



U.S. Department of  
Homeland Security

**United States  
Secret Service**

# Press Release

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## **BARBARA RIGGS APPOINTED AS DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF THE UNITED STATES SECRET SERVICE 30-year Veteran is First Woman to hold Position**

(Washington, D.C.) – Barbara Riggs, a veteran of almost 30 years with the United States Secret Service, began serving as Deputy Director on September 19, 2004. Her appointment marks a significant milestone for the Secret Service, as she is the first woman in the agency's 139-year history to serve as Deputy Director. With her promotion, Riggs also joins an elite group in becoming one of the highest ranking women in career federal law enforcement history and is currently the highest ranking woman in law enforcement within the Department of Homeland Security.

“Ms. Riggs has had a long and impressive career with the Secret Service and I am pleased she has accepted the responsibilities involved in serving as my deputy,” said W. Ralph Basham, Director of the Secret Service. “Her proven leadership, dedication and skills will be a tremendous asset in fulfilling the distinguished mission of the Secret Service.”

Prior to her selection, Riggs served as Chief of Staff, where she planned and directed all activities involving the Office of the Director and served as the Director's policy advisor. Over the last two years, she has overseen the agency's transfer to the Department of Homeland Security.

She previously served as the Assistant Director for the Office of Protective Research, responsible for the agency's threat and vulnerability assessment activities, a critical component of the Secret Service's mission of safeguarding the nation's highest elected leaders and visiting foreign dignitaries. During her tenure in the Office of Protective Research, Riggs had responsibility for the threat and vulnerability assessment for all National Special Security Events, including the NATO 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Summit in 1999, the 2001 Presidential Inauguration, and in 2002, the Winter Olympics in Salt Lake City and Superbowl XXXVI. As Assistant Director, she also oversaw the agency's Technical Security Division, which evaluates and implements technology-based protective countermeasures to safeguard Secret Service protectees and protected facilities, including the White House and Vice President's Residence.

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During her tenure as Assistant Director, Riggs also oversaw the creation of the National Threat Assessment Center (NTAC) in 1998, which was officially authorized by Congress, and is now an important component of the Secret Service. Under her direction, the NTAC conducted the most exhaustive study of assassination attempts (Exceptional Case Study Project) and, in partnership with the Department of Education, developed the Safe School Initiative, which examined school shootings and other school-based attacks. Based on the study's findings, the agencies have developed a guide for schools and regularly train school and law enforcement professionals on threat assessment in schools – how to identify, assess and manage individuals who might pose a risk of school violence.

Barbara Riggs was a member of the White House Security Review conducted in 1995, which was then the most exhaustive evaluation of the security of the White House complex. She continued her leadership role as Assistant Director, pursuing a series of security enhancements to the White House complex. Together with government and private sector stakeholders, Riggs was key in developing integrated security protocols with architectural preservation and restoration on the White House complex.

One of the first 10 women sworn in as Secret Service special agents, Riggs joined the agency in 1975 assigned to the Washington, D.C. Field Office. She later became the first female supervisory special agents assigned to two of the largest field offices of the Secret Service: the Los Angeles Field Office and the New York Field Office. During her tenure in the Secret Service, Riggs has protected six U.S. presidents, including Gerald Ford, Jimmy Carter, Ronald Reagan, George H.W. Bush, Bill Clinton and George W. Bush.

Other career assignments included duty in the Intelligence Division and the Presidential Protective Division, where she was assigned during the terms of President Ronald Reagan and George H.W. Bush. In 1990, she became the first female supervisory agent in the history of the Secret Service assigned to the Presidential Protective Division. Riggs has also served in supervisory positions in the Secret Service's Office of Inspection and as the Special Agent in Charge of the Special Investigations and Security Division.

Riggs has received numerous awards throughout her distinguished Secret Service career, including the Meritorious Executive Presidential Rank Award of 2002 in recognition of her longstanding service to the nation and her actions immediately after the September 11, 2001 terrorist incident.

Riggs is a native of Albany, New York. She attended Cornell University, where she earned a Bachelor's Degree in International Studies in 1974. She currently resides on a farm in Middleburg, Virginia, where she pursues her equestrian interests.

**About the United States Secret Service**

The United States Secret Service was originally founded in 1865 for the purpose of suppressing the counterfeiting of U.S. currency. Now widely known for its protective mission in safeguarding the nation's highest elected officials, visiting foreign dignitaries, and events of national significance, the Secret Service maintains a unique dual mission as one of the premier law enforcement organizations charged with investigating financial crimes.

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*EDITOR'S NOTE:*

*For questions concerning this release, please contact the United States Secret Service Office of Government and Public Affairs at 202-406-5708.*

*Photo available upon request.*