

Par. (3). Pub. L. 99-508, §101(c)(1)(A), substituted “wire, oral, or electronic” for “wire or oral”.

1978—Par. (3). Pub. L. 95-511 inserted “pursuant to this chapter” after “wire or oral communications” and “granted or denied”.

EFFECTIVE DATE OF 1986 AMENDMENT

Amendment by Pub. L. 99-508 effective 90 days after Oct. 21, 1986, and, in case of conduct pursuant to court order or extension, applicable only with respect to court orders and extensions made after such date, with special rule for State authorizations of interceptions, see section 111 of Pub. L. 99-508, set out as a note under section 2510 of this title.

EFFECTIVE DATE OF 1978 AMENDMENT

Amendment by Pub. L. 95-511 effective Oct. 25, 1978, except as specifically provided, see section 401 of Pub. L. 95-511, formerly set out as an Effective Date note under section 1801 of Title 50, War and National Defense.

REPORT ON USE OF DCS 1000 (CARNIVORE) TO IMPLEMENT ORDERS UNDER SECTION 2518

Pub. L. 107-273, div. A, title III, §305(b), Nov. 2, 2002, 116 Stat. 1782, provided that: “At the same time that the Attorney General, or Assistant Attorney General specially designated by the Attorney General, submits to the Administrative Office of the United States Courts the annual report required by section 2519(2) of title 18, United States Code, that is respectively next due after the end of each of the fiscal years 2002 and 2003, the Attorney General shall also submit to the Chairmen and ranking minority members of the Committees on the Judiciary of the Senate and of the House of Representatives a report, covering the same respective time period, that contains the following information with respect to those orders described in that annual report that were applied for by law enforcement agencies of the Department of Justice and whose implementation involved the use of the DCS 1000 program (or any subsequent version of such program)—

“(1) the kind of order or extension applied for (including whether or not the order was an order with respect to which the requirements of sections 2518(1)(b)(ii) and 2518(3)(d) of title 18, United States Code, did not apply by reason of section 2518 (1) of title 18);

“(2) the period of interceptions authorized by the order, and the number and duration of any extensions of the order;

“(3) the offense specified in the order or application, or extension of an order;

“(4) the identity of the applying investigative or law enforcement officer and agency making the application and the person authorizing the application;

“(5) the nature of the facilities from which or place where communications were to be intercepted;

“(6) a general description of the interceptions made under such order or extension, including—

“(A) the approximate nature and frequency of incriminating communications intercepted;

“(B) the approximate nature and frequency of other communications intercepted;

“(C) the approximate number of persons whose communications were intercepted;

“(D) the number of orders in which encryption was encountered and whether such encryption prevented law enforcement from obtaining the plain text of communications intercepted pursuant to such order; and

“(E) the approximate nature, amount, and cost of the manpower and other resources used in the interceptions;

“(7) the number of arrests resulting from interceptions made under such order or extension, and the offenses for which arrests were made;

“(8) the number of trials resulting from such interceptions;

“(9) the number of motions to suppress made with respect to such interceptions, and the number granted or denied;

“(10) the number of convictions resulting from such interceptions and the offenses for which the convictions were obtained and a general assessment of the importance of the interceptions; and

“(11) the specific persons authorizing the use of the DCS 1000 program (or any subsequent version of such program) in the implementation of such order.”

ENCRYPTION REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Pub. L. 106-197, §2(b), May 2, 2000, 114 Stat. 247, provided that: “The encryption reporting requirement in subsection (a) [amending this section] shall be effective for the report transmitted by the Director of the Administrative Office of the Courts for calendar year 2000 and in subsequent reports.”

§ 2520. Recovery of civil damages authorized

(a) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in section 2511(2)(a)(ii), any person whose wire, oral, or electronic communication is intercepted, disclosed, or intentionally used in violation of this chapter may in a civil action recover from the person or entity, other than the United States, which engaged in that violation such relief as may be appropriate.

(b) RELIEF.—In an action under this section, appropriate relief includes—

(1) such preliminary and other equitable or declaratory relief as may be appropriate;

(2) damages under subsection (c) and punitive damages in appropriate cases; and

(3) a reasonable attorney’s fee and other litigation costs reasonably incurred.

(c) COMPUTATION OF DAMAGES.—(1) In an action under this section, if the conduct in violation of this chapter is the private viewing of a private satellite video communication that is not scrambled or encrypted or if the communication is a radio communication that is transmitted on frequencies allocated under subpart D of part 74 of the rules of the Federal Communications Commission that is not scrambled or encrypted and the conduct is not for a tortious or illegal purpose or for purposes of direct or indirect commercial advantage or private commercial gain, then the court shall assess damages as follows:

(A) If the person who engaged in that conduct has not previously been enjoined under section 2511(5) and has not been found liable in a prior civil action under this section, the court shall assess the greater of the sum of actual damages suffered by the plaintiff, or statutory damages of not less than \$50 and not more than \$500.

(B) If, on one prior occasion, the person who engaged in that conduct has been enjoined under section 2511(5) or has been found liable in a civil action under this section, the court shall assess the greater of the sum of actual damages suffered by the plaintiff, or statutory damages of not less than \$100 and not more than \$1000.

(2) In any other action under this section, the court may assess as damages whichever is the greater of—

(A) the sum of the actual damages suffered by the plaintiff and any profits made by the violator as a result of the violation; or

(B) statutory damages of whichever is the greater of \$100 a day for each day of violation or \$10,000.

