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CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF MANUAL

J-3

DISTRIBUTION: A, B, C, S

CJCSM 3150.29F

3 November 2023

(U) CODE WORD, NICKNAME, AND EXERCISE TERM SYSTEM

References:

See Enclosure D.

1. (U) Purpose. This manual establishes standard administrative procedures for the assignment and management of code words, nicknames, and exercise terms, collectively referred to as "NICKA" terms, contained in the NICKA report in accordance with (IAW) the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff's (CJCS's) responsibilities in reference a to provide military guidance in the preparation of detailed plans. The NICKA system fulfills the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) requirement for Joint Staff maintenance of Department of Defense (DoD) NICKA data to support Special Access Program naming IAW reference b. NICKA administrative and security procedures are detailed in Enclosure A.
2. (U) Superseded/Cancellation. CJCS Manual (CJCSM) 3150.29E, "Code Word, Nicknames, and Exercise Terms (NICKA) System," 16 August 2013 is superseded.
3. (U) Applicability
 - a. (U) This manual applies to the Joint Staff, Combatant Commands (CCMDs), Services, OSD, and agencies listed in Enclosure B.
 - b. (U) NICKA naming conventions do not apply to reconnaissance nicknames. The governing publication for reconnaissance nicknames is reference c. The office of primary responsibility (OPR) for reconnaissance nicknames is the Joint Staff Deputy Directorate for Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance Operations, J-32. Additionally, NICKA does not apply to the naming of voice call signs (reference d).
4. (U) Procedures. See Enclosure A.

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5. (U) Summary of Changes

- a. (U) Updates organization name listings and acronyms.
- b. (U) Restructures block assignments to accommodate the stand up of U.S. Cyber Command (USCYBERCOM), U.S. Space Force (USSF), and U.S. Space Command (USSPACECOM).
- c. (U) Removes code word block assignments (code words are randomly assigned by the NICKA database).
- d. (U) Combines numerical assignments and alphabetical combinations into one table (Enclosure C).

~~6. (U) Releasability. LIMITED/NOT APPROVED FOR PUBLIC RELEASE. This directive is approved for .mil/.gov access only on the Non-classified Internet Protocol Router Network (NIPRNET). DoD components (including the CCMDs) and other federal agencies may obtain copies of this directive through controlled access at the following address:~~

~~(b)(6)~~

~~DoD components may also obtain access via the Secret Internet Protocol Router Network (SIPRNET) Directives Electronic Library website.~~

7. (U) Effective Date. This MANUAL is effective upon signature.

For the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff:

Michael L. Downs

MICHAEL L. DOWNS, Maj Gen, USAF
Vice Director, Joint Staff

Enclosures:

- A - (U) NICKA Administrative and Security Procedures
- B - (U) Authorized NICKA User Agencies
- C - (U) Nickname and Exercise Term Alphabetical Block
Assignments/Combinations
- D - (U) References
- GL - (U) Glossary



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(U) DISTRIBUTION

(U) Distribution A, B, C plus the following:

- (U) Defense Logistics Agency
- (U) Defense Counterintelligence Security Agency
- (U) National Guard Bureau
- (U) National Geospatial Intelligence Agency
- (U) National Security Agency/Central Security Service
- (U) Office of the Secretary of Defense
- (U) U.S. Coast Guard
- (U) White House Military Office





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OPR for the subject directive has chosen electronic distribution to the above organizations via e-mail. The Joint Staff Information Management Division has responsibility for publishing the subject directive to the SIPRNET and NIPRNET Joint Electronic Library websites.





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ENCLOSURE A

(U) NICKA ADMINISTRATIVE AND SECURITY PROCEDURES

1. (U) General

a. (U) The Joint Staff Deputy Directorate for Nuclear and Homeland Defense Operations, J-36, as the OPR for the NICKA System:

(1) (U) Allocates code words or blocks of nicknames and exercise terms to authorized NICKA users on behalf of the DoD Chief Information Officer.

(2) (U) Adjudicates the use of NICKA terms that may be perceived as controversial.

