

lows: “Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection (a), all sums received for any Department of Defense activity for fire protection rendered pursuant to this subchapter shall be credited to the appropriation fund or account from which the expenses were paid. Amounts so credited shall be merged with funds in such appropriation fund or account and shall be available for the same purposes and subject to the same limitations as the funds with which the funds are merged.”

2008—Pub. L. 110-181 designated existing provisions as subsec. (a) and added subsec. (b).

**Statutory Notes and Related Subsidiaries**

EFFECTIVE DATE OF 2011 AMENDMENT

Pub. L. 112-81, div. A, title III, §364(b), Dec. 31, 2011, 125 Stat. 1380, provided that: “The amendment made by subsection (a) [amending this section] shall apply with respect to reimbursements for expenditures of funds appropriated after the date of the enactment of this Act [Dec. 31, 2011].”

**§ 1856e. Reimbursement of fire funds**

**(a) Definition of State**

In this section, the term “State” means—

- (1) a State; and
- (2) the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico.

**(b) In general**

If a State seeks reimbursement for amounts expended for resources and services provided to another State for the management and suppression of a wildfire, the Secretary, subject to subsections (c) and (d)—

- (1) may accept the reimbursement amounts from the other State; and
- (2) shall pay those amounts to the State seeking reimbursement.

**(c) Mutual assistance agreement**

As a condition of seeking and providing reimbursement under subsection (b), the State seeking reimbursement and the State providing reimbursement must each have a mutual assistance agreement with the Forest Service or another Federal agency for providing and receiving wildfire management and suppression resources and services.

**(d) Terms and conditions**

The Secretary may prescribe the terms and conditions determined to be necessary to carry out subsection (b).

**(e) Effect on prior reimbursements**

Any acceptance of funds or reimbursements made by the Secretary before February 7, 2014, that otherwise would have been authorized under this section shall be considered to have been made in accordance with this section.

(Pub. L. 113-79, title VIII, §8304, Feb. 7, 2014, 128 Stat. 924.)

**Editorial Notes**

CODIFICATION

Section was enacted as part of the Agricultural Act of 2014, and not as part of act May 27, 1955, which comprises this subchapter.

Section is comprised of section 8304 of Pub. L. 113-79. Subsec. (f) of section 8304 of Pub. L. 113-79 amended section 1856d of this title.

**Statutory Notes and Related Subsidiaries**

DEFINITION OF “SECRETARY”

“Secretary” as meaning the Secretary of Agriculture, see section 9001 of Title 7, Agriculture.

**SUBCHAPTER II—WILDFIRE SUPPRESSION WITH FOREIGN FIRE ORGANIZATION**

**§ 1856m. Definitions**

In this subchapter:

**(1) Assume any and all liability**

The term “assume any and all liability” means—

- (A) the payment of—
  - (i) any judgment, settlement, fine, penalty, or cost assessment (including prevailing party legal fees) associated with the applicable litigation; and
  - (ii) any cost incurred in handling the applicable litigation (including legal fees); and
- (B) with respect to a Federal firefighter, arranging for, and paying the costs of, representation in the applicable litigation.

**(2) Federal firefighter**

The term “Federal firefighter” means an individual furnished by the Secretary of Agriculture or the Secretary of the Interior under an agreement entered into under section 1856n of this title.

**(3) Foreign fire organization**

The term “foreign fire organization” means any foreign governmental, public, or private entity that has wildfire protection resources.

**(4) Foreign firefighter**

The term “foreign firefighter” means an individual furnished by a foreign fire organization under an agreement entered into under section 1856n of this title.

**(5) Wildfire**

The term “wildfire” means any forest or range fire.

**(6) Wildfire protection resources**

The term “wildfire protection resources” means any personnel, supplies, equipment, or other resources required for wildfire presuppression and suppression activities.

(Pub. L. 100-428, §2, as added Pub. L. 112-74, div. E, title IV, §411(2), Dec. 23, 2011, 125 Stat. 1039.)

**Editorial Notes**

PRIOR PROVISIONS

A prior section 1856m, Pub. L. 100-428, §2, Sept. 9, 1988, 102 Stat. 1615, related to definitions, prior to repeal by Pub. L. 112-74, div. E, title IV, §411(2), Dec. 23, 2011, 125 Stat. 1039.

**Statutory Notes and Related Subsidiaries**

SHORT TITLE OF 1989 AMENDMENT

Pub. L. 101-11, §1, Apr. 7, 1989, 103 Stat. 15, provided that: “This Act [repealing section 1856p of this title] may be cited as the ‘Wildfire Suppression Assistance Act.’”

