

STATEMENT OF

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BEFORE THE

**U.S HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY
SUBCOMMITTEE ON MANAGEMENT, INTEGRATION, AND OVERSIGHT**

REGARDING

**TRAINING MORE BORDER PATROL AGENTS: HOW THE DEPARTMENT OF
HOMELAND SECURITY CAN INCREASE TRAINING CAPACITY MOST
EFFECTIVELY**

**TUESDAY, MAY 24, 2005,
2:00 PM
ROOM 210, CANNON OFFICE BUILDING**

CHAIRMAN ROGERS, RANKING MEMBER MEEK, AND DISTINGUISHED COMMITTEE MEMBERS, I am honored to appear before you today to discuss the successes and challenges of training more Border Patrol agents and to increasing training capacity more effectively, as demonstrated by the operations and law enforcement initiatives of the Department of Homeland Security, Customs and Border Protection (CBP), and the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center.

CBP, as the guardian of the Nation's borders, safeguards the homeland—foremost, by protecting the American public against terrorists and the instruments of terror; while at the same time enforcing the laws of the United States and fostering the Nation's economic security through lawful travel and trade. Contributing to all this is the Border Patrol's time-honored duty of interdicting illegal aliens and drugs and those who attempt to smuggle them across our borders. We cannot protect against the entry of terrorists and the instruments of terror without also reducing illegal migration across our borders. And this can only occur if Border Patrol agents are properly trained.

CBP Border Patrol's National Strategy has made a centralized chain of command at Headquarters a priority and has increased the effectiveness of our agents by using intelligence driven operations to deploy our mobile resources. The Strategy recognizes that border awareness and cooperation with our law enforcement partners is critical. CBP is committed to creating the right combination of personnel, technology, and infrastructure to gain operational control of our borders. Recognizing that we cannot control our borders by merely enforcing at the "line," our strategy incorporates a "defense-in-depth" component, to include transportation checks away from the physical

border as well as checkpoints. We will not be able to achieve control of the border unless our apprehensions demonstrate the futility of attempting to enter the United States illegally. The additional agents used to man these checkpoints, blended with infrastructure and technology, increase the probability of arrest of those who attempt to circumvent primary inspection at the checkpoint. Permanent checkpoints allow CBP Border Patrol to establish an important second layer of defense.

The foundation of our border enforcement effort is the uniformed officer in the field and the training he/she receives.

Training

DHS has established a comprehensive training plan for our CBP Officers, Agriculture Specialists, and Border Patrol Agents. Carrying out the Nation's homeland security mission requires a workforce with the necessary skills and proficiency to fight terrorist threats while effectively carrying out our traditional missions of interdicting drugs, intercepting illegal immigrants, and facilitating legitimate trade and travel.

BP Academy in Artesia, New Mexico

Commissioner Robert C. Bonner dedicated the New Border Patrol Academy in Artesia, New Mexico on October 21, 2004. The Federal Law Enforcement Training Center (FLETC) hosts the Border Patrol Academy. This training facility consolidates all Border Patrol training assets at a primary facility, thus creating a cost-efficient, totally encompassed learning environment with regard to Border Patrol agent education. In the

past, Border Patrol agents were trained in several different locations, including New Mexico, Texas, Alabama, Georgia and South Carolina. FLETC was an instrumental partner in our consolidation effort and we continue to work closely with them on issues affecting the Border Patrol Academy.

The consolidation of educational assets and expertise at a centralized location is an extraordinary benefit to both the agents and the agency. The agents receive specialized training and the agency receives a higher caliber of employees.

The Border Patrol Academy is responsible for addressing the basic and advanced training needs for more than 11,000 Border Patrol agents nationwide. New Border Patrol agents must complete a rigorous, 19-week training program that includes courses in anti-terrorism, federal Immigration and anti-drug laws, criminal law and statutory authority, behavioral science, intensive Spanish language training, Border Patrol Operations, care and use of firearms, physical training and motor vehicle operations. The Academy's New Mexico location provides a unique environment similar to the Southwest border where many Border Patrol agents are initially assigned.

Combining all of our tested methodologies and best practices under one roof allows us to more effectively and efficiently provide an advanced training environment that enables our agents to reach that state of readiness, that state of professionalism their fellow agents can depend on in the field and, more importantly, the American people depend on at home.

