

Statutory Notes and Related Subsidiaries

EFFECTIVE DATE

Section effective 180 days after Dec. 22, 1987, see section 186(b) of Pub. L. 100-204, set out as a note under section 4741 of this title.

CHAPTER 53B—FOREIGN RELATIONS OF THE UNITED STATES HISTORICAL SERIES

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§ 4351. General authority and contents of publication**(a) Charter of publication**

The Department of State shall continue to publish the “Foreign Relations of the United States historical series” (hereafter in this chapter referred to as the “FRUS series”), which shall be a thorough, accurate, and reliable documentary record of major United States foreign policy decisions and significant United States diplomatic activity. Volumes of this publication shall include all records needed to provide a comprehensive documentation of the major foreign policy decisions and actions of the United States Government, including the facts which contributed to the formulation of policies and records providing supporting and alternative views to the policy position ultimately adopted.

(b) Editing principles

The editing of records for preparation of the FRUS series shall be guided by the principles of historical objectivity and accuracy. Records shall not be altered and deletions shall not be made without indicating in the published text that a deletion has been made. The published record shall omit no facts which were of major importance in reaching a decision, and nothing shall be omitted for the purpose of concealing a defect of policy.

(c) Deadline for publication of records

The Secretary of State shall ensure that the FRUS series shall be published not more than 30 years after the events recorded.

(Aug. 1, 1956, ch. 841, title IV, § 401, as added Pub. L. 102-138, title I, § 198(a), Oct. 28, 1991, 105 Stat. 685.)

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COMPLIANCE WITH DEADLINE FOR PUBLICATION OF FRUS SERIES; NOTIFICATION TO CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES ON FAILURE TO COMPLY; FINAL DEADLINE

Pub. L. 102-138, title I, § 198(c)(2), Oct. 28, 1991, 105 Stat. 691, provided that:

“(A) In order to come into compliance with section 401(c) of the State Department Basic Authorities Act of 1956 [22 U.S.C. 4351(c)] (as amended by this section) the Secretary of State shall ensure that, by the end of the

3-year period beginning on the date of the enactment of this Act [Oct. 28, 1991], all volumes of the Foreign Relations of the United States historical series (FRUS) for the years that are more than 30 years before the end of that 3-year period have been published.

“(B) If the Secretary cannot reasonably meet the requirements of subparagraph (A), the Secretary shall notify the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate and the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives and describe how the Department of State plans to meet the requirements of subparagraph (A). In no event shall volumes subject to subparagraph (A) be published later than 5 years after the date of the enactment of this Act.”

§ 4352. Responsibility for preparation of FRUS series**(a) In general**

(1)(A) The Historian of the Department of State shall be responsible for the preparation of the FRUS series, including the selection of records, in accordance with the provisions of this chapter.

(B) The Advisory Committee on Historical Diplomatic Documentation shall review records, and shall advise and make recommendations to the Historian concerning all aspects of preparation and publication of the FRUS series, including, in accordance with the procedures contained in section 4353 of this title, the review and selection of records for inclusion in volumes of the series.

(2) Other departments, agencies, and other entities of the United States Government shall cooperate with the Office of the Historian by providing full and complete access to the records pertinent to United States foreign policy decisions and actions and by providing copies of selected records in accordance with the procedures developed under section 4353 of this title, except that no access to any record, and no provision of any copy of a record, shall be required in the case of any record that was prepared less than 20 years before the date of a request for such access or copy made by the Office of the Historian.

(b) National Archives and Records Administration

Notwithstanding any other provision of this chapter, the requirement for the National Archives and Records Administration to provide access to, and copies of, records to the Department of State for the FRUS series shall be governed by chapter 21 of title 44, by any agreement concluded between the Department of State and the National Archives and Records Administration, and, in the case of Presidential records, by section 2204 of such title.

(Aug. 1, 1956, ch. 841, title IV, § 402, as added Pub. L. 102-138, title I, § 198(a), Oct. 28, 1991, 105 Stat. 685; amended Pub. L. 117-81, div. E, title LV, § 5504(1), Dec. 27, 2021, 135 Stat. 2376.)

Editorial Notes

AMENDMENTS

2021—Subsec. (a)(2). Pub. L. 117-81 substituted “20” for “26”.

