

1958—Subsec. (b)(2). Pub. L. 85-600 included the registrar of the Air Force Academy.

Statutory Notes and Related Subsidiaries

EFFECTIVE DATE OF 2018 AMENDMENT

Amendment by Pub. L. 115-232 effective Feb. 1, 2019, with provision for the coordination of amendments and special rule for certain redesignations, see section 800 of Pub. L. 115-232, set out as a note preceding section 3001 of this title.

§ 9067. Assistant Surgeon General for Dental Services

There is an Assistant Surgeon General for Dental Services in the Air Force who is appointed by the Secretary of the Air Force upon the recommendation of the Surgeon General from officers of the Air Force above the grade of lieutenant colonel who are designated as dental officers under section 9067(b) of this title. The Assistant Surgeon General for Dental Services serves at the pleasure of the Secretary.

(Added Pub. L. 95-485, title VIII, § 805(c)(1), Oct. 20, 1978, 92 Stat. 1622, § 8081; amended Pub. L. 105-261, div. A, title V, § 506, Oct. 17, 1998, 112 Stat. 2004; Pub. L. 109-364, div. A, title V, § 504(a), Oct. 17, 2006, 120 Stat. 2179; Pub. L. 114-328, div. A, title V, § 502(oo), Dec. 23, 2016, 130 Stat. 2106; renumbered § 9081 and amended Pub. L. 115-232, div. A, title VIII, §§ 806(c), 809(a), Aug. 13, 2018, 132 Stat. 1833, 1840; renumbered § 9067, Pub. L. 116-92, div. A, title IX, § 952(b)(1), Dec. 20, 2019, 133 Stat. 1561.)

Editorial Notes

PRIOR PROVISIONS

A prior section 9067 was renumbered section 9063 of this title.

A prior section 9068 of this title resulted from the redesignation of section 9084 of this title as section 9068 of this title by section 952(b)(1) of Pub. L. 116-92. Such section 9068 was renumbered section 9083 of this title by section 952(e) of Pub. L. 116-92 and subsequently repealed by Pub. L. 116-283, div. A, title IX, § 921(a), Jan. 1, 2021, 134 Stat. 3804.

A prior section 9069 was renumbered section 9064 of this title.

A prior section 9074 was renumbered section 9065 of this title.

A prior section 9075 was renumbered section 9066 of this title.

AMENDMENTS

2019—Pub. L. 116-92 renumbered section 9081 of this title as this section.

2018—Pub. L. 115-232 renumbered section 8081 of this title as section 9081 of this title and substituted “section 9067(b)” for “section 8067(b)”.

2016—Pub. L. 114-328 struck out second sentence which read as follows: “An appointee who holds a lower regular grade shall be appointed in the regular grade of major general.”

2006—Pub. L. 109-364 substituted “major general” for “brigadier general”.

1998—Pub. L. 105-261 substituted “lieutenant colonel” for “major” and “An appointee who holds a lower regular grade shall be appointed in the regular grade of brigadier general. The Assistant Surgeon General for Dental Services serves at the pleasure of the Secretary.” for “The term of office of the Assistant Surgeon General for Dental Services is four years but may be increased or decreased by the Secretary of the Air Force.”

Statutory Notes and Related Subsidiaries

EFFECTIVE DATE OF 2018 AMENDMENT

Amendment by Pub. L. 115-232 effective Feb. 1, 2019, with provision for the coordination of amendments and special rule for certain redesignations, see section 800 of Pub. L. 115-232, set out as a note preceding section 3001 of this title.

EFFECTIVE DATE OF 2006 AMENDMENT

Pub. L. 109-364, div. A, title V, § 504(b), Oct. 17, 2006, 120 Stat. 2179, provided that: “The amendment made by subsection (a) [amending this section] shall take effect on the date of the occurrence of the next vacancy in the position of Assistant Surgeon General for Dental Services in the Air Force that occurs after the date of the enactment of this Act [Oct. 17, 2006] or, if earlier, on the date of the appointment to the grade of major general of the officer who is the incumbent in that position on the date of the enactment of the Act.”

CHAPTER 908—THE SPACE FORCE

Sec.	
9081.	The United States Space Force.
9082.	Chief of Space Operations.
9083.	Vice Chief of Space Operations.
9084.	Office of the Chief of Space Operations: function; composition.
9085.	Office of the Chief of Space Operations: general duties.
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Editorial Notes

AMENDMENTS

2024—Pub. L. 118-159, div. A, title V, § 509C(c), Dec. 23, 2024, 138 Stat. 1874, added item 9083 and renumbered former items 9083 to 9086 as 9084 to 9087, respectively.

