§ 70105. Transportation security cards

(a) Prohibition.—

(1) The Secretary shall prescribe regulations to prevent an individual from entering an area of a vessel or facility that is designated as a secure area by the Secretary for purposes of a security plan for the vessel or facility that is approved by the Secretary under section 70103 of this title unless the individual—

(A) holds a transportation security card issued under this section and is authorized to be in the area in accordance with the plan; or

(B) is accompanied by another individual who holds a transportation security card issued under this section and is authorized to be in the area in accordance with the plan.

(2) A person shall not admit an individual into such a secure area unless the entry of the individual into the area is in compliance with paragraph (1).

(b) Issuance of Cards.—

(1) The Secretary shall issue a biometric transportation security card to an individual specified in paragraph (2), unless the Secretary determines under subsection (c) that the individual poses a security risk warranting denial of the card.

(2) This subsection applies to—

(A) an individual allowed unescorted access to a secure area designated in a vessel or facility security plan approved under section 70103 of this title;

(B) an individual issued a license, certificate of registry, or merchant mariners document under part E of subtitle II of this title allowed unescorted access to a secure area designated in a vessel security plan approved under section 70103 of this title;

(C) a vessel pilot;

(D) an individual engaged on a towing vessel that pushes, pulls, or hauls alongside a tank vessel allowed unescorted access to a secure area designated in a vessel security plan approved under section 70103 of this title;

(E) an individual with access to security sensitive information as determined by the Secretary;

(F) other individuals engaged in port security activities as determined by the Secretary; and

(G) other individuals as determined appropriate by the Secretary including individuals employed at a port not otherwise covered by this subsection.

(3) The Secretary may extend for up to one year the expiration of a biometric transportation security card required by this section to align the expiration with the expiration of a license, certificate of registry, or merchant mariner document required under chapter 71 or 73.

(c) Determination of Terrorism Security Risk.—

(1) Disqualifications.—

(A) Permanent disqualifying criminal offenses.— Except as provided under paragraph (2), an individual is permanently disqualified from being issued a biometric transportation security card under subsection (b) if the individual has been convicted, or found not guilty by reason of insanity, in a civilian or military jurisdiction of any of the following felonies:

(i) Espionage or conspiracy to commit espionage.

(ii) Sedition or conspiracy to commit sedition.

(iii) Treason or conspiracy to commit treason.
(iv) A Federal crime of terrorism (as defined in section 2332b (g) of title 18), a crime under a comparable State law, or conspiracy to commit such crime.

(v) A crime involving a transportation security incident.

(vi) Improper transportation of a hazardous material in violation of section 5104 (b) of title 49, or a comparable State law.

(vii) Unlawful possession, use, sale, distribution, manufacture, purchase, receipt, transfer, shipment, transportation, delivery, import, export, or storage of, or dealing in, an explosive or explosive device. In this clause, an explosive or explosive device includes—

(I) an explosive (as defined in sections 232 (5) and 844 (j) of title 18);

(II) explosive materials (as defined in subsections (c) through (f) of section 841 of title 18); and

(III) a destructive device (as defined in 921(a)(4) of title 18 or section 5845(f) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986).

(viii) Murder.

(ix) Making any threat, or maliciously conveying false information knowing the same to be false, concerning the deliverance, placement, or detonation of an explosive or other lethal device in or against a place of public use, a State or other government facility, a public transportation system, or an infrastructure facility.

(x) A violation of chapter 96 of title 18, popularly known as the Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Act, or a comparable State law, if one of the predicate acts found by a jury or admitted by the defendant consists of one of the crimes listed in this subparagraph.

(xi) Attempt to commit any of the crimes listed in clauses (i) through (iv).

(xii) Conspiracy or attempt to commit any of the crimes described in clauses (v) through (x).

(B) Interim disqualifying criminal offenses.— Except as provided under paragraph (2), an individual is disqualified from being issued a biometric transportation security card under subsection (b) if the individual has been convicted, or found not guilty by reason of insanity, during the 7-year period ending on the date on which the individual applies for such card, or was released from incarceration during the 5-year period ending on the date on which the individual applies for such card, of any of the following felonies:

(i) Unlawful possession, use, sale, manufacture, purchase, distribution, receipt, transfer, shipment, transportation, delivery, import, export, or storage of, or dealing in, a firearm or other weapon. In this clause, a firearm or other weapon includes—

(I) firearms (as defined in section 921 (a)(3) of title 18 or section 5845(a) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986); and

(II) items contained on the U.S. Munitions Import List under section 447.21 of title 27, Code of Federal Regulations.

