

**National Reconnaissance Office Plan
for Compliance with the
Automatic Declassification Requirements
of Executive Order 12958, as amended
31 December 2004**

1. Purpose:

This document updates the National Reconnaissance Office (NRO) plan for compliance with the automatic declassification of 25-year-old records specified in Section 3.3 of Executive Order (E.O.) 12958, as amended.

2. Responsible Officials:

a. The NRO official responsible for overseeing and coordinating agency compliance with this requirement is:

Mr. Brian Malone
Director, Management Services & Operations
National Reconnaissance Office
14675 Lee Road
Chantilly, VA 20151-1715
703-808-5000

b. For the purpose of certifying records as declassified in accordance with Section 3.3 of the E.O., as amended, the Chief of the Information Access and Release Team (IART)*, is the primary NRO person with declassification authority on behalf of Mr. Malone. The Chief of the Information Management Services Center serves as the backup declassification authority.

3. Surveying Methodology:

The NRO performed a survey in June 1995 to identify its universe of records subject to the 25-year automatic declassification provisions of E.O. 12958.

a. NRO offices and contractors holding classified material for the NRO were contacted and requested to submit estimates of the amount of classified material in their possession dated 1 January 1976 or earlier.

b. The following measures were distributed to standardize the estimative process:

--2250 pages = 1 cubic foot
--1750 pages = 1 linear foot
--2 cu. ft. of papers/per safe drawer
(5 drawer safe = 10 cu. ft.)

*Bolded type indicates changed information.

c. The estimates were aggregated into the categories below.

4. Initial Estimate of Records:

a. Based on the survey mentioned above, the NRO held an estimated 6.5 million pages of classified information dated before 1 January 1976. Those records were estimated to be located as follows:

<u>Location</u>	<u>Number of Pages</u>
NRO Government offices	1,000,000 pages of paper 500,000 pages of microfilm/microfiche/ electronic page images
NRO Contractor offices	1,250,000 pages of paper 750,000 pages of microfilm/microfiche/ electronic page images
Central Intelligence Agency Records Center (ARC)	2,796,750 pages Archives of paper 237,937 pages of microfilm/microfiche

b. Some records that the NRO intends to review for declassification are located in Presidential Libraries. The NRO relies mainly upon the CIA-sponsored Remote Archive Capture (RAC) Program to identify classified NRO records at those Libraries. An NRO team visited two Presidential Libraries to search for classified NRO documents before the RAC program was able to visit them. The total quantity of NRO records at Presidential Libraries is unknown but is expected to be less than 1,000 pages. There are no known NRO records in the Federal Records Centers.

c. The estimated 3.5 million pages of classified NRO government and contractor records subject to automatic declassification during the five-year start up period had not been formally archived in 1995, the date of the original order, because the NRO did not have a National Archives and Records Administration (NARA)-approved Records Control Schedule (RCS). The initial NRO RCS was reviewed by NARA appraisers and approved on 8 April 1996. At that time, the NRO decided to review all 3.5 million pages to identify the permanent records.

d. Most of the remaining estimated 3 million pages of classified records believed at that time to be subject to automatic declassification, those created by the NRO's former Program B, were archived at the CIA AARC under the CIA RCS. The final ownership and disposition of those records remain to be negotiated between the CIA, NRO, and NARA.

5. Current Estimate of Records:

Since that initial estimate, the NRO has continued to create additional records, has refined its estimate of the quantities of microform and other special media records it holds, and has continued to review records originated between 1976 and 1982. Please refer to appendices A through E for the latest estimates of records held.

6. Processing:

a. When the NRO began processing records for possible declassification in 1996, NRO government offices and contractor locations possessing the records were dispersed. The NRO decided a centralized review of those records was essential to ensure uniform treatment of sensitive NRO information as well as to take advantage of the skills and experience of the limited resources available for reviewing records. As a result, the NRO established the Information Declassification Review Center in the Northern Virginia area as the office of primary responsibility (OPR) to process material from all locations. Since re-named the Information Access and Release Team (IART), this OPR currently consists of [REDACTED] a mix of contractors and government personnel, with a government person serving as the final declassification authority.

b. By the very nature of the NRO mission, almost all NRO permanent records contain some classified information. Additionally, the sensitive nature of its mission requires the NRO to comply with strict Presidential and Director of Central Intelligence (DCI) security policy, such as the National Security Council's NSC-49/NSTC-8: National Space Policy (1996) and various DCI directives. Thus, we estimate that a large percentage (63%) of the permanent records will be in file series approved by the President for exemption from automatic declassification. We also believe that a high percentage of the other permanent non-exempt records will contain substantial amounts of classified information that also will result in their exemption from automatic declassification following review with coordinated declassification guides.

c. Processing consists of the following:

(1) Identification and Collection: All NRO components and contractors storing classified material for the NRO were instructed to search for and retrieve all classified government records dated before 1 January 1976, all records subsequently turning 25 years old, and to retire those not currently in use to the NRO Records Center (NRC). In addition, the same NRO team that visited some of the Presidential libraries also visited various NRO contractor locations to identify and recover classified government records.

