

ment, or grant, only for the purposes of section 552a of title 5 (relating to maintenance of records on individuals).”

Subsecs. (e), (f). Pub. L. 115-232, § 523(b)(1), (2), added subsec. (e) and redesignated former subsec. (e) as (f). Former subsec. (f) redesignated (g).

Subsec. (g). Pub. L. 115-232, § 523(b)(1), (3), redesignated subsec. (f) as (g) and added par. (3).

EFFECTIVE DATE OF 2021 AMENDMENT

Amendment by Pub. L. 116-283 effective Jan. 1, 2022, with additional provisions for delayed implementation and applicability of existing law, see section 1801(d) of Pub. L. 116-283, set out as a note preceding section 3001 of this title.

§ 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