

spectively, of par. (1), realigned margins, and added par. (2).

Subsec. (h). Pub. L. 112-95, § 830(c), added subsec. (h).
2005—Subsec. (g). Pub. L. 109-90 added subsec. (g).

Statutory Notes and Related Subsidiaries

APPLICATIONS SUBMITTED BEFORE THE DATE OF ENACTMENT OF PUB. L. 115-254

Pub. L. 115-254, div. K, title I, § 1946(c), Oct. 5, 2018, 132 Stat. 3587, provided that: “Not later than 30 days after the date of enactment of this Act [Oct. 5, 2018], the Administrator [of the Transportation Security Administration] shall approve or deny, in accordance with section 44920(b) of title 49, United States Code, as amended by this Act, each application submitted before the date of enactment of this Act, by an airport operator under subsection (a) of that section, that is awaiting such a determination.”

Executive Documents

CHANGE OF NAME

Defense Security Service of the Department of Defense changed to Defense Counterintelligence and Security Agency effective June 20, 2019, pursuant to Ex. Ord. No. 13467, set out as a note under section 3161 of Title 50, War and National Defense.

§ 44921. Federal flight deck officer program

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Administrator shall establish a program to deputize volunteer pilots of air carriers providing air transportation or intrastate air transportation as Federal law enforcement officers to defend the flight decks of aircraft of such air carriers against acts of criminal violence or air piracy. Such officers shall be known as “Federal flight deck officers”.

(b) PROCEDURAL REQUIREMENTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator shall establish procedural requirements to carry out the program under this section.

(2) COMMENCEMENT OF PROGRAM.—The Administrator shall train and deputize pilots who are qualified to be Federal flight deck officers as Federal flight deck officers under the program.

(3) ISSUES TO BE ADDRESSED.—The procedural requirements established under paragraph (1) shall address the following issues:

(A) The type of firearm to be used by a Federal flight deck officer.

(B) The type of ammunition to be used by a Federal flight deck officer.

(C) The standards and training needed to qualify and requalify as a Federal flight deck officer.

(D) The placement of the firearm of a Federal flight deck officer on board the aircraft to ensure both its security and its ease of retrieval in an emergency.

(E) An analysis of the risk of catastrophic failure of an aircraft as a result of the discharge (including an accidental discharge) of a firearm to be used in the program into the avionics, electrical systems, or other sensitive areas of the aircraft.

(F) The division of responsibility between pilots in the event of an act of criminal violence or air piracy if only 1 pilot is a Federal flight deck officer and if both pilots are Federal flight deck officers.

(G) Procedures for ensuring that the firearm of a Federal flight deck officer does not

leave the cockpit if there is a disturbance in the passenger cabin of the aircraft or if the pilot leaves the cockpit for personal reasons.

(H) Interaction between a Federal flight deck officer and a Federal air marshal on board the aircraft.

(I) The process for selection of pilots to participate in the program based on their fitness to participate in the program, including whether an additional background check should be required beyond that required by section 44936(a)(1).

(J) Storage and transportation of firearms between flights, including international flights, to ensure the security of the firearms, focusing particularly on whether such security would be enhanced by requiring storage of the firearm at the airport when the pilot leaves the airport to remain overnight away from the pilot’s base airport.

(K) Methods for ensuring that security personnel will be able to identify whether a pilot is authorized to carry a firearm under the program.

(L) Methods for ensuring that pilots (including Federal flight deck officers) will be able to identify whether a passenger is a law enforcement officer who is authorized to carry a firearm aboard the aircraft.

(M) Any other issues that the Administrator considers necessary.

(N) The Administrator’s decisions regarding the methods for implementing each of the foregoing procedural requirements shall be subject to review only for abuse of discretion.

(4) PREFERENCE.—In selecting pilots to participate in the program, the Administrator shall give preference to pilots who are former military or law enforcement personnel.

(5) CLASSIFIED INFORMATION.—Notwithstanding section 552 of title 5 but subject to section 40119¹ of this title, information developed under paragraph (3)(E) shall not be disclosed.

(6) NOTICE TO CONGRESS.—The Administrator shall provide notice to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate after completing the analysis required by paragraph (3)(E).

