



April 4, 2017

Defeating a Sophisticated and Dangerous Adversary: Are the New Border Security Task Forces the Right Approach?

Subcommittee on Border and Maritime Security, Committee on Homeland Security, United States House of Representatives, One Hundred Fifteenth Congress, First Session

HEARING CONTENTS:

Member Statements

Martha McSally
Chairwoman, Subcommittee on Border and Maritime Security
[\[View pdf\]](#)

Witnesses

Vice Admiral Karl Schultz
Joint Task Force—East
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
[\[View pdf\]](#)

Chief Paul A. Beeson
Joint Task Force—West
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
[\[View pdf\]](#)

Ms. Janice Ayala
Joint Task Force—Investigations
Homeland Security Investigations
[\[View pdf\]](#)

** Please Note: External links included in this compilation were functional at the time of its creation but are not maintained thereafter.*

This hearing compilation was prepared by the Homeland Security Digital Library, Naval Postgraduate School, Center for Homeland Defense and Security.



Ms. Rebecca Gambler
Director, Homeland Security and Justice Issues
U.S. Government Accountability Office
[\[View pdf\]](#)

Available Webcast(s)*:

[\[View Webcast\]](#)

Compiled From*:

<https://homeland.house.gov/hearing/defeating-sophisticated-dangerous-adversary-new-border-security-task-forces-right-approach/>

** Please Note: External links included in this compilation were functional at the time of its creation but are not maintained thereafter.*

*This hearing compilation was prepared by the Homeland Security Digital Library,
Naval Postgraduate School, Center for Homeland Defense and Security.*



HOMELAND SECURITY COMMITTEE

Statement of Subcommittee Chairwoman Martha McSally (R-AZ) Border and Maritime Security Subcommittee

“Defeating a Sophisticated and Dangerous Adversary:
Are the New Border Security Task Forces the Right Approach?”

April 4, 2017

Remarks as Prepared

At the Subcommittee’s first hearing this Congress, we examined the advanced techniques and tactics utilized by our adversary to evade or circumvent our border security efforts. Obscene profit margins power the cartels’ ability to be creative, nimble and entrepreneurial as they smuggle vast quantities of illicit drugs across the border. Threats posed to the nation by transnational criminal organizations whose influence extends beyond the immediate border zone and into the major metropolitan areas of the nation is a national security challenge.

Now that we better understand the lengths to which the cartels will go to make the billions of dollars that they net every year, I want to shift our focus to the Department of Homeland Security’s collective response and potential solutions for this immense task.

I believe we should begin with the development of a counter-network approach that looks at disrupting every level of cartel operations. From the low-level scout on an Arizona hill-top guiding drug loads away from Border Patrol agents, to the local plaza boss taxing the movement of drugs and people through his area, to the cartel kingpins at the very top of the Sinaloa cartel.

Gen. Stanley McChrystal is famous for the phrase, “It takes a network to defeat a network,” and that thinking can and should be applied to the problem set of trying to defeat an insidious adversary that brings death and ruin to so many. Does DHS have a “friendly” network to defeat the cartel’s network? Do we have a coherent transnational criminal organization strategy and more importantly is the Department of Homeland Security organized in a way that sets us up for success?

I look forward to discussing those questions in greater detail with the witnesses today.

As part of the executive order on transnational crime recently signed by the President, the Secretary of State, the Attorney General, the Secretary of Homeland Security, and the Director of National Intelligence, are all asked to improve the coordination of federal agencies' efforts to identify, interdict, investigate, prosecute, and dismantle transnational criminal organizations. I will be interested in learning what role DHS will play in this Administration’s increased focus on transnational criminal organizations.

Beyond our strategic approach to counter the cartels, we need to be properly organized to fight them as well.

In 2003, The Department of Homeland Security was created from 22 disparate agencies. It should not be surprising that there would be significant growing pains before that agency would function as a truly unified department. Each component of the Department, be it CBP, ICE, or the Coast Guard, has a tendency to operate in its own silo, without the coordination required to make border and maritime security efforts successful, not to mention reducing redundancy and overlap.

This can have negative effect on logistics, communications, and most importantly, operations.

Several years ago, then Secretary Johnson took a page from the Department of Defense playbook and created three joint task forces in an attempt to eliminate stovepipes and foster unity of effort along the border. Two of these task forces, JTF East and West, are geographically based, while one, JTF Investigations, is a functional task force. The goal was simple: establish a streamlined, and unified structure that prioritizes border security operations and investigations against the most meaningful cartel actors.

This Committee, working with our Senate counterparts, provided a temporary 6 year authorization for the joint task forces which was included in last year's National Defense Authorization Act. The intent was to allow the concept to mature, and provide ample opportunity for the Department to demonstrate to this Committee that organizational structure has measurably contributed to border security that would not have happened in the absence of a task force.

In drafting the authorization, we expressly borrowed several concepts from the Department of Defense including joint duty training, and joint duty assignments to foster a culture and operational mindset that, we hope, will transform the way that DHS conducts border security operations.

Today, is the very first time Congress has held a hearing on the new border security joint task forces, so I look forward to hearing from the Commanders as we discuss how best to counter the growing sophistication of the Mexican cartels and the serious national security threat they pose.

###



TESTIMONY OF

VICE ADMIRAL
KARL L. SCHULTZ
Director
Joint Task Force-East

U.S. Coast Guard
Department of Homeland Security

BEFORE

U.S. House of Representatives
Committee on Homeland Security
Subcommittee on Border and Maritime Security

ON

“Defeating a Sophisticated and Dangerous Adversary:
Are the New Border Security Task Forces the Right Approach”

April 4, 2017
Washington, DC

Introduction

Good morning Madam Chairwoman, Ranking Member Vela, and distinguished Members of the Subcommittee. It is a pleasure to be here today on behalf of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to discuss how Joint Task Force-East (JTF-E) – one of three Joint Task Forces established under the DHS Southern Border and Approaches Campaign Plan (SBACP) – is working to address the threats posed by Transnational Criminal Organizations (TCOs) to the safety and security of the United States.

I assumed the duties as Director of Joint Task Force-East in August 2016 and look forward to continued strong partnership and collaboration with my counterparts, U.S. Border Patrol (USBP) Chief Paul Beeson, Director of the Joint Task Force-West; and Janice Ayala, Director of the Joint Task Force-Investigations, from U. S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), Homeland Security Investigations (HSI).

JTF-East Background

Before the creation of the DHS Joint Task Forces (JTFs), DHS agencies in the field regularly worked together to achieve significant enforcement results; however, these results frequently relied upon a network of informal personal relationships and overlapping agency priorities, versus a clear framework that directed regional efforts. The JTF construct formalizes operational processes between regional and national level DHS components, and establishes enduring functional relationships between DHS agencies. JTF-E's organization provides a platform for operational continuity at the national level and optimizes a complex network of relationships with other non-DHS law enforcement and inter-agency partners.

Joint Task Forces were established to enhance unity of effort, build regional cooperation, and define operational priorities. The SBACP gave the JTFs a wide mandate to achieve effective enforcement and interdiction across land, sea and air domains; and to degrade TCOs while facilitating the flow of lawful trade, travel and commerce across borders. As the JTF-E Director, I thank the Committee for its role supporting the authorization that enabled the DHS Secretary to formally establish JTFs.

