

**CONNIE L. PATRICK
DIRECTOR
FEDERAL LAW ENFORCEMENT TRAINING CENTER
DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY**

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**

Good afternoon Chairman Rogers, Ranking Member Meek, and distinguished members of the Subcommittee. It is a pleasure to be with you today to discuss “Training More Border Patrol Agents: How the Department of Homeland Security Can Increase Training Capacity Most Effectively.” Seated behind me are the senior managers of Federal Law Enforcement Training Center (FLETC) who have joined me today.

OPENING REMARKS

I want to acknowledge the generous support the Congress has long extended to the FLETC. I stand ready to work with you and direct the FLETC towards successful completion of the objectives set forth by the Administration and Congress in the protection of our national security.

The FLETC’s primary mission is law enforcement training, and each dollar provided to FLETC goes for the use and benefit of all of the 81 federal agencies that participate as FLETC partners. The FLETC was founded on two guiding principles: quality in training and economies of scale. Neither of these can be achieved without the cooperation of its partner organizations in the concept of consolidated training, which means shared training knowledge and experience, better use of available funds, and law enforcement training uniformity and standardization. During FLETC’s 35-year history, more than 600,000 agents and officers, across all three branches of government, have graduated from training programs conducted at FLETC. This training includes mandatory requirements and other core elements, such as ethics, firearms, vehicle operations, physical training, and investigative skills and techniques.

The consolidated approach provides the opportunity to deliver high-quality training using state-of-the-art facilities, a permanent cadre of trained instructors, and consistency of

training content and quality. The daily interaction and training of students from different agencies encourages networking and agency cooperation. In addition to the permanent cadre of trained instructors, partner organizations assign instructors to FLETC on a rotational basis. The Congressional authorization of rehired annuitant authority has helped to provide an optimum mix of instructional staff. This combination of permanent, detailed, and recently retired staff provides a balance of experience and fresh insights from the field. Training at the FLETC is conducted via a long-standing, shared-funding concept. Our partners pay for travel, meals, and lodging for their trainees; and FLETC provides for the cost of basic tuition through direct appropriations from the Congress. This shared-funding concept ensures that newly hired federal law enforcement agents and officers are assured of standardized training, regardless of the size or responsibility of their employing agencies.

Mr. Chairman, with the creation of the Department of Homeland Security, we entered a new era in law enforcement. The FLETC is an example of the spirit of cooperation and consolidation intended by the DHS legislation. The FLETC also provides critical state, local, tribal, and international law enforcement training activities that complement the mission to secure our homeland.

Under Departmental leadership, FLETC works closely with all elements of the DHS, as well as all other Departments and independent agencies with law enforcement authority. FLETC, as a component of DHS, supports unity of command and the coordination and efficiency themes sought in the public law that created the Department.

The FLETC continues to demonstrate the ability to rapidly respond to emerging needs in a fiscally responsible manner, while maintaining the integrity and quality of training. For example, in

fiscal year 2004, the Border Patrol requested consolidation of all of their training at the FLETC's Artesia, NM facility. The Border Patrol and FLETC worked cooperatively to accomplish this task within 90 days. Also, following 9/11, the FLETC trained thousands of Federal Air Marshals while significantly increasing training levels for its other partner organizations.

Over the years, the FLETC has experienced periods of substantial growth in the training requests by its partner organizations. Using innovation and imagination to maximize resources, these increases have been accommodated; that ability continues. Temporary adjustments, such as extending the training work week from five days to six days and less than optimal lodging options, provide significant increases to the training capacity at the FLETC's Artesia facility. FLETC successfully implemented the six-day training week for over two years to meet the 9/11 training needs. However, extraordinary measures, such as a six-day training work week, are difficult to sustain, take a toll on both staff and facilities, and are costly.

CLOSING

In closing, let me assure you that DHS and FLETC are committed to providing the highest quality law enforcement training at the lowest possible cost. Substantial savings are being realized through the operation of consolidated training sites. We are also aware of the important opportunities and challenges that remain ahead.

I also want to publicly commend the remarkable staff at CBP, Border Patrol, and FLETC, as well as our partner organizations who have contributed so much to the success of consolidated training. Their enthusiasm, flexibility, and talented assistance will continue to be of great benefit.

Mr. Chairman, we invite you and any member of the Committee to visit any of the FLETC training facilities.

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Subcommittee, this concludes my prepared statement. I would be pleased to answer any questions you may have at this time.