

KEYWORD: Guideline B

DIGEST: Applicant's arguments regarding mitigation of property and relatives in Pakistan do not demonstrate that the Judge erred. Adverse decision affirmed.

CASENO: 11-04742.a1

DATE: 06/20/2012

DATE: June 20, 2012

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In Re: )  
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----- ) ISCR Case No. 11-04742  
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Applicant for Security Clearance )  
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**APPEAL BOARD DECISION**

**APPEARANCES**

**FOR GOVERNMENT**

James B. Norman, Esq., Chief Department Counsel

**FOR APPLICANT**

*Pro se*

The Defense Office of Hearings and Appeals (DOHA) declined to grant Applicant a security clearance. On August 12, 2011, DOHA issued a statement of reasons (SOR) advising Applicant of

the basis for that decision—security concerns raised under Guideline B (Foreign Influence) of Department of Defense Directive 5220.6 (Jan. 2, 1992, as amended) (Directive). Applicant requested a hearing. On April 4, 2012, after the hearing, Administrative Judge Paul J. Mason denied Applicant’s request for a security clearance. Applicant appealed pursuant to the Directive ¶¶ E3.1.28 and E3.1.30.

Applicant raised the following issue on appeal: whether the Judge’s adverse clearance decision is arbitrary, capricious, or contrary to law.

Applicant seeks reversal of the Judge’s adverse decision under Guideline B arguing that the Judge should have found the security concerns presented by Applicant’s family members and farm in Pakistan mitigated due to his favorable employment record and his strong ties to the United States. His argument does not demonstrate that the Judge’s decision was arbitrary, capricious or contrary to law.

Once the government presents evidence raising security concerns, the burden shifts to the applicant to establish mitigation. Directive ¶ E3.1.15. The presence of some mitigating evidence does not alone compel the Judge to make a favorable security clearance decision. As the trier of fact, the Judge has to weigh the evidence as a whole and decide whether the favorable evidence outweighs the unfavorable evidence, or *vice versa*. A party’s disagreement with the Judge’s weighing of the evidence, or an ability to argue for a different interpretation of the evidence, is not sufficient to demonstrate the Judge weighed the evidence or reached conclusions in a manner that is arbitrary, capricious, or contrary to law. *See, e.g.*, ISCR Case No. 08-09346 at 2-3 (App. Bd. Mar. 14, 2011).

A review of the record indicates that the Judge weighed the mitigating evidence offered by Applicant against the seriousness of the disqualifying circumstances and considered the possible application of relevant conditions and factors. He found in favor of Applicant as to several of the SOR factual allegations. However, he reasonably explained why the evidence which the Applicant presented in mitigation was insufficient to overcome all of the government’s security concerns. The Board does not review a case *de novo*. The favorable record evidence cited by Applicant is not sufficient to demonstrate the Judge’s decision is arbitrary, capricious or contrary to law. The Board concludes that the Judge examined the relevant data and articulated a satisfactory explanation for the decision, “including a ‘rational connection between the facts found and the choice made.’” *Motor Vehicle Mfrs. Ass’n of the United States v. State Farm Mut. Auto. Ins. Co.*, 463 U.S. 29, 43 (1983) (quoting *Burlington Truck Lines, Inc. v. United States*, 371 U.S. 156, 168 (1962)). “The general standard is that a clearance may be granted only when ‘clearly consistent with the interests of the national security.’” *Department of the Navy v. Egan*, 484 U.S. 518, 528 (1988). Therefore, the Judge’s unfavorable security clearance decision is sustainable.

**Order**

The decision of the Judge denying Applicant a security clearance is AFFIRMED.

Signed: Jean E. Smallin  
Jean E. Smallin  
Administrative Judge  
Member, Appeal Board

Signed: James E. Moody  
James E. Moody  
Administrative Judge  
Member, Appeal Board

Signed: William S. Fields  
William S. Fields  
Administrative Judge  
Member, Appeal Board