2021—Pub. L. 117-81, div. A, title X, § 1081(a)(33), Dec. 27, 2021, 135 Stat. 1921, redesignated item 9084 “Space Development Agency” as 9086 and transferred it to appear after item 9085.

Pub. L. 116-283, div. A, title IX, §§ 921(b), 922(e), title XVI, § 1601(b), Jan. 1, 2021, 134 Stat. 3805, 3807, 4042, added items 9083, 9084 “Space Development Agency”, 9084 “Office of the Chief of Space Operations: general duties”, and 9085 and struck out former item 9083 “Officer career field for space”.

§ 9081. The United States Space Force

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established a United States Space Force as an armed force within the Department of the Air Force.

(b) COMPOSITION.—The Space Force consists of—

- (1) the Regular Space Force;
- (2) all persons appointed or enlisted in, or conscripted into, the Space Force, including those not assigned to units, necessary to form the basis for a complete and immediate mobilization for the national defense in the event of a national emergency; and
- (3) all Space Force units and other Space Force organizations, including installations and supporting and auxiliary combat, training, administrative, and logistic elements.

(c) FUNCTIONS.—The Space Force shall be organized, trained, and equipped to—

- (1) provide freedom of operation for the United States in, from, and to space;
- (2) conduct space operations; and
- (3) protect the interests of the United States in space.

(Added Pub. L. 115–91, div. A, title XVI, § 1601(a)(1), Dec. 12, 2017, 131 Stat. 1718, § 2279c; amended Pub. L. 115–232, div. A, title X, § 1081(a)(17), Aug. 13, 2018, 132 Stat. 1984; renumbered § 9081 and amended Pub. L. 116–92, div. A, title IX, § 952(b)(3), (4), Dec. 20, 2019, 133 Stat. 1562; Pub. L. 116–283, div. A, title IX, § 922(a), (b), Jan. 1, 2021, 134 Stat. 3806; Pub. L. 118–31, div. A, title XVII, § 1712(a), Dec. 22, 2023, 137 Stat. 625.)

AMENDMENT OF SUBSECTION (b)

Pub. L. 118–31, div. A, title XVII, § 1712, Dec. 22, 2023, 137 Stat. 625, provided that, effective on the date of the certification by the Secretary of the Air Force under section 1745 (probably should be “section 1735”) of Pub. L. 118–31, subsection (b) of this section is amended as follows:

- (1) by striking paragraph (1);
- (2) by redesignating paragraphs (2) and (3) as paragraphs (1) and (2), respectively; and
- (3) in paragraph (1), as so redesignated, by striking “, including” and all that follows through “emergency”.

See 2023 Amendment notes below.

Editorial Notes

PRIOR PROVISIONS

A prior section 9081 was renumbered section 9067 of this title.

AMENDMENTS

2023—Subsec. (b). Pub. L. 118–31, § 1712(a)(1), (2), redesignated pars. (2) and (3) as (1) and (2), respectively, and struck out former par. (1) which read as follows: “the Regular Space Force”;

Subsec. (b)(1). Pub. L. 118–31, § 1712(a)(3), struck out “, including those not assigned to units, necessary to form the basis for a complete and immediate mobilization for the national defense in the event of a national emergency” after “Space Force”.

2021—Subsec. (b). Pub. L. 116–283, § 922(a), added subsec. (b) and struck out former subsec. (b). Prior to amendment, text read as follows: “The Space Force shall be composed of the following:

- “(1) The Chief of Space Operations.
- “(2) The space forces and such assets as may be organic therein.”

Subsec. (c). Pub. L. 116–283, § 922(b)(1), added subsec. (c) and struck out former subsec. (c). Prior to amendment, text read as follows: “The Space Force shall be organized, trained, and equipped to provide—

- “(1) freedom of operation for the United States in, from, and to space; and
- “(2) prompt and sustained space operations.”

Subsec. (d). Pub. L. 116–283, § 922(b)(2), struck out subsec. (d). Text read as follows: “It shall be the duty of the Space Force to—

- “(1) protect the interests of the United States in space;
- “(2) deter aggression in, from, and to space; and
- “(3) conduct space operations.”

2019—Pub. L. 116–92, § 952(b)(4), amended section generally. Prior to amendment, section related to Air Force Space Command.

Pub. L. 116–92, § 952(b)(3), renumbered section 2279c of this title as this section.

2018—Subsec. (a)(3). Pub. L. 115–232, § 1081(a)(17)(A), substituted “December 12, 2017” for “the date of the enactment of this Act”.

