

**U.S. Department of Commerce  
U.S. Patent and Trademark Office**



**Privacy Impact Assessment  
for the  
Vault System (VS)**

Reviewed by: Henry J. Holcombe, Bureau Chief Privacy Officer

- Concurrence of Senior Agency Official for Privacy/DOC Chief Privacy Officer  
 Non-concurrence of Senior Agency Official for Privacy/DOC Chief Privacy Officer

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Date

## U.S. Department of Commerce Privacy Impact Assessment USPTO Vault System (VS)

**Unique Project Identifier: PTOP-004-00**

### **Introduction: System Description**

*Provide a brief description of the information system.*

The Vault System (VS) is used by Patent Examiners (PEs) who possess a favorably adjudicated background investigation and are cleared to access National Security Information. The PEs review certain hardcopy patent applications that could contain Personally Identifiable Information (PII), Business Identifiable Information (BII), and classified information. These applications are stored in a secure location in physical folders. Form paragraphs are the official pre-written templates that PEs use to convey information to applicants and applicants' representatives (attorneys or patent agents) as part of the review process. Form paragraphs are stored in an MS-Word document on the VS. Cleared PEs use the VS as a word processor to copy and paste form paragraphs and populate them with information about the review of an application, in order to create correspondence documents that are stored in the physical folders, with copies mailed to applicants and their representatives. The VS can only be used to create, view, and store MS-Word documents, which may contain classified information or information under secrecy order that is treated as if it is classified.

Address the following elements:

***(a) Whether it is a general support system, major application, or other type of system***

System is considered a major application.

***(b) System location***

Vault System resides at the USPTO facilities located in Alexandria, Virginia.

***(c) Whether it is a standalone system or interconnects with other systems (identifying and describing any other systems to which it interconnects)***

Vault System is a stand-alone system without any network connectivity to the USPTO local area network, i.e., intranet/extranet.

***(d) The way the system operates to achieve the purpose(s) identified in Section 4***

Vault System achieves its purpose by having a stand-alone system without any network connectivity to the USPTO local area network, i.e., intranet/extranet, that PEs can use to

prepare office actions and other correspondence in the course of examining patent applications that are under secrecy orders or contain classified information.

***(e) How information in the system is retrieved by the user***

Information is viewed/processed within a controlled access area and in a General Services Administration (GSA)-approved vault.

***(f) How information is transmitted to and from the system***

Not applicable. There is no network connection between the Vault System and any other system.

***(g) Any information sharing***

Not applicable. There is no network connection between the Vault System and any other system.

***(h) The specific programmatic authorities (statutes or Executive Orders) for collecting, maintaining, using, and disseminating the information***

35 U.S.C. 2, 115, 117, 118, 122, 181-188 and 37 CFR 1.17-5.33

***(i) The Federal Information Processing Standards (FIPS) 199 security impact category for the system***

Vault System has a FIPS 199 categorization of Moderate.

**Section 1: Status of the Information System**

1.1 Indicate whether the information system is a new or existing system.

- This is a new information system.
- This is an existing information system with changes that create new privacy risks. *(Check all that apply.)*

<b>Changes That Create New Privacy Risks (CTCNPR)</b>					
a. Conversions	<input type="checkbox"/>	d. Significant Merging	<input type="checkbox"/>	g. New Interagency Uses	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Anonymous to Non-Anonymous	<input type="checkbox"/>	e. New Public Access	<input type="checkbox"/>	h. Internal Flow or Collection	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Significant System Management Changes	<input type="checkbox"/>	f. Commercial Sources	<input type="checkbox"/>	i. Alteration in Character of Data	<input type="checkbox"/>
j. Other changes that create new privacy risks (specify):					

- This is an existing information system in which changes do not create new privacy risks, and there is not a SAOP approved Privacy Impact Assessment.
- This is an existing information system in which changes do not create new privacy risks, and there is a SAOP approved Privacy Impact Assessment.

