



Winter 04  
Fifth Edition

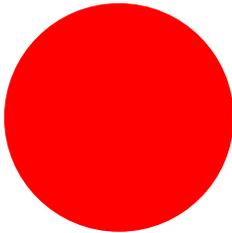
# PDSD Newsletter

Personnel & Document Security Division (202) 720-7373



## Special events in our office

- OPM Training
- Reinvestigations Program Underway
- E-QIP



## Individual Highlights:

- Staff
- Developments 2
- Word Search 3
- Tracking Requests 4



## Happy Holidays from our office to yours!

As 2003 comes to a close, I'd like to thank all of you for your continued support and dedication in Personnel & Information Security. Our productivity continues to grow, with PDSD specialists completing 2,046 adjudications in FY03 versus 1,271 in FY02!

It is an exciting time in the field of Personnel & Information Security, and PDSD is making strides to not only establish a top-notch division, but also to raise our employees awareness of their security responsibilities. With the addition of the Online Security Guide in 2003, PDSD is able to reach USDA employees, in any location, to provide them with a security reference tool and administer required security briefings.

The Information Security Staff has taken off in 2003! Several training sessions on Original Classification have been held and the InfoSec website is near completion.

We really appreciate the time and effort all of you have given to offering insightful ideas for process enhancement and for attending our training opportunities. We plan to offer similar training next year.

Thank you for an outstanding year and we look forward to meeting the challenges of 2004!

Have a happy and safe holiday season!

*Marty Brumbach*

Chief, PDSD

## Executive Briefing on E-QIP

Representatives from the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) met with executives from the Office of the Secretary, Office of the Chief Information Officer, and Departmental Administration as a first step in implementing Electronic Questionnaires for Investigations Processing (e-QIP) in the Department.

E-QIP is one of the President's e-GOV initiatives and will allow for the Personnel and Document Security Division (PDSD) to process security clearance paperwork electronically. USDA will ultimately be asked to sign Memorandums of Understanding with OPM and decide which offices within USDA will be responsible for maintaining

and operating the e-QIP system.

The SF-86, "Questionnaire for National Security Positions," will be the first form used electronically by e-QIP. OPM is awaiting approval from the Office of Management and Budget to use the SF-85P, Questionnaire for Public Trust Positions, and SF-85, Questionnaire for Non-Sensitive Positions.

The Agricultural Research Service, Office of the Chief Information Officer, and the Office of Inspector General have agreed to help PDSD pilot test the e-QIP system. It is estimated the pilot test will begin in March 2004.



*"I long to accomplish a  
great and noble task, but  
it is my chief  
duty to accomplish small  
tasks as if they were  
great and noble."*

*-Helen Keller (1880-1968)*



## *Staff Developments*

*Diane Dixon*, of the Defense Security Service Academy, joined PDSD as the Chief of the Information Security Staff in June 2003.

*Susan Gulbranson*, of the Defense Security Service, joined PDSD as the Chief of the Personnel Security Branch in July 2003.

*Carl Johns* has been involved in the Executive Leadership Program; a 12-month program designed to help prepare employees for a challenging and exciting career in leadership and management. This program includes executive interviews, training sessions and shadowing assignments.

*Verdell Dixon* has accepted a position with the Office of Customs and Border Protection (CBP), Department of Homeland Security. Verdell will be working in the Personnel Security section of CBP as a team leader, beginning January 12, 2004.

*Carrie Moore* has been selected for the Personnel Security Specialist position that was recently announced in PDSD to replace Verdell's position. Carrie also completed training as an Employee Misconduct Investigator in September 2003.

*Karen Maguire* was selected for the InfoSec Specialist position in June 2003.



## *Position Sensitivity Designation & Investigation Forms Training*

The Personnel and Document Security Division sponsored the U.S. Office of Personnel Management's training session on position sensitivity designation and investigative forms completion.

Kimberly Lew, an Investigative Program Specialist with OPM and a former PDSD Personnel Security Specialist, presented two sessions on November 14<sup>th</sup>. Thirty-two USDA employees from eleven different agencies attended the sessions.

Participants were taught how to determine the level of background investigation needed for various USDA positions and how to effectively review investigative forms for accuracy and completion. Agency POC's are asked to exam all security questionnaires for accuracy before submitting them to PDSD.

PDSD hopes to sponsor a similar session in spring or summer 2004.

## *Need to have a security clearance passed?*

At any given time, you may need to have your security clearance passed to another agency or company in order to attend classified meetings, training sessions, or conferences.

