Information Security Oversight Office

1992

Authority

Executive Order 12356, "National Security Information." ISOO receives its policy and program direction from the President through the National Security Council. ISOO is an administrative component of the United States General Services Administration.

Mission

ISOO oversees the Government-wide information security (security classification) program and reports to the President annually on its status.

Functions

Develops and issues implementing directives and instructions for the information security program.

Maintains liaison with agency counterparts and conducts on-site inspections and special document reviews to monitor agency compliance with the information security program.

Develops and disseminates security education materials for Government and industry; monitors agencies' security education and training programs.

Receives and takes action on complaints, appeals and suggestions regarding the administration of the information security program.

Collects and analyzes relevant statistical data on each agency's information security program, and reports them annually, along with other information, to the President.

Serves as spokesperson to Congress, the media, special interest groups, professional organizations and the public on the information security program.

Conducts special studies on identified or potential problem areas in the information security program, and develops remedial approaches for program improvement.

Goals

To hold classification activity to the minimum necessary to protect the national security.

To ensure the safeguarding of national security information in an effective and efficient manner.

To promote declassification and public access to information as soon as national security considerations permit.

February 16, 1993

Dear Mr. President:

I am pleased to submit the Information Security Oversight Office's (ISOO) 1992 Report to the President.

For several years, ISOO has forecast that the information security program would ultimately reflect the changes brought about by the end of the Cold War and agencies' reexamination of the threats to our national security. ISOO believes that the data it has collected for FY 1992 and reported here begin to demonstrate, at least quantitatively, the impact of these extraordinary events. For example, the levels of classfication activity for 1992 are the lowest ever reported by ISOO since its creation in 1978.

As threats change, decisions about what information really needs to be safeguarded in the interest of our national security become far more difficult and controversial. Another major challenge is what to do with the vast quantity of classified information that has built up over the course of the Cold War era. ISOO has been coordinating an interagency review of these and related policy issues. We very much look forward to receiving the input of interested officials within the new Administration as we seek solutions that satisfy both our national security requirements and the need of the American people to be fully informed about the workings of their Government.

Respectfully,

Steven Garfinkel
Director

The President
The White House
Washington, DC 20500

Summary of FY 1992 Program Activity

The FY 1992 Report to the President is the tenth to examine the information security program under E.O. 12356. The following data highlight ISOO's findings.

Classified Document Review

- ISOO examined 10,933 classified documents.
- The 2,878 discrepancies identified in the documents reviewed represent an error rate of 26%.

Classification

- The number of original classification authorities decreased significantly to 5,793.
- Reported original classification decisions decreased 6% to 480,843.
- Reported derivative classification decisions decreased 11% to 5,868,689.
- The total of all classification actions reported for FY 1992 decreased 11% to 6,349,532.
- DOD accounted for 54% of all classification decisions; CIA 30%; Justice 12%; State 3%; and all other agencies 1%.

Declassification

- Under the systematic review program, agencies reviewed 10,715,290 pages of historically valuable records, 32% fewer than in FY 1991; and declassified 9,426,011 pages, 33% fewer than in FY 1991.
- Agencies received 4,431 new mandatory review requests.
- Under mandatory review, agencies declassified in full 101,814 pages; declassified in part 118,655 pages; and retained classification in full on 13,224 pages.
- Agencies received 207 new mandatory review appeals.
- On appeal, agencies declassified in whole or in part 15,248 additional pages.

Safeguarding

- Agencies conducted 21,233 self-inspections.
- Agencies reported 21,071 infractions, 1% fewer than in FY 1991

Summary of Findings and Observations

Positive Indicators

- Specialized declassification projects, such as the Air Force's Southeast Asia Project, can achieve outstanding results and serve as a model for future declassification efforts.
- Agencies made significant reductions in their numbers of original classification authorities.
- Agencies made significant reductions in the number of both original and derivative classification decisions.
- Under both the systematic and mandatory declassification programs, agencies declassified a very high percentage of the documents reviewed.
- Under the mandatory review program, agencies reviewed and declassified much more than they had last year.

Negative Indicators

- The error rate uncovered in ISOO's reviews of classified documents continued to be excessive.
- In original classification, agencies continued to overuse the indefinite declassification instruction, ''OADR.''
- For both original and derivative classification decisions, agencies appeared to classify a little too much information at the **Top Secret** level.
- The product of the systematic declassification review program declined significantly.
- Agencies' self-inspections are lacking, both in quantity and quality.

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Prologue: The Air Force Southeast Asia Declassification Project

For the past few years DOD systematic declassification figures have included an overwhelming degree of Air Force action. ISOO's 1990 Report briefly mentioned a then budding Air Force effort known as the Southeast Asia (SEA) Declassification Project. This reference did not do justice to its significance.

In 1989, the Secretary of the Air Force ordered a bold strike to ease the burden of Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests and other inquiries regarding Viet Nam War era records. Under the direction of the Administrative Assistant to the Secretary, who is the Air Force's Senior Official for its information security program, an ambitious five-year program founded on cooperative relationships began.

SEA DECLASSIFICATION RESULTS

Site	%	Pages
TOTAL	72%	9,000,000
SUITLAND	55%	4,000,000
HRA	86%	2,200,000
POW/MIA	94%	1,600,000
MISC	75%	800,000
WRIGHT PATTERSON	75%	200,000
HICKHAM	75%	200,000

DECLASSIFICATION SITES

- Pages Reviewed
- Pages Declassified

Declassification project completed two years ahead of schedule

1

The Air Force assembled a group of reservists (SEA Team) to perform the declassification mission. The SEA Team, aided by the Air Force Security Police, began by creating a 174 page declassification guide requiring unprecedented coordination with every agency that had some war-time responsibility in Southeast Asia.

Standing by to help was the Air Force Historical Research Agency (HRA) at Maxwell Air Force Base located in Montgomery, Alabama, and its permanent declassification group—the Safe Paper Office. The HRA played a principal role in declassifying, microfilming and indexing millions of pages of Viet Nam War era records archived there. Without impeding the project, HRA entered all of those pages into a computer database available to researchers.

The SEA Project is now complete, two years *ahead* of schedule, and is bearing fruit. FOIA requests and inquiries from researchers are far less time consuming than before and far more productive. Also, with millions fewer classified pages, storage and protection costs are much lower.

The Air Force and DOD are now using SEA Project methods and personnel to declassify POW/MIA and Persian Gulf War records. ISOO hopes that the SEA Declassification Project will serve as a model for many similar projects in the future, not only in DOD, but in other agencies as well.

Computer database is available to researchers

CASE FILE COPY

MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

Attached herewith per your request is a draft statement of the results which demonstrate the importance of the bombing campaign against North Vietnam, together with an extract from a personal notebook of a North Vietnamese soldier.

EARLE G. WHEELER
Chairman
Joint Chiefs of Staff

UNCLASSIFIED

PERSONAL NOTEBOOK OF NORTH VIETNAMESE SOLDIER VU VAN BINH

"20 JUN 66
WE THEN QUIETLY WALKED...
WHILE AIRCRAFT BUZZED CRAZILY ABOVE."

"23 JUN 66
TODAY WE CROSSED THE BEN HAI RIVER. FROM NOW ON WE WILL BE LIVING ON SVN SOIL...
EVERYTHING FOR COMBAT."

LINEBACKER OPERATIONS

SEPTEMBER - DECEMBER 1972 (U)

31 DECEMBER 1978

PROJECT CHECO
OFFICE OF HISTORY
HQ PACAF

Prepared by:
MAJOR CALVIN R. JOHNSON

1029549

FIRST B-52 COMBAT LOSS

(%) The first combat loss of ...
interest for two reasons. That ...
typifies the subsequent loss ...
over Hanoi during ...
occurred on 22 November ...
from Oyess AFB, Texas, ...
explosion over North ...
successfully back from ...
border before crashing ...

(%) Of historical note is ...
flown more than 112,000 combat sortie ...
a single combat loss. There ...
at B-52 cells, with a total or two SAMs sighted by the crews. Only five
of these SAMs caused battle damage to B-52 aircraft. Two were struck in
April 1972 during Freedom Train operations, and recovered safely. Three
were struck in November 1972 during Linebacker I. The last of these
became SAC's first combat loss in SEA.

(%) After bailout of the crew, the aircraft broke up into three
major sections from excessive positive G forces. The right wing, main
fuselage and left wing, and the tail section including the aft wheel well,
all landed with a 4-mile circle. Examination of the lower right wing
surface revealed SAM damage. The tail section and aft wheel showed
moderate SAM damage. The holes were directly through the horizontal
stabilizer, indicating the SAM exploded directly under the aircraft. On
radar the SAM explosion appeared to entirely engulf Olive 2.

(%) Excerpts of Olive 2 (OTE E-05) crew debriefings trace the flight
experience.

SSgt Arnold M. Sellers, gunner (in tail section): I saw the
explosive force come by and then I started watching Iwil. ...
The number 2 engine ...   The first thing I
noticed was a large ...
all along the wing. ...
left tip tank gone. S...
scrubllious. ... I d...
until the right wing ...
of the (right) wing w...
... I would venture ...

> AFTER MORE THAN 112,000 COMBAT SORTIES THE FIRST B-52 WAS LOST ON 22 NOV 1972. FORTUNATELY THE CREW SURVIVED.

> SSGT SELLERS, THE GUNNER, SAID: "I DID NOT REALLY SEE ANYTHING THAT WAS NOTABLE UNTIL THE RIGHT WING CAUGHT FIRE..."