Subsec. (b). Pub. L. 115–232, § 1081(a)(17)(B)(i), substituted “December 12, 2017” for “the date of the enactment of this section” in introductory provisions.

Subsec. (b)(3). Pub. L. 115–232, § 1081(a)(17)(B)(ii), substituted “after December 11, 2018” for “on or after the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this section”.

Statutory Notes and Related Subsidiaries

CHANGE OF NAME; REDESIGNATION OF AIR FORCE SPACE COMMAND AS UNITED STATES SPACE FORCE

Pub. L. 116–92, div. A, title IX, § 952(a), Dec. 20, 2019, 133 Stat. 1561, provided that: “The Air Force Space Command is hereby redesignated as the United States Space Force (USSF).”

EFFECTIVE DATE OF 2023 AMENDMENT

Pub. L. 118–31, div. A, title XVII, § 1712(b), Dec. 22, 2023, 137 Stat. 625, provided that: “The amendments made by subsection (a) [amending this section] shall take effect on the date of the certification by the Secretary of the Air Force under section 1745 [probably means section “1735” of Pub. L. 118–31, set out in a Transition Provisions note under section 20001 of this title].”

PILOT PROGRAM TO DEMONSTRATE HYBRID SATELLITE COMMUNICATION ARCHITECTURE

Pub. L. 118–159, div. A, title XVI, § 1608, Dec. 23, 2024, 138 Stat. 2163, provided that:

“(a) PROGRAM REQUIRED.—Beginning in fiscal year 2025, the Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Space Acquisition and Integration shall carry out a pilot program to demonstrate a hybrid satellite communication architecture at the Space Systems Command of the Space Force.

“(b) REQUIREMENTS AND CONSIDERATIONS.—In carrying out the pilot program under subsection (a), the Assistant Secretary shall include in the hybrid satellite communication architecture at least one military satellite communications system, such as the Wideband Global Satcom system or the Micro Geostationary Earth Orbit system.

“(c) BRIEFING.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act [Dec. 23, 2024], the Assistant Secretary shall provide to the congressional defense committees [Committees on Armed Services and Appropriations of the Senate and the House of Representatives] a briefing that includes—

“(1) a description of the hybrid satellite communication architecture developed under the pilot program under subsection (a) and a summary of the results of the program as of the date of the briefing; and

“(2) a plan for supporting the transition of the hybrid satellite communication architecture efforts to a program of record within the Space Force and the Space Systems Command.

“(d) HYBRID SATELLITE COMMUNICATION ARCHITECTURE.—In this section, the term ‘hybrid satellite communication architecture’ means the network of integrated United States Government, allied Government, and commercially owned and operated capabilities both for on-orbit communication constellations and ground systems.”

AUTHORIZATION FOR ESTABLISHMENT OF THE NATIONAL SPACE INTELLIGENCE CENTER AS A FIELD OPERATING AGENCY

Pub. L. 118–31, div. A, title XVI, § 1606, Dec. 22, 2023, 137 Stat. 586, provided that:

“(a) AUTHORIZATION.—The Secretary of the Air Force may establish the National Space Intelligence Center as a field operating agency of the Space Force to analyze and produce scientific and technical intelligence on space-based and counterspace threats from foreign adversaries.

“(b) COLOCATION.—If the Secretary of the Air Force decides to establish the National Space Intelligence Center as a field operating agency, the Secretary shall consider the operational and geographical benefits provided by collocating with the National Air and Space Intelligence Center.”

APPLIED RESEARCH AND EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES TO SUPPORT SPACE TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT

Pub. L. 117–263, div. A, title XVI, § 1607, Dec. 23, 2022, 136 Stat. 2932, provided that:

“(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of the Air Force and the Chief of Space Operations, in coordination with the Chief Technology and Innovation Office of the Space Force, may carry out applied research and educational activities to support space technology development.

“(b) ACTIVITIES.—Activities carried out under subsection (a) shall support the applied research, development, and demonstration needs of the Space Force, including by addressing and facilitating the advancement of capabilities related to—

- “(1) space domain awareness;
- “(2) positioning, navigation, and timing;
- “(3) communications;
- “(4) hypersonics;
- “(5) cybersecurity; and
- “(6) any other matter the Secretary of the Air Force considers relevant.

“(c) EDUCATION AND TRAINING.—Activities carried out under subsection (a) shall—

“(1) promote education and training for students so as to support the future national security space workforce of the United States; and

“(2) explore opportunities for international collaboration.

“(d) TERMINATION.—The authority provided by this section shall expire on December 31, 2027.”

