

Editorial Notes

REFERENCES IN TEXT

The Communications Assistance for Law Enforcement Act, referred to in par. (4), is title I of Pub. L. 103-414, Oct. 25, 1994, 108 Stat. 4279, which is classified generally to subchapter I (§1001 et seq.) of chapter 9 of Title 47, Telecommunications. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see Short Title note set out under section 1001 of Title 47 and Tables.

AMENDMENTS

1998—Par. (11)(b)(ii). Pub. L. 105-272, §604(a)(1), substituted “that there is probable cause to believe that the person’s actions could have the effect of thwarting interception from a specified facility;” for “of a purpose, on the part of that person, to thwart interception by changing facilities; and”.

Par. (11)(b)(iii). Pub. L. 105-272, §604(a)(2), substituted “such showing has been adequately made; and” for “such purpose has been adequately shown.”

Par. (11)(b)(iv). Pub. L. 105-272, §604(a)(3), added cl. (iv).

Par. (12). Pub. L. 105-272, §604(b), substituted “by reason of subsection (11)(a)” for “by reason of subsection (11)”, struck out “the facilities from which, or” after “shall not begin until”, and struck out comma after “the place where”.

1994—Par. (4). Pub. L. 103-414 inserted at end of concluding provisions “Pursuant to section 2522 of this chapter, an order may also be issued to enforce the assistance capability and capacity requirements under the Communications Assistance for Law Enforcement Act.”

1986—Pub. L. 99-508, §101(c)(1)(A), substituted “wire, oral, or electronic” for “wire or oral” in section catchline.

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

Par. (1)(b)(ii). Pub. L. 99-508, §106(d)(1), inserted “except as provided in subsection (11).”.

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

Par. (3). Pub. L. 99-508, §§101(c)(1)(A), 106(a), in introductory provisions, substituted “wire, oral, or electronic” for “wire or oral” and inserted “(and outside that jurisdiction but within the United States in the case of a mobile interception device authorized by a Federal court within such jurisdiction)”.

Par. (3)(d). Pub. L. 99-508, §§101(c)(1)(A), 106(d)(2), inserted “except as provided in subsection (11).” and substituted “wire, oral, or electronic” for “wire or oral”.

Par. (4). Pub. L. 99-508, §§101(c)(1)(A), (8), 106(b), substituted “wire, oral, or electronic” for “wire or oral” wherever appearing and, in closing provisions, substituted “provider of wire or electronic communication service” for “communication common carrier” wherever appearing, “such service provider” for “such carrier”, and “for reasonable expenses incurred in providing such facilities or assistance” for “at the prevailing rates”.

Par. (5). Pub. L. 99-508, §§101(c)(1)(A), 106(c), substituted “wire, oral, or electronic” for “wire or oral” and inserted provisions which related to beginning of thirty-day period, minimization where intercepted communication is in code or foreign language and expert in that code or foreign language is not immediately available, and conduct of interception by Government personnel or by individual operating under Government contract, acting under supervision of investigative or law enforcement officer authorized to conduct interception.

Pars. (7), (8)(a), (d)(3), (9). Pub. L. 99-508, §101(c)(1)(A), substituted “wire, oral, or electronic” for “wire or oral” wherever appearing.

Par. (10)(c). Pub. L. 99-508, §101(e), added subpar. (c).

Pars. (11), (12). Pub. L. 99-508, §106(d)(3), added pars. (11) and (12).

1984—Par. (7). Pub. L. 98-473, §1203(a), inserted “, the Deputy Attorney General, the Associate Attorney General,” after “Attorney General” in provisions preceding subpar. (a).

Par. (7)(a). Pub. L. 98-473, §1203(b), amended subpar. (a) generally, adding cl. (i) and designated existing provisions as cls. (ii) and (iii).

1978—Par. (1). Pub. L. 95-511, §201(d), inserted “under this chapter” after “communication”.

Par. (4). Pub. L. 95-511, §201(e), inserted “under this chapter” after “wire or oral communication” wherever appearing.

Par. (9). Pub. L. 95-511, §201(e), substituted “any wire or oral communication intercepted pursuant to this chapter” for “any intercepted wire or oral communication”.

