

the public interest in that this ensures that there will be adequate funds to address any of those consequences and helps to ensure the safe and timely decommissioning of the reactor.

Therefore, the NRC staff has concluded that an exemption from 10 CFR 140.11(a)(4), which would permit Holtec Pilgrim and HDI to lower the Pilgrim primary insurance levels and to withdraw from the secondary retrospective premium pool at the requested effective date of 10 months after permanent cessation of power operations, is in the public interest.

C. Environmental Considerations

The NRC's approval of an exemption from insurance or indemnity requirements belongs to a category of actions that the Commission, by rule or regulation, has declared to be a categorical exclusion after first finding that the category of actions does not individually or cumulatively have a significant effect on the human environment. Specifically, the exemption is categorically excluded from the requirement to prepare an environmental assessment or environmental impact statement in accordance with 10 CFR 51.22(c)(25).

Under 10 CFR 51.22(c)(25), granting of an exemption from the requirements of any regulation of Chapter I to 10 CFR is a categorical exclusion provided that: (i) There is no significant hazards consideration; (ii) there is no significant change in the types or significant increase in the amounts of any effluents that may be released offsite; (iii) there is no significant increase in individual or cumulative public or occupational radiation exposure; (iv) there is no significant construction impact; (v) there is no significant increase in the potential for or consequences from radiological accidents; and (vi) the requirements from which an exemption is sought involve surety, insurance, or indemnity requirements.

As the Director, Division of Operating Reactor Licensing, Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation, I have determined that approval of the exemption request involves no significant hazards consideration, as defined in 10 CFR 50.92, because reducing a licensee's offsite liability requirements at Pilgrim does not: (1) Involve a significant increase in the probability or consequences of an accident previously evaluated; (2) create the possibility of a new or different kind of accident from any accident previously evaluated; or (3) involve a significant reduction in a margin of safety. The exempted financial protection regulation is unrelated to the operation of Pilgrim or

site activities. Accordingly, there is no significant change in the types or significant increase in the amounts of any effluents that may be released offsite and no significant increase in individual or cumulative public or occupational radiation exposure. The exempted regulation is not associated with construction so there is no significant construction impact. The exempted regulation does not concern the source term (*i.e.*, potential amount of radiation in an accident) nor any activities conducted at the site. Therefore, there is no significant increase in the potential for, or consequences of, a radiological accident. In addition, there would be no significant impacts to biota, water resources, historic properties, cultural resources, or socioeconomic conditions in the region resulting from issuance of the requested exemption. The requirement for offsite liability insurance involves surety, insurance, or indemnity matters only.

Therefore, pursuant to 10 CFR 51.22(b) and 51.22(c)(25), no environmental impact statement or environmental assessment need be prepared in connection with the approval of this exemption request.

IV. Conclusions

Accordingly, the Commission has determined that, pursuant to 10 CFR 140.8, the exemption is authorized by law and is otherwise in the public interest. Therefore, the Commission hereby grants Holtec Pilgrim and HDI an exemption from the requirements of 10 CFR 140.11(a)(4) for Pilgrim. Pilgrim permanently ceased power operations on May 31, 2019. The exemption from 10 CFR 140.11(a)(4) permits Pilgrim to reduce the required level of primary financial protection from \$450 million to \$100 million and to withdraw from participation in the secondary layer of financial protection 10 months after permanent cessation of power operations.

The exemption is effective as of 10 months after permanent cessation of power operations.

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 6th day of January 2020.

For the Nuclear Regulatory Commission,
Craig G. Erlanger,
Director, Division of Operating Reactor Licensing, Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation.

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RAILROAD RETIREMENT BOARD

Civil Monetary Penalty Inflation Adjustment

AGENCY: Railroad Retirement Board.

ACTION: Notice announcing updated penalty inflation adjustments for civil monetary penalties for 2020.

SUMMARY: As required by Section 701 of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2015, entitled the Federal Civil Penalties Inflation Adjustment Act Improvements Act of 2015, the Railroad Retirement Board (Board) hereby publishes its 2020 annual adjustment of civil penalties for inflation.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Marguerite P. Dadabo, Assistant General Counsel, Railroad Retirement Board, 844 North Rush Street, Chicago, IL 60611-1275, (312) 751-4945, TTD (312) 751-4701.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Section 701 of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2015, Public Law 114-74 (Nov. 2, 2015), entitled the Federal Civil Penalties Inflation Adjustment Act Improvements Act of 2015 (the 2015 Act), amended the Federal Civil Penalties Inflation Adjustment Act of 1990 (28 U.S.C. 2461 note) (Inflation Adjustment Act) to require agencies to publish regulations adjusting the amount of civil monetary penalties provided by law within the jurisdiction of the agency not later than January 15th of every year.