**Section 2: Information in the System**

2.1 Indicate what personally identifiable information (PII)/business identifiable information (BII) is collected, maintained, or disseminated. *(Check all that apply.)*

<b>Identifying Numbers (IN)</b>					
a. Social Security*	<input type="checkbox"/>	f. Driver's License	<input type="checkbox"/>	j. Financial Account	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Taxpayer ID	<input type="checkbox"/>	g. Passport	<input type="checkbox"/>	k. Financial Transaction	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Employer ID	<input type="checkbox"/>	h. Alien Registration	<input type="checkbox"/>	l. Vehicle Identifier	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Employee ID	<input type="checkbox"/>	i. Credit Card	<input type="checkbox"/>	m. Medical Record	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. File/Case ID	<input type="checkbox"/>				
n. Other identifying numbers (specify):					
*Explanation for the business need to collect, maintain, or disseminate the Social Security number, including truncated form:					

<b>General Personal Data (GPD)</b>					
a. Name	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	h. Date of Birth	<input type="checkbox"/>	o. Financial Information	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Maiden Name	<input type="checkbox"/>	i. Place of Birth	<input type="checkbox"/>	p. Medical Information	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Alias	<input type="checkbox"/>	j. Home Address	<input type="checkbox"/>	q. Military Service	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Gender	<input type="checkbox"/>	k. Telephone Number	<input type="checkbox"/>	r. Criminal Record	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Age	<input type="checkbox"/>	l. Email Address	<input type="checkbox"/>	s. Marital Status	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. Race/Ethnicity	<input type="checkbox"/>	m. Education	<input type="checkbox"/>	t. Mother's Maiden Name	<input type="checkbox"/>
g. Citizenship	<input type="checkbox"/>	n. Religion	<input type="checkbox"/>		
u. Other general personal data (specify):					

<b>Work-Related Data (WRD)</b>					
a. Occupation	<input type="checkbox"/>	e. Work Email Address	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	i. Business Associates	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b. Job Title	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	f. Salary	<input type="checkbox"/>	j. Proprietary or Business Information	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c. Work Address	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	g. Work History	<input type="checkbox"/>	k. Procurement/contracting records	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Work Telephone Number	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	h. Employment Performance Ratings or other Performance Information	<input type="checkbox"/>		
l. Other work-related data (specify):					

<b>Distinguishing Features/Biometrics (DFB)</b>					
a. Fingerprints	<input type="checkbox"/>	f. Scars, Marks, Tattoos	<input type="checkbox"/>	k. Signatures	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b. Palm Prints	<input type="checkbox"/>	g. Hair Color	<input type="checkbox"/>	l. Vascular Scans	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Voice/Audio Recording	<input type="checkbox"/>	h. Eye Color	<input type="checkbox"/>	m. DNA Sample or Profile	<input type="checkbox"/>

d. Video Recording	<input type="checkbox"/>	i. Height	<input type="checkbox"/>	n. Retina/Iris Scans	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Photographs	<input type="checkbox"/>	j. Weight	<input type="checkbox"/>	o. Dental Profile	<input type="checkbox"/>
p. Other distinguishing features/biometrics (specify):					

<b>System Administration/Audit Data (SAAD)</b>					
a. UserID	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	c. Date/Time of Access	<input type="checkbox"/>	e. ID Files Accessed	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. IP Address	<input type="checkbox"/>	f. Queries Run	<input type="checkbox"/>	f. Contents of Files	<input type="checkbox"/>
g. Other system administration/audit data (specify):					

<b>Other Information (specify)</b>

2.2 Indicate sources of the PII/BII in the system. (Check all that apply.)

<b>Directly from Individual about Whom the Information Pertains</b>					
In Person	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Hard Copy: Mail/Fax	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Online	<input type="checkbox"/>
Telephone	<input type="checkbox"/>	Email	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Other(specify):					

<b>Government Sources</b>					
Within the Bureau	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Other DOC Bureaus	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other Federal Agencies	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
State, Local, Tribal	<input type="checkbox"/>	Foreign	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Other(specify):					

<b>Non-government Sources</b>					
Public Organizations	<input type="checkbox"/>	Private Sector	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Commercial Data Brokers	<input type="checkbox"/>
Third Party Website or Application			<input type="checkbox"/>		
Other(specify):					

2.3 Describe how the accuracy of the information in the system is ensured.

Patent Examiners and Supervisors enter data in the system and requisite to their level of authority at the USPTO they ensure accuracy. From a technical implementation, USPTO implements security and management controls to prevent the inappropriate disclosure of sensitive information. Security controls are employed to ensure information is resistant to tampering, remains confidential as necessary, and is available as intended by the agency and expected by authorized users. Management controls are utilized to prevent the inappropriate disclosure of sensitive information.

