

CNSSD No. 901  
21 September 2012



**Committee on  
National Security Systems (CNSS)  
Issuance System**



## Committee on National Security Systems

### CHAIR

#### FOREWORD

1. This Directive is issued pursuant to National Security Directive (NSD) No. 42, National Policy for the Security of National Security Telecommunications and Information Systems, dated July 5, 1990; the Committee on National Security Systems Directive (CNSSD) No. 900, Governing Procedures of the Committee on National Security Systems; and any subsequent authorities.

2. This Directive establishes the uniform management in the development, coordination, and dissemination of issuances to identify means to safeguard from exploitation, systems that process or communicate national security information, thereby, implementing the provisions of NSD-42.

3. Issuances promulgated under the former National Communications Security Committee and the National Security Telecommunications and Information Systems Security Committee must remain in effect until revised or rescinded by action of the CNSS.

4. This Directive supersedes CNSSD No. 901, Committee on National Security Systems (CNSS) Issuance System, dated December 2004.

5. Additional copies of this directive are available at the address listed below or via the CNSS website ([www.cnss.gov](http://www.cnss.gov)).

/s/

Teresa M. Takai

**COMMITTEE ON NATIONAL SECURITY SYSTEMS  
ISSUANCE SYSTEM**

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## **SECTION I - PURPOSE AND APPLICABILITY**

1. This directive provides guidance and delineates the responsibilities for establishing Committee on National Security Systems (CNSS) issuances. It is intended to ensure uniform management in the development, coordination, publication, dissemination, and implementation of those documents. The provisions of this directive apply to all Federal Departments and Agencies (D/As) within the Executive Branch that own, procure, use, operate, or maintain National Security Systems (NSS).

## **SECTION II – AUTHORITIES**

2. The authority to issue this Directive derives from NSD- 42, which outlines the roles and responsibilities for securing national security systems, consistent with applicable law, Executive Order 12333, as amended, and other Presidential directives.

3. Nothing in this Directive alters or supersedes the authorities of the Director of National Intelligence.

## **SECTION III – CNSS ISSUANCES**

4. The CNSS Issuance System includes the following:

a. CNSS Policies (CNSSP) address Information Assurance (IA) issues from a broad perspective and establish national-level goals and objectives. The Executive Agent (Secretary of Defense) or the Committee Chair (Department of Defense Chief Information Officer [DoD CIO]) signs CNSSPs after review and approval by the Committee. Policies are binding upon all U.S. Government D/As that own, procure, use, operate, or maintain NSS.

b. CNSS Directives (CNSSD) provide more detailed guidance for achieving CNSS policy goals and objectives than the general policy documented in CNSSPs. The Executive Agent or the Committee Chair signs CNSSDs, after review and approval by the Committee. Directives are binding upon all U.S. Government D/As that own, procure, use, operate, or maintain NSS.

c. CNSS Instructions (CNSSI) provide guidance and establish technical criteria for specific IA issues. CNSSIs include technical or implementation guidelines, restrictions, doctrines, and procedures. The Director, National Security Agency, as National Manager, signs CNSSIs, after review and approval by the Committee. Instructions are binding upon all U.S. Government D/As that own, procure, use, operate, or maintain NSS unless otherwise stated.

d. CNSS Advisory/Information Memoranda (CNSSAM and CNSSIM) address ad hoc issues of a general nature relating to IA issues. The Director, National Security Agency, as National Manager, signs the CNSSAMs and CNSSIMs. They are advisory or informative in nature and not binding upon U.S. Government D/As.

e. The CNSS also issues reports, assessments, position papers, and other documents on specific IA topics of interest. They are informative in nature and not binding upon U.S. Government D/As.

5. The CNSS encourages feedback on all issuances from those using the documents and those affected by the documents. Comments concerning the readability, utility, approach, and effectiveness in supporting a document's stated purpose may be submitted directly to the CNSS Secretariat via email (CNSS@radium.ncsc.mil). Please contact the Secretariat for management of classified comments.

