

composition and functions of Joint Chiefs. See section 151 of this title.

Section 142, acts Aug. 10, 1956, ch. 1041, 70A Stat. 7; Sept. 7, 1962, Pub. L. 87-649, §14c(1), 76 Stat. 501; Oct. 19, 1984, Pub. L. 98-525, title XIII, §1301(b), 98 Stat. 2611, provided for appointment and duties of Chairman of Joint Chiefs. See sections 152 and 153 of this title.

Section 143, acts Aug. 10, 1956, ch. 1041, 70A Stat. 7; Aug. 6, 1958, Pub. L. 85-599, §5(a), 72 Stat. 517; Oct. 19, 1984, Pub. L. 98-525, title XIII, §1301(c), 98 Stat. 2611, provided for a Joint Staff. See section 155 of this title.

#### AMENDMENTS

2016—Pub. L. 114-328, div. A, title V, §502(a)(2), Dec. 23, 2016, 130 Stat. 2102, struck out item 155a “Assistants to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff for National Guard matters and Reserve matters”.

2013—Pub. L. 112-239, div. A, title V, §511(b), Jan. 2, 2013, 126 Stat. 1718, added item 155a.

2008—Pub. L. 110-417, [div. A], title X, §1061(a)(2), Oct. 14, 2008, 122 Stat. 4612, inserted period at end of item 156.

Pub. L. 110-181, div. A, title V, §543(e)(2), Jan. 28, 2008, 122 Stat. 115, added item 156.

1987—Pub. L. 100-180, div. A, title XIII, §1314(b)(1)(B), Dec. 4, 1987, 101 Stat. 1175, substituted “grade and rank” for “rank” in item 152.

1986—Pub. L. 99-433, title II, §201, Oct. 1, 1986, 100 Stat. 1005, amended chapter 5 heading and analysis generally, substituting items 151-155 for items 141-143.

### § 151. Joint Chiefs of Staff: composition; functions

(a) COMPOSITION.—There are in the Department of Defense the Joint Chiefs of Staff, headed by the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. The Joint Chiefs of Staff consist of the following:

- (1) The Chairman.
- (2) The Vice Chairman.
- (3) The Chief of Staff of the Army.
- (4) The Chief of Naval Operations.
- (5) The Chief of Staff of the Air Force.
- (6) The Commandant of the Marine Corps.
- (7) The Chief of the National Guard Bureau.
- (8) The Chief of Space Operations.

(b) FUNCTION AS MILITARY ADVISERS.—(1) The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff is the principal military adviser to the President, the National Security Council, the Homeland Security Council, and the Secretary of Defense.

(2) The other members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff are military advisers to the President, the National Security Council, the Homeland Security Council, and the Secretary of Defense as specified in subsection (d).

(c) CONSULTATION BY CHAIRMAN.—(1) In carrying out his functions, duties, and responsibilities, the Chairman shall, as necessary, consult with and seek the advice of—

(A) the other members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; and

(B) the commanders of the unified and specified combatant commands.

(2) Subject to subsection (d), in presenting advice with respect to any matter to the President, the National Security Council, the Homeland Security Council, or the Secretary of Defense, the Chairman shall, as he considers appropriate, inform the President, the National Security Council, the Homeland Security Council, or the Secretary of Defense, as the case may be, of the range of military advice and opinion with respect to that matter.

(d) ADVICE AND OPINIONS OF MEMBERS OTHER THAN CHAIRMAN.—(1) After first informing the Secretary of Defense and the Chairman, the members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, individually or collectively, in their capacity as military advisors, may provide advice to the President, the National Security Council, the Homeland Security Council, or the Secretary of Defense on a particular matter on the judgment of the military member.

(2) A member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (other than the Chairman) may submit to the Chairman advice or an opinion in disagreement with, or advice or an opinion in addition to, the advice presented by the Chairman to the President, the National Security Council, the Homeland Security Council, or the Secretary of Defense. If a member submits such advice or opinion, the Chairman shall present the advice or opinion of such member at the same time he presents his own advice to the President, the National Security Council, the Homeland Security Council, or the Secretary of Defense, as the case may be.