(3) (U) Maintains the list of authorized user organizations.

(4) (U) Serves as the approval authority for NICKA transaction prioritized above "Routine" and for assignment of nicknames and exercise terms after declaration of worldwide defense readiness condition (DEFCON) 3 or higher.

(5) (U) Provides necessary guidance to the Commander, Joint Staff Support Center (JSSC) for day-to-day management of NICKA activities.

b. (U) Authorized NICKA user agencies:

(1) (U) Request allocation of NICKA terms and may reallocate available NICKA terms within their organization IAW individual policies and procedures, subject to applicable rules set forth herein.

(2) (U) Submit requests to JSSC NICKA personnel via phone or email to activate/request, cancel, and otherwise manage, as required, the lifecycle of their organizations' NICKA data. Contact information is in paragraph 1.c.(3).

(3) (U) Designate primary and alternate points of contact (POCs) responsible for executing requests related to NICKA and interacting with the Joint Staff J-36 and JSSC NICKA administrators. These POCs should be updated as personnel changes occur and reported to JSSC NICKA administrators. Contact information is in paragraph 1.c.(3).

(4) (U) Maintain local records of activated code words, nicknames, and exercise terms.

Enclosure A



(5) (U) Direct, as necessary, supplemental or implementing procedures for their agency.

c. (U) Commander, JSSC:

(1) (U) Recommends changes to the list of authorized NICKA agencies and NICKA term block assignments to the OPR for this manual.

(2) (U) Administers, maintains, synchronizes, and secures the NICKA database (primary and continuity of operations) and responds to authorized NICKA user agency requests.

(3) ~~(CUH)~~ Provides 24/7 help desk support to authorized user organizations.

1. (U) Phone (Defense Switched Network (DSN)): (b)(6)

2. (U) Phone (Secure): (b)(6)

3. ~~(CUH)~~ Email (NIPRNET): (b)(6)

(b)(6) Subject Line: "NICKA Request"

4. ~~(CUH)~~ Email (SIPRNET): (b)(6)

(b)(6) Subject Line: "NICKA Request"

5. ~~(CUH)~~ Website (SIPRNET): (b)(6)

(b)(6)

2. (U) NICKA Request and Update Procedures

a. ~~(CUH)~~ To request a new code word, nickname, or exercise term or to update an existing status, agency OPRs shall contact JSSC NICKA personnel. DoD components will attempt to de-conflict terms if they become aware of a conflict between a non-DoD official term and a DoD nickname, exercise term, or code word. If a term cannot be de-conflicted, DoD components should notify Joint Staff J-36 at the DSN phone number (b)(6)

b. (U) Nickname and exercise term reporting will be suspended after declaration of worldwide DEFCON 3 or higher.

c. (U) The NICKA database does not store meanings of activated terms but establishes a record of terms to maintain uniqueness.

Enclosure A

3. (U) Code Words. A code word is a single word, assigned a classified meaning, to safeguard information pertaining to real-world military plans or operations. When requested by an authorized user agency, the NICKA database manager will generate, assign, and permanently file the requested code word in the NICKA stand-alone database. Once activated, code words are classified confidential or higher. Code words may not be created or changed by users.

4. (U) Nicknames

a. (U) Nicknames are not required but may be assigned to real-world events, projects, movement of forces, or exercise activities. This can involve elements of information at any security classification level; however, the nickname itself, the description or meaning it represents, and the relationship of the nickname and its meaning must remain unclassified. A nickname is only an identifier and is not designed to achieve any particular security purpose (reference e).

b. ~~(CU)~~ Nicknames will consist of two separate words. The first word must begin with one of the two-letter combinations assigned to an authorized NICKA user agency. These letter ranges are used to form the first two letters of the first word of a nickname. The second word has no restrictions. For example, Enclosure C assigns the two-letter range of "GG" to "GL" to U.S. Strategic Command (USSTRATCOM). The first word of a new USSTRATCOM nickname must begin with any of the following 2 letters: GG, GH, GI, GJ, GK, or GL (e.g., "Ghost" for the first word with an unrestricted second word such as "Pilot").

c. (U) On a case-by-case basis, a CCMD component may request use of a 2-letter designator from their parent Service instead of their supported CCMD. For example, an air exercise conducted by Air Forces Central Command may request a term from the U.S. Air Force (USAF) rather than from U.S. Central Command (USCENTCOM).

d. (U) Improperly selected nicknames can be counterproductive. Nicknames must be chosen with sufficient care to ensure they do not:

(1) (U) Express a degree of hostile temperament inconsistent with traditional American ideals or current foreign policy.

