

poses in accordance with subparagraph (A), the court, administrative law judge, or other officer before whom the proceeding is conducted may make such protective orders regarding the confidentiality or use of the information as may be appropriate in the circumstances to protect privacy and administer justice.

(C) No evidence shall be excluded in an administrative or judicial proceeding solely because the government would not have learned of the existence of or obtained such evidence but for the interception of information that is not admissible in such proceeding under subparagraph (A).

(D) Information obtained through activities set forth in paragraphs (1) and (2) shall not be subject to publication or disclosure, or search or review in connection therewith, under section 552 of title 5.

(E) Nothing in this subsection shall be construed to impair or otherwise affect the authority of the United States to intercept a communication, and collect, retain, analyze, use, and disseminate the information obtained thereby, under a provision of law other than this subsection.

(4) APPLICATION WITH OTHER LAW.—Section 705 of the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 605) and chapter 119 of title 18 shall not apply to conduct authorized by and pursuant to this subsection.

(Pub. L. 103–272, §1(e), July 5, 1994, 108 Stat. 866; Pub. L. 110–432, div. A, title III, §306, Oct. 16, 2008, 122 Stat. 4880.)

cluded in “inspect”. The word “considered” is omitted as surplus.

Editorial Notes

AMENDMENTS

2008—Subsec. (c). Pub. L. 110–432 added subsec. (c).

SAFETY INSPECTIONS IN MEXICO

Pub. L. 110–432, div. A, title IV, §416, Oct. 16, 2008, 122 Stat. 4890, as amended by Pub. L. 114–94, div. A, title XI, §11316(j)(8), Dec. 4, 2015, 129 Stat. 1678, provided that: “Mechanical and brake inspections of rail cars performed in Mexico shall not be treated as satisfying United States rail safety laws or regulations unless the Secretary certifies that—

“(1) such inspections are being performed under regulations and standards equivalent to those applicable in the United States;

“(2) the inspections are being performed by employees that have received training similar to the training received by similar railroad employees in the United States;

“(3) inspection records that are required to be available to the crewmembers on board the train, including air slips and blue cards, are maintained in both English and Spanish, and such records are available to the Federal Railroad Administration for review; and

“(4) the Federal Railroad Administration is permitted to perform onsite inspections for the purpose of ensuring compliance with the requirements of this section.”

[For definition of “railroad”, as used in section 416 of Pub. L. 110–432, set out above, see section 2(a) of Pub. L. 110–432, set out as a note under section 20102 of this title.]

§ 20108. Research, development, testing, and training

(a) GENERAL.—The Secretary of Transportation shall carry out, as necessary, research, development, testing, evaluation, and training for every area of railroad safety.

(b) CONTRACTS.—To carry out this part, the Secretary may make contracts for, and carry out, research, development, testing, evaluation, and training (particularly for those areas of railroad safety found to need prompt attention).

(c) AMOUNTS FROM NON-GOVERNMENT SOURCES FOR TRAINING SAFETY EMPLOYEES.—The Secretary may request, receive, and expend amounts received from non-United States Government sources for expenses incurred in training safety employees of private industry, State and local authorities, or other public authorities, except State rail safety inspectors participating in training under section 20105 of this title.

(d) FACILITIES.—The Secretary may erect, alter, and repair buildings and make other public improvements to carry out necessary railroad research, safety, and training activities at the Transportation Technology Center in Pueblo, Colorado.

(e) OFFSETTING COLLECTIONS.—The Secretary may collect fees or rents from facility users to offset appropriated amounts for the cost of providing facilities or research, development, testing, training, or other services, including long-term sustenance of the on-site physical plant.

(f) REVOLVING FUND.—Amounts appropriated to carry out subsection (d) and all fees and rents collected pursuant to subsection (e) shall be

HISTORICAL AND REVISION NOTES

Revised Section	Source (U.S. Code)	Source (Statutes at Large)
20107(a)	45:437(a) (1st sentence words before 9th and after 14th commas). 45:437(d)(1) (1st sentence).	Oct. 16, 1970, Pub. L. 91–458, §208(a) (1st sentence words before 9th and after 14th commas), 84 Stat. 974, 975. Oct. 16, 1970, Pub. L. 91–458, 84 Stat. 971, §208(d)(1) (1st sentence); added Oct. 10, 1980, Pub. L. 96–423, §6(b), 94 Stat. 1813.
20107(b)	45:437(b).	Oct. 16, 1970, Pub. L. 91–458, §208(b), 84 Stat. 975; re-stated Nov. 2, 1978, Pub. L. 95–574, §9, 92 Stat. 2462; Oct. 10, 1980, Pub. L. 96–423, §6(a), 94 Stat. 1813.

In subsection (a), before clause (1), the words “To carry out this part, the Secretary of Transportation may” are substituted for “In carrying out his functions under this subchapter, the Secretary is authorized to perform . . . to carry out the provisions of this subchapter” and “In carrying out the functions formerly vested in the Interstate Commerce Commission and transferred to the Secretary by section 1655(e)(1), (e)(2), and (e)(6)(A) of title 49, Appendix, the Secretary is authorized to perform any act authorized in subsection (a) of this section . . . to carry out such transferred functions” to eliminate unnecessary words. In clause (2), the word “entity” is substituted for “bodies” for consistency in the revised title and with other titles of the United States Code.

In subsection (b), the words “In carrying out this part” are substituted for “To carry out the Secretary’s responsibilities under this subchapter and under the functions transferred by section 1655(e)(1), (e)(2), and (e)(6)(A) of title 49, Appendix” to eliminate unnecessary words. The word “way” is substituted for “manner” for consistency in the revised title and with other titles of the Code. The word “examine” is omitted as being in-

credited to a revolving fund and remain available until expended. The Secretary may use such fees and rents for operation, maintenance, repair, or improvement of the Transportation Technology Center.

