



**Homeland
Security**

Fact Sheet: Southwest Border Next Steps

Release Date: June 23, 2010

For Immediate Release
Office of the Press Secretary
Contact: 202-282-8010

Washington, D.C.—Over the past year and a half, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), working with its federal, state, local, tribal and Mexican partners, has made significant progress in cracking down on border-related crime and smuggling while facilitating legitimate travel and commerce.

The Administration is committed to building on these successes and addressing current challenges with our partners in order to keep our communities safe from threats of border-related violence and crime. To that end, the Department is implementing the following initiatives to strengthen and expand upon existing, successful efforts.

These initiatives come in addition to President Obama's request for \$500 million in supplemental funds for enhanced border security and law enforcement activities, and his deployment of up to an additional 1,200 National Guard troops to assist the ongoing efforts to secure the border and combat cartel violence.

New Measures to Enhance the Security of America's Border Communities

The following initiatives will be budget-neutral.

Creating New Partnerships with State & Local Law Enforcement

- DHS is forging a new partnership with the Major Cities Chiefs Association to create the "Southwest Border Law Enforcement Compact"—designed to boost law enforcement at the border by enabling non-border state and local law enforcement agencies to detail officers to state and local law enforcement agencies along the Southwest border.

Building Information Sharing Capabilities Among All Law Enforcement Partners

- DHS is working with the Department of Justice (DOJ) to create a new system that will fully link the information systems of all state, local and tribal law enforcement entities operating along the Southwest border with those of DHS and DOJ.
- DHS is strengthening the analytic capability of fusion centers across the Southwest border to receive and share threat information, improving our ability to identify and mitigate emerging threats.
- DHS is establishing a suspicious activities reporting program for the Southwest border. This will help local officers recognize and track incidents related to criminal activity by drug traffickers and utilize this information for targeted law enforcement operations on both sides of the border.

Enhancing Technology and Targeting to Crack Down on Smuggling and Border Crime

- DHS will deploy additional Border Patrol agents, ICE investigators, air assets and other technologies to the Arizona border to conduct targeted operations against the cartels that exploit the Tucson Sector border region.
- DHS and the Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) are partnering to develop and implement Project Roadrunner, an integrated license plate reader recognition (LPR) system. Project Roadrunner was conceived to target both north- and southbound drug trafficking and associated illegal activity along the Southwest border. Under this partnership, ONDCP will provide DHS with previously-purchased fixed and mobile cameras—expanding DHS' existing capabilities at minimal cost. This effort is ongoing and will expand as legal and logistical issues are resolved.
- DHS is expanding the Department's Illegal Drug Program to four additional Southwest border ports of entry—for a total of six locations—to target drug traffickers whose trafficking activity can be tied to Mexico and return them to Mexico to face prosecution by Mexican authorities.
- CBP has obtained an approval from the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) for a Certificate of Authorization (COA)

that will allow CBP Unmanned Aircraft System (UAS) flights to operate along the Texas border and throughout the Gulf Coast region. CBP will base a UAS at the Corpus Christi Naval Air Station, Texas, as soon as all necessary agreements and resources are finalized to sustain a permanent UAS presence there.

Prioritizing the Arrest and Removal of Dangerous Criminal Aliens

- Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) is expanding the Joint Criminal Alien Removal Task Forces by nine officers forming two additional teams. These task forces are comprised of ICE officers and local law enforcement agents who work together to identify and arrest convicted criminal aliens in our communities.
- ICE is deploying 40 officers to work with state and local jails that are within 100 miles of the Southwest border to ensure the identification of all removable convicted criminal aliens detained in those jails who, if released, would pose a danger to public safety.

Expanding Unprecedented Law Enforcement Partnerships with Mexico

- The Department is increasing joint training programs with Mexican law enforcement agencies—focusing on money laundering investigations and cracking down on human trafficking and exploitation.