SEA Project may serve as a model for future declassification projects

3

Classified Document Review

In 1992, the review of classified documents remained a prominent feature of ISOO's oversight activities. ISOO analysts reviewed a total of 10,933 classified documents, the highest number ISOO has examined in any one year. In the past two years, nine ISOO analysts have reviewed almost 21,500 classified documents. This emphasis derives from the many benefits that document reviews provide. Perhaps most significant, document reviews highlight an individual agency's performance in classifying and marking documents, and suggest areas in need of improvement.

The 13 agencies or agency elements which participated in the document reviews during 1992 are listed at the end of this section. Each received an individual report on the results. Here, ISOO combines the data from these 13 agencies to look at the total sample for FY 1992. ISOO first examines the documents in the sample in terms of the classification of each document; that is, the type of document, its classification level, the basis for classification, and the assigned duration of classification. Next, ISOO discusses the discrepancies in classification and markings. To promote consistency in the recording of data and the interpretation of results, ISOO analysts work with a number of definitions for discrepancies. These appear below the chart on discrepancies.

Types of Documents

Of the 10,933 documents ISOO reviewed in FY 1992, 5,823 (53 %) were cables or messages transmitted electronically; 2,720 (25 %) were memoranda or letters; and 2,390 (22 %) were other types of documents, predominantly reports or studies.

TYPES OF DOCUMENTS

Memos/Letters 25%

Cables 53%

Other 22%

4
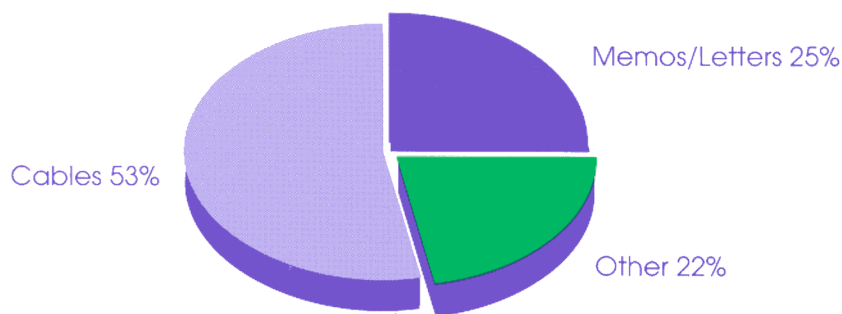
Classification Levels

By level of classification, 172 (1 %) of the documents were classified **Top Secret**; 6,423 (59 %), **Secret**; and 4,338 (40 %), **Confidential**. A positive finding is the low proportion of **Top Secret** documents in the sample. This finding is significant for two reasons. First, more stringent safeguarding requirements apply to **Top Secret** information than to **Secret** or **Confidential**. Thus, the restrained use of the highest level of classification results in lower costs borne by the Government to protect national security information. Second, holding the line on the use of **Top Secret** enhances the credibility of classifications at the highest level.

CLASSIFICATION LEVELS

Confidential 40%
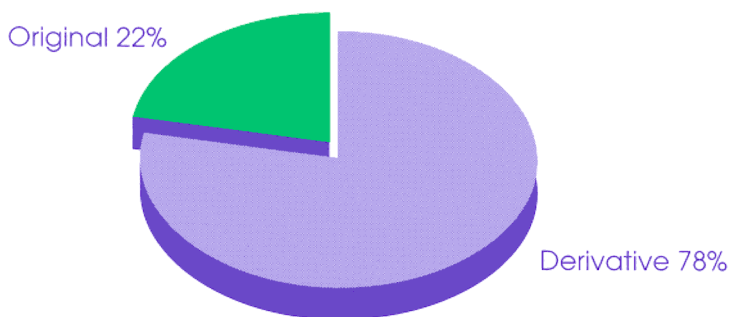
Secret 59%

Top Secret 1%
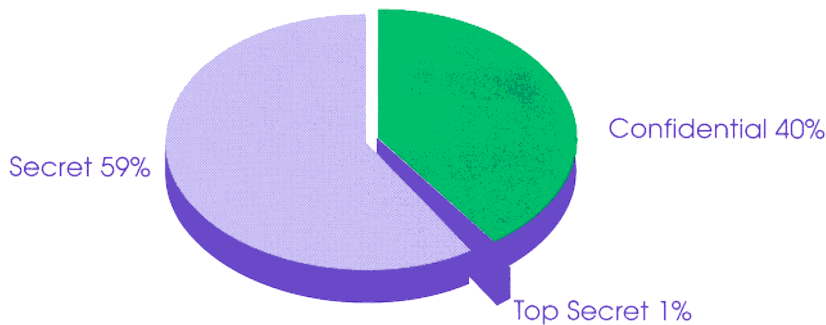
Classification Basis

ISOO Directive No. 1 does not require electronically transmitted information to indicate the basis for classification. Because of this, the absence of a "Classified by" line in cables or messages is not cited as a discrepancy. Of the 6,352 documents in the sample for which the classification basis was known, 1,426 (22 %) were original classifications and 4,926 (78 %) were derivative. Of these derivative classifications, 2,817 (57 %) were classified on the basis of a classification guide; 1,796 (37 %) were based on multiple sources; and 313 (6 %) were based on a single source.

CLASSIFICATION BASIS

(Based on total of 6,352 documents for which the Classification Source was known)

Original 22%

Derivative 78%

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Duration of Classification

Of the 10,933 documents in the sample, 10,238 (94%) were marked "Originating Agency's Determination Required," or "OADR" on the "Declassify on" line; 274 (2%) were marked with a date or event for declassification; and 421 (4%) did not indicate the duration of classification and are included among the discrepancies below. ISOO noted an additional 197 documents that were marked "OADR," but should have cited a date or event for declassification. These are also cited as discrepancies.

DURATION OF CLASSIFICATION

Not Indicated 4%

Date or Event 2%

OADR 94%
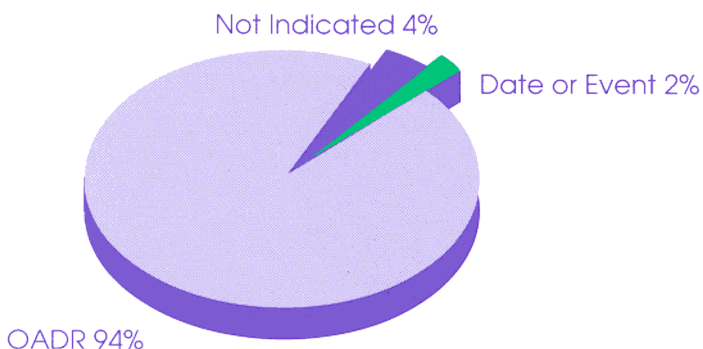
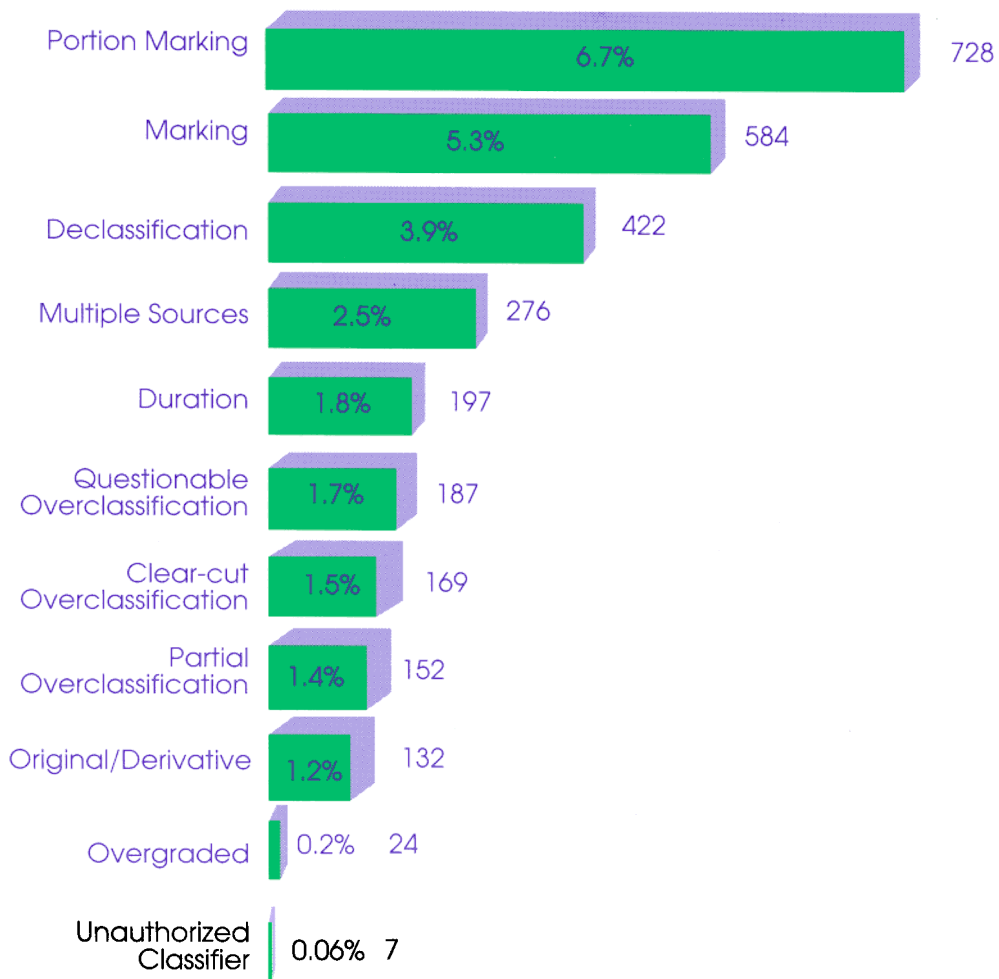**The lower overall discrepancy rate is still too high to merit kudos**