(d) DEFENSE.—A good faith reliance on—

(1) a court warrant or order, a grand jury subpoena, a legislative authorization, or a statutory authorization;

(2) a request of an investigative or law enforcement officer under section 2518(7) of this title; or

(3) a good faith determination that section 2511(3) or 2511(2)(i) of this title permitted the conduct complained of;

is a complete defense against any civil or criminal action brought under this chapter or any other law.

(e) LIMITATION.—A civil action under this section may not be commenced later than two years after the date upon which the claimant first has a reasonable opportunity to discover the violation.

(f) ADMINISTRATIVE DISCIPLINE.—If a court or appropriate department or agency determines that the United States or any of its departments or agencies has violated any provision of this chapter, and the court or appropriate department or agency finds that the circumstances surrounding the violation raise serious questions about whether or not an officer or employee of the United States acted willfully or intentionally with respect to the violation, the department or agency shall, upon receipt of a true and correct copy of the decision and findings of the court or appropriate department or agency promptly initiate a proceeding to determine whether disciplinary action against the officer or employee is warranted. If the head of the department or agency involved determines that disciplinary action is not warranted, he or she shall notify the Inspector General with jurisdiction over the department or agency concerned and shall provide the Inspector General with the reasons for such determination.

(g) IMPROPER DISCLOSURE IS VIOLATION.—Any willful disclosure or use by an investigative or law enforcement officer or governmental entity of information beyond the extent permitted by section 2517 is a violation of this chapter for purposes of section 2520(a).

(Added Pub. L. 90-351, title III, §802, June 19, 1968, 82 Stat. 223; amended Pub. L. 91-358, title II, §211(c), July 29, 1970, 84 Stat. 654; Pub. L. 99-508, title I, §103, Oct. 21, 1986, 100 Stat. 1853; Pub. L. 107-56, title II, §223(a), Oct. 26, 2001, 115 Stat. 293; Pub. L. 107-296, title II, §225(e), Nov. 25, 2002, 116 Stat. 2157.)

AMENDMENTS

2002—Subsec. (d)(3). Pub. L. 107-296 inserted “or 2511(2)(i)” after “2511(3)”.

2001—Subsec. (a). Pub. L. 107-56, §223(a)(1), inserted “, other than the United States,” after “person or entity”.

Subsecs. (f), (g). Pub. L. 107-56, §223(a)(2), (3), added subsecs. (f) and (g).

1986—Pub. L. 99-508 amended section generally. Prior to amendment, section read as follows: “Any person whose wire or oral communication is intercepted, disclosed, or used in violation of this chapter shall (1) have a civil cause of action against any person who intercepts, discloses, or uses, or procures any other per-

son to intercept, disclose, or use such communications, and (2) be entitled to recover from any such person—

“(a) actual damages but not less than liquidated damages computed at the rate of \$100 a day for each day of violation or \$1,000, whichever is higher;

“(b) punitive damages; and

“(c) a reasonable attorney’s fee and other litigation costs reasonably incurred.

A good faith reliance on a court order or legislative authorization shall constitute a complete defense to any civil or criminal action brought under this chapter or under any other law.”

1970—Pub. L. 91-358 substituted provisions that a good faith reliance on a court order or legislative authorization constitute a complete defense to any civil or criminal action brought under this chapter or under any other law, for provisions that a good faith reliance on a court order or on the provisions of section 2518(7) of this chapter constitute a complete defense to any civil or criminal action brought under this chapter.

EFFECTIVE DATE OF 2002 AMENDMENT

Amendment by Pub. L. 107-296 effective 60 days after Nov. 25, 2002, see section 4 of Pub. L. 107-296, set out as an Effective Date note under section 101 of Title 6, Domestic Security.

EFFECTIVE DATE OF 1986 AMENDMENT

Amendment by Pub. L. 99-508 effective 90 days after Oct. 21, 1986, and, in case of conduct pursuant to court order or extension, applicable only with respect to court orders and extensions made after such date, with special rule for State authorizations of interceptions, see section 111 of Pub. L. 99-508, set out as a note under section 2510 of this title.

EFFECTIVE DATE OF 1970 AMENDMENT

Amendment by Pub. L. 91-358 effective on first day of seventh calendar month which begins after July 29, 1970, see section 901(a) of Pub. L. 91-358.

§ 2521. Injunction against illegal interception

Whenever it shall appear that any person is engaged or is about to engage in any act which constitutes or will constitute a felony violation of this chapter, the Attorney General may initiate a civil action in a district court of the United States to enjoin such violation. The court shall proceed as soon as practicable to the hearing and determination of such an action, and may, at any time before final determination, enter such a restraining order or prohibition, or take such other action, as is warranted to prevent a continuing and substantial injury to the United States or to any person or class of persons for whose protection the action is brought. A proceeding under this section is governed by the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure, except that, if an indictment has been returned against the respondent, discovery is governed by the Federal Rules of Criminal Procedure.

(Added Pub. L. 99-508, title I, §110(a), Oct. 21, 1986, 100 Stat. 1859.)

REFERENCES IN TEXT

The Federal Rules of Civil Procedure, referred to in text, are set out in the Appendix to Title 28, Judiciary and Judicial Procedure.

The Federal Rules of Criminal Procedure, referred to in text, are set out in the Appendix to this title.

EFFECTIVE DATE

Section effective 90 days after Oct. 21, 1986, and, in case of conduct pursuant to court order or extension, applicable only with respect to court orders and exten-