#### **SECTION IV - GENERAL GUIDELINES**

6. The following guidelines apply to the development, coordination, and dissemination of CNSS issuances.

a. The development of CNSS issuances is determined by the Committee, except for national-level doctrine, which is determined by the National Manager. Development of the issuances is accomplished through CNSS Working Groups (WGs), Tiger Teams, Quick Reaction Teams (QRTs), and NSA Offices of Primary Interest (OPIs). NSA OPIs will have the same role as a Working Group Chair. NSA develops those CNSS issuances that secure operation and use of Communications Security (COMSEC) equipment/cryptosystems and the required keying cryptographic material.

b. All proposed issuances will go through the CNSS issuance development and review process. This process requires coordination with and approval by the Committee, as stated in this directive, before submission to the appropriate authority for signature and promulgation.

c. CNSS issuances are numbered in accordance with the system outlined in ANNEX A, and will be disseminated, at a minimum, to the Committee membership and posted to the appropriate CNSS websites and on-line libraries.

d. Issuances being revised and/or superseded must be so stated in the FOREWORD of the publication.

e. Proposed revisions to CNSS issuances must follow the same coordination process as that for original issuances unless such changes are not significant. If not significant, the CNSS Secretariat may make the revisions and send the revised page(s) to the CNSS Members and Observers. In addition, the Secretariat will post the updates to the issuance to the appropriate on-line libraries.

f. CNSS issuances must be reviewed by the appropriate Panel at least every three years from the date of signature to assess accuracy, redundancy, conflicts, obsolescence, revisions and/or rescissions, as appropriate. When a CNSS issuance is found to be adequate and only requires administrative changes or modernization of nomenclature, the Panel will notify the CNSS Secretariat. The Secretariat will add a cover memorandum to the issuance indicating its review date and that it is still current, and will make any requested change. If an issuance needs to be updated or rewritten, the Subcommittee Tri-Chairs will assign the issuance to a Subcommittee Panel, which will in turn assign it to a CNSS WG. The CNSS may coordinate with non-NSS entities to ensure CNSS issuances are harmonized and synchronized to fully leverage common security issuances across the Federal Government.

g. The CNSS may coordinate with Five Eyes partner nations (Australia, Canada, New Zealand, United Kingdom, United States) to ensure CNSS issuances are harmonized and synchronized to address NSS issuances deemed to have implications common to the U.S. Government and foreign partners. When necessary, a CNSS Foreign Partner Advisory Group may be established to determine whether to extend an invitation to the Five Eyes partners to review and comment on specific draft CNSS issuances. The Executive Secretary will serve as the Chair for the duration of the group.

## **SECTION V – ISSUANCE REVIEW AND VOTING PROCESS**

7. The issuance review and voting process has four stages.

a. Drafting and Pre-Coordination: The pre-coordination phase allows all Subcommittee Members and Observers to know what issuances are being developed and/or proposed, provide comments at the early development stage, and allow them to place a representative, if only virtually, on the WG or other group if they have concerns or vested interest in the particular issuance. This also includes issuances developed by NSA OPIs. Not all CNSS Members and Observers will be able to provide representation on the WG or other group responsible for drafting issuances.

(1) The WG Chair champions the development of the draft issuance with the WG participants and using the approved CNSS issuance templates available from the CNSS Secretariat.

(2) The WG Chair provides the draft issuance to the Secretariat.

(3) The Secretariat sends out the draft issuance to the CNSS Subcommittee Members and Observers for the WG Chair with a suspense date for comments.

(4) The Subcommittee Members and Observers with their respective Subject Matter Experts (SME) review the document and provide comments directly back to the WG Chair.

(5) The WG Chair and WG members work to adjudicate the pre-coordination comments and update the issuance as necessary.

(6) The WG Chair prepares the formal draft and sends it to the CNSS Secretariat to begin the formal comment period.

b. Formal Open Comment (Day 1 to Day 30 Working Days): This period allows CNSS Subcommittee Members and Observers to provide comments directly to the WG Chair, and for that individual to work directly with those providing comments to resolve critical issues and make the final changes before formal Subcommittee review.

(1) The WG Chair determines the amount of time dedicated to receiving and adjudicating comments. The total of these timeframes cannot exceed 30 working days. The WG Chair provides this information to the CNSS Secretariat. The Secretariat includes this language regarding timelines in a cover email.

