

REF ID: A72220  
EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT  
NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL  
WASHINGTON

October 20, 1953

MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY OF STATE  
THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE  
THE SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY  
THE DIRECTOR, FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION  
THE SECRETARY OF THE ARMY  
THE SECRETARY OF THE NAVY  
THE SECRETARY OF THE AIR FORCE  
THE DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE  
THE DIRECTOR OF THE NATIONAL SECURITY AGENCY  
THE ATOMIC ENERGY COMMISSION

SUBJECT: Communications Security

REFERENCE: NSC 168

Pursuant to paragraph 1-b of the enclosed National Security Council directive on the subject (NSC 168) it is requested that you designate a member to represent you on the United States Communications Security Board.

When all representatives have been designated this office will arrange for the calling of an organizational meeting of the Board.

JAMES S. LAY, Jr.  
Executive Secretary

cc: Mr. Friedman ✓  
National Security Agency

DIVISION  
PLANS AND POLICY

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SECURITY INFORMATION

Referenced

*File*24 April 1954  
NUMBER C-5200.5

## Department of Defense Directive

SUBJECT Communications Security (COMSEC)

- References: (a) NSC Directive on Communications Security, (NSC 168) dtd 20 Oct 53  
(b) SecDef Memorandum: Interim Responsibility for COMSEC, dtd 5 Dec 52  
(c) NSCID No. 9 Revised, dtd 24 Oct 52  
(d) Secretary of Defense Directive: Implementation of NSCID No. 9 Revised, dtd 5 Dec 52

1. This Directive is issued for the purpose of implementing within the Department of Defense the provisions of reference (a) and supersedes reference (b). All directives, orders, or instructions relating to COMSEC matters issued by any authorities within the Department of Defense which are inconsistent or at variance with the provisions of this Directive will be rescinded or revised in consonance therewith.

2. The Department of Defense has been designated by reference (a) as Executive Agent of the Government for all COMSEC matters.

3. The National Security Agency (NSA) was authorized by reference (c) and established by reference (d). Reference (b) assigned to the Director, NSA, on an interim basis, the responsibility for COMSEC activities and related matters previously assigned to the Director, Armed Forces Security Agency (AFSA). The Director, NSA, has now been designated to act for the Executive Agent in all COMSEC matters set forth in paragraphs 2d(1) through 2d(13) of reference (a) and any others which may be specified by the "Special Committee of the National Security Council for COMSEC Matters", or the "United States Communications Security Board" hereinafter referred to as the Board. With respect to military COMSEC and to communications portions of military cover and deception, Director, National Security Agency will be guided by approved policy, plans and doctrine developed by the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

4. In fulfilling his COMSEC responsibilities, the Director, NSA, will be governed by the provisions of reference (a) and by relevant policies and directives of the Department of Defense. Consistent therewith, in the fields of cryptosecurity, transmission security, physical security, and cover and deception, it shall be his responsibility to fulfill the approved requirements of the JCS and of the individual military departments arising from the performance of their assigned responsibilities specifically:

a. To obtain from the Secretary of Defense, the Joint Chiefs of Staff and/or military departments such information as he may require in performing his functions, as authorized in this directive.

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- b. To prescribe, or review and approve, the cryptoprinciples incorporated or to be incorporated in any telecommunications equipments and systems and in any COMSEC equipments and systems.
- c. To prescribe, or review and approve, cryptosecurity rules, regulations, and instructions applicable to the operation and use of any crypto-equipments and systems and of any COMSEC equipments and systems.
- d. To perform technical analysis of military telecommunications for the purpose of determining the degree of COMSEC being provided by the cryptoprinciples, materials and procedures used, as well as the effect on COMSEC of the communications procedures and practices being utilized; making arrangements with the military departments to obtain the material required for such analysis.
- e. To review and evaluate communications procedures developed by the military departments to determine whether such procedures will provide and maintain transmission security; and to recommend revisions and additional rules and procedures as required. To accomplish this, the Director, NSA, may perform technical analyses of military telecommunications and shall make the necessary arrangements with the Joint Chiefs of Staff and/or military departments to obtain the material required for such analysis.
- f. To prescribe minimum standards for the physical security of cryptomaterial, in collaboration with the military departments as appropriate.
- g. To assist in the preparation of or to review as appropriate the communications portions of military cover and deception plans of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Military Departments. To formulate in collaboration with the Joint Chiefs of Staff the standards for and techniques used in such portions.
- h. To receive from the military departments their research and development programs and/or requirements for crypto-equipments and materials, and provide for review, coordination, and approval of all such research and development programs. In so doing, he will ascertain from the Joint Chiefs of Staff the extent of joint or common interest in the programs and/or requirements.
- i. In consonance with the policies of the Department of Defense, and advising with the Joint Chiefs of Staff, to formulate an integrated program for cryptosecurity research and development to meet the requirements of the military departments in order to insure the continuing security of their telecommunications.
- j. To provide for the conduct of an integrated research and development program adequate to achieve a satisfactory state of cryptosecurity.
- k. To inform any military department which has expressed interest in cryptosecurity research and development projects of the progress being made.