2.4 Is the information covered by the Paperwork Reduction Act?

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes, the information is covered by the Paperwork Reduction Act. Provide the OMB control number and the agency number for the collection. 0651-0031 Patent Processing 0651-0034 Secrecy and License to Export
<input type="checkbox"/>	No, the information is not covered by the Paperwork Reduction Act.

2.5 Indicate the technologies used that contain PII/BII in ways that have not been previously deployed. (Check all that apply.)

<b>Technologies Used Containing PII/BII Not Previously Deployed (TUCPBNPD)</b>			
Smart Cards	<input type="checkbox"/>	Biometrics	<input type="checkbox"/>
Caller-ID	<input type="checkbox"/>	Personal Identity Verification (PIV) Cards	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (specify):			

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	There are not any technologies used that contain PII/BII in ways that have not been previously deployed.
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**Section 3: System Supported Activities**

3.1 Indicate IT system supported activities which raise privacy risks/concerns. (Check all that apply.)

<b>Activities</b>			
Audio recordings	<input type="checkbox"/>	Building entry readers	<input type="checkbox"/>
Video surveillance	<input type="checkbox"/>	Electronic purchase transactions	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (specify):			

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	There are not any IT system supported activities which raise privacy risks/concerns.
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**Section 4: Purpose of the System**

4.1 Indicate why the PII/BII in the IT system is being collected, maintained, or disseminated. (Check all that apply.)

<b>Purpose</b>			
For a Computer Matching Program	<input type="checkbox"/>	For administering human resources programs	<input type="checkbox"/>
For administrative matters	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	To promote information sharing initiatives	<input type="checkbox"/>

For litigation	<input type="checkbox"/>	For criminal law enforcement activities	<input type="checkbox"/>
For civil enforcement activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	For intelligence activities	<input type="checkbox"/>
To improve Federal services online	<input type="checkbox"/>	For employee or customer satisfaction	<input type="checkbox"/>
For web measurement and customization technologies (single-session)	<input type="checkbox"/>	For web measurement and customization technologies (multi-session)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (specify): Fulfilling the mission of the USPTO and examination of Patent Applications. PII (Examiner name and Title and Phone number) is collected to facilitate processing and/or patent application examination responses to tell the applicants who acted on the application on the response mailed to the applicant.			

**Section 5: Use of the Information**

5.1 In the context of functional areas (business processes, missions, operations, etc.) supported by the IT system, describe how the PII/BII that is collected, maintained, or disseminated will be used. Indicate if the PII/BII identified in Section 2.1 of this document is in reference to a federal employee/contractor, member of the public, foreign national, visitor or other (specify).

The information in the system is about federal employees and members of the public. This information is used for processing patent applications under Secrecy Orders and in the actions produced in our vault on the Vault System the BII is information from patent applications, which are analyzed with respect to their inventiveness against prior art. The PII is the information on our employee names and phone numbers which are required so that the applicants know who has acted on their application and their level of authority at the USPTO. Other forms of PII and BII may be a part of the hardcopy patent application files.

5.2 Describe any potential threats to privacy, such as insider threat, as a result of the bureau’s/operating unit’s use of the information, and controls that the bureau/operating unit has put into place to ensure that the information is handled, retained, and disposed appropriately. (For example: mandatory training for system users regarding appropriate handling of information, automatic purging of information in accordance with the retention schedule, etc.)

Insider threats as well foreign and adversarial entities are the predominant threat to privacy and data in the system. USPTO has implemented National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) security controls (encryption, access control, auditing) and we have this system completely separated from all other information technology (IT) systems. It is not connected to anything but a printer and the electrical power to run it. It is secured behind two card access doors and a GSA approved vault door in a Secret level security vault.

