

volumes exported under Corpus Christi's existing long-term export authorizations, will not exceed the maximum volumes approved under those DOE/FE authorizations in any annual (*i.e.*, consecutive 12-month) period.

#### DOE/FE Evaluation

This Notice applies only to the portion of the Application requesting authority to export LNG to non-FTA countries pursuant to section 3(a) of the NGA, 15 U.S.C. 717b(a). DOE/FE will review Corpus Christi's request for a FTA export authorization separately pursuant to section 3(c) of the NGA, 15 U.S.C. 717b(c).

In reviewing Corpus Christi's request for a non-FTA export authorization, DOE will consider any issues required by law or policy. DOE will consider domestic need for the natural gas, as well as any other issues determined to be appropriate, including whether the arrangement is consistent with DOE's policy of promoting competition in the marketplace by allowing commercial parties to freely negotiate their own trade arrangements. As part of this analysis, DOE will consider one or more of the following studies examining the cumulative impacts of exporting domestically produced LNG:

- *Effect of Increased Levels of Liquefied Natural Gas on U.S. Energy Markets*, conducted by the U.S. Energy Information Administration upon DOE's request (2014 EIA LNG Export Study);<sup>1</sup>

- *The Macroeconomic Impact of Increasing U.S. LNG Exports*, conducted jointly by the Center for Energy Studies at Rice University's Baker Institute for Public Policy and Oxford Economics, on behalf of DOE (2015 LNG Export Study);<sup>2</sup> and

- *Macroeconomic Outcomes of Market Determined Levels of U.S. LNG Exports*, conducted by NERA Economic Consulting on behalf of DOE (2018 LNG Export Study).<sup>3</sup>

Additionally, DOE will consider the following environmental documents:

- *Addendum to Environmental Review Documents Concerning Exports*

<sup>1</sup> The 2014 EIA LNG Export Study, published on Oct. 29, 2014, is available at: <https://www.eia.gov/analysis/requests/fe/>.

<sup>2</sup> The 2015 LNG Export Study, dated Oct. 29, 2015, is available at: [http://energy.gov/sites/prod/files/2015/12/f27/20151113\\_macro\\_impact\\_of\\_lng\\_exports\\_0.pdf](http://energy.gov/sites/prod/files/2015/12/f27/20151113_macro_impact_of_lng_exports_0.pdf).

<sup>3</sup> The 2018 LNG Export Study, dated June 7, 2018, is available at: <https://www.energy.gov/sites/prod/files/2018/06/f52/Macroeconomic%20LNG%20Export%20Study%202018.pdf>. DOE is currently evaluating public comments received on this Study (83 FR 27314).

*of Natural Gas From the United States*, 79 FR 48132 (Aug. 15, 2014);<sup>4</sup> and

- *Life Cycle Greenhouse Gas Perspective on Exporting Liquefied Natural Gas From the United States*, 79 FR 32260 (June 4, 2014).<sup>5</sup>

Parties that may oppose this Application should address these issues and documents in their comments and/or protests, as well as other issues deemed relevant to the Application.

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), 42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*, requires DOE to give appropriate consideration to the environmental effects of its proposed decisions. Corpus Christi states that no changes to the Liquefaction Project will be required for the short-term exports requested in the Application. No final decision will be issued in this proceeding until DOE has met its environmental responsibilities.

#### Public Comment Procedures

In response to this Notice, any person may file a protest, comments, or a motion to intervene or notice of intervention, as applicable. Interested parties will be provided 30 days from the date of publication of this Notice in which to submit comments, protests, motions to intervene, or notices of intervention.

Any person wishing to become a party to the proceeding must file a motion to intervene or notice of intervention. The filing of comments or a protest with respect to the Application will not serve to make the commenter or protestant a party to the proceeding, although protests and comments received from persons who are not parties will be considered in determining the appropriate action to be taken on the Application. All protests, comments, motions to intervene, or notices of intervention must meet the requirements specified by the regulations in 10 CFR part 590.