(7) MINIMIZATION OF RISK.—If the Administrator determines as a result of the analysis under paragraph (3)(E) that there is a significant risk of the catastrophic failure of an aircraft as a result of the discharge of a firearm, the Administrator shall take such actions as may be necessary to minimize that risk.

(c) TRAINING, SUPERVISION, AND EQUIPMENT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator shall only be obligated to provide the training, supervision, and equipment necessary for a pilot to be a Federal flight deck officer under this section at no expense to the pilot or the air carrier employing the pilot.

(2) TRAINING.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator shall base the requirements for the training of

¹ See References in Text note below.

Federal flight deck officers under subsection (b) on the training standards applicable to Federal air marshals; except that the Administrator shall take into account the differing roles and responsibilities of Federal flight deck officers and Federal air marshals.

(B) ELEMENTS.—The training of a Federal flight deck officer shall include, at a minimum, the following elements:

(i) Training to ensure that the officer achieves the level of proficiency with a firearm required under subparagraph (C)(i).

(ii) Training to ensure that the officer maintains exclusive control over the officer's firearm at all times, including training in defensive maneuvers.

(iii) Training to assist the officer in determining when it is appropriate to use the officer's firearm and when it is appropriate to use less than lethal force.

(C) TRAINING IN USE OF FIREARMS.—

(i) STANDARD.—In order to be deputized as a Federal flight deck officer, a pilot must achieve a level of proficiency with a firearm that is required by the Administrator. Such level shall be comparable to the level of proficiency required of Federal air marshals.

(ii) CONDUCT OF TRAINING.—

(I) IN GENERAL.—The training of a Federal flight deck officer in the use of a firearm may be conducted by the Administrator or by a firearms training facility.

(II) ACCESS TO TRAINING FACILITIES.—The Administrator shall designate additional firearms training facilities located in various regions of the United States for Federal flight deck officers for recurrent and requalifying training relative to the number of such facilities available on the day before such² date of enactment.

(iii) REQUALIFICATION.—

(I) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator shall require a Federal flight deck officer to requalify to carry a firearm under the program. Such requalification shall occur at an interval required by the Administrator.

(II) USE OF FACILITIES FOR REQUALIFICATION.—The Administrator shall allow a Federal flight deck officer to requalify to carry a firearm under the program through training at a Transportation Security Administration-approved firearms training facility utilizing a Transportation Security Administration-approved contractor and a curriculum developed and approved by the Transportation Security Administration.

(iv) PERIODIC REVIEW.—The Administrator shall periodically review requalification training intervals and assess whether it is appropriate and sufficient to adjust the time between each requalifica-

tion training to facilitate continued participation in the program under this section while still maintaining effectiveness of the training, and update the training requirements as appropriate.

(D) TRAINING REVIEW.—Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of the TSA Modernization Act, and biennially thereafter, the Administrator shall review training facilities and training requirements for initial and recurrent training for Federal flight deck officers and evaluate how training requirements, including the length of training, could be streamlined while maintaining the effectiveness of the training, and update the training requirements as appropriate.

(d) DEPUTIZATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator may deputize, as a Federal flight deck officer under this section, a pilot who submits to the Administrator a request to be such an officer and whom the Administrator determines is qualified to be such an officer.

(2) QUALIFICATION.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—A pilot is qualified to be a Federal flight deck officer under this section if—

(i) the pilot is employed by an air carrier;

(ii) the Administrator determines (in the Administrator's discretion) that the pilot meets the standards established by the Administrator for being such an officer; and

(iii) the Administrator determines that the pilot has completed the training required by the Administrator.

(B) CONSISTENCY WITH REQUIREMENTS FOR CERTAIN MEDICAL CERTIFICATES.—In establishing standards under subparagraph (A)(ii), the Administrator may not establish medical or physical standards for a pilot to become a Federal flight deck officer that are inconsistent with or more stringent than the requirements of the Federal Aviation Administration for the issuance of the required airman medical certificate under part 67 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations (or any corresponding similar regulation or ruling).

(3) DEPUTIZATION BY OTHER FEDERAL AGENCIES.—The Administrator may request another Federal agency to deputize, as Federal flight deck officers under this section, those pilots that the Administrator determines are qualified to be such officers.

