

of personnel to provide such services or to the provision of screening at the airport.

(g) OPERATOR OF AIRPORT.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, an operator of an airport shall not be liable for any claims for damages filed in State or Federal court (including a claim for compensatory, punitive, contributory, or indemnity damages) relating to—

(1) such airport operator's decision to submit an application to the Secretary of Homeland Security under subsection (a) or section 44919 or such airport operator's decision not to submit an application; and

(2) any act of negligence, gross negligence, or intentional wrongdoing by—

(A) a qualified private screening company or any of its employees in any case in which the qualified private screening company is acting under a contract entered into with the Secretary of Homeland Security or the Secretary's designee; or

(B) employees of the Federal Government providing passenger and property security screening services at the airport.

(3) Nothing in this section shall relieve any airport operator from liability for its own acts or omissions related to its security responsibilities, nor except as may be provided by the Support Anti-Terrorism by Fostering Effective Technologies Act of 2002 shall it relieve any qualified private screening company or its employees from any liability related to its own acts of negligence, gross negligence, or intentional wrongdoing.

(Added Pub. L. 107-71, title I, §108(a), Nov. 19, 2001, 115 Stat. 612; amended Pub. L. 109-90, title V, § 547, Oct. 18, 2005, 119 Stat. 2089.)

REFERENCES IN TEXT

Section 110(c) of the Aviation and Transportation Security Act, referred to in subsec. (a), is section 110(c) of Pub. L. 107-71, which is set out as a note under section 44901 of this title.

The Support Anti-Terrorism by Fostering Effective Technologies Act of 2002, referred to in subsec. (g)(3), is subtitle G (§§861-865) of title VIII of Pub. L. 107-296, Nov. 25, 2002, 116 Stat. 2238, also known as the SAFETY Act, which is classified generally to part G (§441 et seq.) of subchapter VIII of chapter 1 of Title 6, Domestic Security. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see Short Title note set out under section 101 of Title 6 and Tables.

AMENDMENTS

2005—Subsec. (g). Pub. L. 109-90 added subsec. (g).

TRANSFER OF FUNCTIONS

For transfer of functions, personnel, assets, and liabilities of the Transportation Security Administration of the Department of Transportation, including the functions of the Secretary of Transportation, and of the Under Secretary of Transportation for Security, relating thereto, to the Secretary of Homeland Security, and for treatment of related references, see sections 203(2), 551(d), 552(d), and 557 of Title 6, Domestic Security, and the Department of Homeland Security Reorganization Plan of November 25, 2002, as modified, set out as a note under section 542 of Title 6.

§ 44921. Federal flight deck officer program

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Under Secretary of Transportation for Security shall establish a program to deputize volunteer pilots of air car-

riers 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.—Not later than 3 months after the date of enactment of this section, the Under Secretary shall establish procedural requirements to carry out the program under this section.

(2) COMMENCEMENT OF PROGRAM.—Beginning 3 months after the date of enactment of this section, the Under Secretary shall begin the process of training and deputizing 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 Under Secretary considers necessary.

(N) The Under Secretary'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 Under Secretary 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 40119 of this title, information developed under paragraph (3)(E) shall not be disclosed.

(6) NOTICE TO CONGRESS.—The Under Secretary 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 Under Secretary 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 Under Secretary shall take such actions as may be necessary to minimize that risk.

(c) TRAINING, SUPERVISION, AND EQUIPMENT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Under Secretary 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 Under Secretary shall base the requirements for the training of Federal flight deck officers under subsection (b) on the training standards applicable to Federal air marshals; except that the Under Secretary 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 Under Secretary. Such level shall be comparable to

the level of proficiency required of Federal air marshals.

(ii) CONDUCT OF TRAINING.—The training of a Federal flight deck officer in the use of a firearm may be conducted by the Under Secretary or by a firearms training facility approved by the Under Secretary.

(iii) REQUALIFICATION.—The Under Secretary 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 Under Secretary.

(d) DEPUTIZATION.—

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

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

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

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

(C) the Under Secretary determines that the pilot has completed the training required by the Under Secretary.

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

(4) REVOCATION.—The Under Secretary may,¹ (in the Under Secretary's discretion) revoke the deputization of a pilot as a Federal flight deck officer if the Under Secretary finds that the pilot is no longer qualified to be such an officer.

(e) COMPENSATION.—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.

(f) AUTHORITY TO CARRY FIREARMS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Under Secretary 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

¹ So in original. The comma probably should not appear.

in any State and from 1 State to another State.

(3) CARRYING FIREARMS OUTSIDE UNITED STATES.—In consultation with the Secretary of State, the Under Secretary 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.

(g) AUTHORITY TO USE FORCE.—Notwithstanding section 44903(d), the Under Secretary 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 Under Secretary—

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

(2) if the Under Secretary determines that a shortcoming in standards, training, or procedures was responsible for the accidental discharge, the Under Secretary² 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.—

(1) EXEMPTION.—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.

(2) PILOT DEFINED.—The term “pilot” means an individual who has final authority and responsibility for the operation and safety of the flight or any other flight deck crew member.