(2) The CNSS Secretariat provides a CNSS-provided comment matrix and the issuance to the CNSS Subcommittee Members and Observers. Each CNSS Member will post their completed formal open comment matrix to the appropriate CNSS collaboration site.

(3) The final draft is sent to the Secretariat for formal Subcommittee review.

c. Formal Subcommittee Review (Day 31 to Day 45 Working Days): The intent is to use this formal review process to adjudicate remaining critical comments so that the issuance can go forward with 100% concurrence. Comments received from the Subcommittee Members and Observers will be available for all Committee and Subcommittee Members and Observers to see during this review process. The final updated issuance is then forwarded to the Committee Members for formal vote along with a recommendation from their Subcommittee Member.

(1) On Day 31, the WG Chair submits the final to the Secretariat to be input into the formal Subcommittee review process.

(2) The Subcommittee Members and Observers have 15 days to resolve any remaining critical comments with the Chair of the responsible group. During this 15-day period, the CNSS Subcommittee Tri-Chairs will assist the WG Chair as needed to help resolve the non-concurring D/As concerns. Final updates are made to the issuance based on adjudication of the critical comments. The final draft and the critical comments are sent by the WG Chair to the Secretariat.

(3) On Day 45, the Subcommittee Member recommends a voting option to their Committee Member: concur, or non-concur with documented critical comments.

(4) If extensive non-concurs with critical comments are received during the Formal Subcommittee Review process, the WG will prepare an issue paper summarizing the

critical comments and the recommendations on the requirement for issuance (ANNEX B-2). The critical comments will be sent to the Committee to discuss.

d. Formal Committee Voting Process (Day 46 to Day 56 Working Days): This is where the Committee Members cast their formal vote in the electronic CNSS Voting application.

(1) On Day 46, the CNSS Secretariat sends the final draft to the Committee Members for formal voting. The Committee Members have 10 days to concur or non-concur with critical comments.

(a) 100% Concurrence: If there is 100% concurrence, the document is sent by the CNSS Secretariat to the appropriate authority for signature.

(b) Non-Concurs with Critical Comments. If there are non-concurs with documented critical comments that were not resolved, the issuance is submitted to the Committee for resolution. The non-concur issues will become an agenda item for the next Committee meeting. Two thirds or more of the Committee membership must be present for a quorum. If there are no critical legal comments, an 80% approval vote at the Committee meeting is needed to move an issuance forward. If there are critical legal comments, a 100% approval vote at the Committee meeting is needed to move an issuance forward. If 80% (no critical legal comments) or 100% (critical legal comments) concurrence is NOT achieved, the Committee Chair and Co-Chair will attempt to resolve the issue with the non-concurring D/As prior to the next Committee meeting. If not resolved by the next Committee meeting, critical non-legal comments may be referred to the Senior Information Sharing and Safeguarding Steering Committee for resolution prior to the following Committee meeting. The Senior Information Sharing and Safeguarding Steering Committee will be notified of unresolved critical legal comments, which will be forwarded to the respective D/As' Offices of General Counsel for resolution prior to the next Committee meeting. Committee members will be notified of the outcome of the resolution. (ANNEX B-1)

8. Observers do not vote.

9. The voting process for issuances is presented in graphic form in ANNEX B.

## **SECTION VI - RESPONSIBILITIES**

10. The WG chairs and participants must:

a. Develop the draft issuance and coordinate the draft within their respective organizations and with interested parties during the pre-coordination stage.

b. Adjudicate comments through the pre-coordination, Formal Open Comment and

Formal Subcommittee Review stages as necessary. Update the issuance and finalize the draft for submission to the Committee Members for formal vote.

c. Prepare an issue paper if there are extensive non-concurs during the formal Subcommittee review process. The paper should summarize the critical comments and the recommendations on the requirement for issuance.

11. The Subcommittee Panel Members must:

a. Work with WG chairs to scope new issuances to ensure consistency with other issuances and preclude duplication.

b. Assist the WG chairs in adjudicating critical comments, as needed.

12. The Subcommittee Members must:

a. During the Draft and Pre-Coordination Phase: Review the pre-coordination draft to be sure their organization has the appropriate representation on the issue and their D/A's views are accurately captured in the draft.

b. During the Formal Open Comment Phase: Review the draft issuance and ensure it is properly reviewed and coordinated within their D/A.

c. During the Formal Open Comment Phase: Post comments to the appropriate CNSS collaboration site.

d. Work with the WG Chair responsible for the issuance to adjudicate the comments.

e. Recommend a voting option to their Committee Member (concur or non-concur with documented critical comments).