Filings may be submitted using one of the following methods: (1) Emailing the filing to [fergas@hq.doe.gov](mailto:fergas@hq.doe.gov), with FE Docket No. 18-137-LNG in the title line; (2) mailing an original and three paper copies of the filing to the Office of Regulation, Analysis, and Engagement at the address listed in **ADDRESSES**; or (3) hand delivering an original and three paper copies of the filing to the Office of Regulation, Analysis, and Engagement at the

<sup>4</sup> The Addendum and related documents are available at: <http://energy.gov/fe/draft-addendum-environmental-review-documents-concerning-exports-natural-gas-united-states>.

<sup>5</sup> The Life Cycle Greenhouse Gas Report is available at: <http://energy.gov/fe/life-cycle-greenhouse-gas-perspective-exporting-liquefied-natural-gas-united-states>.

address listed in **ADDRESSES**. All filings must include a reference to FE Docket No. 18-137-LNG. PLEASE NOTE: If submitting a filing via email, please include all related documents and attachments (*e.g.*, exhibits) in the original email correspondence. Please do not include any active hyperlinks or password protection in any of the documents or attachments related to the filing. All electronic filings submitted to DOE must follow these guidelines to ensure that all documents are filed in a timely manner. Any hardcopy filing submitted greater in length than 50 pages must also include, at the time of the filing, a digital copy on disk of the entire submission.

A decisional record on the Application will be developed through responses to this Notice by parties, including the parties' written comments and replies thereto. Additional procedures will be used as necessary to achieve a complete understanding of the facts and issues. If an additional procedure is scheduled, notice will be provided to all parties. If no party requests additional procedures, a final Opinion and Order may be issued based on the official record, including the Application and responses filed by parties pursuant to this Notice, in accordance with 10 CFR 590.316.

The Application is available for inspection and copying in the Office of Regulation, Analysis, and Engagement docket room, Room 3E-042, 1000 Independence Avenue SW, Washington, DC 20585. The docket room is open between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. The Application and any filed protests, motions to intervene, notices of interventions, and comments will also be available electronically by going to the following DOE/FE Web address: <http://www.fe.doe.gov/programs/gasregulation/index.html>.

Signed in Washington, DC, on September 24, 2018.

**Amy Sweeney,**

*Director, Division of Natural Gas, Office of Fossil Energy.*

[FR Doc. 2018-21269 Filed 9-28-18; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 6450-01-P**

## DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

### Adjustment of Indemnification Amount for Inflation

**AGENCY:** Office of the General Counsel, U.S. Department of Energy.

**ACTION:** Notice of adjusted indemnification amount.

**SUMMARY:** The Department of Energy (DOE) is announcing the adjusted amount of indemnification provided under subsection 170d. of the Atomic Energy Act of 1954 (AEA), commonly known as the Price-Anderson Act. Subsection 170t. of the AEA requires an inflation adjustment of the indemnification amount at least once during each 5-year period following July 1, 2003, in accordance with the aggregate percentage change in the Consumer Price Index (CPI). This notice announces \$13,703,464,000 as the third inflation-adjusted indemnification amount based on the aggregate percentage change in the CPI during the 5-year period from July 1, 2013 to July 1, 2018.

**DATES:** This action is effective on October 1, 2018.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Heather Thacker, Attorney Advisor (GC-72), Office of the General Counsel, U.S. Department of Energy, 1000 Independence Ave. SW, Washington, DC 20585, (202) 586-6924.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The Price-Anderson Act (PAA), section 170 of the AEA (42 U.S.C. 2210), establishes a system of financial protection for persons who may be liable for a "nuclear incident," as defined in section 11q. of the AEA (42 U.S.C. 2014q.). The Price-Anderson Act is administered by DOE with respect to the nuclear activities of contractors acting on DOE's behalf. Subsection 170d. provides that the Secretary of Energy shall enter into agreements of indemnification with any person who may conduct activities under a contract with DOE that involve the risk of public liability and that are not subject to the financial protection requirements of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission system. DOE's Price-Anderson Act indemnification contract provisions are codified in the Department of Energy Acquisition Regulation (DEAR), which sets forth a standard nuclear indemnification clause, the Nuclear Hazard Indemnity Clause at 48 CFR 952.250-70, that is incorporated into all DOE contracts and subcontracts in which the contractor is under risk of public liability for a nuclear incident or precautionary evacuation, as those terms are defined in the PAA.