Par. (10). Pub. L. 95-511, §201(g), substituted “any wire or oral communication intercepted pursuant to this chapter,” for “any intercepted wire or oral communication,”.

1970—Par. (4). Pub. L. 91-358 inserted the provision that, upon the request of the applicant, an order authorizing the interception of a wire or oral communication direct that a communication common carrier, landlord, custodian, or other person furnish the applicant with all information, facilities, and technical assistance necessary to accomplish the interception unobtrusively and with a minimum of interference with the services provided.

Statutory Notes and Related Subsidiaries

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.

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.

§ 2519. Reports concerning intercepted wire, oral, or electronic communications

(1) In January of each year, any judge who has issued an order (or an extension thereof) under section 2518 that expired during the preceding year, or who has denied approval of an interception during that year, shall report to the Administrative Office of the United States Courts—

(a) the fact that an order or extension was applied for;

(b) 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 this title did not apply by reason of section 2518(11) of this title);

(c) the fact that the order or extension was granted as applied for, was modified, or was denied;

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

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

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

(g) the nature of the facilities from which or the place where communications were to be intercepted.

(2) In March of each year the Attorney General, an Assistant Attorney General specially designated by the Attorney General, or the principal prosecuting attorney of a State, or the principal prosecuting attorney for any political subdivision of a State, shall report to the Administrative Office of the United States Courts—

(a) the information required by paragraphs (a) through (g) of subsection (1) of this section with respect to each application for an order or extension made during the preceding calendar year;

(b) a general description of the interceptions made under such order or extension, including (i) the approximate nature and frequency of incriminating communications intercepted, (ii) the approximate nature and frequency of other communications intercepted, (iii) the approximate number of persons whose communications were intercepted, (iv) 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 (v) the approximate nature, amount, and cost of the manpower and other resources used in the interceptions;

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

(d) the number of trials resulting from such interceptions;

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

(f) 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

(g) the information required by paragraphs (b) through (f) of this subsection with respect to orders or extensions obtained in a preceding calendar year.

(3) In June of each year the Director of the Administrative Office of the United States Courts shall transmit to the Congress a full and complete report concerning the number of applications for orders authorizing or approving the interception of wire, oral, or electronic communications pursuant to this chapter and the number of orders and extensions granted or denied pursuant to this chapter during the preceding calendar year. Such report shall include a summary and analysis of the data required to be filed with the Administrative Office by subsections (1) and (2) of this section. The Director of the Administrative Office of the United States Courts is authorized to issue binding regulations dealing with the content and form of the reports required to be filed by subsections (1) and (2) of this section.

(Added Pub. L. 90-351, title III, §802, June 19, 1968, 82 Stat. 222; amended Pub. L. 95-511, title II, §201(h), Oct. 25, 1978, 92 Stat. 1798; Pub. L. 99-508, title I, §§101(c)(1)(A), 106(d)(4), Oct. 21, 1986, 100 Stat. 1851, 1857; Pub. L. 106-197, §2(a), May 2, 2000, 114 Stat. 247; Pub. L. 111-174, §6, May 27, 2010, 124 Stat. 1217.)

Editorial Notes

AMENDMENTS

2010—Par. (1). Pub. L. 111-174, §6(1), substituted “In January of each year, any judge who has issued an order (or an extension thereof) under section 2518 that expired during the preceding year, or who has denied approval of an interception during that year,” for “Within thirty days after the expiration of an order (or each extension thereof) entered under section 2518, or the denial of an order approving an interception, the issuing or denying judge” in introductory provisions.

Par. (2). Pub. L. 111-174, §6(2), substituted “In March of each year” for “In January of each year” in introductory provisions.

Par. (3). Pub. L. 111-174, §6(3), substituted “In June of each year” for “In April of each year”.

2000—Par. (2)(b)(iv), (v). Pub. L. 106-197 added cl. (iv) and redesignated former cl. (iv) as (v).

1986—Pub. L. 99-508, §101(c)(1)(A), substituted “wire, oral, or electronic” for “wire or oral” in section catchline.

Par. (1)(b). Pub. L. 99-508, §106(d)(4), inserted “(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 this title did not apply by reason of section 2518(11) of this title)”.

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”.

Statutory Notes and Related Subsidiaries

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 (11) 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), 2511(2)(i), or 2511(2)(j) 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