Mandatory IT Awareness and role-based training is required for staff that have access to the system and addresses how to handle, retain, and dispose of data.

**Section 6: Information Sharing and Access**

6.1 Indicate with whom the bureau intends to share the PII/BII in the IT system and how the PII/BII will be shared. *(Check all that apply.)*

Recipient	How Information will be Shared		
	Case-by-Case	Bulk Transfer	Direct Access
Within the bureau	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
DOC bureaus	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Federal agencies	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
State, local, tribal gov't agencies	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Public	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Private sector	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Foreign governments	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Foreign entities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (specify): The patents applications will be shared with the specific entities under the secrecy order only.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

The PII/BII in the system will not be shared.

6.2 Does the DOC bureau/operating unit place a limitation on re-dissemination of PII/BII shared with external agencies/entities?

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes, the external agency/entity is required to verify with the DOC bureau/operating unit before re-dissemination of PII/BII.
<input type="checkbox"/>	No, the external agency/entity is not required to verify with the DOC bureau/operating unit before re-dissemination of PII/BII.
<input type="checkbox"/>	No, the bureau/operating unit does not share PII/BII with external agencies/entities.

6.3 Indicate whether the IT system connects with or receives information from any other IT systems authorized to process PII and/or BII.

<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes, this IT system connects with or receives information from another IT system(s) authorized to process PII and/or BII. Provide the name of the IT system and describe the technical controls which prevent PII/BII leakage:
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No, this IT system does not connect with or receive information from another IT system(s) authorized to process PII and/or BII.

6.4 Identify the class of users who will have access to the IT system and the PII/BII. *(Check all that apply.)*

Class of Users			
General Public	<input type="checkbox"/>	Government Employees	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>



Contractors	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Other (specify):			

**Section 7: Notice and Consent**

7.1 Indicate whether individuals will be notified if their PII/BII is collected, maintained, or disseminated by the system. *(Check all that apply.)*

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes, notice is provided pursuant to a system of records notice published in the Federal Register and discussed in Section 9.	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes, notice is provided by a Privacy Act statement and/or privacy policy. The Privacy Act statement and/or privacy policy can be found at: <a href="https://www.uspto.gov/privacy-policy">https://www.uspto.gov/privacy-policy</a>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes, notice is provided by other means.	Specify how:
<input type="checkbox"/>	No, notice is not provided.	Specify why not:

7.2 Indicate whether and how individuals have an opportunity to decline to provide PII/BII.

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes, individuals have an opportunity to decline to provide PII/BII.	Specify how: Individuals have the opportunity to decline to provide PII/BII since they have a choice of what type of information they wish to put into their application.
<input type="checkbox"/>	No, individuals do not have an opportunity to decline to provide PII/BII.	Specify why not:

7.3 Indicate whether and how individuals have an opportunity to consent to particular uses of their PII/BII.

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes, individuals have an opportunity to consent to particular uses of their PII/BII.	Specify how: Individuals have the ability to consent to particular uses of their information since submission of personal information is voluntary. When individuals voluntarily submit information, it constitutes their consent to the use of the information for the purpose(s) stated at the time of collection. Should there ever be a need to use information for a purpose other than one already provided for under the Privacy Act, we will give them specific instructions on how they may consent to such use. They are never required to give such consent.
<input type="checkbox"/>	No, individuals do not have an opportunity to consent to particular uses of their PII/BII.	Specify why not:

7.4 Indicate whether and how individuals have an opportunity to review/update PII/BII pertaining to them.

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes, individuals have an opportunity to review/update PII/BII pertaining to them.	Specify how: Individuals will need to work with USPTO patent examiners to update their records if contact information changes.
<input type="checkbox"/>	No, individuals do not have an opportunity to review/update PII/BII pertaining to them.	Specify why not:

