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GPO



Director, Office of Administration.
Director, Eastern Administrative Support Center.
Director, Central Administrative Support Center.
Director, Western Administrative Support Center.
Director, Mountain Administrative Support Center.

NATIONAL TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION ADMINISTRATION

Deputy Assistant Secretary.
Chief Counsel.
Legal Advisor.

PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Solicitor, Deputy Solicitor.

UNITED STATES TRAVEL AND TOURISM ADMINISTRATION

Under Secretary.
Director, Office of Management and Administration.

[56 FR 50233, May 6, 1991, as amended at 57 FR 28781, June 29, 1992; 57 FR 48969, Oct. 29, 1992]

# PART 4a—CLASSIFICATION, DECLASSIFICATION AND PUBLIC AVAILABILITY OF NATIONAL SECURITY INFORMATION

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AUTHORITY: Sec. 5.3(b), E.O. 12356; 47 FR 14874, April 6, 1982; 47 FR 15557, April 12, 1982.

SOURCE: 48 FR 20040, May 4, 1983, unless otherwise noted.

## Subpart A—Classification of National Security Information

### § 4a.1 General.

Executive Order 12356 provides the only basis for classifying information within the Department of Commerce, except as provided in the Atomic Energy Act of 1954. The policy of the Department of Commerce is to make information concerning its activities available to the public consistent with the need to protect the national defense or foreign relations as required by the interests of the United States and its citizens. Accordingly, security classification shall be applied only to protect the national security.

### § 4a.2 Director, Office of Security.

The Director is responsible for (a) acting on all suggestions, complaints, and appeals not otherwise resolved, concerning the implementation and administration of E.O. 12356 and implementing directives, and (b) deciding all appeals from denials of requests for national security information under the Mandatory Review provision of E.O. 12356, when the initial denial was based on continued classification under the Order. When acting on such appeals the Director shall confer, as necessary, with the Offices of the General Counsel, Information Management, and Personnel. The Director may solicit advise from various operating units as required. All suggestions, complaints, or appeals should be addressed to the Director, Office of Security, Room 5044, 14th Street and Constitution Avenue, NW., Washington, D.C. 20230.

### § 4a.3 Classification levels.

Information may be classified as national security information by a designated original classifier of the Department when it is determined that the information concerns one or more of the categories prescribed in E.O.

12356 and when the unauthorized disclosure of the information, either by itself or in the context of other information, reasonably could be expected to cause damage to the national security. The levels established by E.O. 12356 (Top Secret, Secret, and Confidential) are the only terms which may be applied to national security information. Except as provided by statute, no other terms shall be used within the Department of Commerce in conjunction with any of the three classification levels.

### §4a.4 Classification authority.

Authority to originally classify information as Secret or Confidential may be exercised only by the Secretary of Commerce and by officials to whom such authority is specifically delegated. No official of the Department of Commerce is authorized to originally classify information as Top Secret.

### §4a.5 Duration of classification.

Information shall remain classified as long as its unauthorized disclosure would result in damage to the national security. When it can be determined a specific date or event for declassification shall be set by the original classification authority at the time the information is originally classified. Automatic declassification markings applied under predecessor executive orders shall remain valid unless the classification is extended by an authorized declassification authority. Information classified under predecessor orders and marked for declassification review shall remain classified until reviewed for declassification under the provisions of E.O. 12356 governing systematic review or mandatory review for declassification.

## Subpart B—Declassification

### §4a.6 General.

Information that continues to meet the classification requirements prescribed in E.O. 12356 despite the passage of time will continue to be safeguarded. However, information which is properly classified at the time it is developed may not necessarily require protection indefinitely. National security information over which the Department of Commerce exercises final classification jurisdiction shall be declassified or downgraded as soon as national security considerations permit. When information is determined to be no longer damaging to the national security, it may continue to be exempt from public disclosure by law. If so, when the information is declassified the declassification authority shall indicate that all or portions of the information become FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY and shall cite the authority which permits nondisclosure.

### §4a.7 Systematic review for declassification.

Classified information constituting permanently valuable records of the Government, as defined by U.S.C. 2103, that is in the possession and control of the Department of Commerce or of the Archivist of the United States, shall be systematically reviewed for declassification. This review shall be in accordance with systematic review guidelines authorized by the Secretary of Commerce.

### §4a.8 Mandatory review for declassification.

(a) *Requests.* Classified information under the jurisdiction of the Department of Commerce shall be reviewed for declassification upon receipt of a request by a United States citizen or permanent resident alien, a Federal agency, or a state or local government. A request for mandatory review of classified information shall be submitted in writing and describe the information with sufficient specificity to locate it with a reasonable amount of effort. Request shall be submitted to the Director, Office of Security, U.S. Department of Commerce, Room 5044, 14th Street and Constitution Avenue, NW., Washington, D.C. 20230.

(b) *Processing requirements.* (1) The Director, Office of Security, shall acknowledge receipt of the request directly to the requester. When a request does not satisfy the conditions of paragraph (a) of this section, the requester shall be notified that unless additional identifying information is provided, no further action will be taken. The request shall be forwarded to the operating unit or office which originated the information or which has primary