(ii) Extortion.

(iii) Dishonesty, fraud, or misrepresentation, including identity fraud and money laundering if the money laundering is related to a crime described in this subparagraph or subparagraph (A). In this clause, welfare fraud and passing bad checks do not constitute dishonesty, fraud, or misrepresentation.

(iv) Bribery.

(v) Smuggling.

(vi) Immigration violations.

(vii) Distribution of, possession with intent to distribute, or importation of a controlled substance.
(viii) Arson.
(ix) Kidnaping or hostage taking.
(x) Rape or aggravated sexual abuse.
(xi) Assault with intent to kill.
(xii) Robbery.
(xiii) Conspiracy or attempt to commit any of the crimes listed in this subparagraph.
(xiv) Fraudulent entry into a seaport in violation of section 1036 of title 18, or a comparable State law.
(xv) A violation of the chapter 96 of title 18, popularly known as the Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Act or a comparable State law, other than any of the violations listed in subparagraph (A)(x).

(C) Under want, warrant, or indictment.— An applicant who is wanted, or under indictment, in any civilian or military jurisdiction for a felony listed in paragraph (1)(A), is disqualified from being issued a biometric transportation security card under subsection (b) until the want or warrant is released or the indictment is dismissed.

(D) Other potential disqualifications.— Except as provided under subparagraphs (A) through (C), an individual may not be denied a transportation security card under subsection (b) unless the Secretary determines that individual—

(i) has been convicted within the preceding 7-year period of a felony or found not guilty by reason of insanity of a felony—
   (I) that the Secretary believes could cause the individual to be a terrorism security risk to the United States; or
   (II) for causing a severe transportation security incident;
(ii) has been released from incarceration within the preceding 5-year period for committing a felony described in clause (i);
(iii) may be denied admission to the United States or removed from the United States under the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1101 et seq.); or
(iv) otherwise poses a terrorism security risk to the United States.

(E) Modification of listed offenses.— The Secretary may, by rulemaking, add to or modify the list of disqualifying crimes described in paragraph (1)(B).

(2) The Secretary shall prescribe regulations that establish a waiver process for issuing a transportation security card to an individual found to be otherwise ineligible for such a card under subparagraph (A), (B), or (D) paragraph (1). In deciding to issue a card to such an individual, the Secretary shall—

(A) give consideration to the circumstances of any disqualifying act or offense, restitution made by the individual, Federal and State mitigation remedies, and other factors from which it may be concluded that the individual does not pose a terrorism risk warranting denial of the card; and
(B) issue a waiver to an individual without regard to whether that individual would otherwise be disqualified if the individual’s employer establishes alternate security arrangements acceptable to the Secretary.

(3) Denial of waiver review.—

(A) In general.— The Secretary shall establish a review process before an administrative law judge for individuals denied a waiver under paragraph (2).

(B) Scope of review.— In conducting a review under the process established pursuant to subparagraph (A), the administrative law judge shall be governed by the standards of section 706 of title 5. The substantial evidence standard in section 706 (2)(E) of title 5 shall apply
whether or not there has been an agency hearing. The judge shall review all facts on the record of the agency.

(C) **Classified evidence.**— The Secretary, in consultation with the Director of National Intelligence, shall issue regulations to establish procedures by which the Secretary, as part of a review conducted under this paragraph, may provide to the individual adversely affected by the determination an unclassified summary of classified evidence upon which the denial of a waiver by the Secretary was based.

(D) **Review of classified evidence by administrative law judge.**—

(i) **Review.**— As part of a review conducted under this section, if the decision of the Secretary was based on classified information (as defined in section 1(a) of the Classified Information Procedures Act (18 U.S.C. App.)), such information may be submitted by the Secretary to the reviewing administrative law judge, pursuant to appropriate security procedures, and shall be reviewed by the administrative law judge ex parte and in camera.

(ii) **Security clearances.**— Pursuant to existing procedures and requirements, the Secretary, in coordination (as necessary) with the heads of other affected departments or agencies, shall ensure that administrative law judges reviewing negative waiver decisions of the Secretary under this paragraph possess security clearances appropriate for such review.

(iii) **Unclassified summaries of classified evidence.**— As part of a review conducted under this paragraph and upon the request of the individual adversely affected by the decision of the Secretary not to grant a waiver, the Secretary shall provide to the individual and reviewing administrative law judge, consistent with the procedures established under clause (i), an unclassified summary of any classified information upon which the decision of the Secretary was based.

