(g) Inspections by accredited persons

(1) The Secretary shall, subject to the provisions of this subsection, accredit persons for the purpose of conducting inspections of establishments that manufacture, prepare, propagate, compound, or process class II or class III devices, which inspections are required under section 360(h) of this title or are inspections of such establishments required to register under section 360(i) of this title. The owner or operator of such an establishment that is eligible under paragraph (6) may, from the list published under paragraph (4), select an accredited person to conduct such inspections.

(2) The Secretary shall publish in the Federal Register criteria to accredit or deny accreditation to persons who request to perform the duties specified in paragraph (1). Thereafter, the Secretary shall inform those requesting accreditation, within 60 days after the receipt of such request, whether the request for accreditation is adequate for review, and the Secretary shall promptly act on the request for accreditation. Any resulting accreditation shall state that such person is accredited to conduct inspections at device establishments identified in paragraph (1). The accreditation of such person shall specify the particular activities under this subsection for which such person is accredited.

(3) An accredited person shall, at a minimum, meet the following requirements:

(A) Such person may not be an employee of the Federal Government.

(B) Such person shall be an independent organization which is not owned or controlled by a manufacturer, supplier, or vendor of articles regulated under this chapter and which has no organizational, material, or financial affiliation (including a consultative affiliation) with such a manufacturer, supplier, or vendor.

(C) Such person shall be a legally constituted entity permitted to conduct the activities for which it seeks accreditation.

(D) Such person shall not engage in the design, manufacture, promotion, or sale of articles regulated under this chapter.

(E) The operations of such person shall be in accordance with generally accepted professional and ethical business practices, and such person shall agree in writing that at a minimum the person will—

(i) certify that reported information accurately reflects data reviewed, inspection observations made, other matters that relate to or may influence compliance with this chapter, and recommendations made during an inspection or at an inspection's closing meeting;

(ii) limit work to that for which competence and capacity are available;

(iii) treat information received, records, reports, and recommendations as confidential commercial or financial information or trade secret information, except such information may be made available to the Secretary;

(iv) promptly respond and attempt to resolve complaints regarding its

activities for which it is accredited; and

(v) protect against the use, in carrying out paragraph (1), of any officer or employee of the accredited person who has a financial conflict of interest regarding any product regulated under this chapter, and annually make available to the public disclosures of the extent to which the accredited person, and the officers and employees of the person, have maintained compliance with requirements under this clause relating to financial conflicts of interest.

(F) Such person shall notify the Secretary of any withdrawal, suspension, restriction, or expiration of certificate of conformance with the quality systems standard referred to in paragraph (7) for any device establishment that such person inspects under this subsection not later than 30 days after such withdrawal, suspension, restriction, or expiration.

(G) Such person may conduct audits to establish conformance with the quality systems standard referred to in paragraph (7).

(4) The Secretary shall publish on the Internet site of the Food and Drug Administration a list of persons who are accredited under paragraph (2). Such list shall be updated to ensure that the identity of each accredited person, and the particular activities for which the person is accredited, is known to the public. The updating of such list shall be no later than one month after the accreditation of a person under this subsection or the suspension or withdrawal of accreditation, or the modification of the particular activities for which the person is accredited.

(5)

(A) To ensure that persons accredited under this subsection continue to meet the standards of accreditation, the Secretary shall (i) audit the performance of such persons on a periodic basis through the review of inspection reports and inspections by persons designated by the Secretary to evaluate the compliance status of a device establishment and the performance of accredited persons, and (ii) take such additional measures as the Secretary determines to be appropriate.

(B) The Secretary may withdraw accreditation of any person accredited under paragraph (2), after providing notice and an opportunity for an informal hearing, when such person is substantially not in compliance with the standards of accreditation, poses a threat to public health, fails to act in a manner that is consistent with the purposes of this subsection, or where the Secretary determines that there is a financial conflict of interest in the relationship between the accredited person and the owner or operator of a device establishment that the accredited person has inspected under this subsection. The Secretary may suspend the accreditation of such person during the pendency of the process under the preceding sentence.

(6)

(A) Subject to subparagraphs (B) and (C), a device establishment is eligible for inspection by persons accredited under paragraph (2) if the following conditions are met:

(i) The Secretary classified the results of the most recent inspection of the establishment as "no action indicated" or "voluntary action indicated".