For the 2020 annual adjustment for inflation of the maximum civil penalty under the Program Fraud Civil Remedies Act of 1986, the Board applies the formula provided by the 2015 Act and the Board's regulations at Title 20, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 356. In accordance with the 2015 Act, the amount of the adjustment is based on the percent increase between the Consumer Price Index (CPI-U) for the month of October preceding the date of the adjustment and the CPI-U for the October one year prior to the October immediately preceding the date of the adjustment. If there is no increase, there is no adjustment of civil penalties. The percent increase between the CPI-U for October 2019 and October 2018, as provided by Office of Management and Budget Memorandum M-20-05 (December 16, 2019) is 1.01764 percent. Therefore, the new maximum penalty under the Program Fraud Civil Remedies Act is \$11,665 (the 2019 maximum penalty of \$11,463 multiplied by 1.01764, rounded to the nearest dollar). The new minimum penalty under the False Claims Act is \$11,665 (the 2019 minimum penalty of \$11,463 multiplied by 1.01764, rounded to the

nearest dollar), and the new maximum penalty is \$23,331 (the 2019 maximum penalty of \$22,927 multiplied by 1.01764, rounded to the nearest dollar). The adjustments in penalties will be effective January 13, 2020.

Dated: January 8, 2020.

By Authority of the Board.

Stephanie Hillyard,
Secretary to the Board.

[FR Doc. 2020-00324 Filed 1-10-20; 8:45 am]

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SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION

[Release Nos. 33-10740; 34-87905; IA-5428; IC-33740]

Adjustments to Civil Monetary Penalty Amounts

AGENCY: Securities and Exchange Commission.

ACTION: Notice of annual inflation adjustment of civil monetary penalties.

SUMMARY: The Securities and Exchange Commission (the “Commission”) is publishing this notice (the “Notice”) pursuant to the Federal Civil Penalties Inflation Adjustment Act Improvements Act of 2015 (the “2015 Act”). This Act requires all agencies to annually adjust for inflation the civil monetary penalties that can be imposed under the statutes administered by the agency and publish the adjusted amounts in the **Federal Register**. This Notice sets forth the annual inflation adjustment of the maximum amount of civil monetary penalties (“CMPs”) administered by the Commission under the Securities Act of 1933, the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 (the “Exchange Act”), the Investment Company Act of 1940, the Investment Advisers Act of 1940, and certain penalties under the Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002. These amounts are effective beginning on January 15, 2020, and will apply to all penalties imposed after that date for violations of the aforementioned statutes that occurred after November 2, 2015.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Stephen M. Ng, Senior Special Counsel, Office of the General Counsel, at (202) 551-7957, or Hannah W. Riedel, Senior Counsel, Office of the General Counsel, at (202) 551-7918.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Background

This Notice is being published pursuant to the 2015 Act,¹ which

amended the Federal Civil Penalties Inflation Adjustment Act of 1990 (the “Inflation Adjustment Act”).² The Inflation Adjustment Act previously had been amended by the Debt Collection Improvement Act of 1996 (the “DCIA”)³ to require that each federal agency adopt regulations at least once every four years that adjust for inflation the CMPs that can be imposed under the statutes administered by the agency. Pursuant to this requirement, the Commission previously adopted regulations in 1996, 2001, 2005, 2009, and 2013 to adjust the maximum amount of the CMPs that could be imposed under the statutes the Commission administers.⁴

The 2015 Act replaces the inflation adjustment formula prescribed in the DCIA with a new formula for calculating the inflation-adjusted amount of CMPs. The 2015 Act requires that agencies use this new formula to re-calculate the inflation-adjusted amounts of the penalties they administer on an annual basis and publish these new amounts in the **Federal Register** by January 15 of each year.⁵ The Commission previously published the first annual adjustment required by the 2015 Act on January 6, 2017 (the “2017 Adjustment”).⁶ As part of the 2017 Adjustment, the Commission promulgated 17 CFR 201.1001(a) and Table I to Subsection 1001, which lists the penalty amounts for all violations that occurred on or before November 2, 2015. For violations occurring after November 2, 2015, Subsection 1001(b) provides that the applicable penalty amounts will be adjusted annually based on the formula set forth in the 2015 Act. Subsection 1001(b) further provides that these adjusted amounts will be published in

² Public Law 101-410, 104 Stat. 890-892 (1990), codified at 28 U.S.C. 2461 note.