Discrepancies

The 2,878 discrepancies identified in these documents represent an error rate of 26%. This rate is obtained by dividing the number of discrepancies by the number of documents reviewed. It should be kept in mind, however, that some documents had more than one discrepancy. This rate is still too high, although lower than the 42% rate identified by ISOO for the combined document reviews it conducted in FY 1986 through FY 1989, and the 33% rate identified for non-Gulf War related documents in FY 1991. (The error rate for Gulf War related documents in FY 1991 was a very low 8%.) It is important to ensure that documents do not become unnecessarily classified or improperly marked. In prior Annual Reports, as well as in the conduct of oversight activities, ISOO has emphasized that errors involving clear-cut overclassification, absence of declassification instructions, improper use of "OADR" (the indefinite duration of classification), failure to cite the classification source, and lack of portion marking damage the integrity of the classification system. Unwarranted classification is an abuse of the system that results in a loss of credibility and misuse of scarce resources. The high cost of managing classified information emphasizes the need to apply the classification stamp judiciously. The absence of declassification instructions multiplies every time one of these documents is used as a source of classification in the derivative process, and creates an additional barrier when declassification and public access are warranted. Applying the "OADR" marking to documents that are clearly time-sensitive restricts the communication or dissemination of information beyond the period for which such protection is warranted. Citing the classification source provides the means to trace a classification decision to its origin. Omitting it eliminates this option. The absence of portion markings also invites error in the derivative process.

Achieving improvement in classification and marking is complicated by the fact that agency performance varies widely. Within some agencies, the discrepancy rate is very low while in others it is significantly higher. ISOO will continue to work with agency officials to improve classifiers' awareness of the classification process and to impress upon them the costs of misusing the classification system.

Discrepancy rates vary significantly among agencies

DISCREPANCIES

Failure to portion mark is the largest discrepancy

Category	Percentage	Count
Portion Marking	6.7%	728
Marking	5.3%	584
Declassification	3.9%	422
Multiple Sources	2.5%	276
Duration	1.8%	197
Questionable Overclassification	1.7%	187
Clear-cut Overclassification	1.5%	169
Partial Overclassification	1.4%	152
Original/Derivative	1.2%	132
Overgraded	0.2%	24
Unauthorized Classifier	0.06%	7

Definitions

Clear-cut overclassification—The information in the document does not meet the standards necessary for classification.

Questionable overclassification—While the question of meeting classification standards is arguable, classification does not appear to be necessary to protect our national security.

Partial overclassification—A portion(s) of the document appears to be unnecessarily classified, although the overall classification of the document is correct.

Overgraded—All or some of the information in the document appears to be classified at a higher level than justified.

Undergraded—All or some of the information in the document appears to be classified at a lower level than necessary.

Unauthorized Classifier—The document appears to have been classified by someone not authorized to do so.

Declassification—The document appears to have improper declassification instructions or no declassification instructions at all.

Duration—The duration of classification is marked "OADR" when a specific date or event for declassification appears feasible.

Original/Derivative—The document is marked and treated as an original classification action although the classified information appears to be derived from a guide or other source(s).

Marking—The document appears to have improper classification markings or lacks required markings, including instances in which the document fails to cite or cites improperly the classification source. This does not include marking errors more specifically included under another discrepancy category.

Portion Marking—The document appears to lack required portion markings.

Multiple Sources—The official file copy of the document cites "multiple sources" as the basis for classification, but does not list these sources.

PARTICIPANTS

Participants	No. of Documents
ACDA	352
Air Force	1,321
Army	2,099
CIA	1,012
DIA	305
DMA	111
DOT	317
Joint Electronic Warfare Center (JCS)	409
Navy	242
NSC	558
State	1,811
U.S. Central Command (JCS)	1,659
USMC	737

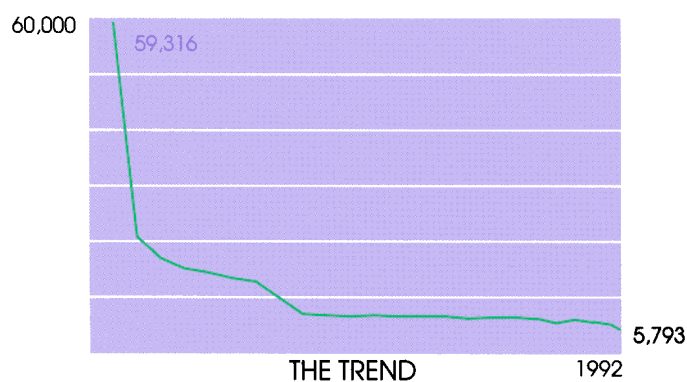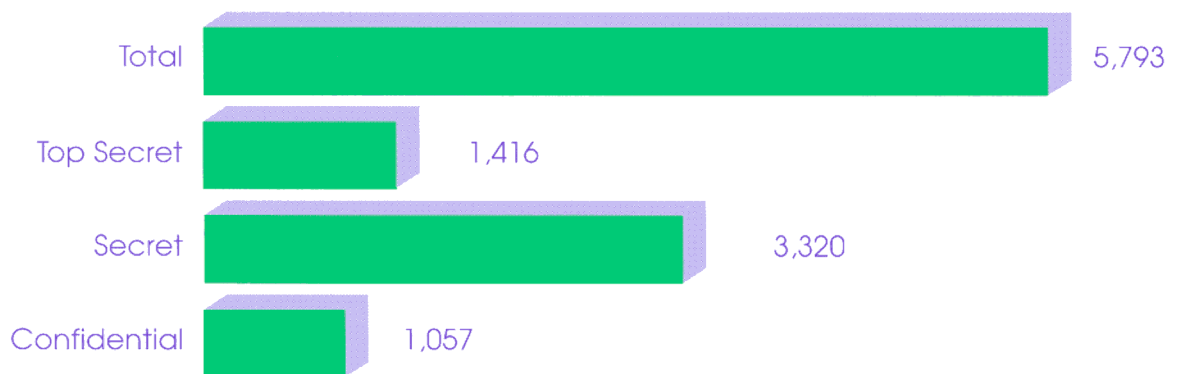ISOO noted approximately 5% overclassification in this sample

Classification

Original Classifiers

Original classification authorities, also called original classifiers, are those individuals designated in writing, either by the President or by selected agency heads, to classify information in the first instance. Under E.O. 12356, only original classifiers determine what information, if disclosed without authority, could reasonably be expected to cause damage to the national security.

For FY 1992, the number of original classifiers throughout the executive branch of the government decreased by 681, to a total of 5,793. This figure represents the lowest number of original classifiers ever reported by ISOO. Also, the proportional decrease in the number of original classifiers is the largest recorded in a year when the classification system did not

ORIGINAL CLASSIFIERS   FY 1992

Total	5,793
Top Secret	1,416
Secret	3,320
Confidential	1,057

60,000

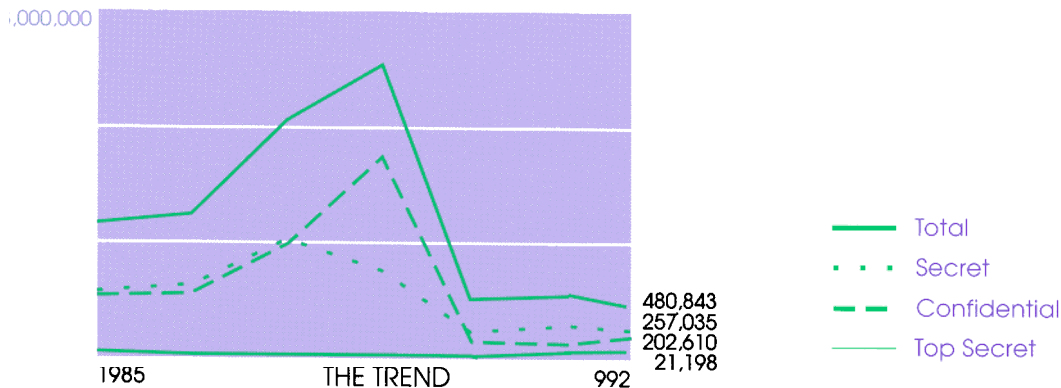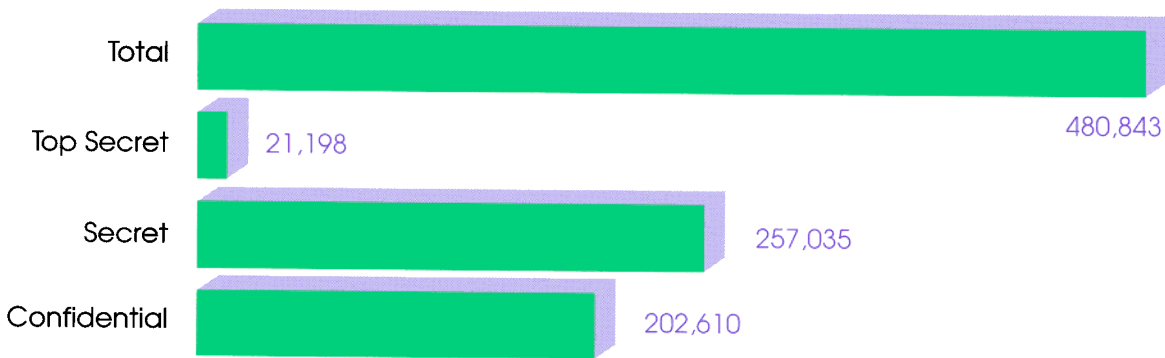59,316

5,793

THE TREND   1992

change. ISOO believes that the dramatic world changes experienced in the past few years affect the level of decrease and will work toward similar decreases in the future. ISOO will continue to monitor this situation closely, and feels that reducing the number of original classifiers will allow the classification system to regulate itself more closely.

