



# **U.S. Customs and Border Protection**

Report to Congress on Ongoing DHS Initiatives to  
Improve Security along the U.S. Northern Border

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# **DHS INITIATIVES TO IMPROVE SECURITY ALONG THE U.S. NORTHERN BORDER**

## **Legislative Requirement/Citation**

Pursuant to Section 731 of the Implementing Recommendations of the 9/11 Commission Act of 2007, Public Law 110-53 (August 4, 2007), U.S. Customs and Border Protection is submitting a report to Congress regarding ongoing initiatives of the Department of Homeland Security to improve security along the Northern Border of the United States.

### **SEC. 731. REPORT REGARDING BORDER SECURITY.**

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Homeland Security shall submit to Congress a report regarding ongoing initiatives of the Department of Homeland Security to improve security along the northern border of the United States.

(b) **CONTENTS.**—The report submitted under subsection (a) shall—

- (1) address the vulnerabilities along the northern border of the United States
- and (2) provide recommendations to address such vulnerabilities, including required resources needed to protect the northern border of the United States.

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## **Executive Summary**

The international boundary with Canada extends 3,987 miles across both land and water, and it is often described as the largest open border in the world. It separates two friendly nations with a long history of social, cultural, and economic ties that have contributed to a high volume of cross-border trade and travel. Almost all of Canada's major metropolitan areas are located on or near the international boundary. In fact, 90 percent of Canada's population lives within 100 miles of the border. While legal trade is predominant, there are networks of illicit criminal activity and smuggling of drugs, currency, people, and weapons between the two countries. The long, porous nature of the U.S. Northern Border provides a multitude of opportunities for clandestine and undocumented crossings. The primary threat along the Northern Border is the potential for extremists and their conveyances to enter the United States undetected.

The challenge of securing U.S. land, air, and sea borders is vast and complex, and involves the ongoing work of multiple Department of Homeland Security (DHS) components, as well as other Federal, State, local, tribal, and international efforts. While this report focuses primarily on the efforts and initiatives of the U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP), which serves as our homeland's frontline border agency, the enforcement efforts of United States Coast Guard (USCG) and U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) also play a vital role in DHS's efforts to protect the United States against threats to our border.

Nationally, CBP faces the challenge of interdicting the criminal and terrorist exploitation of international passenger and cargo movements into the United States at 327 official air, land, and sea ports of entry (POE) and 15 pre-clearance offices overseas. Between the Northern Border POEs, eight Border Patrol sectors protect against the illegal flow of people and contraband. Along the U.S. Northern Border, CBP processes over 70 million international travelers and 35 million vehicles, makes approximately 4,000 arrests, and interdicts approximately 40,000 pounds of illegal drugs annually.

Since its creation, DHS has been committed to gaining control of our Nation's entire border as rapidly and effectively as possible. DHS has made significant progress in securing our borders, including the Northern Border, through the deployment of personnel, technology, air assets, and infrastructure, as well as through the use of intelligence and strong partnerships. While we continue to make progress, our work is not done. DHS must remain vigilant to changes in risks and threats.

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## **Background**

The National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States (also known as the 9-11 Commission), an independent, bipartisan commission created by congressional legislation and the signature of President George W. Bush in late 2002, was chartered to prepare a full and complete account of the circumstances surrounding the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks, including preparedness for and immediate response to the attacks. The Commission was also mandated to provide recommendations designed to guard against future attacks.

After the publication of its final report, the Commission closed on August 21, 2004. On August 4, 2007, the President signed the Implementing Recommendations of the 9/11 Commission Act of 2007 (the Act) to implement some of the recommendations of the Commission. The Act also mandates this border security report.

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## Discussion

### Northern Border Vulnerabilities:

As the frontline border agency in DHS, CBP faces the challenge of interdicting the criminal and terrorist exploitation of international passenger and cargo movements into our Nation at 327 official air, land, and sea POEs throughout the United States and 15 overseas pre-clearance offices. Between POEs, 20 Border Patrol Sectors and 35 interior checkpoints protect against the illegal flow of people and contraband across nearly 2,000 miles of border with Mexico and approximately 4,000 miles of border across both land and water with Canada. Specific to the Northern Border, eight Border Patrol sectors protect against the illegal flow of people and contraband between the Northern Border POEs.

Along the U.S. Northern Border, CBP processes over 70 million international travelers and 35 million vehicles each year. In addition, CBP annually makes approximately 4,000 arrests and interdicts approximately 40,000 pounds of illegal drugs at and between the POEs along the Northern Border. CBP defines the Northern Border region as the area between the United States and Canada, running from Washington through Maine, including the Great Lakes Region. It stands as the longest undefended border in the world. The terrain, which ranges from densely forested lands on the west and east coasts to open plains in the middle of the country, is comprised of many sparsely populated lands with limited Federal, State, and local law enforcement presence along the immediate border area. As such, the Northern Border operating environment differs appreciably from the Southwest Border and requires a different law enforcement approach.

