

Drafting Cabinet material: Applying a security classification and endorsement

Four Principles

1. You are responsible for handling Cabinet material securely.

Cabinet Material must be kept secure. Familiarise yourself with the additional "Handling Cabinet material" requirements.

2. Cabinet material is only made available to government officials who have a legitimate "need to know".

3. Cabinet material should only be released in accordance with legislative requirements, government policies and directives.

4. The Official Information Act 1982 applies to Cabinet Material

Classifications in themselves do not allow official information to be withheld under the Official Information Act. All requests under the Official Information Act must be considered using the criteria in the Act regardless of the classification given to the document concerned.

Classifications

In Confidence

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Compromise of information would likely prejudice the maintenance of law and order, impede the effective conduct of government in New Zealand or affect adversely the privacy of its citizens.

Sensitive

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Compromise of information would likely cause harm to organisations, damage the interests of New Zealand, or endanger the safety or wellbeing of its citizens.

*'Special Handling Required' endorsement used with Sensitive for material in the public interest/personal privacy area that requires additional protection. **Not in CabNet.***

Restricted

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Compromise of information would likely adversely affect New Zealand's security, defence, or international relations.

Confidential

Compromise of information would likely cause significant (short-term) damage to New Zealand's security, defence or international relations.

Secret

Compromise of information would likely cause extreme (medium-term) damage to New Zealand's security, defence or international relations.

Top Secret

Compromise of information would likely cause catastrophic (longer-term) damage to New Zealand's security, defence or international relations.

Endorsements

Endorsement markings may be used along with security classifications to identify protected information.

Use endorsements only when there is a clear need for special care.

Endorsement markings may indicate:

- the specific nature of information
- temporary sensitivities
- limitations on availability
- how recipients should handle or disclose information.

Cabinet material may carry one or more of these endorsement markings:

- Budget [CabNet]
- Commercial [CabNet]
- Legally Privileged [CabNet]
- Staff [CabNet]
- NZ Eyes Only
- Addressee Only
- Special Handling required