

EFFECTIVE DATE OF 2011 AMENDMENT

Amendment by Pub. L. 111-383 effective Jan. 1, 2011, see section 901(p) of Pub. L. 111-383, set out as a note under section 131 of this title.

RECOVERY AND IDENTIFICATION OF REMAINS OF CERTAIN WORLD WAR II SERVICEMEN LOST IN PACIFIC THEATER OF OPERATIONS

Pub. L. 106-65, div. A, title V, § 576, Oct. 5, 1999, 113 Stat. 624, as amended by Pub. L. 107-107, div. A, title X, § 1048(g)(3), Dec. 28, 2001, 115 Stat. 1228, provided that:

“(a) RECOVERY OF REMAINS.—(1) The Secretary of Defense shall make every reasonable effort to search for, recover, and identify the remains of United States servicemen lost in the Pacific theater of operations during World War II (including in New Guinea) while engaged in flight operations.

“(2) In order to provide high priority to carrying out paragraph (1), the Secretary of Defense shall consider increasing the number of personnel assigned to the Central Identification Laboratory, Hawaii.

“(3) Not later than September 30, 2000, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report setting forth the efforts made to accomplish the objectives specified in paragraph (1). The Secretary shall include in the report a statement of the backlog of cases at the Central Identification Laboratory, Hawaii, shown by conflict, and the status of the joint manning plan required by section 566(c) of the Strom Thurmond National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1999 (Public Law 105-261; 112 Stat. 2029).

“(b) DIPLOMATIC INTERVENTION IF REQUIRED.—The Secretary of State, upon request by the Secretary of Defense, shall work with officials of governments of nations in the area that was covered by the Pacific theater of operations of World War II to seek to overcome any diplomatic obstacles that may impede the Secretary of Defense from carrying out the objectives specified in subsection (a)(1).”

POW/MIA INTELLIGENCE ANALYSIS

Pub. L. 105-85, div. A, title IX, § 934, Nov. 18, 1997, 111 Stat. 1866, as amended by Pub. L. 106-65, div. A, title X, § 1066(c)(4), Oct. 5, 1999, 113 Stat. 773, provided that:

“(a) INTELLIGENCE ANALYSIS.—The Director of Central Intelligence, in consultation with the Secretary of Defense, shall provide intelligence analysis on matters concerning prisoners of war and missing persons (as defined in chapter 76 of title 10, United States Code) to all departments and agencies of the Federal Government involved in such matters.

“(b) USE OF INTELLIGENCE IN ANALYSIS OF POW/MIA CASES IN DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE.—The Secretary of Defense shall ensure that the Defense Prisoner of War/Missing Personnel Office of the Department of Defense takes into full account all intelligence regarding matters concerning prisoners of war and missing persons (as defined in chapter 76 of title 10, United States Code) in analyzing cases involving such persons.”

[Reference to the Director of Central Intelligence or the Director of the Central Intelligence Agency in the Director's capacity as the head of the intelligence community deemed to be a reference to the Director of National Intelligence. Reference to the Director of Central Intelligence or the Director of the Central Intelligence Agency in the Director's capacity as the head of the Central Intelligence Agency deemed to be a reference to the Director of the Central Intelligence Agency. See section 1081(a), (b) of Pub. L. 108-458, set out as a note under section 401 of Title 50, War and National Defense.]

CONGRESSIONAL STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

Section 569(a) of Pub. L. 104-106 provided that: “The purpose of this section [enacting this chapter and section 655 of this title, amending sections 552, 553, 555, and 556 of Title 37, Pay and Allowances of the Uniformed Services, and enacting provisions set out as a note under section 5561 of Title 5, Government Organization

and Employees] is to ensure that any member of the Armed Forces (and any Department of Defense civilian employee or contractor employee who serves with or accompanies the Armed Forces in the field under orders) who becomes missing or unaccounted for is ultimately accounted for by the United States and, as a general rule, is not declared dead solely because of the passage of time.”

§ 1502. Missing persons: initial report

(a) PRELIMINARY ASSESSMENT AND RECOMMENDATION BY COMMANDER.—After receiving information that the whereabouts and status of a person described in section 1501(c) of this title is uncertain and that the absence of the person may be involuntary, the commander of the unit, facility, or area to or in which the person is assigned shall make a preliminary assessment of the circumstances. If, as a result of that assessment, the commander concludes that the person is missing, the commander shall—

(1) recommend that the person be placed in a missing status; and

(2) not later than 10 days after receiving such information, transmit a report containing that recommendation to the Secretary concerned in accordance with procedures prescribed under section 1501(b) of this title.

(b) TRANSMISSION OF ADVISORY COPY TO THEATER COMPONENT COMMANDER.—When transmitting a report under subsection (a)(2) recommending that a person be placed in a missing status, the commander transmitting that report shall transmit an advisory copy of the report to the theater component commander with jurisdiction over the missing person.

(c) SAFEGUARDING AND FORWARDING OF RECORDS.—A commander making a preliminary assessment under subsection (a) with respect to a missing person shall (in accordance with procedures prescribed under section 1501 of this title) safeguard and forward for official use any information relating to the whereabouts and status of the missing person that results from the preliminary assessment or from actions taken to locate the person.

(Added Pub. L. 104-106, div. A, title V, § 569(b)(1), Feb. 10, 1996, 110 Stat. 338; amended Pub. L. 104-201, div. A, title V, § 578(b)(1), Sept. 23, 1996, 110 Stat. 2536; Pub. L. 105-85, div. A, title V, § 599(b)(1), Nov. 18, 1997, 111 Stat. 1768.)