(E) **New evidence.**— The Secretary shall establish a process under which an individual may submit a new request for a waiver, notwithstanding confirmation by the administrative law judge of the Secretary’s initial denial of the waiver, if the request is supported by substantial evidence that was not available to the Secretary at the time the initial waiver request was denied.

(4) The Secretary shall establish an appeals process under this section for individuals found to be ineligible for a transportation security card that includes notice and an opportunity for a hearing.

(5) Upon application, the Secretary may issue a transportation security card to an individual if the Secretary has previously determined, under section 5103a of title 49, that the individual does not pose a security risk.

(d) **Background Records Check.**—

(1) On request of the Secretary, the Attorney General shall—

(A) conduct a background records check regarding the individual; and

(B) upon completing the background records check, notify the Secretary of the completion and results of the background records check.

(2) A background records check regarding an individual under this subsection shall consist of the following:

(A) A check of the relevant criminal history databases.

(B) In the case of an alien, a check of the relevant databases to determine the status of the alien under the immigration laws of the United States.

(C) As appropriate, a check of the relevant international databases or other appropriate means.

(D) Review of any other national security-related information or database identified by the Attorney General for purposes of such a background records check.

(e) **Restrictions on Use and Maintenance of Information.**—
(1) Information obtained by the Attorney General or the Secretary under this section may not be made available to the public, including the individual’s employer.

(2) Any information constituting grounds for denial of a transportation security card under this section shall be maintained confidentially by the Secretary and may be used only for making determinations under this section. The Secretary may share any such information with other Federal law enforcement agencies. An individual’s employer may only be informed of whether or not the individual has been issued the card under this section.

(f) Definition.— In this section, the term “alien” has the meaning given the term in section 101(a)(3) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1101 (a)(3)).

(g) Applications for Merchant Mariners’ Documents.— The Assistant Secretary of Homeland Security for the Transportation Security Administration and the Commandant of the Coast Guard shall concurrently process an application from an individual for merchant mariner’s documents under chapter 73 of title 46, United States Code, and an application from that individual for a transportation security card under this section.

(h) Fees.— The Secretary shall ensure that the fees charged each individual applying for a transportation security card under this section who has passed a background check under section 5103a (d) of title 49, United States Code, and who has a current hazardous materials endorsement in accordance with section 1572 of title 49, Code of Federal Regulations, and each individual with a current merchant mariners’ document who has passed a criminal background check under section 7302 (d)—

(1) are for costs associated with the issuance, production, and management of the transportation security card, as determined by the Secretary; and

(2) do not include costs associated with performing a background check for that individual, except for any incremental costs in the event that the scope of such background checks diverge.

(i) Implementation Schedule.— In implementing the transportation security card program under this section, the Secretary shall—

(1) establish a priority for each United States port based on risk, including vulnerabilities assessed under section 70102; and

(2) implement the program, based upon such risk and other factors as determined by the Secretary, at all facilities regulated under this chapter at—

(A) the 10 United States ports that the Secretary designates top priority not later than July 1, 2007;

(B) the 40 United States ports that are next in order of priority to the ports described in subparagraph (A) not later than January 1, 2008; and

(C) all other United States ports not later than January 1, 2009.

(j) Transportation Security Card Processing Deadline.— Not later than January 1, 2009, the Secretary shall process and issue or deny each application for a transportation security card under this section for individuals with current and valid merchant mariners’ documents on the date of the enactment of the SAFE Port Act.

(k) Deployment of Transportation Security Card Readers.—

(1) Pilot program.—

(A) In general.— The Secretary shall conduct a pilot program to test the business processes, technology, and operational impacts required to deploy transportation security card readers at secure areas of the marine transportation system.

(B) Geographic locations.— The pilot program shall take place at not fewer than 5 distinct geographic locations, to include vessels and facilities in a variety of environmental settings.

(C) Commencement.— The pilot program shall commence not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of the SAFE Port Act.
(2) Correlation with transportation security cards.—
   
   (A) In general.— The pilot program described in paragraph (1) shall be conducted concurrently with the issuance of the transportation security cards described in subsection (b) to ensure card and card reader interoperability.
   
   (B) Fee.— An individual charged a fee for a transportation security card issued under this section may not be charged an additional fee if the Secretary determines different transportation security cards are needed based on the results of the pilot program described in paragraph (1) or for other reasons related to the technology requirements for the transportation security card program.

