

the event of an aviation disaster directly involving United States citizens abroad, if possible, the Department of State will assign a specific individual, and an alternate, as the Department of State liaison for the family of each such citizen.

(b) Toll-free communications system

In the establishment of the Department of State toll-free communications system to facilitate inquiries concerning the affect of any disaster abroad on United States citizens residing or traveling abroad, the Secretary of State shall ensure that a toll-free telephone number is reserved for the exclusive use of the families of citizens who have been determined to be directly involved in any such disaster.

(Pub. L. 101-604, title II, §205, Nov. 16, 1990, 104 Stat. 3083.)

§ 5505. Disaster training for State Department personnel

(a) Additional training

The Secretary of State shall institute a supplemental program of training in disaster management for all consular officers.

(b) Training improvements

(1) In expanding the training program under subsection (a), the Secretary of State shall consult with death and bereavement counselors concerning the particular demands posed by aviation tragedies and terrorist activities.

(2) In providing such additional training under subsection (a) the Secretary of State shall consider supplementing the current training program through—

(A) providing specialized training to create a team of “disaster specialists” to deploy immediately in a crisis; or

(B) securing outside experts to be brought in during the initial phases to assist consular personnel.

(Pub. L. 101-604, title II, §206, Nov. 16, 1990, 104 Stat. 3084.)

§ 5506. Department of State responsibilities and procedures at international disaster site

(a) Dispatch of senior State Department official to site

Not later than 60 days after November 16, 1990, the Secretary of State shall issue such rules and guidelines as are necessary to provide that in the event of an international disaster, particularly an aviation tragedy, directly involving significant numbers of United States citizens abroad not less than one senior officer from the Bureau of Consular Affairs of the Department of State shall be dispatched to the site of such disaster.

(b) Criteria for Department of State staffing at disaster site

Not later than 60 days after November 16, 1990, the Secretary of State shall promulgate criteria for Department of State staffing of disaster sites abroad. Such criteria shall define responsibility for staffing decisions and shall consider the deployment of crisis teams under subsection (d). The Secretary of State shall promptly issue

such rules and guidelines as are necessary to implement criteria developed pursuant to this subsection.

(c) State Department ombudsman

Not later than 60 days after November 16, 1990, the Secretary of State shall issue such rules and guidelines as are necessary to provide that in the event of an international aviation disaster involving significant numbers of United States citizens abroad not less than one officer or employee of the Department of State shall be dispatched to the disaster site to provide on-site assistance to families who may visit the site and to act as an ombudsman in matters involving the foreign local government authorities and social service agencies.

(d) Crisis teams

Not later than 60 days after November 16, 1990, the Secretary of State shall promulgate procedures for the deployment of a “crisis team”, which may include public affairs, forensic, and bereavement experts, to the site of any international disaster involving United States citizens abroad to augment in-country Embassy and consulate staff. The Secretary of State shall promptly issue such rules and guidelines as are necessary to implement procedures developed pursuant to this subsection.

(Pub. L. 101-604, title II, §207, Nov. 16, 1990, 104 Stat. 3084.)

Statutory Notes and Related Subsidiaries

AUTHORITY OF SECRETARY OF STATE

Except as otherwise provided, Secretary of State to have and exercise any authority vested by law in any official or office of Department of State and references to such officials or offices deemed to refer to Secretary of State or Department of State, as appropriate, see section 2651a of this title and section 161(d) of Pub. L. 103-236, set out as a note under section 2651a of this title.

§ 5507. Recovery and disposition of remains and personal effects

It is the policy of the Department of State (pursuant to section 2715 of this title) to provide liaison with foreign governments and persons and with United States air carriers concerning arrangements for the preparation and transport to the United States of the remains of citizens who die abroad, as well as the disposition of personal effects. The Secretary of State shall ensure that regulations and guidelines of the Department of State reflect such policy and that such assistance is rendered to the families of United States citizens who are killed in terrorist incidents and disasters abroad.

(Pub. L. 101-604, title II, §208, Nov. 16, 1990, 104 Stat. 3085.)

§ 5508. Assessment of Lockerbie experience

(a) Assessment

The Secretary of State shall compile an assessment of the Department of State response to the Pan American Airways Flight 103 aviation disaster over Lockerbie, Scotland, on December 21, 1988.