(4) REVOCATION.—The Administrator may (in the Administrator's discretion) revoke the deputization of a pilot as a Federal flight deck officer if the Administrator finds that the pilot is no longer qualified to be such an officer.

(5) TRANSFER FROM INACTIVE TO ACTIVE STATUS.—In accordance with any applicable Transportation Security Administration appeals processes, a pilot deputized as a Federal flight deck officer who moves to inactive status may return to active status upon successful completion of a recurrent training program administered within program guidelines.

² So in original.

(e) COMPENSATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Pilots participating in the program under this section shall not be eligible for compensation from the Federal Government for services provided as a Federal flight deck officer. The Federal Government and air carriers shall not be obligated to compensate a pilot for participating in the program or for the pilot's training or qualification and requalification to carry firearms under the program.

(2) FACILITATION OF TRAINING.—An air carrier shall permit a pilot seeking to be deputized as a Federal flight deck officer or a Federal flight deck officer to take a reasonable amount of leave to participate in initial, recurrent, or requalification training, as applicable, for the program. Leave required under this paragraph may be provided without compensation.

(f) AUTHORITY TO CARRY FIREARMS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator shall authorize a Federal flight deck officer to carry a firearm while engaged in providing air transportation or intrastate air transportation. Notwithstanding subsection (c)(1), the officer may purchase a firearm and carry that firearm aboard an aircraft of which the officer is the pilot in accordance with this section if the firearm is of a type that may be used under the program.

(2) PREEMPTION.—Notwithstanding any other provision of Federal or State law, a Federal flight deck officer, whenever necessary to participate in the program, may carry a firearm in any State and from 1 State to another State.

(3) CARRYING FIREARMS OUTSIDE UNITED STATES.—In consultation with the Secretary of State, the Administrator may take such action as may be necessary to ensure that a Federal flight deck officer may carry a firearm in a foreign country whenever necessary to participate in the program.

(4) CONSISTENCY WITH FEDERAL AIR MARSHAL PROGRAM.—The Administrator shall harmonize, to the extent practicable and in a manner that does not jeopardize existing Federal air marshal agreements, the policies relating to the carriage of firearms on international flights by Federal flight deck officers with the policies of the Federal air marshal program for carrying firearms on such flights and carrying out the duties of a Federal flight deck officer, notwithstanding Annex 17 of the International Civil Aviation Organization.

(g) AUTHORITY TO USE FORCE.—Notwithstanding section 44903(d), the Administrator shall prescribe the standards and circumstances under which a Federal flight deck officer may use, while the program under this section is in effect, force (including lethal force) against an individual in the defense of the flight deck of an aircraft in air transportation or intrastate air transportation.

(h) LIMITATION ON LIABILITY.—

(1) LIABILITY OF AIR CARRIERS.—An air carrier shall not be liable for damages in any action brought in a Federal or State court arising out of a Federal flight deck officer's use of or failure to use a firearm.

(2) LIABILITY OF FEDERAL FLIGHT DECK OFFICERS.—A Federal flight deck officer shall not be liable for damages in any action brought in a Federal or State court arising out of the acts or omissions of the officer in defending the flight deck of an aircraft against acts of criminal violence or air piracy unless the officer is guilty of gross negligence or willful misconduct.

(3) LIABILITY OF FEDERAL GOVERNMENT.—For purposes of an action against the United States with respect to an act or omission of a Federal flight deck officer in defending the flight deck of an aircraft, the officer shall be treated as an employee of the Federal Government under chapter 171 of title 28, relating to tort claims procedure.

(i) PROCEDURES FOLLOWING ACCIDENTAL DISCHARGES.—If an accidental discharge of a firearm under the pilot program results in the injury or death of a passenger or crew member on an aircraft, the Administrator—

(1) shall revoke the deputization of the Federal flight deck officer responsible for that firearm if the Administrator determines that the discharge was attributable to the negligence of the officer; and

(2) if the Administrator determines that a shortcoming in standards, training, or procedures was responsible for the accidental discharge, may temporarily suspend the program until the shortcoming is corrected.