(3) Regulations.— Not later than 2 years after the commencement of the pilot program under paragraph (1)(C), the Secretary, after a notice and comment period that includes at least 1 public hearing, shall promulgate final regulations that require the deployment of transportation security card readers that are consistent with the findings of the pilot program and build upon the regulations prescribed under subsection (a).

(4) Report.— Not later than 120 days before the promulgation of regulations under paragraph (3), the Secretary shall submit a comprehensive report to the appropriate congressional committees (as defined in section 2(1) of SAFE Port Act) that includes—
   
   (A) the findings of the pilot program with respect to technical and operational impacts of implementing a transportation security card reader system;
   
   (B) any actions that may be necessary to ensure that all vessels and facilities to which this section applies are able to comply with such regulations; and
   
   (C) an analysis of the viability of equipment under the extreme weather conditions of the marine environment.

(l) Progress Reports.— Not later than 6 months after the date of the enactment of the SAFE Port Act, and every 6 months thereafter until the requirements under this section are fully implemented, the Secretary shall submit a report on progress being made in implementing such requirements to the appropriate congressional committees (as defined in section 2(1) of the SAFE Port Act).

(m) Limitation.— The Secretary may not require the placement of an electronic reader for transportation security cards on a vessel unless—
   
   (1) the vessel has more individuals on the crew that are required to have a transportation security card than the number the Secretary determines, by regulation issued under subsection (k)(3), warrants such a reader; or
   
   (2) the Secretary determines that the vessel is at risk of a severe transportation security incident.

(n) The Secretary may use a secondary authentication system to verify the identification of individuals using transportation security cards when the individual’s fingerprints are not able to be taken or read.

(o) Escorting.— The Secretary shall coordinate with owners and operators subject to this section to allow any individual who has a pending application for a transportation security card under this section or is waiting for reissuance of such card, including any individual whose card has been lost or stolen, and who needs to perform work in a secure or restricted area to have access to such area for that purpose through escorting of such individual in accordance with subsection (a)(1)(B) by another individual who holds a transportation security card. Nothing in this subsection shall be construed as requiring or compelling an owner or operator to provide escorted access.

(p) Processing Time.— The Secretary shall review an initial transportation security card application and respond to the applicant, as appropriate, including the mailing of an Initial Determination of Threat Assessment letter, within 30 days after receipt of the initial application. The Secretary shall, to the greatest extent practicable, review appeal and waiver requests submitted by a transportation security card applicant, and send a written decision or request for additional information required for the appeal or waiver determination, within 30 days after receipt of the applicant’s appeal or waiver written request. For an applicant that is required to submit additional information for an appeal or waiver determination,
the Secretary shall send a written decision, to the greatest extent practicable, within 30 days after receipt of all requested information.

(q) Receipt and Activation of Transportation Security Card.—

(1) In general.— Not later than one year after the date of publication of final regulations required by subsection (k)(3) of this section the Secretary shall develop a plan to permit the receipt and activation of transportation security cards at any vessel or facility described in subsection (a) of this section that desires to implement this capability. This plan shall comply, to the extent possible, with all appropriate requirements of Federal standards for personal identity verification and credential.

(2) Limitation.— The Secretary may not require any such vessel or facility to provide on-site activation capability.

Footnotes
1 So in original. Probably should be followed by a comma.
2 So in original. Probably should be followed by “of”.


References in Text


The Immigration and Nationality Act, referred to in subsec. (c)(1)(D)(iii), is act June 27, 1952, ch. 477, 66 Stat. 163, which is classified principally to chapter 12 (§ 1101 et seq.) of Title 8, Aliens and Nationality. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see Short Title note set out under section 1101 of Title 8 and Tables.


The date of the enactment of the SAFE Port Act, referred to in subsecs. (j), (k)(1)(C), (l), is the date of enactment of Pub. L. 109–347, which was approved Oct. 13, 2006.

Section 2(1) of the SAFE Port Act, referred to in subsecs. (k)(4), (l), is classified to section 901 (1) of Title 6, Domestic Security.

Amendments

2010—Subsec. (b)(2)(B). Pub. L. 111–281, § 809(1), inserted “allowed unescorted access to a secure area designated in a vessel security plan approved under section 70103 of this title” after “subtitle II of this title”.

Subsec. (b)(2)(D). Pub. L. 111–281, § 809(2), inserted “allowed unescorted access to a secure area designated in a vessel security plan approved under section 70103 of this title” after “tank vessel”.


Subsec. (c)(3)(C). Pub. L. 111–281, § 903(c)(2), substituted “Director of National Intelligence” for “National Intelligence Director”.