13. Committee Members must:

a. If extensive non-concurs with critical comments are received during the Formal Subcommittee Review, review the issue paper provided by the WG summarizing the critical comments and indicating recommendations. The three options for the Committee to consider include:

(1) Canceling the requirement for the issuance,

(2) Re-scoping the issuance and providing additional guidance to the WG,

or

(3) Sending the issuance back through the 15-day Subcommittee review with Committee guidance.

b. Review the CNSS issuance and their Subcommittee member recommendation and vote in the CNSS electronic voting application (concur or non-concur with documented critical comments).

c. If non-concurring, be prepared to discuss the documented critical concerns at the next Committee meeting. If there is no resolution, be prepared to participate with the Subcommittee Tri-Chairs and legal representation from all involved parties in adjudicating the critical comments.

**Note:** There are no abstentions. If a Committee Member does not vote within the designated timeframe, a non-response will be considered a concur.

14. The CNSS Secretariat must:

- a. Establish, manage, and maintain a CNSS issuance system.
- b. Coordinate drafts, revisions, and cancellations of CNSS issuances with CNSS Members and Observers.
- c. Assign and record issuance numbers.
- d. Publish and disseminate CNSS issuances, to include changes and cancellations.
- e. Maintain and publish an index of all CNSS issuances (active and cancelled).
- f. Review proposed CNSS issuances for completeness, accuracy, and compliance with established policies and templates, as well as other issuances governing the CNSS.
- g. Ensure that correspondence with the CNSS Members and Observers allows them opportunity to coordinate or approve issuances within their agencies as required by CNSSD No. 900.
- h. Advise the Committee Chair/Co-Chair of any critical comments or other issues that prevent meeting the agenda for discussion and decision. And, if needed, request legal adjudication of an issue concurrently with preparation of the agenda topic.
- i. Submit, upon final coordination or approval, all issuances to the appropriate authority for signature.
- j. Maintain permanent records on each issuance.

k. Maintain sites for issuance review and voting.

15. The Heads of U.S. Government D/As must:

- a. Ensure their D/A has appropriate representation on WGs.
- b. Ensure their Committee and Subcommittee representatives fully coordinate CNSS issuances within their D/A.
- c. Ensure their D/A provides a coordinated response on all proposed CNSS issuances in accordance with suspense dates established by the Committee, Subcommittees, Working Groups, and the Secretariat.
- d. Ensure timely implementation and dissemination of CNSS policies, directives, and instructions, and other issuances within their D/A.
- e. Ensure that their D/A follows CNSS Compliance and Deferred Compliance Procedures. See CNSSI 900 for Compliance and Deferred Compliance procedures.

Encls:

ANNEX A - CATEGORIES AND NUMBERING FOR CNSS ISSUANCE SYSTEM  
(PAST AND PRESENT)

ANNEX B - VOTING PROCESS FOR ISSUANCES

## ANNEX A

### CATEGORIES AND NUMBERING FOR CNSS ISSUANCE SYSTEM (PAST AND PRESENT)

#### Policies:

INFORMATION ASSURANCE	001-099 (Includes historic INFOSEC)
COMSEC	100-199
COMPUSEC	200-299 (Inactive)
TEMPEST	300-399

#### Directives:

INFORMATION ASSURANCE	500-599 (Includes historic INFOSEC)
COMSEC	600-699
COMPUSEC	700-799 (Inactive)
TEMPEST	800-899
ADMINISTRATIVE	900-999

#### Instructions:

INFORMATION ASSURANCE	1000-2999 (Includes historic INFOSEC)
COMSEC	3000-3999 Systems 4000-4999 General
TELCOM SECURITY	5000-6999
TEMPEST	7000-8999