Today I am pleased to report, under the JTF construct, DHS components in the field are working in close collaboration to develop standard operational plans supporting regional operations to defeat these criminal networks. We leverage existing DHS facilities and capabilities to stand-up Joint Information Operations Centers to best coordinate information sharing and asset utilization. The enhanced coordination and sharing of resources and information is improving our ability to more comprehensively target and dismantle TCOs through a “whole of department/unity of effort” approach. While still nascent in our development at JTF-E, the benefits to DHS mission accomplishment are very promising.

JTF-E's geographic responsibility includes the international waters of the Gulf of Mexico, the Caribbean Sea and the Eastern Pacific Ocean – southward to the north coast

of South America, the airspace spanning U.S. territorial lands and waters; also, the international airspace in the approaches to Central America is shared with JTF-West.

My dual-hatted status as a member of the Armed Forces responsible for Coast Guard operations east of the Rocky Mountains, and as the JTF-E Director, positions me well to coordinate and collaborate across DHS agencies and with Department of Defense (DoD) Geographic Combatant Commands, including U.S. Southern Command (USSOUTHCOM) and U.S. Northern Command (USNORTHCOM). This positioning enhances information sharing and assists in identifying DoD resources that could be requested to support DHS Component-led operations. JTF-E's two Deputy Directors are Senior Executive Service (SES) representatives from U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) - Air and Marine Operations; and ICE-HSI, with additional members from CBP's Office of Field Operations and the USBP. The JTF-E staff of just over 40 detailees provide key touch points and experience essential to building relationships and processes crucial to JTF-E's performance.

Current Status of JTF-East

JTF-E's task is to lead the coordination of DHS component enforcement efforts to plan and implement enhanced counter-network operations directed at disrupting TCOs across its Joint Operating Area (JOA). Secretary Kelly has directed the JTFs to target individuals and organizations whose criminal conduct undermines border security or the integrity of the immigration system, including alien smuggling or trafficking, drug trafficking, illegal entry and reentry, visa fraud, identity theft, unlawful possession or use of official documents, and acts of violence committed against persons or property at or near the border. These broad responsibilities make the JTFs distinct from other DHS task forces which have more specific functional roles.

Given the geographic size and complexity of our JOA, coordinating efforts among the hundreds of individual component operational entities with distinct missions, chains of command, responsibilities, and operating areas remains a challenge. JTF-E has focused its efforts on coordinating operations within our newly created Regional Integrating Groups (RIGs), beginning with the Eastern Caribbean RIG. JTF-E has also conducted initial planning meetings with the Central Caribbean and Gulf Coast RIGs.

The JTFs seek to harmonize DHS-wide operational priorities with the priorities of local front line component offices working at the tactical level. Through a repeatable, deliberate planning process that best aligns available resources against both regional and national department-level threats, JTF-E enhances enforcement at the field level.

For example, from November 10 to November 22, 2016, JTF-E, partnering with the Eastern Caribbean RIG, coordinated a push of resources to Puerto Rico in support of the Caribbean Border Interagency Group's (CBIG) operation "Caribbean Guard," a standing joint operation in Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands that seeks to deter, disrupt, and dismantle TCOs.

JTF-E and regional DHS leadership received and validated resource requests from ICE, CBP, the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG), and other partners, and developed a consolidated, interagency resource request in order to reallocate resources stationed outside of Puerto Rico to meet the joint operational requirements. These resources included additional CBP aircraft, DoD linguist support, and a USCG Maritime Safety and Security Team operating out of the Virgin Islands. Additionally, JTF-E leveraged refined intelligence support from Joint Inter-Agency Task Force-South (JIATF-S). The collaborative effort enabled by JTF-E yielded 13 arrests, 70 migrants intercepted ashore and 18 migrants interdicted at sea, the seizure of more than 500 kilograms of cocaine and 28 kilograms of marijuana, over \$77,000 in bulk cash, and two vessels. These actions also disrupted a nationally identified priority TCO. However, these numbers only partially capture the results of the integrated field operations.

Enhancing unity of effort in the pursuit of joint operational priorities is also a key goal of the JTF concept. JTF-E improves synchronization of cross-component capabilities that provide timely, actionable, fused “all-source” intelligence. Additionally, JTF-E intelligence efforts fill in the intelligence gaps between the maritime and land domains, while also leveraging cross-component personnel to cultivate a comprehensive perspective on emerging threats. Our most recent example includes JTF-E compiling and coordinating existing intelligence prepared by CBP, ICE, USCG, USSOUTHCOM, JIATF-S, the Drug Enforcement Agency, and others, in order to produce an all-inclusive threat overview, termed a Joint Intelligence Preparation of the Operating Environment (JIPOE).

To thwart illegal maritime migration, the recently developed DHS Maritime Migration Contingency Plan identifies JTF-E as the Secretary’s single touch-point in the event of increased or mass maritime migration. JTF-E’s recently clarified roles will enable the Secretary to receive consolidated information and make validated requests for assistance to DoD, thus allowing for more rapid decision making and analysis. JTF-E recently exercised this role in a large scale multi-week USSOUTHCOM exercise and implemented it during the recent termination of the wet-foot/dry-foot policy affecting Cuban maritime migration.

Future JTF-East Engagements

In addition to our responsibility to coordinate within our department, JTF-E supports DHS’s aggressive efforts to counter TCOs at the earliest possible points in their supply chains via increased collaboration with our partners in Mexico, Central and South America, and the Caribbean. JTF-E leads the Western Hemisphere Illicit Pathways Initiative (WHIP), promoting information sharing and collaboration with our partner nations to fight against TCOs in Central America and Special Interest Aliens transiting through Central America and the Caribbean. Through collaboration with DoD’s Combating Terrorism and Technical Support Office, JTF-E continues to explore technology solutions that enable the law enforcement missions of U.S. and international partners, while illuminating illicit pathways throughout the Western Hemisphere.

JTF-E is actively working with the Eastern Caribbean RIG, the Central Caribbean RIG and the Gulf Coast RIG to facilitate additional near term joint operations. These efforts will build upon the lessons learned from prior joint operations supporting regional DHS components, as well as enhanced collaboration across departmental and interagency lines. Enhanced intelligence sharing and informational analysis will also be incorporated as interagency law enforcement coordination is improved and future operational processes are further refined.

Conclusion

The JTFs are new and reside in a department with a short fourteen-year history that is responsible for the critical and complex task of securing our homeland and our borders. JTF-East, JTF-West, and JTF-Investigations operate collaboratively to unify operations on a daily basis to achieve the objective of the Southern Border and Approaches Campaign Plan. All three Task Forces are enhancing unity of effort, building regional cooperation, and are more clearly defining operational priorities. Continued progress on these fronts is instrumental to defeating TCOs and making America safer. TCOs are adaptive and resilient, investing a significant amount of resources and time in adjusting tactics to subvert our efforts. Combating TCOs will continue to be a priority for the JTFs, as they play a key role in our layered border security strategy. As JTFs mature, they will continue to strengthen cooperation within DHS and improve coordination both internationally and across the whole of government enterprise.



TESTIMONY OF

PAUL A. BEESON
Director
Joint Task Force – West

U.S. Customs and Border Protection
Department of Homeland Security

BEFORE

U.S. House of Representatives
Committee on Homeland Security
Subcommittee on Border and Maritime Security

ON

“Defeating a Sophisticated and Dangerous Adversary: Are the New Border Security Task Forces
the Right Approach?”