There are also several major Canadian cities proximate to the U.S. border; in fact, 90 percent of Canada's population lives within 100 miles of the border. Historically, these Canadian cities, as well as the Northern Border in general, have yielded significantly lower numbers of illegal incursions when compared to the Southwest Border; however, there is an undisputed presence in Canada of known terrorist affiliate and extremist groups, including Hezbollah, Hamas, and the Armed Islamic Group of Algeria (Algerian GIA). With more than 4,000 miles of land and water border between the United States and Canada that must be secured, the lack of an adequate law enforcement presence along the Northern Border exacerbates the magnitude of this concern. The extensive commercial and transportation infrastructure of this area also provides traffickers and smugglers with many avenues vulnerable to exploitation, including vehicular transportation, commercial trucking, and commercial and non-commercial air, rail, and maritime modes of transportation. In order to further secure our Nation's borders against illegal entry, oral declarations alone will no longer be sufficient to prove identity and citizenship for entry into the United States through land and sea ports of entry. This document procedure change was implemented on January 31, 2008. Standard and consistent documentation, such as that which will be required under the Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative (WHTI), is critical for border officials to accurately determine admissibility into the United States.

The vast maritime border with Canada and the open access small vessels have in the Great Lakes provides an additional conduit for alien smuggling. The Great Lakes region consists of several large bodies of open water, including the Great Lakes themselves and rivers along the border,

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such as the St. Lawrence River. The lakes present unique border enforcement challenges, as they are heavily used by boaters in the summer and by ice fishermen and snowmobiles in the winter. Border Patrol agents frequently patrol the marinas in many areas along the border, but rarely have the resources to access boats on the open water. Boaters entering from Canada communicate by phone with CBP officers on a voluntary basis at marinas; however, there are inadequate video capabilities at the marinas for CBP officers to monitor all arriving vessels. Further, gaps remain on both sides of the border regarding information about the number of unregistered vessels operating in the marine environment. This is particularly applicable to private recreational vessels. Additionally, the extent to which criminal activity is occurring on registered and unregistered vessels is not readily known. Regardless of the mode or method, transnational criminal networks engaged in the illicit movement of people or cargo along the Northern Border adapt their efforts to counter CBP operations that are targeted at preventing their illegal activity.

At present, the three primary threats along the Northern Border are terrorism, drug trafficking, and illegal immigration.

### *Terrorism:*

Individuals with known or suspected ties to terrorist groups have been identified, and in some cases arrested, in both Canada and the United States. These people could pose a potential threat to the United States. While there is currently no credible intelligence or other evidence indicating that terrorist groups in Canada are planning an attack on U.S. soil, there is a significant concern that terrorists can enter the United States undetected at or between the POEs. For the most part, the activities of terrorist groups located in Canada have been in the form of logistical and financial support activities for extremists engaged in violent confrontations abroad. However, many of these groups and individuals have openly expressed their hostility toward the United States and their intent to use violence against our citizens. Due to its close proximity and different immigration policies, Canada may be viewed by extremist groups as a staging area for entry into the United States. For example, known terrorist affiliates and extremist groups could feasibly exploit established immigrant communities located near the Northern Border to settle into major population centers.

### *Drug and Contraband Trafficking:*

Illegal drug trafficking is a problem which flows in both directions along the Northern Border. “BC Bud”, a specifically potent type of hydroponic marijuana, and ecstasy are the leading illicit drugs smuggled cross-border from Canada into the United States, while cocaine, currency, and tobacco are the major contraband smuggled from the United States into Canada. Drugs moving through the POEs are primarily delivered via private and commercial vehicles, while the drugs moving through remote regions between POEs are transported via low flying aircraft, small boats, snow mobiles, and human carriers. One of the most difficult tasks for law enforcement agencies in the Great Lakes and Northwest Border areas is to sort suspicious behavior from legitimate activity. Further, with a lack of adequate radar across the entire Northern Border, low flying aircraft can escape detection.

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### *Illegal Immigration:*

Migration research has revealed that legal and illegal immigration are predominantly driven by the presence of favorable economic conditions and a belief that an improved quality of life exists in the destination country. The United States and Canada are among the world leaders in accepting refugees and immigrants, each possessing open societies with laws that protect citizens, legal residents, and visitors. While illegal immigration along the Northern Border is not of the same magnitude as at the Southern Border, the difference is hard to quantify because of the terrain.

CBP is working to continuously improve the security of U.S. borders through the adaptation and incorporation of new technology, enhancing POE inspection capabilities, and strengthening our Border Patrol efforts. However, the sophistication employed by criminals and extremists to deceive CBP personnel will continue to evolve in a continuing attempt to respond to and counter our efforts.

### **CBP's On-Going Initiatives Along the Northern Border:**

CBP has a strong, proactive presence at and between the POEs along the Northern Border. Eight Border Patrol Sectors encompassing 15 States stretch from the Pacific coast, across the Rocky Mountains, Great Plains, and Great Lakes, to the Atlantic coast. CBP Air and Marine (A&M) assets are currently distributed throughout the Northern Border at four primary and three secondary operational air branches with one additional primary air and marine branch to be opened in the Detroit, Michigan, area in May 2008. Furthermore, six CBP Field Offices direct the operations of dozens of POEs across the Northern Border.