#### Advisory and Information Memoranda:

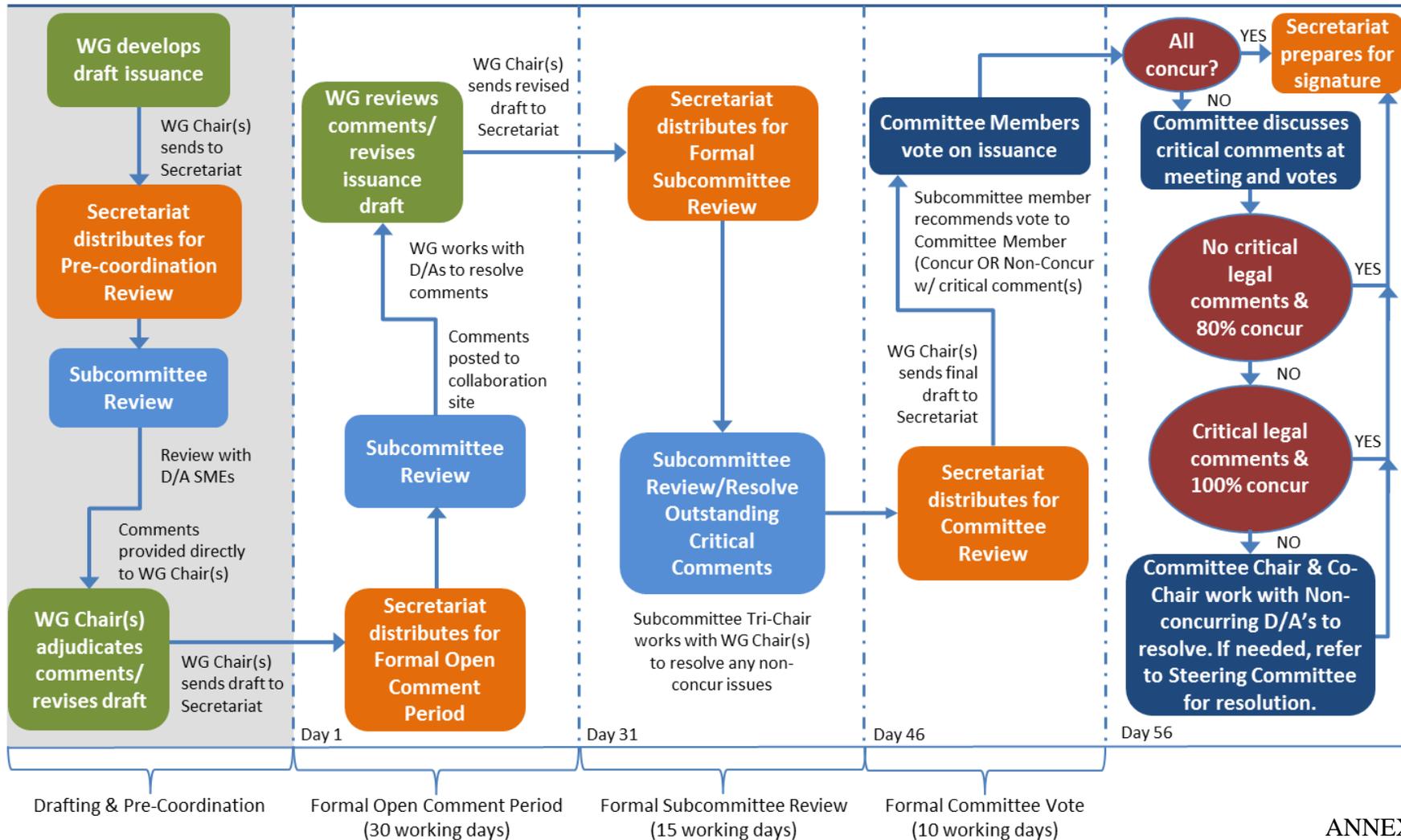
INFORMATION ASSURANCE	- One-up series by year (nn-YR) (Includes historic INFOSEC)
COMSEC	- One-up series by year (nn-YR)
COMPUSEC	- One-up series by year (nn-YR) (Inactive)
TEMPEST	- One-up series by year (nn-YR)

**ANNEX B**  
**VOTING PROCESS FOR ISSUANCES**



ANNEX B-1

# Streamlined CNSS Issuance Review and Voting Process





ANNEX B-2

## Process for Handling Extensive Non-Concurs During Formal Subcommittee Review

