

PDSD NEWS

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE / DEPARTMENTAL ADMINISTRATION
OFFICE OF SECURITY SERVICES / PERSONNEL & DOCUMENT SECURITY DIVISION

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WINTER 2008

SECURITY ENTRY TRACKING SYSTEM | webSETS GOES LIVE!

The wait is over! The first release of the new web-based Security Entry Tracking System goes into production in March!



For over two years, the Personnel & Document Security Division (PDSD) has been working with the National Finance Center (NFC) to modernize the current Security Entry Tracking System (SETS). The legacy system lacked the tracking capabilities and tools needed to keep up with the recent changes in personnel security, such as reporting to the Clearance Verification System with OPM and tracking investigation actions for Homeland Security Presidential Directive – 12. The new SETS will be the central repository for all investigations completed by USDA.

To gain access to SETS, you must (1) complete the “User Request & Acknowledgement” form with an authorizing official signature that indicates your duties require such access, (2) successfully complete the AgLearn training module and fax your certificate to PDSD, and (3) receive your login information from PDSD.

The training module will be added to your AgLearn Learning Plan after PDSD has received and approved your “User Request & Acknowledgement” form. Those users who have already submitted this form will have the training added to their plan shortly. An email notification will be forwarded. The training will take approximately one hour to complete as it provides a field-by-field walk through of each SETS screen and a quiz at the end.

*After successful completion
of the AgLearn training
module, fax your certificate to
Carrie Moore at 202/720-1689.*

The NFC website (www.nfc.gov) will provide a link to the new SETS along with an updated SETS user manual. We encourage all users, especially those who will be involved in data entry, to read and reference the user manual.

If you have any questions or to report any errors in the system, please email Carrie Moore at Carrie.Moore@usda.gov. If you have any problems with your login information, report the specific error message to Arviet Thorpe at Arviet.Thorpe@usda.gov.

We would like to thank everyone who has been involved in this project and will continue to provide their support as we enter Phase 3 later in 2008. In Phase 3, we plan to implement document imaging, additional adjudicative tracking fields and reports. We welcome your suggestions and input for continued improvement.

NEWS FROM OPM: PROPOSED POSITION DESIGNATION SYSTEM

On January 18, 2008, Linda M. Springer, Director, Office of Personnel Management, announced a proposed revision to the Position Designation System which may ultimately replace the current process of designating National Security positions, under title 5, Code of Federal Regulations, part 732 (5 CFR 732) and Public Trust positions, as required by title 5, Code of Federal Regulations, part 731 (5 CFR 731). This memo has been distributed to all Mission Areas by PDSD. If you did not receive a copy, please email Carrie Moore at carrie.moore@usda.gov.

Each Public Trust position in the competitive service or career SES must be designated at the low, moderate, or high risk level as determined by the position's potential for adverse impact on the efficiency and integrity of the service. Every National Security position in the Federal service not designated as Non-Sensitive must be designated as Noncritical-Sensitive, Critical-Sensitive, or Special-Sensitive, depending on the degree to which the occupant could bring about a material adverse effect on national security. The nature of the position includes the incumbent's need for access to classified information (i.e. Confidential, Secret, or Top Secret). Position designation determines what type of investigation is required and how closely an individual is screened for a position.

OPM is requesting agencies to conduct an impact assessment of the proposed system for a period of 90 days from the date of the January 18th memo to compare the designations that would result from the proposed system with those made under the current designation process, assess any anticipated impact with regard to cost and investigative coverage, and provide recommendations for improvement. Agencies should continue to use the current designation system during the 90-day assessment period. **Please email your results to PDResponses@opm.gov or mail to Office of Personnel Management, Federal Investigative Services Division, Agency Liaison Group, 223 23rd Street, 11th Floor, Arlington, VA 22202, by April 18th.**

Are you the missing piece?

Every employee is an important piece of the security puzzle. Believe it or not, in most organizations, employees and even entire departments assume that security is the responsibility of others. There is little sense of ownership and duty to be protective of one's workplace and fellow employees. Unless explained otherwise, employees may attempt to justify or rationalize their lack of action and involvement by making incorrect **assumptions** such as:

- This stranger got past the receptionist/guard/fence/access control system, so therefore he or she must belong.
- If I speak up about improper activities I observe, I am a "squealer" or "snitch".
- If I report a fellow employee who is acting in an unstable, intimidating, or threatening manner, I will be getting the person in trouble.
- I should just let someone else speak up.
- Everyone else does it, so it must be OK.
- Management won't do anything if I do speak up.
- This really isn't so serious or dangerous.
- It's not my job – it's the job of the security department or security officers.