March 21, 2017
Washington, D.C.

Introduction

Chairwoman McSally, Ranking Member Vela, and distinguished Members of the Subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to appear today on behalf of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS or the Department), to discuss how the Joint Task Force-West (JTF-W) — one of three Joint Task Forces established under the DHS Southern Border and Approaches Campaign (SBAC) — is working to address the threats posed by Transnational Criminal Organizations (TCOs) to the safety and security of the United States.

Although I officially assumed my duties as Director of JTF-W in December 2016, I reported to JTF-W Headquarters in San Antonio, Texas, on March 5, 2017. I look forward to working closely with my counterparts, U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) Vice-Admiral Karl Schultz, Director of the Joint Task Force-East, and Janice Ayala, Director of the Joint Task Force-Investigations, from U. S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), Homeland Security Investigations (HSI).

Thanks to the support of Congress, during the past decade DHS has deployed more personnel, resources, technology, and tactical infrastructure to secure our borders than at any other time in history. DHS has harnessed this support to expand the whole-of-government approach to border security – one that leverages the authorities and capabilities of multiple departments and agencies and extends international partnerships – to multiply our efforts to counter the dynamic and sophisticated tactics and techniques that TCOs use to penetrate our border.

The Southwest Border (SWB) of the United States is a highly diverse environment with equally diverse threats to the security and safety of our border communities and communities throughout the United States. TCOs operating along the SWB are engaged in the smuggling and trafficking of aliens, narcotics, weapons, currency, and other illicit goods. The nearly unlimited financial resources generated by TCOs' criminal activities afford them a freedom of action that challenges traditional law enforcement strategies. TCOs are also highly mobile and maintain sophisticated cross-border networks, operating throughout the SWB environments including at and between ports of entry (POE), and in the land, air, and maritime domains.

JTF-W History and Structure

JTF-W, which became fully operational in July 2015, was established as a pilot program as part of the SBAC. The SBAC leverages the range of unique Department authorities, responsibilities, and capabilities to enhance and unify our operational approach to address comprehensive threat environments and complements the biennial national Southwest Border Counternarcotics Strategy. JTF-W, with U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) serving as its executive agent, supports the Department's Unity of Effort initiative, through the integrated Corridor structure, by identifying, disrupting, and dismantling threats posed by TCOs to the SWB of the United States. We coordinate and support integrated counter-network operations against priority TCOs engaged in criminal cross-border activity, employing a whole-of-government approach to deliver the greatest possible consequences against these prioritized TCOs. What is different today is that JTF-W leads the coordination of these efforts in a joint environment. We build on

the collective capabilities of the DHS Components to plan and coordinate operations using the collective strength of the Department, in support of DHS goals. It is in a joint environment such as JTF-W where the full capabilities of DHS can be leveraged and focused to address emerging and priority threats to the Homeland.

The JTF-W Joint Operating Area (JOA), established by the SBAC, includes the land border with Mexico from California to Texas, the land approaches through Mexico to this border, the littorals in the Gulf of Mexico off Texas and in the Pacific Ocean off California, and the airspace spanning U.S. territorial land and waters. JTF-W and JTF-E share Central America as part of their respective JOAs. JTF-W activities are coordinated and conducted through four operational Corridors pursuant to the CBP Commissioner's Integrated Corridor Operations Model memorandum: the South Texas Corridor; the New Mexico/West Texas Corridor; the Arizona Corridor; and the California Corridor. This Integrated Corridor Operations Model facilitates cross-Component coordination, enabling the DHS Components in these Corridors to execute targeted border security operations across the JTF-W JOA against prioritized TCOs in a manner and scope that previously did not exist. Corridor leadership is comprised of senior representatives from each DHS Component within the geographic region, including CBP, ICE, and USCG. By drawing leadership from each DHS Component, JTF-W coordinates through existing command and control structures to synchronize Component efforts, specifically to:

- Integrate and align Component intelligence capabilities to achieve the JTF-W mission;
- Prioritize investigative efforts to disrupt, degrade, and dismantle TCOs and illicit networks;
- Institutionalize and standardize integrated counter-network operations to identify and target TCOs and illicit networks;
- Strengthen international, prosecutorial, and deterrent efforts against TCO enterprises and significant activity impacting the JTF-W JOA; and
- Advance the JTF-W mission through unified communication and messaging efforts.

Since its inception, JTF-W has employed and continues to refine a standardized, DHS-wide counter-network strategy throughout its JOA. JTF-W works to ensure that intelligence is shared, threats and targets are prioritized, and operations are planned and executed jointly by facilitating the coordination and collaboration of the operational Components across DHS, specifically CBP, ICE, USCIS, and USCG. To achieve maximum operational flexibility, JTF-W is currently staffed with not-to-exceed (NTE) and temporary duty (TDY) personnel from these Components. All employed equipment and assets are temporarily realigned from the Components to support JTF-W activities. JTF-W staff from the represented Components coordinate efforts related to intelligence, operations, logistics, administration, and external engagement. JTF-W further supports the efforts of DHS in external outreach and engagement with other federal partners such as Department of Justice, Department of State, and Department of Defense.

JTF-W Efforts to Counter TCOs

The dynamic threats posed by TCOs necessitate a united, comprehensive strategy and an aggressive approach by multiple entities across all levels of government. To combat the challenges posed by TCOs, JTF-W is focused on both long-term investigative operations against

priority TCOs, as well as short-term operations against other associated networks, operatives, and affiliates.

For example, the Threat and Intelligence Priorities Assessment (TIPA) is component-neutral assessment tool that provides a thorough analysis of the threats facing each unique operating environment. This approach enables multiple agencies to examine the same set of threats within and across mission and geographic areas of responsibility. It provides the ability to individually and collectively identify and understand the highest priority threats in the region. This is the first time that these DHS entities along the SWB have utilized one process to produce a joint threat assessment.

JTF-W led the initiative to implement a standardized operational planning process across the SWB Corridors. This process was aligned with the overarching DHS Operational Planning Guidance and the DHS Campaign Plan for Securing the U.S. Southern Border and Approaches. Through this process, JTF-W is able to articulate how strategic goals are being implemented tactically through named operations, targeting prioritized TCOs. An example of this collaboration was Operation OPTAR. In Arizona this past year, DHS Components from the JTF-W Arizona Corridor jointly planned and executed an operation targeting heroin smuggling through the POE. This joint effort resulted in the seizure of almost 5,000 kilograms of drugs, including heroin, cocaine, marijuana and methamphetamines bound for the United States and 12,000 rounds of ammunition and approximately \$80,000 bound for Mexico.

JTF-W is uniquely situated to centralize mission requirements to expand information sharing and Information Technology systems across the Department. While the mission requirements are not new, JTF-W has served as a catalyst for inter-agency information sharing. For example, JTF-W expanded access to traditional Component-centric systems by establishing a true joint environment where enforcement personnel could leverage the breadth of information and authorities of the Department to target every level of these criminal networks. JTF-W will continue to coordinate expanded information sharing capabilities, enhancing operational capabilities and more efficiently leveraging DHS and our partners' resources.

