

*CBS Mornings*

01/17/22

7:01:16 a.m. [TEASE]

14 seconds

[ON-SCREEN HEADLINE: Classified Documents]

MICHELLE MILLER: Pressure builds on President Biden over the scandal involving documents marked classified. The questions from members of both parties.

CONGRESSMAN JIM COMER (R-KY): The Secret Service, you would assume, would vet people before they would be granted entry.

(...)

7:12:23 a.m.

2 minutes and 45 seconds

[ON-SCREEN HEADLINE: Classified Documents Fallout]

MILLER: Now to the discovery of those documents marked classified at locations linked to President Biden and the serious questions they raise. Adriana Diaz looks into what exactly the term “classified” means and whether it really is common for pages like these to leave the White House.

ADRIANA DIAZ: House Republicans want answers —

COMER: We need to know who had access to those documents.

[ON-SCREEN HEADLINE: Biden’s Classified Docs Fallout; Experts Break Down What It Means When Docs Are Marked Classified]

DIAZ: — including a list of who visited President Biden's Wilmington home where five more pages marked classified were discovered last week. The White House counsel's office said in a statement that there are no logs, writing in part, “[l]ike any President across decades of modern history, his personal residence is personal.”

HOUSE SPEAKER KEVIN MCCARTHY (R-CA): Are these all the documents? Are there more out there?

DIAZ: So far, roughly 20 classified documents have been found at Mr. Biden's home and former office that the White House said were immediately handed over to the National Archives. In contrast, the FBI seized more than 100 documents at Mar-a-Lago in August after former President Donald Trump denied repeated requests to turn them all over. Presidents and vice presidents can take classified documents home with little accounting of what they have and

where, says former CIA director Michael Morell.

MICHAEL MORELL: They're cut slack because of who they are and I think that — that's what has to end. Somebody needs to be put in charge of knowing what information has gone to the residence and making sure that that information comes back.

DIAZ: Mary McCord, who oversaw the national security division at the Department of Justice, says the labeling is clear.

MARY MCCORD: Classified documents have markings on them so that they would be immediately identifiable as classified.

DIAZ: There are three broad classification levels: confidential, secret, and top secret. depending on the risk, the intelligence, if it gets out, poses to national security. The levels are indicated on cover pages like these from the Mar-a-Lago seizure and on the top and bottom of each page as shown in this mockup. And there's a wide range of what can be considered classified.

MCCORD: We're talking about military intelligence. We're talking about human sources. We're talking about nuclear-related material. I think what is key here is less about what types of things can be secret and more about the harm that these things would cause to national security if they were disclosed.

DIAZ: Under the Presidential Records Act, what is supposed to happen at the end of the administration is all government documents belonging to a president or vice president, whether they're classified or not, are supposed to go to the National Archives. So one of the key questions a special counsel will have to determine here is why these documents weren't at the Archives, Nate.

NATE BURLESON: Adriana, thank you.