

Subsec. (e)(2). Pub. L. 92-303, §5(3), substituted “January 1, 1974” for “January 1, 1973”.

Subsec. (e)(3). Pub. L. 92-303, §5(4), substituted “twelve years” for “seven years”.

Subsec. (f). Pub. L. 92-303, §8, designated existing provisions as par. (1) and added par. (2).

Subsec. (h). Pub. L. 92-303, §3(a), substituted “coal mine” for “underground coal mine”.

#### EFFECTIVE DATE OF 1984 AMENDMENT

Amendment by Pub. L. 98-426 effective Sept. 28, 1984, and applicable both with respect to claims filed after such date and to claims pending on such date, see section 28(a) of Pub. L. 98-426, set out as a note under section 901 of Title 33, Navigation and Navigable Waters.

#### EFFECTIVE DATE OF 1981 AMENDMENT

Amendment by sections 203(a)(6), (b), 204, 205(a) of Pub. L. 97-119 effective Jan. 1, 1982, except as otherwise provided, see section 206(a) of Pub. L. 97-119, set out as a note under section 901 of this title.

#### EFFECTIVE DATE OF 1978 AMENDMENT

Amendment by Pub. L. 95-239 effective Mar. 1, 1978, see section 20(a) of Pub. L. 95-239, set out as a note under section 901 of this title.

#### EFFECTIVE DATE OF 1972 AMENDMENT

Amendment by section 3(a), (b) of Pub. L. 92-303 effective Dec. 30, 1969, see section 3(c) of Pub. L. 92-303, set out as a note under section 901 of this title.

### § 932a. Appointment of qualified individuals to hear and determine claims for benefits

Qualified individuals appointed by the Secretary of Labor may hear and determine claims for benefits under part B or part C of title IV of the Federal Coal Mine Health and Safety Act of 1969<sup>1</sup> [30 U.S.C. 921 et seq., 931 et seq.] and under section 415 of such Act [30 U.S.C. 925]. For purposes of this section, the term “qualified individual” means such an individual, regardless of whether that individual is a hearing examiner appointed under section 3105 of title 5. Nothing in this section shall be deemed to imply that there is or is not in effect any authority for such individuals to hear and determine such claims under any provision of law other than this section.

(Pub. L. 94-504, Oct. 15, 1976, 90 Stat. 2428; Pub. L. 107-275, §2(b)(5), Nov. 2, 2002, 116 Stat. 1926.)

#### REFERENCES IN TEXT

The Federal Coal Mine Health and Safety Act of 1969, referred to in text, is Pub. L. 91-173, Dec. 30, 1969, 83 Stat. 742, as amended, which was renamed the Federal Mine Safety and Health Act of 1977 by Pub. L. 95-164, title I, §101, Nov. 9, 1977, 91 Stat. 1290. Parts B and C of title IV of the Federal Mine Safety and Health Act of 1977 are classified generally to part B (§921 et seq.) of this subchapter and to this part (§931 et seq.), respectively. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see Short Title note set out under section 801 of this title and Tables.

#### CODIFICATION

Section was not enacted as part of the Federal Mine Safety and Health Act of 1977 which comprises this chapter or the Black Lung Benefits Act which comprises this subchapter.

#### AMENDMENTS

2002—Pub. L. 107-275 substituted “under part B or part C” for “under part C”.

#### EFFECTIVE DATE OF 2002 AMENDMENT

Amendment by Pub. L. 107-275 effective 90 days after Nov. 2, 2002, see section 4 of Pub. L. 107-275, set out as a note under section 902 of this title.

#### EXTENSION OF ADJUDICATION PERIOD THROUGH MARCH 1, 1979

Pub. L. 95-239, §7(i), Mar. 1, 1978, 92 Stat. 100, authorized individuals appointed to hear and determine claims for benefits under this part and under section 925 of this title pursuant to this section, notwithstanding the provisions of section 932(a) of this title, to continue to adjudicate such claims during the one-year period following Mar. 1, 1978.

### § 933. Duties of operators in States not qualifying under workmen's compensation laws

#### (a) Securing of benefits for miners; self-insurers; mutual companies

During any period in which a State workmen's compensation law is not included on the list published by the Secretary under section 931(b) of this title each operator of a coal mine in such State shall secure the payment of benefits for which he is liable under section 932 of this title by (1) qualifying as a self-insurer in accordance with regulations prescribed by the Secretary, or (2) insuring and keeping insured the payment of such benefits with any stock company or mutual company or association, or with any other person or fund, including any State fund, while such company, association, person or fund is authorized under the laws of any State to insure workmen's compensation.

#### (b) Required provisions of insurance contracts

In order to meet the requirements of clause (2) of subsection (a) of this section, every policy or contract of insurance must contain—

(1) a provision to pay benefits required under section 932 of this title, notwithstanding the provisions of the State workmen's compensation law which may provide for lesser payments;

(2) a provision that insolvency or bankruptcy of the operator or discharge therein (or both) shall not relieve the carrier from liability for such payments; and

(3) such other provisions as the Secretary, by regulation, may require.

#### (c) Cancellation of insurance contracts

No policy or contract of insurance issued by a carrier to comply with the requirements of clause (2) of subsection (a) of this subsection<sup>1</sup> shall be canceled prior to the date specified in such policy or contract for its expiration until at least thirty days have elapsed after notice of cancellation has been sent by registered or certified mail to the Secretary and to the operator at his last known place of business.

