

Department of Energy

§ 851.7

(b) A Compliance Order is a final order that is effective immediately unless the Order specifies a different effective date.

(c) Within 15 calendar days of the issuance of a Compliance Order, the recipient of the Order may request the Secretary to rescind or modify the Order. A request does not stay the effectiveness of a Compliance Order unless the Secretary issues an order to that effect.

(d) A copy of the Compliance Order must be prominently posted, once issued, at or near the location where the violation, potential violation, or inconsistency occurred until it is corrected.

§ 851.5 Enforcement.

(a) A contractor that is indemnified under section 170d. of the AEA (or any subcontractor or supplier thereto) and that violates (or whose employee violates) any requirement of this part shall be subject to a civil penalty of up to \$70,000 for each such violation. If any violation under this subsection is a continuing violation, each day of the violation shall constitute a separate violation for the purpose of computing the civil penalty.

(b) A contractor that violates any requirement of this part may be subject to a reduction in fees or other payments under a contract with DOE, pursuant to the contract's *Conditional Payment of Fee* clause, or other contract clause providing for such reductions.

(c) DOE may not penalize a contractor under both paragraphs (a) and (b) of this section for the same violation of a requirement of this part.

(d) For contractors listed in subsection d. of section 234A of the AEA, 42 U.S.C. 2282a(d), the total amount of civil penalties under paragraph (a) and contract penalties under paragraph (b) of this section may not exceed the total amount of fees paid by DOE to the contractor in that fiscal year.

(e) DOE shall not penalize a contractor under both sections 234A and 234C of the AEA for the same violation.

(f) DOE enforcement actions through civil penalties under paragraph (a) of this section, start on February 9, 2007.

EFFECTIVE DATE NOTE: At 74 FR 66033, Dec. 14, 2009, § 851.5 was amended by revising the

first sentence of paragraph (a), effective January 13, 2010. For the convenience of the user, the revised text is set forth as follows:

§ 851.5 Enforcement.

(a) A contractor that is indemnified under section 170d. of the AEA (or any subcontractor or supplier thereto) and that violates (or whose employee violates) any requirement of this part shall be subject to a civil penalty of up to \$75,000 for each such violation. * * *

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§ 851.6 Petitions for generally applicable rulemaking.

(a) *Right to file.* Any person may file a petition for generally applicable rulemaking to amend or interpret provisions of this part.

(b) *How to file.* Any person who wants to file a petition for generally applicable rulemaking pursuant to this section must file by mail or messenger in an envelope addressed to the Office of General Counsel, GC-1, U.S. Department of Energy, 1000 Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, DC 20585.

(c) *Content of rulemaking petitions.* A petition under this section must:

(1) Be labeled "Petition for Rulemaking Under 10 CFR 851;"

(2) Describe with particularity the provision of this part to be amended and the text of regulatory language to be added; and

(3) Explain why, if relevant, DOE should not choose to make policy by precedent through adjudication of petitions for assessment of civil penalty.

(d) *Determinations upon rulemaking petitions.* After considering the petition and other information DOE deems relevant, DOE may grant the petition and issue an appropriate rulemaking notice, or deny the petition because the rule being sought:

(1) Would be inconsistent with statutory law;

(2) Would establish a generally applicable policy in a subject matter area that should be left to case-by-case determinations; or

(3) For other good cause.

§ 851.7 Requests for a binding interpretive ruling.

(a) *Right to file.* Any person subject to this part shall have the right to file a

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request for an interpretive ruling that is binding on DOE with regard to a question as to how the regulations in this part would apply to particular facts and circumstances.

(b) *How to file.* Any person who wants to file a request under this section must file by mail or messenger in an envelop addressed to the Office of General Counsel, GC-1, U.S. Department of Energy, 1000 Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, DC 20585.

(c) *Content of request for interpretive ruling.* A request under this section must:

- (1) Be in writing;
- (2) Be labeled “Request for Interpretive Ruling Under 10 CFR 851;”
- (3) Identify the name, address, telephone number, e-mail address, and any designated representative of the person filing the request;
- (4) State the facts and circumstances relevant to the request;
- (5) Be accompanied by copies of relevant supporting documents if any;
- (6) Specifically identify the pertinent regulations and the related question on which an interpretive ruling is sought; and
- (7) Include explanatory discussion in support of the interpretive ruling being sought.

(d) *Public comment.* DOE may give public notice of any request for an interpretive ruling and provide an opportunity for public comment.

(e) *Opportunity to respond to public comment.* DOE may provide an opportunity to any person who requests an interpretive ruling to respond to public comments relating to the request.

(f) *Other sources of information.* DOE may:

- (1) Conduct an investigation of any statement in a request;
- (2) Consider any other source of information in evaluating a request for an interpretive ruling; and
- (3) Rely on previously issued interpretive rulings with addressing the same or a related issue.

(g) *Informal conference.* DOE may convene an informal conference with the person requesting the interpretive ruling.

(h) *Effect of interpretive ruling.* Except as provided in paragraph (i) of this section, an interpretive ruling under this

section is binding on DOE only with respect to the person who requested the ruling.

(i) *Reliance on interpretive ruling.* If DOE issues an interpretive ruling under this section, then DOE may not subject the person who requested the ruling to an enforcement action for civil penalties for actions reasonably taken in reliance on the ruling, but a person may not act in reliance on an interpretive ruling that is administratively rescinded or modified after opportunity to comment, judicially invalidated, or overruled by statute or regulation.

(j) *Denial of requests for an interpretive ruling.* DOE may deny a request for an interpretive ruling if DOE determines that:

- (1) There is insufficient information upon which to base an interpretive ruling;
- (2) The interpretive question posed should be treated in a general notice of proposed rulemaking;
- (3) There is an adequate procedure elsewhere in this part for addressing the interpretive question such as a petition for variance; or
- (4) For other good cause.

(k) *Public availability of interpretive rulings.* For information of interested members of the public, DOE may file a copy of interpretive rulings on a DOE internet web site.

[71 FR 6931, Feb. 9, 2006; 71 FR 36661, June 28, 2006]

§ 851.8 Informal requests for information.

(a) Any person may informally request information under this section as to how to comply with the requirements of this part, instead of applying for a binding interpretive ruling under § 851.7. DOE responses to informal requests for information under this section are not binding on DOE and do not preclude enforcement actions under this part.

(b) Inquiries regarding the technical requirements of the standards required by this part must be directed to the Office of Health, Safety and Security, U.S. Department of Energy, 1000 Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, DC 20585.