SPACE SYSTEM ACQUISITION AND THE ADAPTIVE ACQUISITION FRAMEWORK

Pub. L. 116-283, div. A, title VIII, §807, Jan. 1, 2021, 134 Stat. 3742, as amended by Pub. L. 118-159, div. A, title VIII, §§804(c)(7), 805(c)(2), Dec. 23, 2024, 138 Stat. 1969, 1972, provided that:

“(a) SERVICE ACQUISITION EXECUTIVE FOR SPACE SYSTEMS AND PROGRAMS.—Before implementing the application of the adaptive acquisition framework to a Space Systems Acquisition pathway described in subsection (c), there shall be within the Department of the Air Force an individual serving as the Service Acquisition Executive of the Department of the Air Force for Space Systems and Programs as required under section 957 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2020 (Public Law 116-92; 133 Stat. 1566; 10 U.S.C. 9016 note).

“(b) MILESTONE DECISION AUTHORITY FOR UNITED STATES SPACE FORCE.—

“(1) PROGRAM EXECUTIVE OFFICER.—The Service Acquisition Executive for Space Systems and Programs of the United States Space Force may further delegate authority to an appropriate program executive officer to serve as the milestone decision authority for major defense acquisition programs of the United States Space Force.

“(2) PROGRAM MANAGER.—The program executive officer assigned under paragraph (1) may further delegate authority over major systems to an appropriate program manager.

“(c) ADAPTIVE ACQUISITION FRAMEWORK APPLICATION TO SPACE ACQUISITION.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Defense shall take such actions necessary to ensure the adaptive acquisition framework (as described in Department of Defense Instruction 5000.02, ‘Operation of the Adaptive Acquisition Framework’) includes one or more pathways specifically tailored for Space Systems Acquisition in order to achieve faster acquisition, improve synchronization and more rapid fielding of critical end-to-end capabilities (including by using new commercial capabilities and services), while maintaining accountability for effective programs that are delivered on time and on budget.

“(2) GOAL.—The goal of the application of the adaptive acquisition framework to a Space Systems Acquisition pathway shall be to quickly and effectively acquire end-to-end space warfighting capabilities needed to address the requirements of the national defense strategy (as defined under section 113(g) of title 10, United States Code).

“(d) REPORT.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than May 15, 2021, the Secretary of Defense shall submit to the congres-

sional defense committees [Committees on Armed Services and Appropriations of the Senate and the House of Representatives] a report on the application of the adaptive acquisition framework to any Space Systems Acquisition pathway established under subsection (a) that includes the following:

“(A) Proposed United States Space Force budget line items for fiscal year 2022, including—

“(i) a comparison with budget line items for any major defense acquisition programs, middle tier acquisition programs, covered software programs, and major systems of the United States Space Force for three previous fiscal years;

“(ii) existing and recommended measures to ensure sufficient transparency and accountability related to the performance of the Space Systems Acquisition pathway; and

“(iii) proposed mechanisms to enable insight into the funding prioritization process and significant funding changes, including the independent cost estimate basis and full funding considerations for any major defense acquisition programs, middle tier acquisition programs, covered software programs, and major systems procured by the United States Space Force.

“(B) Proposed revised, flexible, and streamlined options for joint requirements validation in order to be more responsive and innovative, while ensuring the ability of the Joint Chiefs of Staff to ensure top-level system requirements are properly prioritized to address joint-warfighting needs.

“(C) A list of acquisition programs of the United States Space Force for which multiyear contracting authority under sections 2306b [now 10 U.S.C. 3501] or 2306c [now 10 U.S.C. 3531] of title 10, United States Code, is recommended.

“(D) A list of space systems acquisition programs for which alternative acquisition pathways may be used.

“(E) Policies or procedures for potential new pathways in the application of the adaptive acquisition framework to a Space Systems Acquisition with specific acquisition key decision points and reporting requirements for development, fielding, and sustainment activities that meet the requirements of the adaptive acquisition framework.

“(F) An analysis of the need for updated determination authority for procurement of useable end items that are not weapon systems.

“(G) Policies and a governance structure, for both the Office of the Secretary of Defense and each military department, for a separate United States Space Force budget topline, corporate process, and portfolio management process.

“(H) An analysis of the risks and benefits of the delegation of the authority of the head of contracting activity authority to the Chief of Space Operations in a manner that would not expand the operations of the United States Space Force.

“(2) COMPTROLLER GENERAL REVIEW.—Not later than 60 days after the submission of the report required under paragraph (1), the Comptroller General of the United States shall review such report and submit to the congressional defense committees an analysis and recommendations based on such report.