#### (d) Penalties for failure to secure payment of benefits

(1) Any employer required to secure the payment of benefits under this section who fails to secure such benefits shall be subject to a civil penalty assessed by the Secretary of not more than \$1,000 for each day during which such failure occurs. In any case where such employer is

<sup>1</sup> See References in Text note below.

<sup>1</sup> So in original. Probably should be “section”.

a corporation, the president, secretary, and treasurer thereof also shall be severally liable to such civil penalty as provided in this subsection for the failure of such corporation to secure the payment of benefits. Such president, secretary, and treasurer shall be severally personally liable, jointly with such corporation, for any benefit which may accrue under this subchapter in respect to any disability which may occur to any employee of such corporation while it shall so fail to secure the payment of benefits as required by this section.

(2) Any employer of a miner who knowingly transfers, sells, encumbers, assigns, or in any manner disposes of, conceals, secrets,<sup>2</sup> or destroys any property belonging to such employer, after any miner employed by such employer has filed a claim under this subchapter, and with intent to avoid the payment of benefits under this subchapter to such miner or his or her dependents, shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction thereof, shall be punished by a fine of not more than \$1,000, or by imprisonment for not more than one year, or both. In any case where such employer is a corporation, the president, secretary, and treasurer thereof also shall be severally liable for such penalty of imprisonment as well as jointly liable with such corporation for such fine.

(3) This subsection shall not affect any other liability of the employer under this part.

(Pub. L. 91-173, title IV, §423, Dec. 30, 1969, 83 Stat. 797; Pub. L. 92-303, §3(b), May 19, 1972, 86 Stat. 153; Pub. L. 95-239, §8, Mar. 1, 1978, 92 Stat. 100.)

#### AMENDMENTS

1978—Subsec. (d). Pub. L. 95-239 added subsec. (d).

1972—Subsec. (a). Pub. L. 92-303 substituted "a coal mine" for "an underground coal mine".

#### EFFECTIVE DATE OF 1978 AMENDMENT

Amendment by Pub. L. 95-239 effective Mar. 1, 1978, see section 20(a) of Pub. L. 95-239, set out as a note under section 901 of this title.

#### EFFECTIVE DATE OF 1972 AMENDMENT

Amendment by Pub. L. 92-303 effective Dec. 30, 1969, see section 3(c) of Pub. L. 92-303, set out as a note under section 901 of this title.

### § 934. "Fund" defined; liability of operators to United States for repayments to fund; procedures applicable; rate of interest

(a) For purposes of this section, the term "fund" has the meaning set forth in section 902(h) of this title.

(b)(1) If—

(A) an amount is paid out of the fund to an individual entitled to benefits under section 932 of this title, and

(B) the Secretary determines, under the provisions of sections 932 and 933 of this title, that an operator was required to secure the payment of all or a portion of such benefits,

then the operator is liable to the United States for repayment to the fund of the amount of such benefits the payment of which is properly attributed to him plus interest thereon. No opera-

tor or representative of operators may bring any proceeding, or intervene in any proceeding, held for the purpose of determining claims for benefits to be paid by the fund, except that nothing in this section shall affect the rights, duties, or liabilities of any operator in proceedings under section 932 or section 933 of this title. In a case where no operator responsibility is assigned pursuant to sections 932 and 933 of this title, a determination by the Secretary that the fund is liable for the payment of benefits shall be final.

(2) If any operator liable to the fund under paragraph (1) refuses to pay, after demand, the amount of such liability (including interest), then there shall be a lien in favor of the United States for such amount upon all property and rights to property, whether real or personal, belonging to such operator. The lien arises on the date on which such liability is finally determined, and continues until it is satisfied or becomes unenforceable by reason of lapse of time.

(3)(A) Except as otherwise provided under this subsection, the priority of the lien shall be determined in the same manner as under section 6323 of title 26. That section shall be applied for such purposes—

(i) by substituting "lien imposed by section 424(b)(2) of the Federal Mine Safety and Health Act of 1977" for "lien imposed by section 6321"; "operator liability lien" for "tax lien"; "operator" for "taxpayer"; "lien arising under section 424(b)(2) of the Federal Mine Safety and Health Act of 1977" for "assessment of the tax"; "payment of the liability is made to the Black Lung Disability Trust Fund" for "satisfaction of a levy pursuant to section 6332(b)"; and "satisfaction of operator liability" for "collection of any tax under this title" each place such terms appear; and

(ii) by treating all references to the "Secretary" as references to the Secretary of Labor.

(B) In the case of a bankruptcy or insolvency proceeding, the lien imposed under paragraph (2) shall be treated in the same manner as a lien for taxes due and owing to the United States for purposes of the Bankruptcy Act or section 3713(a) of title 31.

(C) For purposes of applying section 6323(a) of title 26 to determine the priority between the lien imposed under paragraph (2) and the Federal tax lien, each lien shall be treated as a judgment lien arising as of the time notice of such lien is filed.

(D) For purposes of this subsection, notice of the lien imposed under paragraph (2) shall be filed in the same manner as under subsections (f) and (g) of section 6323 of title 26.

(4)(A) In any case where there has been a refusal or neglect to pay the liability imposed under paragraph (2), the Secretary may bring a civil action in a district court of the United States to enforce the lien of the United States under this section with respect to such liability or to subject any property, of whatever nature, of the operator, or in which he has any right, title, or interest, to the payment of such liability.

(B) The liability imposed by paragraph (1) may be collected at a proceeding in court if the proceeding is commenced within 6 years after the

<sup>2</sup> So in original. Probably should be "secretes,".