Achieving effective control of the border of the United States is one of the key mission objectives of DHS, and the primary responsibility of many of its elements within CBP, including the Office of Field Operations (OFO), Office of Border Patrol (OBP), and A&M. Managing, securing, and controlling the border requires determining the mix of personnel, technology, infrastructure, and response platforms to achieve maximum tactical and strategic advantage. Since its creation, DHS has made significant investments along the Northern Border at and between the POEs, as well as enhanced air and marine operations. In addition to physical assets, DHS has also increased efforts to integrate and coordinate intelligence and operations, and develop strong partnerships among the DHS agencies as well as with other Federal, State, local, and international partners.

The following section provides the ongoing activities and initiatives of CBP along the Northern Border.

### *Initiatives At the Ports of Entry:*

1. Personnel. An important component of security at the POEs is adequate staffing to address the threat and workload. To identify adequate staffing levels, CBP uses a Workload Staffing Model (WSM) as a decision support tool. The WSM incorporates a variety of information and data that assist CBP in determining staffing needs, based on workload volume and expected processing times, but do not eliminate the judgment of experienced personnel when making

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decisions on allocating staff. The model is used as a decision support tool to make better resource decisions and to allocate available resources based upon the current financial plan.

The WSM analyzes multiple factors that influence staffing needs including the following:

- Volume for key CBP officers' functions;
- Level of effort or processing times for these functions;
- Staffing for special teams not directly driven by volume of specific functions, such as targeting teams and response teams;
- Staffing necessary to provide coverage for specific equipment at POEs, such as Radiation Portal Monitors (RPMs);
- Staffing necessary to provide coverage for the specific physical attributes of each port, including the number of crossings and the number of lanes;
- Time spent on non-direct activities, such as training, administrative duties, and Temporary Duty assignments;
- "Open the door" requirements, including coverage for the number of shifts a POE is open for business;
- Submitted requests for additional staffing from the Field Offices based on criteria such as facility expansions, expected workload increases, or the roll out of specific local or national initiatives; and
- Wait time statistics.

Utilizing the model as a decision support tool in combination with the judgment of experienced personnel, CBP has allocated approximately 190 CBP officers (CBPO) to the Northern Border.

### 2. Technology.

- a. *Radiation Portal Monitors.* CBP has sought to secure the United States from a major nuclear event. RPMs, which detect the presence of radiation, have played a central role in securing against the importation of nuclear materials through the Northern Border POEs and the unimaginable consequences of a nuclear catastrophe in the United States. As of December 2007, CBP has deployed 241 RPMs along the Northern Border land POEs – enabling CBP to screen approximately 91 percent of all truck cargo and 81 percent of all personally owned vehicles entering the United States from Canada for illicit radiological/nuclear materials. By December 2008, CBP plans to have approximately 470 RPMs deployed at the Northern Border POEs. This will provide the capability to screen for radiation approximately 99 percent of all truck cargo and 97 percent of all personally owned vehicles entering the United States from Canada. Additional radiological detection devices, called Radiation Isotope Identifier Devices (RIIDs) and Personal Radiation Detectors (PRDs), further secure the POEs and provide for the safety of DHS port personnel by detecting the existence and specific type of radiation, as well as the radiation's capacity to harm people.
- b. *Large and Small Scale Non-Intrusive Inspection Systems.* On September 11, 2001, CBP had 64 large-scale Non-Intrusive Inspection (NII) systems deployed to

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the Nation's POEs. At that time, there were no systems deployed to the Northern Border. Today, CBP has 192 systems deployed nationwide, with 40 of the systems deployed to Northern Border POEs. Twelve of the 40 Northern Border NII systems include rail gamma-ray imaging technology, providing CBP the capacity to scan up to 90 percent of all rail traffic arriving in the United States from Canada. CBP plans to deploy additional Rail Vehicle and Container Inspection System units to six additional rail crossing locations on the Northern Border. The further deployment of imaging systems in the rail environment will help to further secure the Northern Border. Once deployed, these additional systems will provide CBP with the capability to scan up to 98 percent of the rail traffic arriving in the United States from Canada for the presence of contraband. CBP will continue to update its NII Acquisition and Deployment Strategy and make appropriate adjustments aimed at enhancing the overall efficiency and effectiveness of the program. CBP will continue to pursue a mix of technologies designed to complement one another and present a layered defense to smuggling attempts.

- c. *The Screening of International Travelers.* The Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004, as amended, requires that all people, including United States and Canadian citizens, who wish to enter the United States, must present a passport or other acceptable document that denotes document that verifies their citizenship and identity. Otherwise known as the Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative (WHTI), the requirement to present documentary proof of citizenship and identity became mandatory in the air environment on January 23, 2007. CBP will begin the transition to the WHTI secure document requirement for land and sea POEs over the next 18 months, with implementation as early as June 1, 2009.