Ongoing Initiatives to Secure the Southwest Border

Over the past year and a half, the Department has launched unprecedented security initiatives designed to provide additional manpower, technology and infrastructure to high-risk Southwest border regions; coordinate more closely with our federal, state and local law enforcement partners; and forge new cooperative arrangements with Mexican law enforcement authorities that bolster security on both sides of the border.

Surging Additional Manpower, Technology and Infrastructure to the Border

- The Border Patrol is better staffed than at any time in its 85-year history, having nearly doubled the number of agents from approximately 10,000 in 2004 to more than 20,000 today.
- DHS has doubled the number of personnel assigned to Southwest Border Enforcement Security Task Forces; tripled the number of ICE intelligence analysts working along the U.S.-Mexico border; quadrupled deployments of Border Liaison Officers; and begun screening 100 percent of southbound rail shipments for illegal weapons, drugs and cash—for the first time ever.
- DHS has deployed additional canine teams trained to detect drugs and weapons, as well as non-intrusive inspection technology to identify anomalies in passenger vehicles that may indicate the presence of drugs, weapons, or other contraband, to the Southwest border.
- The 652 miles of border fencing mandated by Congress is nearly complete—and DHS expects to complete the remaining six miles by the end of the year.

Building New Partnerships with State, Local and Mexican Law Enforcement

- The federal government has worked closely with state and local law enforcement along the border—leveraging the resources and capabilities of over 50 law enforcement agencies to crack down on transnational criminal organizations.
- DHS has increased the funds state and local law enforcement can use to combat border-related crime through Operation Stonegarden—a Department of Homeland Security funded grant program designed to enhance border security by developing multilateral enforcement efforts between the U.S. Border Patrol and state, local, and tribal law enforcement agencies. Based on risk, cross-border traffic and border-related threat intelligence, nearly 84 percent of 2009 Operation Stonegarden funds went to Southwest border states.

Forging Unprecedented Cooperation with Mexico

- Secretary Napolitano and her Mexican counterparts have signed numerous bilateral agreements and declarations of cooperation to bolster cooperation in the areas of enforcement, planning, information and intelligence sharing, joint operations and trade facilitation along the Southwest border.

Strengthening Immigration Enforcement by Prioritizing Dangerous Criminal Aliens

- ICE has prioritized enforcement against convicted criminal aliens who pose the most danger to communities while

strengthening oversight and consistency in immigration enforcement across the country.

- ICE has expanded the Secure Communities program, which uses biometric information to identify dangerous criminal aliens in state and local jails and remove them from the United States. Since its launch in October 2008, Secure Communities has identified more than 34,900 aliens charged with or convicted of the most serious, violent or major drug offenses, and removed more than 8,500 to date.
- ICE has changed the way it approaches worksite enforcement, prioritizing investigations of employers who exploit undocumented workers or commit criminal offenses.

Tangible Results of the Department's Efforts in the Past 18 Months:

- Overall Border Patrol apprehensions of illegal aliens decreased from over 723,800 in fiscal year 2008 to over 556,000 in fiscal year 2009, a 23 percent reduction, indicating that fewer people are attempting to illegally cross the border. From 2004-2009, the number of Border Patrol apprehensions along the Southwest border has decreased by 53 percent.
- Seizures of contraband rose significantly across the board last year compared to the year before: illegal bulk cash seizures rose 14 percent; illegal weapons seizures rose 29 percent; and illegal drugs seizures rose 15 percent.
- So far this year, ICE has removed more than 117,000 aliens convicted of crimes—a 37 percent increase as compared to the same time last year.
- In fiscal year 2009, ICE conducted more than 1,400 I-9 audits of employers suspected of hiring illegal labor—triple the number of audits conducted in fiscal year 2008.

For more information, visit www.dhs.gov.

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AILA InfoNet Doc. No. 10062368. (Posted 06/23/10)

This page was last reviewed/modified on June 23, 2010.