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AUTHORITY OF SECRETARY OF STATE

Except as otherwise provided, Secretary of State to have and exercise any authority vested by law in any

official or office of Department of State and references to such officials or offices deemed to refer to Secretary of State or Department of State, as appropriate, see section 2651a of this title and section 161(d) of Pub. L. 103-236, set out as a note under section 2651a of this title.

§ 4353. Procedures for identifying records for FRUS series; declassification, revisions, and summaries

(a) Development of procedures

Not later than 180 days after October 28, 1991, each department, agency, or other entity of the United States Government engaged in foreign policy formulation, execution, or support shall develop procedures for its historical office (or a designated individual in the event that there is no historical office)—

(1) to coordinate with the State Department's Office of the Historian in selecting records for possible inclusion in the FRUS series;

(2) to permit full access to the original, unrevised records by such individuals holding appropriate security clearances as have been designated by the Historian as liaison to that department, agency, or entity, for purposes of this chapter, and by members of the Advisory Committee; and

(3) to permit access to specific types of records not selected for inclusion in the FRUS series by the individuals identified in paragraph (2) when requested by the Historian in order to confirm that records selected by that department, agency, or entity accurately represent the policymaking process reflected in the relevant part of the FRUS series.

(b) Declassification review

(1) Subject to the provisions of this subsection, records selected by the Historian for inclusion in the FRUS series shall be submitted to the respective originating agency for declassification review in accordance with that agency's procedures for such review, except that such declassification review shall be completed by the originating agency within 120 days after such records are submitted for review. If the originating agency determines that any such record is not declassifiable because of a continuing need to protect sources and methods for the collection of intelligence information or to protect other sensitive national security information, then the originating agency shall attempt to make such deletions in the text as will make the record declassifiable.

(2) If the Historian determines that the meaning of the records proposed for inclusion in a volume of the FRUS series would be so altered or changed by deletions made under paragraph (1) that publication in that condition could be misleading or lead to an inaccurate or incomplete historical record, then the Historian shall take steps to achieve a satisfactory resolution of the problem with the originating agency. Within 60 days of receiving a proposed solution from the Historian, the originating agency shall furnish the Historian a written response agreeing to the solution or explaining the reasons for the alteration or deletion.

(3) The Historian shall inform the Advisory Committee of any failure by an originating

agency to complete its declassification review of a record within 120 days and of any steps taken under paragraph (2).

(4) If the Advisory Committee determines that the meaning of the records proposed for inclusion in a volume of the FRUS series would be so altered or changed by deletions made under paragraph (1), or if the Advisory Committee determines as a result of inspection of other documents under subsection (a)(3) that the selection of documents could be misleading or lead to an inaccurate or incomplete historical record, then the Advisory Committee shall so advise the Secretary of State and submit recommendations to resolve the issue.

(5)(A) The Advisory Committee shall have full and complete access to the original text of any record in which deletions have been made. In the event that the head of any originating agency considers it necessary to deny access by the Advisory Committee to the original text of any record, that agency head shall promptly notify the Advisory Committee in writing, describing the nature of the record in question and the justification for withholding that record.

(B) The Historian shall provide the Advisory Committee with a complete list of the records described in subparagraph (A).

(6) If a record is deleted in whole or in part as a result of review under this subsection then a note to that effect shall be inserted at the appropriate place in the FRUS volume.

(Aug. 1, 1956, ch. 841, title IV, § 403, as added Pub. L. 102-138, title I, § 198(a), Oct. 28, 1991, 105 Stat. 686.)

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§ 4354. Declassification of State Department records

(a) Deadline for declassification

(1) Except as provided in subsection (b), each classified record of permanent historical value (as determined by the Secretary of State and the Archivist of the United States) which was published, issued, or otherwise prepared by the Department of State (or any officer or employee thereof acting in an official capacity) shall be declassified not later than 25 years after the record was prepared, shall be transferred to the National Archives and Records Administration, and shall be made available at the National Archives for public inspection and copying.

(2) Nothing in this subsection may be construed to require the declassification of a record wholly prepared by a foreign government.

(b) Exempted records

Subsection (a) shall not apply to any record (or portion thereof) the publication of which the Secretary of State, in coordination with any