(2) Sorting: Records are sorted into the following categories using the NRO RCS.

- temporary
- permanent - Exempt File Series
- permanent - Non-exempt File Series
- permanent - Originally classified by another organization

(3) Review and Redaction: Permanent non-exempt records originated by the NRO that are 25 years old are withdrawn from the NRC and reviewed line-by-line by the IART using coordinated declassification guides to determine which records reasonably can be redacted and declassified. Those containing a preponderance of classified information are exempted from automatic declassification. Each year, as additional NRO records are retired to the NRC, records about to become 25 years old will be identified, sent to the IART, and reviewed for possible declassification.

The NRO does not retire its records in integral file blocks as defined in the E.O., therefore all records in individual groups of records are reviewed prior to their becoming 25 years old.

Processing of permanent records existing in special media (microform, motion pictures, audiotapes, videotapes, and comparable materials) will be delayed beyond 31 December 2006 but will be accomplished prior to the 31 December 2011 deadline.

(4) Referrals:

(a) Following review for possible declassification, all permanent NRO non-exempt records containing the equities of other government agencies are identified; the agencies are notified; and those records are referred to the equity-holder agencies for their review and return to the NRO.

(b) Permanent non-exempt records originated in other government agencies and referred to the NRO because they contain NRO equities are processed in the same manner as NRO-originated records, i.e., they are reviewed line-by-line and sensitive NRO information is redacted. Records referred to us by other government agencies that contain a preponderance of classified NRO information may be exempted. All records are returned to the referring agency.

(5) Record-Keeping Database: The IART has developed an internal, stand-alone prototype database called Database of Released Records (DORR) to record information about documents the NRO has released to the public. Although not yet populated, this database will contain the metadata pertaining to documents released in response to requests under the Freedom of Information

Act (FOIA). Database fields include the title, date of origination, author, number of pages, key words, and date of release. All fields are searchable. Once populated, the database also will contain images of the released documents.

(6) Release to Public: The NRO plans to investigate the feasibility of entering into DORR those records released in response to Section 3.3 of the E.O., automatic declassification. To fulfill the requirements of Section 3.7 of the amended order, the NRO will work with the Director of the Information Security Oversight Office in his effort to link and effectively use "existing agency databases of records that have been declassified and publicly released."

7. Estimated Implementation Costs to Meet 31 December 2006 Deadline:

The NRO estimates a total cost of \$10,000,000 to implement the automatic declassification provisions of the E.O. by the 31 December 2006 deadline. Costs for security clearances are not included here as all government personnel possess the required clearances as a condition of employment; therefore, there is no additional cost chargeable to declassification activities. Costs of granting security clearances to contractor personnel are factored into the price of contracts and are included below in contract costs. All current contract personnel possess needed security clearances, so there are no further costs associated with acquiring clearances.

Costs for physical security, likewise, are not included in our estimate as our declassification program occupies space in existing NRO-controlled facilities constructed to meet DCI security standards. Included in our estimate of the total costs are the following sub-amounts:

Fiscal year 2004 (actual costs)

- a. Training: \$0 (training accomplished on the job)
- b. Computer support: \$77,272
- c. Contracts: \$2,229,322
- d. Full-time equivalent (FTE) personnel:

Number of FTEs

Government: 1.8

Contractor: 15.5

Costs

Government: 1 GS-13; 1 IS-3

Contractor \$ ____*

Fiscal year 2005 (estimated costs)

- a. Training: \$0 (training accomplished on the job)
- b. Computer support: \$3,000,000
- c. Contracts: \$2,296,200
- d. Full-time equivalent personnel:

Number of FTEs

Government: 1.8

Contractor: 15.5

Costs

Government: 1 GS-14; 1 IS-3

Contractor \$ ____*

Fiscal year 2006 (anticipated costs)

- a. Training: \$0 (training accomplished on the job)
- b. Computer support: \$12,000
- c. Contracts: \$2,365,000
- d. Full-time equivalent personnel:

Number of FTEs

Government: 1.8

Contractor: 15.5

Costs

Government: GS-14; 1 IS-3

Contractor \$ ____*

*Costs for contractor FTEs are included in contract costs.