Security is not effective if we do not all take part. Do not be afraid to report suspicious activities. If you have security questions, contact the Information Security Staff at (202) 720-7373.

REQUESTING SCI ACCESS

Agencies are reminded that all requests for Sensitive Compartmented Information (SCI) on the Justification form, AD-1188, MUST be based on a clearly-articulated, mission related "need to know" criteria and MUST be endorsed by the individual's Under Secretary, Assistant Secretary, or Staff Office Director. The specific compartments needed must be included in the justification statement.

The subject must have a current SSBI investigation and a security questionnaire (SF86) that is dated within the last two years.

Requests that do not meet these requirements will be returned to the agency by PDSD. The AD-1188 Justification form, with instructions on page 2, can be located on the PDSD website at

<http://www.usda.gov/da/pdsd/forms.htm>

For further information on submitting proper SCI requests, contact John Loveless, Chief, Personnel Security Branch, at 202/ 720-7373.

NATIONAL SECURITY ANNUAL REFRESHER TRAINING ON **AGLEARN**

INDIVIDUALS WHO HOLD A SECURITY CLEARANCE ARE REQUIRED TO RECEIVE ANNUAL INFORMATION SECURITY REFRESHER TRAINING ON HOW TO HANDLE AND PROTECT CLASSIFIED INFORMATION. THIS CAN NOW BE ACCOMPLISHED USING THE USDA AGLEARN TRAINING SITE.

THE TRAINING TAKES LESS THAN AN HOUR AND REVIEWS EMPLOYEE'S RESPONSIBILITIES FOR PROTECTING NATIONAL SECURITY CLASSIFIED INFORMATION. THERE IS A QUIZ AT THE END OF THE TRAINING AND THE INDIVIDUAL CAN PRINT A CERTIFICATE.

THE COURSE ID NUMBER IS: **DA-OSS-PDSD-01** AND IS TITLED "NATIONAL SECURITY ANNUAL REFRESHER TRAINING". IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS CONCERNING THIS TRAINING, PLEASE CONTACT THE INFORMATION SECURITY STAFF AT 202/ 720-7373.

e-QIP UPDATE NOTICE

Effective December 30, 2007, e-QIP version 2.00.08 was implemented during OPM's quarterly update of the system. As an Agency User, you will see several changes to the system on the Agency side and the Applicant Side of e-QIP.

Changes on the Agency side of e-QIP:

1. The Request ID on the Signature Pages will be increased to a 12 point font size for greater visibility.
2. On the Agency Use Block (AUB) the Special Handling Instructions section has been changed to the "Agency Special Instructions for the Investigative Service Provider" to clear up confusion. These are instructions for the ISP concerning the case.
3. The Mass initiation screen has been changed to automatically list 100 applicants at a time.
4. Service Code C will no longer be used with a 09 (ANACI) case type. An attempt to submit a 09C case will result in a Validation Error on the AUB.

Changes to the Applicant Side of e-QIP:

1. The Validation of the Relatives requires an entry for Mother and Father and an explanation if "I Don't Know This Information" is checked by an applicant filling out the SF86 or SF85P.
2. The Signature Forms will pre-populate the applicant's Full Name, Other Names Used, Current Address, and Home Telephone Number. The Social Security Number and the Date Signed will not be pre-populated.
3. The Validation for "Three People that Know You Well" will require the applicant to provide three separate names and will require an explanation if the "I Don't Know This Information" is checked. The form will not certify unless these items are satisfied.

If you have any questions, please contact Vet Thorpe at arviet.thorpe@usda.gov.

tax **TIMES**

April 15th
Filing Due Date

Financial Responsibility

Failure to Maintain Your Debts May Affect Your Determination

Executive Order 12674, as amended by Executive Order 12731, titled “*The Fourteen Principles of Ethical Conduct for Federal Employees*” requires that “*Employees shall satisfy in good faith their obligations as citizens, including all financial obligations, especially those – such as Federal, State, or local taxes – that are imposed by law.*”

USDA is committed to ensuring that its employees continue to uphold the high standards of conduct expected of public servants. Assistance in filing returns or in resolving any balance owed is available from the IRS at 1-800-829-1040. Forms, publications and additional information are also available on the IRS website at www.irs.gov.