In Fiscal Year 2016, JTF-W and JTF-I identified 19 TCOs prioritized for disruption or dismantlement, using a standardized inter-agency process that did not exist prior to the creation of this task force. This prioritization allowed DHS to focus its enforcement efforts on permanently dismantling these TCOs. JTF-W monitored and evaluated enforcement actions (i.e., civil penalties, arrests, removals, and seizures) to evaluate its effectiveness based on existing DHS performance measures. Of these original 19 TCOs, JTF-W has dismantled four. JTF-W and the JTF-I continue to coordinate with DHS Components to disrupt and dismantle the remaining TCOs that are still active. For Fiscal Year 2017, these processes are being refined, standardized, and institutionalized.

In addition to these longer-term efforts, JTF-W led the coordination and execution of *Operation All In*. This Secretary-approved operation, the first of its kind within the Department, synchronized intelligence-gathering, investigation, and interdiction cross-Component efforts against known human-smuggling facilitators across the SWB and parts of the interior United States. As a result of *Operation All In*, 204 targets with extensive ties to human smuggling

networks, who had been operating up to that point with impunity and profiting financially from this criminal enterprise, were identified and encountered. Based on the initial success of *Operation All In*, the DHS Secretary approved this operational concept as an open-ended, steady-state enforcement effort.

Recognizing that DHS is not alone in the fight against TCOs, JTF-W, through the integrated Corridor structure, actively partners with numerous other federal, state, local, and tribal law enforcement agencies, as well as international partners. These partnerships are critical to JTF-W's ability to coordinate operations to disrupt and dismantle TCOs engaged in illicit smuggling activities across the JOA. Of note, prosecutors accepted 97% of the *Operation All In* targets that were presented for criminal prosecution at either the federal or state level, demonstrating the high-degree of external coordination between law enforcement and prosecuting attorneys.

In the international arena, JTF-W prioritizes its efforts to advance border and regional security in alignment with DHS's International Engagement Strategy, and supporting the binational programs with the government of Mexico, and in the near future, Central America. These initiatives, which are coordinated through existing mechanisms at the attaché, component, and Department level, advance border security through binational partnerships, foreign country capacity building, and enhanced international engagement.

In addition to these enforcement efforts, JTF-W has leveraged internal and external relationships as part of a public messaging campaign. For example, JTF-W has created an ongoing series of short videos as a cost-neutral effort to deter illegal migration and raise awareness of the atrocities, abuses, extortion, and natural hazards migrants will encounter on their journey. These videos, which are produced internally using organic resources and personnel, received extensive distribution both domestically and abroad. To date, three videos have been viewed 555,000 times via multiple social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter, and have been broadcast by Univision, Telemundo, and other Spanish-language television outlets.

Next Steps

President Trump recently issued two executive orders¹ that direct additional tools and resources for securing the southern border – to prevent illegal immigration, drug and human trafficking, and acts of terrorism. The executive orders also prioritize enforcement of Federal law in order to thwart TCOs and other groups engaged in illicit activities that present a threat to public safety and national security. Specifically, per Secretary Kelly's February 20, 2017, implementation memo,² JTF-W will plan and implement enhanced counter-network operations directed at disrupting TCOs, particularly those involved in human smuggling. Working with our Federal,

¹ Executive Order 13767: Border Security and Immigration Enforcement Improvements, January 25, 2017. <https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2017/01/25/executive-order-border-security-and-immigration-enforcement-improvements>; and Executive Order 13773: Enforcing Federal Law with Respect to Transnational Criminal Organizations and Preventing International Trafficking, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2017/02/09/presidential-executive-order-enforcing-federal-law-respect-transnational>

² Memo: Implementing the President's Border Security and Immigration Enforcement Improvements Policies. February 20, 2017. https://www.dhs.gov/sites/default/files/publications/17_0220_S1_Implementing-the-Presidents-Border-Security-Immigration-Enforcement-Improvement-Policies.pdf.

state, and local law enforcement partners, the JTF-W will target individuals and organizations whose criminal conduct undermines border security or the integrity of the immigration system, including offenses related to alien smuggling or trafficking, drug trafficking, illegal entry and reentry, visa fraud, identity theft, unlawful possession or use of official documents, and acts of violence committed against persons or property at or near the border. We will take all appropriate steps to implement the provisions of the President's executive orders, which support the Department's efforts to disrupt and dismantle TCOs that are fortifying their illicit networks in the border region.

Moving forward, JTF-W, through its coordination and collaboration efforts, will support DHS Secretary Kelly's vision for the Joint Task Forces to enhance counter-network operations directed at disrupting TCOs impacting the SWB. Our efforts will remain focused on human smuggling TCOs and illicit networks, while additionally targeting those involved in drug trafficking, currency smuggling, and other related cross-border crimes. Through integration, collaboration, and coordination efforts, JTF-W will prioritize efforts to disrupt and dismantle TCOs and illicit networks presenting the greatest risk to the Homeland.

JTF-W will continue to evaluate, refine, and institutionalize processes and procedures to maximize efficiency and effectiveness. We will expand investigative and operational reach by leveraging domestic and international partners to increase intelligence and information sharing and coordinate law enforcement actions beyond the SWB region. This same approach will be instrumental in enhancing domestic relationships with federal, state, and local law enforcement partners to effectively share information and optimize enforcement actions against those illicit organizations that threaten the security of the SWB and its approaches. This whole of government approach will enable DHS and its partners to attack TCOs and illicit networks at their most vulnerable points, regardless of where they reside.

Conclusion

DHS is committed to mitigating the threats posed by TCOs operating along the SWB. With continued support from Congress, JTF-W will support Component efforts to disrupt and dismantle TCOs by improving the coordination and collaboration with all partners, foreign and domestic. The JTF-W counter-network strategy will expand the enforcement zone from point-of-origin to point-of-destination; including transit zones, the southern border, and the approaches, harnessing the collective capabilities of DHS and its partners through a Unity of Effort.

Chairwoman McSally, Ranking Member Vela, and distinguished Members of Subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to testify today. As I mentioned earlier, DHS is embarking on a new era of joint operational planning and operations. TCOs recognize no borders or authorities. The only way to attack an enemy of this nature is to leverage the collective capabilities of DHS, partner agencies, and governments. JTF-W will continue to employ its counter-network strategy against TCOs and illicit networks to enhance the safety, security, and prosperity of the Homeland. I look forward to your questions.



U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement

STATEMENT

OF

JANICE AYALA
DIRECTOR
JOINT TASK FORCE FOR INVESTIGATIONS (JTF-I)
DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

REGARDING A HEARING ENTITLED

“DEFEATING A SOPHISTICATED AND DANGEROUS ADVERSARY: ARE THE NEW
BORDER SECURITY TASK FORCES THE RIGHT APPROACH?”

BEFORE THE

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY
SUBCOMMITTEE ON BORDER AND MARITIME SECURITY

Tuesday, March 21, 2017

2:00 p.m.

210 Capitol Visitor Center

Chairman McSally, Ranking Member Vela, and distinguished members:

Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today to discuss the Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) solutions to threats posed by Drug Cartels and Smugglers, and the efforts of the DHS Joint Task Forces (JTFs). As a Senior Executive of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), Homeland Security Investigations (HSI), the primary criminal investigators of DHS, I serve as Director of Joint Task Force – Investigations (JTF-I). ICE has been designated as the executive agent of JTF-I.