For FY 1992, agencies reported decreases in authorities at all levels of classification. At the **Top Secret** level, agencies reported a decrease of 9 % ; at the **Secret** level, a decrease of 13 % ; and at the **Confidential** level, a decrease of 5 % . ISOO wishes to recognize several agencies for their efforts to reduce the number of original classifiers. Most impressive was the 38 % decrease reported by CIA. Also among the front-runners, NASA and Commerce reported decreases of 48 % and 35 % , respectively. DOD also continued to make significant progress in decreasing its number of original classifiers. Of particular note within DOD are Army, DMA, JCS and Navy.
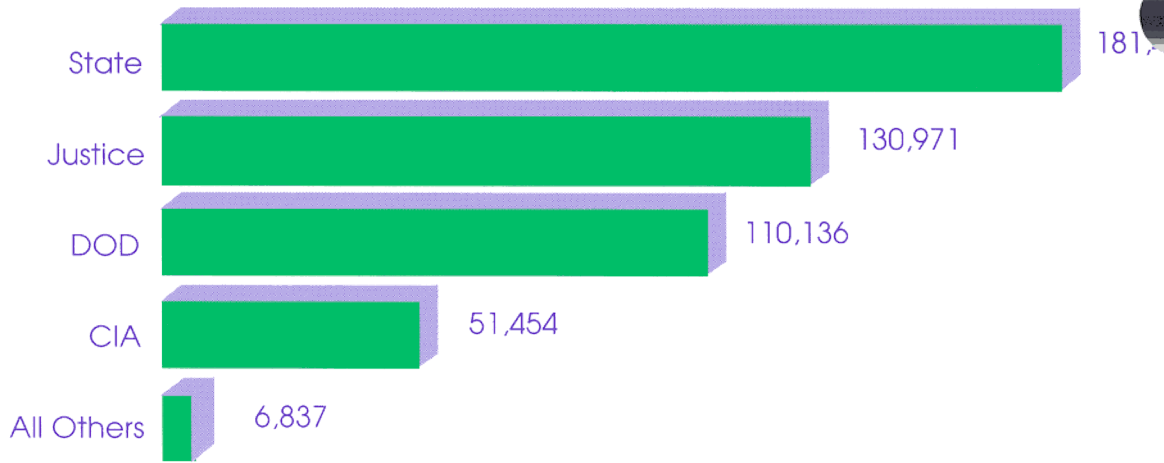
Original Classification

Original classification is an initial determination by an authorized classifier that information requires extraordinary protection, because unauthorized disclosure of the information could reasonably be expected to cause damage to the national security. The process of original classification ordinarily includes both the determination of the need to protect the information and the placement of markings to identify the information as classified. By definition, original classification precedes all other aspects of the information security system, e.g., derivative classification, safeguarding, and declassification. Therefore, ISOO often refers to the number of original classification actions as the most important figure that it reports.

ORIGINAL ACTIVITY   FY 1992

Total
Top Secret — 21,198
Secret — 257,035
Confidential — 202,610
480,843

1,000,000

1985   THE TREND   992

480,843
257,035
202,610
21,198

——— Total
· · · · Secret
— — Confidential
——— Top Secret

Almost 40% fewer original classifiers at CIA

ORIGINAL ACTIVITY BY AGENCY   FY 1992

Agency	Value
State	181,
Justice	130,971
DOD	110,136
CIA	51,454
All Others	6,837

For FY 1992, agencies reported a total of 480,843 original classification decisions. This figure represents a 6% decrease of original classification decisions from the number reported in FY 1991, and is also the lowest number of original classification actions ever reported by ISOO. ISOO attributes this decrease to the impact of geopolitical changes on the security community. ISOO anticipates that the number of original classification decisions will continue to decline in the coming years.

Four agencies, State, Justice, DOD and CIA, continue to account for over 99% of all original classification decisions. All except DOD reported decreases in original decisions. The remaining agencies with original classification authority reported a 41% decrease in original classification decisions.

By classification level, agencies reported a 12% decrease in the number of original decisions made at the **Secret** level, but an increase at the **Top Secret** level of 13% and at the **Confidential** level of 1%. While the increase in original **Top Secret** classification decisions only amounts to approximately 2,500 decisions, ISOO is concerned that the increase itself seems to be against the general tide of activity. We will continue to monitor this issue closely.

As part of the original classification process, the classifier must determine a time frame for the protection of the information. This is commonly called "duration" of classification. E.O. 12356 provides classifiers with two means of designating declassification instructions for national security information. First, the information may be marked for declassification upon a specific date or event. For example, a classifier may determine that the information's sensitivity will lapse upon the completion of a particular project. The event would be noted on the face of the document, and when the project had been completed, the information would automatically be declassified. Only if a specific date or event cannot be determined at the time of classification does the classifier mark the document with the notation "Originating Agency's Determination Required" ("OADR"). "OADR" indicates that the information must be reviewed by the originating agency before any declassification action may be taken.

ORIGINAL CLASSIFICATION LEVELS   FY 1992

Confidential 42%

Top Secret 4%

Secret 54%
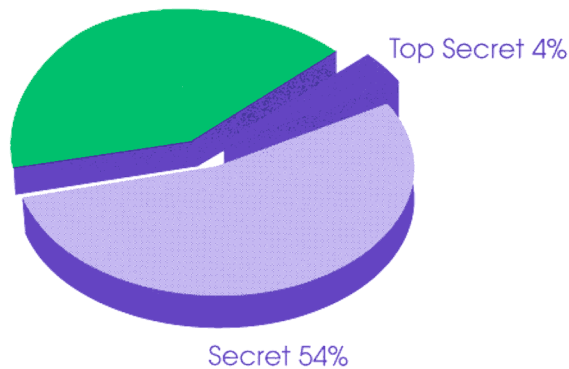
As in FY 1991, the use of a date or event to declassify information constitutes only about 5 % of all original decisions made in FY 1992. ISOO maintains that automatic declassification instructions should be ordinarily assigned to between 10 and 18 % of all original classification decisions made. As ISOO has stated previously, this is an area in which improvement is necessary for the classification system to perform credibly. Changes to the classification system currently being considered include provisions designed to help resolve this problem.

DURATION OF CLASSIFICATION   FY 1992

OADR 95%
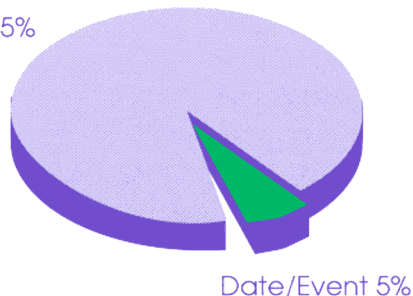
Date/Event 5%

Overuse of "OADR" requires remedial action

Derivative Classification

Derivative classification is the act of incorporating, paraphrasing, restating, or generating in new form classified source information. Information may be derivatively classified in two ways: (a) through the use of a source document, usually correspondence or publications generated by an original classification authority; or (b) through the use of a classification guide. A classification guide is a set of instructions issued by an original classification authority. It
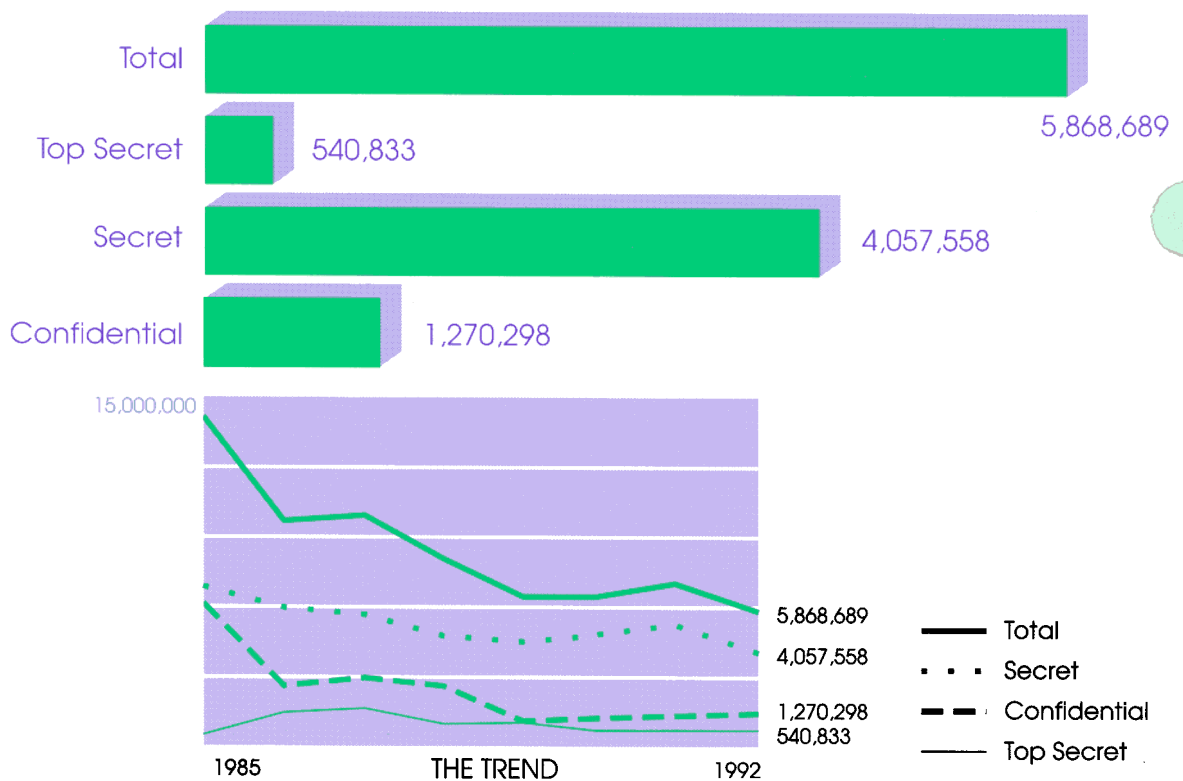
pertains to a particular subject and describes the elements of information about that subject that must be classified, and the level and duration of classification. Only executive branch or Government contractor employees with the appropriate security clearance, who are required by their work to restate classified source information, may classify derivatively.