Failure to satisfy debts can raise questions about an individual’s reliability and trustworthiness. This is one area that is reviewed by the Personnel Security Branch in determining an employee’s ability to hold a Public Trust or National Security position with USDA.

The concern is an individual who is financially overextended is at risk of having to engage in illegal acts to generate funds. A history of not meeting financial obligations and/or a current inability or unwillingness to satisfy debts are some of the disqualifying factors that must be mitigated to reach a favorable determination.

Ensure your credit report is accurate! You are entitled to receive one free credit report every 12 months from each of the nationwide consumer credit reporting companies – Equifax, Experian, and TransUnion. This free credit report can be requested through www.annualcreditreport.com.

Assistance in dealing with financial problems is available through the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) at 1-800-222-0364.



PUBLISHED!

Departmental Regulation 3440-001, **USDA Classified National Security Information Program Regulation**, dated January 9, 2008, is now officially published at <http://www.ocio.usda.gov/directives/doc/DR3440-001.pdf>.

eClearance: Presidential Management Initiative Update

In conjunction with the eClearance Program Management Office within the Office of Personnel Management (OPM), the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) has developed milestones to further leverage information technology to improve the personnel security investigations process.

The new milestones will 1) expand the government-wide use of the Electronic Questionnaire for Investigations Processing (e-QIP) tool for the processing of SF-86, SF 85-P, and SF-85 investigations and 2) increase the utilization of the Clearance Verification System (CVS), which provides OPM and partnering agencies access to the clearance database of each participating agency.

The first of these milestones is to develop plans to increase USDA's utilization of e-QIP for all investigative form types. USDA has met e-QIP usage goals for the processing of SF 86 and SF 85Ps since 2006 and is one of several government agencies to regularly achieve 100% usage for these forms.

In anticipation of this new milestone, PDSO has provided e-QIP training to all USDA Mission Areas and agency Human Resources staffs to facilitate and encourage the use of the SF-85, "Questionnaire for Non-Sensitive Positions."

Several USDA agencies, to include the Food Safety and Inspection Service, Agricultural Research Service, and Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, have implemented electronic use of the SF-85 on a widespread basis and have experienced the benefits of improved timeliness and reduced errors.

PDSO will reach out to remaining USDA agencies in the near future to further explain the milestone and develop a plan to reach 100% use for the SF-85.

PDSO will utilize the Security Entry Tracking System (SETS) to provide regular updates of security clearance information into the CVS. All security clearance data should be transferred to CVS by no later than June 2008.

Questions concerning these milestones should be directed to Susan Gulbranson or John Loveless on (202) 720-7373.

Why do we Mark Classified Documents?

For more information on marking, visit

<http://www.archives.gov/isoo/training/markings-booklet.pdf>

Alert the Holder -

Marking is the principal means of informing the holder of classified or sensitive information.

Level of Protection -

The markings also inform the holder of the type and level of protection and handling required for the document.

Portion Markings -

Portion markings let the user of the information know at what level each paragraph, slide, picture, etc. is to be protected in the event information must be extracted to be used in another document. If portion markings are not present, there may be confusion as to what information is actually classified and what is not.

Guidance on Downgrading (if any) and Declassification -

If a document is classified, the downgrading / declassification instructions will be reflected on the title page of the document. These instructions provide the holder with information on how to protect the document as well as the proper disposition of the document.

Special Caveats -

These include, but are not all-inclusive: Not Releasable to Foreign Nationals (NOFORN), North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), Restricted Data, and Distribution Statements. These special caveats inform the user of the special access, control, dissemination, or safeguarding requirements in addition to the classification markings.

Visit us on the Web!

<http://www.usda.gov/da/pdsd/>

Email PDSO at:

pdsd@usda.gov

If you would like to suggest a future newsletter article, please email Carrie Moore at

carrie.moore@usda.gov

NOTE ON DEBRIEFINGS

All individuals holding a security clearance MUST contact PDSO **before** they leave from USDA due to retirement, transfer to another agency, or any other form of termination to receive their debriefing.

To properly cancel active security clearances, individuals must receive a debriefing from PDSO and sign the "Security Debriefing Acknowledgement" section on their "Classified Information Nondisclosure Agreement" form, SF-312.

Employees who do not have a security clearance DO NOT need to receive a debriefing. For more information, contact Joy Assent at lajoya.assent@usda.gov.

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