Former Department of Homeland Security Secretary Jeh Johnson announced the Department's new Unity of Effort Initiative in April of 2014. On May 8, 2014, former Secretary Johnson announced and directed our Department-wide Southern Border and Approaches Campaign (SBAC) Plan. The SBAC is part of a comprehensive security strategy designed to unify efforts across DHS components to address threats specifically associated with terrorism, illicit market-driven flows, and illegal migration across our Southern Border and Approaches. In furtherance of the Department-wide SBAC, former Secretary Johnson commissioned three pilot Joint Task Forces (JTFs) on November 20, 2014. The three Joint Task Forces, JTF-I, JTF-East (JTF-E), and JTF-West (JTF-W), are responsible for establishing operational priorities and synchronizing capabilities in order to achieve SBAC objectives.

Two of the JTFs, JTF East (JTF-E) and JTF West (JTF-W), are geographically focused task forces that concentrate on the southern land and maritime borders of the United States and the approaches to our border—all the way to Central and South America. As a "functional" task force, JTF-I was established to improve the investigative functions within the Department in furtherance of the SBAC Plan. JTF-I uses a Department-wide process that prioritizes and integrates support for criminal investigations along the U.S. Southern Border and Approaches to mitigate the risk of terrorism, dismantle transnational criminal organizations (TCOs), prevent their reconstitution, and reduce illicit flows.

JTF-I operates within the diverse mission space of the SBAC. JTF-I's ability to facilitate cross-cutting partnerships between components with overlapping mission responsibilities allows the SBAC to operate with a higher level of cooperation, transparency, and effectiveness. By consolidating resources and refining duplicative efforts, the JTF-I leverages unique domestic and international authorities that are integral to the elimination of targeted TCOs. JTF-I's coordination has led to the successful disruption of several smuggling networks, which I describe in detail below.

We leverage HSI's broad authority, unique investigative tools, and global footprint to secure our borders, working in close coordination with U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP), the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG), Joint Task Forces East and West, and many other domestic and international law enforcement and customs partners to target TCOs. Today, I will provide JTF-I's perspective on the solutions to the sophisticated smuggling threats that we face on our Southwest Border, the approaches that lead up to our border, and some of what we do to

address TCOs and their smuggling activities before contraband arrives at our borders, and even in the interior of the United States.

The Cartels along the Southwest Border

The primary TCOs that threaten the Southwest Border of the United States are Mexican Drug Cartels (the Cartels). Over the last decade, the United States, working with our Mexican law enforcement and military counterparts, has had sustained success in attacking Cartel leaders, as evidenced by the recent extradition of Joaquin Guzman Loera, aka “El Chapo”, to face prosecution in the United States. However, every law enforcement success against the Cartels is countered by the fact that the Cartels are highly networked organizations with built-in redundancies that adapt on a daily basis based on *their* intelligence of U.S. border security and law enforcement.

While drug smuggling remains the focal point for media and community interest, the threat and crimes associated with human smuggling are prevalent and very much real. Based on investigatory evidence and collected intelligence, we observe that human smuggling enterprises and the Cartels maintain a symbiotic relationship with each other. Certain members of these criminal enterprises control the major U.S. and foreign drug markets and others control the smuggling flow across certain geographic areas of the border on behalf of their cartel. Some/Most Human Smugglers are required to pay taxes and fees to Cartels for access to smuggling routes through specific geographic areas and are subject to physical violence and/or death if proper coordination and compensation are not rendered. In addition, failed coordination between the Cartels and human smuggling enterprises greatly increases the risk of unwanted law enforcement attention and investigative efforts.

The Cartels move illicit proceeds, hide assets, and conduct transactions globally. Among the various methods Cartels use to transfer and launder their illicit proceeds are bulk cash smuggling, trade-based money laundering, funnel accounts, professional money launderers, and the misuse of Money Service Businesses (MSB) and emerging payment systems. The Cartels exploit vulnerabilities in both the U.S. and Mexican financial system and conduct layered financial transactions to circumvent regulatory scrutiny, which presents difficulties for authorities attempting to distinguish between licit and illicit use of the financial system. The U.S. government has refined our ability to target money laundering and financial violations through various techniques, to include interagency investigations, training and capacity-building, targeted financial sanctions, and direct engagement with at-risk financial institutions and jurisdictions.

U.S. Anti-Money Laundering laws and regulations impose customer identification, recordkeeping, and reporting obligations on covered financial institutions that help deter criminals from moving illicit proceeds through the financial system. These preventive measures also create valuable evidentiary trails for law enforcement to employ during an investigation. As such, HSI has an abundance of investigative tools in our arsenal to disrupt and dismantle Cartel money laundering operations as well as to discourage new actors from engaging in illicit activity.

Smuggling Trends along the Southwest Border

The Southwest Border is a diverse environment, including maritime borders in both the Gulf of Mexico and on the Pacific Ocean that transition to vast land border areas that include rivers, rural agricultural lands, and densely populated urban areas along the nearly 2,000 miles of our southern border. In response to these vastly different areas, the Cartels adapt their methods and cargo to the smuggling environment.

Mexico is a major source and transit country for illicit drugs destined for the United States. It is a primary source of marijuana, methamphetamine, and heroin, and a key transit area for cocaine.

As a result of Mexico's dominant role as either a source or transit point for illicit drugs destined for the United States, it has also become a primary destination for the illicit proceeds that the Cartels earn from their distribution networks in the United States. Mexican Cartels use a variety of techniques to repatriate illicit proceeds, from bulk cash smuggling to sophisticated trade-based money laundering schemes. Many of the more complex techniques rely on third party money launderers and corrupt individuals at financial institutions.

Attacking the TCOs

To investigate TCOs impacting Southwest Border security, ICE has assigned more than 1,500 special agents and almost 150 intelligence research specialists to Southwest Border offices, to include the Border Enforcement Security Task Forces (BESTs), which provide a comprehensive regional response to the growing threat to border security, public safety, and national security. This includes border security at land, maritime, and international airports. In fiscal year (FY) 2016, ICE drug smuggling investigations conducted by the five HSI Special Agent in Charge offices along the Southwest border resulted in 5,659 criminal arrests, 3,941 indictments, 3,383 convictions, and 330 administrative immigration arrests.

JTF-I prioritizes these and other DHS Component investigations, to best focus on an integrated approach transcending border centric activities, into broad counter network operations. These networks are comprised of international, border, and domestic elements conspiring together that require a multitude of investigations from a variety of offices.

In addition to leveraging domestic assets, we work closely with Attaché personnel deployed to 66 offices in 49 countries that are uniquely positioned to utilize established relationships with host country law enforcement, to include the engagement of Transnational Criminal Investigative Units (TCIUs). These TCIUs are composed of DHS-trained host country counterparts who have the authority to investigate and enforce violations of law in their respective countries. Since our law enforcement officers working overseas do not possess general law enforcement or investigative authority in most host countries, the use of these TCIUs enables ICE to promote direct action in its investigative leads while respecting the sovereignty of the host country and cultivating international partnerships. These efforts, often thousands of miles from the U.S.-Mexico border in countries like Colombia and Panama, essentially act as an outer layer of security for our Southwest Border.