(ii) With respect to inspections of the establishment to be conducted by an accredited person, the owner or operator of the establishment submits to the Secretary a notice that—

(I)provides the date of the last inspection of the establishment by the Secretary and the classification of that inspection;

(II)states the intention of the owner or operator to use an accredited person to conduct inspections of the establishment;

(III)identifies the particular accredited person the owner or operator intends to select to conduct such inspections; and

(IV)includes a certification that, with respect to the devices that are manufactured, prepared, propagated, compounded, or processed in the establishment—

(aa)at least 1 of such devices is marketed in the United States; and

(bb)at least 1 of such devices is marketed, or is intended to be marketed, in 1 or more foreign countries, 1 of which countries certifies, accredits, or otherwise recognizes the person accredited under paragraph (2) and identified under subclause (III) as a person authorized to conduct inspections of device establishments.

(B)

(i) Except with respect to the requirement of subparagraph (A)(i), a device establishment is deemed to have clearance to participate in the program and to use the accredited person identified in the notice under subparagraph (A)(ii) for inspections of the establishment unless the Secretary, not later than 30 days after receiving such notice, issues a response that—

(I)denies clearance to participate as provided under subparagraph (C); or

(II)makes a request under clause (ii).

(ii) The Secretary may request from the owner or operator of a device establishment in response to the notice under subparagraph (A)(ii) with respect to the establishment, or from the particular accredited person identified in such notice—

(I)compliance data for the establishment in accordance with clause (iii)(I); or

(II)information concerning the relationship between the owner or operator of the establishment and the accredited person identified in such notice in accordance with clause (iii)(II).

The owner or operator of the establishment, or such accredited person, as the case may be, shall respond to such a request not later than 60 days after receiving such request.

(iii)

(I) The compliance data to be submitted by the owner or operator of a device establishment in response to a request under clause (ii)(I) are data describing whether the quality controls of the establishment have been sufficient for ensuring consistent compliance with current good manufacturing practice within the meaning of section 351(h) of this title and with other applicable provisions of this chapter. Such data shall include complete reports of inspectional findings regarding good manufacturing practice or other quality control audits that, during the preceding 2-year period, were conducted at the establishment by persons other than the owner or operator of the establishment, together with all other compliance data the Secretary deems necessary. Data under the preceding sentence shall demonstrate to the Secretary whether the establishment has facilitated consistent compliance by promptly correcting any compliance problems identified in such inspections.

(II)A request to an accredited person under clause (ii)(II) may not seek any information that is not required to be maintained by such person in records under subsection (f)(1).

(iv)A device establishment is deemed to have clearance to participate in the program and to use the accredited person identified in the notice under subparagraph (A)(ii) for inspections of the establishment unless the Secretary, not later than 60 days after receiving the information requested under clause (ii), issues a response that denies clearance to participate as provided under subparagraph (C).

(C)

(i) The Secretary may deny clearance to a device establishment if the Secretary has evidence that the certification under subparagraph (A)(ii)(IV) is untrue and the Secretary provides to the owner or operator of the establishment a statement summarizing such evidence.

(ii) The Secretary may deny clearance to a device establishment if the Secretary determines that the establishment has failed to demonstrate consistent compliance for purposes of subparagraph (B)(iii)(I) and the Secretary provides to the owner or operator of the establishment a statement of the reasons for such determination.

(iii)

(I) The Secretary may reject the selection of the accredited person identified in the notice under subparagraph (A)(ii) if the Secretary provides to the owner or operator of the establishment a statement of the reasons for such rejection. Reasons for the rejection may include that the establishment or the accredited person, as the case may be, has failed to fully respond to the request, or that the Secretary has concerns regarding the relationship between the establishment and such accredited person.

(II) If the Secretary rejects the selection of an accredited person by the owner or operator of a device establishment, the owner or operator may make an additional selection of an accredited person by submitting to the Secretary a notice that identifies the additional selection. Clauses (i) and (ii) of subparagraph (B), and subclause (I) of this clause, apply to the selection of an accredited person through a notice under the preceding sentence in the same manner and to the same extent as such provisions apply to a selection of an accredited person through a notice under subparagraph (A)(ii).

