

CLASSIFICATION

**READ-AHEAD FOR SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
OR DEPUTY SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
PC, Bilat, Meeting on [Topic]
Date, Time in Regular Time, Room Location via SVTC or Zoom**

From: Name, Title (for SD/DSD must be ASD or higher)

Meeting Purpose: Articulate reason(s) for and desired outcome(s) of the meeting; 2-3 lines maximum. In general, “discuss” is not a sufficient desired outcome. This section can be deleted for NSC-hosted meetings.

Attendees: List all attendees. Can be title only if well known (e.g., USDP, CJCS). If external agency or foreign counterpart list name and title, attach bios. This section can be deleted for NSC-hosted meetings.

Background and Key Issues.

- **Issue 1.** Format Matters - use simple, straightforward issue/topic titles. Consistency helps senior leaders process materials more efficiently because they know where to find information.
 - Sentences should be pithy and concise. Portion mark every bullet, insert two spaces after a portion marking.
 - All bullets should be 3 lines or less. Background and Key Issues may be a maximum of 4 pages; Talking Points may be a maximum of 2 pages.
 - Use Times New Roman, 12-pitch, two spaces after a period, and the oxford comma.
- **Issue 2.** Link issues to the purpose - what does the Principal need to know about what happened before this meeting and why we are having it now?
 - Each issue should be linked to the meeting purpose, desired outcomes, and grouped / sequenced in the anticipated order of discussion. For NSC meetings, use the agenda to organize.
 - Describe the issue, articulate the DoD position. Identify the key issues for THIS meeting.
 - Bureaucratic State of Play. Explain key stakeholders views, positions and where the issue is currently in the process. For example, provide a brief summary of previous Deputies Committee meetings/bilats /DMAG/DWCs etc and X, Y, and Z.
- ***If Raised Topic.*** “If Raised” issues should be grouped logically, preferably consolidated under the related topic or under one heading.

Classified By/Derived From:
Reason(s):
Declassify By:
Prepared By: Name, Office
Phone Number:

Controlled by:
CUI Category(ies):
Limited Dissemination Control:
POC:

CLASSIFICATION

(Depending on classification, use the appropriate declassification instructions and/or CUI designation indicator)

Non-Concurs/Alternate Viewpoints. *(By exception)*

- If needed (and not already covered in the bureaucratic state of play), identify whether there is significant intra-DoD or interagency divergence, potential landmines, or alternate viewpoints. Provide counterpoints, if appropriate. If a stakeholder concurs with comment or has a different view explain concisely and provide a counterargument.
 - OPRs are not required to achieve consensus, but OPRs are accountable for fair representation of divergent views. Therefore, please make certain to fully coordinate with all relevant DoD stakeholders in advance of submission.

Attachment(s)

TAB A – Talking Points - always go at TAB A, no exceptions. All meetings require a run of show and talking points.

TAB B – Agenda or slides, if relevant.

TAB C – Additional Background as needed (e.g., DC SoC, white paper, etc)

TAB D – Coordination (GC coordination required)

**TALKING POINTS FOR SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
PC, Bilat, Meeting on [Topic]
Date, Time in Regular Time, Room Location via SVTC or Zoom**

Run of Show.

- Title – Topic
- For example: SD – Opening comments
- CJCS – Operational overview
- USDP – Policy considerations
- *Note:* For NSC-led meetings, this section should be taken directly from the agenda and should include the Department/Agency expected to contribute on those topics. For example, “Intelligence Update – DNI”.

Strategic Framing Points

- Provide 3-5 talking points the Secretary or Deputy Secretary will use to begin his/her engagement, articulate the context for the meeting, and frame the discussion for the issues below.

Key Issues.

- **Issue 1.** Each talking point should be no more than three lines in length, and preferably are only two lines each.
 - Underline (but do not highlight) key phrases or parts of the talking points.
 - Talking points should be written in full sentences and be ready for the Principal to speak.
 - Use Times New Roman, 14-pitch, two spaces after a period.
- **Issue 2.** Do not reiterate content from the background section in the talking points.