United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
Washington, D.C. 20240

Memorandum

JUL 31 2000

To: Solicitor
Inspector General
Assistant Secretaries
Heads of Bureaus and Offices

From: John Berry
Assistant Secretary - Policy, Management and Budget

Subject: Classified National Security Information Program

During this last year of the current Administration, many offices will likely experience a large turnover in personnel who have had significant exposure to classified information. It is, therefore, incumbent on each of us to pay strict attention to the proper handling and safeguarding of classified national security information. The following points should be shared with affected personnel:

1. Classified information, including "extra" copies, is not personal property and may not be removed from the Government's control by any departing official. Section 4.2 (b) of Executive Order 12958, "Classified National Security Information," states explicitly: "Classified information shall remain under the control of the originating agency or its successor in function... An official or employee leaving agency service may not remove classified information from the agency's control." This prohibition applies to everyone, up to and including agency heads.

2. All bureau/office security officers, records managers, security assistants, classified document custodians and other designated personnel having classified document security responsibilities should be reminded to ensure this Department's retention of all classified information that may be in the possession of departing officials.

3. Any employee of this Department possessing a security clearance must be debriefed by his or her designated security officer prior to separation and/or departure. These debriefings should include reminders that the responsibility to protect classified information, including that stored in one's memory, does not end with a person's departure from Government service. Further, that a person who no longer has a security clearance is still subject to criminal and civil sanctions for the unauthorized disclosure of classified information learned while he or she was cleared. It is the responsibility of the bureau and office head to ensure that those employees having access to classified information within their respective organizations comply with and conform to these regulations.

Your cooperation in this matter of mutual interest and national importance is greatly appreciated. Please contact your bureau/office security officer if you have any questions.

cc: Bureau/Office Security Officers:

Ricky Henson, National Business Center, Office of the Secretary
Ronald Brown, Office of Inspector General
Linda Walker, U.S. Geological Survey
Joan Banks, National Park Service
Elizabeth Forrest, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Walter Johnson, Bureau of Land Management
Peggy Moran-Gicker, Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement
Arthur Quintana, Minerals Management Service
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