(iv) In the case of a device establishment that is denied clearance under clause (i) or (ii) or with respect to which the selection of the accredited person is rejected under clause (iii), the Secretary shall designate a person to review the statement of reasons, or statement summarizing such evidence, as the case may be, of the Secretary under such clause if, during the 30-day period beginning on the date on which the owner or operator of the establishment receives such statement, the owner or operator requests the review. The review shall commence not later than 30 days after the owner or operator requests the review, unless the Secretary and the owner or operator otherwise agree.

(7)

(A) Persons accredited under paragraph (2) to conduct inspections shall record in writing their inspection observations and shall present the observations to the device establishment's designated representative and describe each observation. Additionally, such accredited person shall prepare an inspection report in a form and manner designated by the Secretary to conduct inspections, taking into consideration the goals of international harmonization of quality systems standards. Any official classification of the inspection shall be determined by the Secretary.

(B) At a minimum, an inspection report under subparagraph (A) shall identify the persons responsible for good manufacturing practice compliance at the inspected device establishment, the dates of the inspection, the scope of the inspection, and shall describe in detail each observation identified by the accredited person, identify other matters that relate to or may influence compliance with this chapter, and describe any recommendations during the inspection or at the inspection's closing meeting.

(C) An inspection report under subparagraph (A) shall be sent to the Secretary and to the designated representative of the inspected device establishment at the same time, but under no circumstances later than three weeks after the last day of the inspection. The report to the Secretary shall be accompanied by all written inspection observations previously provided to the designated representative of the establishment.

(D) Any statement or representation made by an employee or agent of a device establishment to a person accredited under paragraph (2) to conduct inspections shall be subject to section 1001 of title 18.

(E) If at any time during an inspection by an accredited person the accredited person discovers a condition that could cause or contribute to an unreasonable risk to the public health, the accredited person shall immediately notify the Secretary of the identification of the device establishment subject to inspection and such condition.

(F) For the purpose of setting risk-based inspectional priorities, the Secretary shall accept voluntary submissions of reports of audits assessing conformance with appropriate quality systems standards set by the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) and identified by the Secretary in public notice. If the owner or operator of an establishment elects to submit audit reports under this subparagraph, the owner or operator shall submit all such audit reports with respect to the establishment during the preceding 2-year periods.

(8) Compensation for an accredited person shall be determined by agreement between the accredited person and the person who engages the services of the accredited person, and shall be paid by the person who engages such services.

(9) Nothing in this subsection affects the authority of the Secretary to inspect any device establishment pursuant to this chapter.

(10)

(A) For fiscal year 2005 and each subsequent fiscal year, no device establishment may be inspected during the fiscal year involved by a person accredited under paragraph (2) if—

(i)of the amounts appropriated for salaries and expenses of the Food and Drug Administration for the preceding fiscal year (referred to in this subparagraph as the "first prior fiscal year"), the amount obligated by the Secretary for inspections of device establishments by the Secretary was less than the adjusted base amount applicable to such first prior fiscal year; and

(ii)of the amounts appropriated for salaries and expenses of the Food and Drug Administration for the fiscal year preceding the first prior fiscal year (referred to in this subparagraph as the "second prior fiscal year"), the amount obligated by the Secretary for inspections of device establishments

by the Secretary was less than the adjusted base amount applicable to such second prior fiscal year.

(B)

(i) Subject to clause (ii), the Comptroller General of the United States shall determine the amount that was obligated by the Secretary for fiscal year 2002 for compliance activities of the Food and Drug Administration with respect to devices (referred to in this subparagraph as the "compliance budget"), and of such amount, the amount that was obligated for inspections by the Secretary of device establishments (referred to in this subparagraph as the "inspection budget").

(ii) For purposes of determinations under clause (i), the Comptroller General shall not include in the compliance budget or the inspection budget any amounts obligated for inspections of device establishments conducted as part of the process of reviewing applications under section 360e of this title.

(iii) Not later than March 31, 2003, the Comptroller General shall complete the determinations required in this subparagraph and submit to the Secretary and the Congress a report describing the findings made through such determinations.

(C) For purposes of this paragraph:

(i) The term "base amount" means the inspection budget determined under subparagraph (B) for fiscal year 2002.