Simply fill out the "Request for Passing a Security Clearance" form located on

the PDSD website at <http://www.usda.gov/da/pdsd/Web-pass.pdf>. Requests should be made as soon as possible. Your supervisor must sign the bottom of the request form. Fax requests to 202/720-0178. Questions? Contact Carrie Moore at 202/720-3487.

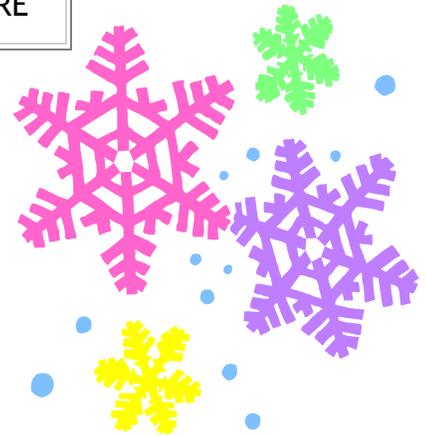


*Security Word Search Puzzle!*

Find each of the following words.

SUITABILITY	CLASSIFIED	CLEARANCE	LOYALTY
INDOCTRINATION	SECURITY	ALLEGIANCE	BRIEFING
ACCESS	INTERIM	VIOLATION	ADJUDICATION
CITIZENSHIP	PDS	OPM	AWARENESS
SCI	INVESTIGATION	TRUSTWORTHY	QUESTIONNAIRE

Y H T R O W T S U R T I I S R W N C T U A P C  
 I T I N D O C T R I N A T I O N A C C E S S G  
 E T S A T N S E S S O P M I R L A T P R A I A  
 C S C I V I O L A T I O N E S V W I I D T N I  
 N D E Q U E S T I O N N A I R E H L J C I V E  
 A E C R B R I E F I N G N N I S N U C T T E D  
 I I N I I T O E N E S A U S N T D P A I I S S  
 G F A I O I D Y L E A N Y E S I O L W I M T C  
 E I R A W D A E C I E T Z O C I O I A I N I Z  
 L S A T I H I U E T N I I A L C M A R S I G C  
 L S E H A T R F T E T I T U S P A E E Q I A C  
 A A L S U I T A B I L I T Y I L T T N I I T S  
 A L C E T C T S C T O N A S A N T I E R I I A  
 P C A Y T T O R N N I S I T I U H R S O R O M  
 A L O Y A L T Y H N S C D P D S D I S R V N A  
 I A S C I T A E I L G A O A S E I R T U N O I





## Reinvestigations Program Underway

The Personnel Security Branch initiated the Reinvestigations program in October 2003. The first tasking group included those employees holding a Top Secret security clearance with an investigation over 5 years old. Each agency point-of-contact was forwarded their employee listing to begin the process of obtaining completed SF86 questionnaires and releases.

The second tasking group, expected to deploy in early 2004, will include those

employees holding a Secret security clearance with an investigation over 10 years old.

Periodic reinvestigations are required by OPM regulation and failure to comply could result in access denial to classified information or meetings.

For additional information, refer to Bulletin #03-04 at <http://www.usda.gov/da/pdsd/bulletins.htm>.

## Common Errors on Security Questionnaires

All questions on these forms must be answered. If no response is necessary or applicable, indicate this on the form (for example, enter "None" or "N/A"). If you find that you cannot report an exact date, approximate or estimate the date to the best of your ability and indicate this by marking "APPROX." or "EST."

Any changes that you make to this form after you sign it must be initialed and dated by you. Under certain limited circumstances, agencies may modify the form consistent with your intent.

All dates provided on this form must be in Month/Day/Year or Month/Year format.

If you need additional space to list your residences or employments/self-employments/unemployment's or education, you should use a continuation sheet, SF 86A. If additional space is needed to answer other items, use a blank piece of paper. Each blank piece of paper you use must contain your name and Social Security Number at the top of the page.

Release pages must be signed within 120 days to meet OPM requirements.

Errors on the questionnaires will cause a delay in processing. If you need copies of OPM's guidelines on submitting acceptable forms, please contact PDSB.

## Using PSD to Track Outstanding Requests

The Personnel Security Database (PSD) is a valuable tool that can be used to track specific data. How? By exporting your PSD agency query into MS Excel, you can filter the records to answer such questions as...How many returned forms are still waiting for corrections?...How many briefings are still pending?...etc.