SHORT TITLE

Pub. L. 100-428, §1, Sept. 9, 1988, 102 Stat. 1615, as amended by Pub. L. 112-74, div. E, title IV, §411(1), Dec.

23, 2011, 125 Stat. 1039, provided that: “This Act [enacting this subchapter] may be cited as the ‘Emergency Wildfire Suppression Act’.”

### § 1856n. Implementation

#### (a) Exchange of wildfire protection resources under a reciprocal agreement with a foreign fire organization

##### (1) Authority to enter into a reciprocal agreement

The Secretary of Agriculture or the Secretary of the Interior, in consultation with the Secretary of State, may enter into a reciprocal agreement with any foreign fire organization for mutual aid in furnishing wildfire protection resources for lands and other properties for which such Secretary or organization normally provides wildfire protection.

##### (2) Requirements for a reciprocal agreement

Any agreement entered into under this subsection—

(A) shall include a waiver by each party to the agreement of all claims against every other party to the agreement for compensation for any loss, damage, personal injury, or death occurring in consequence of the performance of such agreement;

(B) shall include a provision to allow the termination of such agreement by any party thereto after reasonable notice; and

(C) may provide for the reimbursement of any party thereto for all or any part of the costs incurred by such party in furnishing wildfire protection resources for, or on behalf of, any other party thereto.

#### (b) Exchange of wildfire protection resources without a reciprocal agreement

In the absence of any agreement authorized under subsection (a), the Secretary of Agriculture or the Secretary of the Interior may—

(1) furnish emergency wildfire protection resources to any foreign nation when the furnishing of such resources is determined by such Secretary to be in the best interest of the United States; and

(2) accept emergency wildfire protection resources from any foreign fire organization when the acceptance of such resources is determined by such Secretary to be in the best interest of the United States.

#### (c) Reimbursement under agreements with Canada

Notwithstanding the preceding provisions of this section, reimbursement may be provided for the costs incurred by the Government of Canada or a Canadian organization in furnishing wildfire protection resources to the Government of the United States under—

(1) the memorandum entitled “Memorandum of Understanding Between the United States Department of Agriculture and Environment Canada on Cooperation in the Field of Forestry-Related Programs” dated June 25, 1982; and

(2) the arrangement entitled “Arrangement in the Form of an Exchange of Notes Between the Government of Canada and the Government of the United States of America” dated May 4, 1982.

#### (d) Service performed under this subchapter by Federal employees

##### (1) In general

Any service performed by any employee of the United States under an agreement or otherwise under this subchapter shall constitute service rendered in the line of duty in such employment.

##### (2) Effect

Except as provided in section 1856n-1 of this title, the performance of such service by any other individual shall not make such individual an employee of the United States.

(Pub. L. 100-428, §3, Sept. 9, 1988, 102 Stat. 1615; Pub. L. 112-74, div. E, title IV, §411(3), Dec. 23, 2011, 125 Stat. 1040.)

### Editorial Notes

#### AMENDMENTS

2011—Subsec. (a). Pub. L. 112-74, §411(3)(A), inserted headings for subsec. (a) and pars. (1) and (2).

Subsec. (b). Pub. L. 112-74, §411(3)(B)(i), inserted heading.

Subsec. (b)(1). Pub. L. 112-74, §411(3)(B)(ii), substituted “United States; and” for “United States, and”.

Subsec. (c). Pub. L. 112-74, §411(3)(C), inserted heading.

Subsec. (d). Pub. L. 112-74, §411(3)(D), inserted subsec. heading, designated first and second sentences as pars. (1) and (2), respectively, inserted par. headings, and substituted “Except as provided in section 1856n-1 of this title, the” for “The” in par. (2).

#### § 1856n-1. Reciprocal agreements with liability coverage

##### (a) Protection from liability for foreign firefighters and foreign fire organizations

Subject to subsection (b), in an agreement with a foreign fire organization entered into under section 1856n of this title, the Secretary of Agriculture and the Secretary of the Interior may provide that—

(1) a foreign firefighter shall be considered to be an employee of the United States for purposes of tort liability while the foreign firefighter is acting within the scope of an official duty under the agreement; and

(2) any claim against the foreign fire organization or any legal organization associated with the foreign firefighter that arises out of an act or omission of the foreign firefighter in the performance of an official duty under the agreement, or that arises out of any other act, omission, or occurrence for which the foreign fire organization or legal organization associated with the foreign firefighter is legally responsible under applicable law, may be prosecuted only—

(A) against the United States; and

(B) as if the act or omission were the act or omission of an employee of the United States.

##### (b) Protection from liability for Federal firefighters and the Federal Government

The Secretary of Agriculture and the Secretary of the Interior may provide the protections under subsection (a) if the foreign fire organization agrees—