PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION

Information is classified, that is, given a security classification, by the U.S. Government to identify that special information whose unauthorized disclosure could damage the national security. It is very important that classified information be correctly identified as such as soon as it comes into existence. Otherwise, the special precautions necessary to prevent its dissemination to individuals not authorized to receive it will not be implemented, one or more such individuals will probably obtain that information, and our national security will be damaged.

After it has been determined that certain information is classified and the documents or materials containing or revealing that information are appropriately marked, then security requirements to protect that information come into effect. Those subsequent security requirements, which include physical security measures, personnel investigations, and other procedures for protecting classified information while it is stored, used, and transmitted, are expensive. Accordingly, it is important to classify only information that truly requires protection against unauthorized disclosure.

Classified information can be disseminated only to those who "need to know" that information. *Unnecessary* classification of scientific and technical information will prevent its distribution to *all* scientists and engineers in the United States who could use that information. This restriction slows overall national progress in science and technology—an area upon which our national security heavily depends. Unnecessary classification also keeps the citizenry from being fully informed about matters of national significance. This restriction of information is undesirable for our nation, which has as a founding principle the right of (and necessity for) the public to be informed on governmental matters. Finally, unnecessary classification tends to decrease the actual protection for correctly classified information by lessening the credibility of (respect for) classification.

The classification of information, documents, or materials is a complex activity. It is not an exact science but requires subjective determinations (judgments) by classifiers. To reach sound classification decisions, the classifier (1) must be knowledgeable in the field in which the classification decision is made, (2) must be provided with adequate classification guidance, and (3) must understand and apply the principles of classification. A classifier generally acquires knowledge of the field in which he provides classification guidance (e.g., uranium-enrichment technologies) by education, training, and experience. Written classification guidance is provided to a classifier in the form of classification guides. However, a classifier's knowledge of the principles of classification, and how they should be applied to reach classification decisions, is usually acquired only by self-study and on-the-job experience. There is no formal educational program for training classifiers.

A document that broadly covers the classification of information would be very helpful to classifiers in their "self-education and training" and in their preparation of classification guides. Such a document would also assist classification managers in establishing sound classification programs. To the author's knowledge, no single document, or small number of documents, provides background information on classification of information in the United States, describes classification principles, provides guidance in the selection and training of classifiers, presents information to aid in preparing classification guides, discusses employee classification education, and considers other important aspects of classification and of a sound classification program for an organization. This document was prepared in an attempt to remedy that situation and thereby assist classifiers to become better at their jobs and to help classification managers improve their organization's classification program.

This document was written primarily for Department of Energy (DOE) and DOE-contractor personnel who prepare or interpret guidance for the classification of information. However, this document should also be useful to other U.S. Government and Government-contractor employees who are concerned with information classification. The basic classification principles are the same for any government activity.

Since the main emphasis of this document is on classification of information within DOE and its contractors, this document is very much concerned with information classified as Restricted Data or Formerly Restricted Data under the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, as amended, as well as with information classified under Executive Order (currently Executive Order 12958). Further, because of the focus on DOE interests, there is considerably more discussion on the classification of scientific and technical information and material, including hardware, than on military operations information, foreign relations information, intelligence information, or other classified areas of information.

Classification in this document means *security classification*, or classification of information based on the adverse effect that its unauthorized release would have on national security, as contrasted to classification on other bases. The qualifying term *security* has generally been omitted in this document, primarily for reasons of custom and convenience (one less word) but also to minimize possible confusion between the separate and distinct roles of *classification* and *security*. *Security* customarily means *physical security*. Classification personnel decide when information is classified. After that decision, and the appropriate marking of the document or other material that contains or reveals this information, security personnel become responsible for the physical protection of this information.

The author welcomes suggestions for improvements in this document.

ABSTRACT

Certain governmental information must be classified for national-security reasons. The costs to our nation of not classifying information that should be classified for national security reasons can be enormous. However, the national-security benefits from classifying information are usually accompanied by significant costs—those due to a citizenry not fully informed on governmental activities, the extra costs of operating classified programs and procuring classified materials (e.g., weapons), the losses to our nation when advances made in classified programs cannot be utilized in unclassified programs. The goal of a classification system should be to clearly identify that information which must be protected for national-security reasons and to ensure that information not needing such protection is not classified. This document was prepared to help attain that goal.

This document is the first of a planned four-volume work that comprehensively discusses the security-classification of information. This Volume 1 was first issued in 1989 and this is its first revision. Volume 1 broadly describes the need for classification, the basis for classification, and the history of classification in the United States from colonial times until World War II. Classification of information since World War II, under Executive Orders and the Atomic Energy Acts of 1946 and 1954, is discussed in more detail, with particular emphasis on the classification of atomic-energy information. Adverse impacts of classification are also described.

Volume 2, issued in 1993, discussed principles for classification of information. Subsequent volumes will discuss classification management and the control of certain unclassified scientific and technical information.

The principal intended audience for this document is Department of Energy (DOE) and DOE-contractor personnel concerned with the security-classification of information. Classification of scientific and technical information is extensively discussed because this is of major importance within DOE. However, these volumes should be useful to classification personnel in all federal agencies because the basic classification principles are the same for any governmental activity.