



The Selective Service System

The Military Selective Service Act states that "...an adequate armed strength must be achieved and maintained to insure the security of this Nation....and that in a free society the obligations and privileges of serving in the armed forces and the reserve components thereof shall be shared generally, in accordance with a system of selection which is fair and just, and which is consistent with the maintenance of an effective national economy." As such, "The President is authorized...to select and induct into the Armed Forces of the United States for training and service...such numbers of persons that may be required to provide and maintain the strength of Armed Forces."

The Selective Service System (SSS) is an independent Agency within the Executive Branch of the United States Government. Our role is to be prepared to provide trained and untrained manpower to the Department of Defense in a national emergency, and to manage a program of alternative service for person's classified as conscientious objectors to all military service.

The Director, Selective Service is responsible directly to the President of the United States. Our Agency is organized around the following construct: 124 Full Time Federal Employees and 175 part time military Reserve Force Officers; a National headquarters in Arlington, Virginia; a Data Management Center in North Chicago, Illinois; Regional headquarters in Atlanta, Georgia; Denver Colorado; and North Chicago, Illinois; 54 Part Time Federal Employees serving as SSS State Directors (recommended by a State's Governor and appointed by the President) and representing 50 States, New York City, Puerto Rico, Guam and the Northern Marianas Islands, and the District of Columbia; and National, District and Local Boards manned by over 11,000 uncompensated Federal employees. Following a national mobilization, the SSS establishes Area Offices and Alternative Service Offices manned by military Reserve Force Officers, recalled retirees, and temporary-hired Federal employees charged with administering SSS induction and appeals processing activities.

In peacetime, the SSS conducts registration, compliance and verification functions for young men aged 18 to 25 years of age. SSS manages the third largest PII database in the Federal government. We provide information sharing services to the Department of Defense to help sustain recruitment for the All-Volunteer Force, while facilitating computer matching services between Registrants, their registration for Selective Service, and access to Federal and State benefits.

The President and Congress would authorize the mobilization of the SSS during a national emergency. Reserve Forces Officers would establish SSS State Headquarters at about 450 Area Offices at predetermined locations. A lottery will establish the order in which men would be called, and induction orders would be issued in lottery number order. Agency mobilization plans are designed to meet the needs of the Department of Defense. The first priority group would consist of men in the calendar year of their 20th birthday. Registrants receiving induction orders would either report to the Military Entrance Processing Station for examination and possible immediate induction, or file claims for postponement, deferment, or exemption from military service. SSS would activate Local and Appeal Boards for administrative and judgmental claims. Such claims would be considered by the Area Office or the Local Board, depending on the nature of the claim.