Mexico has proven to be an outstanding partner in the fight against TCOs, taking down the Cartels' top leadership and working to dismantle these organizations. ICE's Attaché Office in Mexico City is the largest ICE presence outside of the United States and has coordinated the establishment of TCIUs in Mexico comprised of Mexican law enforcement officers. ICE Attaché personnel work daily with Mexican authorities to combat these transnational threats. Additionally, ICE—along with other DHS Components—actively works through the Department of State to provide training and technical assistance to our Mexican counterparts. The spirit of collaboration and joint effort between DHS Components and our counterparts in Mexico is unprecedented.

JTF-I is responsible for enhancing and integrating criminal investigations in support of the operational priorities of JTF-East, JTF-West, the Components, and DHS Headquarters. To accomplish this, JTF-I manages the DHS-wide nomination and selection process for Homeland Criminal Organization Targets (HOMECORTs), the top transnational criminal networks impacting homeland security, and then coordinates the dozens of investigations and operations targeting each HOMECORT.

HOMECORT consists of three parts. The first is a nomination and selection process for prioritizing the top transnational criminal networks that are threatening homeland security based on the specific threats prioritized and described in JTF-E and JTF-W operational priorities. The second is the development of comprehensive knowledge about the criminal network (hierarchy, associations, activities, etc.), which is called Comprehensive Criminal Network Analysis (CCNA). The third is National Case Coordination, a term used to describe centralized management and support of complex and priority investigations of entire criminal networks that cross jurisdictions, programs, and interagency and international boundaries. The ultimate goal of a HOMECORT investigation is the complete dismantlement of the criminal network that is the subject of the investigation. Dismantlement is defined as destroying the target organization's leadership, network, and financial base to the point that the organization is incapable of reconstituting itself.

HOMECORT criminal networks typically cross international boundaries, prosecutorial jurisdictions, agency missions, programs, and operations areas; and, as a result, are linked to scores of U.S. and foreign partner investigations, operations, prosecutions, seizures, and apprehensions. HOMECORT cases are the most serious and complex criminal investigations conducted by the federal government, as they typically involve all functions of federal policing and governance including investigations, patrol, inspections, immigration, citizenship, finance, justice, public integrity, public health and safety, trade, and diplomacy.

JTF-I consists of over 60 interagency investigators, analysts, and operators, primarily from ICE, CBP, and Coast Guard, located in ICE headquarters and embedded in National Capital Regional Centers. As members of an ICE HSI-led Task Force, these detailees have full access to Investigative Case Management systems, analytical tools, and other unique and useful investigative information that they typically would not have at their own agency. JTF-I staff provides over 3,500 hours of monthly analytical support to HOMECORT investigations and SBAC and JTF priorities while developing and improving best practices related to joint investigations, analysis, and targeting.

By filling a gap in the coordination of national level cases and leveraging the broad knowledge, skills and capabilities of its interagency detailees, JTF-I achieved significant successes disrupting several transnational criminal networks (involving hundreds of criminal investigations) that threatened homeland security. Equally important, JTF-I coordination has helped overcome many of the obstacles to information sharing, investigative integration with operational forces, tactical cueing, and intelligence support that previously plagued other task forces, interagency initiatives, and national programs.

Over the last twenty months, JTF-I coordinated and supported the targeting of 14 HOMECORT criminal networks, comprised of several hundred individual criminal investigations. Presently, 11 of these 14 criminal networks have been dismantled to the point they no longer threaten homeland security. The eleven networks include human smugglers, sex traffickers, drug smugglers, money launderers, bulk cash smugglers, weapons smugglers, and smugglers of special interest aliens. The three other HOMECORT criminal networks continue to be the targets of active criminal investigations. Efforts against current and future HOMECORT criminal networks will be enhanced by Executive Order 13773, Enforcing Federal law with Respect to Transnational Criminal Organizations and Preventing International Trafficking (the EO). Among other things, the EO directs the entire executive branch to strengthen its enforcement of Federal law to thwart TCOs, prioritize and dedicate sufficient resources to disable and dismantle TCOs, develop strategies to counter the crimes committed by TCOs, and otherwise pursue and support efforts to defeat TCOs. Solidifying HOMECORT as the DHS-wide process for identifying and prioritizing the top criminal networks impacting homeland security will help to fulfill all of these objectives. The EO also directs DHS to use HOMECORT to identify and describe homeland security threats to the National Security Council's Threat Mitigation Working Group. And, the EO supports further JTF-I engagement with foreign partners to build investigative capacities through operations such as HSI's CITADEL, an investigative surge operation to identify, disrupt and dismantle Transnational Criminal Organizations (TCOs), Drug Trafficking Organizations (DTOs) and terrorist networks by targeting the mechanisms they use to move people, illicit funds, and contraband through the Central America (CENTAM) corridor. CITADEL integrates each of the JTF-I HOMECORT cases and associated targets with International Operations, as well as other HSI priority cases. Specifically, CITADEL focuses on leveraging HSI and Partner Nation (PN) authorities and subject matter expertise to dismantle priority TCO targets involved in human and bulk cash smuggling, as well as narcotics smuggling. .

CONCLUSION

Thank you again for the opportunity to appear before you today and for your continued support of DHS and its mission. JTF-I is committed to stemming cross-border criminal organizations through the various efforts I have discussed today. I appreciate your interest in these important issues.

I would be pleased to answer any questions you may have.



Testimony

Before the Subcommittee on Border and
Maritime Security, Committee on
Homeland Security, House of
Representatives

For Release on Delivery
Expected at 10:00 a.m. EDT
Tuesday, April 4, 2017

BORDER SECURITY

DHS Could Strengthen Efforts to Establish Collaborative Mechanisms and Assess Use of Resources

Statement of Rebecca Gambler, Director, Homeland
Security and Justice

GAO Highlights

Highlights of [GAO-17-495T](#), a testimony before the Subcommittee on Border and Maritime Security, Committee on Homeland Security, House of Representatives

Why GAO Did This Study

Securing U.S. borders is the responsibility of DHS, in collaboration with other federal, state, local, and tribal entities. Within DHS, CBP is the lead agency for border security and is responsible for, among other things, keeping terrorists and their weapons, criminals and their contraband, and inadmissible aliens out of the country. In recent years, GAO has reported on a variety of DHS collaborative mechanisms and efforts to assess its use of border security resources.

This statement addresses (1) DHS's efforts to implement collaborative mechanisms along the southwest border and (2) DHS's efforts to assess its use of resources and programs to secure the southwest border. This statement is based on GAO reports and testimonies issued from September 2013 through February 2017 that examined DHS efforts to enhance border security and assess the effectiveness of its border security operations. GAO's reports and testimonies incorporated information GAO obtained by examining DHS collaborative mechanisms, reviewing CBP policies and procedures for coordinating use of assets, analyzing DHS data related to enforcement programs, and interviewing relevant DHS officials.

What GAO Recommends

GAO has previously made numerous recommendations to DHS to improve the function of collaborative mechanisms and use of resources for border security, and DHS has generally agreed. DHS has taken actions or described planned actions to address the recommendations, which GAO will continue to monitor.

View [GAO-17-495T](#). For more information, contact Rebecca Gambler at (202) 512-8777 or GamblerR@gao.gov.

