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U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement

News Releases

July 14, 2009

ICE announces increases in FY 2009 3rd quarter SW border criminal arrests

Other ICE statistics also show significant gains

WASHINGTON - Criminal arrests on the Southwest Border by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) have increased more than 17 percent through the first three quarters of Fiscal Year (FY) 2009, compared to the same period in FY 2008. In the nine months from Oct. 1, 2008 through June 29, 2009, ICE made 6,834 criminal arrests compared with 5,802 arrests during the same period last year. This significant increase shows ICE's emphasis on targeting criminal aliens who pose a threat to public safety.

"As an investigative agency, ICE prioritizes our immigration enforcement efforts to target those who threaten the security of the American people," said ICE Assistant Secretary John Morton. "We are combining innovative and cooperative approaches - in coordination with our state, local and international partners - to help us engage in smart and effective law enforcement."

Nationwide, ICE has returned more than 18 percent more aliens to their countries of origin in FY 2009. From Oct. 1, 2008 through June 30, 2009, ICE has deported or returned more than 271,200 aliens, compared to the 229,800 aliens removed during the same time period in FY 2008.

Criminal Alien Program (CAP)

ICE's Criminal Alien Program (CAP) has remained consistently active by issuing more than 168,800 charging documents to aliens following their arrest on criminal charges by other law enforcement agencies; this figure is up a percent point compared with the record-breaking statistics of FY 2008.

CAP identifies, processes and removes criminal aliens who are incarcerated in federal, state and local prisons and jails throughout the United States. ICE agents screen inmates and place detainers on criminal aliens to prevent them from being released to the general public. After they're thoroughly screened, ICE issues charging documents to formally begin proceedings to remove the criminal alien from the United States.

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Secure Communities - the first eight months

The first eight months of ICE's new Secure Communities program screened more than 445,000 individuals' fingerprints resulting in more than 56,300 hits in the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) databases. Of this number, more than 5,000 were identified as "Level 1" criminal aliens who have been convicted of or arrested for major drug offenses and/or violent offenses such as murder, manslaughter, rape, robbery, and kidnapping. Under Secure Communities, more than 48,800 were identified as level 2 or level 3 criminals - criminal aliens convicted of or arrested for minor drug offenses and/or mainly property offenses such as burglary, larceny, fraud, and money laundering, or other offenses.

Beginning Oct. 27, 2008, the Secure Communities program was implemented in one county jail and expanded rapidly to other law enforcement agencies. Secure Communities is designed to screen all fingerprints that are sent to FBI's database through DHS databases automatically and simultaneously. Ultimately, all law enforcement agencies nationwide will have access to this seamless program.

Fugitive Operations Program

ICE fugitive alien arrests, those who have already received final deportation orders from a federal immigration judge have increased 8 percent compared with last year to more than 20,100. However, the number of criminal fugitives arrested by ICE increased 133 percent to more than 8,300 aliens. In addition, ICE Fugitive Operations Teams arrested another 2,200 criminal aliens who did not have final orders of deportation, which is a 173 percent increase over the same period last year. In all, ICE Fugitive Operations Teams arrested more than 26,900 aliens so far in FY 2009.

-- ICE --

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) was established in March 2003 as the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security. ICE is comprised of five integrated divisions that form a 21st century law enforcement agency with broad responsibilities for a number of key homeland security priorities.

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