Prior to implementation, citizens of the United States and Canada have been able to make oral declarations as to their citizenship and present many different types of documents as "proof" of identity, many of which are highly susceptible to forgery and easily obtained. With the new requirement for individuals to carry a passport or other acceptable documents before entering the country, WHTI will greatly reduce the opportunities for fraud or misrepresentation of one's identity and will help to secure the homeland against the entry of known terrorists and the threat of terrorism. Advanced technology embedded in the officially sanctioned travel documents, with the appropriate privacy protections and infrastructure, will allow CBP for the first time to verify an individual's identity and perform real-time queries against terrorists watch lists and lookout databases such as the Treasury Enforcement Communications System (TECS), which is being renamed to the Traveler Enforcement and Compliance System to better align with the DHS mission.

- d. *Automated Commercial Environment (ACE).* Prior to 9/11, CBP did not receive advanced manifest information on trucks crossing through our Northern and Southern Borders. Any decision regarding the truck's status (release into the commerce of the United States, examination, detention, etc.), had to be made as

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the truck idled at the primary booth. As of November 2007, all of CBP's land border POEs are capable of receiving and processing electronic manifests as part of ACE. Now, CBP officers are able to make crucial decisions prior to the truck's arrival at the border, in most cases one full hour ahead of time. Additionally, all e-manifest information of driver and cargo are passed through the Automated Targeting System (ATS) and TECS, further enhancing CBP's decision-making ability at the border.

- e. *Border Security Deployment Program (BSDP)*. BSDP provides an integrated surveillance and intrusion detection system, which delivers critical security infrastructure, motion detection, and remote monitoring capabilities to the U.S. land POEs. BSDP components include perimeter and interior camera systems connected via the DHS Wide-Area Network to remote monitoring stations called Customs Area Security Centers. These centralized command centers house digital video recorders augmented with analytic software designed to alert the watch officer of a detected alarm or intrusion event within a port facility and archive the event for use as evidence in subsequent prosecutions. BSDP was initiated in 2001 as part of the Northern Border port hardening initiative. This system configuration has been installed at all Northern Border POEs.

3. *Facilities*. Over the years, CBP has taken steps to harden POEs along the Northern Border. More recently, CBP has undertaken a systematic review of the land port inspection facilities to determine the enhancements needed to sustain its evolving operational requirements. Some land POE facilities were built more than 70 years ago, and others are in need of significant refurbishment or replacement. Many of these facilities are under the extreme stress of high volume traffic, and often under 24 hours-per-day, 365 days-per-year use.

### *Initiatives Between the Ports of Entry:*

1. *Personnel*. Prior to 9/11, the Northern Border was staffed by 340 Border Patrol agents. Since then, CBP, Office of Border Patrol has undertaken a series of staffing initiatives to increase the number of agents assigned to the Northern Border. The most recent of these took place in FY 2007. From the beginning of FY 2007 to December 22, 2007, the number of Border Patrol agents on the Northern Border increased from 919 to 1,136. For a variety of reasons (e.g., attrition, poor housing market) this increase fell short of the Congressionally mandated target of 1,158 agents. However, the increase represented a 24 percent increase in the number of agents on the Northern Border. In FY 2008, CBP intends to meet the target of 1,158 Border Patrol agents on the Northern Border plus an additional 312 enhancement positions to the Northern Border. This will bring the total number to 1,470 Border Patrol agents, representing a 30 percent increase over the current staffing level and a 60 percent increase over the FY 2006 staffing level. CBP expects that this increase can be accomplished through the Voluntary Relocation Program (VRP), which will provide experienced agents from the Southwest Border to these Northern Border locations. Based on past experience with the VRP, CBP believes that there will be significant challenges to increasing the number of agents by 500 or 600 within one year. For example, it would deplete the VRP pool and will require sending inexperienced

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Border Patrol agent interns to these Northern Border locations. This is problematic because there is currently no Post Academy infrastructure in any of the Northern Border Sectors. Additionally, experienced agents are needed to meet the threats and challenges on the Northern Border. Lastly, many small communities are not equipped with available housing or other necessities (e.g., schools) to accommodate these agents and their families.

Going forward, CBP has a plan to more than double the number of Border Patrol agents (to 2,212) assigned to the Northern Border by 2010. Having 2,212 agents by 2010 will result in:

- 24/7 operational capabilities at all Northern Border Stations;
  - 24/7 intelligence capabilities at all Northern Border Sectors;
  - Expanded liaison and partnership capabilities with stakeholder Law Enforcement agents;
  - Situational awareness on the Northern Border; and
  - A Northern Border that is staffed with qualified and experienced agents.
2. Partnerships. The Northern Border Patrol Sectors have formally expanded their liaison efforts, both domestic and abroad, and increased intelligence sharing with other Federal, State, and local law enforcement agencies, further developing and expanding partnerships with stakeholders that have a shared interest in border security. Below are some of the key strategic partnerships we currently have in place or are expanding.
- a. Project North Star – A bi-national forum that provides Canadian and U.S. law enforcement managers a mechanism to enhance existing communications, cooperation, and partnership between agencies and personnel that operate within the U.S.-Canada border area.
  - b. Border Security Evaluation Teams (BSET) – This concept was developed as a mechanism for the Northern Border Sectors to expeditiously evaluate the level of border security within the outlying border zones of a sector. BSETs gather intelligence and establish points-of-contact with State and local law enforcement agencies, local civic leaders, and the public to determine if suspected cross-border activities and intelligence indicate a need for deployment of Border Patrol resources in those areas.
  - c. Airfields Initiative - A bi-national liaison partnership between the Federal, State, and local law enforcement agencies of the United States and Canada, and includes the aviation community, and the public. Airfields Initiative partners are utilized as sources of information and intelligence on aircraft incursions, adding another layer of deterrence against smugglers and threats to national security.
  - d. Operation Noble Mustang - The Spokane Sector's Operation Noble Mustang adopts horses from the U.S. Bureau of Land Management's wild horse and burro program. The mustangs are utilized by the Patrol's Spokane Sector to patrol a 308