**Section 8: Administrative and Technological Controls**

8.1 Indicate the administrative and technological controls for the system. *(Check all that apply.)*

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	All users signed a confidentiality agreement or non-disclosure agreement.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	All users are subject to a Code of Conduct that includes the requirement for confidentiality.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Staff (employees and contractors) received training on privacy and confidentiality policies and practices.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Access to the PII/BII is restricted to authorized personnel only.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Access to the PII/BII is being monitored, tracked, or recorded. Explanation: Audit logs and also physical access control of the surrounding vault.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The information is secured in accordance with the Federal Information Security Modernization Act (FISMA) requirements. Provide date of most recent Assessment and Authorization (A&A): <u>11/14/2022</u> <input type="checkbox"/> This is a new system. The A&A date will be provided when the A&A package is approved.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The Federal Information Processing Standard (FIPS) 199 security impact category for this system is a moderate or higher.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NIST Special Publication (SP) 800-122 and NIST SP 800-53 Revision 4 Appendix J recommended security controls for protecting PII/BII are in place and functioning as intended; or have an approved Plan of Action and Milestones (POA&M).
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	A security assessment report has been reviewed for the information system and it has been determined that there are no additional privacy risks.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Contractors that have access to the system are subject to information security provisions in their contracts required by DOC policy.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Contracts with customers establish DOC ownership rights over data including PII/BII.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Acceptance of liability for exposure of PII/BII is clearly defined in agreements with customers.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (specify):

8.2 Provide a general description of the technologies used to protect PII/BII on the IT system. *(Include data encryption in transit and/or at rest, if applicable).*

<p>Vault System is a standalone system with totally controlled access. Users are Patent Examiners cleared to access information classified at the Secret level and the Vault System is secured using appropriate administrative, physical, and technical safeguards in accordance with the applicable federal laws, Executive Orders, directives, policies, regulations, and standards.</p> <p>The information is protected in accordance with the NIST 800-53, Revision 4 control set. Security Assessment and Authorization activities are routinely conducted for PACS. Secured technical architecture is incorporated into the system to prevent any unauthorized access. Data is maintained in areas</p>
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accessible only to authorized personnel who are required to use two-factor authentication.

**Management Controls:**

a. The USPTO uses the Life Cycle review process to ensure that management controls are in place for VAULT. During the enhancement of any component, the security controls are reviewed, re-evaluated, and updated in the Security Plan. The Security Plans specifically address the management, operational and technical controls that are in place, and planned, during the operation of the enhanced system. Additional management controls include performing national agency checks on all personnel.

**Operational Controls:**

1. Automated operational controls include securing all hardware associated with VAULT in the USPTO Data Center. The Data Center is controlled by access card entry and is manned by a uniformed guard service to restrict access to the servers, their Operating Systems and databases. Contingency planning has been prepared for the data. Backups are performed on the processing databases. Backups are stored on tape and are secured off-site. Additional operation controls include (1) Logical edit checks to ensure proper sequence of actions; (2) Physical terminal identification; (3) Database User ID; (4) Restricted data display, as required; and (5) Restricted access.
2. Manual procedures shall be followed for handling extracted data containing sensitive PII which is physically transported outside of the USPTO premises. In order to remove data extracts containing sensitive PII from USPTO premises, users must:
  - a. Maintain a centralized office log for extracted datasets that contain sensitive PII. This log must include the date the data was extracted and removed from the facilities, a description of the data extracted, the purpose of the extract, the expected date of disposal or return, and the actual date of return or deletion.
  - b. Ensure that any extract which is no longer needed is returned to USPTO premises or securely erased and that this activity is recorded on the log.
  - c. Obtain management concurrence in the log, if an extract aged over 90 days is still required.

**Section 9: Privacy Act**

9.1 Is the PII/BII searchable by a personal identifier (e.g., name or Social Security number)?

- Yes, the PII/BII is searchable by a personal identifier.
- No, the PII/BII is not searchable by a personal identifier.

9.2 Indicate whether a system of records is being created under the Privacy Act, 5 U.S.C. § 552a. *(A new system of records notice (SORN) is required if the system is not covered by an existing SORN).*

As per the Privacy Act of 1974, “the term ‘system of records’ means a group of any records under the control of any agency from which information is retrieved by the name of the individual or by some identifying number, symbol, or other identifying particular assigned to the individual.”

