

## §5.9

the contract is in excess of \$500, the Agency Head may make recommendations to the Secretary that an appropriate adjustment in liquidated damages be made or that the contractor or subcontractor be relieved of liability for such liquidated damages. Such findings with respect to liquidated damages shall include findings with respect to any wage underpayments for which the liquidated damages are determined.

(c) The recommendations of the Agency Head for adjustment or relief from liquidated damages under paragraph (a) of this section shall be reviewed by the Administrator or an authorized representative who shall issue an order concurring in the recommendations, partially concurring in the recommendations, or rejecting the recommendations, and the reasons therefor. The order shall be the final decision of the Department of Labor, unless a petition for review is filed pursuant to part 7 of this title, and the Administrative Review Board in its discretion reviews such decision and order; or, with respect to contracts subject to the Service Contract Act, unless petition for review is filed pursuant to part 8 of this title, and the Administrative Review Board in its discretion reviews such decision and order.

(d) Whenever the Agency Head finds that a sum of liquidated damages administratively determined to be due under section 104(a) of the Contract Work Hours and Safety Standards Act for a contract is \$500 or less and the Agency Head finds that the sum of liquidated damages is incorrect or that the contractor or subcontractor violated inadvertently the provisions of the Contract Work Hours and Safety Standards Act notwithstanding the exercise of due care upon the part of the contractor or subcontractor involved, an appropriate adjustment may be made in such liquidated damages or the contractor or subcontractor may be relieved of liability for such liquidated damages without submitting recommendations to this effect or a report to the Department of Labor. This delegation of authority is made under section 105 of the Contract Work Hours and Safety Standards Act and has been found to be necessary and proper in the

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public interest to prevent undue hardship and to avoid serious impairment of the conduct of Government business.

[48 FR 19541, Apr. 29, 1983, as amended at 51 FR 12265, Apr. 9, 1986; 51 FR 13496, Apr. 21, 1986]

### §5.9 Suspension of funds.

In the event of failure or refusal of the contractor or any subcontractor to comply with the labor standards clauses contained in §5.5 and the applicable statutes listed in §5.1, the Federal agency, upon its own action or upon written request of an authorized representative of the Department of Labor, shall take such action as may be necessary to cause the suspension of the payment, advance or guarantee of funds until such time as the violations are discontinued or until sufficient funds are withheld to compensate employees for the wages to which they are entitled and to cover any liquidated damages which may be due.

### §5.10 Restitution, criminal action.

(a) In cases other than those forwarded to the Attorney General of the United States under paragraph (b), of this section, where violations of the labor standards clauses contained in §5.5 and the applicable statutes listed in §5.1 result in underpayment of wages to employees, the Federal agency or an authorized representative of the Department of Labor shall request that restitution be made to such employees or on their behalf to plans, funds, or programs for any type of bona fide fringe benefits within the meaning of section 1(b)(2) of the Davis-Bacon Act.

(b) In cases where the Agency Head or the Administrator finds substantial evidence that such violations are willful and in violation of a criminal statute, the matter shall be forwarded to the Attorney General of the United States for prosecution if the facts warrant. In all such cases the Administrator shall be informed simultaneously of the action taken.

### §5.11 Disputes concerning payment of wages.

(a) This section sets forth the procedure for resolution of disputes of fact or law concerning payment of prevailing wage rates, overtime pay, or

proper classification. The procedures in this section may be initiated upon the Administrator's own motion, upon referral of the dispute by a Federal agency pursuant to § 5.5(a)(9), or upon request of the contractor or subcontractor(s).

(b)(1) In the event of a dispute described in paragraph (a) of this section in which it appears that relevant facts are at issue, the Administrator will notify the affected contractor and subcontractor(s) (if any), by registered or certified mail to the last known address, of the investigation findings. If the Administrator determines that there is reasonable cause to believe that the contractor and/or subcontractor(s) should also be subject to debarment under the Davis-Bacon Act or § 5.12(a)(1), the letter will so indicate.

(2) A contractor and/or subcontractor desiring a hearing concerning the Administrator's investigative findings shall request such a hearing by letter postmarked within 30 days of the date of the Administrator's letter. The request shall set forth those findings which are in dispute and the reasons therefor, including any affirmative defenses, with respect to the violations and/or debarment, as appropriate.

(3) Upon receipt of a timely request for a hearing, the Administrator shall refer the case to the Chief Administrative Law Judge by Order of Reference, to which shall be attached a copy of the letter from the Administrator and response thereto, for designation of an Administrative Law Judge to conduct such hearings as may be necessary to resolve the disputed matters. The hearing shall be conducted in accordance with the procedures set forth in 29 CFR part 6.

(c)(1) In the event of a dispute described in paragraph (a) of this section in which it appears that there are no relevant facts at issue, and where there is not at that time reasonable cause to institute debarment proceedings under § 5.12, the Administrator shall notify the contractor and subcontractor(s) (if any), by registered or certified mail to the last known address, of the investigation findings, and shall issue a ruling on any issues of law known to be in dispute.

(2)(i) If the contractor and/or subcontractor(s) disagree with the factual findings of the Administrator or believe that there are relevant facts in dispute, the contractor or subcontractor(s) shall so advise the Administrator by letter postmarked within 30 days of the date of the Administrator's letter. In the response, the contractor and/or subcontractor(s) shall explain in detail the facts alleged to be in dispute and attach any supporting documentation.

(ii) Upon receipt of a response under paragraph (c)(2)(i) of this section alleging the existence of a factual dispute, the Administrator shall examine the information submitted. If the Administrator determines that there is a relevant issue of fact, the Administrator shall refer the case to the Chief Administrative Law Judge in accordance with paragraph (b)(3) of this section. If the Administrator determines that there is no relevant issue of fact, the Administrator shall so rule and advise the contractor and subcontractor(s) (if any) accordingly.

(3) If the contractor and/or subcontractor(s) desire review of the ruling issued by the Administrator under paragraph (c)(1) or (2) of this section, the contractor and/or subcontractor(s) shall file a petition for review thereof with the Administrative Review Board within 30 days of the date of the ruling, with a copy thereof the Administrator. The petition for review shall be filed in accordance with part 7 of this title.

(d) If a timely response to the Administrator's findings or ruling is not made or a timely petition for review is not filed, the Administrator's findings and/or ruling shall be final, except that with respect to debarment under the Davis-Bacon Act, the Administrator shall advise the Comptroller General of the Administrator's recommendation in accordance with § 5.12(a)(1). If a timely response or petition for review is filed, the findings and/or ruling of the Administrator shall be inoperative unless and until the decision is upheld by the Administrative Law Judge or the Administrative Review Board.