



Sensitive Information in the Case File

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Beware of the PII (personally identifiable information), SSI (sensitive security information), FOUO (for official use only) information, and LES (law enforcement sensitive) information that finds its way into a violation case file. Remember that inclusion of such information is often not “evidence” necessary to support an alleged violation. If it is not necessary, it may be omitted from the case file. But if you do include such information in a violation case file, know the policies concerning the public release of the information and comply with them to ensure that the civil penalty process may proceed without delay. Failure to comply will cause the violation case file to be returned for corrective action.

Why? Because the charged party gets a copy of the violation case file and that means all information contained within the file will be released to the party. If you include information that requires authorization from the originator or other authority before public release, the violation case file must contain evidence that the information has received proper authorization for release. You should consult program managers, message traffic, and applicable manuals for instruction on handling these types of information:

SSI is related to maritime security activities such as security plans, maritime security directives and certain NVICs. It also includes information obtained or developed in the conduct of transportation security activities.

PII is information about an individual that can be used to distinguish or trace an individual’s identity such as social security number, name, date and place of birth, biometric record data and so on.

FOUO is unclassified information of a sensitive nature and which the unauthorized disclosure could adversely affect a person's welfare or privacy, conduct of a federal program, or operations essential to the national interest. Generally release of this material requires authorization from the originator.

LES includes materials that reveal law enforcement investigative methods or policies/procedures, reveal official law enforcement or regulatory functions, or reveal sensitive Coast Guard operations.