

**(2) Non-reporting chemical facilities of interest**

Any owner of a chemical facility of interest who fails to comply with, or knowingly submits false information under, this subchapter or the CFATS regulations shall be liable for a civil penalty under section 70119(a) of title 46.

**(c) Emergency orders****(1) In general**

Notwithstanding subsection (a) or any site security plan or alternative security program approved under this subchapter, if the Secretary determines that there is an imminent threat of death, serious illness, or severe personal injury, due to a violation of this subchapter or the risk of a terrorist incident that may affect a chemical facility of interest, the Secretary—

(A) shall consult with the facility, if practicable, on steps to mitigate the risk; and

(B) may order the facility, without notice or opportunity for a hearing, effective immediately or as soon as practicable, to—

(i) implement appropriate emergency security measures; or

(ii) cease or reduce some or all operations, in accordance with safe shutdown procedures, if the Secretary determines that such a cessation or reduction of operations is the most appropriate means to address the risk.

**(2) Limitation on delegation**

The Secretary may not delegate the authority under paragraph (1) to any official other than the Director of Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security.

**(3) Limitation on authority**

The Secretary may exercise the authority under this subsection only to the extent necessary to abate the imminent threat determination under paragraph (1).

**(4) Due process for facility owner or operator****(A) Written orders**

An order issued by the Secretary under paragraph (1) shall be in the form of a written emergency order that—

(i) describes the violation or risk that creates the imminent threat;

(ii) states the security measures or order issued or imposed; and

(iii) describes the standards and procedures for obtaining relief from the order.

**(B) Opportunity for review**

After issuing an order under paragraph (1) with respect to a chemical facility of interest, the Secretary shall provide for review of the order under section 554 of title 5 if a petition for review is filed not later than 20 days after the date on which the Secretary issues the order.

**(C) Expiration of effectiveness of order**

If a petition for review of an order is filed under subparagraph (B) and the review under that paragraph<sup>2</sup> is not completed by the last day of the 30-day period beginning on the

date on which the petition is filed, the order shall vacate automatically at the end of that period unless the Secretary determines, in writing, that the imminent threat providing a basis for the order continues to exist.

**(d) Right of action**

Nothing in this subchapter confers upon any person except the Secretary or his or her designee a right of action against an owner or operator of a covered chemical facility to enforce any provision of this subchapter.

(Pub. L. 107-296, title XXI, §2104, as added Pub. L. 113-254, §2(a), Dec. 18, 2014, 128 Stat. 2912; amended Pub. L. 115-278, §2(g)(8)(B), Nov. 16, 2018, 132 Stat. 4180.)

## TERMINATION OF SECTION

*For termination of section by section 5 of Pub. L. 113-254, see Effective and Termination Dates note below.*

## Editorial Notes

## AMENDMENTS

2018—Subsec. (c)(2). Pub. L. 115-278 substituted “Director of Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security” for “Under Secretary responsible for overseeing critical infrastructure protection, cybersecurity, and other related programs of the Department appointed under section 113(a)(1)(H) of this title”.

## Statutory Notes and Related Subsidiaries

## EFFECTIVE AND TERMINATION DATES

Section effective on the date that is 30 days after Dec. 18, 2014, and authority provided under this section to terminate on the date that is 5 years and 3 months after such effective date, see sections 4(a) and 5 of Pub. L. 113-254, set out as notes under section 621 of this title.

**§ 625. Whistleblower protections****(a) Procedure for reporting problems****(1) Establishment of a reporting procedure**

Not later than 180 days after December 18, 2014, the Secretary shall establish, and provide information to the public regarding, a procedure under which any employee or contractor of a chemical facility of interest may submit a report to the Secretary regarding a violation of a requirement under this subchapter.

**(2) Confidentiality**

The Secretary shall keep confidential the identity of an individual who submits a report under paragraph (1) and any such report shall be treated as a record containing protected information to the extent that the report does not consist of publicly available information.

**(3) Acknowledgment of receipt**

If a report submitted under paragraph (1) identifies the individual making the report, the Secretary shall promptly respond to the individual directly and shall promptly acknowledge receipt of the report.

