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§18.1005 Public records.

The contents of an official record, or of a document authorized to be recorded or filed and actually recorded or filed, including data compilations in any form, if otherwise admissible, may be proved by copy, certified as correct in accordance with §18.902 or testified to be correct by a witness who has compared it with the original. If a copy which complies with the foregoing cannot be obtained by the exercise of reasonable diligence, then other evidence of the contents may be given.

§18.1006 Summaries.

The contents of voluminous writings, recordings, or photographs which cannot conveniently be examined at the hearing may be presented in the form of a chart, summary, or calculation. The originals, or duplicates, shall be made available for examination or copying, or both, by other parties at reasonable time and place. The judge may order that they be produced at the hearing.

§18.1007 Testimony or written admission of party.

Contents of writings, recordings, or photographs may be proved by the testimony or deposition of the party against whom offered or by that party's written admission, without accounting for the nonproduction of the original.

§18.1008 Functions of the judge.

When the admissibility of other evidence of contents of writings, recordings, or photographs under these rules depends upon the fulfillment of a condition of fact, the question whether the condition has been fulfilled is ordinarily for the judge to determine in accordance with the provisions of §18.104(a). However, when an issue is raised whether the asserted writing ever existed; or whether another writing, recording, or photograph produced at the hearing is the original; or whether other evidence of contents correctly reflects the contents, the issue is for the judge as trier of fact to determine as in the case of other issues of fact.

APPLICABILITY

§18.1101 Applicability of rules.

(a) *General provision.* These rules govern formal adversarial adjudications conducted by the United States Department of Labor before a presiding officer.

(1) Which are required by Act of Congress to be determined on the record after opportunity for an administrative agency hearing in accordance with the Administrative Procedure Act, 5 U.S.C. 554, 556 and 557, or

(2) Which by United States Department of Labor regulation are conducted in conformance with the foregoing provisions. *Presiding officer,* referred to in these rules as *the judge,* means an Administrative Law Judge, an agency head, or other officer who presides at the reception of evidence at a hearing in such an adjudication.

(b) *Rules inapplicable.* The rules (other than with respect to privileges) do not apply in the following situations:

(1) *Preliminary questions of fact.* The determination of questions of fact preliminary to admissibility of evidence when the issue is to be determined by the judge under §18.104.

(2) *Longshore, black lung, and related acts.* Other than with respect to §§18.403, 18.611(a), 18.614 and without prejudice to current practice, hearings held pursuant to the Longshore and Harbor Workers' Compensation Act, 33 U.S.C. 901; the Federal Mine Safety and Health Act (formerly the Federal Coal Mine Health and Safety Act) as amended by the Black Lung Benefits Act, 30 U.S.C. 901; and acts such as the Defense Base Act, 42 U.S.C. 1651; the District of Columbia Workmen's Compensation Act, 36 DC Code 501; the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act, 43 U.S.C. 1331; and the Nonappropriated Fund Instrumentalities Act, 5 U.S.C. 8171, which incorporate section 23(a) of the Longshore and Harbor Workers' Compensation Act by reference.

(c) *Rules inapplicable in part.* These rules do not apply to the extent inconsistent with, in conflict with, or to the extent a matter is otherwise specifically provided by an Act of Congress, or by a rule or regulation of specific application prescribed by the United

States Department of Labor pursuant to statutory authority, or pursuant to executive order.

§ 18.1102 [Reserved]

§ 18.1103 Title.

These rules may be known as the United States Department of Labor Rules of Evidence and cited as 29 CFR 18.—— (1989).

§ 18.1104 Effective date.

These rules are effective thirty days after date of publication with respect to formal adversarial adjudications as specified in § 18.1101 except that with respect to hearings held following an investigation conducted by the United States Department of Labor, these rules shall be effective only where the investigation commenced thirty days after publication.

APPENDIX TO SUBPART B—REPORTER'S NOTES

Reporter's Introductory Note

The Rules of Evidence for the United States Department of Labor modify the Federal Rules of Evidence for application in formal adversarial adjudications conducted by the United States Department of Labor. The civil nonjury nature of the hearings and the broad underlying values and goals of the administrative process are given recognition in these rules.

REPORTER'S NOTE TO § 18.102

In all formal adversarial adjudications of the United States Department of Labor governed by these rules, and in particular such adjudications in which a party appears without the benefit of counsel, the judge is required to construe these rules and to exercise discretion as provided in the rules, see, e.g., § 18.403, to secure fairness in administration and elimination of unjustifiable expense and delay to the end that the truth may be ascertained and the proceedings justly determined, § 18.102. The judge shall also exercise reasonable control over the mode and order of interrogating witnesses and presenting evidence so as to (1) make the interrogation and presentation effective for the ascertainment of the truth, (2) avoid needless consumption of time, and (3) protect witnesses from harassment or undue embarrassment, § 18.611(a).

REPORTER'S NOTE TO § 18.103

Section 18.103(a) provides that error is not harmless, i.e., a substantial right is affected, unless on review it is determined that it is more probably true than not true that the error did not materially contribute to the decision or order of the court. The more probably true than not true test is the most liberal harmless error standard. See *Haddad* v. *Lockheed California Corp.*, 720 F.2d 1454, 1458–59 (9th Cir. 1983):

The purpose of a harmless error standard is to enable an appellate court to gauge the probability that the trier of fact was affected by the error. See R. Traynor, [The Riddle of Harmless Error] at 29–30. Perhaps the most important factor to consider in fashioning such a standard is the nature of the particular fact-finding process to which the standard is to be applied. Accordingly, a crucial first step in determining how we should gauge the probability that an error was harmless is recognizing the distinction between civil and criminal trials. See *Kotteakos* v. *United States*, 328 U.S. 750, 763, 66 S.Ct. 1239, 1247, 90 L.Ed. 1557 (1946); *Valle-Valdez*, 544 F.2d at 914–15. This distinction has two facets, each of which reflects the differing burdens of proof in civil and criminal cases. First, the lower burden of proof in civil cases implies a larger margin of error. The danger of the harmless error doctrine is that an appellate court may usurp the jury's function, by merely deleting improper evidence from the record and assessing the sufficiency of the evidence to support the verdict below. See *Kotteakos*, 328 U.S. at 764–65, 66 S.Ct. at 1247–48; R. Traynor, *supra*, at 18–22. This danger has less practical importance where, as in most civil cases, the jury verdict merely rests on a more probable than not standard of proof.

The second facet of the distinction between errors in civil and criminal trials involves the differing degrees of certainty owed to civil and criminal litigants. Whereas a criminal defendant must be found guilty beyond a reasonable doubt, a civil litigant merely has a right to a jury verdict that more probably than not corresponds to the truth.

The term *materially contribute* was chosen as the most appropriate in preference to *substantially swayed*, *Kotteakos* v. *United States*, 328 U.S. 750, 66 S.Ct. 1239, 90 L.Ed 1557 (1946) or *material effect*. *Holloway* v. *Arkansas*, 435 U.S. 475, 98 S.Ct. 1173, 55 L.Ed.2d 426 (1978). The word *contribute* was employed in *Schneble* v. *Florida*, 405 U.S. 427, 92 S.Ct. 1056, 31 L.Ed.2d 340 (1972) and *United States* v. *Hastings*, 461 U.S. 499, 103 S.Ct. 1974, 76 L.Ed.2d 96 (1983).

Error will not be considered in determining whether a substantial right of a party was affected if the evidence was admitted in error following a properly made objection, § 18.103(a)(1), and the judge explicitly states that he or she does not rely on such evidence in support of the decision or order. The judge must explicitly decline to rely upon the improperly admitted evidence. The alternative