8. Other Factors Impacting the NRO's Ability to Meet the 31 December 2006 Deadline:

a. The NRO has engaged in cooperative efforts with the Air Force and the CIA to facilitate efficient processing of its 25-year-old or older permanent records.

(1) In response to a FOIA case that entailed a significant number of records, the NRO coordinated with the Air Force use of special ad-hoc declassification guidance for former NRO aircraft-related programs. That effort allowed the NRO to make redaction decisions on specified Air Force 25-year-old information equities without having to refer documents containing those equities to the Air Force Declassification Office for further review. The NRO equities contained in this ad hoc aircraft guide were consistent with the NRO Review and Redaction Guide for 25-Year-Old Information (RRG). The still classified NRO information equities from that ad hoc guide subsequently were incorporated into the RRG.

(2) The NRO executed a memorandum of agreement with the Air Force Records Manager that permanently transferred to the NRO all legacy records that dealt with the reconnaissance satellite component of the 1950s era Air Force WS-117L umbrella research and development effort. This transfer will centralize these records and ensure uniform treatment of the small amount of still-classified NRO equities residing in them.

(3) The NRO and the CIA have developed highly efficient procedures for referring documents to each other for review of its equities. Most referrals are from the CIA to the NRO. Thus far, the NRO has reviewed and returned to CIA more than 50,600 pages of documents that contain NRO equities. The NRO has referred to CIA over 3,750 pages of documents for review of their equities, and the CIA has completed its review and returned the documents to the NRO.

b. The NRO has developed effective plans for development, approval, use, update, and sharing of its declassification guides.

(1) In reference to the Information Security Oversight Office (ISOO) implementing directive published in accordance with the original Order, the NRO developed and submitted two formal declassification guides to ISOO for approval by the Interagency Security Classification Appeals Panel (ISCAP); the CORONA, ARGON, LANYARD Declassification Guide (CAL Guide) in August 1996 and the Review and Redaction Guide (RRG) in July 1999. In November 2004, ISOO visited the NRO to begin a dialogue leading to submission of the NRO declassification guidance to the ISCAP for approval. As explained during the visit, the CAL Guide, now used infrequently, was incorporated into the RRG in 2004 as an appendix.

(2) The NRO continues to staff a proposal for the DCI to approve the declassification of selected non-sensitive programmatic data from additional retired satellite programs. If the DCI approves the proposal, the NRO will develop and submit to ISOO for ISCAP approval dedicated declassification guides to govern the systematic declassification review (SDR) of the related records.

(3) Despite the lack of formal ISCAP approval, and now consistent with the current ISOO Implementing Directive for the amended Order, the Director, National Reconnaissance Office (DNRO) authorized the IART to apply the existing declassification guides to those NRO records 25-years-old or older. To ensure uniform review and treatment, declassification decisions based on these guides are made within the NRO exclusively by the IART. Because it has exclusive authority to apply these declassification guides, the IART also serves as a single point of review and internal coordination for requests involving 25-year-old information under the FOIA, mandatory declassification review (MDR) requests, and internal NRO pre-publication security reviews.

(4) The CAL Declassification Guide was used to govern the SDR of all permanent records from the former CORONA, ARGON, and LANYARD satellite imaging programs. That line-by-line review was completed in 1997. The resulting declassified records were placed for public access in the NRO FOIA Reading Room, located in the Visitors Center on the NRO Headquarters campus.

(5) The RRG is the declassification guide used to review records 25-years-old or older that cover the breadth of the NRO's activities. It has been used to review various non-CAL 25-year-old records collections, FOIA, and MDR cases as noted earlier.

(6) The RRG is dynamically updated as a result of changes in security policy or decisions on releasing information through FOIA and MDR requests or pre-publication security reviews. Every year, these dynamically coordinated changes to the RRG, nearly all of which result in additional information becoming releasable, are submitted to the DNRO for his certification. The DNRO certified the 2003 RRG changes in January of 2004. All changes are documented with an effective date in the body of the guide. Any changes that would result in the exemption of additional information will be first submitted to ISOO for ISCAP approval prior to implementation.

