

(Pub. L. 95-511, title I, § 101, Oct. 25, 1978, 92 Stat. 1783.)

EFFECTIVE DATE; EXCEPTION

Section 401, formerly section 301 of Pub. L. 95-511, as renumbered § 401 and amended by Pub. L. 103-359, title VIII, § 807(a)(1), (2), Oct. 14, 1994, 108 Stat. 3443, provided that: “The provisions of this Act [enacting this chapter, amending sections 2511, 2518, and 2519 of Title 18, Crimes and Criminal Procedure, and enacting provision set out as a note below] (other than title III [enacting subchapter II of this chapter]) and the amendments made hereby shall become effective upon the date of enactment of this Act [Oct. 25, 1978], except that any electronic surveillance approved by the Attorney General to gather foreign intelligence information shall not be deemed unlawful for failure to follow the procedures of this Act, if that surveillance is terminated or an order approving that surveillance is obtained under title I of this Act [enacting this subchapter] within ninety days following the designation of the first judge pursuant to section 103 of this Act [section 1803 of this title].”

SHORT TITLE

Section 1 of Pub. L. 95-511 provided: “That this Act [enacting this chapter, amending sections 2511, 2518, and 2519 of Title 18, Crimes and Criminal Procedure, and enacting provisions set out as a note above] may be cited as the ‘Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act of 1978’.”

TERMINATION OF TRUST TERRITORY OF THE PACIFIC ISLANDS

For termination of Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, see note set out preceding section 1681 of Title 48, Territories and Insular Possessions.

SECTION REFERRED TO IN OTHER SECTIONS

This section is referred to in sections 402a, 438, 1802, 1804, 1805, 1810, 1821, 1822, 1823, 1824, 1828 of this title; title 12 section 3414; title 15 section 1681u; title 18 sections 794, 2511, 2709.

§ 1802. Electronic surveillance authorization without court order; certification by Attorney General; reports to Congressional committees; transmittal under seal; duties and compensation of communication common carrier; applications; jurisdiction of court

(a)(1) Notwithstanding any other law, the President, through the Attorney General, may authorize electronic surveillance without a court order under this subchapter to acquire foreign intelligence information for periods of up to one year if the Attorney General certifies in writing under oath that—

(A) the electronic surveillance is solely directed at—

(i) the acquisition of the contents of communications transmitted by means of communications used exclusively between or among foreign powers, as defined in section 1801(a)(1), (2), or (3) of this title; or

(ii) the acquisition of technical intelligence, other than the spoken communications of individuals, from property or premises under the open and exclusive control of a foreign power, as defined in section 1801(a)(1), (2), or (3) of this title;

(B) there is no substantial likelihood that the surveillance will acquire the contents of any communication to which a United States person is a party; and

(C) the proposed minimization procedures with respect to such surveillance meet the definition of minimization procedures under section 1801(h) of this title; and

if the Attorney General reports such minimization procedures and any changes thereto to the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence and the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence at least thirty days prior to their effective date, unless the Attorney General determines immediate action is required and notifies the committees immediately of such minimization procedures and the reason for their becoming effective immediately.

(2) An electronic surveillance authorized by this subsection may be conducted only in accordance with the Attorney General’s certification and the minimization procedures adopted by him. The Attorney General shall assess compliance with such procedures and shall report such assessments to the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence and the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence under the provisions of section 1808(a) of this title.

(3) The Attorney General shall immediately transmit under seal to the court established under section 1803(a) of this title a copy of his certification. Such certification shall be maintained under security measures established by the Chief Justice with the concurrence of the Attorney General, in consultation with the Director of Central Intelligence, and shall remain sealed unless—

(A) an application for a court order with respect to the surveillance is made under sections 1801(h)(4) and 1804 of this title; or

(B) the certification is necessary to determine the legality of the surveillance under section 1806(f) of this title.

(4) With respect to electronic surveillance authorized by this subsection, the Attorney General may direct a specified communication common carrier to—

(A) furnish all information, facilities, or technical assistance necessary to accomplish the electronic surveillance in such a manner as will protect its secrecy and produce a minimum of interference with the services that such carrier is providing its customers; and

(B) maintain under security procedures approved by the Attorney General and the Director of Central Intelligence any records concerning the surveillance or the aid furnished which such carrier wishes to retain.

The Government shall compensate, at the prevailing rate, such carrier for furnishing such aid.

(b) Applications for a court order under this subchapter are authorized if the President has, by written authorization, empowered the Attorney General to approve applications to the court having jurisdiction under section 1803 of this title, and a judge to whom an application is made may, notwithstanding any other law, grant an order, in conformity with section 1805 of this title, approving electronic surveillance of a foreign power or an agent of a foreign power for the purpose of obtaining foreign intelligence information, except that the court shall not have jurisdiction to grant any order approving

electronic surveillance directed solely as described in paragraph (1)(A) of subsection (a) of this section unless such surveillance may involve the acquisition of communications of any United States person.