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mile section of the U.S.-Canadian border from the crest of the Cascade Mountain Range in Washington to the Continental Divide in Montana.

3. Technology. *SBinet* technology and tactical infrastructure solutions will be deployed to the Northern Border (discussed further in the next section of the report). In addition, deployment of interim technology continues across the Northern Border to include 187 new ground sensors to supplement the 1,203 already in existence, 12 sensor-linked camera systems (G-2 Sentinel Systems), and 71 thermal night vision devices (TAM-14).

Furthermore, CBP's Office of Information and Technology and DHS Science and Technology (S&T) are working closely on pilot projects throughout the Northern Border to improve technology capabilities.

- DHS S&T and CBP pilot projects in specific Border Patrol Sectors include the following:
    - The Blaine Sector is planning to emplace vehicle bollards, which will serve as valuable tactical infrastructure separating the U.S./Canada border.
    - The Spokane Sector is a planned test site to place acoustic sensors across an area to detect low flying aircraft incursions.
    - The Grand Forks Sector is working towards testing an improved piece of technology for the Northern Border called gel celled unattended ground sensors.
    - The Swanton Sector is working on BorderNet, a proof-of-concept pilot planned to enhance current detection capabilities and demonstrate technologies capabilities in a Northern Border operational environment. This includes:
      - Ground based marine radar and cued video;
      - Fiber Optic Cable Sensor package, networked unattended ground sensor field on the border; and
      - Radar/Video surveillance platforms.
  - Project-25 is a compliant communications systems project being deployed to the Detroit and Buffalo Sectors:
    - It will allow for secure encrypted digital voice radio communication; and
    - There are communications interoperability gateway devices included in the upgrade.
4. End of Catch and Release. In August 2006, through the Secure Border Initiative (SBI), DHS announced the effective end of "catch and release" for the entire border, including northern and southern. This was a joint effort between CBP and ICE, as well as other Federal agencies such as the Department of Justice.
  5. Facilities. Since the Northern Border sectors have experienced unprecedented growth and hundreds of additional Border Patrol agents are planned to be assigned in the next few years to the Northern Border, CBP is developing a 50-agent Standard Station Concept to expedite the replacement of much smaller stations and construction of new facilities to accommodate the growth in personnel.

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### *Air and Marine Initiatives:*

CBP A&M has developed a plan to increase security along the Northern Border through the accelerated start up of operations at five Northern Border locations. By the spring of 2008, CBP A&M will have established the following five air wings on the Northern Border: Bellingham, Washington (August 2004); Plattsburgh, New York (October 2004); Great Falls, Montana (September 2006); Grand Forks, North Dakota (September 2007); and Detroit, Michigan (May/June 2008).

CBP A&M Northern Border locations were chosen to provide an interdiction/law enforcement response in a timely fashion. In addition, the North Dakota Air Branch in Grand Forks was chosen to provide a strategic, centrally-located air branch at the Northern Border that will have an expanded role, and is currently under review to certify its operational readiness for Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) operations.

The UAS provides CBP with a remotely piloted asset that allows for persistent, broad area surveillance. UAS operations proactively respond to un-cued, cued, and intelligence-based missions. The UAS Program focuses its capabilities on CBP priority mission and will fill gaps in surveillance and reconnaissance requirements along the Northern Border. The UAS enables CBP to gather situational awareness information in areas that other operational elements may not be able to reach, a critical capability at a border with such difficult terrain.

The Predator B UAS, in particular, was chosen because it provides the unique capabilities that allow it to carry a variety of operational payloads and fly for extended periods of time without requiring the support systems and limitations of on-board pilots. It also has the flexibility and endurance to fly these long-leg surveillance missions while conducting both scheduled and unscheduled searches. As a law enforcement force multiplier for CBP, the UAS allows CBP A&M to support other DHS entities, including the USCG, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, and ICE, and will support ongoing efforts to address the Northern Border vulnerabilities. One UAS is scheduled to deploy from Grand Forks, North Dakota, in FY 2008, and plans to expand UAS operations across the border are under development.

CBP A&M will continue to enhance its technical capabilities through the establishment of a central UAS operations capability, co-located at the Air and Marine Operations Center (AMOC) in Riverside, California. The AMOC is a state-of-the-art law enforcement Command, Control, Communication, Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance center. It provides law enforcement with a common operating picture and has acted as the clearinghouse for information and mission tasking during special events and disasters. The center has expanded its role in air and marine interdiction and today uses extensive intelligence, detection, monitoring, and coordination capabilities to make general aviation aircraft threat determinations and conduct UAS, airspace security, and covert/overt electronic tracking operations.