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes, this system is covered by an existing system of records notice (SORN). Provide the SORN name, number, and link. <i>(list all that apply):</i>  <a href="#">COMMERCE/PAT-TM-7 Patent Application Files</a> . (Note: This notice is broken down, where indicated, into three subsystems relating to the status of the files: a. Pending; b. Abandoned; and c. Patented.). <a href="#">PAT/TM-8 Patent Application Secrecy Order Files</a> <a href="#">PAT/TM-13 Petitioners for License to File for Foreign Patents</a> <a href="#">COMMERCE/DEPT-18. Employees Personnel Files Not Covered by Notices of Other Agencies</a>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes, a SORN has been submitted to the Department for approval on <u>(date)</u> .
<input type="checkbox"/>	No, this system is not a system of records and a SORN is not applicable.

**Section 10: Retention of Information**

10.1 Indicate whether these records are covered by an approved records control schedule and monitored for compliance. *(Check all that apply.)*

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	There is an approved record controls schedule. Provide the name of the record controls schedule:  Evidentiary Patent Applications N1-241-10-1:4.1 Patent Examination Working Files N1-241-10-1:4.2
<input type="checkbox"/>	No, there is not an approved record controls schedule. Provide the stage in which the project is in developing and submitting a records control schedule:
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes, retention is monitored for compliance to the schedule.
<input type="checkbox"/>	No, retention is not monitored for compliance to the schedule. Provide explanation:

10.2 Indicate the disposal method of the PII/BII. *(Check all that apply.)*

<b>Disposal</b>			
Shredding	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Overwriting	<input type="checkbox"/>
Degaussing	<input type="checkbox"/>	Deleting	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Other (specify): Hardcopy files (outside the Vault System) are shredded. Electronic information on the system does not leave the secure vault. When computer media is no longer needed, it stays in a more secure section of the vault which requires DOE "Q" clearance to enter until a secure disposal is authorized.			

**Section 11: NIST Special Publication 800-122 PII Confidentiality Impact Level**

11.1 Indicate the potential impact that could result to the subject individuals and/or the organization if PII were inappropriately accessed, used, or disclosed. *(The PII Confidentiality Impact Level is not the same, and does not have to be the same, as the Federal Information Processing Standards (FIPS) 199 security impact category.)*

<input type="checkbox"/>	Low – the loss of confidentiality, integrity, or availability could be expected to have a limited adverse effect on organizational operations, organizational assets, or individuals.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Moderate – the loss of confidentiality, integrity, or availability could be expected to have a serious adverse effect on organizational operations, organizational assets, or individuals.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	High – the loss of confidentiality, integrity, or availability could be expected to have a severe or catastrophic adverse effect on organizational operations, organizational assets, or individuals.

11.2 Indicate which factors were used to determine the above PII confidentiality impact level. *(Check all that apply.)*

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Identifiability	Provide explanation: Name, telephone number, Job titles, User ID, Work Telephone Number etc. can together identify a particular individual.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Quantity of PII	Provide explanation: The quantity of PII/BII is determined by the number of nominations submitted for review.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Data Field Sensitivity	Provide explanation: The patent information in the system is classified under secrecy order making the data sensitive.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Context of Use	Provide explanation: The Vault System (VS) is used by Patent Examiners (PEs) who possess a favorably adjudicated background investigation and are cleared to access National Security Information.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Obligation to Protect Confidentiality	Provide explanation: USPTO examiners are obligated to protect applicants' identity and application while the application is undergoing patent prosecution. Based on the data collected USPTO must protect the PII of each individual in accordance to the Privacy Act of 1974.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Access to and Location of PII	Provide explanation: This system comprises of a laptop and a printer that is locked in a GSA secret vault within the USPTO campus. Access to this area is restricted to only verified patent examiners.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other:	Provide explanation:

**Section 12: Analysis**

12.1 Identify and evaluate any potential threats to privacy that exist in light of the information collected or the sources from which the information is collected. Also, describe the choices that the bureau/operating unit made with regard to the type or quantity of information collected and the sources providing the information in order to prevent or mitigate threats to privacy. (For example: If a decision was made to collect less data,

include a discussion of this decision; if it is necessary to obtain information from sources other than the individual, explain why.)

