



ISOO Notice 2022-02: Declassification Guide Review Requirements

May 19, 2022

Authorities

1. Executive Order 13526, “Classified National Security Information,” section 3.3
2. 32 CFR 2001.32, “Classified National Security Information”, Declassification Guides
3. 32 CFR 2003.12, “Interagency Security Classification Appeals Panel Bylaws, Rules, and Appeal Procedures”, Review of agency exemptions from automatic declassification under section 3.3 of the Order

Purpose and Background

The purpose of this ISOO Notice is to provide guidance to agencies on the internal review and updating of declassification guides and whether they must submit updated guides for approval by the Interagency Security Classification Appeals Panel (ISCAP).

Declassification guides are how Federal agencies receive authority to exempt specific information from automatic declassification at 25, 50, and 75 years. They are reviewed and approved by the ISCAP under the provisions of 32 CFR Part 2003.12 and must be shared with the National Declassification Center (NDC) to facilitate equity identification by declassification reviewers.

One year prior to the onset of automatic declassification, agencies must submit their proposed exemptions to the ISCAP for review and approval. According to 32 CFR Part 2001.32(c), “Internal review and update,” guides must be reviewed and updated by the creating agency as circumstances require, but at least once every five years.

ISOO Notice 2019-01, “Agencies Eligible to Receive Referrals from Automatic Declassification at 25, 50, and 75 Years,” details the exemption authorities granted by the ISCAP to 23 agencies and seven combatant commands, as well as the dates of the most recently approved declassification guides.

Guidance

As required by 32 CFR 2001.32(c), agencies must conduct an internal review and update of their declassification guide no later than five years after the date of their existing approved guide.

Agencies may update declassification guides without obtaining ISCAP approval only if the updates do not add any new exemption categories or identify new types of information for exemption. Agencies may, for example, add additional descriptive information concerning information that may be declassified.

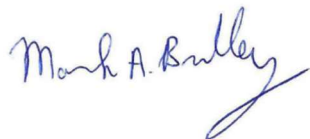
Agencies must submit updated declassification guides for review and approval by the ISCAP if the update includes new categories of information to be exempted from declassification and/or seeks a new category of exemption authority. For example, an agency must submit an updated guide for ISCAP approval if that agency is seeking a 75X6 exemption for specific information dating from 1948 that would cause serious harm to U.S. foreign relations that is subject to automatic declassification in 2023 for which that agency does not have 75X6 authority.

Agencies may submit required updates to the ISCAP in the form of an annex or addendum in order to expedite review and approval. Agencies should contact the ISCAP Staff at iscap@nara.gov with any questions concerning the submission of an updated guide.

Agencies that require but do not currently have approved declassification exemptions should also contact the ISCAP Staff to begin the process of developing a declassification guide for review and approval.

In all cases, declassification guides, or detailed declassification guidance, must be submitted to the Director of the NDC in accordance with 32 CFR Part 2001.32(d)(2).

Please direct any questions regarding this ISOO Notice to: isoo@nara.gov.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Mark A. Bradley". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping tail on the letter "y".

MARK A. BRADLEY
Director