“(e) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

“(1) COVERED SOFTWARE PROGRAM.—The term ‘covered software program’ means an acquisition program or project that is carried out using the software acquisition pathway established under section 3603 of title 10, United States Code.

“(2) MAJOR DEFENSE ACQUISITION PROGRAM.—The term ‘major defense acquisition program’ has the meaning given in section 2430 of title 10, United States Code [now 10 U.S.C. 4201].

“(3) MAJOR SYSTEM.—The term ‘major system’ has the meaning given in section 2302 of title 10, United States Code [now 10 U.S.C. 3041].

“(4) MIDDLE TIER ACQUISITION PROGRAM.—The term ‘middle tier acquisition program’ means an acquisi-

tion program or project that is carried out using the rapid fielding or rapid prototyping acquisition pathway under section 3602 of title 10, United States Code.

“(5) MILESTONE DECISION AUTHORITY.—The term ‘milestone decision authority’ has the meaning given in section 2431a of title 10, United States Code [now 10 U.S.C. 4211].

“(6) PROGRAM EXECUTIVE OFFICER; PROGRAM MANAGER.—The terms ‘program executive officer’ and ‘program manager’ have the meanings given those terms, respectively, in section 1737 of title 10, United States Code.”

MEMBERS

Pub. L. 116-92, div. A, title IX, §952(d), Dec. 20, 2019, 133 Stat. 1562, provided that:

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Effective as of the date of the enactment of this Act [Dec. 20, 2019], there shall be assigned to the Space Force such members of the Air Force as the Secretary of the Air Force shall specify.

“(2) NO AUTHORIZATION OF ADDITIONAL MILITARY BILLETTS.—The Secretary shall carry out this subsection within military personnel of the Air Force otherwise authorized by this Act. Nothing in this subsection shall be construed to authorize additional military billets for the purposes of, or in connection with, the establishment of the Space Force.”

CLARIFICATION OF AUTHORITIES

Pub. L. 116-92, div. A, title IX, §958(b), Dec. 20, 2019, 133 Stat. 1567, as amended by Pub. L. 116-283, div. A, title IX, §928, Jan. 1, 2021, 134 Stat. 3832, provided that:

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as specifically provided by this subtitle [subtitle D (§§951-961) of title IX of div. A of Pub. L. 116-92, see Short Title of 2019 Amendment note set out under section 101 of this title and Tables], the amendments made by this subtitle, or the amendments made by subtitle C of title IX of the William M. (Mac) Thornberry National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2021 [§§921-931 of title IX of div. A of Pub. L. 116-283, see Tables]—

“(A) a member of the Space Force shall be treated as a member of the Air Force for the purpose of the application of any provision of law, including provisions of law relating to pay, benefits, and retirement;

“(B) a civilian employee of the Space Force shall be treated as a civilian employee of the Air Force for the purpose of the application of any provision of law, including provisions of law relating to pay, benefits, and retirement;

“(C) the authority of the Secretary of Defense with respect to the Air Force, members of the Air Force, or civilian employees of the Air Force may be exercised by the Secretary with respect to the Space Force, members of the Space Force, or civilian employees of the Space Force; and

“(D) the authority of the Secretary of the Air Force with respect to the Air Force, members of the Air Force, or civilian employees of the Air Force may be exercised by the Secretary with respect to the Space Force, members of the Space Force, or civilian employees of the Space Force.

“(2) APPOINTMENT AND ENLISTMENT.—For purposes of the appointment or enlistment of individuals as members of the Space Force pending the integration of the Space Force into the laws providing for the appointment or enlistment of individuals as members of the Armed Forces, appointments and enlistments of individuals as members of the Armed Forces in the Space Force may be made in the same manner in which appointments and enlistments of individuals as members of the Armed Forces in the other Armed Forces may be made by law.”

EFFECTS ON MILITARY INSTALLATIONS

Pub. L. 116-92, div. A, title IX, §959, Dec. 20, 2019, 133 Stat. 1568, provided that: “Nothing in this subtitle [subtitle D (§§951-961) of title IX of div. A of Pub. L. 116-92, see Short Title of 2019 Amendment note set out under

section 101 of this title and Tables], or the amendments made by this subtitle, shall be construed to authorize or require the relocation of any facility, infrastructure, or military installation of the Air Force.”

IMPLEMENTATION

Pub. L. 116-92, div. A, title IX, §961, Dec. 20, 2019, 133 Stat. 1568, provided that:

“(a) REQUIREMENT.—Except as specifically provided by this subtitle [subtitle D (§§951-961) of title IX of div. A of Pub. L. 116-92, see Short Title of 2019 Amendment note set out under section 101 of this title and Tables], the Secretary of the Air Force shall implement this subtitle, and the amendments made by this subtitle, by not later than 18 months after the date of the enactment of this Act [Dec. 20, 2019].