During FY 1992, the number of reported derivative classification actions decreased significantly by 11 % to a total of 5,868,689 actions. This number represents the lowest number of derivative classification actions ever reported by ISOO. The decrease is attributable to the 21 % fewer derivative classification decisions reported by DOD. Of the other two agencies which, along with DOD, account for almost 99 % of derivative classification actions, CIA and Justice/FBI reported increases of 4 % and 22 %, respectively.

All other agencies reported 64,711 derivative classification actions, a 23 % reduction from the prior year. ISOO commends the following agencies for reducing their numbers of derivative actions for FY 1992: DOE (10 %); DOT (36 %); EPA (29 %); FCC (47 %); ITC (42 %); NASA (91 %); NRC (23 %); NSC (11 %); OPIC (50 %); PIOB (41 %); and VA (80 %).

Derivative
actions dip
below 6 million
for the first time

DERIVATIVE ACTIVITY   FY 1992

Total	5,868,689
Top Secret	540,833
Secret	4,057,558
Confidential	1,270,298

15,000,000

5,868,689	——	Total
4,057,558	• • •	Secret
1,270,298	— —	Confidential
540,833	——	Top Secret

1985   THE TREND   1992

DERIVATIVE ACTIVITY BY AGENCY FY 1992

DOD — 3,328,949

CIA — 1,873,326

Justice — 601,703

All Others — 64,71
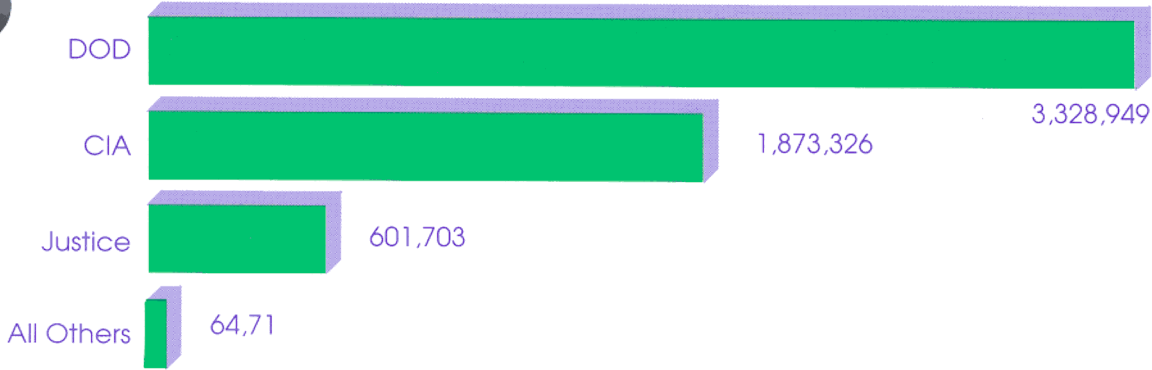
As in the past, the breakdown of derivative classification actions by classification level differs somewhat from the breakdown of original decisions: **Secret** and **Top Secret** decisions comprise higher percentages of the total. Several factors contribute to this result. With respect to the proportion of **Top Secret** actions, these result from a very few activities that produce a relatively large quantity of derivative documents from classification guidance. Generally, this **Top Secret** information is highly localized, so that the percentage of **Top Secret** actions within almost all collections of classified information is much smaller.

Significantly contributing to the higher proportion of **Secret** derivative decisions is the fact that State treats all of its classification decisions as original. Therefore, State's classification decisions have relatively little impact upon the total number of derivative decisions. State classifies a significantly higher percentage of its information at the **Confidential** level (82 %), far more than any of the other major classifying agencies. As a result, the percentage of derivative **Confidential** decisions (22 %) is almost half the percentage of original **Confidential** decisions (42 %), while the percentage of derivative **Secret** decisions (69 %) is considerably higher than the percentage of original **Secret** decisions (53 %).
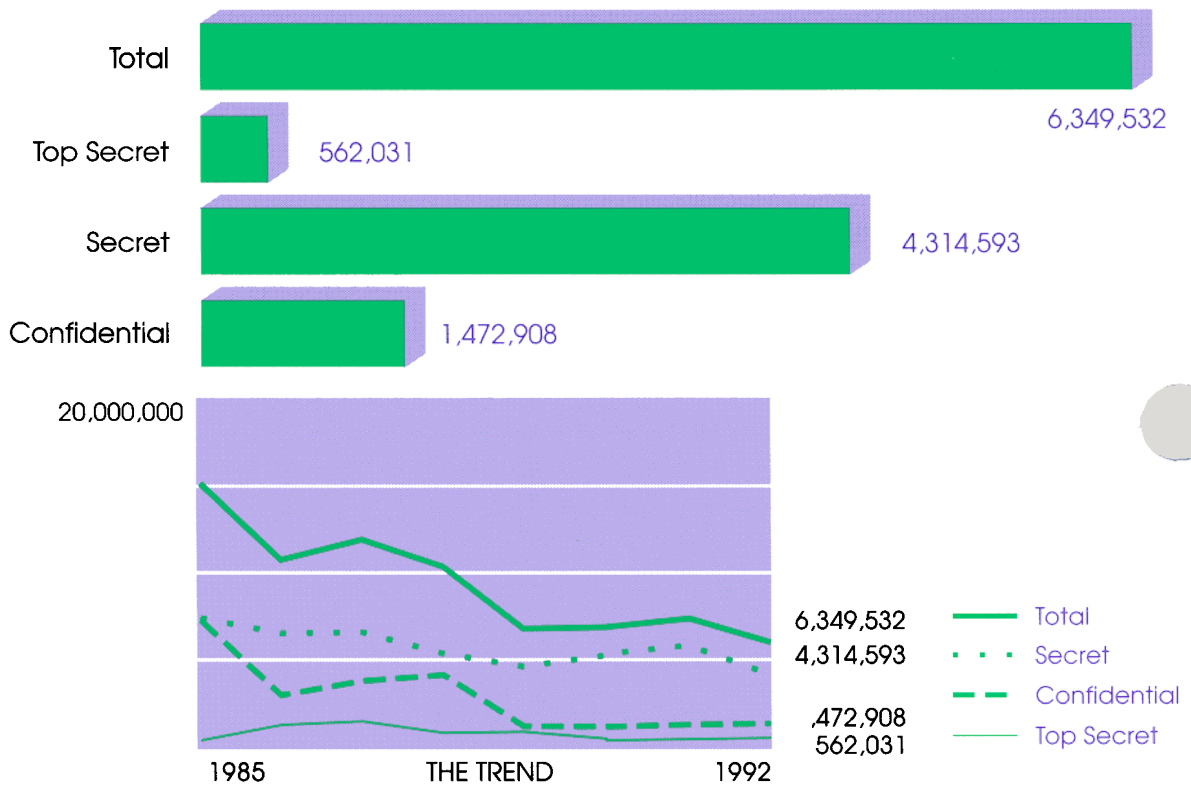
DERIVATIVE CLASSIFICATION LEVELS   FY 1992

Confidential 22%

Top Secret 9%

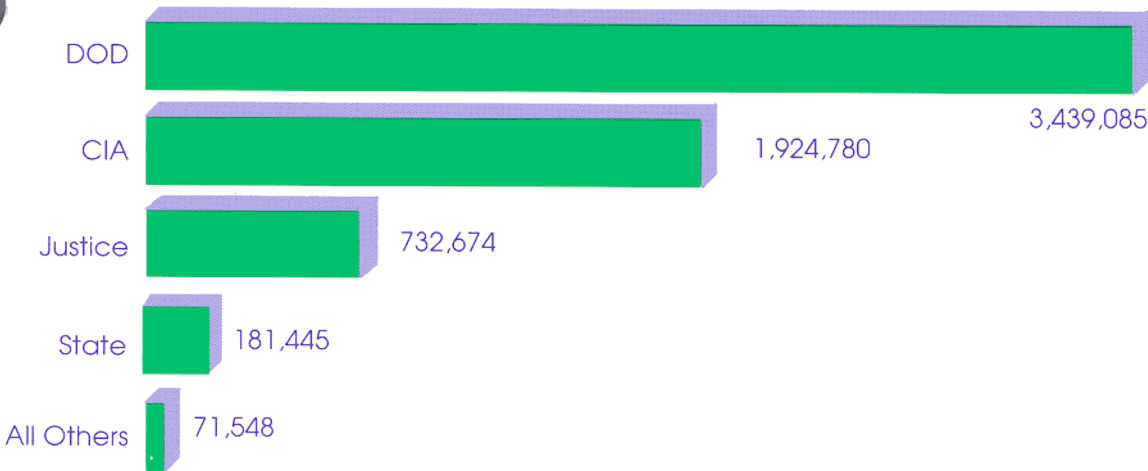Secret 69%
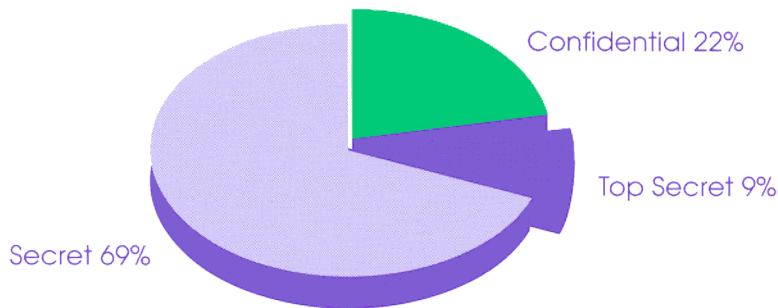
Combined Classification

