

(S. B. 667)

(No. 153)

(Approved December 14, 2005)

AN ACT

To direct the Superintendent of the Puerto Rico Police to train members of the Explosives and Public Security Office in diving techniques and to certify them as such in order to provide support, protection and security services to the citizenry as well as to property in situations of use or warning of use of explosive devices in maritime vessels anchored in the ports of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico.

STATEMENT OF MOTIVES

The most devastating act of terrorism in the history of the United States of America, specifically in the states of New York, Washington, D.C. and Pennsylvania, took place on September 11, 2001. A series of terrorist attacks using commercial passenger airplanes hijacked by suicidal attackers demolished the Twin Towers of the World Trade Center in New York, and part of the Pentagon in Washington, D.C.. As soon as these events occurred, the authorities in charge of national security alerted the North American territory from coast to coast, thus paralyzing air traffic and evacuating important buildings.

Since the events of that day, the Puerto Rico Police has received countless phone calls announcing the placement of some type of explosive device in different geographical areas of the Island. Now then, threatening calls regarding the existence or placing of bombs could also be outside of land area, and we could face said situation in the maritime context which

would affect the vessels anchored in the ports of the island. Should there be an emergency of such nature at this time, the Government would have to request assistance from the federal agencies specialized in the management of explosive devices placed in maritime vessels. In Puerto Rico, however, said agencies do not have this type of specialized unit. It would be necessary to request the transfer of personnel and equipment from the United States, thus increasing the possibility of the occurrence of a disaster of major proportions. Therefore, the Puerto Rico Police as the principal agent to prevent and fight criminal conduct should be trained and prepared to intervene in scenarios of such a nature.

For all the stated above, this Legislature deems pertinent that the Puerto Rico Police train the explosives unit in diving techniques and certifies it as such in order to provide support, protection and security services to the citizenry as well as to property in emergency situations of such a nature in maritime vessels anchored in the ports of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF PUERTO RICO:

Section 1.- The Superintendent of the Puerto Rico Police is hereby directed to train members of the Explosives and Public Security Office in diving techniques and to certify said members as divers in order to provide support, protection and security services to the citizenry as well as to property in situations of use or threat to use explosive devices in maritime vessels anchored in the ports of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico.

The Superintendent shall also acquire the equipment needed to comply with the provisions of this Act so that the safety of the members of the Explosives and Public Security Office is safeguarded while in the performance of their duties in an emergency situation caused by the threat of

the placing or existence of a bomb in maritime vessels anchored in the ports of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico.

Section 2.- In order to comply with the purposes of this Act, the different security and public health agencies shall provide support, training and advisory services in the preparation and certification as divers of the members of the Explosives and Public Security Office, starting with the strategic bomb threat placement or existence thereof prevention plan to be designed, developed or implemented interagency by the public security government entities.

Section 3.- The Superintendent of the Puerto Rico Police shall identify the funds needed to comply with the purposes of this Act from the Budget of Operating Expenses in effect at the time of the approval of this Act. For subsequent fiscal years, on the date of approval of this Act, the budget needed to comply with its purposes shall be consigned in the General Budget of Expenses of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico and included in the Budget of Operating Expenses of the Agency.

Section 4.- In order to comply with the purposes of this Act, the Superintendent is authorized to request, receive, match and administer state, federal and municipal funds, including the funds appropriated by the Department of the Homeland Security.

Section 5.- The Superintendent of the Puerto Rico Police is hereby authorized to adopt the regulations needed to comply with the purposes of this act, pursuant to the provisions of Act No. 170 of August 12, 1988, as amended, known as the "Uniform Administrative Procedures Act."

Section 6.- This Act shall take effect July 1, 2006.

CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify to the Secretary of State that the following Act No. 153 (S.B. 667) of the 2nd Session of the 15th Legislature of Puerto Rico:

AN ACT to direct the Superintendent of the Puerto Rico Police to train members of the Explosives and Public Security Office in diving techniques and to certify them as such in order to provide support, protection and security services to the citizenry as well as to property in situations of use or warning of use of explosive devices in maritime vessels anchored in the ports of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico,

has been translated from Spanish to English and that the English version is correct.

In San Juan, Puerto Rico, today 7th of April of 2006.

Francisco J. Domenech
Director