“(b) BRIEFINGS.—Not later than 60 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, and every 60 days thereafter until March 31, 2023, the Secretary of the Air Force and the Chief of Space Operations shall jointly provide to the congressional defense committees [Committees on Armed Services and Appropriations of the Senate and the House of Representatives] a briefing on the status of the implementation of the Space Force pursuant to this subtitle and the amendments made by this subtitle. Each briefing shall address the current missions, operations and activities, manpower requirements and status, and budget and funding requirements and status of the Space Force, and such other matters with respect to the implementation and operation of the Space Force as the Secretary and the Chief jointly consider appropriate to keep Congress fully and currently informed on the status of the implementation of the Space Force.”

Executive Documents

SPACE POLICY DIRECTIVE-4. ESTABLISHMENT OF THE UNITED STATES SPACE FORCE

Space Policy Directive-4, Feb. 19, 2019, 84 F.R. 6049, provided:

Memorandum for the Vice President[,] the Secretary of State[,] the Secretary of Defense[,] the Secretary of Commerce[,] the Secretary of Labor[,] the Secretary of Transportation[,] the Secretary of Homeland Security[,] the Director of the Office of Management and Budget[,] the Director of National Intelligence[,] the Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs[,] the Director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy[,] the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff[,] the Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration[, and] the Deputy Assistant to the President for Homeland Security and Counterterrorism

SECTION 1. *Introduction.* Space is integral to our way of life, our national security, and modern warfare. Although United States space systems have historically maintained a technological advantage over those of our potential adversaries, those potential adversaries are now advancing their space capabilities and actively developing ways to deny our use of space in a crisis or conflict. It is imperative that the United States adapt its national security organizations, policies, doctrine, and capabilities to deter aggression and protect our interests. Toward that end, the Department of Defense shall take actions under existing authority to marshal its space resources to deter and counter threats in space, and to develop a legislative proposal to establish a United States Space Force as a sixth branch of the United States Armed Forces within the Department of the Air Force. This is an important step toward a future military department for space. Under this proposal, the United States Space Force would be authorized to organize, train, and equip military space forces of the United States to ensure unfettered access to, and freedom to operate in, space, and to provide vital capabilities to joint and coalition forces in peacetime and across the spectrum of conflict.

SEC. 2. *Definitions.* For the purposes of this memorandum and the legislative proposal directed by section

3 of this memorandum, the following definitions shall apply:

(a) The term “United States Space Force” refers to a new branch of the United States Armed Forces to be initially placed by statute within the Department of the Air Force.

(b) The term “Department of the Space Force” refers to a future military department within the Department of Defense that will be responsible for organizing, training, and equipping the United States Space Force.

(c) The term “United States Space Command” refers to a Unified Combatant Command to be established pursuant to the Presidential memorandum of December 18, 2018 (Establishment of United States Space Command as a Unified Combatant Command) [10 U.S.C. 161 note], that will be responsible for Joint Force space operations as will be assigned in the Unified Command Plan.

SEC. 3. *Legislative Proposal and Purpose.* The Secretary of Defense shall submit a legislative proposal to the President through the Office of Management and Budget that would establish the United States Space Force as a new armed service within the Department of the Air Force.

The legislative proposal would, if enacted, establish the United States Space Force to organize, train, and equip forces to provide for freedom of operation in, from, and to the space domain; to provide independent military options for national leadership; and to enhance the lethality and effectiveness of the Joint Force. The United States Space Force should include both combat and combat support functions to enable prompt and sustained offensive and defensive space operations, and joint operations in all domains. The United States Space Force shall be organized, trained, and equipped to meet the following priorities:

(a) Protecting the Nation’s interests in space and the peaceful use of space for all responsible actors, consistent with applicable law, including international law;

(b) Ensuring unfettered use of space for United States national security purposes, the United States economy, and United States persons, partners, and allies;

(c) Deterring aggression and defending the Nation, United States allies, and United States interests from hostile acts in and from space;

(d) Ensuring that needed space capabilities are integrated and available to all United States Combatant Commands;

(e) Projecting military power in, from, and to space in support of our Nation’s interests; and

(f) Developing, maintaining, and improving a community of professionals focused on the national security demands of the space domain.

