

**§ 892b. Quality assurance program****(a) Definition**

For purposes of this section, the term “hydrographic product” means any publicly or commercially available product produced by a non-Federal entity that includes or displays hydrographic data.

**(b) Program****(1) In general**

The Administrator—

(A) by not later than 2 years after December 19, 2002, shall, subject to the availability of appropriations, develop and implement a quality assurance program that is equally available to all applicants, under which the Administrator may certify hydrographic products that satisfy the standards promulgated by the Administrator under section 892a(a)(3) of this title;

(B) may authorize the use of the emblem or any trademark of the Administration on a hydrographic product certified under subparagraph (A); and

(C) may charge a fee for such certification and use.

**(2) Limitation on fee amount**

Any fee under paragraph (1)(C) shall not exceed the costs of conducting the quality assurance testing, evaluation, or studies necessary to determine whether the hydrographic product satisfies the standards adopted under section 892a(a)(3) of this title, including the cost of administering such a program.

**(c) Limitation on liability**

The Government of the United States shall not be liable for any negligence by a person that produces hydrographic products certified under this section.

**(d) Hydrographic Services Account****(1) Establishment**

There is established in the Treasury a separate account, which shall be known as the “Hydrographic Services Account”.

**(2) Content**

The account shall consist of—

(A) amounts received by the United States as fees charged under subsection (b)(1)(C); and

(B) such other amounts as may be provided by law.

**(3) Use**

Amounts in the account shall be available to the Administrator, without further appropriation, for hydrographic services.

**(e) Limitation on new fees and increases in existing fees for hydrographic services**

After November 13, 1998, the Administrator may not—

(1) establish any fee or other charge for the provision of any hydrographic service except as authorized by this section; or

(2) increase the amount of any fee or other charge for the provision of any hydrographic service except as authorized by this section and section 1307 of title 44.

(Pub. L. 105–384, title III, §304, Nov. 13, 1998, 112 Stat. 3455; Pub. L. 107–372, title I, §104(a), Dec. 19, 2002, 116 Stat. 3080.)

## AMENDMENTS

2002—Subsec. (b)(1). Pub. L. 107–372 reenacted heading without change and amended text generally. Prior to amendment, text read as follows: “The Administrator may—

“(A) develop and implement a quality assurance program that is equally available to all applicants, under which the Administrator may certify hydrographic products that satisfy the standards promulgated by the Administrator under section 892a(a)(3) of this title;

“(B) authorize the use of the emblem or any trademark of the Administration on a hydrographic product certified under subparagraph (A); and

“(C) charge a fee for such certification and use.”

**§ 892c. Hydrographic Services Review Panel****(a) Establishment**

No later than 1 year after December 19, 2002, the Secretary shall establish the Hydrographic Services Review Panel.

**(b) Duties****(1) In general**

The panel shall advise the Administrator on matters related to the responsibilities and authorities set forth in section 892a of this title and such other appropriate matters as the Administrator refers to the panel for review and advice.

**(2) Administrative resources**

The Administrator shall make available to the panel such information, personnel, and administrative services and assistance as it may reasonably require to carry out its duties.

**(c) Membership****(1) In general**

(A) The panel shall consist of 15 voting members who shall be appointed by the Administrator. The Co-directors of the Center for Coastal and Ocean Mapping/Joint Hydrographic Center and no more than 2 employees of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration appointed by the Administrator shall serve as nonvoting members of the panel. The voting members of the panel shall be individuals who, by reason of knowledge, experience, or training, are especially qualified in 1 or more of the disciplines and fields relating to hydrographic data and hydrographic services, marine transportation, port administration, vessel pilotage, coastal and fishery management, and other disciplines as determined appropriate by the Administrator.

(B) An individual may not be appointed as a voting member of the panel if the individual is a full-time officer or employee of the United States.

(C) Any voting member of the panel who is an applicant for, or beneficiary (as determined by the Secretary) of, any assistance under this subchapter shall disclose to the panel that relationship, and may not vote on any matter pertaining to that assistance.

**(2) Terms**

(A) The term of office of a voting member of the panel shall be 4 years, except that of the