(3) The Chairman shall establish procedures to ensure that the presentation of his own advice to the President, the National Security Council, the Homeland Security Council, or the Secretary of Defense is not unduly delayed by reason of the submission of the individual advice or opinion of another member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

[(e) Repealed. Pub. L. 114-328, div. A, title IX, §921(a)(2)(C), Dec. 23, 2016, 130 Stat. 2351.]

(f) RECOMMENDATIONS TO CONGRESS.—After first informing the Secretary of Defense, a member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff may make such recommendations to Congress relating to the Department of Defense as he considers appropriate.

(g) MEETINGS OF JCS.—(1) The Chairman shall convene regular meetings of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

(2) Subject to the authority, direction, and control of the President and the Secretary of Defense, the Chairman shall—

(A) preside over the Joint Chiefs of Staff;

(B) provide agenda for the meetings of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (including, as the Chairman considers appropriate, any subject for the agenda recommended by any other member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff);

(C) assist the Joint Chiefs of Staff in carrying on their business as promptly as practicable; and

(D) determine when issues under consideration by the Joint Chiefs of Staff shall be decided.

(Added Pub. L. 99-433, title II, §201, Oct. 1, 1986, 100 Stat. 1005; amended Pub. L. 102-484, div. A, title IX, §911(a), Oct. 23, 1992, 106 Stat. 2473; Pub. L. 109-163, div. A, title IX, §908(a), Jan. 6, 2006, 119 Stat. 3403; Pub. L. 112-81, div. A, title V, §512(a), Dec. 31, 2011, 125 Stat. 1393; Pub. L. 114-328, div. A, title IX, §921(a), Dec. 23, 2016, 130 Stat. 2351; Pub. L. 116-92, div. A, title IX, §953(c), Dec. 20, 2019, 133 Stat. 1564.)

#### Editorial Notes

##### AMENDMENTS

2019—Subsec. (a)(8). Pub. L. 116-92 added par. (8).

2016—Subsec. (b)(2). Pub. L. 114-328, §921(a)(2)(A), substituted “subsection (d)” for “subsections (d) and (e)”.

Subsec. (c)(1). Pub. L. 114-328, §921(a)(1), substituted “as necessary” for “as he considers appropriate” in introductory provisions.

Subsec. (d). Pub. L. 114-328, §921(a)(2)(B), added par. (1) and redesignated former pars. (1) and (2) as (2) and (3), respectively.

Subsec. (e). Pub. L. 114-328, §921(a)(2)(C), struck out subsec. (e) which required members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff to provide advice on request to the President, the National Security Council, the Homeland Security Council, or the Secretary of Defense.

2011—Subsec. (a)(7). Pub. L. 112-81 added par. (7).

2006—Subsecs. (b), (c)(2), (d), (e). Pub. L. 109-163 inserted “the Homeland Security Council,” after “the National Security Council,” wherever appearing.

1992—Subsec. (a)(2) to (6). Pub. L. 102-484 added par. (2) and redesignated former pars. (2) to (5) as (3) to (6), respectively.

#### Statutory Notes and Related Subsidiaries

##### EFFECTIVE DATE OF 2019 AMENDMENT

Pub. L. 116-92, div. A, title IX, §953(c), Dec. 20, 2019, 133 Stat. 1564, provided that the amendment made by section 953(c) is effective on the date that is one year after Dec. 20, 2019.

#### § 152. Chairman: appointment; grade and rank

(a) APPOINTMENT; TERM OF OFFICE.—(1) There is a Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, appointed by the President, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, from the officers of the regular components of the armed forces. The Chairman serves at the pleasure of the President for a term of four years, beginning on October 1 of an odd-numbered year. The limitation does not apply in time of war.

(2) In the event of the death, retirement, resignation, or reassignment of the officer serving as Chairman before the end of the term for which the officer was appointed, an officer appointed to fill the vacancy shall serve as Chairman only for the remainder of the original term, but may be reappointed as provided in paragraph (1).