³ Public Law 104-134, Title III, § 31001(s)(1), 110 Stat. 1321-373 (1996), codified at 28 U.S.C. 2461 note.

⁴ See Release Nos. 33-7361, 34-37912, IA-1596, IC-22310, dated November 1, 1996 (effective December 9, 1996), previously found at 17 CFR 201.1001 and Table I to Subpart E of Part 201; Release Nos. 33-7946, 34-43897, IA-1921, IC-24846, dated January 31, 2001 (effective February 2, 2001), previously found at 17 CFR 201.1002 and Table II to Subpart E of Part 201; Release Nos. 33-8530, 34-51136, IA-2348, IC-26748, dated February 9, 2005 (effective February 14, 2005), previously found at 17 CFR 201.1003 and Table III to Subpart E of Part 201; Release Nos. 33-9009, 34-59449, IA-2845, IC-28635, dated February 25, 2009 (effective March 3, 2009), previously found at 17 CFR 201.1004 and Table IV to Subpart E of Part 201; and Release Nos. 33-9387, 34-68994, IA-3557, IC-30408, dated February 27, 2013 (effective March 5, 2013), previously found at 17 CFR 201.1005 and Table V to Subpart E of Part 201. The penalty amounts contained in these releases have now been consolidated into Table I to 17 CFR 201.1001.

⁵ 28 U.S.C. 2461 note Sec. 4.

⁶ Release Nos. 33-10276; 34-79749; IA-4599; IC-32414 (effective Jan. 18, 2017).

the **Federal Register** and on the Commission’s website. The Commission subsequently published annual adjustments on January 8, 2018 (the “2018 Adjustment”) and February 20, 2019 (“2019 Adjustment”).⁸

A CMP is defined in relevant part as any penalty, fine, or other sanction that: (1) Is for a specific amount, or has a maximum amount, as provided by federal law; and (2) is assessed or enforced by an agency in an administrative proceeding or by a federal court pursuant to federal law.⁹ This definition applies to the monetary penalty provisions contained in four statutes administered by the Commission: The Securities Act, the Exchange Act, the Investment Company Act, and the Investment Advisers Act. In addition, the Sarbanes-Oxley Act provides the Public Company Accounting Oversight Board (the “PCAOB”) authority to levy civil monetary penalties in its disciplinary proceedings pursuant to 15 U.S.C. 7215(c)(4)(D).¹⁰ The definition of a CMP in the Inflation Adjustment Act encompasses such civil monetary penalties.¹¹

II. Adjusting the Commission’s Penalty Amounts for Inflation

This Notice sets forth the annual inflation adjustment required by the 2015 Act for all CMPs under the Securities Act, the Exchange Act, the Investment Company Act, and the Investment Advisers Act, and certain civil monetary penalties under the Sarbanes-Oxley Act.

Pursuant to the 2015 Act, the penalty amounts in the 2019 Adjustment are adjusted for inflation by increasing them by the percentage change between the Consumer Price Index for all Urban Consumers (“CPI-U”) for October 2018

⁷ Release Nos. 33-10451; 34-82455; IA-4842; IC-32963 (effective Jan. 15, 2018).

⁸ Release Nos. 33-10604; 34-85118; IA-5111; IC-33373 (effective Jan. 15, 2019). The publication of the 2019 Adjustment in the **Federal Register** was delayed due to operation of the Antideficiency Act during the absence of an appropriations bill to fund federal government programs between December 22, 2018 and January 25, 2019.

⁹ 28 U.S.C. 2461 note Sec. 3(2).

¹⁰ 15 U.S.C. 7215(c)(4)(D).

¹¹ The Commission may by order affirm, modify, remand, or set aside sanctions, including civil monetary penalties, imposed by the PCAOB. See Section 107(c) of the Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002, 15 U.S.C. 7217. The Commission may enforce such orders in federal district court pursuant to Section 21(e) of the Exchange Act. As a result, penalties assessed by the PCAOB in its disciplinary proceedings are penalties “enforced” by the Commission for purposes of the Inflation Adjustment Act. See *Adjustments to Civil Monetary Penalty Amounts*, Release No. 33-8530 (Feb. 4, 2005) [70 FR 7606 (Feb. 14, 2005)].

¹ Public Law 114-74 Sec. 701, 129 Stat. 599-601 (Nov. 2, 2015), codified at 28 U.S.C. 2461 note.