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- l. To receive from the military departments their quantitative requirements for crypto-equipments and materials, and provide for review, coordination, and approval of all crypto-equipment and material production and procurement programs.
  - m. In consonance with the policies of the Department of Defense and advising with the Joint Chiefs of Staff, to formulate an integrated program for the production and procurement of crypto-equipments and materials.
  - n. To produce cryptomaterial necessary to meet the requirements of the military departments and to insure that there is adequate capacity to meet these requirements. In so doing, the Director, NSA, by mutual agreement will authorize the military departments to engage in the production of cryptomaterial. Such production will be conducted in accordance with technical cryptologic criteria prescribed by the Director, NSA, and he will be kept informed of the production accomplished.
  - o. In meeting operational requirements, to insure the necessary compatibility and, insofar as practicable, the standardization of crypto-equipments and material in order to promote a maximum of efficiency and economy in their procurement, operation, and maintenance. Determination of the acceptability of an equipment in meeting the operational requirements is the responsibility of each military department.
  - p. To furnish services and materials for the COMSEC program of the military departments under mutually agreeable fiscal arrangements.
  - q. To provide technical guidance and support for cryptosecurity training conducted by the military departments.
  - r. To arrange with the authorized representatives of a military department for required liaison with subordinate elements of that department.
  - s. To refer violations of COMSEC instructions to the authorized representatives of the military department concerned for such action as may be deemed necessary, and if appropriate corrective action is not taken refer the matter to the Secretary of Defense at the same time informing the Joint Chiefs of Staff.
5. The Director, NSA, shall discharge his responsibilities with respect to the military departments in accordance with his own judgment, subject to the provisions of this directive.
6. In COMSEC matters, it shall be the responsibility of the military departments:
- a. To organize and conduct their COMSEC activities as they see fit subject to the provisions of law, the directives of the President, the provisions of reference (a), and the provisions of this directive. Nothing in this directive shall relieve the military departments of their responsibilities for executing all measures required to assure the security and efficiency of their own telecommunications.

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- b. To provide all lawful assistance required by the Board.
  - c. To provide the Director, NSA, with such information (including budgetary and fiscal), and logistic and other assistance as he may require in the performance of his functions, as authorized in this directive.
  - d. To furnish in a mutually agreeable manner to the Director, NSA, the materials necessary for his technical analysis of military telecommunications.
  - e. To submit all research and development requirements for crypto-equipments and material to the Director, NSA, and to keep him currently advised of any changes therein.
  - f. To accomplish in a mutually agreeable manner such COMSEC research and development projects as may be authorized by the Director, NSA. Subject to prior notification to and approval by the Director, NSA, to initiate and conduct such research and development projects as may be necessary to support their COMSEC activities.
  - g. To determine the acceptability of crypto-equipments in meeting their expressed operational requirements. Military departments will furnish the Director, NSA, timely notification of service test findings. When equipment developed to meet joint or common requirements is service tested, the departments concerned will conduct their service tests so as to achieve maximum results with the procurement of the minimum number of service test models.
  - h. To submit all quantitative requirements for crypto-equipments and materials to the Director, NSA, in accordance with procedures established by him.
  - i. To organize, train, equip, operate, administer, budget for, and provide logistic support to their respective COMSEC activities. This will include provision of reserve programs to meet emergency or wartime requirements.
  - j. To perform, under mutually agreeable arrangements, such COMSEC tasks and functions as may be requested by the Director, NSA.
  - k. To provide the necessary COMSEC facilities and resources for the support of the military effort, in accordance with the responsibilities of the military departments.
7. The Director, NSA, will arrange with the appropriate authorities of departments and agencies of the Government outside the Department of Defense for the exercise of the authority over COMSEC matters granted in paragraph 2 of reference (a).
8. In accordance with the policies established by the Board, and in behalf of the Executive Agent of the Government for all COMSEC matters, the Director, NSA, will conduct the liaison on technical COMSEC and related matters with the cryptologic authorities of foreign nations and international organizations. The military departments shall be invited to participate in any international conference called for the purpose of determining the crypto-

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equipments, procedures, and/or materials to be used to provide security to communications between the military forces of the United States and those of other countries.

9. Appeals from any decision of the Board by the Director, NSA, or by the representative of any of the military departments, shall be filed only with the approval of the Secretary of Defense. In the event that a military department objects to any decision of the Director, NSA, that department will call the matter to the attention of the Director, NSA. If the matter in question cannot be resolved after consideration by the Director, NSA, and the department concerned, that department will refer the matter to the Secretary of Defense at the same time informing the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

10. If in the implementation of COMSEC directives or requirements it becomes apparent that the primary mission of a military department will be adversely affected or its budgetary authorization will be exceeded, such directives or requirements will be implemented to the greatest extent practicable consistent with the execution of primary missions and consistent with budgetary limitations, pending resolution.

11. The military departments shall not be required to disclose to the Director, NSA, the Board, or any of its committees the contents of any official communications concerning its activities, if, in the opinion of the head of the department, the disclosure would be contrary to the national interest.

12. Nothing in this directive shall be construed to give the Board or any of its representatives the right to inspect the operation of COMSEC in any military department without approval by the head thereof.

13. Special terms used in this directive shall have the meanings assigned by reference (a).



Deputy Secretary of Defense

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