

**Advance Questions for Mr. William A. Chatfield**  
**Nominee to be Director of Selective Service**

**Duties**

**If confirmed as the Director of Selective Service what would you view as your principal responsibilities and duties?**

The principal responsibilities of the Director are noted in the Military Selective Service Act: to be ready to provide both trained and untrained manpower to the Armed Forces in the numbers and timeframes requested by the Department of Defense, and to be prepared to manage an Alternative Service Program for those men classified as conscientious objectors. This charter implies that Selective Service be organized, staffed, and trained to perform these tasks.

**Relationships**

**The mission of the Selective Service System is to provide manpower to the Armed Forces in time of national emergency and to manage an Alternative Service Program for men classified as conscientious objectors during a draft.**

**If confirmed, what would your relationship be to the Secretary of Defense and the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness?**

It is clear that the chief customer of Selective Service is the Secretary of Defense. Today, Selective Service receives its guidance on the number of conscripts that may be required in a crisis, as well as the desired timeframes from the manpower planners in his Department. The Agency's primary contact within DoD is the Office of the Undersecretary for Personnel and Readiness. We also work very closely with the Military Entrance Processing Command which also comes under this structure. As necessary, there is also direct liaison with the Office of the Secretary of Defense regarding SSS policy issues. Over many years, these relationships have worked well and I will ensure that they continue.

**If confirmed, what would your relationship be to the Assistant Secretaries for Manpower in the military services; the uniformed personnel chiefs of the military services; the Director of the National Guard Bureau; the reserve component chiefs; and the manpower officials in the Joint Staff?**

As an independent civilian Agency, Selective Service's principal interface with DoD is the Office of the Secretary of Defense. Joint and Service manpower officials express their needs up their chain to OSD. This said, Selective Service has historically responded to the Services on Service-unique issues. For example, the

SSS has been assisting individual Service recruiting efforts by including a recruiting brochure for the active and reserve components in our registration acknowledgment envelope mailed to more than 40,000 men each week. As Director, I will meet with the Service Secretaries as necessary. The Chief of the Bureau and the Reserve Chiefs support the Agency by placing 400 National Guard and Reserve officers in Selective Service assignments and assisting with the registration of young men.

## **Major Challenges**

**In your view, what are the major challenges confronting the next Director of the Selective Service System?**

There are four: getting the registration message out to the public given budget limitations, maintaining the registration compliance rate above the 90% range, assuring the public that if a draft is reinstated it will be fair and equitable, and defending the System against challenges to its survival from those who believe that our Nation no longer needs the Agency.

**If confirmed, what plans do you have for addressing these challenges?**

To heighten awareness of the registration requirement among men 18 through 26 years old I would focus more mass mailings to targeted shortfall areas, augmented with public service advertising. This would expand the reach and frequency of the registration message. In support of this approach, I would add momentum and sustainability by encouraging more states to link driver's permits and licenses to the federal registration requirement. And finally, I would ensure a top to bottom review of all mobilization programs to determine the exact costs for readiness and whether the proper level of readiness has been achieved. Selective Service needs only to be as ready and capable as is necessary to fulfill its responsibilities. With the foregoing accomplished, justification for survival of the Agency and its missions would be self-evident.

## **Most Serious Problems**

**What do you consider to be the most serious problems in the performance of the functions of the Selective Service System?**

I believe they are two: eroding public awareness of the federal registration requirement and an essentially no-growth budget. I am sensitive to the fact that the public awareness task is never completed because another 5,000 young men turn 18 year old every day in the U.S.

## **What plans do you have for addressing these challenges?**

One of my first actions would be to spend about 60 days assessing the structure and organization of the System. Given the sizeable Agency investment in information technology over several years, Selective Service need not operate as it did coming out of deep standby in 1980. Through a smarter realignment of programs and people, and capitalizing upon automation already in place, the resources should be available for reprogramming in sync with priorities that I will identify, especially awareness of the registration requirement.

