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CBP Announces FY06 Enforcement Actions at California's Land Border

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San Diego— U.S. Customs and Border Protection officers conducting security operations at California's land border ports of entry performed over 83 million inspections of people, seized almost 213,000 pounds of illegal narcotics and apprehended over 67,500 immigration violators during federal fiscal year 2006, officials announced today.

The CBP San Diego field office manages the work of over 1,300 front-line federal officers at border stations at San Ysidro, Otay Mesa, Tecate, Calexico, Andrade and the San Diego air and sea ports of entry.

Of the total enforcement actions, CBP officers at passenger ports in San Diego and Imperial counties inspected almost 69 million people in 34.5 million passenger cars and 14.5 million pedestrians during the fiscal year, which ended September 30. During these examinations, officers seized 193,733 pounds of narcotics, an increase of over two percent from the previous year when 189,183 pounds were confiscated.

Marijuana seizures at passenger facilities increased slightly to 182,763 pounds; cocaine seizures increased about 60 percent to 8,038 pounds; heroin seizures increased 29 percent to 209 pounds; and methamphetamine confiscations increased 69 percent to 2,723 pounds.

CBP officers at commercial cargo facilities processed over 1.1 million cargo trucks during the fiscal year, up almost three percent over FY2005. Narcotic apprehensions, composed mainly of marijuana, decreased 71 percent to 19,212 pounds compared to 65,585 pounds during the previous year, officials said. CBP officials credited enhanced enforcement and screening methods involving examinations and gamma ray inspections for this reduction.

Total immigration violations processed at the ports fell 10 percent to 67,534. Apprehension of undocumented migrants being smuggled in vehicles fell 54 percent to 22,758 and the apprehension of aliens using fraudulent documents decreased about 15.5 percent to 29,781. The successful detection of undocumented false claims of U.S. citizenship increased over 44 percent, indicating a possible shift in smuggler strategy from hiding migrants in vehicle compartments to coaching them to present themselves as U.S. citizens, officials said.

The apprehension of minors involved in immigration infractions increased eight percent to 6,835 during the year, raising continued concerns by CBP about the physical dangers associated with smuggling of children.

CBP enforcement officers prosecuted 559 migrant smugglers during the fiscal year, an increase of 31 percent over the previous year. Working closely with Mexican authorities, CBP forwarded 53 migrant smuggling cases involving Mexican smugglers to be prosecuted in Mexican courts.

The apprehensions of individuals with outstanding felony warrants for such crimes as homicide, robbery and assault by local, state or national police agencies increased about 16 percent to 1,771 compared to 1,532 arrests during the same period last year. Officials cited good basic police work and increased use at the ports of document scanning and fingerprint technology that compares traveler information against various law enforcement databases as

reasons for the change.

The amount of unreported currency seized by CBP officers during the year increased 254 percent to \$2.6 million compared to \$744,000 the previous year.

Trusted traveler programs advanced during FY2006 with increases in both the Secure Network for Travelers Rapid Inspection (SENTRI) for passenger vehicles and the Free And Secure Trade (FAST) program for commercial truck drivers.

The number of participants enrolled in SENTRI on both sides of the California border increased 19 percent to 78,238 and the number of vehicles processed in San Ysidro, Otay Mesa and Calexico SENTRI lanes increased over nine percent to 3.9 million inspections during the period.

CBP and the Mexican government inaugurated Imperial County's first SENTRI lane at the downtown Calexico facility in December 2005. The lane became an immediate hit during its first year of use when 6,300 people on both sides of the border enrolled in the program and made over 218,000 entries into the U.S.

FAST participation by registered cargo truck drivers increased 17 percent to 2,532 drivers who made 135,215 entries into the U.S., up 130 percent over the previous year.

The number of interceptions of reportable or actionable agricultural pests in the passenger environment increased from 275 in FY2005 to 858 last year and the number of violations detected increased 117 percent. CBP officials credit the change to increasing effectiveness in recognizing and preventing the accidental or intentional introduction of potentially injurious pests and effective partnerships with such agencies as the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, U.S. Department of Agriculture, California Department of Food and Agriculture, and the San Diego County Sheriff 's and Agriculture offices.

"Sustained rigorous border security by CBP officers and agriculture specialists whose priority mission is to detect possible terrorists or terrorist weapons continues to produce benefits in terms of narcotics seizures, human smuggling apprehensions, capture of wanted individuals and detection of pests and diseases," said Adele Fasano, field operations director for CBP in San Diego. "Our challenge continues to be to better facilitate the efficient processing of legitimate vehicle, pedestrian and cargo traffic to minimize any delays. We are working hard to expand our trusted traveler programs, use of technology and layered enforcement strategies to minimize these delays."

U.S. Customs and Border Protection is the unified border agency within the Department of Homeland Security charged with the management, control and protection of the nation's borders at and between the official ports of entry. CBP is charged with keeping terrorists and terrorist weapons out of the country while enforcing hundreds of U.S. laws.

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