

(10) “Secretary” means the Secretary of State, except that (subject to section 3921 of this title) with reference to the exercise of functions under this Act with respect to any agency authorized by law to utilize the Foreign Service personnel system, such term means the head of that agency;

(11) “Service” or “Foreign Service” means the Foreign Service of the United States; and

(12) “United States”, when used in a geographic sense, means the several States and the District of Columbia.

(Pub. L. 96-465, title I, §102, Oct. 17, 1980, 94 Stat. 2075; Pub. L. 98-164, title I, §130(a), Nov. 22, 1983, 97 Stat. 1027.)

#### Editorial Notes

##### REFERENCES IN TEXT

Section 552(e) of title 5, referred to in par. (2), was redesignated section 552(f) of title 5 by section 1802(b) of Pub. L. 99-570.

##### AMENDMENTS

1983—Pub. L. 98-164 struck out “(a)” before “As used in this chapter”, and struck out subsec. (b) which provided that references to Foreign Service officers in any provision be deemed to refer to, with respect to the United States Information Agency, Foreign Service Information officers.

#### § 3903. Members of Service

The following are the members of the Service:

(1) Chiefs of mission, appointed under section 3942(a)(1) of this title or assigned under section 3982(c) of this title.

(2) Ambassadors at large, appointed under section 3942(a)(1) of this title.

(3) Members of the Senior Foreign Service, appointed under section 3942(a)(1) or 3943 of this title, who are the corps of leaders and experts for the management of the Service and the performance of its functions.

(4) Foreign Service officers, appointed under section 3942(a)(1) of this title, who have general responsibility for carrying out the functions of the Service.

(5) Foreign Service personnel, United States citizens appointed under section 3943 of this title, who provide skills and services required for effective performance by the Service.

(6) Foreign national employees, foreign nationals appointed under section 3943 of this title, who provide clerical, administrative, technical, fiscal, and other support at Foreign Service posts abroad.

(7) Consular agents, appointed under section 3943 of this title by the Secretary of State, who provide consular and related services as authorized by the Secretary of State at specified locations abroad where no Foreign Service posts are situated.

(Pub. L. 96-465, title I, §103, Oct. 17, 1980, 94 Stat. 2076.)

#### § 3904. Functions of Service

Members of the Service shall, under the direction of the Secretary—

(1) represent the interests of the United States in relation to foreign countries and

international organizations, and perform the functions relevant to their appointments and assignments, including (as appropriate) functions under the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations, other international agreements to which the United States is a party, the laws of the United States, and orders, regulations, and directives issued pursuant to law;

(2) provide guidance for the formulation and conduct of programs and activities of the Department and other agencies which relate to the foreign relations of the United States; and

(3) perform functions on behalf of any agency or other Government establishment (including any establishment in the legislative or judicial branch) requiring their services.

(Pub. L. 96-465, title I, §104, Oct. 17, 1980, 94 Stat. 2076.)

#### § 3905. Personnel actions

##### (a) Merit principles; “personnel action” defined

(1) All personnel actions with respect to career members and career candidates in the Service (including applicants for career candidate appointments) shall be made in accordance with merit principles.

(2) For purposes of paragraph (1), the term “personnel action” means—

(A) any appointment, promotion, assignment (including assignment to any position or salary class), award of performance pay or special differential, within-class salary increase, separation, or performance evaluation, and

(B) any decision, recommendation, examination, or ranking provided for under this chapter which relates to any action referred to in subparagraph (A).

##### (b) Rules and regulations; discrimination; reprisals for disclosure of information; submission of reports, evaluations, or recommendations; freedom from prohibited personnel practices

The Secretary shall administer the provisions of this chapter and shall prescribe such regulations as may be necessary to ensure that members of the Service, as well as applicants for appointments in the Service—

(1) are free from discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, handicapping condition, marital status, geographic or educational affiliation within the United States, or political affiliation, as prohibited under section 2302(b)(1) of title 5;

(2) are free from reprisal for—

(A) a disclosure of information by a member or applicant which the member or applicant reasonably believes evidences—

(i) a violation of any law, rule, or regulation, or

(ii) mismanagement, a gross waste of funds, an abuse of authority, or a substantial and specific danger to public health or safety,

if such disclosure is not specifically prohibited by law and if such information is not specifically required by Executive order to be kept secret in the interest of national defense or the conduct of foreign affairs; or