By adding original and derivative classification decisions, ISOO arrives at what it calls combined classification activity. In FY 1992, combined classification activity significantly decreased by 757,485 (11 %) to a total of 6,349,532 actions. Because derivative actions outnumber original actions by a ratio of 12:1, they have a much greater effect on combined classification activity. Again, both derivative and original classification activity reached all time reported lows in FY 1992. This resulted in an all time reported low for combined classification activity.

Combined classification activity at lowest level ever reported by ISOO

COMBINED ACTIVITY   FY 1992

Total

Top Secret   562,031

Secret   4,314,593

Confidential   1,472,908

20,000,000

6,349,532	—— Total
4,314,593	· · · Secret
,472,908	— — Confidential
562,031	—— Top Secret

1985   THE TREND   1992

6,349,532

COMBINED ACTIVITY BY AGENCY FY 1992

Agency	Value
DOD	3,439,085
CIA	1,924,780
Justice	732,674
State	181,445
All Others	71,548

While DOD accounted for 61 % of all classification decisions reported for FY 1991, for FY 1992 it was 54 %. ISOO believes that the DOD decrease in classification decisions is partly attributable to the absence of Operation Desert Shield/Desert Storm documents, which inflated classification decisions for the previous two years. CIA accounted for 30 % of the total, Justice 12 %, and State 3 %. Again, the remaining agencies accounted for slightly more than 1 % of the combined classification activity. These agencies run the gamut, however, in the degree of their involvement with classified information. They range from very large departments that possess very little classified information and generate almost none, to very small entities that exist almost exclusively in a classified environment.

COMBINED CLASSIFICATION LEVELS   FY 1992

Top Secret 9%

Secret 68%

Confidential 23%
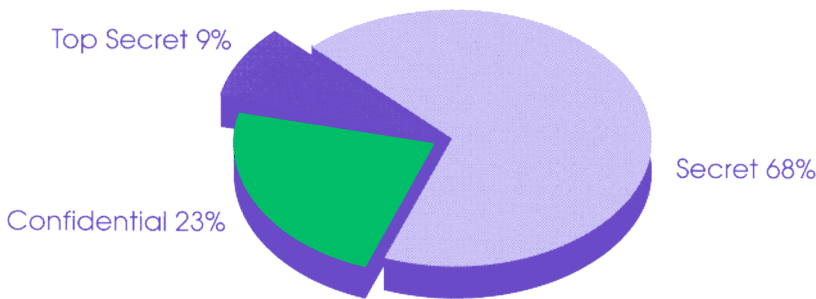
Derivative decisions outnumber original decisions 12:1
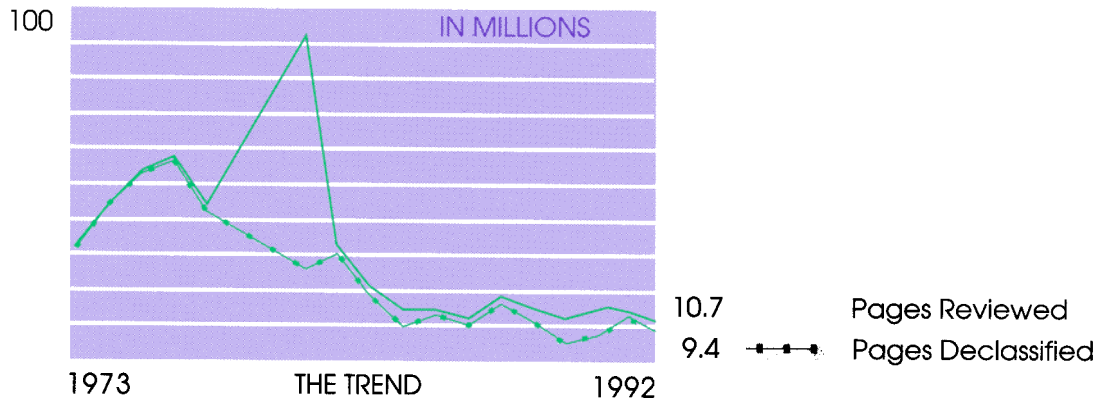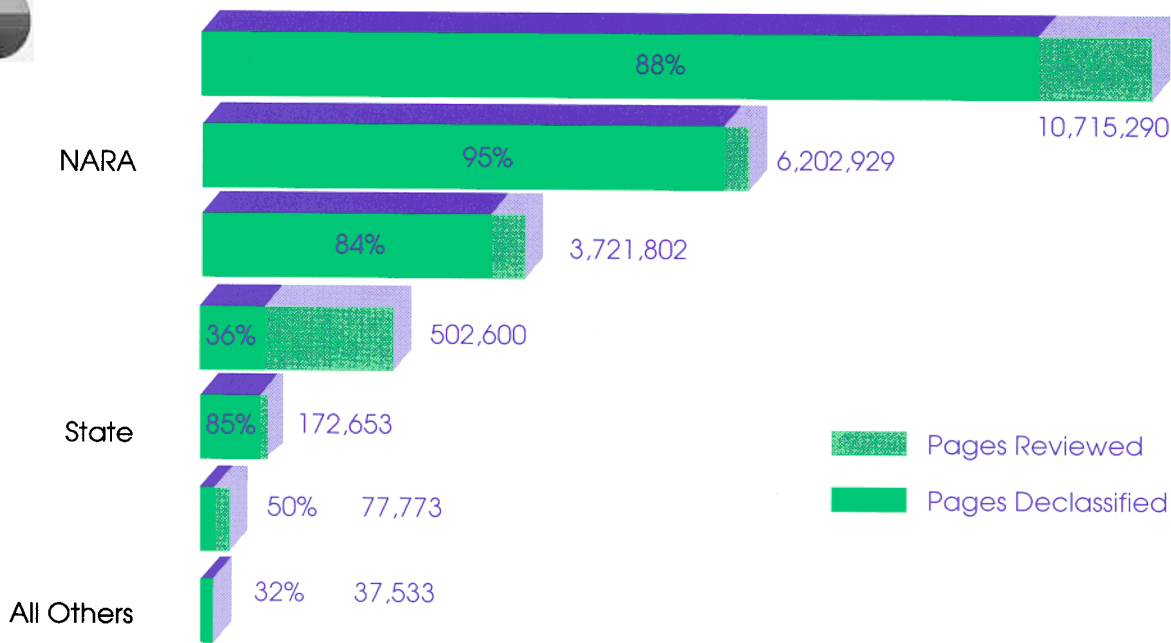
Declassification

Systematic Review

Started in 1972, "systematic review for declassification" is the program under which classified, permanently valuable (archival) records are reviewed for purposes of declassification after the records reach a specific age. Under E.O. 12356, NARA is the only agency required to conduct a systematic review of its classified holdings. NARA ordinarily reviews its classified holdings as they become 30 years old, except for certain intelligence or cryptologic file series, which are to be reviewed as they become 50 years old. While other agencies are not required to conduct a systematic review program, ISOO encourages them to do so. With the approval of the originator, agencies, including NARA, may conduct a systematic review of records that are less than 30 years old.

Both the number of pages reviewed and declassified decreased significantly in FY 1992. Agencies reviewed 10.7 million pages, almost 5 million (32%) fewer than in FY 1991, and declassified 9.4 million pages. Agencies declassified 88% of the pages reviewed, approximately the same proportion declassified in FY 1991.

Although the decrease in systematic review is due to the low figures reported by several agencies, NARA's figure critically impacted on the systematic review product. In FY 1992, NARA reviewed 6 million pages, a decrease of 2 million pages (28%) from FY 1991. Because the success of the systematic review program primarily rests with NARA, ISOO maintains a special interest in those matters that affect NARA's declassification program. NARA's explanation for the decline in its systematic review product consist of two factors. They are: (1) the absence of sufficient staff to fulfill its systematic review responsibilities; and (2) the records reviewed included a smaller percentage of classified documents within the aggregate files.

Voluntary systematic review activity remains critical to the program's success. For FY 1992, DOD accounted for the second highest volume of pages reviewed. The number of pages DOD reviewed and declassified decreased significantly. The number of pages reviewed dropped from 6 million in FY 1991, to almost 4 million pages in FY 1992. It appears that diminishing resources and the drawdown of special projects contributed to this decrease. Even though the number of pages reviewed and declassified significantly dropped, DOD declassified 84% of the pages it reviewed. For the third straight year Air Force accounted for most of DOD's systematic review activity, reviewing and declassifying more than 2/3 of its total product. (Please refer to the Prologue, p. 1, above.)

