

## § 16.227

record be withheld from public disclosure. Any person may object to disclosure of information in the record by filing a written motion to withhold specific information with the hearing officer. The person shall state specific grounds for nondisclosure in the motion.

(c) The hearing officer shall grant the motion to withhold information from public disclosure if the hearing officer determines that disclosure would be in violation of the Privacy Act, would reveal trade secrets or privileged or confidential commercial or financial information, or is otherwise prohibited by law.

### § 16.227 Standard of proof.

The hearing officer shall issue an initial decision or rule in a party's favor only if the decision or ruling is in accordance with law and supported by a preponderance of the reliable, probative, and substantial evidence contained in the record.

[Amdt. 16-1, as amended at 78 FR 56147, Sept. 12, 2013]

### § 16.229 Burden of proof.

As used in this subpart, the burden of proof is as follows:

(a) The burden of proof of noncompliance with an Act or any regulation, order, agreement or document of conveyance issued under the authority of an Act is on the agency.

(b) Except as otherwise provided by statute or rule, the proponent of a motion, request, or order has the burden of proof.

(c) A party who has asserted an affirmative defense has the burden of proving the affirmative defense.

[Doc. No. 27783, 61 FR 54004, October 16, 1996, as amended at Amdt. 16-1, 78 FR 56147, Sept. 12, 2013]

### § 16.231 Offer of proof.

A party whose evidence has been excluded by a ruling of the hearing officer may offer the evidence on the record when filing an appeal.

### § 16.233 Record.

(a) *Exclusive record.* The transcript of all testimony in the hearing, all exhibits received into evidence, all motions,

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applications requests and rulings, all documents included in the hearing record and the Director's Determination shall constitute the exclusive record for decision in the proceedings and the basis for the issuance of any orders.

(b) *Examination and copy of record.* A copy of the record will be filed by the FAA Part 16 Docket Clerk in the Federal Docket Management System (FDMS). Any person desiring to review the record may then do so at <http://www.regulations.gov>.

[Amdt. 16-1, 78 FR 56147, Sept. 12, 2013]

### § 16.235 Argument before the hearing officer.

(a) *Argument during the hearing.* During the hearing, the hearing officer shall give the parties reasonable opportunity to present oral argument on the record supporting or opposing motions, objections, and rulings if the parties request an opportunity for argument. The hearing officer may direct written argument during the hearing if the hearing officer finds that submission of written arguments would not delay the hearing.

(b) *Posthearing briefs.* The hearing officer may request or permit the parties to submit posthearing briefs. The hearing officer may provide for the filing of simultaneous reply briefs as well, if such filing will not unduly delay the issuance of the hearing officer's initial decision. Posthearing briefs shall include proposed findings of fact and conclusions of law; exceptions to rulings of the hearing officer; references to the record in support of the findings of fact; and supporting arguments for the proposed findings, proposed conclusions, and exceptions.

[Doc. No. 27783, 61 FR 54004, October 16, 1996, as amended at Amdt. 16-1, 78 FR 56147, Sept. 12, 2013]

### § 16.237 Waiver of procedures.

(a) The hearing officer shall waive such procedural steps as all parties to the hearing agree to waive before issuance of an initial decision.

(b) Consent to a waiver of any procedural step bars the raising of this issue on appeal.

(c) The parties may not by consent waive the obligation of the hearing officer to enter an initial decision on the record.

**§ 16.241 Initial decisions, order, and appeals.**

(a) The hearing officer shall issue an initial decision based on the record developed during the proceeding and shall send the initial decision to the parties not later than 110 days after the Director's Determination unless otherwise provided in the hearing order.

(b) Each party adversely affected by the hearing officer's initial decision may file an appeal with the Associate Administrator within 15 days of the date the initial decision is issued. Each party may file a reply to an appeal within 10 days after it is served on the party. Filing and service of appeals and replies shall be by personal delivery.

(c) If an appeal is filed, the Associate Administrator reviews the entire record and issues a final agency decision and order within 60 days of the due date of the reply. If no appeal is filed, the Associate Administrator may take review of the case on his or her own motion. If the Associate Administrator finds that the respondent is not in compliance with any Act or any regulation, agreement, or document of conveyance issued or made under such Act, the final agency order includes, in accordance with § 16.245(d), a statement of corrective action, if appropriate, and identifies sanctions for continued non-compliance.

(d) If no appeal is filed, and the Associate Administrator does not take review of the initial decision on the Associate Administrator's own motion, the initial decision shall take effect as the final agency decision and order on the sixteenth day after the actual date the initial decision is issued.

(e) The failure to file an appeal is deemed a waiver of any rights to seek judicial review of an initial decision that becomes a final agency decision by operation of paragraph (d) of this section.

[Doc. No. 27783, 61 FR 54004, October 16, 1996, as amended at Amdt. 16-1, 78 FR 56147, Sept. 12, 2013]

**§ 16.243 Consent orders.**

(a) The agency attorney and the respondents may agree at any time before the issuance of a final decision and order to dispose of the case by issuance of a consent order. Good faith efforts to resolve a complaint through issuance of a consent order may continue throughout the administrative process. Except as provided in § 16.209, such efforts may not serve as the basis for extensions of the times set forth in this part.

(b) A proposal for a consent order, specified in paragraph (a) of this section, shall include:

(1) A proposed consent order;

(2) An admission of all jurisdictional facts;

(3) An express waiver of the right to further procedural steps and of all rights of judicial review; and

(4) The hearing order, if issued, and an acknowledgment that the hearing order may be used to construe the terms of the consent order.

(c) If the issuance of a consent order has been agreed upon by all parties to the hearing, the proposed consent order shall be filed with the hearing officer, along with a draft order adopting the consent decree and dismissing the case, for the hearing officer's adoption.

(d) The deadline for the hearing officer's initial decision and the final agency decision is extended by the amount of days elapsed between the filing of the proposed consent order with the hearing officer and the issuance of the hearing officer's order continuing the hearing.

(e) If the agency attorney and sponsor agree to dispose of a case by issuance of a consent order before the FAA issues a hearing order, the proposal for a consent order is submitted jointly to the official authorized to issue a hearing order, together with a request to adopt the consent order and dismiss the case. The official authorized to issue the hearing order issues the consent order as an order of the FAA and terminates the proceeding.

[Doc. No. 27783, 61 FR 54004, October 16, 1996, as amended at Amdt. 16-1, 78 FR 56147, Sept. 12, 2013]