(3) The President may extend to eight years the combined period of service of an officer as Chairman and Vice Chairman if the President determines that such action is in the national interest. The limitation in this paragraph does not apply in time of war.

(b) REQUIREMENT FOR APPOINTMENT.—(1) The President may appoint an officer as Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff only if the officer has served as—

(A) the Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff;

(B) the Chief of Staff of the Army, the Chief of Naval Operations, the Chief of Staff of the Air Force, the Commandant of the Marine Corps, or the Chief of Space Operations; or

(C) the commander of a unified or specified combatant command.

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

(c) GRADE AND RANK.—The Chairman, while so serving, holds the grade of general, in the case of the Navy, admiral, or, in the case of an officer of the Space Force, the equivalent grade, and outranks all other officers of the armed forces.

However, he may not exercise military command over the Joint Chiefs of Staff or any of the armed forces.

(Added Pub. L. 99-433, title II, §201, Oct. 1, 1986, 100 Stat. 1006; amended Pub. L. 100-180, div. A, title XIII, §1314(b)(1)(A), Dec. 4, 1987, 101 Stat. 1175; Pub. L. 114-328, div. A, title IX, §921(b)(1), Dec. 23, 2016, 130 Stat. 2351; Pub. L. 116-283, div. A, title IX, §924(b)(7)(A), Jan. 1, 2021, 134 Stat. 3822.)

#### Editorial Notes

##### AMENDMENTS

2021—Subsec. (b)(1)(B). Pub. L. 116-283, §924(b)(7)(A)(i), which directed substitution of “the Commandant of the Marine Corps, or the Chief of Space Operations” for “or the Commandant of the Marine Corps” in subpar. (C), was executed by making the substitution in subpar. (B), to reflect the probable intent of Congress.

Subsec. (c). Pub. L. 116-283, §924(b)(7)(A)(ii), which directed substitution of “, in the case of the Navy, admiral, or, in the case of an officer of the Space Force, the equivalent grade,” for “or, in the case of the Navy, admiral”, was executed by making the substitution for “or, in the case of an officer of the Navy, admiral”, to reflect the probable intent of Congress.

2016—Subsec. (a)(1). Pub. L. 114-328, §921(b)(1)(A), substituted “four years, beginning on October 1 of an odd-numbered year. The limitation does not apply in time of war.” for “two years, beginning on October 1 of odd-numbered years. Subject to paragraph (3), an officer serving as Chairman may be reappointed in the same manner for two additional terms. However, in time of war there is no limit on the number of reappointments.”

Subsec. (a)(3). Pub. L. 114-328, §921(b)(1)(B), added par. (3) and struck out former par. (3) which read as follows: “An officer may not serve as Chairman or Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff if the combined period of service of such officer in such positions exceeds six years. However, the President may extend to eight years the combined period of service an officer may serve in such positions if he determines such action is in the national interest. The limitations of this paragraph do not apply in time of war.”

1987—Pub. L. 100-180 substituted “grade and rank” for “rank” in section catchline.

#### Statutory Notes and Related Subsidiaries

##### EFFECTIVE DATE OF 2016 AMENDMENT

Pub. L. 114-328, div. A, title IX, §921(b)(2), Dec. 23, 2016, 130 Stat. 2351, provided that: “The amendments made by paragraph (1) [amending this section] shall take effect on January 1, 2019, and shall apply to individuals appointed as Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff on or after that date.”

#### § 153. Chairman: functions

(a) PLANNING; ADVICE; POLICY FORMULATION.—Subject to the authority, direction, and control of the President and the Secretary of Defense, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff shall be responsible for the following:

(1) STRATEGIC DIRECTION.—Assisting the President and the Secretary in providing for the strategic direction of the armed forces.

(2) STRATEGIC AND CONTINGENCY PLANNING.—In matters relating to strategic and contingency planning—

(A) developing strategic frameworks and preparing strategic plans, as required, to guide the use and employment of military force and related activities across all geo-