SYSTEMATIC REVIEW ACTIONS BY AGENCY   FY 1992

88%

10,715,290

NARA

95%

6,202,929

84%

3,721,802

36%

502,600

State

85%   172,653

50%   77,773

32%   37,533

All Others

■ Pages Reviewed

■ Pages Declassified

100

IN MILLIONS

10.7   Pages Reviewed
9.4 •─•─• Pages Declassified

1973   THE TREND   1992

Other agencies contributed to the systematic review product in FY 1992, but their contributions were modest. A positive situation is CIA's contribution to systematic review in FY 1992. After years of a minimal declassification program, in FY 1991 CIA commenced a modest systematic review effort. In FY 1992, CIA expanded this program significantly, which resulted in almost 39,000 pages of declassified information. ISOO commends CIA for its efforts and urges their continuation and expansion. Furthermore, ISOO urges all the other classifying agencies to contribute their fair share of effort to the systematic review program. The constant build-up of the classified universe demands it.
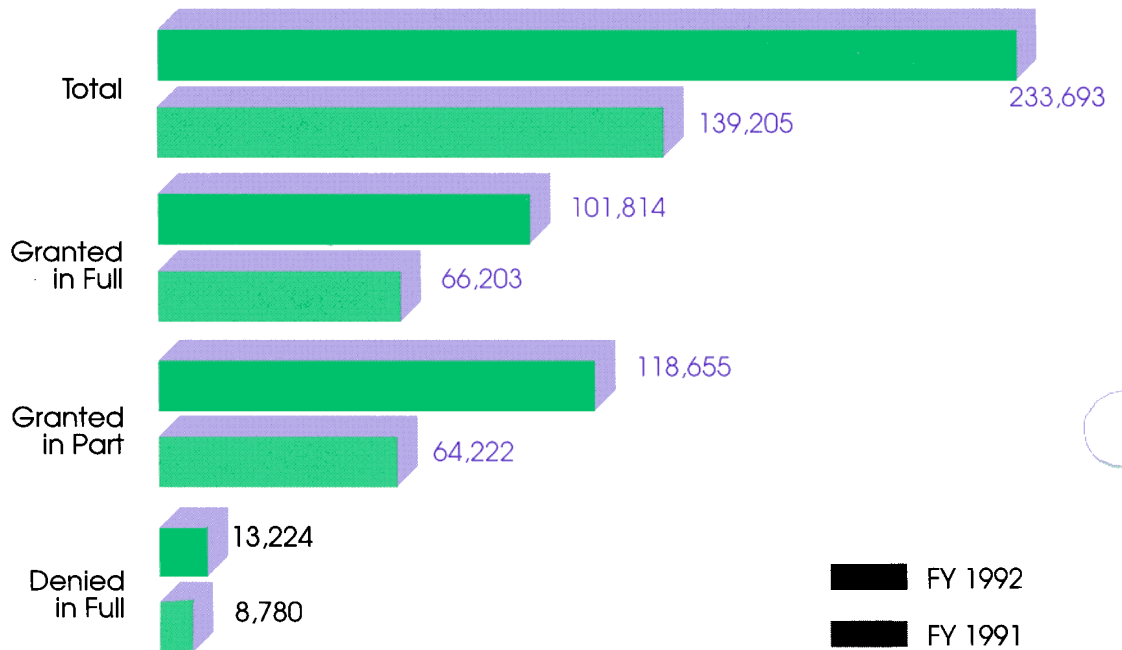
Agencies
besides NARA
and DOD must
contribute
to the
declassification
effort more
substantially.

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Mandatory Review

Under Executive Order 12356, the mandatory review process allows agencies or citizens to require an agency to review specified national security information for purposes of seeking its declassification. Requests must be in writing and describe the information with sufficient detail to permit the agency to retrieve it with a reasonable amount of effort. Mandatory review remains popular with some researchers as a less contentious alternative to Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests. It is also used to seek the declassification of presidential papers or records, which are not subject to the FOIA.

Requesters may require the review of classified information at any time

MANDATORY REVIEW PAGES PROCESSED   FY 1991–1992

Total
233,693
139,205

Granted in Full
101,814
66,203

Granted in Part
118,655
64,222

Denied in Full
13,224
8,780

FY 1992
FY 1991

MANDATORY REVIEW ACTION TAKEN   FY 1992

CASES   DOCUMENTS   PAGES

44%   8%   48%   2%   36%   62%   51%   6%   43%

■ Granted In Full   ▨ Granted In Part   ■ Denied In Full
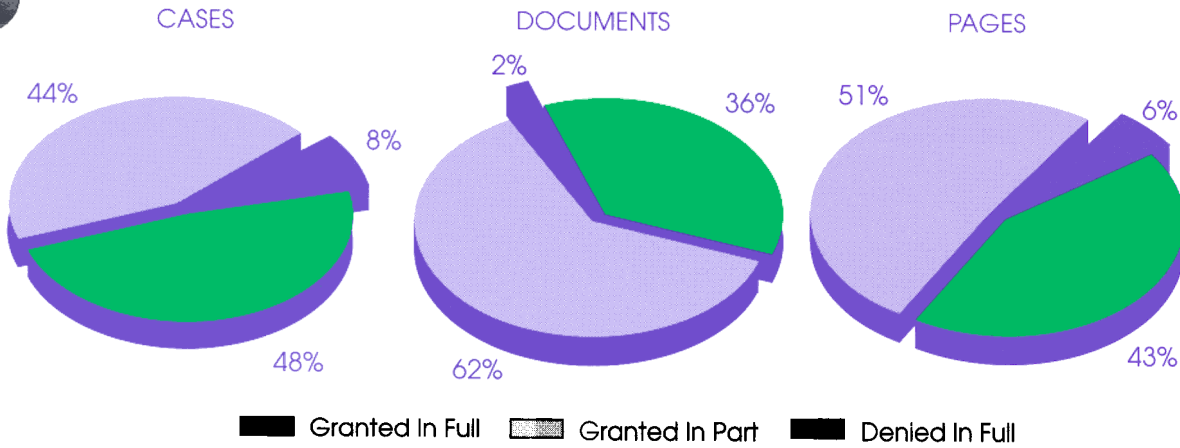
The 3,867 cases processed under mandatory review during FY 1992 comprised 57,000 documents totaling 233,693 pages. The number of pages processed represents a 68 % increase from the prior year. Because the rate of declassification in whole or in part remained at the same high level as in the prior year (94 %), the number of pages declassified in whole or in part also increased by a very impressive 68 %. Given the high proportion and number of pages declassified, mandatory review remains a highly successful mechanism for the declassification of information.
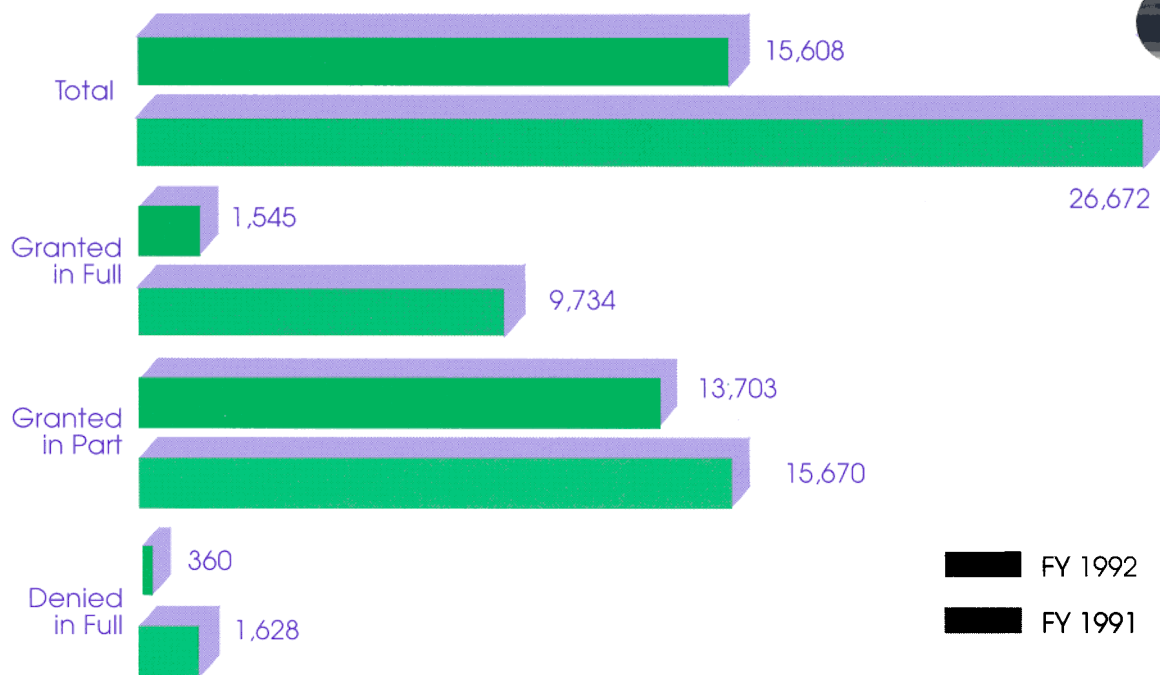
E.O. 12356 also provides that agencies or members of the public may appeal mandatory review denials to designated officials of the denying agencies. During FY 1992, agencies processed 229 appeals that comprised 4,605 documents totaling 15,608 pages. Of these, 98 % of the pages were declassified in whole or part. This impressive rate suggests that researchers can anticipate even greater returns in declassified information if they pursue an appeal. This also suggests that as declassification decisions reach a higher level within an agency, the likelihood of declassification is greater.

