

### § 3a.12

#### § 3a.12 Authority to classify official information.

(a) The authority to classify information or material originally under E.O. 11652 is restricted to those offices within the executive branch which are concerned with matters of national security, and is limited to the minimum number absolutely required for efficient administration.

(b) The authority to classify information or material originally as Top Secret is to be exercised only by such officials as the President may designate in writing and by the heads of the following departments and agencies and such of their principal staff officials as the heads of these departments and agencies may designate in writing:

Such offices in the Executive Office of the President as the President may designate in writing.

Central Intelligence Agency.  
Atomic Energy Commission.  
Department of State.  
Department of the Treasury.  
Department of Defense.  
Department of the Army.  
Department of the Navy.  
Department of the Air Force.  
U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency  
Department of Justice.  
National Aeronautics and Space Administration.  
Agency for International Development.

(c) The authority to classify information or material originally as Secret is exercised only by:

(1) Officials who have Top Secret classification authority under § 3a.11(b); and

(2) The heads of the following departments and agencies and such principal staff officials as they may designate in writing:

Department of Transportation.  
Federal Communications Commission.  
Export-Import Bank of the United States.  
Department of Commerce.  
U.S. Civil Service Commission.  
U.S. Information Agency.  
General Services Administration.  
Department of Health, Education, and Welfare.  
Civil Aeronautics Board.  
Federal Maritime Commission.  
Federal Power Commission.  
National Science Foundation.  
Overseas Private Investment Corporation.

(d) The authority to classify information or material originally as Confiden-

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tial is exercised by officials who have Top Secret or Secret classification authority.

(e) Pursuant to E.O. 11652, the authority to classify information or material originally as Secret or Confidential in the FPC shall be exercised only by the Chairman, the Vice Chairman, and the Executive Director. When an incumbent change occurs in these positions, the name of the new incumbent will be reported to the Interagency Classification Review Committee NSC.

#### § 3a.13 Classification responsibility and procedure.

(a) Each FPC official who has classifying authority (§ 3a.12) shall be held accountable for the propriety of the classifications attributed to him. Unnecessary classification and overclassification shall be avoided. Classification shall be solely on the basis of national security considerations. In no case shall information be classified in order to conceal inefficiency or administrative error, to prevent embarrassment to the FPC or any of its officials or employees, or to prevent for any other reason the release of information which does not require protection in the interest of national security.

(b) Each classified document shall show on its face its classification and whether it is subject to or exempt from the General Declassification Schedule (§ 3a.22(b)). It also shall show the office of origin, the date of preparation and classification and, to the extent practicable, be so marked as to indicate which portions are classified, at what level, and which portions are not classified in order to facilitate excerpting and other use. Material which merely contains references to classified materials, which references do not reveal classified information, shall not be classified.

(c) Material classified under this part shall indicate on its face the identity of the highest authority authorizing the classification. Where the individual who signs or otherwise authenticates a document or item has also authorized the classification, no further annotation as to his identity is required.

(d) Classified information or material furnished to the United States by a foreign government or international organization shall either retain its original classification or be assigned a U.S. classification. In either case, the classification shall assure a degree of protection equivalent to that required by the government or international organization which furnished the information or material.

(e) Whenever information or material classified by an authorized official is incorporated in another document or other material by any person other than the classifier, the previously assigned security classification category shall be reflected thereon together with the identity of the classifier.

(f) As a holder of classified information or material, the FPC shall observe and respect the classification assigned by the originator. If it is believed that there is unnecessary classification; that the assigned classification is improper, or that the document is subject to declassification under E.O. 11652, the FPC will so inform the originator who is then required by the Executive order to reexamine the classification.

#### DECLASSIFICATION AND DOWNGRADING

##### § 3a.21 Authority to downgrade and declassify.

(a) The authority to downgrade and declassify information or material shall be exercised as follows:

(1) Information or material may be downgraded or declassified by the official authorizing the original classification, by a successor or by a supervisory official of either.

(2) Downgrading and declassification authority may also be exercised by an official specifically authorized under regulations issued by the head of the Department listed in sections 2 A and B of E.O. 11652, March 10, 1972.

(3) In the case of classified information or material transferred pursuant to statute or Executive order in conjunction with a transfer of function and not merely for storage purposes, the receiving department or agency shall be deemed to be the originating department or agency for all purposes under E.O. 11652, including downgrading and declassification.

(4) In the case of classified information or material not officially transferred under paragraph (a)(3) of this section, but originated in a department or agency which has since ceased to exist, each department or agency in possession shall be deemed to be the originating department or agency for all purposes. Such information or material may be downgraded and declassified after consulting with any other departments or agencies having an interest in the subject matter.

(5) Classified information or material transferred to the General Services Administration for accession to the Archives of the United States shall be downgraded and declassified by the Archivist of the United States in accordance with E.O. 11652, directives of the President issued through the National Security Council, and pertinent regulations of the departments and agencies.

##### § 3a.22 Declassification and downgrading.

(a) When classified information of material no longer requires the level of protection assigned to it, it shall be downgraded or declassified in order to preserve the effectiveness and integrity of the classification system. The Chairman, Vice Chairman, and Executive Director exercise downgrading and declassification authority in the FPC.

(b) Information and material classified prior to June 1, 1972, and assigned to Group 4 under E.O. 10501, as amended by E.O. 10964, unless declassified earlier by the original classifying authority, shall be declassified and downgraded in accordance with the following General Declassification Schedule.

(1) *Top Secret*. Information or material originally classified TOP SECRET becomes automatically downgraded to Secret at the end of the second full calendar year following the year in which it was originated, downgraded to Confidential at the end of the fourth full calendar year following the year in which it was originated, and declassified at the end of the 10th full calendar year following the year in which it was originated.

(2) *Secret*. Information and material originally classified Secret becomes