SEC. 4. *Scope.* (a) The legislative proposal required by section 3 of this memorandum shall, in addition to the provisions required under section 3 of this memorandum, include provisions that would, if enacted:

(i) consolidate existing forces and authorities for military space activities, as appropriate, in order to minimize duplication of effort and eliminate bureaucratic inefficiencies; and

(ii) not include the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the National Reconnaissance Office, or other non-military space organizations or missions of the United States Government.

(b) The proposed United States Space Force should:

(i) include, as determined by the Secretary of Defense in consultation with the Secretaries of the military departments, the uniformed and civilian personnel conducting and directly supporting space operations from all Department of Defense Armed Forces;

(ii) assume responsibilities for all major military space acquisition programs; and

(iii) create the appropriate career tracks for military and civilian space personnel across all relevant specialties, including operations, intelligence, engineering, science, acquisition, and cyber.

SEC. 5. *United States Space Force Budget.* In accordance with the Department of Defense budget process, the

Secretary of Defense shall submit to the Director of the Office of Management and Budget a proposed budget for the United States Space Force to be included in the President’s Fiscal Year 2020 Budget Request.

SEC. 6. *United States Space Force Organization and Leadership.* (a) The legislative proposal required by section 3 of this memorandum shall create a civilian Under Secretary of the Air Force for Space, to be known as the Under Secretary for Space, appointed by the President by and with the advice and consent of the Senate.

(b) The legislative proposal shall establish a Chief of Staff of the Space Force, who will be a senior military officer in the grade of General or Admiral, and who shall serve as a member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

SEC. 7. *Associated Elements.* (a) A Unified Combatant Command for space, to be known as the United States Space Command, will be established consistent with law, as directed on December 18, 2018. This command will have all of the responsibilities of a Unified Combatant Command in addition to the space-related responsibilities previously assigned to United States Strategic Command. It will also have the responsibilities of the Joint Force provider and Joint Force training for space operations forces. Moving expeditiously toward a Unified Combatant Command reflects the importance of warfighting in space to the Joint Force. The commander of this command will lead space warfighting through global space operations that may occur in the space domain, the terrestrial domains, or through the electromagnetic spectrum.

(b) With forces provided by the United States Space Force and other United States Armed Forces, the United States Space Command shall ensure unfettered access to, and freedom to operate in, space and provide vital effects and capabilities to joint and coalition forces during peacetime and across the spectrum of conflict.

SEC. 8. *Relationship with National Intelligence.* The Secretary of Defense and the Director of National Intelligence shall create and enhance mechanisms for collaboration between the Department of Defense and the United States Intelligence Community in order to increase unity of effort and the effectiveness of space operations. The Secretary of Defense and the Director of National Intelligence shall provide a report to the President within 180 days of the date of this memorandum [Feb. 19, 2019] on steps they have taken and are planning to take toward these ends, including legislative proposals as necessary and appropriate.

SEC. 9. *Operational Authorities.* In order to ensure that the United States Space Force and United States Space Command have the necessary operational authorities, the National Space Council and the National Security Council shall coordinate an accelerated review of space operational authorities. Within 90 days of the date of this memorandum, the Secretary of Defense shall present to the National Space Council and the National Security Council proposed relevant authority changes for the President’s approval. The National Space Council and the National Security Council shall then conduct an interagency review of the Secretary’s proposal and make recommendations to the President on appropriate authorities, to be completed no later than 60 days from the date the Secretary of Defense presents his proposal to the councils.

SEC. 10. *Periodic Review.* As the United States Space Force matures, and as national security requires, it will become necessary to create a separate military department, to be known as the Department of the Space Force. This department will take over some or all responsibilities for the United States Space Force from the Department of the Air Force. The Secretary of Defense will conduct periodic reviews to determine when to recommend that the President seek legislation to establish such a department.

SEC. 11. *General Provisions.* (a) Nothing in this memorandum shall be construed to impair or otherwise affect:

(i) the authority granted by law to an executive department or agency, or the head thereof; or

(ii) the functions of the Director of the Office of Management and Budget relating to budgetary, administrative, or legislative proposals.

(b) This memorandum shall be implemented consistent with applicable law and United States national and homeland security requirements, and subject to the availability of appropriations.

(c) This memorandum is not intended to, and does not, create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or in equity by any party against the United States, its departments, agencies, or entities, its officers, employees, or agents, or any other person.

(d) The Secretary of Defense is authorized and directed to publish this memorandum in the Federal Register.

DONALD J. TRUMP.

§ 9082. Chief of Space Operations

(a) APPOINTMENT.—(1) There is a Chief of Space Operations, appointed by the President, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, from the general officers of the Space Force. The Chief serves at the pleasure of the President.