## **Military Personnel and the Selective Service System**

**The Selective Service System relies on military members, from both the active and reserve components, to accomplish its mission. For example, about 450 National Guardsmen and Reservists fulfill their military training obligations with the Selective Service System.**

**Please describe the current military manpower requirements of the Selective Service System and any initiatives taken by the Department of Defense and each of the Services to lower the number of uniformed military personnel who support the Selective Service System.**

Over the years, OSD and the military services have been most cooperative in satisfying the Agency's military requirements, and working with them, Selective Service has reduced its uniform assets. Since the mid-1990s, SSS has continuously realigned and updated those requirements. So the Agency now has assigned only two full-time active duty officers vice the previous 19; 400 part-time National Guard and Reserve officers instead of 750; and a cut in field grade positions of about 22 percent.

**To your knowledge, have there been proposals to substitute civilian positions for active duty or reserve component personnel and what are your views about such an initiative?**

Yes, SSS has proposed replacing higher cost active duty positions with civilians. And although there has been a reduction in active duty officers, there has not been a one-for-one replacement with civilians. Further, the Agency has never sought replacements for its declining number of part-time reserve component personnel. Declining military personnel have been compensated for by applying more automation, changing policies, reshaping the organization, and through staff training. These approaches have worked and the Agency is doing more with less,

so there is no need to add more employees.

**What are your personal views about the requirement for military personnel to operate and manage the Selective Service System?**

While there is a benefit from military representation in the Agency, and we have this with our part-time National Guard and Reserve officers, Congress created Selective Service to be the independent, civilian buffer between the end user of conscripts, the DoD, and American society. This approach has been working for over 63 years. But I do not believe that it is appropriate for military personnel to occupy decision-making positions; these ought to be civilian.

**Coordination with Secondary Schools**

**Former Director Alfred Rascon stated that the Selective Service System had to overcome two major hurdles when reaching out to young men: “ignorance of the law and apathy toward responsibility.” The Selective Service System has cultivated ties with organizations representing secondary school principals and counselors and community organizations in an effort to ensure knowledge of the requirements of law and voluntary compliance.**

**If confirmed, what actions would you take to overcome the obstacles identified by Mr. Rascon?**

My background is communications and building partnerships with various audiences. I believe that an aggressive public awareness program, coupled with outreach to those groups which influence and touch young men -- both educational and others, is the way to dispell ignorance and address youthful apathy.

**What Selective Service programs exist to inform and influence parents, teachers and other organizations regarding the requirement to register with the Selective Service System, and how widespread are these programs?**

SSS is already outreaching to influencers, schools, young men themselves, and other groups. Some are national in scope, such as radio Public Service Announcements to all the major media markets, high school kits to volunteer Selective Service registrars in 25,000 schools, and professional associations which deal with youth: National Association of Secondary School Principals, National School Boards Association, American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers, and the National Association of Financial Aid Administrators. Examples of national influencer groups include: The League of United Latin American Citizens, National Urban League, Organization of Chinese Americans,

and the National Congress of American Indians. Additionally, several programs focus on local or regional communities, such as YMCAs, local ethnic media, immigration services organizations, and others. These local efforts are targeted in areas of low registration compliance. And finally Selective Service has an extensive network of 10,000 civilian Board Members who are ambassadors for our programs in virtually every county across America.

**What is your understanding of the level of voluntary participation by secondary schools in assisting the Selective Service in achieving compliance by male students?**

The Nation's secondary schools are supportive. The Selective Service registrars in 25,000 high schools are volunteer staff or faculty members who distribute SSS awareness materials, approach the young man directly to register, and send him to the library to register on the Internet at <[www.sss.gov](http://www.sss.gov)>. Today, SSS has 86 percent of the Nation's high schools participating with registrars.

**If confirmed, would you recommend imposing legal obligations on school systems that received federal funding to assist in overcoming ignorance of the law and apathy toward compliance?**

There is no doubt that this legal mandate would foster greater registrations, however, it might be perceived as "Big Brother" being too heavy handed. I believe that the programs already in place at SSS are working; the registration compliance rate is moving upward and at the end of CY 2002 it was 91 percent. And this number can only be improved upon as more and more States adopt driver's license legislation supporting the federal registration law. But registration awareness remains a challenge and has to be worked daily. This is one of my priorities.

