



GSA Public Buildings Service

PBS Instructional Letter-PBS-IL-02-1

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MEMORANDUM FOR HEADS OF SERVICES AND STAFF OF ICES  
REGIONAL ADMINISTRATORS

ASSISTANT REGIONAL ADMINISTRATORS  
PUBLIC BUILDINGS SERVICE

FROM

F. JOSEPH MORAVEC  
COMMISSIONER

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "F. Moravec", written over the printed name of the Commissioner.

SUBJECT

Implementation of the Interagency Security Committee Security  
Design Criteria for New Federal Office Buildings and Major  
Modernization Projects

- (1) Purpose: This order provides for the implementation of the Interagency Security Committee Security Design Criteria for New Federal Office Buildings and Major Modernization Projects within GSA.
- (2) Background: On June 28, 1995, the President issued a memorandum to executive branch departments and agencies requiring the adherence to the Department of Justice (DOJ) study entitled, "Vulnerability Assessment of Federal Facilities." This DOJ study, in part, called for the establishment of an Interagency Security Committee to provide a permanent body to address continuing government-wide security for Federal facilities. On October 19, 1995, the Interagency Security Committee (ISC) was created by Executive Order (EO) 12977. EO 12977 designates the Administrator of General Services Administration as the chair of the ISC. The Administrator has designated the Assistant Commissioner of the Federal Protective Service to act for the General Services Administration in Committee functions. Section 5, paragraphs (a3)(B)(C) and (D) of EO 12977 identify specific duties that pertain to the assessment of technology and information systems as a means to providing cost-effective improvements in security in Federal buildings, the development of long-term construction standards for those locations with threat levels or missions that require blast resistant structures or other specialized security requirements, and the evaluation of standards for the location of, and special security related to, day care centers.

In response to these specific duties, GSA and the ISC's Long-Term Construction Standards Working Committee wrote the draft Security Design Criteria in 1996. On January 17, 1997, GSA adopted a working version of this draft document. This working version was then issued to GSA regional offices and members of the ISC to permit quick updates for ongoing research developments. This working document remained in effect until January 1998, when GSA and the ISC Long-Term Construction Standards Working Committee met to update and re-write the draft document. This re-write was completed in August 1998, and sent to each ISC member agency for final review. The ISC unanimously approved the new document in November 1998. In June 1999, the final approval process was completed after the Office of Management and Budget and the National Security Council provided their concurrence for the document.

The new document is now designated as the "Interagency Security Committee Security Design Criteria for New Federal Office Buildings and Major Modernization Projects," and is dated May 28, 2001.

- (3) Requirements: The DOJ study identifies the minimum-security standards that GSA will adhere to for all existing owned and leased Federal facilities. The ISC Security Design Criteria pertains to all new Federal Office Buildings and Major Modernization Projects. It takes into consideration technology developments, new cost consideration, the experience of practitioners applying the criteria, and the need to balance security requirements with public building environments that remain lively, open, and accessible.
- (4) Applicability: This order applies to all PBS regional and field offices that administer, manage, or perform planning, repair and alteration, real estate, physical security or design and construction functions, as well as those agencies that perform the functions under a delegation of authority from GSA. This order also applies to all GSA contractor and/or consulting firms performing a service to GSA. The ISC Security Design Criteria apply to new construction of general purpose office buildings and new or lease-construction of courthouses occupied by Federal employees in the United States and not under the jurisdiction and/or control of the Department of Defense. The criteria also apply to lease-constructed projects being submitted to Congress for appropriations or authorization. Where prudent and appropriate, the criteria apply to major modernization projects.

The criteria does not apply to airports, prisons, hospitals, clinics, and ports of entry, or to unique facilities such as those classified by the DOJ Vulnerability Assessment Study as Level V. Nor will the criteria overrule existing Federal laws and statutes, and other agency standards that have been developed for special facilities, such as border stations and child care centers.

Assistant Commissioners in the Central Office and Assistant Regional Administrators, Public Buildings Service, shall implement the ISC Security Design Criteria within their respective programs.

The Office of the Chief Architect shall provide guidance for specific design approaches on individual projects.

- (5) Implementation Guidelines: GSA will apply the provisions of the ISC Security Design Criteria on all GSA controlled facilities by means of conducting a thorough and comprehensive decision making process that is applied on a building-by-building basis. The decision process factors information that is gathered from a multitude of sources (risk assessment, threat vulnerability analysis, architectural and engineering evaluation and recommendation(s), and detailed design and construction costs) so that the final protective measures employed at any facility reflect the best decision possible. As an example, throughout the planning and design stages for a new office building, considerations and constraints, such as site characteristics, physical security assessments, cost estimates, and environmental conditions, may lead to a decision to modify the final criteria selected for the new construction. Part I of the ISC Security Design Criteria outlines this process thoroughly.

Special attention is to be given to the benchmarking construction cost process during the design development process. This includes the concepts phase through and including the construction document phase. The benchmarking process will serve as the project's cost planning control mechanism prior to OMB and Congressional Approvals.

- (6) Appeals: For those instances where decisions cannot be reached within the design team, the respective Assistant Regional Administrator (ARA), Public Buildings Service, will serve as the appellate level. The appellate ARA will then, in concert with the Office of the Chief Architect, review all pertinent information and render a final decision.
- (7) Effective: The requirements of this order are effective upon date of this order.