April 2017

BORDER SECURITY

DHS Could Strengthen Efforts to Establish Collaborative Mechanisms and Assess Use of Resources

What GAO Found

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and its U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) have implemented various mechanisms along the southern U.S. border to coordinate security operations, but could strengthen coordination of Predator B unmanned aerial system (UAS) operations to conduct border security efforts. In September 2013, GAO reported that DHS and CBP used collaborative mechanisms along the southwest border—including interagency Border Enforcement Security Task Forces and Regional Coordinating Mechanisms—to coordinate information sharing, target and prioritize resources, and leverage assets. GAO interviewed participants from the various mechanisms who provided perspective on successful collaboration, such as establishing positive working relationships, sharing resources, and sharing information. Participants also identified barriers, such as resource constraints, rotation of key personnel, and lack of leadership buy-in. GAO recommended that DHS take steps to improve its visibility over field collaborative mechanisms. DHS concurred and collected data related to the mechanisms' operations. Further, as GAO reported in June 2014, officials involved with mechanisms along the southwest border cited limited resource commitments by participating agencies and a lack of common objectives. Among other things, GAO recommended that DHS establish written interagency agreements with mechanism partners, and DHS concurred. Lastly, in February 2017, GAO reported that DHS and CBP had established mechanisms to coordinate Predator B UAS operations but could better document their coordination procedures. GAO made recommendations for DHS and CBP to improve coordination of UAS operations, and DHS concurred.

GAO recently reported that DHS and CBP could strengthen efforts to assess their use of resources and programs to secure the southwest border. For example, in February 2017, GAO reported that CBP does not record mission data consistently across all operational centers for its Predator B UAS, limiting CBP's ability to assess program effectiveness. In addition, CBP has not updated its guidance for collecting and recording mission information in its data collection system since 2014. Updating guidance consistent with internal control standards would help CBP better ensure the quality of data it uses to assess effectiveness. In January 2017, GAO found that methodological weaknesses limit the usefulness for assessing the effectiveness of CBP's Border Patrol Consequence Delivery System. Specifically, Border Patrol's methodology for calculating recidivism—the percent of aliens apprehended multiple times along the southwest border within a fiscal year—does not account for an alien's apprehension history over multiple years. Border Patrol could strengthen the methodology for calculating recidivism by using an alien's apprehension history beyond one fiscal year. Finally, CBP has not developed metrics that systematically use the data it collects to assess the contributions of its pedestrian and vehicle border fencing to its mission. Developing metrics to assess the contributions of fencing to border security operations could better position CBP to make resource allocation decisions with the best information available to inform competing mission priorities and investments. GAO made recommendations to DHS and CBP to update guidance, strengthen its recidivism calculation methodology, and develop metrics, and DHS generally concurred.

Chairwoman McCally, Ranking Member Vela, and Members of the Subcommittee:

I am pleased to be here today to discuss the Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) efforts to coordinate and assess its border security operations. Securing U.S. borders is the responsibility of DHS, in collaboration with other federal, state, local, and tribal entities. Within DHS, U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) is the lead agency for border security and is responsible for, among other things, keeping terrorists and their weapons, criminals and their contraband, and inadmissible aliens out of the country.¹ The United States international border with Mexico (southwest border) continues to be vulnerable to illegal cross-border, and DHS reported apprehending over 331,000 illegal entrants and making over 14,000 seizures of drugs in fiscal year 2015.

Over time, DHS and CBP have established various collaborative mechanisms along the southern U.S. border, including the southwest border and southern maritime approaches, to integrate CBP operations and improve interagency coordination. For example, CBP, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), U.S. Coast Guard (Coast Guard), and other stakeholders have partnered to form multiple joint task forces. To further support collaboration, DHS and CBP coordinate use of resources, including a variety of technology and assets such as aircraft. For example, CBP's Air and Marine Operations (AMO) uses Predator B unmanned aerial systems (UAS) and other aircraft equipped with video and radar surveillance technology along the southwest border to conduct border security efforts, in part, through coordination with joint task forces.

GAO has identified best practices for implementing interagency collaboration—broadly defined as any joint activity that is intended to produce more public value than could be produced when agencies act alone.² Among other things, these best practices note that agencies can enhance and sustain their collaborative efforts by developing mechanisms to monitor, evaluate, and report on results. In addition, we found that all collaborative mechanisms benefit from certain key features, such as implementing processes to track and monitor progress toward

¹See 6 U.S.C. § 211(a) (establishing CBP within DHS), (c) (enumerating CBP's duties).

²GAO, *Results-Oriented Government: Practices That Can Help Enhance and Sustain Collaboration among Federal Agencies*, [GAO-06-15](#) (Washington, D.C.: Oct. 21, 2005) and *Managing for Results: Key Considerations for Implementing Interagency Collaborative Mechanisms*, [GAO-12-1022](#) (Washington, D.C.: Sept. 27, 2012).

short-term and long-term outcomes. With regard to assessing its progress and efforts to secure the border, CBP components collect a variety of data on their use of resources and programs. For example, CBP's U.S. Border Patrol (Border Patrol) collects data that support efforts to address smuggling and other illegal cross-border activity along the U.S. southwest border through its Consequence Delivery System (CDS) program—a process to classify each apprehended alien into criminal or noncriminal categories and apply various criminal, administrative, and programmatic consequences, such as federal prosecution, most likely to deter future illegal activity. In addition, Border Patrol collects a variety of data on its apprehension of aliens and seizures of narcotics along the southwest border and on use of resources such as tactical infrastructure—fencing, gates, roads, bridges, lighting, and drainage—and surveillance technology, such as towers equipped with video cameras and radar technology. AMO also collects data on its use of air and maritime assets; for example, seizures and apprehensions provided for by support from its Predator B UAS and Tethered Aerostat Radar System (TARS) program—fixed site unmanned buoyant craft tethered to the ground equipped with radar technology.

Over the years, we have reported on the progress and challenges DHS faces in implementing its border security efforts, including establishing collaborative mechanisms and assessing the effectiveness of its use of resources and programs along the border. My statement discusses our past findings on (1) DHS's efforts to implement collaborative mechanisms along the southwest border and (2) DHS's efforts to assess its use of resources and programs to secure the southwest border.

My statement today is based on reports and testimonies we issued from September 2013 through February 2017 that examined DHS efforts to enhance border security and assess the effectiveness of its border security operations (see Related GAO Products at the end of this statement). Our reports and testimonies incorporated information we obtained by examining DHS's collaborative mechanisms established along the southwest border; reviewing CBP policies and procedures for coordinating use of assets; analyzing DHS data related to enforcement program and asset assists or instances in which a technological asset assisted in the apprehension of illegal entrants, seizure of drugs or other contraband; and interviewing relevant DHS officials. In addition, since 2013, we assessed the extent to which DHS and CBP have implemented recommendations by reviewing supporting documentation. More detailed information about our scope and methodology can be found in our reports and testimonies. We conducted all of this work in accordance with

generally accepted government auditing standards. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives. We believe that the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives.

