



Izaak Vincent Kemp

- Earned a PhD in Electrical Engineering from the University of Dayton
- Employed at the Air Force Research Laboratory (AFRL) and National Air and Space Intelligence Center (NASIC)
- Held Top Secret/SCI clearance
- Age 35 at conviction



CDSE

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CASE STUDY

UNAUTHORIZED REMOVAL AND RETENTION OF CLASSIFIED DOCUMENTS OR MATERIAL

WHAT HAPPENED

In 2021, a former U.S. Air Force contractor, Izaak Vincent Kemp, was sentenced to federal prison for removing classified documents from his workplace and storing them in his Fairborn, Ohio home. Between 2016 and 2019, Kemp worked at the nearby Air Force Research Laboratory (AFRL) and U.S. Air Force National Air and Space Intelligence Center (NASIC), both located at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base.

Authorities first discovered the documents at Kemp's home by happenstance. In May 2019, the Fairborn Police Department (FPD) conducted an unrelated search of the premises; acting on information Kemp was operating a marijuana growing facility, officers noticed several clearly marked, classified documents. FPD alerted federal authorities who subsequently recovered more than one hundred SECRET-classified documents, approximately 2,500 pages in total, from Kemp's residence.

As a military contractor and clearance holder, Kemp received various training at AFRL and NASIC on the proper handling and safeguarding of classified material. Kemp was aware that his actions were unauthorized, risked the disclosure of highly sensitive government information, and could have caused serious damage to the national security of the United States.

While prosecutors presented no evidence that he leaked or sold classified information, Kemp was criminally culpable for knowingly taking classified material home. In court proceedings, neither the Department of Justice (DOJ) nor Kemp provided a motive for his crime.

The DOJ charged Kemp in January 2021 with a felony offense under 18 U.S.C. 1924 – Unauthorized removal and retention of classified documents or material. Kemp pled guilty a month later and, in September 2021, received a prison sentence of one year and one day.

INDICATORS

- Access Attributes – As a cleared employee, Kemp had access to AFRL and NASIC facilities, classified systems, and applications.
- Security and Compliance Incidents – On multiple occasions, Kemp reproduced classified documents, exited a secured area with the documents on his person, and stored them at his house.
- Substance Abuse and Addictive Behaviors – Kemp was allegedly engaged in illegal drug activities and admitted to substance abuse.

IMPACT

- NASIC is the primary source for foreign air and space threat analysis within the Department of Defense (DOD). AFRL is responsible for the discovery, development and delivery of warfighting technologies for DOD's air, space, and cyberspace forces. Although the subject matter of the documents taken by Izaak Kemp were undisclosed, by virtue of his clearance and employment, Kemp certainly had access to highly sensitive information at two organizations vital to national defense.
- Kemp's motivation for illegally taking classified documents remains unclear. Attorneys for the prosecution noted that Kemp's actions were deliberate, not "the inadvertent or careless removal of a few documents." Prosecutors further emphasized that Kemp heightened the risk of unauthorized disclosure by "maintaining a significant marijuana grow operation in the same location."
- At the same time Kemp was printing and taking classified documents home, lawmakers were stiffening penalties for illegal activity such as his. In January 2018, Congress passed a bill that increased the maximum prison sentence for 18 U.S.C. 1924 –from one year, a misdemeanor, to five years, a felony offense.

ADDITIONAL INFO

Consider the following questions:

- What potential risk indicators could co-workers have spotted in Kemp's behavior?
- Why was Kemp's crime serious even though he may not have shared classified information?
- What procedures can organizations implement to detect and prevent the unauthorized removal or retention of sensitive material?

Resources for further exploration:

- Insider Threat Awareness eLearning – <https://www.cdse.edu/Training/eLearning/INT101>
- Insider Threat Job Aids – <https://www.cdse.edu/Training/Job-Aids/Insider-Threat-Job-Aids>
- If You See Something, Say Something® Video Challenge – <https://www.dhs.gov/see-something-say-something/take-challenge>

IF YOU SEE SOMETHING, SAY SOMETHING!

Contact the appropriate POC to report any observed potential risk indicators:

Name _____ Agency _____

Title: Supervisor/Security Officer/ITP Senior Official/ITP Manager