

DATE 11/6/81

ADVISORY CIRCULAR



DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
Federal Aviation Administration
Washington, D.C.

FAR GUIDANCE MATERIAL

Subject: SCREENING OF PERSONS CARRYING U.S. CLASSIFIED MATERIAL

1. **PURPOSE.** To provide instructions for the screening of passengers carrying classified material in order to maintain the integrity of the screening process and prevent the compromise of classified material.

2. **BACKGROUND.** On occasion, personnel of the Federal Government and personnel of contractors to the Federal Government have a need and are authorized to carry material containing information classified in the interest of the national security. Due to the requirements of the Federal Aviation Regulations, all passengers and their carry-on items must be screened prior to boarding scheduled air carrier aircraft. Carry-on items which contain classified material, if routinely examined, could subject the information to compromise.

3. **CLASSIFIED MATERIAL SCREENING PROCEDURES.** Persons carrying Government classified materials shall be screened in the same manner as other passengers except for the following:

a. The passenger should inform the carrier representative classified materials are being carried and should present an official U.S. Government or company identification and travel documentation. In most instances, the classified materials being carried will be contained in sealed envelopes or small packages. In these instances, the passenger is to report to the screening station for routine processing. At that point, the classified material shall be processed by X-ray examination where such equipment is available and where such processing is feasible. The classified material shall contain no metal bindings and shall be in sealed envelopes or packages. If the envelopes/packages containing the classified material, the passenger's other carry-on baggage and the passenger successfully complete the required screening, the passenger shall be permitted to board. Where there is no X-ray equipment in use, the person screening the carry-on baggage should be able to inspect envelopes containing classified material to assure the absence of weapons by flexing, feel, weight, etc., without opening the envelopes. In the event that the person conducting the screening is not satisfied and there is doubt as to the contents of the envelopes, the passenger shall not be permitted to board with the envelopes. Opening of the envelopes containing classified material by screening personnel is not authorized and should never be attempted.

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b. In a few instances, classified material will be in sealed packages which, because of size, weight, or other physical characteristics, are not suitable for processing as specified above. Persons carrying such material shall be screened in the same manner as other passengers, except for the following:

(1) The Federal Government or contractor official who has authorized the transport of the classified material shall notify an official of the appropriate air carrier in advance of the travel. Upon notification, the carrier should advise the authorizing official that the courier should be instructed to report to the airline ticket counter upon arriving at the air terminal. Upon arrival at the ticket counter, a carrier representative shall check the courier's identifying documents.

(2) Federal Government and contractor personnel shall present an identification card or credential bearing a photograph, description data, and signature of the individual. (If the identification card does not carry descriptive data, i.e., date of birth, height, weight, or signature, these items must be included in the courier letter of authorization described below.) Federal personnel will present official identification issued by their agencies. Contractor personnel will present identification issued by the contracting firm or company employing the individual or an identification issued by the U.S. Government. In the latter instance, the identification card will carry the name of the employing contractor or otherwise be marked to denote "contractor."

(3) Federal Government and contractor personnel shall also present the original of a letter authorizing the individual to carry classified material. A reproduced copy is not acceptable. The letter may contain a preprinted endorsement for authentication by an official at the destination in cases in which round-trip carrying is involved. The traveler, however, shall provide an authenticated copy to each airline involved. The letter should be prepared on letterhead stationery of the agency or contractor employing the individual. In those instances where an individual visiting another agency of a contractor is given classified information which he/she must transport by return trip and has no letter from his/her organization covering the material, the letter of authorization will be prepared on the letterhead stationery of the agency or contractor being visited. The letter of authorization should:

(a) Give the full name of the individual and the employing agency or company.

(b) Describe the type identification the individual will present (e.g., Naval Research Laboratory Identification Card, No. 1234, ABC Corporation Card, No. 1234).

(c) Describe the material being carried (e.g., three sealed packages, 9" x 18" x 24", addressee, and addressor).

(d) Identify the point of departure, destination, and known transfer points.

(e) Carry a date of issue and an expiration date not exceeding seven days from the date of issue.

(f) Carry the names, title, signature, and telephone number of the official issuing the letter. Each package or carton to be exempt will be signed on its face by the official who signed the letter.

(g) Carry the name of the Government agency designated to confirm the letter of authorization and its telephone number. The telephone number of the agency designated shall be a U.S. Government official number that is subject to verification for both Government and contractor use.

(4) If satisfied with the identification and the letter of authorization, the carrier representative shall provide the passenger with an escort to the screening station and authorize the screening personnel to exempt the classified packages from physical or other type inspection. The passenger and all other items the passenger may be carrying shall be subject to normal screening. If the airline representative is not satisfied with the authenticity of the passenger or the documentation presented, he/she should contact a representative of the authorizing official for appropriate verification. If the airline representative is still not satisfied, the passenger shall not be permitted to carry the classified packages aboard. In these instances, the U.S. agency or company involved should be advised of the situation. If the situation warrants, the Federal Bureau of Investigation should also be advised.

4. ARMED FORCES COURIER SERVICES (ARFCOS) SCREENING PROCEDURES. The ARFCOS has been specifically designated by the Department of Defense to escort courier material classified TOP SECRET that is considered highly sensitive by the Federal Government. All branches of the Federal Government and qualified contractors of the Government may be served by ARFCOS in the transportation of these types of materials.

a. In most instances, material in the custody of ARFCOS couriers will be of such volume as to require loading in the aircraft cargo compartment. The loading of this material will be under the supervision of a representative of the carrier, but it must be accompanied by and under constant surveillance of ARFCOS personnel who will remain on guard until the cargo compartment is secured. In accordance with Air Transport Association policy, air carriers will normally accept ARFCOS Forms 9 and 14 as authorization for ARFCOS couriers to gain access to sterile ramp areas. The ARFCOS courier will be the last passenger to board the aircraft and the first to deplane. Off-loading procedures will also be observed by the ARFCOS courier. The carrier concerned will be given sufficient advance notification by the dispatching Armed Forces Courier Station in order that arrangements for transporting the courier material to the aircraft can be completed.

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b. Hand-carried ARFCOS material will be placed in an ARFCOS courier pouch, then secured with an ARFCOS lock. Screening procedures as outlined in 3 above will be followed.

c. ARFCOS courier personnel are not armed and may or may not be in military uniform. All such persons will be identified by both their military and an ARFCOS identification card (ARFCOS Form 9, buff with a red stripe, or Form 14, blue with a red stripe) in addition to the prescribed letter of authorization.

d. It is incumbent upon the courier to assure that appropriate arrangements are made at the destination for secure storage of classified material as may be required.



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U.S. Department
of Transportation

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