Once in place, Northern Border UAS operations units, in concert with the AMOC, will coordinate local area operations with OBP and other Federal, State, and local law enforcement organizations. The AMOC UAS operations capability will become an important component for SBInet integration, and will continue to fill gaps in air domain awareness once all CBP A&M

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aviation assets, including the UAS, are fully integrated with the AMOC. This increased air domain awareness will help support efficient cueing and launching of additional air assets as they are based along the Northern Border.

To support Northern Border expansion, additional pilots and other law enforcement personnel, along with non-enforcement support personnel (e.g., operations analysts, maintenance personnel, and administrative staff), are required. The FY 2008 budget includes \$17.1 million to support activation of the Great Lakes Air and Marine Branch in Detroit, Michigan (\$6.1 million in Salaries and Expenses and \$11 million in Operation and Maintenance funds).

### **USCG's Ongoing Initiatives Along the Northern Border**

In addition to CBP presence on the Great Lakes, the USCG, under Operation Neptune Shield (ONS), maintains a robust operational presence along the maritime portion of our Northern Border. ONS activities include but are not limited to:

- Surveillance Patrols by USCG surface and air assets;
- Boardings of both large vessels and small;
- Escorts of:
  - Military vessels;
  - Selected high consequence vessels (carrying Certain Dangerous Cargoes);
  - High capacity passenger vessels; and
- Enforcement of Fixed Security Zones, especially near maritime critical infrastructure.

Supporting these operations are USCG Districts 1, 9, and 13, as well as USCG Sectors:

- Northern New England;
- Buffalo;
- Detroit;
- Lake Michigan;
- Sault Ste Marie; and
- Seattle.

### **ICE's Ongoing Initiatives Along the Northern Border**

As the largest investigative arm of DHS, ICE brings a unified and coordinated focus to the enforcement of Federal immigration and customs laws through its activities and initiatives, which are wide ranging and comprehensive. ICE is building upon successful investigative and enforcement models to help secure the Northern Border.

ICE's expertise in conducting smuggling investigations has contributed immeasurably to public safety and homeland security. ICE's efforts in combating smuggling by sea, air, and land has successfully thwarted criminal organizations' introduction of narcotics and other dangerous goods that threaten the well-being of the United States.

Along with other state and federal partners such as DEA and FBI, ICE investigates activities occurring at or with a nexus to our Nation's borders, to include investigations involving narcotics, currency, contraband, and weapons of mass destruction, DHS's role and ICE's

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priority mission to protect the United States and its people by deterring, interdicting, and investigating threats arising from the movement of people and goods is synonymous with a strong and aggressive anti-smuggling program. The following programs are being used in this effort:

### *Border Enforcement Security Task Force*

In dealing with the drug cartels and their associated violence, ICE has taken the lead in the creation of inter-agency task forces along the Southwest Border. In 2006, DHS Secretary Michael Chertoff adopted the Border Enforcement Security Taskforce (BEST) initiative in response to the increased violence along the Southwest Border. BEST is an ICE-led initiative designed to enhance security on the Southern Border and combat violence related to smuggling organizations through a coordinated effort involving Federal, State, local, and foreign law enforcement agencies.

In the FY 2007, BESTs were responsible for 519 criminal arrests, 1,145 administrative arrests, 238 indictments, and 155 convictions. The investigations have also resulted in the seizure of 2,066 pounds of cocaine, 52,518 pounds of marijuana, 231 pounds of methamphetamine, 215 pounds of heroin, 18 pounds of crystal methamphetamine, 2 tunnels, 237 weapons, 12 improvised explosive devices, 178 vehicles, and approximately \$2.9 million in U.S. currency.

The success of the BEST along the Southwest Border has made it ideal for replication along the Northern Border. In an effort to expand the BEST concept to the Northern Border, operations at the BEST in Blaine, Washington, were initiated on February 4, 2008. Operations at the BEST in Buffalo, New York, are scheduled to commence in March 2008. Additionally, the BEST concept will be instituted in the seaport environments of Long Beach/Los Angeles, New York/Newark, and Miami in 2008.

### *Shadow Wolves*

The ICE patrol officers, also known as Shadow Wolves, were established by Congressional mandate in the early 1970s to remedy the rampant smuggling occurring through the Tohono O'odham Indian Nation in Southern Arizona. The primary mission of the Shadow Wolves is the interdiction of smuggled narcotics utilizing both technology and the ancient art of tracking. In FY 2007, the Shadow Wolves seized nearly 50,000 pounds of marijuana on the Tohono O'odham Indian Nation.

ICE is exploring the feasibility of expanding the Shadow Wolves program to the Northern Border. In 2007, the Shadow Wolves traveled to the Blackfeet Indian Reservation in Montana for a 30-day temporary deployment (TDY). Shadow Wolves and special agents conducted valuable outreach efforts by meeting with local ranchers, farmers, community leaders, and residents. In 2008, the Shadow Wolves are anticipating a TDY to the Chippewa Bay Mills Indian Reservation in the Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan, region.

