Risk to Classified Information

DEFENSE COUNTERINTELLIGENCE AND SECURITY AGENCY

Categorizing NISPOM Non-Compliances

Severity Categorization

Characterization

FCL Impact

Critical Vulnerability

Classified information has been, or is in imminent risk of being, lost or compromised.

Serious Vulnerability

Classified information is in danger of loss or compromise.

Systemic

Indicates a systemic problem exists throughout the security program or within a specific NISPOM area.

Isolated

Indicates a single non-compliance, including multiple instances of the same non-compliance.

Serious Security Issue

Critical or serious vulnerability that also has an impact on the facility clearance.

Administrative Finding

Classified information is not in danger of loss or compromise.

- All NISPOM non-compliances are categorized as an administrative finding, serious vulnerability, or critical vulnerability. This decision is made after carefully considering evidence and implemented supplementary controls.
- Critical and serious vulnerabilities are further characterized as isolated or systemic. All vulnerabilities are initially characterized as isolated. If three or more related isolated vulnerabilities exist indicating a systemic problem within the overall security program or throughout a NISPOM area, a systemic characterization may be used. Administrative findings have no further characterization.
- Vulnerabilities that require immediate mitigation due to their impact on the contractor's ability to maintain a facility clearance (FCL) are also serious security issues and may result in an FCL invalidation.