AMENDMENTS

1997—Subsecs. (b), (c). Pub. L. 105-85 added subsec. (b) and redesignated former subsec. (b) as (c).

1996—Subsec. (a)(2). Pub. L. 104-201, § 578(b)(1)(A), substituted “10 days” for “48 hours” and “Secretary concerned” for “theater component commander with jurisdiction over the missing person”.

Subsec. (b). Pub. L. 104-201, § 578(b)(1)(D), struck out at end “The theater component commander through whom the report with respect to the missing person is transmitted under subsection (b) shall ensure that all pertinent information relating to the whereabouts and status of the missing person that results from the preliminary assessment or from actions taken to locate the person is properly safeguarded to avoid loss, damage, or modification.”

Pub. L. 104-201, § 578(b)(1)(B), (C), redesignated subsec. (c) as (b) and struck out former subsec. (b) which read as follows: “TRANSMISSION THROUGH THEATER COMPONENT COMMANDER.—Upon reviewing a report under subsection (a) recommending that a person be placed in a

missing status, the theater component commander shall ensure that all necessary actions are being taken, and all appropriate assets are being used, to resolve the status of the missing person. Not later than 14 days after receiving the report, the theater component commander shall forward the report to the Secretary of Defense or the Secretary concerned in accordance with procedures prescribed under section 1501(b) of this title. The theater component commander shall include with such report a certification that all necessary actions are being taken, and all appropriate assets are being used, to resolve the status of the missing person."

Subsec. (c). Pub. L. 104-201, § 578(b)(1)(C), redesignated subsec. (c) as (b).

§ 1503. Actions of Secretary concerned; initial board inquiry

(a) DETERMINATION BY SECRETARY.—Upon receiving a recommendation under section 1502(a) of this title that a person be placed in a missing status, the Secretary receiving the recommendation shall review the recommendation and, not later than 10 days after receiving such recommendation, shall appoint a board under this section to conduct an inquiry into the whereabouts and status of the person.

(b) INQUIRIES INVOLVING MORE THAN ONE MISSING PERSON.—If it appears to the Secretary who appoints a board under this section that the absence or missing status of two or more persons is factually related, the Secretary may appoint a single board under this section to conduct the inquiry into the whereabouts and status of all such persons.

(c) COMPOSITION.—(1) A board appointed under this section to inquire into the whereabouts and status of a person shall consist of at least one individual described in paragraph (2) who has experience with and understanding of military operations or activities similar to the operation or activity in which the person disappeared.

(2) An individual referred to in paragraph (1) is the following:

(A) A military officer, in the case of an inquiry with respect to a member of the armed forces.

(B) A civilian, in the case of an inquiry with respect to a civilian employee of the Department of Defense or of a contractor of the Department of Defense.

(3) An individual may be appointed as a member of a board under this section only if the individual has a security clearance that affords the individual access to all information relating to the whereabouts and status of the missing persons covered by the inquiry.

(4) A Secretary appointing a board under this subsection shall, for purposes of providing legal counsel to the board, assign to the board a judge advocate, or appoint to the board an attorney, who has expertise in the law relating to missing persons, the determination of death of such persons, and the rights of family members and dependents of such persons.

(d) DUTIES OF BOARD.—A board appointed to conduct an inquiry into the whereabouts and status of a missing person under this section shall—

(1) collect, develop, and investigate all facts and evidence relating to the disappearance or whereabouts and status of the person;

(2) collect appropriate documentation of the facts and evidence covered by the board's investigation;

(3) analyze the facts and evidence, make findings based on that analysis, and draw conclusions as to the current whereabouts and status of the person; and

(4) with respect to each person covered by the inquiry, recommend to the Secretary who appointed the board that—

(A) the person be placed in a missing status; or

(B) the person be declared to have deserted, to be absent without leave, or (subject to the requirements of section 1507 of this title) to be dead.

(e) BOARD PROCEEDINGS.—During the proceedings of an inquiry under this section, a board shall—

(1) collect, record, and safeguard all facts, documents, statements, photographs, tapes, messages, maps, sketches, reports, and other information (whether classified or unclassified) relating to the whereabouts and status of each person covered by the inquiry;

(2) gather information relating to actions taken to find the person, including any evidence of the whereabouts and status of the person arising from such actions; and

(3) maintain a record of its proceedings.

(f) COUNSEL FOR MISSING PERSON.—(1) The Secretary appointing a board to conduct an inquiry under this section shall appoint counsel to represent each person covered by the inquiry or, in a case covered by subsection (b), one counsel to represent all persons covered by the inquiry. Counsel appointed under this paragraph may be referred to as "missing person's counsel" and represents the interests of the person covered by the inquiry (and not any member of the person's family or other interested parties). The identity of counsel appointed under this paragraph for a missing person shall be made known to the missing person's primary next of kin and any other previously designated person of the person.

(2) To be appointed as a missing person's counsel, a person must—

(A) have the qualifications specified in section 827(b) of this title (article 27(b) of the Uniform Code of Military Justice) for trial counsel or defense counsel detailed for a general court-martial;

(B) have a security clearance that affords the counsel access to all information relating to the whereabouts and status of the person or persons covered by the inquiry; and

(C) have expertise in the law relating to missing persons, the determination of the death of such persons, and the rights of family members and dependents of such persons.

(3) A missing person's counsel—

(A) shall have access to all facts and evidence considered by the board during the proceedings under the inquiry for which the counsel is appointed;

(B) shall observe all official activities of the board during such proceedings;

(C) may question witnesses before the board; and