(2) (U) Convey connotations that could be offensive to good taste or appear to be derogatory to a particular group, sect, or creed.

Enclosure A



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(3) (U) Convey connotations offensive to U.S. allies or democratic free world nations.

e. (U) The following will NOT be used as nicknames:

(1) (U) Any two-word combination voice call sign found in reference d.

(2) (U) Combination of words using “project,” “exercise,” and/or “operation.”

(3) (U) Words that may be correctly used as either one word or two, such as “moonlight.”

(4) (U) Exotic words, trite expressions, well-known commercial trademarks, or popular cultural references.

(5) (U) Two-word combinations that include a code word as part of the combination.

f. (U) Any nickname that has been placed in an “inactive” status cannot be re-used. Inactive nicknames are kept in the NICKA database for historical purposes to prevent re-use.

g. (U) Nicknames for high-visibility operations or projects that may be perceived as controversial or volatile by senior leadership must be vetted through the Joint Staff J-36/National and Nuclear Command, Control, and Communications (N2C3) Division prior to activation or registration.

5. (U) Exercise Terms

a. (U) Exercise terms are only assigned to tests, drills, or exercises for the purpose of emphasizing that the event is not a test or drill and a real-world operation. The selection of exercise terms will follow the same guidance provided for nicknames as described in paragraphs 3.b–3.f. above.

b. (U) Like nicknames, the NICKA database does not store meanings of exercise terms. Exercise terms that have been placed in an “inactive” status cannot be re-used but remain stored in the database for historical purposes to maintain uniqueness and prevent re-use. The exercise term, the description or meaning it represents, and the relationship of the exercise term and its meaning must remain unclassified.

6. (U) Records and Reporting

Enclosure A



a. (U) DoD components and the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy will maintain local records on all NICKA terms within their assigned blocks whether active, available, inactive, or canceled. Code words, nicknames, and exercise terms may be deleted from local records two years after cancellation. The terms will not be deleted from the NICKA system, but will be preserved for historical purposes to ensure NICKA terms are not reused or re-activated once canceled. The associated purpose and meanings of the terms in the database are not retained.

b. ~~(CUH)~~ DoD components will annually review and verify the status of active code words, nicknames, and exercise terms in their portion of the NICKA database as well as current NICKA OPRs. Commands may request a hard copy of their portion of the database from the Joint Staff J-36/N2C3 Division DSN at (b)(6). Any required information changes or updates to the database to include current agency NICKA OPR, contact phone numbers (DSN and commercial), and e-mail addresses (NIPRNET and SIPRNET) will be reported to Joint Staff J-36/N2C3 Division and the JSSC.

7. (U) Security. Agency NICKA OPRs will assign the appropriate security classification to each term IAW the following guidelines:

a. (U) Code Words

(1) (U) During the development of a plan or the planning of an operation, a code word and its meaning will have the same classification. When necessary to facilitate plan implementation or execution by other DoD components or echelons, the using component, with the approval of the code word owner, may downgrade the term to a lower classification than assigned to its meaning; however, it must remain classified while the plan is current or the operation is being executed. For example, if the meaning of the code word is classified top secret, the code word could be downgraded to a secret or confidential classification with the approval of the code word owner.

(2) (U) The meaning of a code word may only be used in a message or other document together with the code word when essential.

(3) (U) In handling correspondence pertaining to active code words, care will be used to avoid bringing the code words and their meanings together.

(4) (U) The names of the DoD components that activate code words, nicknames, and exercise terms will be entered with the terms in the database. The meanings of code words are not normally maintained in the NICKA database.

