

**NOTE BY THE TECHNICAL SECRETARIAT****UPDATE ON THE SECURE INFORMATION EXCHANGE SYSTEM****INTRODUCTION**

1. The timely exchange of information between the States Parties and the Technical Secretariat (the Secretariat) is crucial for the effective and efficient implementation of the provisions of the Chemical Weapons Convention (the Convention).
2. The traditional way of exchanging classified information, through diplomatic pouch, imposes logistical difficulties. These can cause delays and may, therefore, adversely affect the timely fulfilment by the States Parties of their obligations under the Convention, including the timely submission of declarations. This may also have repercussions for important activities carried out by the Secretariat, such as the evaluation of declarations and the planning of inspections.
3. To address this issue, the Secretariat has designed and put in place a system for the secure electronic transmission of classified and unclassified documents, known as the Secure Information Exchange System (SIX), in accordance with the Note by the Secretariat on this subject (S/1192/2014, dated 1 July 2014).
4. This Note describes the current status of SIX, as well as the future priorities for this critical communication mechanism. A previous update was provided to the States Parties last year including the amended terms and conditions and use of SIX (S/2404/2025, dated 16 May 2025).

OVERVIEW OF SYSTEM USE

5. SIX is an established system for secure communication between the Secretariat and the States Parties. As at 21 April 2026, 69 States Parties had registered for SIX, resulting in the authorisation of 137 active users to use the system.
6. States Parties from all OPCW regional groups are represented among the users of SIX, with 26% of users from the Group of Western European and Other States, 26% from Asia, 23% from Latin America and the Caribbean, 16% from Eastern Europe, and 9% from Africa.
7. As at 21 April 2026, 42 annual declarations on past activities (ADPAs) for 2025 had been submitted using SIX, which represents 58.3% of the total number of declarations received by the Secretariat (72 ADPAs for 2025 as at 21 April 2026). The use of electronic declaration transmission enables States Parties to dedicate more time to the preparation of declarations and to benefit from a more efficient and streamlined declaration submission process.



8. Since the initial release of SIX in 2014, the Secretariat has received 2,588 documents from States Parties through the system. The majority of these documents have been annual declarations on past and anticipated activities, as well as amendments to previously submitted declarations under Article VI of the Convention. In addition, other types of documents have been received via SIX, including declarations under other articles of the Convention, responses to official letters from the Secretariat, and operational documents related to SIX itself. A total of 13.8% of all documents received via SIX are unclassified.
9. Beyond the receipt of documents from States Parties, the amended terms and conditions (S/2404/2025) have enabled the Secretariat to expand the use of SIX to transmit a broader range of classified documents to States Parties and other authorised recipients. Notably in 2025, SIX was used to distribute the Verification Implementation Report for 2024 to 2 States Parties, transfer discrepancy notes verbales to 44 States Parties, and biannually distributed redacted declarations to 35 States Parties. In addition, as at 21 April 2026, SIX is employed as a secure communication channel by 11 designated laboratories.

CURRENT AND FUTURE ACTIVITIES

10. Since SIX was launched, the Secretariat has continued to provide support to the States Parties with regards to registering and using the system, enhancing the system's security and usability, and promoting the benefits of its use. Presentations and demonstrations of SIX have been included in training courses provided by the Secretariat for National Authorities.
11. The Secretariat also intends to use SIX for the distribution of the Verification Implementation Report for 2025 in 2026, as part of its continued efforts to expand the use of the system for official communications with States Parties.
12. The Secretariat is preparing an information graphic to illustrate SIX procedures, accompanied by responses to frequently asked questions, for publication on the Catalyst platform in the latter half of 2026.
13. In order to ensure that SIX is available to users and remains a secure means of transmission, the Secretariat carries out regular system updates, maintenance, and security audits.

CONCLUSION

14. Since its initial launch, SIX has continued to create efficiencies for the Secretariat and the States Parties by providing a secure mechanism to transmit classified information. The Secretariat encourages States Parties and designated laboratories to consider registering for SIX in order to avail themselves of the benefits the system provides.
15. Further administrative and technical questions concerning SIX can be sent by email to the Data Analytics, Reporting and Quality Control Section (DARQ) of the Declarations Branch, Verification Division, OPCW (email: six@opcw.org). Any other requests may be sent by email to the Declarations Branch, Verification Division, OPCW (email: deb@opcw.org).