Subsecs. (o), (p). Pub. L. 111–281, § 818(a), added subssecs. (o) and (p).


2007—Subsec. (b)(1). Pub. L. 110–53, § 1309(a)(1), substituted “determines under subsection (c) that the individual poses a security risk” for “decides that the individual poses a security risk under subsection (c)”.

Subsec. (c)(1). Pub. L. 110–53, § 1309(a)(2), inserted heading and amended text of par. (1) generally, substituting provisions relating to disqualifications, consisting of subpars. (A) to (E), for former provisions relating to when individuals may be denied transportation security cards, consisting of subpars. (A) to (D).
Subsec. (c)(2). Pub. L. 109–347, § 104(b)(2), inserted “subparagraph (A), (B), or (D)” before “paragraph (1)”.
Subsec. (c)(3) to (5). Pub. L. 109–241 added par. (3) and redesignated former pars. (3) and (4) as (4) and (5), respectively.
Subsecs. (g) to (m). Pub. L. 109–347, § 104(a), added subsecs. (g) to (m).

Effective Date of 2010 Amendment


Deadline for Section 70105 Regulations

Pub. L. 109–347, title I, § 104(c), Oct. 13, 2006, 120 Stat. 1891, provided that: “Not later than January 1, 2007, the Secretary of Homeland Security shall promulgate final regulations implementing the requirements for issuing transportation security cards under section 70105 of title 46, United States Code. The regulations shall include a background check process to enable newly hired workers to begin working unless the Secretary makes an initial determination that the worker poses a security risk. Such process shall include a check against the consolidated and integrated terrorist watch list maintained by the Federal Government.”

Pilot Program for Fingerprinting of Maritime Workers


“(a) In General.—Within 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act [Oct. 15, 2010], the Secretary of Homeland Security shall establish procedures providing for an individual who is required to be fingerprinted for purposes of obtaining a transportation security card under section 70105 of title 46, United States Code, the ability to be fingerprinted at any of not less than 20 facilities operated by or under contract with an agency of the Department of Homeland Security that fingerprints the public for the Department. These facilities shall be in addition to facilities established under section 70105 of title 46, United States Code.

“(b) Expiration.—The requirement made by subsection (a) expires 1 year after the date the Secretary establishes the facilities required under that subsection.”

Assessment of Transportation Security Card Enrollment Sites


(a) In General.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act [Oct. 15, 2010], the Secretary of the department in which the Coast Guard is operating shall prepare an assessment of the enrollment sites for transportation security cards issued under section 70105 of title 46, United States Code, including—

(1) the feasibility of keeping those enrollment sites open after the date of enactment of this Act; and

(2) the quality of customer service, including the periods of time individuals are kept on hold on the telephone, whether appointments are kept, and processing times for applications.

(b) Timelines and Benchmarks.—The Secretary shall develop timelines and benchmarks for implementing the findings of the assessment as the Secretary deems necessary.

Receipt of Cards


“(1) Report by comptroller general.—Within 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act [Oct. 15, 2010], the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate a report assessing the costs, technical feasibility, and security measures associated with implementing procedures to deliver a transportation security card to an approved applicant’s place of residence in a secure manner or to allow an approved applicant to receive the card at an enrollment center of the individual’s choosing.

“(2) Process for alternative means of receipt.—If the Comptroller General finds in the final report under paragraph (1) that it is feasible for a transportation security card to be sent to an approved applicant’s place of residence in a secure manner, the Secretary shall, within 1 year after the date of issuance of the final report by the Comptroller General, implement a secure process to permit an individual approved for a transportation security card to receive the card at the applicant’s place of residence or at the enrollment center of the individual’s choosing. The individual shall be responsible for any additional cost associated with the secure delivery of a transportation security card.”
Prohibition of Issuance of Transportation Security Cards to Persons Convicted of Certain Felonies

Pub. L. 109–347, title I, § 106, Oct. 13, 2006, 120 Stat. 1891, provided that: “The Secretary [of Homeland Security], in issuing a final rule pursuant to section 70105 of title 46, United States Code, shall provide for the disqualification of individuals who have been found guilty or have been found not guilty by reason of insanity of a felony, involving—
“(1) treason, or conspiracy to commit treason;
“(2) espionage, or conspiracy to commit espionage;
“(3) sedition, or conspiracy to commit sedition; or
“(4) a crime listed in chapter 113B of title 18, United States Code, a comparable State law, or conspiracy to commit such crime.”