidential human sources, use the marking "25X1-human" instead of a specific event or date 25 years or less.

## **5 FAH-1 H-912.2 Contacts**

*(CT:CH-22; 04-08-2008)*

Address questions concerning the protection and safeguarding of national security information and the protection, safeguarding and marking of SBU information to the Programs Applications Division of the Office of Information Security (DS/IS/APD) or via the SBU or classified e-mail systems at HelpdeskDSec@state.gov. Address questions concerning marking, classification and declassification of national security information to the Programs and Policies Division of the Office of Information Programs and Services (A/ISS/IPS/PP), SA2, or by e-mail to classification@state.gov.

## **5 FAH-1 H-913 THROUGH H-919 UNASSIGNED**