

**§ 1203.203 Degree of protection.**

(a) *General.* Upon determination that information or material must be classified, the degree of protection commensurate with the sensitivity of the information must be determined. If there is reasonable doubt about the need to classify information, it shall be safeguarded as if it were classified pending a determination by an original classification authority, who shall make this determination within 30 days. If there is reasonable doubt about the appropriate level of classification, it shall be safeguarded at the higher level of classification pending a determination by an original classification authority, who shall make this determination within 30 days.

(b) *Authorized categories of classification.* The three categories of classification, as authorized and defined in "the Order," are set out below. No other restrictive markings are authorized to be placed on NASA classified documents or materials except as expressly provided by statute or by NASA Directives.

(1) *Top Secret.* Top Secret is the designation applied to information or material the unauthorized disclosure of which could reasonably be expected to cause exceptionally grave damage to the national security. Examples of exceptionally grave damage include armed hostilities against the United States or its allies; disruption of foreign relations vitally affecting the national security; the compromise of vital national defense plans or complex cryptologic and communications intelligence systems; the revelation of sensitive intelligence operations; and the disclosure of scientific or technological developments vital to national security.

(2) *Secret.* Secret is the designation applied to information or material the unauthorized disclosure of which could reasonably be expected to cause serious damage to the national security. Examples of serious damage include disruption of foreign relations significantly affecting the national security; significant impairment of a program or policy directly related to the national security; revelation of significant military plans or intelligence operations; and compromise of significant sci-

entific or technological developments relating to national security.

(3) *Confidential.* Confidential is the designation applied to that information or material for which the unauthorized disclosure could reasonably be expected to cause damage to the national security.

[44 FR 34913, June 18, 1979, as amended at 48 FR 5890, Feb. 9, 1983]

### Subpart C—Classification Principles and Considerations

**§ 1203.300 General.**

In general, the types of NASA-generated information and material requiring protection in the interest of national security lie in the areas of applied research, technology or operations.

**§ 1203.301 Identification of information requiring protection.**

Classifiers shall identify the level of classification of each classified portion of a document (including subject and titles), and those portions that are not classified.

**§ 1203.302 Combination, interrelation or compilation.**

An interrelationship of individual items, classified or unclassified, may result in a combined item requiring a higher classification than that of any of the individual items. Compilations of unclassified information are considered unclassified unless some additional significant factor is added in the process of compilation. For example:

(a) The way unclassified information is compiled may be classified;

(b) The fact that the information is complete for its intended purpose may be classified; or

(c) The fact the compilation represents an official evaluation may be classified. In these cases, the compilations would be classified.

**§ 1203.303 Dissemination considerations.**

The degree of intended dissemination, use of the information and whether the end purpose to be served renders effective security control impractical

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are considerations during the classification process. These factors do not necessarily preclude classification, but must be considered in order not to impose security controls which are impractical to enforce.

**§ 1203.304 Internal effect.**

The effect of security protection on program progress and cost and on other functional activities of NASA should be considered. Impeditive effects and added costs inherent in a security classification must be assessed in light of the detrimental effects on the national security interests which would result from failure to classify.

**§ 1203.305 Restricted data.**

Restricted Data or Formerly Restricted Data is so classified when originated, as required by the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, as amended. Specific guidance for the classification of Restricted Data is provided in "Classification Guides" published by the Department of Energy.

**Subpart D—Guides for Original Classification**

**§ 1203.400 Specific classifying guidance.**

Technological and operational information and material, and in some exceptional cases scientific information falling within any one or more of the following categories, must be classified if its unauthorized disclosure could reasonably be expected to cause damage to the national security. In cases where it is believed that a contrary course of action would better serve the national interests, the matter should be referred to the Chairperson, NASA Information Security Program Committee, for a determination. It is not intended that this list be exclusive; original classifiers are responsible for initially classifying any other type of information which, in their judgment, requires protection under "the Order."

(a) Information which provides the United States, in comparison with other nations, with a significant scientific, engineering, technical, operational, intelligence, strategic, tactical or economic advantage related to national security.

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(b) Information which, if disclosed, would significantly diminish the technological lead of the United States in any military system, subsystem or component, and would result in damage to such a system, subsystem or component.

(c) Scientific or technological information in an area where an advanced military application that would in itself be classified is foreseen during exploratory development.

(d) Information which, if known, would:

(1) Provide a foreign nation with an insight into the defense application or the war or defense plans or posture of the United States;

(2) Allow a foreign nation to develop, improve or refine a similar item of defense application;

(3) Provide a foreign nation with a base upon which to develop effective countermeasures;

(4) Weaken or nullify the effectiveness of a defense or military plan, operation, project, weapon system or activity which is vital to the national security.

(e) Information or material which is important to the national security of the United States in relation to other nations when there is sound reason to believe that those nations are unaware that the United States has or is capable of obtaining the information or material; i.e., through intelligence activities, sources, or methods.

(f) Information which if disclosed could be exploited in a manner prejudicial to the national security posture of the United States by discrediting its technological power, capability or intentions.

(g) Information which reveals an unusually significant scientific or technological "breakthrough" which there is sound reason to believe is not known to or within the state-of-the-art capability of other nations. If the "breakthrough" supplies the United States with an important advantage of a technological nature, classification also would be appropriate if the potential application of the information, although not specifically visualized, would afford the United States a significant national security advantage in terms of technological lead time or an