

§ 159a.20 Information developed by private sources.

(a) *General.* There are some circumstances in which information not meeting the definition in § 159a.9(f) may warrant protection in the interest of national security.

(b) *Patent Secrecy Act.* The Patent Secrecy Act of 1952 provides that the Secretary of Defense, among others, may determine that disclosure of an invention by granting of a patent would be detrimental to national security. See DoD Directive 5535.2⁸. A patent application on which a secrecy order has been imposed shall be handled as follows within the Department of Defense:

(1) If the patent application contains information that warrants classification, it shall be assigned a classification and be marked and safeguarded accordingly.

(2) If the patent application does not contain information that warrants classification, the following procedures shall be followed:

(i) A cover sheet (or cover letter for transmittal) shall be placed on the application with substantially the following language:

The attached material contains information on which secrecy orders have been issued by the U.S. Patent Office after determination that disclosure would be detrimental to national security (Patent Secrecy Act of 1952, 35 U.S.C. 181-188). Its transmission or revelation in any manner to an unauthorized person is prohibited by law. Handle as though classified CONFIDENTIAL (or such other classification as would have been assigned had the patent application been within the definition provided in § 159a.9(f)).

(ii) The information shall be withheld from public release; its dissemination within the Department of Defense shall be controlled; the applicant shall be instructed not to disclose it to any unauthorized person; and the patent application (or other document incorporating the protected information) shall be safeguarded in the manner prescribed for equivalent classified material.

(3) If filing of a patent application with a foreign government is approved under provisions of the Patent Secrecy Act of 1952 and agreements on inter-

change of patent information for defense purposes, the copies of the patent application prepared for foreign registration (but only those copies) shall be marked at the bottom of each page as follows:

Withheld under the Patent Secrecy Act of 1952 (35 U.S.C. 181-188). Handle as CONFIDENTIAL (or such other level as has been determined).

(c) *Independent Research and Development.* (1) Information in a document or material that is a product of government-sponsored independent research and development conducted without access to classified information may not be classified unless the government first acquires a proprietary interest in such product.

(2) If no prior access was given but the person or company conducting the independent research or development believes that protection may be warranted in the interest of national security, the person or company should safeguard the information in accordance with § 159a.19 and submit it to an appropriate DoD element for evaluation. The DoD element receiving such a request for evaluation shall make or obtain a determination whether a classification would be assigned if it were government information. If the determination is negative, the originator shall be advised that the information is unclassified. If the determination is affirmative, the DoD element shall make or obtain a determination whether a proprietary interest in the research and development will be acquired. If so, the information shall be assigned proper classification. If not, the originator shall be informed that there is no basis for classification and the tentative classification shall be canceled.

(d) *Other Private Information.* The procedure specified in § 159a.19 shall apply in any case not specified in paragraph (c) of this section, such as an unsolicited contract bid, in which private information is submitted to a DoD element for a determination of classification.

§ 159a.21 Regrading.

(a) *Raising to a Higher Level of Classification.* The upgrading of classified information to a higher level than previously determined by officials with

⁸See footnote 1 to § 159a.3.