

## What Can You Do?

There are many countries and organizations that would like to harm Americans and degrade our influence in the world. It's possible, and not unprecedented, for spouses and family members of U.S. military personnel to be targeted for intelligence collection. This is true in the United States and especially true overseas! What can you do?

### Be Alert

Foreign governments and organizations collect significant amounts of useful information by using spies. A foreign agent may use a variety of approaches to befriend someone and get sensitive information. This sensitive information can be critical to the success of a terrorist or spy, and consequently deadly to Americans.

### Be Careful

There may be times when your spouse cannot talk about the specifics of his or her job. It's very important to conceal and protect certain information such as flight schedules, ship movements, temporary duty (TDY) locations, and installation activities, for example. Something as simple as a phone discussion about where your spouse is deploying, or going TDY, can be very useful to our enemies.

*"OPSEC is a vital element in protecting the Army's soldiers and missions, and I want to stress how vital a role every member of the team plays in ensuring that we deny our adversaries potentially useful information."*

*"Whether we are on duty or off duty, we cannot afford to let our guard down. Your diligence in OPSEC is key to ensuring our effectiveness in operations and our collective safety. Together, we will succeed."*

*Maj. Gen. Keith B. Alexander  
Commanding General  
U.S. Army Intelligence and  
Security Command*



### Thank You

Thank you for taking the time to read this guide. Our goal is to provide you with a greater understanding of the Army's security concerns. The information in this guide is not intended to frighten you or make you suspicious that everyone you meet is a secret agent or terrorist. But stay alert – if a stranger shows excessive interest in the affairs of your family members, military or not, notify the authorities.

# OPSEC

## OPERATIONS SECURITY



# A Guide For Family and Friends

Presented by

1<sup>st</sup> Information Operations  
Command (Land),  
Vulnerability Assessment  
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OPSEC Section



## What Is OPSEC?

Operations Security, or OPSEC, is keeping potential adversaries from discovering our critical information. As the name suggests, it protects our operations – planned, in progress, and those completed. Success depends on secrecy and surprise, so the military can accomplish the mission faster and with less risk. Our adversaries want our information, and they don't concentrate on only soldiers to get it. They want you, the family member.



## You Are A Vital Player In Our Success!

As a family member of our military community, you are a vital player in our success, and we couldn't do our job without your support. You may not know it, but you also play a crucial role in ensuring your loved one's safety. You can protect your family and friends by protecting what you know of the military's day-to-day operations. That's OPSEC.



## Protecting Critical Information

Even though information may not be secret, it can be what we call "critical information." Critical information deals with specific facts about military intentions, capabilities, operations or activities. If an adversary knew this detailed information, our mission accomplishment and personnel safety could be jeopardized. It must be protected to ensure an adversary doesn't gain a significant advantage.

By being a member of the military family, you will often know some bits of critical information. Do not discuss them outside of your immediate family and especially not over the telephone.

## Examples Of Critical Information

- Detailed information about the mission of assigned units.
- Details on locations and times of unit deployments.
- Personnel transactions that occur in large numbers (Example: pay information, powers of attorney, wills, deployment information).
- References to trends in unit morale or personnel problems.
- Details concerning security procedures.

## Puzzle Pieces

These bits of information may seem insignificant. However, to a trained adversary, they are small pieces of a puzzle that highlight what we're doing and planning. Remember, the elements of security and surprise are vital to the accomplishment of our goals and our collective personnel protection.

- Where and how you discuss this information is just as important as with whom you discuss it. Adversary agents tasked with collecting information frequently visit some of the same stores, clubs, recreational areas, or places of worship as you do.
- Determined individuals can easily collect data from cordless and cellular phones, and even baby monitors, using inexpensive receivers available from local electronics stores.
- If anyone, especially a foreign national, persistently seeks information, notify your military sponsor immediately. He or she will notify the unit OPSEC program manager.

### OPSEC IS A FAMILY AFFAIR.

*All Family Members Are Part Of  
The Army's OPSEC Team. They Need  
To Protect Information To Ensure The  
Safety Of All Our Soldiers, Civilians,  
And Army Families.*

**DISCUSS OPSEC WITH YOUR FAMILY**