

marked in accordance with instructions from an authorized classifier or in accordance with an authorized classification guide and shall comply with the standards set forth in sections 2.1–2.2 of the Executive Order and the ISOO implementing directives in 32 CFR 2001.22.

(c) *Department of State Classification Guide.* The Department of State Classification Guide (DSCG) is the primary authority for the classification of information in documents created by Department of State personnel. The Guide is classified “Confidential” and is found on the Department of State’s classified Web site.

§9.7 Identification and marking.

(a) Classified information shall be marked pursuant to the standards set forth in section 1.6 of the Executive Order; ISOO implementing directives in 32 CFR 2001, Subpart B; and internal Department guidance in 12 Foreign Affairs Manual (FAM).

(b) Foreign government information shall retain its original classification markings or be marked and classified at a U.S. classification level that provides a degree of protection at least equivalent to that required by the entity that furnished the information. Foreign government information retaining its original classification markings need not be assigned a U.S. classification marking provided the responsible agency determines that the foreign government markings are adequate to meet the purposes served by U.S. classification markings.

(c) Information assigned a level of classification under predecessor executive orders shall be considered as classified at that level of classification.

§9.8 Classification challenges.

(a) *Challenges.* Holders of information pertaining to the Department of State who believe that its classification status is improper are expected and encouraged to challenge the classification status of the information. Holders of information making challenges to the classification status of information shall not be subject to retribution for such action. Informal, usually oral, challenges are encouraged. Formal challenges to classification actions

shall be in writing to an original classification authority (OCA) with jurisdiction over the information and a copy of the challenge shall be sent to the Office of Information Programs and Services (IPS) of the Department of State, SA–2, 515 22nd St. NW., Washington, DC 20522–6001. The Department (either the OCA or IPS) shall provide an initial response in writing within 60 days.

(b) *Appeal procedures and time limits.* A negative response may be appealed to the Department’s Appeals Review Panel (ARP) and should be sent to: Chairman, Appeals Review Panel, c/o Information and Privacy Coordinator/ Appeals Officer, at the IPS address given above. The appeal shall include a copy of the original challenge, the response, and any additional information the appellant believes would assist the ARP in reaching its decision. The ARP shall respond within 90 days of receipt of the appeal. A negative decision by the ARP may be appealed to the Interagency Security Classification Appeals Panel (ISCAP) referenced in section 5.3 of Executive Order 12958. If the Department fails to respond to a formal challenge within 120 days or if the ARP fails to respond to an appeal within 90 days, the challenge may be sent to the ISCAP.

§9.9 Declassification and downgrading.

(a) *Declassification processes.* Declassification of classified information may occur:

(1) After review of material in response to a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request, mandatory declassification review request, discovery request, subpoena, classification challenge, or other information access or declassification request;

(2) After review as part of the Department’s systematic declassification review program;

(3) As a result of the elapse of the time or the occurrence of the event specified at the time of classification;

(4) By operation of the automatic declassification provisions of section 3.3 of the Executive Order with respect to material more than 25 years old.