After graduating from the basic academy, probationary agents are required to complete a post-academy course of study. The Post Academy Training Program is committed to the continued basic training development of probationary agents for the U. S. Border Patrol. The program is managed and coordinated by the Post Academy Coordinator. Post Academy schedules are developed and are used as a weekly guide for instructional topics and assignments. The Post Academy examinations are administered at two intervals after basic training graduation, during the 28th and 40th week of the trainee's service. The exams consist of two parts, both of which are taken at each of the two intervals: LAW - a comprehensive written exam in immigration, criminal, statutory, and nationality law; and SPANISH – a comprehensive combination oral and written Spanish exam, administered by a Post Academy Examination Review Board, upon completion of the law portion.

Another important part of our basic training is our use of practical exercises throughout a trainee's 19 weeks at the Academy. These exercises require trainees to practice observational skills and questioning skills, while applying their job knowledge of documentation requirements, immigration issues, checkpoint operations, and vehicle stops.

CBP realized it needed to unify and integrate its existing operations and workforce. While new officers and agents receive a wide range of intensive training during their first two years, journeyman agents complete training based on operational priorities and workforce needs.

Agents receive formal instruction at their stations in Non Intrusive Inspection (NII) devices, including personal radiation detectors, which are utilized at all Border Patrol checkpoints. This field training is being incorporated into the Basic Academy curriculum and should be in the classroom materials in Artesia very soon. Expedited Removal training has been a vital tool in addressing the increased smuggling of Other than Mexicans (OTMs). Classes have been implemented for agents, train-the-trainer, and supervisory training on signatory authority. This training has recently expanded and is occurring in selected areas throughout the Southwest border in an effort to disrupt OTM smuggling and increase the number of aliens removed.

One of the specific areas addressed in the 9/11 Commission Report was fraudulent documents training. Under our new curriculum, basic trainees receive fraudulent document training at the Academy that culminates with a graded practical exercise during which trainees examine characteristics of unique documents and determine if the documents are genuine, counterfeit or altered. The course highlights fraud indicators that may be present in evaluating any document for authenticity. Security features of U.S. entry documents and imposter detection are emphasized as well. Additionally, Fraudulent Document training for all Border Patrol agents is being conducted with a 2-day Anti-Terrorism course. This course will build on the instruction given at the Border Patrol Academy that integrates CBP directives with the agent's job responsibilities as the first line of defense.

Immigration and Customs Enforcement's Forensic Document Laboratory (FDL) teaches a 3-day intensive train the trainer session for the CBP Office of Field Operations and CBP Office of Border Patrol on fraudulent document detection. The FDL assists our frontline officers with any forensic document analysis, provides training, and issues intelligence alerts about current fraudulent document trends as needed, and does so on a recurring basis. A Pocket Guide Reference on Document Security Features and Printing Techniques has been provided to all frontline officers. CBP constantly evaluates and adjusts training in the field to meet the current operational need.

CBP has participated in Master Exercise Practitioner (MEP) training conducted by FEMA. As certified MEPs, Border Patrol agents have worked with CBP Officers at the Ports of Entry and other agencies to develop and deliver tabletop, functional, and full-scale exercises designed to detect, deter, or respond to terrorist threats and incidents.

CBP developed a Counter-Terrorism Response (CTR) protocol and training to address questioning and detaining possible terrorist subjects. CBP also has a Detecting Deception and Eliciting Responses (DDER) Course which is advanced training in non-coercive interviewing techniques and includes a day of classroom lectures on such topics as Behavioral Analysis and Interviewing Strategies, followed by 2 days of CBP specific "role playing" exercises. The primary focus of the DDER course is to enhance questioning skills and to build upon the officers' arsenal of interviewing techniques while confronting potential terrorists. The Office of Training and Development is focused on expanding these courses throughout CBP as quickly as possible.

CBP Office of Training and Development is working to validate Supervisor Technical Training and other Leadership, Management, Executive, and Communications courses that Border Patrol staff currently use. This effort will assist CBP in building a more coherent program that benefits all facets of our agency.

Conclusion

We have made much progress to deny terrorists the ability to travel freely into the U.S., identify potential alien smugglers, and constrain the mobility of known and suspected terrorists. In addition to the initiatives described above, we are working aggressively with our international partners to improve standards for travel documents, enhance aviation safety and port security, and speed the exchange of terrorist identifying information. DHS understands that we must engage in a global effort each day, through collaboration, information sharing and ongoing dialogue to bring the weight of our collective law enforcement and intelligence capabilities to bear against those who seek to do us harm.

I would be happy to answer any questions you have at this time.