**(4) Steps to address problems**

The Secretary—

(A) shall review and consider the information provided in any report submitted under paragraph (1); and

<sup>2</sup> So in original. Probably should be “that subparagraph”.

(B) may take action under section 624 of this title if necessary to address any substantiated violation of a requirement under this subchapter identified in the report.

**(5) Due process for facility owner or operator**

**(A) In general**

If, upon the review described in paragraph (4), the Secretary determines that a violation of a provision of this subchapter, or a regulation prescribed under this subchapter, has occurred, the Secretary may—

- (i) institute a civil enforcement under section 624(a) of this title; or
- (ii) if the Secretary makes the determination under section 624(c) of this title, issue an emergency order.

**(B) Written orders**

The action of the Secretary under paragraph (4) shall be in a written form that—

- (i) describes the violation;
- (ii) states the authority under which the Secretary is proceeding; and
- (iii) describes the standards and procedures for obtaining relief from the order.

**(C) Opportunity for review**

After taking action under paragraph (4), the Secretary shall provide for review of the action if a petition for review is filed within 20 calendar days of the date of issuance of the order for the action.

**(D) Expiration of effectiveness of order**

If a petition for review of an action is filed under subparagraph (C) and the review under that subparagraph is not completed by the end of the 30-day period beginning on the date the petition is filed, the action shall cease to be effective at the end of such period unless the Secretary determines, in writing, that the violation providing a basis for the action continues to exist.

**(6) Retaliation prohibited**

**(A) In general**

An owner or operator of a chemical facility of interest or agent thereof may not discharge an employee or otherwise discriminate against an employee with respect to the compensation provided to, or terms, conditions, or privileges of the employment of, the employee because the employee (or an individual acting pursuant to a request of the employee) submitted a report under paragraph (1).

**(B) Exception**

An employee shall not be entitled to the protections under this section if the employee—

- (i) knowingly and willfully makes any false, fictitious, or fraudulent statement or representation; or
- (ii) uses any false writing or document knowing the writing or document contains any false, fictitious, or fraudulent statement or entry.

**(b) Protected disclosures**

Nothing in this subchapter shall be construed to limit the right of an individual to make any disclosure—

(1) protected or authorized under section 2302(b)(8) or 7211 of title 5;

(2) protected under any other Federal or State law that shields the disclosing individual against retaliation or discrimination for having made the disclosure in the public interest; or

(3) to the Special Counsel of an agency, the inspector general of an agency, or any other employee designated by the head of an agency to receive disclosures similar to the disclosures described in paragraphs (1) and (2).

**(c) Publication of rights**

The Secretary, in partnership with industry associations and labor organizations, shall make publicly available both physically and online the rights that an individual who discloses information, including security-sensitive information, regarding problems, deficiencies, or vulnerabilities at a covered chemical facility would have under Federal whistleblower protection laws or this subchapter.

**(d) Protected information**

All information contained in a report made under this subsection (a)<sup>1</sup> shall be protected in accordance with section 623 of this title.

(Pub. L. 107-296, title XXI, §2105, as added Pub. L. 113-254, §2(a), Dec. 18, 2014, 128 Stat. 2914.)

TERMINATION OF SECTION

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**§ 626. Relationship to other laws**

**(a) Other Federal laws**

Nothing in this subchapter shall be construed to supersede, amend, alter, or affect any Federal law that—

(1) regulates (including by requiring information to be submitted or made available) the manufacture, distribution in commerce, use, handling, sale, other treatment, or disposal of chemical substances or mixtures; or

(2) authorizes or requires the disclosure of any record or information obtained from a chemical facility under any law other than this subchapter.

**(b) States and political subdivisions**

This subchapter shall not preclude or deny any right of any State or political subdivision thereof to adopt or enforce any regulation, requirement, or standard of performance with respect to chemical facility security that is more stringent than a regulation, requirement, or standard of performance issued under this section, or otherwise impair any right or jurisdiction of

<sup>1</sup> So in original.