

(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 recom-

mendations 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) As directed by the Secretary of Defense, the Secretaries of the military departments shall assign specified forces under their jurisdiction to unified and specified combatant commands or to the United States element of the North American Aerospace Defense Command to perform missions assigned to those commands. The Secretary of Defense shall ensure that such assignments are consistent with the force structure prescribed by the President for each combatant command.

(2) A force not assigned to a combatant command or to the United States element of the North American Aerospace Defense Command under paragraph (1) shall remain assigned to the military department concerned for carrying out the responsibilities of the Secretary of the military department concerned as specified in section 3013, 5013, or 8013 of this title, as applicable.

(3) A force assigned to a combatant command or to the United States element of the North American Aerospace Defense Command under this section may be transferred from the command to which it is assigned only—

(A) by authority of the Secretary of Defense; and

(B) under procedures prescribed by the Secretary and approved by the President.

(4) Except as otherwise directed by the Secretary of Defense, all forces assigned to a unified combatant command shall be under the command of the commander of that command. The preceding sentence applies to forces assigned to a specified combatant command only as prescribed by the Secretary of Defense.

(b) CHAIN OF COMMAND.—Unless otherwise directed by the President, the chain of command to a unified or specified combatant command runs—

(1) from the President to the Secretary of Defense; and

(2) from the Secretary of Defense to the commander of the combatant command.

(Added Pub. L. 99-433, title II, §211(a), Oct. 1, 1986, 100 Stat. 1012; amended Pub. L. 100-180, div.

A, title XIII, § 1313, Dec. 4, 1987, 101 Stat. 1175; Pub. L. 100-456, div. A, title VII, § 711, Sept. 29, 1988, 102 Stat. 1997; Pub. L. 104-201, div. A, title X, § 1073(a), Sept. 23, 1996, 110 Stat. 2657; Pub. L. 114-328, div. A, title IX, § 924, Dec. 23, 2016, 130 Stat. 2358; Pub. L. 115-91, div. A, title X, § 1081(a)(9), Dec. 12, 2017, 131 Stat. 1594.)

AMENDMENTS

2017—Subsec. (a)(4). Pub. L. 115-91 struck out comma after “command of”.

2016—Subsec. (a)(1). Pub. L. 114-328, § 924(1), substituted “As directed by the Secretary of Defense” for “Except as provided in paragraph (2)” and “specified forces” for “all forces” and struck out “Such assignments shall be made as directed by the Secretary of Defense, including direction as to the command to which forces are to be assigned.” before “The Secretary of Defense”.

Subsec. (a)(2). Pub. L. 114-328, § 924(2), added par. (2) and struck out former par. (2) which read as follows: “Except as otherwise directed by the Secretary of Defense, forces to be assigned by the Secretaries of the military departments to the combatant commands or to the United States element of the North American Aerospace Defense Command under paragraph (1) do not include forces assigned to carry out functions of the Secretary of a military department listed in sections 3013(b), 5013(b), and 8013(b) of this title or forces assigned to multinational peacekeeping organizations.”

Subsec. (a)(4). Pub. L. 114-328, § 924(3)(B), struck out “assigned to, and” before “under the command”.

Pub. L. 114-328, § 924(3)(A), which directed striking out “operating with the geographic area”, was executed by striking out “operating within the geographic area” after “all forces” to reflect the probable intent of Congress.

1996—Subsec. (a)(1) to (3). Pub. L. 104-201 substituted “North American Aerospace Defense Command” for “North American Air Defense Command”.

1988—Subsec. (a)(1) to (3). Pub. L. 100-456 inserted “or to the United States element of the North American Air Defense Command”.

1987—Subsec. (a)(2). Pub. L. 100-180 inserted before period at end “or forces assigned to multinational peacekeeping organizations”.

IMPLEMENTATION OF ASSIGNMENT OF FORCES TO COMBATANT COMMANDS

Pub. L. 99-433, title II, § 214(a), Oct. 1, 1986, 100 Stat. 1018, provided that section 162(a) of this title shall be implemented not later than 90 days after Oct. 1, 1986.

§ 163. Role of Chairman of Joint Chiefs of Staff

(a) COMMUNICATIONS THROUGH CHAIRMAN OF JCS; ASSIGNMENT OF DUTIES.—Subject to the limitations in section 152(c) of this title, the President may—

(1) direct that communications between the President or the Secretary of Defense and the commanders of the unified and specified combatant commands be transmitted through the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; and

(2) assign duties to the Chairman to assist the President and the Secretary of Defense in performing their command function.

(b) OVERSIGHT BY CHAIRMAN OF JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF.—(1) The Secretary of Defense may assign to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff responsibility for overseeing the activities of the combatant commands. Such assignment by the Secretary to the Chairman does not confer any command authority on the Chairman and does not alter the responsibility of the com-

manders of the combatant commands prescribed in section 164(b)(2) of this title.

(2) Subject to the authority, direction, and control of the Secretary of Defense, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff serves as the spokesman for the commanders of the combatant commands, especially on the operational requirements of their commands. In performing such function, the Chairman shall—

(A) confer with and obtain information from the commanders of the combatant commands with respect to the requirements of their commands;

(B) evaluate and integrate such information;

(C) advise and make recommendations to the Secretary of Defense with respect to the requirements of the combatant commands, individually and collectively; and

(D) communicate, as appropriate, the requirements of the combatant commands to other elements of the Department of Defense.

(Added Pub. L. 99-433, title II, § 211(a), Oct. 1, 1986, 100 Stat. 1013.)

§ 164. Commanders of combatant commands: assignment; powers and duties

(a) ASSIGNMENT AS COMBATANT COMMANDER.—

(1) The President may assign an officer to serve as the commander of a unified or specified combatant command only if the officer—

(A) has the joint specialty under section 661 of this title; and

(B) has completed a full tour of duty in a joint duty assignment (as defined in section 664(d) of this title) as a general or flag officer.

(2) The President may waive paragraph (1) in the case of an officer if the President determines that such action is necessary in the national interest.

(b) RESPONSIBILITIES OF COMBATANT COMMANDERS.—(1) The commander of a combatant command is responsible to the President and to the Secretary of Defense for the performance of missions assigned to that command by the President or by the Secretary with the approval of the President.

(2) Subject to the direction of the President, the commander of a combatant command—

(A) performs his duties under the authority, direction, and control of the Secretary of Defense; and

(B) is directly responsible to the Secretary for the preparedness of the command to carry out missions assigned to the command.

(3) Among the full range of command responsibilities specified in subsection (c) and as provided for in section 161 of this title, the primary duties of the commander of a combatant command shall be as follows:

(A) To produce plans for the employment of the armed forces to execute national defense strategies and respond to significant military contingencies.

(B) To take actions, as necessary, to deter conflict.

(C) To command United States armed forces as directed by the Secretary and approved by the President.

(c) COMMAND AUTHORITY OF COMBATANT COMMANDERS.—(1) Unless otherwise directed by the