(ii) The term "adjusted base amount", in the case of applicability to fiscal year 2003, means an amount equal to the base amount increased by 5 percent.

(iii) The term "adjusted base amount", with respect to applicability to fiscal year 2004 or any subsequent fiscal year, means the adjusted base amount applicable to the preceding year increased by 5 percent.

(11) The authority provided by this subsection terminates on December 24, 2022.

(12) No later than four years after October 26, 2002, the Comptroller General shall report to the Committee on Energy and Commerce of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions of the Senate—

(A)the number of inspections conducted by accredited persons pursuant to this subsection and the number of inspections conducted by Federal employees pursuant to section 360(h) of this title and of device establishments required to register under section 360(i) of this title;

(B)the number of persons who sought accreditation under this subsection, as well as the number of persons who were accredited under this subsection;

(C)the reasons why persons who sought accreditation, but were denied accreditation, were denied;

(D)the number of audits conducted by the Secretary of accredited persons, the quality of inspections conducted by accredited persons, whether accredited persons are meeting their obligations under this chapter, and whether the number of audits conducted is sufficient to permit these assessments;

(E)whether this subsection is achieving the goal of ensuring more information about device establishment compliance is being presented to the Secretary, and whether that information is of a quality consistent with information obtained by the Secretary pursuant to inspections conducted by Federal employees;

(F)whether this subsection is advancing efforts to allow device establishments to rely upon third-party inspections for purposes of compliance with the laws of foreign governments; and

(G)whether the Congress should continue, modify, or terminate the program under this subsection.

(13) The Secretary shall include in the annual report required under section 393(g) of this title the names of all accredited persons and the particular activities under this subsection for which each such person is accredited and the name of each accredited person whose accreditation has been withdrawn during the year.

(14) Notwithstanding any provision of this subsection, this subsection does not have any legal effect on any agreement described in section 383(b) of this title between the Secretary and a foreign country.

(15)

(A) Notwithstanding any other provision of this subsection, the Secretary may recognize auditing organizations that are recognized by organizations established by governments to facilitate international harmonization for purposes of conducting inspections of—

(i)establishments that manufacture, prepare, propagate, compound, or process devices (other than types of devices licensed under section 262 of title 42), as required under section 360(h) of this title; or

(ii)establishments required to register pursuant to section 360(i) of this title.

(B) Nothing in this paragraph affects—

(i)the authority of the Secretary to inspect any device establishment pursuant to this chapter; or

(ii) the authority of the Secretary to determine the official classification of an inspection.

(h) Improvements to inspections process for device establishments

(1) In the case of inspections other than for-cause inspections, the Secretary shall review processes and standards applicable to inspections of domestic and foreign device establishments in effect as of August 18, 2017, and update such processes and standards through the adoption of uniform processes and standards applicable to such inspections. Such uniform processes and standards shall provide for—

(A) exceptions to such processes and standards, as appropriate;

(B) announcing the inspection of the establishment within a reasonable time before such inspection occurs, including by providing to the owner, operator, or agent in charge of the establishment a notification regarding the type and nature of the inspection;

(C) a reasonable estimate of the timeframe for the inspection, an opportunity for advance communications between the officers or employees carrying out the inspection under subsection (a)(1) and the owner, operator, or agent in charge of the establishment concerning appropriate working hours during the inspection, and, to the extent feasible, advance notice of some records that will be requested; and

(D) regular communications during the inspection with the owner, operator, or agent in charge of the establishment regarding inspection status, which may be recorded by either party with advance notice and mutual consent.

(2)

(A) The Secretary shall, with respect to a request described in subparagraph (B), provide nonbinding feedback with respect to such request not later than 45 days after the Secretary receives such request.

(B) A request described in this subparagraph is a request for feedback—

(i) that is made by the owner, operator, or agent in charge of such establishment in a timely manner; and

(ii) with respect to actions proposed to be taken by a device establishment in a response to a report received by such establishment pursuant to subsection (b) that involve a public health priority, that implicate systemic or major actions, or relate to emerging safety issues (as determined by the Secretary).

(3) Nothing in this subsection affects the authority of the Secretary to conduct inspections otherwise permitted under this chapter in order to ensure compliance with this chapter.