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# NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL COMMUNICATIONS SECURITY DIRECTIVE

*United States*
*Communications Security Board*

GROUP 1
Excluded from automatic downgrading and declassification

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The Special Committee of The National Security Council
For Communication Security Affairs
Washington, D. C. 20506

MEMORANDUM FOR THE CHAIRMAN, UNITED STATES COMMUNICATIONS SECURITY BOARD

SUBJECT: NSC Communications Security Directive

The Special Committee of the National Security Council for Communications Security Affairs has reviewed your memorandum of June 1968, requesting, on behalf of the United States Communications Security Board (USCSB), that the Special Committee approve the USCSB recommendation that the existing NSC 5711, dated 25 April 1957, be replaced by the proposed NSC Communications Security Directive, approved unanimously by USCSB on 4 June 1968.

The Special Committee hereby approves the USCSB recommendation. Effective this date, the NSC Communications Security Directive supersedes NSC 5711.

The President is being advised of this action by copy of this memorandum to the Executive Secretary of the National Security Council.

Dean Rusk
Secretary of State
August 26, 1968

Clark M. Clifford
Secretary of Defense
12 August 1968

# NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL COMMUNICATIONS SECURITY DIRECTIVE*

26 August 1968

The security of federal telecommunications and the control of compromising emanations are national responsibilities, and the activities pertaining thereto must be so organized and managed as to ensure maximum utilization of available resources and to satisfy the requirements of the National Security Council and the departments and agencies of the Government. To ensure the coordination of these security activities of the several departments and agencies of the Government in the interest of national security, specific responsibilities and authorities are established as prescribed herein.

For the purposes of this Directive, communications security (COMSEC) is concerned with all measures designed for the security of federal telecommunications, including the control of compromising emanations from telecommunications systems, while emanations security (EMSEC) is concerned with the control of compromising emanations from all other sources.

1. *The Special Committee of the National Security Council for Communications Security Affairs*

a. The Secretaries of State and Defense are designated as a Special Committee of the National Security Council for Communications Security Affairs and, in that capacity, shall establish the policies for the effective coordination of the COMSEC and EMSEC activities of the Government, and shall keep the President advised through the Executive Secretary of the National Security Council.

b. The heads of the executive departments and independent agencies not represented on the Special Committee shall also participate as members whenever matters of direct interest to their respective departments or agencies are before that Committee.

2. *The United States Communications Security Board (USCSB)*

a. The United States Communications Security Board (USCSB), hereinafter referred to as the Board, is established to ensure coordinated and effective national COMSEC and EMSEC efforts. The Board shall act for and under the aforementioned Special Committee and shall operate in accordance with this Directive and any other directives that may be issued by the Special Committee.

b. The Board shall be composed of one representative of each of the following:

(1) The Secretary of State
(2) The Secretary of Treasury
(3) The Secretary of Defense
(4) The Secretary of Transportation
(5) The Secretary of the Army
(6) The Secretary of the Navy

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**This Directive supersedes NSC 5711, dated 25 April 1957.*

(7) The Secretary of the Air Force
(8) The Director of Central Intelligence
(9) The Chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission
(10) The Director of the National Security Agency
(11) The Director, Federal Bureau of Investigation

c. Under the authority of the special Committee it shall be the responsibility of the Board to:

(1) Establish broad COMSEC and EMSEC objectives, policies and procedures necessary to:

(a) Ensure high and uniform security standards.

(b) Provide guidance to U.S. departments and agencies in their relations with foreign governments, international organizations, and private industry.

(c) Provide guidance to the Secretary of Defense as the Executive Agent of the Government for communications security.

(2) Keep the Special Committee informed on significant COMSEC and EMSEC matters and make recommendations as deemed necessary.

(3) Review every two years the COMSEC and EMSEC status and objectives of all departments and agencies and make recommendations to each department and agency as necessary.

(4) Establish a national COMSEC and EMSEC issuance system for promulgating policies of the Board under the Chairman's signature, and for issuing COMSEC and EMSEC guidance and information of government-wide interest.

(5) Approve and promulgate definitions unique to COMSEC and EMSEC.

d. The Board shall make recommendations to the Special Committee on Board membership and shall establish procedures and membership criteria for considering membership changes.

e. The Board shall elect its own Chairman from among its Members, with tenure as it determines.

f. The Board shall meet at least annually.

g. The Board shall reach decisions by majority vote. The Director, National Security Agency shall have no vote in matters involving appeals from his own decision. In the event that the Board votes and reaches a decision, any dissenting member of the Board may appeal from such decision. Such appeal must be made within 15 days to the Special Committee. In the event that the Board votes and fails to reach a decision, any member of the Board may appeal to the Special Committee and such appeal must be made within 15 days of the inconclusive vote. In either event, the Special Committee shall review the vote and its determination thereon shall be final. Appeal by the representative of any component of the Department of Defense shall be filed only with the approval of the Secretary of Defense.

h. No action shall be taken with respect to any matter forming the subject of an appeal until the appeal is decided; provided that, if the Secretary of Defense determines, after consultation with the Secretary of State (and the heads of other executive departments and independent agencies as appropriate), that the subject matter presents a problem of an emergency nature and requires immediate action, his decision shall govern, pending the result of the appeal.

i. The Board shall invite any department or agency not represented to participate in matters of direct interest to such a department or agency. Such a department or agency may also request consideration of a matter by the Board.

j. Departments or agencies not represented on the Board may appeal from decisions of the Board in the manner prescribed for departments and agencies represented on the Board.

