

same location within the processing queue as the original request.

(o) *Honoring form or format requests.* DoD Components shall provide the record in any form or format requested by the requester if the record is readily reproducible in that form or format. DoD Components shall make reasonable efforts to maintain their records in forms or formats that are reproducible. In responding to requests for records, DoD Components shall make reasonable efforts to search for records in electronic form or format, except when such efforts would significantly interfere with the operation of the DoD Components' automated information system. Such determinations shall be made on a case by case basis. See also paragraph (g)(2) of this section.

[63 FR 65420, Nov. 25, 1998; 63 FR 67724, Dec. 8, 1998]

Subpart B—FOIA Reading Rooms

§ 286.7 Requirements.

(a) *Reading room.* Each DoD Component shall provide an appropriate facility or facilities where the public may inspect and copy or have copied the records described in paragraph (b) of this section and § 286.8(a). In addition to the records described in paragraph (b) of this section and § 286.8(a), DoD Components may elect to place other records in their reading room, and also make them electronically available to the public. DoD Components may share reading room facilities if the public is not unduly inconvenienced, and also may establish decentralized reading rooms. When appropriate, the cost of copying may be imposed on the person requesting the material in accordance with the provisions of subpart F of this part.

(b) *Record availability.* The FOIA requires that records described in 5 U.S.C. 552(a)(2) (A), (B), (C), and (D) created on or after November 1, 1996, shall be made available electronically by November 1, 1997, as well as in hard copy in the FOIA reading room for inspection and copying, unless such records are published and copies are offered for sale. Personal privacy information, that if disclosed to a third party requester, would result in an invasion of the first party's personal pri-

vacy, and contractor submitted information, that if disclosed to a competing contractor, would result in competitive harm to the submitting contractor shall be deleted from all 5 U.S.C. 552(A)(2) records made available to the general public. In every case, justification for the deletion must be fully explained in writing, and the extent of such deletion shall be indicated on the record which is made publicly available, unless such indication would harm an interest protected by an exemption under which the deletion was made. If technically feasible, the extent of the deletion in electronic records or any other form of record shall be indicated at the place in the record where the deletion was made. However, a DoD Component may publish in the FEDERAL REGISTER a description of the basis upon which it will delete identifying details of particular types of records to avoid clearly unwarranted invasions of privacy, or competitive harm to business submitters. In appropriate cases, the DoD Component may refer to this description rather than write a separate justification for each deletion. 5 U.S.C. 552(a)(2) (A), (B), (C) and (D) records are:

(1) *(a)(2)(A) records.* Final opinions, including concurring and dissenting opinions, and orders made in the adjudication of cases, as defined in 5 U.S.C. 551, that may be cited, used, or relied upon as precedents in future adjudications.

(2) *(a)(2)(B) records.* Statements of policy and interpretations that have been adopted by the agency and are not published in the FEDERAL REGISTER.

(3) *(a)(2)(C) records.* Administrative staff manuals and instructions, or portions thereof, that establish DoD policy or interpretations of policy that affect a member of the public. This provision does not apply to instructions for employees on tactics and techniques to be used in performing their duties, or to instructions relating only to the internal management of the DoD Component. Examples of manuals and instructions not normally made available are:

(i) Those issued for audit, investigation, and inspection purposes, or those that prescribe operational tactics,

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standards of performance, or criterial for defense, prosecution, or settlement of cases.

(ii) Operations and maintenance manuals and technical information concerning munitions, equipment, systems, and intelligence activities.

(4) *(a)(2)(D) records.* Those 5 U.S.C. 552(a)(3) records, which because of the nature of the subject matter, have become or are likely to become the subject of subsequent requests for substantially the same records. These records are referred to as FOIA-processed (a)(2) records.

(i) DoD Components shall decide on a case by case basis whether records fall into this category, based on the following factors:

(A) Previous experience of the DoD Component with similar records.

(B) Particular circumstances of the records involved, including their nature and the type of information contained in them.

(C) The identify and number of requesters and whether there is widespread press, historic, or commercial interest in the records.

(ii) This provision is intended for situations where public access in a timely manner is important, and it is not intended to apply where there may be a limited number of requests over a short period of time from a few requesters. DoD Components may remove the records from this access medium when the appropriate officials determine that access is no longer necessary.

(iii) Should a requester submit a FOIA request for FOIA-processed (a)(2) records, and insist that the request be processed, DoD Components shall process the FOIA request. However, DoD Components have no obligation to process a FOIA request for 5 U.S.C. 552(a)(2) (A), (B), and (C) records because these records are required to be made public and not FOIA-processed under paragraph (a)(3) of the FOIA.

§ 286.8 Indexes.

(a) *“(a)(2)” materials.* (1) Each DoD Component shall maintain in each facility prescribed in § 286.7(a), an index of materials described in § 286.7(b) that are issued, adopted, or promulgated, after July 4, 1967. No “(a) (2)” materials issued, promulgated, or adopted

after July 4, 1967, that are not indexed and either made available or published may be relied upon, used or cited as precedent against any individual unless such individual has actual and timely notice of the contents of such materials. Such materials issued, promulgated, or adopted before July 4, 1967, need not be indexed, but must be made available upon request if not exempted under this part.

(2) Each DoD Component shall promptly publish quarterly or more frequently, and distribute, by sale or otherwise, copies of each index of “(a)(2)” materials or supplements thereto unless it publishes in the FEDERAL REGISTER an order containing a determination that publication is unnecessary and impracticable. A copy of each index or supplement not published shall be provided to a requester at a cost not to exceed the direct cost of duplication as set forth in subpart F of this part.

(3) Each index of “(a)(2)” materials or supplement thereto shall be arranged topical or by descriptive words rather than by case name or numbering system so that members of the public can readily locate material. Case name and numbering arrangements, however, may also be included for DoD Component convenience.

(4) A general index of FOIA-processed (a)(2) records referred to in § 286.7(b)(4), shall be made available to the public, both in hard copy and electronically by December 31, 1999.

(b) *Other materials.* (1) Any available index of DoD Component material published in the FEDERAL REGISTER, such as material required to be published by Section 552(a)(1) of the FOIA, shall be made available in DoD Component FOIA reading rooms, and electronically to the public.

(2) Although not required to be made available in response to FOIA requests or made available in FOIA Reading Rooms, “(a)(1)” materials shall, when feasible, be made available to the public in FOIA reading rooms for inspection and copying, and by electronic means. Examples of “(a)(1)” materials are: descriptions of any agency’s central and field organization, and to the extent they affect the public, rules of