(7) The RRG is shared only for information purposes with internal and external organizations. The external organizations include the NRO's declassification counterparts at CIA and Air Force, just as they share their declassification guides with the IART. These particular other government agencies (OGAs) are the most likely to possess records with NRO

information equities. By sharing the RRG with these OGAs, we help them recognize the kinds of information the NRO wants to review before they declassify those records.

c. The NRO does not and will not delegate authority to declassify its 25-year-old information. NRO information is extremely sensitive in nature. As indicated earlier, to ensure uniform review and treatment of its sensitive records, the DNRO has directed that only the IART can make declassification decisions based on the RRG and any other declassification guide that might be produced.

d. The NRO participates in training activities for identifying NRO and OGA information equities.

(1) A key training vehicle is through the NRO membership on the External Referral Working Group (ERWG). This interagency body coordinates the policy for the recognition and proper treatment of information equities among Executive Department agencies. Personnel from the IART have attended every interagency Equities Recognition Training session sponsored by the ERWG. The NRO also has developed presentations at varying classification levels that identify its information equities for outside audiences. We have given NRO equities training presentations to the Equity Recognition Training sessions and have given tailored presentations to CIA and Air Force audiences.

(2) All NRO personnel involved in the review of records for possible declassification have been trained in recognizing Restricted Data and Formerly Restricted Data (RD/FRD) as required by legislation (the Kyl and Lott amendments to the National Defense Authorization Acts for fiscal year 1999 and 2000, respectively).

e. The NRO does not anticipate any external factors that would affect its ability to declassify, exempt, refer, or appropriately delay the complete review of our 25-year-old records by 31 December 2006.

f. The 19 NRO exempt files series approved by the President in 1999 are used to protect the bulk of the NRO's highly sensitive records base from automatic declassification. If the DCI declassifies additional satellite reconnaissance programs, the records associated with those programs will be removed from the exempted files series and reviewed for declassification as an SDR.

g. The NRO has current and future plans to re-review 25-year-old records.

(1) Realizing the potential for valuable historical insight into the early operation of the NRO, we began conducting a line-by-line re-review of over 24,600 pages of a 172,500-page

collection of former NRO staff records previously reviewed on a "pass/fail" basis. We anticipate completing this re-review in 2005.

(2) Subject to operational priorities, we plan to re-review the CAL records collection previously processed as an SDR and released to the public in 1997.

Appendix A

**Total Number of Pages Reviewed
Fiscal Year 1995 through Fiscal Year 2004**

a.	Total quantity of textual records reviewed for declassification	1,227,500 pgs
b.	Total quantity of textual records declassified	46,900 pgs
c.	Total quantity of textual records exempted from declassification	1,217,700 pgs
d.	Total quantity of textual records excluded from automatic declassification	0 pgs
e.	Total quantity of textual records referred for review to other agencies by your agency	9,900 pgs
f.	Total quantity of textual records referred to your agency for review	59,200 pgs
g.	Total quantity of textual records in file series that were file series exempted	272,500 pgs
h.	Total quantity of special media records reviewed for declassification	575,000 pgs
i.	Total quantity of special media records declassified	0 pgs
j.	Total quantity of special media records exempted from declassification	282,500 pgs
k.	Total quantity of special media records excluded from automatic declassification	0 pgs
l.	Total quantity of special media records referred to other agencies for review for declassification	0 pgs
m.	Total quantity of special media records referred to your agency for review	10 pgs
n.	Total quantity of special media records in file series that were file series exempted	292,500 pgs

Note: All numbers have been rounded to the nearest 100.

Appendix B

Work Completed in Fiscal Year 2004

a.	Total quantity of textual records that were reviewed in Fiscal Year 2004	422,500 pgs
b.	Total quantity of textual records declassified in Fiscal Year 2004	0 pgs
c.	Total quantity of textual records exempted in Fiscal Year 2004	412,600 pgs
d.	Total quantity of textual records referred to other agencies in Fiscal Year 2004	7,800 pgs
e.	Total quantity of textual records referred to your agency in Fiscal Year 2004	11,000 pgs
f.	Total quantity of textual records excluded from automatic declassification in Fiscal Year 2004	0 pgs
g.	Total quantity of special media that were reviewed in Fiscal Year 2004	575,000 pgs
h.	Total quantity of special media declassified in Fiscal Year 2004	0 pgs
i.	Total quantity of special media exempted in Fiscal Year 2004	575,000 pgs
j.	Total quantity of special media referred to other agencies in Fiscal Year 2004	0 pgs
k.	Total quantity of special media referred to your agency in Fiscal Year 2004	10 pgs
l.	Total quantity of special media excluded from automatic declassification in Fiscal Year 2004	0 pgs

Note: All numbers have been rounded to the nearest 100.

