



June 1, 2002

MEMORANDUM FOR COMMITTEE MEMBERS  
INTERAGENCY COMMITTEE ON SECURITY EQUIPMENT

FROM: CHAIR *Jeffery Schatz*  
INTERAGENCY COMMITTEE ON SECURITY EQUIPMENT

SUBJECT: Re-certification of GSA Approved Security Containers

The General Services Administration (GSA) has authorized re-labeling of security containers that are missing the General Services Administration Approved label. The conditions and procedures for re-certification and application of a General Services Administration Approved label are contained in the attached policy document. This Re-certification Program was established in response to agency and Government contractor requests. The Program was developed by and coordinated with Federal agencies through the Interagency Committee on Security Equipment.

GSA encourages the inspection of security containers for the presence of the General Services Administration Approved label. If an Approved container is required and the label is not present, the container should be replaced by an Approved container or re-certified in accordance with the procedures.

Questions regarding this program should be directed to GSA to either Jeffery Schatz or Christopher Pollock. They can be reached at (703) 305-6338 or (703) 305-7342, respectively.

Attachment (1)

**Policy Statement:**

Security containers and vault doors shall have a “General Services Administration Approved” label on the front of the equipment in order to be considered equipment approved by the General Services Administration (GSA) for the purpose of storing national security information.

Containers that were originally GSA approved, but that do not have the original manufacturer’s labels, may be re-certified and re-labeled through a re-certification inspection by a qualified inspector. Containers with a GSA Approved re-certification label will be considered equipment approved by GSA for storing national security information.

Containers that have been modified from the original manufacturer’s product, damaged or improperly opened may not be re-certified unless they have been returned to their original condition through replacement of parts with new or salvaged, OEM parts or repaired in accordance with Federal Standard 809.

**Background:**

In coordination with Federal agencies, GSA developed the re-certification program to provide a means for government users and government contractors to replace missing GSA labels and utilize security equipment when the equipment is inspected and determined to conform to security and safety standards.

The Directive on Safeguarding Classified National Security Information which implements Executive Order 12958 states under Section IV “The Administrator of General Services shall, in coordination with agency heads originating classified information, establish and publish uniform standards, specifications and supply schedules for security equipment designed to provide secure storage for and destruction of classified information.” The Directive further states Top Secret and Secret materials shall be stored “...in a GSA-approved security container...” (Review the Directive for additional requirements or alternatives.) The evidence that security containers, modular vaults, and vault doors meet the specifications for GSA approval is the General Services Administration Approved label on the front of the equipment. Labels are applied at the time of manufacture by the original equipment manufacturer (OEM).

Until now, there has been no process for replacing GSA approval labels on security containers and vault doors originally approved by GSA for the storage of classified material. The labels may be missing from the container or vault door for a variety of reasons. The most common reasons are: the container or door may have been opened/repared in an unauthorized manner, the glue dried out and the label fell off, or a custodian removed the label without realizing their importance. Regardless of the reason for the labels absence, the user does not know if the container provides the intended level of security.

In addition, some federal or contractor security managers have in their possession containers or vault doors that have left government control or were the possession of other government agencies. Containers from outside of the security system have increased probability of having been damaged, improperly repaired or modified from the approved design. Containers with GSA approval labels are

often turned into excess property programs when they no longer meet activity or security requirements and the excess programs do not screen the products. This may lead a security manager to question their security integrity even though they still have a GSA approval label.

To assist the users of the containers and vault doors in determining if security equipment is in proper condition to store classified information, GSA has developed a re-certification program.

The objective of the re-certification program is to provide a means for government users and government contractors to replace missing GSA labels and utilize security equipment when the equipment is inspected and determined to conform to security and safety standards.

The program consists of a training course that instructs government and civilian personnel in the approved methods of opening, repairing and inspecting GSA approved containers and vault doors. The graduates of these classes will be able to inspect the containers and vault doors and provide replacement labels if the equipment meets the required security standards. The inspectors will be provided refresher courses periodically, and will be kept up to date on newly developed information affecting the inspections. The replacement labels are tracked so audits can be done to ensure inspections are performed properly.