(Pub. L. 95-511, title I, § 102, Oct. 25, 1978, 92 Stat. 1786.)

EX. ORD. NO. 12139. EXERCISE OF CERTAIN AUTHORITY
RESPECTING ELECTRONIC SURVEILLANCE

Ex. Ord. No. 12139, May 23, 1979, 44 F.R. 30311, provided:

By the authority vested in me as President by Sections 102 and 104 of the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act of 1978 (50 U.S.C. 1802 and 1804), in order to provide as set forth in that Act [this chapter] for the authorization of electronic surveillance for foreign intelligence purposes, it is hereby ordered as follows:

1-101. Pursuant to Section 102(a)(1) of the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act of 1978 (50 U.S.C. 1802(a)), the Attorney General is authorized to approve electronic surveillance to acquire foreign intelligence information without a court order, but only if the Attorney General makes the certifications required by that Section.

1-102. Pursuant to Section 102(b) of the Foreign Intelligence Act of 1978 (50 U.S.C. 1802(b)), the Attorney General is authorized to approve applications to the court having jurisdiction under Section 103 of that Act [50 U.S.C. 1803] to obtain orders for electronic surveillance for the purpose of obtaining foreign intelligence information.

1-103. Pursuant to Section 104(a)(7) of the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act of 1978 (50 U.S.C. 1804(a)(7)), the following officials, each of whom is employed in the area of national security or defense, is designated to make the certifications required by Section 104(a)(7) of the Act in support of applications to conduct electronic surveillance:

- (a) Secretary of State.
- (b) Secretary of Defense.
- (c) Director of Central Intelligence.
- (d) Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation.
- (e) Deputy Secretary of State.
- (f) Deputy Secretary of Defense.
- (g) Deputy Director of Central Intelligence.

None of the above officials, nor anyone officially acting in that capacity, may exercise the authority to make the above certifications, unless that official has been appointed by the President with the advice and consent of the Senate.

1-104. Section 2-202 of Executive Order No. 12036 [set out under section 401 of this title] is amended by inserting the following at the end of that section: "Any electronic surveillance, as defined in the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act of 1978, shall be conducted in accordance with that Act as well as this Order."

1-105. Section 2-203 of Executive Order No. 12036 [set out under section 401 of this title] is amended by inserting the following at the end of that section: "Any monitoring which constitutes electronic surveillance as defined in the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act of 1978 shall be conducted in accordance with that Act as well as this Order."

JIMMY CARTER.

SECTION REFERRED TO IN OTHER SECTIONS

This section is referred to in sections 1801, 1805 of this title.

§ 1803. Designation of judges

(a) Court to hear applications and grant orders; record of denial; transmittal to court of review

The Chief Justice of the United States shall publicly designate seven district court judges

from seven of the United States judicial circuits who shall constitute a court which shall have jurisdiction to hear applications for and grant orders approving electronic surveillance anywhere within the United States under the procedures set forth in this chapter, except that no judge designated under this subsection shall hear the same application for electronic surveillance under this chapter which has been denied previously by another judge designated under this subsection. If any judge so designated denies an application for an order authorizing electronic surveillance under this chapter, such judge shall provide immediately for the record a written statement of each reason of his decision and, on motion of the United States, the record shall be transmitted, under seal, to the court of review established in subsection (b) of this section.

(b) Court of review; record, transmittal to Supreme Court

The Chief Justice shall publicly designate three judges, one of whom shall be publicly designated as the presiding judge, from the United States district courts or courts of appeals who together shall comprise a court of review which shall have jurisdiction to review the denial of any application made under this chapter. If such court determines that the application was properly denied, the court shall immediately provide for the record a written statement of each reason for its decision and, on petition of the United States for a writ of certiorari, the record shall be transmitted under seal to the Supreme Court, which shall have jurisdiction to review such decision.

(c) Expeditious conduct of proceedings; security measures for maintenance of records

Proceedings under this chapter shall be conducted as expeditiously as possible. The record of proceedings under this chapter, including applications made and orders granted, shall be maintained under security measures established by the Chief Justice in consultation with the Attorney General and the Director of Central Intelligence.

(d) Tenure

Each judge designated under this section shall so serve for a maximum of seven years and shall not be eligible for redesignation, except that the judges first designated under subsection (a) of this section shall be designated for terms of from one to seven years so that one term expires each year, and that judges first designated under subsection (b) of this section shall be designated for terms of three, five, and seven years.

(Pub. L. 95-511, title I, § 103, Oct. 25, 1978, 92 Stat. 1788.)

REFERENCES IN TEXT

This chapter, referred to in subsecs. (a), (b), and (c), was in the original "this Act", meaning Pub. L. 95-511, Oct. 25, 1978, 92 Stat. 1783, as amended, which is classified principally to this chapter. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see Short Title note set out under section 1801 of this title and Tables.

SECTION REFERRED TO IN OTHER SECTIONS

This section is referred to in sections 1802, 1804, 1805, 1821, 1822, 1824 of this title; title 8 section 1532.