(2) The Chief shall be appointed for a term of four years. In time of war or during a national emergency declared by Congress, the Chief may be reappointed for a term of not more than four years.

(3) The President may appoint an officer as Chief of Space Operations only if—

(A) the officer has had significant experience in joint duty assignments; and

(B) such experience includes at least one full tour of duty in a joint duty assignment (as defined in section 664(d) of this title) as a general officer of the Space Force.

(4) The President may waive paragraph (3) in the case of an officer if the President determines such action is necessary in the national interest.

(b) GRADE.—The Chief, while so serving, has the grade of general without vacating the permanent grade of the officer.

(c) RELATIONSHIP TO THE SECRETARY OF THE AIR FORCE.—Except as otherwise prescribed by law and subject to section 9013(f) of this title, the Chief performs the duties of such position under the authority, direction, and control of the Secretary of the Air Force and is directly responsible to the Secretary.

(d) DUTIES.—Subject to the authority, direction, and control of the Secretary of the Air Force, the Chief shall—

(1) preside over the Office of the Chief of Space Operations;

(2) transmit the plans and recommendations of the Office of the Chief of Space Operations to the Secretary and advise the Secretary with regard to such plans and recommendations;

(3) after approval of the plans or recommendations of the Office of the Chief of Space Operations by the Secretary, act as the agent of the Secretary in carrying them into effect;

(4) exercise supervision, consistent with the authority assigned to commanders of unified or specified combatant commands under chapter 6 of this title, over such of the members and organizations of the Space Force as the Secretary determines;

(5) perform duties prescribed for the Chief of Space Operations by sections 171 and 3104 of this title and other provisions of law; and

(6) perform such other military duties, not otherwise assigned by law, as are assigned to the Chief by the President, the Secretary of Defense, or the Secretary of the Air Force.

(e) JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF.—(1) The Chief of Space Operations shall be a member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

(2) To the extent that such action does not impair the independence of the Chief in the performance of the duties of the Chief as a member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff pursuant to paragraph (1), the Chief shall inform the Secretary of the Air Force regarding military advice rendered by members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff on matters affecting the Department of the Air Force.

(3) Subject to the authority, direction, and control of the Secretary of Defense, the Chief shall keep the Secretary of the Air Force fully informed of significant military operations affecting the duties and responsibilities of the Secretary.

(f) VACANCY IN POSITION OF CHIEF OF SPACE OPERATIONS.—When there is a vacancy in the position of Chief of Space Operations or during the absence or disability of the Chief of Space Operations—

(1) the Vice Chief of Space Operations shall perform the duties of the Chief of Space Operations until a successor is appointed or the absence or disability ceases; or

(2) if there is a vacancy in the position of the Vice Chief of Space Operations or the Vice Chief of Space Operations is absent or disabled, unless the President directs otherwise, the most senior officer of the Space Force in the Space Staff who is not absent or disabled and who is not restricted in performance of duty shall perform the duties of the Chief of Space Operations until the earliest of—

(A) the appointment of a successor to the Chief of Space Operations or the Vice Chief of Space Operations; or

(B) the cessation of the absence or disability of the Chief of Space Operations or Vice Chief of Space Operations.

(Added Pub. L. 116-92, div. A, title IX, §953(a), Dec. 20, 2019, 133 Stat. 1563; amended Pub. L. 116-283, div. A, title IX, §922(c), title XVIII, §1883(b)(2), Jan. 1, 2021, 134 Stat. 3806, 4294; Pub. L. 118-31, div. A, title XVII, §1741(b)(7), Dec. 22, 2023, 137 Stat. 681; Pub. L. 118-159, div. A, title V, §§509C(b), 521(j), Dec. 23, 2024, 138 Stat. 1873, 1882.)

Editorial Notes

AMENDMENTS

2024—Subsec. (a)(1), (3)(B). Pub. L. 118-159, §521(j)(1), struck out “, flag, or equivalent” after “general”.

Subsec. (b). Pub. L. 118-159, §521(j)(2), substituted “grade of general” for “grade in the Space Force equivalent to the grade of general in the Army, Air Force, and Marine Corps, or admiral in the Navy”.

Subsec. (f). Pub. L. 118-159, §509C(b), added subsec. (f).
2023—Subsec. (d)(5). Pub. L. 118-31, §1741(b)(7)(A), substituted “sections 171 and 3104 of this title and other provisions of law” for “sections 171, 1808(a), and 1847(e)(4)(B), (5) of this title and other provision of law”.

Subsec. (e)(1). Pub. L. 118-31, §1741(b)(7)(B), substituted “The Chief” for “Commencing one year after