(j) LIMITATION ON AUTHORITY OF AIR CARRIERS.—No air carrier shall prohibit or threaten any retaliatory action against a pilot employed by the air carrier from becoming a Federal flight deck officer under this section. No air carrier shall—

(1) prohibit a Federal flight deck officer from piloting an aircraft operated by the air carrier; or

(2) terminate the employment of a Federal flight deck officer, solely on the basis of his or her volunteering for or participating in the program under this section.

(k) APPLICABILITY.—This section shall not apply to air carriers operating under part 135 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations, and to pilots employed by such carriers to the extent that such carriers and pilots are covered by section 135.119 of such title or any successor to such section.

(l) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) ADMINISTRATOR.—The term "Administrator" means the Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration.

(2) AIR TRANSPORTATION.—The term "air transportation" includes all-cargo air transportation.

(3) FIREARMS TRAINING FACILITY.—The term "firearms training facility" means a private or government-owned gun range approved by the Administrator to provide recurrent or requalification training, as applicable, for the program, utilizing a Transportation Security Administration-approved contractor and a curriculum developed and approved by the Transportation Security Administration.

(4) PILOT.—The term "pilot" means an individual who has final authority and responsi-

bility for the operation and safety of the flight or any other flight deck crew member.

(Added Pub. L. 107–296, title XIV, §1402(a), Nov. 25, 2002, 116 Stat. 2300; amended Pub. L. 108–176, title VI, §609(b), Dec. 12, 2003, 117 Stat. 2570; Pub. L. 115–254, div. K, title I, §1963(a)–(h), Oct. 5, 2018, 132 Stat. 3601–3603.)

Editorial Notes

REFERENCES IN TEXT

Section 40119 of this title, referred to in subsec. (b)(5), was repealed by Pub. L. 115–254, div. K, title I, §1991(c)(3), Oct. 5, 2018, 132 Stat. 3627.

The date of enactment of the TSA Modernization Act, referred to in subsec. (c)(2)(D), is the date of enactment of title I of div. K of Pub. L. 115–254, which was approved Oct. 5, 2018.

AMENDMENTS

2018—Pub. L. 115–254, §1963(h)(7), substituted “Administrator” for “Under Secretary” wherever appearing.

Subsec. (a). Pub. L. 115–254, §1963(h)(1), substituted “Administrator” for “Under Secretary of Transportation for Security”.

Subsec. (b)(1). Pub. L. 115–254, §1963(h)(2)(A), substituted “The Administrator” for “Not later than 3 months after the date of enactment of this section, the Under Secretary”.

Subsec. (b)(2). Pub. L. 115–254, §1963(h)(2)(B), substituted “The Administrator shall train and deputize” for “Beginning 3 months after the date of enactment of this section, the Under Secretary shall begin the process of training and deputizing”.

Subsec. (b)(3)(N). Pub. L. 115–254, §1963(h)(2)(C), substituted “Administrator’s” for “Under Secretary’s”.

Subsec. (c)(2)(C)(ii). Pub. L. 115–254, §1963(a), designated existing provisions as subcl. (I), inserted heading, struck out “approved by the Under Secretary” after “facility”, and added subcl. (II).

Subsec. (c)(2)(C)(iii). Pub. L. 115–254, §1963(b)(1), designated existing provisions as subcl. (I), inserted heading, substituted “The Administrator shall” for “The Under Secretary shall” and “the Administrator” for “the Under Secretary”, and added subcl. (II).

Subsec. (c)(2)(C)(iv). Pub. L. 115–254, §1963(b)(2), added cl. (iv).

Subsec. (c)(2)(D). Pub. L. 115–254, §1963(c), added subpar. (D).

Subsec. (d)(2). Pub. L. 115–254, §1963(f), designated existing provisions as subpar. (A), inserted heading, redesignated former subpars. (A) to (C) as cls. (i) to (iii), respectively, of subpar. (A), substituted “Administrator’s” for “Under Secretary’s” in subpar. (A)(ii), and added subpar. (B).

Subsec. (d)(4). Pub. L. 115–254, §1963(h)(3), substituted “may” for “may,” and “Administrator’s” for “Under Secretary’s”.

