

prove any plan submitted by the head of a modal administration or joint program office pursuant to subsection (a) if any of the projects described in the plan duplicate significant aspects of research efforts of any other modal administration.

(5) SAVINGS CLAUSE.—Nothing in this subsection limits the ability of the head of a modal administration to comply with applicable law.

(c) FUNDING LIMITATIONS.—No funds may be expended by the Department of Transportation on research that has been determined by the Assistant Secretary under subsection (b)(4) to be duplicative unless—

(1) the research is required by an Act of Congress;

(2) the research was part of a contract that was funded before the date of enactment of this chapter;

(3) the research updates previously commissioned research; or

(4) the Assistant Secretary certifies to Congress that such research is necessary, and provides justification for such certification.

(d) CERTIFICATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall annually certify to Congress that—

(A) each modal research plan has been reviewed; and

(B) there is no duplication of study for research directed, commissioned, or conducted by the Department of Transportation.

(2) CORRECTIVE ACTION PLAN.—If the Secretary, after submitting a certification under paragraph (1), identifies duplication of research within the Department of Transportation, the Secretary shall—

(A) notify Congress of the duplicative research; and

(B) submit to Congress a corrective action plan to eliminate the duplicative research.

(Added Pub. L. 114-94, div. A, title VI, § 6019(b)(1), Dec. 4, 2015, 129 Stat. 1578; amended Pub. L. 117-58, div. B, title V, § 25015(a), Nov. 15, 2021, 135 Stat. 870.)

Editorial Notes

REFERENCES IN TEXT

The date of enactment of this chapter, referred to in subsec. (c)(2), is the date of enactment of Pub. L. 114-94, which was approved Dec. 4, 2015.

AMENDMENTS

2021—Subsec. (a)(1). Pub. L. 117-58, § 25015(a)(1)(A), added par. (1) and struck out former par. (1). Prior to amendment, text read as follows: “Not later than May 1 of each year, the head of each modal administration and joint program office of the Department of Transportation shall submit to the Assistant Secretary for Research and Technology of the Department of Transportation (referred to in this chapter as the ‘Assistant Secretary’) a comprehensive annual modal research plan for the upcoming fiscal year and a detailed outlook for the following fiscal year.”

Subsec. (a)(2). Pub. L. 117-58, § 25015(a)(1)(D), added par. (2). Former par. (2) redesignated (3).

Pub. L. 117-58, § 25015(a)(1)(B), inserted “prepared or” before “submitted”.

Subsec. (a)(3). Pub. L. 117-58, § 25015(a)(1)(C), redesignated par. (2) as (3).

Subsec. (b)(1). Pub. L. 117-58, § 25015(a)(2)(A)(i), inserted “by the head of a modal administration or joint program office” after “submitted” in introductory provisions.

Subsec. (b)(1)(B)(ii). Pub. L. 117-58, § 25015(a)(2)(A)(ii), added cl. (ii) and struck out former cl. (ii) which read as follows: “request that the plan and outlook be revised and resubmitted for approval.”

Subsec. (b)(2) to (4). Pub. L. 117-58, § 25015(a)(2)(B), (C), added par. (2) and redesignated former pars. (2) and (3) as (3) and (4), respectively.

Subsec. (b)(5). Pub. L. 117-58, § 25015(a)(2)(D), added par. (5).

Subsec. (c). Pub. L. 117-58, § 25015(a)(3), which directed amendment without providing closing quotation marks designating the provisions to be inserted, was executed by substituting “subsection (b)(4)” for “subsection (b)(3)” in introductory provisions, to reflect the probable intent of Congress.

Statutory Notes and Related Subsidiaries

EFFECTIVE DATE

Section effective Oct. 1, 2015, see section 1003 of Pub. L. 114-94, set out as an Effective Date of 2015 Amendment note under section 5313 of Title 5, Government Organization and Employees.

FINDINGS

Pub. L. 114-94, div. A, title VI, § 6019(a), Dec. 4, 2015, 129 Stat. 1577, provided that: “Congress finds that—

“(1) Federal transportation research planning—

“(A) should be coordinated by the Office of the Secretary [of Transportation]; and

“(B) should be, to the extent practicable, multimodal and not occur solely within the sub-agencies of the Department [of Transportation];

“(2) managing a multimodal research portfolio within the Office of the Secretary will—

“(A) help identify opportunities in which research could be applied across modes; and

“(B) prevent duplication of efforts and waste of limited Federal resources;

“(3) the Assistant Secretary for Research and Technology at the Department of Transportation will—

“(A) give stakeholders a formal opportunity to address concerns;

“(B) ensure unbiased research; and

“(C) improve the overall research products of the Department; and

“(4) increasing transparency of transportation research and development efforts will—

“(A) build stakeholder confidence in the final product; and

“(B) lead to the improved implementation of research findings.”

