

charges as a precondition to taking further action upon the request.

(6) A requester may appeal to the head of a DoD Component or designee whenever that DoD Component has not acted on an initial request within 60 days or the requester has been notified that requested information may not be released in whole or in part. Within 30 days after receipt, an appellate authority shall determine whether continued classification of the requested information is required in whole or in part, notify the requester of its determination, and make available to the requester any information determined to be releasable. If continued classification is required under this part, the requester shall be notified of the reasons therefor. If so requested, an appellate authority shall communicate its determination to any referring DoD Component or outside agency.

(7) The ASD(PA) shall act as appellate authority for all appeals regarding OSD, OJCS, and Unified Command records.

(f) *Foreign Government Information.* Requests for mandatory review for the declassification of foreign government information shall be processed and acted upon under the provisions of this section subject to § 159a.76(c).

(g) *Prohibition.* No DoD Component in possession of a document shall in response to a request under the Freedom of Information Act or this section refuse to confirm the existence or non-existence of the document, unless the fact of its existence or nonexistence would itself be classifiable under this part.

(h) *Restricted Data and Formerly Restricted Data.* Any proposed action on a request, including requests from Presidential libraries, for DoD classified documents that are marked "Restricted Data" or "Formerly Restricted Data" must be coordinated with the Department of Energy.

**§ 159a.27 Declassification of transferred documents or material.**

(a) *Material Officially Transferred.* In the case of classified information or material transferred under statute, E.O., or directive from one department or agency or DoD Component to another in conjunction with a transfer of

functions, as distinguished from transfers merely for purposes of storage, the receiving department, agency, or DoD Component shall be deemed to be the original classifying authority over such material for purposes of downgrading and declassification.

(b) *Material Not Officially Transferred.* When a DoD Component has in its possession classified information or material originated in an agency outside the Department of Defense that has ceased to exist and such information or material has not been transferred to another department or agency within the meaning of paragraph (a) of this section, or when it is impossible to identify the originating agency, the DoD Component shall be deemed to be the originating agency for the purpose of declassifying or downgrading such information or material. If it appears probable that another department, agency, or DoD Component may have a substantial interest in the classification of such information, the DoD Component deemed to be the originating agency shall notify such other department, agency, or DoD Component of the nature of the information or material and any intention to downgrade or declassify it. Until 60 days after notification, the DoD Component shall not declassify or downgrade such information or material without consulting the other department, agency, or DoD Component. During this period, the other department, agency, or DoD Component may express objections to downgrading or declassifying such information or material.

(c) *Transfer for Storage or Retirement.* Whenever practicable, classified documents shall be reviewed for downgrading or declassification before they are forwarded to a Records Center for storage or to the NARA for permanent preservation. Any downgrading or declassification determination shall be indicated on each document by markings as required by subpart E of this part.

**§ 159a.28 Downgrading.**

(a) *Automatic Downgrading.* Classified information marked for automatic downgrading in accordance with this or