



ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20301-1400

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PUBLIC AFFAIRS

MEMORANDUM FOR NEWS MEDIA BUREAU CHIEFS

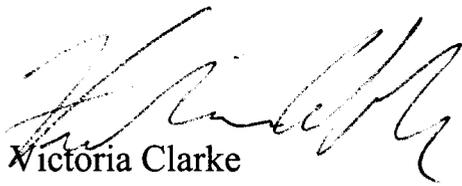
SUBJECT: Selection for Secretary of Defense Trips

The attached document outlines the procedures and policies by which OASD (PA) will select media to travel with the Secretary of Defense.

Individual correspondents, bureau chiefs and DoD public affairs officials contributed significantly to the development of this process with their advice and recommendations. These decisions are based largely on their input. Additional criteria that weighed heavily in reaching these decisions include:

- Size and scope of news organizations
- Commitment to on-going coverage of the Pentagon
- Representation of DoD's diverse audiences

These criteria, admittedly, contain quantitative and qualitative considerations. Simply selecting the largest media organizations every time would ignore outlets that reach diverse and important constituencies. Although we will not make everyone happy, we do think this system provides a balanced and predictable method for selection of the Secretary's traveling press contingent.

  
Victoria Clarke  
Assistant Secretary of Defense  
for Public Affairs

Attachment  
as stated

## Selection Procedures for Secretary of Defense Traveling Press

1. **Selection Criteria:** The selection of news media accompanying the Secretary of Defense on trips is based on a number of criteria, but the biggest factor in how many members of the media are allowed to travel with the Secretary is the size of the plane assigned to the trip and the number of seats allocated to public affairs. We will always try to accommodate as many members of the media, representing as many disciplines in the media, as possible.
  
2. **Media Categories:** We will consider media in the following categories when considering and selecting specific travelers. The OASD(PA) Press Operations office is responsible for establishing and maintaining appropriate rotating travel rosters:
  - Wire Services (AP, Reuters, AFP. All others, on a rotating basis)
  
  - Electronic Media (TV)
  
  - Electronic Media (Radio)
  
  - Large newspaper/news service/magazines – those organizations with audited circulations of at least 500,000, which cover the Pentagon on a regular basis.
  
  - Small newspaper/news service/magazines – all organizations not covered in the large category.
  
  - Photo (and all others not covered above)

- 3. Selection Criteria:** Assume a seat allocation of 13. Pool rules do not necessarily apply in this situation, but should be addressed in the planning stages of each trip. In any case, if there are five seats or less available, all products of the traveling media will be pooled with the members of the DoD National Media Pool. If more than 13 seats are available, they will be offered to news organizations in the following order: newspapers (large, then small), TV, radio, photo, wires.

Allocated seats will be assigned as below (cuts, based on seats available, will come from the bottom):

1. AP
2. TV
3. TV
4. Reuters
5. AFP
6. Large newspaper/news service/magazine
7. Small newspaper/news service/magazine
8. TV
9. TV
10. Large newspaper/news service/magazine
11. Radio
12. Photographer
13. Rotating wire service

**4. Selecting Media:** Within a group, media outlets will initially be ranked based on their deliberate and long-term commitment (prior to September 11, 2001) to covering the Pentagon and the Secretary of Defense's traveling schedule. Once the initial list (group-level) is established, a numerical rotation will determine the media organizations that are invited to travel on the next trip. To avoid manipulation of the roster, if trip selection is offered to a media outlet and is subsequently turned down, that organization will move to the bottom of the list. Organizations that would like to be included after the initial rotation is established will be vetted for continuing commitment to covering the Pentagon, then added to the bottom of the roster.

**5. Unique situations associated with selecting the traveling press contingent will be considered and adjudicated on a case-by-case basis by the ASD(PA).**