MANDATORY REVIEW ACTIONS BY AGENCY   FY 1992

Agency	Total Cases Acted On	% Granted in Full	% Granted in Part	% Denied in Full
	1,132	45	46	9
DOD	811	64	26	10
NSC	711	48	50	2
CIA	453	30	57	13
NARA	418	32	56	12
Justice	56	29	50	21
All Others	286	67	30	3
Totals	3,867	48	44	8

Mandatory review results in a very high percentage of information declassified in whole or in part

MANDATORY REVIEW APPEALS: PAGES PROCESSED FY 1991–1992

Total
15,608
26,672

Granted in Full
1,545
9,734

Granted in Part
13,703
15,670

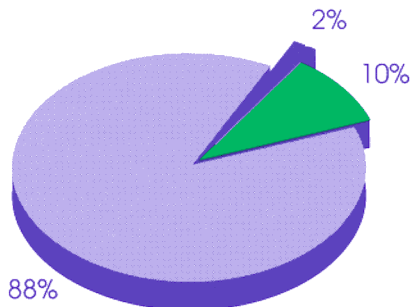Denied in Full
360
1,628

FY 1992
FY 1991

Appeals result in significantly more declassified information

This phenomenon illustrates a problem that ISOO has observed repeatedly about the declassification process. At the journeyman level, most declassifiers are reluctant to declassify information in "iffy" situations. They perceive that erring on the side of disclosure, i.e., declassifying, may be held against them, while erring on the side of caution, i.e., withholding, poses no personal risk. Only when difficult declassification decisions reach higher ranking officials through appeal, litigation or otherwise are they likely to be resolved in favor of disclosure. For the declassification process to function more efficiently, journeyman level declassifiers must be confident that reasonable declassification determinations cannot and will not adversely affect their careers. ISOO will be exploring options that may be available to achieve this end.

MANDATORY REVIEW APPEALS DISPOSITION   FY 1992
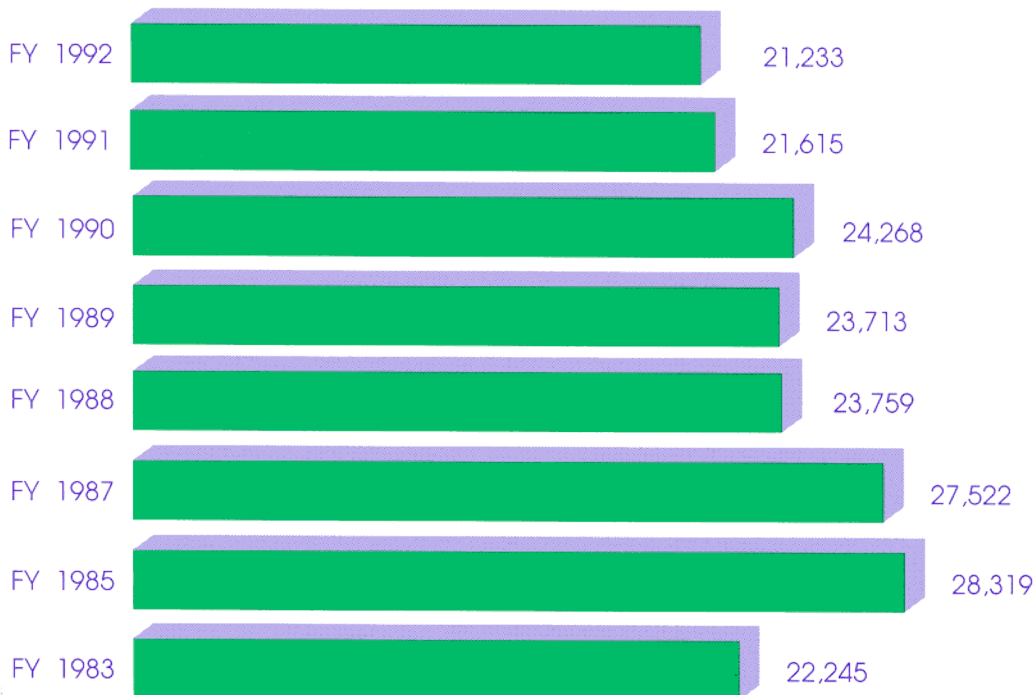
Total of 15,608
Pages Processed

2%

10%

88%

Granted In Full　Granted In Part　Denied In Full

Safeguarding

Executive Order 12356 requires that each executive branch agency that originates or handles classified information establish and maintain "an active oversight and security education program." Self-inspections are an important part of any such program and agencies are required to report to ISOO the number of self-inspections that they perform each year. Self-inspections often identify infractions (minor violations) of the Executive Order, the implementing ISOO Directive or agency regulations, which are reported to ISOO annually.

For the second year in a row, agencies reported a decrease in the number of self-inspections. While the decrease, from 21,615 for FY 1991 to 21,233 for FY 1992, is only 1.7%, it shows a disturbing downward trend for which there is no apparent explanation. Last year ISOO reported an 11% decrease in the number of self-inspections, and in large measure attributed that reduction to DOD's properly refocused efforts due to the Persian Gulf War. Despite that conflict's swift resolution, the number of self-inspections in FY 1992 did not return to pre-war levels. They continued to decline slightly at DOD and more significantly at several other agencies.

AGENCY SELF – INSPECTIONS

Year	Number
FY 1992	21,233
FY 1991	21,615
FY 1990	24,268
FY 1989	23,713
FY 1988	23,759
FY 1987	27,522
FY 1985	28,319
FY 1983	22,245

Number of self-inspections continue to decline

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INFRACTIONS

Infraction	Total FY 1991	Total FY 1992
Unauthorized Access	490	461
Mismarking	8,730	9,051
Unauthorized Transmission	2,648	2,473
Improper Storage	7,331	7,359
Unauthorized Reproduction	106	170
Overclassification	847	678
Underclassification	296	224
Classification w/o Authority	35	114
Improper Destruction	234	157
Other	493	384
Totals	**21,210**	**21,071**

In FY 1992, agencies detected a total of 21,071 infractions. Compared to FY 1991, this figure represents a minimal decrease of 139 fewer infractions. The average number of infractions discovered per inspection increased very slightly; from 0.98 in FY 1991, to 0.99 in FY 1992. This rate does not indicate that an effective self-inspection program is in place at all agencies. ISOO has consistently held that agencies would identify a far greater number of infractions with more high quality self-inspections. For example, document reviews should be an integral part of every agency's self-inspection program. While more agencies are conducting internal document reviews, some of the agencies that have the most problems with their classified product do not. Clearly, this relationship is not a coincidence.

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Self-inspections should include classified document reviews

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Agency Acronyms or Abbreviations

ACDA	:	Arms Control and Disarmament Agency
AID	:	Agency for International Development
Air Force	:	Department of the Air Force
Army	:	Department of the Army
BIB		Board for International Broadcasting
CEA		Council of Economic Advisers
CIA		Central Intelligence Agency
Commerce		Department of Commerce
DARPA		Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency
DCAA		Defense Contract Audit Agency
DIA		Defense Intelligence Agency
DIS		Defense Investigative Service
DISA		Defense Information Systems Agency
DLA		Defense Logistics Agency
DMA		Defense Mapping Agency
NA		Defense Nuclear Agency
D		Department of Defense
DOE		Department of Energy
DOT		Department of Transportation
ED		Department of Education
EPA		Environmental Protection Agency
EXIMBANK		Export-Import Bank
FBI		Federal Bureau of Investigation
FCA		Farm Credit Administration
FCC		Federal Communications Commission
FEMA		Federal Emergency Management Agency
FMC		Federal Maritime Commission
FRS		Federal Reserve System
GSA		General Services Administration
HHS		Department of Health and Human Services
HUD		Department of Housing and Urban Development
ICC		Interstate Commerce Commission
Interior		Department of the Interior
ISOO		Information Security Oversight Office
ITC		International Trade Commission
JCS		Joint Chiefs of Staff
Justice		Department of Justice

Agency Acronyms or Abbreviations

Labor	Department of Labor
MMC	Marine Mammal Commission
MSPB	Merit Systems Protection Board
NARA	National Archives and Records Administration
NASA	National Aeronautics and Space Administration
Navy	Department of the Navy
NRC	Nuclear Regulatory Commission
NSA	National Security Agency
NSC	National Security Council
NSF	National Science Foundation
OA, EOP	Office of Administration, Executive Office of the President
OIG,DOD	Office of the Inspector General, Department of Defense
OMB	Office of Management and Budget
ONDCP	Office of National Drug Control Policy
OPIC	Overseas Private Investment Corporation
OPM	Office of Personnel Management
OSD	Office of the Secretary of Defense
OSIA	On-Site Inspection Agency
OSTP	Office of Science and Technology Policy
OTS	Office of Thrift Supervision
OVP	Office of the Vice President
PC	Peace Corps
PFIAB	President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board
PIOB	President's Intelligence Oversight Board
SBA	Small Business Administration
SDIO	Strategic Defense Initiative Organization
SEC	Securities and Exchange Commission
SSS	Selective Service System
State	Department of State
Treasury	Department of the Treasury
TVA	Tennessee Valley Authority
USDA	Department of Agriculture
USIA	United States Information Agency
USMC	United States Marine Corps
USPS	United States Postal Service
USTR	Office of the United States Trade Representative
VA	Department of Veterans Affairs

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Notes