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PRIOR PROVISIONS

Prior to enactment of this chapter by Pub. L. 99-433, provisions relating to combat commands were contained in section 124 of this title.

AMENDMENTS

- 2003—Pub. L. 108-136, div. A, title VIII, §848(a)(2), Nov. 24, 2003, 117 Stat. 1555, added item 167a.
2001—Pub. L. 107-107, div. A, title XV, §1512(b), Dec. 28, 2001, 115 Stat. 1273, added item 166b.
1994—Pub. L. 103-337, div. A, title XIII, §1316(a)(2), Oct. 5, 1994, 108 Stat. 2899, added item 168.
1991—Pub. L. 102-190, div. A, title IX, §902(b), Dec. 5, 1991, 105 Stat. 1451, added item 166a.
1986—Pub. L. 99-500, §101(c) [title IX, §9115(b)(2)], Oct. 18, 1986, 100 Stat. 1783-82, 1783-124, and Pub. L. 99-591, §101(c) [title IX, §9115(b)(2)], Oct. 30, 1986, 100 Stat. 3341-82, 3341-124; Pub. L. 99-661, div. A, title XIII, §1311(b)(2), Nov. 14, 1986, 100 Stat. 3985, amended analysis identically adding item 167.
Pub. L. 99-433, title II, §211(a), Oct. 1, 1986, 100 Stat. 1012, added chapter 6 heading and analysis.

§ 161. Combatant commands: establishment

(a) UNIFIED AND SPECIFIED COMBATANT COMMANDS.—With the advice and assistance of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the President, through the Secretary of Defense, shall—

- (1) establish unified combatant commands and specified combatant commands to perform military missions; and
- (2) prescribe the force structure of those commands.

(b) PERIODIC REVIEW.—(1) The Chairman periodically (and not less often than every two years) shall—

- (A) review the missions, responsibilities (including geographic boundaries), and force structure of each combatant command; and
- (B) recommend to the President, through the Secretary of Defense, any changes to such missions, responsibilities, and force structures as may be necessary.

(2) Except during time of hostilities or imminent threat of hostilities, the President shall notify Congress not more than 60 days after—

- (A) establishing a new combatant command; or
- (B) significantly revising the missions, responsibilities, or force structure of an existing combatant command.

(c) DEFINITIONS.—In this chapter:

- (1) The term “unified combatant command” means a military command which has broad, continuing missions and which is composed of forces from two or more military departments.

(2) The term “specified combatant command” means a military command which has broad, continuing missions and which is normally composed of forces from a single military department.

(3) The term “combatant command” means a unified combatant command or a specified combatant command.

(Added Pub. L. 99-433, title II, §211(a), Oct. 1, 1986, 100 Stat. 1012.)

MATTERS TO BE CONSIDERED IN NEXT ASSESSMENT OF CURRENT MISSIONS, RESPONSIBILITIES, AND FORCE STRUCTURE OF UNIFIED COMBATANT COMMANDS

Pub. L. 104-201, div. A, title IX, §905, Sept. 23, 1996, 110 Stat. 2619, required the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff to consider, as part of the next periodic review after Sept. 23, 1996, pursuant to subsec. (b) of this section: (1) whether there was an adequate distribution of responsibilities among the regional unified combatant commands; (2) whether fewer or differently configured commands would permit the United States to better execute warfighting plans; (3) whether any assets or activities were redundant; (4) whether warfighting requirements were adequate to justify current commands; (5) whether exclusion of certain nations from the Areas of Responsibility presented difficulties with respect to national security objectives in those areas; and (6) whether the boundary between the United States Central and European Commands could create command conflicts in the context of a major regional conflict in the Middle East.

INITIAL REVIEW OF COMBATANT COMMANDS

Pub. L. 99-433, title II, §212, Oct. 1, 1986, 100 Stat. 1017, set out 10 areas to be covered in first review of missions, responsibilities, and force structure of unified combatant commands under subsec. (b) of this section, and directed that first report to President be made not later than Oct. 1, 1987.

DISESTABLISHMENT OF UNITED STATES JOINT FORCES COMMAND

Memorandum of President of the United States, Jan. 6, 2011, 76 F.R. 1977, provided:

Memorandum for the Secretary of Defense
Pursuant to my authority as Commander in Chief and under 10 U.S.C. 161, I hereby accept the recommendations of the Secretary of Defense and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and approve the disestablishment of United States Joint Forces Command, effective on a date to be determined by the Secretary of Defense. I direct this action be reflected in the 2010 Unified Command Plan.

Pursuant to 10 U.S.C. 161(b)(2) and 3 U.S.C. 301, you are directed to notify the Congress on my behalf.

You are authorized and directed to publish this memorandum in the Federal Register.

BARACK OBAMA.

UNIFIED COMMAND PLAN 2011

Memorandum of President of the United States, Apr. 6, 2011, 76 F.R. 19893, provided:

Memorandum for the Secretary of Defense
Pursuant to my authority as Commander in Chief, I hereby approve and direct the implementation of the revised Unified Command Plan.

Consistent with title 10, United States Code, section 161(b)(2) and title 3, United States Code, section 301, you are directed to notify the Congress on my behalf.

You are authorized and directed to publish this memorandum in the Federal Register.

BARACK OBAMA.

§ 162. Combatant commands: assigned forces; chain of command

(a) ASSIGNMENT OF FORCES.—(1) Except as provided in paragraph (2), the Secretaries of the