Periodically throughout the year, each agency point-of-contact will receive 'overdue listings' of outstanding forms and briefings. We encourage all agencies to monitor and perform follow-

ups on the status of any outstanding employee requests (form correction or briefing completion) and using PSD will ease the tracking process.

Simply highlight your query name in PSD, and select the *OfficeLinks* icon on your toolbar. Choose "Analyze with MS Excel" and your Access query will export into MS Excel. *Filter* the columns as needed to pinpoint your data.

Need assistance? Contact Carrie Moore at 202/720-3487.



*"Organization doesn't really accomplish anything. Plans don't accomplish anything, either. Theories of management don't much matter. Endeavors succeed or fail because of the people involved. Only by attracting the best people will you accomplish great deeds."*  
Colin Powell





## *News from the Information Security Staff*

The Information Security Program Website will be operational in January 2004. The website will provide resources and one-stop shopping for Information Security Policy documents USDA must follow.

You will also be able to find helpful information about writing contracts involving classified information, otherwise called "Industrial Security." Some other items you will find at this website will include Training Aids, Posters, Power Point Presentations for Security Awareness Training, and current Information Security Seminars and Conferences.

The Information Security Staff will also take over conducting the in-house Security Indoctrination sessions beginning in early 2004.

Have any questions on Information Security matters? Contact Diane Dixon at 202/260-0106 or Karen Maguire at 202/720-5712.



## *Initial Security Indoctrinations*

Prior to granting a security clearance to an employee in a National Security position, he/she must undergo a briefing on their security responsibilities for safeguarding classified information.

The employee is made aware of the importance of the classified information and its effect on the national security, the proper ways to handle and protect the classified information, the appropriate laws and regulations protecting classified information, the penalties and consequences of violating these laws, and the potential problems with foreign intelligence services targeting cleared employees for information.

All employees are required to promptly report all security violations,

unauthorized disclosures, or possible compromises of classified information or material to their security office.

At the briefing, employees are asked to sign a *Certificate of Clearance* and the SF312, Nondisclosure Agreement. Access to classified information is not granted until the briefing has been successfully completed and the forms have been submitted.

All employees are encouraged to read the online Security Guide located at <http://www.usda.gov/da/pdsd/Security%20Guide/Home.htm>.

Contact PSDS if you have any questions, or if you need to report a security violation at 202/720-7373.



*"Remember not only to say the right thing in the right place, but far more difficult still, to leave unsaid the wrong thing at the tempting moment."*

*Benjamin Franklin*





*Processing Delays at OPM*

The events of September 11<sup>th</sup>, subsequent activation of our military troops, and the establishment of the Department of Homeland Security has caused significant delays in OPM’s ability to meet its traditional investigation timeframes.

We understand how these delays can cause your office staffing and clearance

difficulties. PDSB is diligently working to follow-up with OPM on these overdue investigations and we will offer any support we can to include granting temporary security clearances in exceptional situations.

See Bulletin #04-01 for additional information on our website at <http://www.usda.gov/da/pdsd/bulletins.htm>.

*Help Us to Help You*

To help streamline our communication with you, please take note of the following:

Questions concerning PDSB policies, guidelines, and regulations should only be directed to PDSB management.

All **new** Requests for Personnel Security Services (security questionnaire) packets should be mailed or hand-delivered to PDSB in an envelope, addressed to the attention of Susan Gulbranson, Chief of Personnel Security Branch.

Documents requested by a PDSB Specialist/Reviewer, in order to

complete security questionnaires or adjudications, should be faxed or mailed back to the attention of that Specialist/Reviewer.

Requests for *Passing a Security Clearance* or problems with the *Personnel Security Database* should be faxed or emailed to Carrie Moore at 202/720-3487 (phone), 202/720-0178 (fax), or [carrie.moore@usda.gov](mailto:carrie.moore@usda.gov).

For all general questions or comments, please email us at [pdsd@usda.gov](mailto:pdsd@usda.gov).

Thank you for your cooperation!

**Our Address**  
1400 Independence Ave, SW  
STOP 9305, RMS302  
Washington, DC 20250

**Phone:**  
(202) 720-7373

**Fax:**  
(202) 720-0178

**E-Mail:**  
[pdsd@usda.gov](mailto:pdsd@usda.gov)

*Have a safe and happy New Year!*

*Final Thought...*

If you would like to see PDSB address a particular topic, process, or guideline in a future newsletter, please submit your request to PDSB at [pdsd@usda.gov](mailto:pdsd@usda.gov).



*We're on the Web!*

*See us at:*

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