Subsection 170t.(2) of the AEA requires that the Secretary adjust for inflation the amount of indemnification provided under an indemnification agreement pursuant to subsection 170d. at least once during each 5-year period following July 1, 2003, in accordance with the aggregate percentage change in the Consumer Price Index (CPI). The CPI

is defined in subsection 170t.(3) to mean the CPI for all urban consumers published by the Secretary of Labor. DOE's initial adjustment increased the indemnification amount to \$11.961 billion. 74 FR 52793 (October 14, 2009). The second inflation adjustment, for the period following July 1, 2013, increased the indemnification amount to \$12,697,798,000. 78 FR 56868 (September 16, 2013).

This notice announces DOE's third periodic inflation adjustment for the 5-year period following July 1, 2018 based on the aggregate percentage change in the CPI between July 1, 2013 and July 1, 2018.

The CPI used to calculate the inflation adjustment for the period following July 1, 2013 was 233.504 (June 2013). The CPI used to calculate the inflation adjustment that is the subject of this Notice is 251.989 (June 2018). This difference represents an increase of approximately 7.92%. Application of this increase to the current DOE indemnification amount results in an inflation-adjusted indemnification amount rounded to the nearest thousand of \$13,703,464,000.

The inflation adjustment under AEA, subsection 170t., applies only to a nuclear incident within the United States. There is no corresponding inflation adjustment for a nuclear incident outside the United States. Accordingly, the indemnification amount for a nuclear incident outside the United States continues to be \$500 million.

This notice of adjusted indemnification amount is a "rule" as defined in the Administrative Procedure Act (APA) (5 U.S.C. 551(4)). However, the APA (5 U.S.C. 553(b)(B)) does not require an agency to seek comment on a proposed rule prior to publishing a final rule "when the agency for good cause finds (and incorporates the finding and a brief statement of reasons therefore in the rules issued) that notice and public procedure thereon are impracticable, unnecessary, or contrary to the public interest." In this instance, DOE has concluded that solicitation of public comment is unnecessary. Congress has required DOE to adjust the amount of indemnification provided under an agreement of indemnification pursuant to section 170d. to reflect inflation in the initial and each subsequent 5-year period following July 1, 2003. The statute provides no discretion regarding the substance of the adjustment. DOE is required only to perform a ministerial computation to determine the relevant amount. On the same basis, DOE finds good cause, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 553(d)(3) to waive

the requirement for a 30-day delay in the effective date for this rule. As such, this rule is effective October 1, 2018.

DOE has determined that this notice of adjusted indemnification amount is the type of action that does not individually or cumulatively have a significant impact on the human environment as set forth in DOE's regulations implementing the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*). Specifically, the rule is covered under the categorical exclusion in paragraph A6 of Appendix A to subpart D, 10 CFR part 1021, which applies to rulemakings that are strictly procedural. Accordingly, neither an environmental assessment nor an environmental impact statement is required.

The Regulatory Flexibility Act (5 U.S.C. 601 *et seq.*) requires preparation of an initial regulatory flexibility analysis for any rule that by law must be proposed for public comment, unless the agency certifies that the rule, if promulgated, will not have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities. As required by Executive Order 13272, "Proper Consideration of Small Entities in Agency Rulemaking," 67 FR 53461 (August 16, 2002), DOE published procedures and policies on February 19, 2003, to ensure that the potential impacts of its rules on small entities are properly considered during the rulemaking process. 68 FR 7990. The Department has made its procedures and policies available on the Office of General Counsel's website: <http://energy.gov/gc/office-general-counsel>. Because DOE, in this final rule, is performing only a ministerial computation to determine the relevant indemnification amount as required by Congress, a general notice of proposed rulemaking is not required, and the analytical requirements of the Regulatory Flexibility Act do not apply to this rulemaking.

Signed in Washington, DC, on September 24, 2018.

**Theodore J. Garrish,**

*General Counsel, Acting.*

[FR Doc. 2018-21293 Filed 9-28-18; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 6450-01-P**