**Assistance to Military Recruiting**

**The Selective Service System has assisted in military recruiting by placing rotational recruiting messages for the active and reserve components on registration acknowledgment cards mailed to more than 38,000 men each week.**

**How effective has the Selective Service System's recruiting effort been?**

The Department of Defense is pleased with this Selective Service partnership which provides information about military opportunities available in all the active and reserve components. One very big selling point is the fact that SSS names and addresses are the most accurate to be found anywhere because they are recently submitted by the men themselves. Therefore, there is no wasted postage to contact

them. The satisfaction of DoD is expressed by its replacement of the joint program previously handled by OSD with the SSS mailing.

**What are your views and recommendations about additional methods the Selective Service System might use in assisting in recruiting efforts?**

Conceptually, there are additional ways that SSS might aid in this area. For example, if reenlistment rates or enlistments themselves fall in the reserve components as a result of many protracted deployments, SSS might draft exclusively for them. A variation of this could be a National Guard and reserve draft, in which the military person completes his basic and advanced training on active duty, then performs a full-time homeland security mission in the U.S. for a period of time, followed by a part-time assignment in a Guard or reserve unit. Finally, a special skills draft might be necessary for the Armed Forces if volunteers prove too few. I am sure that there are other ways for SSS to contribute in support of our all-volunteer military.

**What are your views and recommendations about initiatives the Department of Defense might implement to assist the Selective Service System in achieving higher compliance rates?**

I cannot think of anything additional that DoD might do for us to achieve higher registration compliance. The Department already provides us its commercially-developed recruiting list. We bounce it against our registration database and if a name isn't there, SSS contacts the man to solicit his registration. Additionally, each Service ensures a new recruit is registered with Selective Service as he processes into the military. So Defense is helping us out currently.

**State by State Compliance**

**For several years, the Selective Service System has issued “report cards” by state measuring the percentage of eligible men turning 20 who have registered in accordance with the law.**

**What programs and requirements used by states have proven most influential in achieving above average compliance rates?**

The two most successful programs at the state level which foster registration compliance are state driver's license legislation and laws which parallel the federal Solomon and Thurmond amendments. Driver's license legislation links a driver's permit, license, license renewal, and state ID card to registering by means of the license application or submitting one's Selective Service number. We now have 32

states, two territories and the District of Columbia participating. This is a wonderful source of registrations because every young man wants a license as soon as he can get it. The other great source of registrations is a state law which links a man's eligibility for state-funded higher education benefits and state jobs to the federal registration requirement. To date, 36 states and territories have enacted these laws.

**What recommendations for legislation, if any, or for new programs at both the federal and state level do you have for increasing compliance levels nationwide?**

At the federal level, there really isn't a need for new or additional legislation. However, we hope that at the state level driver's license legislation might eventually include all 50 states and every U.S. territory.

**In your view, is the current budget of the Selective Service System sufficient to prevent declines in compliance rates?**

I think that SSS has proven that its current initiatives are improving the challenges to compliance. However, what I am concerned about is an essentially straight-lined budget which precludes applying those public awareness initiatives, technology, and staffing changes necessary to conduct business smarter and more effectively.

### **Incentives to Individuals for Compliance**

**Selective Service registration currently is a requirement for a number of opportunities, including federal student loans, job training, employment, and U.S. citizenship.**

**Are there any additional incentives that you consider appropriate to encourage more young men to register in a timely manner?**

Thanks to the Congress and most state legislatures, I believe that SSS has the bases covered. From its point of view, the one that needs to be expanded, the one that is the most productive source of registrations, is driver's license legislation. But this is totally dependent upon the wishes of states that have not yet enacted such legislation.