(g) **LEASES AND CONTRACTS.**—Notwithstanding section 1302 of title 40, the Secretary may lease to others or enter into contracts for terms of up to 20 years, for such consideration and subject to such terms and conditions as the Secretary determines to be in the best interests of the Government of the United States, for the operation, maintenance, repair, and improvement of the Transportation Technology Center.

(h) **PROPERTY AND CASUALTY LOSS INSURANCE.**—The Secretary may allow its lessees and contractors to purchase property and casualty loss insurance for its assets and activities at the Transportation Technology Center to mitigate the lessee's or contractor's risk associated with operating a facility.

(i) **ENERGY PROJECTS.**—Notwithstanding section 1341 of title 31, the Secretary may enter into contracts or agreements, or commit to obligations in connection with third-party contracts or agreements, including contingent liability for the purchase of electric power in connection with such contracts or agreements, for terms not to exceed 20 years, to enable the use of the land at the Transportation Technology Center for projects to produce energy from renewable sources.

(j) **RAIL RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT CENTER OF EXCELLENCE.**—

(1) **CENTER OF EXCELLENCE.**—The Secretary shall award grants to establish and maintain a center of excellence to advance research and development that improves the safety, efficiency, and reliability of passenger and freight rail transportation.

(2) **ELIGIBILITY.**—An institution of higher education (as defined in section 101 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001)) or a consortium of nonprofit institutions of higher education shall be eligible to receive a grant from the center established pursuant to paragraph (1).

(3) **SELECTION CRITERIA.**—In awarding a grant under this subsection, the Secretary shall—

(A) give preference to applicants with strong past performance related to rail research, education, and workforce development activities;

(B) consider the extent to which the applicant would involve public and private sector passenger and freight railroad operators; and

(C) consider the regional and national impacts of the applicant's proposal.

(4) **USE OF FUNDS.**—Grant funds awarded pursuant to this subsection shall be used for basic and applied research, evaluation, education, workforce development, and training efforts related to safety, project delivery, efficiency, reliability, resiliency, and sustainability of urban commuter, intercity high-speed, and freight rail transportation, to include advances in rolling stock, advanced positive train control, human factors, rail infrastructure, shared corridors, grade crossing safety, inspection technology, remote sensing, rail systems maintenance, network resiliency,

operational reliability, energy efficiency, and other advanced technologies.

(5) **FEDERAL SHARE.**—The Federal share of a grant awarded under this subsection shall be 50 percent of the cost of establishing and operating the center of excellence and related research activities carried out by the grant recipient.

(Pub. L. 103-272, §1(e), July 5, 1994, 108 Stat. 867; Pub. L. 117-58, div. B, title II, §§22412, 22413, Nov. 15, 2021, 135 Stat. 743, 744.)

HISTORICAL AND REVISION NOTES

<i>Revised Section</i>	<i>Source (U.S. Code)</i>	<i>Source (Statutes at Large)</i>
20108(a)	45:431(a) (1st sentence cl. (2)).	Oct. 16, 1970, Pub. L. 91-458, §§202(a) (1st sentence cl. (2)), 208(a) (1st sentence words before 3d comma and between 9th-14th commas), 84 Stat. 971, 974.
20108(b)	45:437(a) (1st sentence words before 3d comma and between 9th-14th commas). 45:437(d)(1) (1st sentence).	Oct. 16, 1970, Pub. L. 91-458, 84 Stat. 971, §208(d)(1) (1st sentence); added Oct. 10, 1980, Pub. L. 96-423, §6(b), 94 Stat. 1813.
20108(c)	45:444(a) (last sentence).	Oct. 16, 1970, Pub. L. 91-458, 84 Stat. 971, §214(a) (last sentence); added Oct. 10, 1980, Pub. L. 96-423, §2, 94 Stat. 1811; Aug. 13, 1981, Pub. L. 97-35, §1195, 95 Stat. 702; Jan. 14, 1983, Pub. L. 97-468, §703, 96 Stat. 2580; restated June 22, 1988, Pub. L. 100-342, §2, 102 Stat. 624; Nov. 5, 1990, Pub. L. 101-508, §10501(b), 104 Stat. 1388-400; restated Sept. 3, 1992, Pub. L. 102-365, §12, 106 Stat. 980.

In subsection (b), the words “To carry out this part, the Secretary may” are substituted for “In carrying out his functions under this subchapter, the Secretary is authorized to perform such acts including, but not limited to . . . as he deems necessary to carry out the provisions of this subchapter” and “In carrying out the functions formerly vested in the Interstate Commerce Commission and transferred to the Secretary by section 1655(e)(1), (e)(2), and (e)(6)(A) of title 49, Appendix, the Secretary is authorized to perform any act authorized in subsection (a) of this section that he considers necessary to carry out such transferred functions, including, but not limited to” to eliminate unnecessary words.

Editorial Notes

AMENDMENTS

2021—Subsecs. (d) to (i). Pub. L. 117-58, §22412, added subsecs. (d) to (i).

Subsec. (j). Pub. L. 117-58, §22413, added subsec. (j).

§ 20109. Employee protections

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—A railroad carrier engaged in interstate or foreign commerce, a contractor or a subcontractor of such a railroad carrier, or an officer or employee of such a railroad carrier, may not discharge, demote, suspend, reprimand, or in any other way discriminate against an employee if such discrimination is due, in whole or in part, to the employee's lawful, good faith act done, or perceived by the employer to have been done or about to be done—

(1) to provide information, directly cause information to be provided, or otherwise di-