Insider threats, Foreign and adversarial entities are the predominant threats to the information collected and its privacy. Security controls following FedRAM P and NIST guidance were implemented to deter and prevent threats to privacy. Management controls are utilized to prevent the inappropriate disclosure of sensitive information including Annual Security Awareness Training which is mandatory for all USPTO employees. It includes training modules on understanding privacy responsibilities and procedures and other information such as defining PII and how it should be protected.

12.2 Indicate whether the conduct of this PIA results in any required business process changes.

<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes, the conduct of this PIA results in required business process changes. Explanation:
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No, the conduct of this PIA does not result in any required business process changes.

12.3 Indicate whether the conduct of this PIA results in any required technology changes.

<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes, the conduct of this PIA results in required technology changes. Explanation:
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No, the conduct of this PIA does not result in any required technology changes.

## Points of Contact and Signatures

<p><b>System Owner</b>                  Name: Tashiana Adams                  Office: Office of Patents                  Phone: (571) 270-5228                  Email: Tashiana.Adams@uspto.gov</p> <p>I certify that this PIA is an accurate representation of the security controls in place to protect PII/BII processed on this IT system.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Users, Adams,  <small>Digitally signed by Users,                  Adams, Tashiana R.                  Date: 2022.03.16                  08:06:06 -04'00'</small></p> <p>Signature: <u>Tashiana R.</u></p> <p>Date signed: _____</p>	<p><b>Chief Information Security Officer</b>                  Name: Don Watson                  Office: Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO)                  Phone: (571) 272-8130                  Email: Don.Watson@uspto.gov</p> <p>I certify that this PIA is an accurate representation of the security controls in place to protect PII/BII processed on this IT system.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Users,  <small>Digitally signed by Users,                  Watson, Don                  Date: 2022.03.20                  19:32:22 -04'00'</small></p> <p>Signature: <u>Watson, Don</u></p> <p>Date signed: _____</p>
<p><b>Privacy Act Officer</b>                  Name: Ezequiel Berdichevsky                  Office: Office of General Law (O/GL)                  Phone: (571) 270-1557                  Email: Ezequiel.Berdichevsky@uspto.gov</p> <p>I certify that the appropriate authorities and SORNs (if applicable) are cited in this PIA.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Users, Berdichevsky,  <small>Digitally signed by Users,                  Berdichevsky, Ezequiel                  Date: 2022.02.28 13:49:43 -05'00'</small></p> <p>Signature: <u>Ezequiel</u></p> <p>Date signed: _____</p>	<p><b>Bureau Chief Privacy Officer and Authorizing Official</b>                  Name: Henry J. Holcombe                  Office: Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO)                  Phone: (571) 272-9400                  Email: Jamie.Holcombe@uspto.gov</p> <p>I certify that the PII/BII processed in this IT system is necessary, this PIA ensures compliance with DOC policy to protect privacy, and the Bureau/OU Privacy Act Officer concurs with the SORNs and authorities cited.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Users,  <small>Digitally signed by Users,                  Holcombe, Henry                  Date: 2022.03.22                  15:28:00 -04'00'</small></p> <p>Signature: <u>Holcombe, Henry</u></p> <p>Date signed: _____</p>
<p><b>Co-Authorizing Official</b>                  Name: Andrew Faile                  Office: Office of Patents                  Phone: (571) 272-8800                  Email: Andrew.Faile@uspto.gov</p> <p>I certify that this PIA accurately reflects the representations made to me herein by the System Owner, the Chief Information Security Officer, and the Chief Privacy Officer regarding security controls in place to protect PII/BII in this PIA.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Users, Faile,  <small>Digitally signed by Users,                  Faile, Andrew                  Date: 2022.03.22                  16:06:36 -04'00'</small></p> <p>Signature: <u>Andrew</u></p> <p>Date signed: _____</p>	Empty space for signature

**This page is for internal routing purposes and documentation of approvals. Upon final approval, this page must be removed prior to publication of the PIA.**