Appendix C

Estimated Quantity of Records Expected to be Reviewed in 2005

a.	Estimated quantity of textual records expected to be reviewed in Fiscal Year 2005	208,100 pgs
b.	Total quantity of textual records expected to be declassified in Fiscal Year 2005	33,800 pgs
c.	Total quantity of textual records expected to be exempted in Fiscal Year 2005	198,800 pgs
d.	Total quantity of textual records expected to be referred to other agencies in Fiscal Year 2005	7,200 pgs
e.	Total quantity of textual records expected to be referred to your agency in Fiscal Year 2005	No reliable data
f.	Total quantity of textual records expected to be excluded from automatic declassification in Fiscal Year 2005	0 pgs
g.	Total quantity of special media that are expected to be reviewed in Fiscal Year 2005	0 pgs
h.	Total quantity of special media expected to be declassified in Fiscal Year 2005	0 pgs
i.	Total quantity of special media expected to be exempted in Fiscal Year 2005	0 pgs
j.	Total quantity of special media expected to be referred to other agencies in Fiscal Year 2005	0 pgs
k.	Total quantity of special media expected to be referred to your agency in Fiscal Year 2005	No data
l.	Total quantity of special media expected to be excluded from automatic declassification in Fiscal Year 2005	0 pgs

Note: All numbers have been rounded to the nearest 100.

Appendix D

**Estimated Aggregate of Records Expected to be Reviewed
by 31 December 2006**

	Current Estimate	2004 Estimate	Change	Explanation
a.	Estimated quantity of textual records that will be reviewed by December 31, 2006: 1,485,600 pgs	Not estimated		
b.	Estimated quantity of textual records that will be declassified by December 31, 2006: 71,400 pgs	65,600 pgs	+5,800 pgs	Permission to declassify an additional program approved by DCI
c.	Estimated quantity of textual records that will be exempted from automatic declassification by December 31, 2006: 1,416,400 pgs	2,194,000 pgs	-777,600 pgs	Improved records management procedures
d.	Estimated quantity of textual records that are expected to be referred to other agencies by December 31, 2006: 19,100 pgs	7,000 pgs	+12,100 pgs	More experience, better estimates
e.	Estimated quantity of textual records that are expected to be referred to your agency for declassification or exemption by December 31, 2006: 40,600 pgs	No change		
f.	Estimated quantity of textual records that are expected to be excluded by December 31, 2006: 0 pgs	Not estimated		
g.	Estimated quantity of special media that can be delayed until December 31, 2011: 575,000 pgs	135,200 pgs	+439,800 pgs	Additional records retired. Improved records management procedures.

Appendix D (Continued)

h.	Estimated quantity of special media that your agency expects to declassify by Fiscal Year 2011: 14,100 pgs	6,800 pgs	+7,300 pgs	Better data on total amount of special media. See Box g. above.
i.	Estimated quantity of special media that your agency expects to exempt by December 31, 2011: 560,900 pgs	128,400 pgs	+432,500 pgs	Same as Box h. above.
j.	Estimated quantity of special media that your agency expects to refer to other agencies by December 31, 2011: 100 pgs	50 pgs	+50 pgs	Better data on total amount of special media. See Box g. above.
k.	Estimated quantity of special media that you expect to be referred to your agency for declassification or exemption by December 31, 2016: No data	No change		

Note: All numbers have been rounded to the nearest 100.

Appendix E

Estimated Quantity of Records Expected to be Reviewed in 2007

a.	Estimated quantity of textual records expected to be reviewed in Fiscal Year 2007	51,500 pgs
b.	Total quantity of textual records expected to be declassified in Fiscal Year 2007	19,000 pgs
c.	Total quantity of textual records expected to be exempted in Fiscal Year 2007	54,300 pgs
d.	Total quantity of textual records expected to be referred to other agencies in Fiscal Year 2007	2,900 pgs
e.	Total quantity of textual records expected to be referred to your agency in Fiscal Year 2007	No data
f.	Total quantity of textual records expected to be excluded from automatic declassification in Fiscal Year 2007	0 pgs
g.	Total quantity of special media that are expected to be reviewed in Fiscal Year 2007	No data
h.	Total quantity of special media expected to be declassified in Fiscal Year 2007	No data
i.	Total quantity of special media expected to be exempted in Fiscal Year 2007	No data
j.	Total quantity of special media expected to be referred to other agencies in Fiscal Year 2007	No data
k.	Total quantity of special media expected to be referred to your agency in Fiscal Year 2007	No data
l.	Total quantity of special media expected to be excluded from automatic declassification in Fiscal Year 2007	0 pgs

Note: All numbers have been rounded to the nearest 100.