Enclosure A

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(5) (U) A code word that must be replaced by another code word because of compromise, suspected compromise, or for another legitimate reason will be canceled, declassified, and kept as controlled unclassified information (~~CU~~) under the operations security (OPSEC) ~~CU~~ category.

(6) (U) When an operation is completed or a plan is discontinued and is not replaced by a similar operation or plan, but the meaning cannot be declassified, the code word assigned to it will be canceled and remain classified.

(7) (U) When the meaning of a code word no longer requires a security classification, the using component may declassify the meaning and the code word, keeping the latter ~~CU~~ under the OPSEC ~~CU~~ category.

(8) (U) In every case, when a code word is referred to in written text, the security classification of the code word will be placed in parentheses immediately following the code word itself, ex. "Code Word (~~S~~)."

(9) (U) Even inactive or canceled code words must not be discussed over unclassified communications media.

b. (U) Nicknames. Nicknames will remain unclassified or ~~CU~~.

c. (U) Exercise Terms. Exercise terms will remain unclassified or ~~CU~~.

d. (U) Cancellation. Code words, nicknames, and exercise terms will be canceled when they no longer serve a useful purpose. Requests for cancellation will be forwarded to JSSC to update the NICKA database.

Enclosure A

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ENCLOSURE B

(U) AUTHORIZED NICKA USER AGENCIES

(U) U.S. Africa Command (USAFRICOM)
(U) USCENTCOM
(U) USCYBERCOM
(U) U.S. European Command (USEUCOM)
(U) U.S. Indo-Pacific Command (USINDOPACOM)
(U) U.S. Northern Command (USNORTHCOM) and North American
Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD)
(U) U.S. Special Operations Command (USSOCOM)
(U) U.S. Southern Command (USSOUTHCOM)
(U) USSPACECOM
(U) USSTRATCOM
(U) U.S. Transportation Command (USTRANSCOM)
(U) USAF
(U) U.S. Army (USA)
(U) U.S. Marine Corps (USMC)
(U) U.S. Navy (USN)
(U) USSF
(U) Defense Counterintelligence Security Agency (DCSA)
(U) Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA)
(U) Defense Information Systems Agency (DISA)
(U) Defense Logistics Agency (DLA)
(U) Defense Threat Reduction Agency (DTRA)
(U) Joint Staff
(U) National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency (NGA)
(U) National Security Agency/Central Security Service (NSA/CSS)
(U) OSD
(U) U.S. Coast Guard
(U) National Guard Bureau
(U) White House Military Office

(U) NOTE: All NORAD requests will be handled IAW the same guidance as a USNORTHCOM nickname and/or exercise transaction within the NICKA database.



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Enclosure B



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ENCLOSURE C

(U) NICKNAME AND EXERCISE TERM ALPHABETICAL BLOCK
ASSIGNMENTS/COMBINATIONS



USERS	ASSIGNED ALPHABETICAL BLOCKS
USAFRICOM	JS-JZ, NS-NZ, OA-OF, UM-UR
USCENTCOM	EA-EF, IM-IR, NA-NF
USCYBERCOM	AG-AL, ES-EZ, SM-SR (except the term "Space"), CY
USEUCOM	AS-AZ, FG-FL, NM-NR, SG-SL
USINDOPACOM	BA-BF, FM-FR, KA-KF, TA-TF, VA-VF
USNORTHCOM/NORAD	AM-AR (except the term "Apollo"), FA-FF, JM-JR, QG-QL, VG-VL
USSOCOM	AA-AF, BM-BR, EM-ER, GA-GF, JA-JF, KM-KR
USSOUTHCOM	BG-BL, FS-FZ, KG-KL, QM-QR
USSPACECOM	WS-WZ, YS-YZ, ZG-ZL, ZM-ZR, ZS-ZZ (plus the term "Apollo")
USSTRATCOM	BS-BZ, GG-GL, KS-KZ, OG-OL, YM-YR
USTRANSCOM	PS-PZ, TS-TZ, UG-UL, VM-VR, WM-WR, YG-YL
USAF	CM-CR, HA-HF, LM-LR, PA-PF, GR-RL, SA-SF
USA	CA-CF, GM-GR, LA-LF, OM-OR, QS-QZ, RM-RR, TM-TR, UA-UF, US-UZ, WG-WL
USMC	CS-CX, CZ, HG-HL, LS-LZ, PG-PL
USN	CG-CL, GS-GZ, LG-LL, OS-OZ, RA-RF, RS-RZ
USSF	VS-VZ (plus the terms "Space" and "Polaris")