(3) ALL-CARGO AIR TRANSPORTATION.—In this section, the term “air transportation” includes all-cargo air transportation.

(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.)

REFERENCES IN TEXT

The date of enactment of this section, referred to in subsec. (b)(1), (2), is the date of enactment of Pub. L. 107-296, which was approved Nov. 25, 2002.

AMENDMENTS

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).

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.

TRANSFER OF FUNCTIONS

For transfer of functions, personnel, assets, and liabilities of the Transportation Security Administration of the Department of Transportation, including the functions of the Secretary of Transportation, and of the Under Secretary of Transportation for Security, relating thereto, to the Secretary of Homeland Security, and for treatment of related references, see sections 203(2), 551(d), 552(d), and 557 of Title 6, Domestic Security, and the Department of Homeland Security Reorganization Plan of November 25, 2002, as modified, set out as a note under section 542 of Title 6.

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)

²So in original. The words “the Under Secretary” probably should not appear.

[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. Deputation of State and local law enforcement officers

(a) DEPUTATION AUTHORITY.—The Under Secretary of Transportation for Security 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 deputized under this section shall be treated as a Federal law enforcement officer for purposes of meeting the requirements of this chapter and other provisions of law to provide Federal law enforcement officers to carry out Federal airport security duties.

(c) AGREEMENTS.—To deputize a State or local law enforcement officer under this section, the Under Secretary shall enter into a voluntary agreement with the appropriate State or local law enforcement agency that employs the State or local law enforcement officer.

(d) REIMBURSEMENT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Under Secretary shall reimburse a State or local law enforcement agency for all reasonable, allowable, and allocable costs incurred by the State or local law enforcement agency with respect to a law enforcement officer deputized under this section.

(2) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There are authorized to be appropriated such sums as may be necessary to carry out this subsection.

(e) FEDERAL TORT CLAIMS ACT.—A State or local law enforcement officer who is deputized under this section shall be treated as an “employee of the Government” for purposes of sections 1346(b), 2401(b), and chapter 171 of title 28, United States Code, while carrying out Federal airport security duties within the course and scope of the officer’s employment, subject to Federal supervision and control, and in accordance with the terms of such deputation.

(f) STATIONING OF OFFICERS.—The Under Secretary may allow law enforcement personnel to be stationed other than at the airport security screening location if that would be preferable for law enforcement purposes and if such personnel would still be able to provide prompt responsiveness to problems occurring at the screening location.

(Added Pub. L. 108-7, div. I, title III, §351(a), Feb. 20, 2003, 117 Stat. 419.)

§ 44923. Airport security improvement projects

(a) GRANT AUTHORITY.—Subject to the requirements of this section, the Under Secretary for Border and Transportation Security of the Department of Homeland Security shall make grants to airport sponsors—

(1) for projects to replace baggage conveyer systems related to aviation security;

(2) for projects to reconfigure terminal baggage areas as needed to install explosive detection systems;

(3) for projects to enable the Under Secretary to deploy explosive detection systems behind the ticket counter, in the baggage sorting area, or in line with the baggage handling system; and

(4) for other airport security capital improvement projects.

(b) APPLICATIONS.—A sponsor seeking a grant under this section shall submit to the Under Secretary an application in such form and containing such information as the Under Secretary prescribes.

(c) APPROVAL.—The Under Secretary, after consultation with the Secretary of Transportation, may approve an application of a sponsor for a grant under this section only if the Under Secretary determines that the project will improve security at an airport or improve the efficiency of the airport without lessening security.

(d) LETTERS OF INTENT.—

(1) ISSUANCE.—The Under Secretary shall issue a letter of intent to a sponsor committing to obligate from future budget authority an amount, not more than the Federal Government’s share of the project’s cost, for an airport security improvement project (including interest costs and costs of formulating the project).

(2) SCHEDULE.—A letter of intent under this subsection shall establish a schedule under which the Under Secretary will reimburse the sponsor for the Government’s share of the project’s costs, as amounts become available, if the sponsor, after the Under Secretary issues the letter, carries out the project without receiving amounts under this section.

(3) NOTICE TO UNDER SECRETARY.—A sponsor that has been issued a letter of intent under this subsection shall notify the Under Secretary of the sponsor’s intent to carry out a project before the project begins.

(4) NOTICE TO CONGRESS.—The Under Secretary shall transmit to the Committees on Appropriations and Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives and the Committees on Appropriations and Commerce, Science and Transportation of the Senate a written notification at least 3 days before the issuance of a letter of intent under this section.

(5) LIMITATIONS.—A letter of intent issued under this subsection is not an obligation of the Government under section 1501 of title 31, and the letter is not deemed to be an administrative commitment for financing. An obligation or administrative commitment may be made only as amounts are provided in authorization and appropriations laws.

(6) STATUTORY CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this subsection shall be construed to prohibit the obligation of amounts pursuant to a letter of intent under this subsection in the same fiscal year as the letter of intent is issued.

(e) FEDERAL SHARE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Government’s share of the cost of a project under this section shall be 90 percent for a project at a medium or large hub airport and 95 percent for a project at any other airport.

(2) EXISTING LETTERS OF INTENT.—The Under Secretary shall revise letters of intent issued