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### *Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Force*

ICE is a leading member in the Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Force (OCDETF) program that was established in 1982. This program was developed as a vehicle to promote close cooperation and coordination among Federal, State, and local law enforcement agencies engaged in narcotics and money laundering investigations. ICE has permanent full-time managers (OCDETF Coordinators) located in each of the nine regional OCDETF core cities, a national program manager in headquarters, and an ICE Supervisory Special Agency currently serves as Associate Director of the OCDETF Executive Office at the Department of Justice. ICE receives approximately \$44 million in funding to support its participation in the OCDETF Program.

### *High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area*

ICE is actively involved in the High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA) program, which is a geographically oriented anti-drug support program, administered by the Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP). HIDTA regions are comprised of specific designated counties that have been identified as high risk for narcotics smuggling and trafficking. Currently, ONDCP has designated more than 25 HIDTAs throughout the United States. ICE's involvement in the HIDTA program ensures a coordinated effort in U.S. drug enforcement efforts.

### *Operation Shiprider*

In July 2007, ICE cross-designated 19 members of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) as U.S. Customs officers in preparation for Operation Shiprider, a joint venture between USCG and the RCMP. In August 2007, Operation Shiprider was implemented by the USCG and the RCMP. RCMP officers, under the guidance and supervision of the ICE Special Agent in Charge in Blaine, Washington, and Buffalo, New York, utilized their newly acquired Customs officer status. The RCMP officers patrolled the water border between United States and Canada aboard USCG vessels, as did the USCG officers aboard RCMP vessels.

With the revision of the Title 19 United States Code directives, relating to customs law enforcement, other Federal, State, and local officers across the country will continue to supplement the ICE investigative mission and participate on task forces throughout the United States. Joint investigations of narcotics smuggling, money laundering, human smuggling and trafficking, and fraud related activities will continue to disrupt and dismantle criminal organizations threatening this Nation's borders. To date, ICE has cross-designated approximately 300 State and local police officers nationwide with Title 19 Authority. ICE anticipates cross-designating an additional 300 officers in the near future.

Additionally, in an effort to capture and exploit the intelligence value of detainees in ICE custody, ICE Office of Deportation and Removal Operations (DRO) created Operation Last Call (OLC). This is a comprehensive intelligence collection strategy designed to maximize information gathering through the systematic debriefing of ICE detainees. OLC is a coordinated effort between the Office of Intelligence (INT), DRO, and the Office of Investigations (OI). It establishes standardized procedures to collect and report intelligence originating from DRO

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facilities, provides relevant, accurate and timely intelligence to ICE operational components, expands the pool of viable sources of human intelligence/criminal informants, and provides an extensive network for collecting and developing strategic level information. In 2007, DRO-Intelligence Operations selected two areas for OLC expansion in the Northern Border area which have also been identified in the CBP *SBI*net plan. DRO Field Office Buffalo, New York, was selected for the next phase of OLC expansion; training and implementation began in FY 2007 and will be completed in early 2008. Additionally, DRO Field Office Detroit, Michigan, is being considered as the next location for OLC expansion in 2008. Upon completion, additional capability will exist to extract and report information of intelligence value from ICE/DRO detainees in this region as well as maintaining a standing capability to react to intelligence collection requirements and information needs communicated to ICE by other law enforcement and Intelligence community entities. Additionally, DRO has processed 803 prioritized fugitives through the FBI/Foreign Terrorist Tracking Task Force (FTTTF). Of the 803 cases, approximately 85 cases came back with some type of record through which Fugitive Operations is sorting. Currently, a second list is being prepared to be sent through the FTTTF.

### **Joint Efforts Along the Northern Border**

The Integrated Border Enforcement Teams (IBETs) are a multi DHS agency law enforcement initiative with Canada that emphasizes a cooperative approach to Canadian and United States cross-border law enforcement efforts. Through the use of an expanded intelligence sharing network, IBETs enhance border integrity and security of the U.S.-Canada border by identifying, investigating, and interdicting persons and organizations that pose a threat to national security or are engaged in other organized criminal activity. The goal of IBETs is to ensure a comprehensive and permanent coordination of law enforcement, anti-terrorism efforts, and information sharing across the U.S.-Canadian border. The IBET core agencies include CBP, USCG, ICE, the Canada Border Services Agency, and the RCMP.

There are 15 IBET regional teams located across the United States-Canada border. The IBET teams are the vehicle through which cross border information, investigations, and operations are planned and coordinated between our two countries. The successful IBET partnership was demonstrated during Coast Guard/RCMP Shiprider pilot operations in Blaine, Washington, and Massena, New York, in the summer of 2007, which resulted in seizures of 200 pounds of marijuana, 1 million contraband cigarettes, \$38,000 CDN in illicit cash, six vessels, and netted 12 arrests and was briefed to the Secretary of DHS.

