Military Chaplain Support
Demographics study of Defense Manpower Data Agency data

Military Association of Atheists & Freethinkers
February 2010
DoD data show nearly one-quarter of the military is nontheistic

- Nontheists are found throughout the military

- Military and Civilian leadership must recognize and support this significant demographic

* General Population data set produced by DMDC (DRS#28452) July 14, 2009 and analyzed by MAAF
Chaplain staffing reflects evangelical efforts to proselytize the military

- Evangelicals are represented in the chaplain's corps at **over three times** the rate of the general population
- Protestant (non-Catholic, non-evangelicals) have representation approximately equal to the general population
- Catholics are represented in the chaplains corps at about **half the rate** of the general population
- Other faith groups are represented at rates approximating the general population in aggregate

*Population represents 2,254,271 service members, including 2,928 chaplains*
Even professed atheists outnumber many more well-supported religious groups

- **Even professed atheists outnumber many more well-supported religious groups**
- **6% of the population are listed as “unknown,” and this designation may indicate a disinterest in religion or unwillingness to self-identify as a minority.**
- **Nones and atheists**, those professing no specific faith interest or an interest inconsistent with traditional religions, range over **20% of the population with no chaplain support**
- **Evangelicals flood the chaplains corps** while service members need morale and welfare support that is not constrained by one faith tradition
Demographics show a systematic bias in the Chaplains’ Corps

- Evangelicals flood the chaplains corps while service members need morale and welfare support that is not constrained by one faith tradition.
MAAF envisions a minimum level of support from all chaplains

- Until all chaplains commit to support all service members equally and renounce proselytism and evangelism of any sort, we will have a military divided by religion.

- Chaplains should pledge, "Nontheistic service members, including atheists, agnostics, humanists, freethinkers, and those holding other nontheistic designations, serve honorably within our nation's military. I pledge to support nontheistic service members as strongly as I support theistic service members. I further pledge not to use my position to influence individuals or the chain of command to adopt the principles or practices of my own personal religion. I concur that these statements are minimum standards of conduct to which all service members, especially chaplains and commanders, should adhere."
Organizations like MAAF can help to educate chaplains and close the nontheist support gap

- Chaplain Outreach
  - www.maafl.info/chaplain.html
- Policy Advice
  - www.secular.org
- Community Connections
  - www.maafl.info/nontheistorgs.html
- Advocacy
  - www.militaryreligiousfreedom.org