§ 6502. Consolidated research database

(a) RESEARCH ABSTRACT DATABASE.—

(1) SUBMISSION.—Not later than September 1 of each year, the head of each modal administration and joint program office of the Department of Transportation shall submit to the Assistant Secretary, for review and public posting, a description of each proposed research project to be carried out during the following fiscal year, including—

(A) proposed funding for any new projects; and

(B) proposed additional funding for any existing projects.

(2) PUBLICATION.—Not less frequently than annually, after receiving the descriptions under paragraph (1), the Assistant Secretary shall publish on a public website a comprehensive database including a description of all re-

search projects conducted by the Department of Transportation, including research funded through university transportation centers under section 5505.

(3) CONTENTS.—The database published under paragraph (2) shall—

- (A) be delimited by research project; and
- (B) include a description of, with respect to each research project—
 - (i) research objectives;
 - (ii) the progress made with respect to the project, including whether the project is ongoing or complete;
 - (iii) any outcomes of the project, including potential implications for policy, regulations, or guidance issued by a modal administration or the Department of Transportation;
 - (iv) any findings of the project;
 - (v) the amount of funds allocated for the project; and
 - (vi) such other information as the Assistant Secretary determines to be necessary to address Departmental priorities and statutory mandates;

(C) identify research projects with multimodal applications;

(D) specify how relevant modal administrations have assisted, will contribute to, or plan to use the findings from the research projects identified under paragraph (1);

(E) identify areas in which more than 1 modal administration is conducting research on a similar subject or a subject that has a bearing on more than 1 mode;

(F) indicate how the findings of research are being disseminated to improve the efficiency, effectiveness, and safety of transportation systems; and

(G) describe the public and stakeholder input to the research plans submitted under section 6501(a)(1).

(b) FUNDING REPORT.—In conjunction with each of the annual budget requests submitted by the President under section 1105 of title 31, the Secretary shall annually publish on a public website and submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report that describes—

- (1) the amount spent in the last full fiscal year on transportation research and development with specific descriptions of projects funded at \$5,000,000 or more; and
- (2) the amount proposed in the current budget for transportation research and development with specific descriptions of projects funded at \$5,000,000 or more.

(c) PERFORMANCE PLANS AND REPORTS.—In the plans and reports submitted under sections 1115 and 1116 of title 31, the Secretary shall include—

- (1) a summary of the Federal transportation research and development activities for the previous fiscal year in each topic area;
- (2) the amount spent in each topic area;
- (3) a description of the extent to which the research and development is meeting the expectations described in section 6503(c)(1); and
- (4) any amendments to the strategic plan developed under section 6503.

(Added Pub. L. 114-94, div. A, title VI, §6019(b)(1), Dec. 4, 2015, 129 Stat. 1579; amended Pub. L.

117-58, div. B, title V, §25015(b), Nov. 15, 2021, 135 Stat. 871.)

Editorial Notes

AMENDMENTS

2021—Subsec. (a). Pub. L. 117-58 inserted subsec. (a) heading and added pars. (1) and (2) and heading, introductory provisions, and subpars. (A) and (B) of par. (3), and struck out former subsec. (a) heading, former par. (1), which related to publication of research abstract database in general, and former par. (2) heading and subpars. (A) and (B), which related to contents of database. Subpars. (C) to (G) of former par. (2) effectively redesignated subpars. (C) to (G) of par. (3).

Statutory Notes and Related Subsidiaries

EFFECTIVE DATE

Section effective Oct. 1, 2015, see section 1003 of Pub. L. 114-94, set out as an Effective Date of 2015 Amendment note under section 5313 of Title 5, Government Organization and Employees.

§ 6503. Transportation research and development 5-year strategic plan

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of publication of the Department of Transportation Strategic Plan and not less frequently than once every 5 years thereafter, the Secretary shall develop a 5-year transportation research and development strategic plan to guide future Federal transportation research and development activities.

(b) CONSISTENCY.—Each strategic plan developed under subsection (a) shall be consistent with—

- (1) section 306 of title 5;
- (2) sections 1115 and 1116 of title 31; and
- (3) any other research and development plan within the Department of Transportation.

(c) CONTENTS.—Each strategic plan developed under subsection (a) shall—

(1) describe how the plan furthers the primary purposes of the transportation research and development program, which shall include—

- (A) improving mobility of people and goods;
- (B) reducing congestion;
- (C) promoting safety;
- (D) improving the durability and extending the life of transportation infrastructure;
- (E) preserving the environment;
- (F) preserving the existing transportation system; and
- (G) reducing transportation cybersecurity risks;

(2) for each of the purposes referred to in paragraph (1), list the primary proposed research and development activities that the Department of Transportation intends to pursue to accomplish that purpose, which may include—

- (A) fundamental research pertaining to the applied physical and natural sciences;
- (B) applied science and research;
- (C) technology development research; and
- (D) social science research; and

(3) for each research and development activity—