Subsec. (d)(5). Pub. L. 115–254, §1963(g), added par. (5).

Subsec. (e). Pub. L. 115–254, §1963(d), designated existing provisions as par. (1), inserted heading, and added par. (2).

Subsec. (f)(1), (3). Pub. L. 115–254, §1963(e)(1), substituted “Administrator” for “Under Secretary”.

Subsec. (f)(4). Pub. L. 115–254, §1963(e)(2), added par. (4).

Subsec. (i)(2). Pub. L. 115–254, §1963(h)(4), substituted “may” for “the Under Secretary may”.

Subsec. (k). Pub. L. 115–254, §1963(h)(5), struck out par. (1) designation and heading before “This section” and struck out pars. (2) and (3) which defined “pilot” and defined “air transportation” to include all-cargo air transportation.

Subsec. (l). Pub. L. 115–254, §1963(h)(6), added subsec. (l).

2003—Subsec. (a). Pub. L. 108–176, §609(b)(1), struck out “passenger” before “air transportation” in two places.

Subsec. (k)(2). Pub. L. 108–176, §609(b)(2), substituted “or any other flight deck crew member” for “or, if more than 1 pilot is required for the operation of the aircraft or by the regulations under which the flight is being conducted, the individual designated as second in command”.

Subsec. (k)(3). Pub. L. 108–176, §609(b)(3), added par. (3).

Statutory Notes and Related Subsidiaries

EFFECTIVE DATE OF 2003 AMENDMENT

Amendment by Pub. L. 108–176 applicable only to fiscal years beginning after Sept. 30, 2003, except as otherwise specifically provided, see section 3 of Pub. L. 108–176, set out as a note under section 106 of this title.

EFFECTIVE DATE

Section effective 60 days after Nov. 25, 2002, see section 4 of Pub. L. 107–296, set out as a note under section 101 of Title 6, Domestic Security.

REGULATIONS

Pub. L. 115–254, div. K, title I, §1963(i), Oct. 5, 2018, 132 Stat. 3604, provided that: “Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act [Oct. 5, 2018]—

“(1) the Secretary of Transportation shall revise section 15.5(b)(11) of title 49, Code of Federal Regulations, to classify information about pilots deputized as Federal flight deck officers under section 44921 of title 49, United States Code, as sensitive security information in a manner consistent with the classification of information about Federal air marshals; and

“(2) the Administrator [of the Transportation Security Administration] shall revise section 1520.5(b)(11) of title 49, Code of Federal Regulations, to classify information about pilots deputized as Federal flight deck officers under section 44921 of title 49, United States Code, as sensitive security information in a manner consistent with the classification of information about Federal air marshals.”

Pub. L. 115–254, div. K, title I, §1963(j), Oct. 5, 2018, 132 Stat. 3604, provided that: “Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act [Oct. 5, 2018], the Administrator [of the Transportation Security Administration] shall prescribe such regulations as may be necessary to carry out this section [amending this section and enacting provisions set out as a note under this section] and the amendments made by this section.”

EQUITABLE IMPLEMENTATION OF 2003 AMENDMENTS

Pub. L. 108–176, title VI, §609(c), Dec. 12, 2003, 117 Stat. 2570, provided that: “In carrying out the amendments made by subsection (d) [probably means subsec. (b), which amended this section], the Under Secretary for Border and Transportation Security of the Department of Homeland Security shall ensure that passenger and cargo pilots are treated equitably in receiving access to training as Federal flight deck officers.”

TIME FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Pub. L. 108–176, title VI, §609(d), Dec. 12, 2003, 117 Stat. 2570, provided that: “The requirements of subsection (e) [section 609 of Pub. L. 108–176 has no subsec. (e)] shall have no effect on the deadlines for implementation contained in section 44921 of title 49, United States Code, as in effect on the day before the date of enactment of this Act [Dec. 12, 2003].”

§ 44922. Deputization of State and local law enforcement officers

(a) DEPUTIZATION AUTHORITY.—The Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration may deputize a State or local law enforcement officer to carry out Federal airport security duties under this chapter.

(b) FULFILLMENT OF REQUIREMENTS.—A State or local law enforcement officer who is depu-