### **Performance of the Selective Service System**

**In his responses to questions submitted by the Committee in May 2001, former**

**Director Rascon indicated that the accuracy of the address information of Selective Service registrants is good because of measures for voluntary submission of changes and through reliance on the U.S. Postal Service's National Change of Address system.**

**What is your estimate of the current accuracy of the address information of Selective Service registrants in the prime induction group?**

It is highly accurate because Selective Service employs the same program as the U.S. Postal Service – the National Change of Address System. In addition, this program is supplemented with changes provided by the registrant himself from our acknowledgment mailing to him at his residence, through changes a registrant mails using a card at any Post Office, from changes he provides by telephone, and with address updates he supplies on the Internet. Actual mailings average over a 98.5 percent successful contact rate, so our procedures are working.

**What additional steps is the Selective Service System taking to ensure the accuracy of address information?**

SSS is continuing the successful Postal Service system, has printed on the outside of all its cards and envelopes the Postal endorsement for address corrections to ensure notification to the Agency, and practices internal controls to guarantee that address changes from a registrant are posted to his file immediately and accurately.

### **Military Conscription**

**The demands placed on our military forces fighting the war on terror have led to calls by some to reinstate the draft. Legislative proposals have been introduced in the Senate and the House of Representatives that would require all young men and women in the United States to perform a period of military service or a period of civilian service in furtherance of the national defense and homeland security.**

**What are your views on reinstating the draft to support the war on terror?**

I see Selective Service as a service organization and, as such, it does not make policy; it responds to and implements policy. Policymaking is the realm of this Committee and the Administration. It would be my job to lead the Agency in conducting a timely, fair, and equitable draft if Congress and the President so direct. It would not be within my purview to determine when and if such a draft is necessary.

**In your opinion, should women be subject to the draft if it is reinstated?**

Since the founding of the Nation, the U.S. has never drafted women. To do so would require Congressional and Presidential policy and lawmaking decisions. Personally, I see no pressing need to do so. The primary customer, the DoD, has taken the position that there is no “military necessity” to register, let alone, draft females, especially since a general draft would be intended to replace combat casualties. As a matter of longstanding policy, the Nation continues to exclude women from front-line, ground combat assignments.

**Are there any circumstances under which you would recommend reinstating the draft? If so, what are these circumstances?**

It would be my job to lead the Agency in conducting a timely, fair, and equitable draft if Congress and the President so direct. It would not be within my purview to determine when and if such a draft is necessary. But I can speculate that the Nation’s policymakers might consider a draft if confronted with very serious threats from a hostile adversary or group of adversaries, or if a conflict was to be protracted over several years and volunteers were too few, or if there appeared to be no other solution to filling critical skills vacancies in the Armed Forces.

**Congressional Oversight**

**In order to exercise its legislative and oversight responsibilities, it is important that this Committee and other appropriate committees of the Congress are able to receive testimony, briefings, and other communications of information.**

**Do you agree, if confirmed for this high position, to appear before this Committee and other appropriate committees of the Congress?**

Absolutely. I see it as a matter of integrity and principle that the Agency Head be the facilitator between Selective Service and the Congress in an ongoing dialogue. I’ve mentioned public awareness of the registration requirement, but the other type of awareness is Agency awareness by the oversight committees. This can only be achieved if I am responsive; I intend to be responsive.

**Do you agree, when asked, to give your personal views, even if those views differ from the Administration in power?**

If the Committee desires the personal views of Bill Chatfield, it just has to ask.

**Do you agree, if confirmed, to appear before this Committee, or designated members of this Committee, and provide information, subject to appropriate and necessary security protection, with respect to your responsibilities as the Director, Selective Service System?**

If confirmed, I envision my job as Director to be the lead in the exchange of information between the Committee and the Selective Service System. Selective Service is a public agency doing the public's business. It can only retain its program credibility if what it does is open to public view—and this means the Congress.

**Do you agree to ensure that testimony, briefings and other communications of information are provided to this Committee and its staff and other appropriate Committees?**

I assure you that, if confirmed, I and Selective Service will continue to be forthright and responsive in any communications to or from a Committee.