As a result of the IBETs, ICE initiated an investigation called "Operation Frozen Timber" that identified a Canadian smuggling organization utilizing helicopters to smuggle narcotics, bulk cash, and firearms into and out of the National Forests and parklands along the U.S.-Canada border. This investigation resulted in the seizure of approximately 8,000 pounds of marijuana, 800 pounds of cocaine, 3 aircraft, and \$1.5 million in U.S. currency.

Additionally, Border Enforcement Security Teams are based on a joint interagency task force configuration. They coordinate the efforts of agencies – such as DHS Intelligence and Analysis, ICE, and CBP – working with State and local law enforcement to investigate organizations

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operating in the border environment that pose a threat to national security or engage in other criminal activity.

Further, CBP, ICE, and USCG are working on a Small Vessel Security Strategy (SVSS), currently undergoing the final draft and review process. The major goals of the SVSS include maximizing interagency cooperation on the small vessel threat, increasing maritime awareness capabilities regarding small vessels, and partnering with the small vessel community. Given the heavy volume of recreational boat traffic on the Great Lakes, the potential impact of the SVSS overall Northern Border security is significant.

### **Continued Plans and Efforts to Secure the Northern Border**

The Secure Border Initiative (SBI) is a comprehensive, multi-year plan established by DHS to bring clarity of mission, effective coordination of assets, and greater accountability to the work of DHS in securing the Nation's borders. A major component of SBI is *SBI<sub>net</sub>*. *SBI<sub>net</sub>* is developing and installing an integrated solution that includes technology and tactical infrastructure at and between our Nation's POEs. CBP is the executive agent for DHS in the development of *SBI<sub>net</sub>*. *SBI<sub>net</sub>* will develop a common operating picture of the border within the command center environments across the borders, which will provide uniform data to all DHS agencies and be interoperable with stakeholders external to DHS. A primary goal of *SBI<sub>net</sub>* is to provide agents and officers with the tools to help achieve effective control of the Nation's borders against terrorists and illegal cross-border activity.

CBP is refining our Northern Border Strategy to more comprehensively address all hazards and all threats to the Northern Border. The strategy will be driven by shared, timely, actionable, and accurate information. The goal is to gain effective control of the Northern Border through the deployment of an optimal mix of resources, including personnel, tactical infrastructure, and technology. It also will build upon the on-going initiatives and strong partnerships with Federal, State, local, tribal, and foreign governments as well as international partners. Through the deployment of resources and partnerships, security in each geographical area along the Northern Border will be enhanced while the levels of control established by previous deployments are maintained.

In March 2007, Congress directed CBP to realign \$20 million of the Border Security, Fencing, Infrastructure and Technology appropriation "to begin addressing needs along the Northern Border." As such, CBP is developing a prototype that demonstrates an integrated air, land, and maritime security solution in a selected area of the Northern Border.

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## **Recommendations to Address Vulnerabilities**

As described above, DHS has a strong, proactive presence at and between the POEs along the Northern Border to address the potential threats and vulnerabilities to our Nation. It is also aggressively planning and implementing initiatives to enhance capabilities along the entire Northern Border. These initiatives are designed to improve deterrence and detection of incursions, response capabilities, as well as passenger and cargo screening at the POEs.

Operational offices are increasing staffing and investing in technology and infrastructure projects along the Northern Border. These enhancements will improve law enforcement effectiveness, create deterrence, and allow our agents and officers to focus on potential threats while facilitating legitimate travelers and cargo. In addition, several other initiatives such as WHTI, aviation assets, and intelligence, information-sharing, and community partnerships are planned or underway to secure our Nation's borders.

The move away from accepting oral declarations alone as evidence of citizenship and identity on January 31, 2008, will both increase security and pave the way for the implementation of WHTI as early as June 1, 2009. With consistent identity and citizenship documents that are easily recognizable to CBP officers, security is increased and traveler process times will become quicker and more efficient. WHTI, when implemented, will dramatically increase the security of the Northern Border, easing the burden on CBPOs and allowing them to focus on threat detection. DHS's deployment of additional aviation assets on the Northern Border, particularly the UAS, will enable an unprecedented detection and response capability to our agents and officers in remote and forbidding locations. SBI's Northern Border Demonstration will test cutting edge border security technologies in the Northern Border environment and pave the way for their further development and deployment. Finally, DHS will increasingly leverage the power of partnerships, both existing and new, in intelligence and information sharing initiatives with Federal, State, Local, and Canadian agencies. These, too, will dramatically increase border awareness and interdiction capability.

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## **Conclusion**

In the aftermath of 9/11, DHS has made great strides to protect our Nation's borders against all hazards and all threats. On the Northern Border, we have made significant investments in personnel, technology, infrastructure, and air and marine assets. DHS continues to integrate border security operations and establish critical partnerships with Federal, State, local, tribal, and international partners.

However, we must continue to build upon these efforts. Vulnerabilities still exist along the Northern Border and must be addressed. Specifically, we must continue to guard against the potential for extremists or their conveyances to enter the country undetected. We must remain vigilant and guarded against those who intend to harm our citizens or way of life, while at the same time facilitate the flow of legitimate trade and travel. The Administration and Congress have demonstrated the commitment to address the threats and vulnerabilities at our borders, and must continue to effectively provide and deploy the resources necessary to protect our Nation.