3. *The Executive Agent of the Government for Communications Security*

a. The Secretary of Defense is hereby designated as the Executive Agent of the Government for Communications Security.

b. As the Executive Agent for Communications Security, the Secretary of Defense is responsible for the centralized provision of the measures necessary to provide and assure the adequacy of the COMSEC systems and materials to be used by the departments and agencies of the Government.

c. As the Executive Agent for Communications Security, the Secretary of Defense is empowered to take action within the policies and procedures established by the Board in all COMSEC matters affecting the departments and agencies of the Government:

> *Provided:* That where exception to his action is made by the Secretary of a department or by the Head or Director of an agency outside the Department of Defense, such exceptions shall be referred to the Board. Pending Board review, if the Secretary of Defense determines that the subject matter presents a problem of an emergency nature and requires immediate action, he may refer the matter to the Special Committee for immediate decision.

4. *The Director, National Security Agency*

The Director, National Security Agency shall act for the Executive Agent in all COMSEC matters set forth below. In so doing, he shall fulfill requirements of the various departments and agencies of the Government. Subject to the provisions of this directive, matters voted on by the Board, and the direction of the Secretary of Defense, he shall:

a. Prescribe or approve all cryptographic systems and techniques used in any manner. Included are the doctrine and procedures governing their operation, use, modification or removal from use, and the application of compromising emanations suppression techniques and protective measures to cryptographic systems and techniques.

b. Initiate research and development projects needed to fulfill stated qualitative requirements for COMSEC equipment or to advance communications security technology, including techniques, protective measures, and standards for controlling compromising emanations of COMSEC equipment. When mutually agreed, the Director, NSA, may delegate authority to conduct specified cryptographic R&D projects.

c. Evaluate and advise the Board and the departments and agencies concerned on the vulnerability of telecommunications to hostile exploitation. Recommend basic doctrine, methods, and procedures to minimize COMSEC vulnerabilities.

d. Generate and produce cryptomaterial and provide for the production or procurement of COMSEC equipment needed by departments and agencies. When mutually agreed, the Director, NSA may authorize departments and agencies to produce specified COMSEC equipment and cryptomaterial in accordance with prescribed technical and security criteria.

e. Conduct technical COMSEC liaison with the appropriate organizations of foreign governments and international organizations concerned with such matters. When required by U.S. commitments, provide for COMSEC assistance to foreign governments and international organizations.

f. Provide guidance and procedures to departments and agencies to effect the maximum practicable control over material authorized for release outside the Government.

g. Collaborate with departments and agencies in order to:

(1) Develop basic COMSEC design criteria for telecommunications systems, including command and control systems for weapons and space vehicles, determine the level of COMSEC protection provided by a specific system, and advise and assist the cognizant department or agency.

(2) Develop and prescribe doctrine on measures required to protect COMSEC equipment, materials and information.

(3) Formulate concepts and develop techniques for the collection and analysis of data necessary to identify and evaluate COMSEC vulnerabilities, and for the prevention or control of compromising emanations which may constitute a threat to COMSEC.

(4) Assist in the formulation of principles and the development of techniques for communications cover and manipulative communications deception and in the preparation or review of the COMSEC elements of these programs.

(5) Develop national long range COMSEC objectives, to include consideration of equipment research, development and application, threat projection and security theory.

(6) Provide technical guidance and support for COMSEC education and training programs.

h. Obtain information needed to assess the adequacy of national COMSEC doctrine, procedures, techniques, and material.

i. Provide a Secretariat for the United States Communications Security Board, including an Executive Secretary who shall be approved by the Chairman.

5. *The Heads of the Departments and Agencies of the Government*

The heads of all departments and agencies of the Federal Government shall organize and conduct their COMSEC and EMSEC activities as they see fit subject to the provisions of law, the directives of the President, the provisions of this Directive, matters voted on by the Board, and any other Directives which may be issued by the Special Committee. Nothing in this Directive shall relieve the heads of the individual departments and agencies of their responsibilities for executing all measures required to assure the security of federal telecommunications and the control of compromising emanations.

6. Nothing in this Directive shall be construed to give the Board, any of its members or committee, the Executive Agent, or the Director of NSA the right to inspect any department or agency without approval by the head thereof. Departments and agencies shall not be required to disclose to the Board, any of its members or committees, the Executive Agent, or the Director of NSA the contents of any official communications concerning its activities, if, in the opinion of the head of the department or agency, the disclosure would be contrary to the national interest.

7. The communications conducted by the Central Intelligence Agency in the performance of functions described in NSCID No. 5 are specifically exempted from this Directive.