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DCSA	YA-YF
DIA	DM-DR, IA-IF, MM-MR, SS-SZ
DISA	DS-DZ, IG-IL, MS-MZ
DLA	JG-JL
DTRA	DG-DL, HS-HZ, MG-ML
Joint Staff	EG-EL, IS-IZ, NG-NL, PM-PR (except the term "Polaris")
NGA	QA-QF, WA-WF
NSA/CSS	DA-DF, HM-HR, MA-MF
OSD	TG-TL, ZA-ZF

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(U) NOTE: Block assignments will be made as requests are received for authorized users not listed.

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ENCLOSURE D

(U) REFERENCES

- a. (U) DoD Directive 5100.01, "Functions of the Department of Defense and Its Major Components," 21 December 2010, incorporating Change 1, effective 17 September 2020
- b. (U) DoD Instruction 5205.11, "Management, Administration, and Oversight of DoD Special Access Programs (SAPs)," 6 February 2013, incorporating Change 2, effective 4 February 2020
- c. (U) CJCS Instruction 3250.01F, "(U) Policy Guidance for Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance and Sensitive Reconnaissance Operations," 7 August 2019
- d. (U) Joint Army-Navy-Air Force Publication 119(M), "Joint Voice Call Sign Book," October 2004
- e. (U) DoD Manual 5200.1, Volume 3, "DoD Information Security Program: Protection of Classified Information," 24 February 2012, incorporating Change 3, 28 July 2020



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Enclosure D

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(U) GLOSSARY

(U) CCMD	Combatant Command
(U) CJCS	Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff
(U) CJCSM	Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Manual
(U) CUI	controlled unclassified information
(U) DCSA	Defense Counterintelligence Security Agency
(U) DEFCON	defense readiness condition
(U) DIA	Defense Intelligence Agency
(U) DISA	Defense Information Systems Agency
(U) DLA	Defense Logistics Agency
(U) DoD	Department of Defense
(U) DSN	Defense Switched Network
(U) DTRA	Defense Threat Reduction Agency
(U) IAW	in accordance with
(U) JSSC	Joint Staff Support Center
(U) N2C3	National and Nuclear Command, Control, and Communications Division
(U) NGA	National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency
(U) NICKA	code word, nickname, and exercise term system
(U) NIPRNET	Non-classified Internet Protocol Router Network
(U) NORAD	North American Aerospace Defense Command
(U) NSA/CSS	National Security Agency/Central Security Service
(U) OPR	office of primary responsibility
(U) OPSEC	operations security
(U) OSD	Office of the Secretary of Defense
(U) SIPRNET	Secret Internet Protocol Router Network
(U) USA	U.S. Army
(U) USAF	U.S. Air Force
(U) USAFRICOM	U.S. Africa Command
(U) USCENTCOM	U.S. Central Command
(U) USCYBERCOM	U.S. Cyber Command
(U) USEUCOM	U.S. European Command
(U) USINDOPACOM	U.S. Indo-Pacific Command
(U) USMC	U.S. Marine Corps
(U) USN	U.S. Navy





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(U) USNORTHCOM	U.S. Northern Command
(U) USSF	U.S. Space Force
(U) USSOCOM	U.S. Special Operations Command
(U) USSOUTHCOM	U.S. Southern Command
(U) USSPACECOM	U.S. Space Command
(U) USSTRATCOM	U.S. Strategic Command
(U) USTRANSCOM	U.S. Transportation Command