DHS and CBP Have Established Collaborative Mechanisms Along the Southwest Border, but Could Strengthen Coordination of Predator B UAS Operations

DHS and CBP Have Implemented a Variety of Collaborative Mechanisms to Coordinate Border Security Efforts

DHS and its components have used various mechanisms over time to coordinate border security operations. In September 2013, we reported that the overlap in geographic and operational boundaries among DHS components underscored the importance of collaboration and coordination among these components.³ To help address this issue and mitigate operational inflexibility, DHS components, including those with border security-related missions such as CBP, Coast Guard, and ICE, employed a variety of collaborative mechanisms to coordinate their missions and share information. These mechanisms had both similarities and differences in how they were structured and on which missions or

³GAO, *Department of Homeland Security: Opportunities Exist to Enhance Visibility over Collaborative Field Mechanisms*, [GAO-13-734](#) (Washington, D.C.: Sept. 27, 2013). Among other things, we recommended that DHS take steps to increase its visibility over how collaborative field mechanisms operate. DHS concurred and implemented actions to collect information about the mechanisms.

threats they focused, among other things, but they all had the overarching goal of increasing mission effectiveness and efficiencies. For example:

- In 2011, the Joint Targeting Team originated as a CBP-led partnership among the Del Rio area of Texas, including Border Patrol, CBP's Office of Field Operations, and ICE. This mechanism was expanded to support the South Texas Campaign (STC) mission to disrupt and dismantle transnational criminal organizations, and its membership grew to include additional federal, state, local, tribal, and international law enforcement agencies.⁴
- In 2005, the first Border Enforcement Security Task Force (BEST) was organized and led by ICE, in partnership with CBP, in Laredo, Texas, and additional units were subsequently formed along both the southern and northern borders. The BESTs' mission was to identify, disrupt, and dismantle existing and emerging threats at U.S. land, sea, and air borders.
- In 2011, CBP, Coast Guard, and ICE established Regional Coordinating Mechanisms (ReCoM) to utilize the fusion of intelligence, planning, and operations to target the threat of transnational terrorist and criminal acts along the coastal border. Coast Guard served as the lead agency responsible for planning and coordinating among DHS components.

In June 2014, we reported on STC border security efforts along with the activities of two additional collaborative mechanisms: (1) the Joint Field Command (JFC), which had operational control over all CBP resources in Arizona; and (2) the Alliance to Combat Transnational Threats (ACTT), which was a multiagency law enforcement partnership in Arizona.⁵ We found that through these collaborative mechanisms, DHS and CBP had coordinated border security efforts in information sharing, resource targeting and prioritization, and leveraging of assets. For example, to coordinate information sharing, the JFC maintained an operations coordination center and clearinghouse for intelligence information. Through the ACTT, interagency partners worked jointly to target individuals and criminal organizations involved in illegal cross-border

⁴CBP developed and implemented the STC to identify and address current and emerging threats along the border in South Texas. The STC conducts targeted operations to disrupt and degrade the ability of transnational criminal organizations to operate throughout the South Texas corridor while it simultaneously facilitates legitimate trade and travel.

⁵GAO, *Border Security: Opportunities Exist to Strengthen Collaborative Mechanisms along the Southwest Border*, [GAO-14-494](#) (Washington, D.C.: June 27, 2014).

activity. The STC leveraged assets of CBP components and interagency partners by shifting resources to high-threat regions and conducting joint operations.

More recently, the Secretary of Homeland Security initiated the Southern Border and Approaches Campaign Plan in November 2014 to address the region's border security challenges by commissioning three DHS joint task forces to, in part, enhance collaboration among DHS components, including CBP, ICE, and Coast Guard. Two of DHS's joint task forces are geographically based, Joint Task Force – East and Joint Task Force – West, and one which is functionally based, Joint Task Force – Investigations. Joint Task Force – West is separated into geographic command corridors with CBP as the lead agency responsible for overseeing border security efforts to include: Arizona, California, New Mexico/West Texas, and South Texas. Coast Guard is the lead agency responsible for Joint Task Force – East, which is responsible for the southern maritime and border approaches. ICE is the lead agency responsible for Joint Task Force – Investigations, which focuses on investigations in support of Joint Task Force – West and Joint Task Force – East. Additionally, DHS has used these task forces to coordinate various border security activities, such as use of Predator B UAS, as we reported in February 2017 and discuss below.⁶

Collaborative Mechanism Participants Identified Practices that Enhanced or Served as Challenges to Collaboration

In September 2013, we reported on successful collaborative practices and challenges identified by participants from eight border security collaborative field mechanisms we visited—the STC, four BESTs and 3 ReCoMs.⁷ Their perspectives were generally consistent with the seven key issues to consider when implementing collaborative mechanisms that we identified in our 2012 report on interagency collaboration.⁸ Among participants who we interviewed, there was consensus that certain practices facilitated more effective collaboration, which, according to participants, contributed to the groups' overall successes. For example,

⁶GAO, *Border Security: Additional Actions Needed to Strengthen Collection of Unmanned Aerial Systems and Aerostats Data*, [GAO-17-152](#) (Washington, D.C.: Feb. 16, 2017).

⁷[GAO-13-734](#).

⁸[GAO-12-1022](#). We identified seven features of successful collaborative mechanisms: (1) Outcomes and accountability; (2) Bridging organizational cultures; (3) Leadership; (4) Clarity of roles and responsibilities; (5) Participants; (6) Resources; and (7) Written guidance and agreements.

participants identified three of the seven categories of practices as keys to success: (1) positive working relationships/communication, (2) sharing resources, and (3) sharing information. Specifically, in our interviews, BEST officials stated that developing trust and building relationships helped participants respond quickly to a crisis, and communicating frequently helped participants eliminate duplication of efforts. Participants from the STC, BESTs, and ReCoMs also reported that having positive working relationships built on strong trust among participants was a key factor in their law enforcement partnerships because of the sensitive nature of law enforcement information, and the risks posed if it is not protected appropriately. In turn, building positive working relationships was facilitated by another collaborative factor identified as important by a majority of participants: physical collocation of mechanism stakeholders. Specifically, participants from the mechanisms focused on law enforcement investigations, such as the STC and BESTs, reported that being physically collocated with members from other agencies was important for increasing the groups' effectiveness.

Participants from the eight border security collaborative field mechanisms we visited at the time also identified challenges or barriers that affected their collaboration across components and made it more difficult. Specifically, participants identified three barriers that most frequently hindered effective collaboration within their mechanisms: (1) resource constraints, (2) rotation of key personnel, and (3) lack of leadership buy-in. For example, when discussing resource issues, a majority of participants said funding for their group's operation was critical and identified resource constraints as a challenge to sustaining their collaborative efforts. These participants also reported that since none of the mechanisms receive dedicated funding, the participating federal agencies provided support for their respective representatives assigned to the selected mechanisms. Also, there was a majority opinion among mechanism participants we visited that rotation of key personnel and lack of leadership buy-in hindered effective collaboration within their mechanisms. For example, STC participants stated that the rotation of key personnel hindered the STC's ability to develop and retain more seasoned personnel with expertise in investigations and surveillance techniques.

In addition, in June 2014, we identified coordination benefits and challenges related to the JFC, STC, and ACTT.⁹ For example, DHS and

⁹[GAO-14-494](#).

CBP leveraged the assets of CBP components and interagency partners through these mechanisms to conduct a number of joint operations and deploy increased resources to various border security efforts. In addition, these mechanisms provided partner agencies with increased access to specific resources, such as AMO air support and planning assistance for operations. Officials involved with the JFC, STC, and ACTT also reported collaboration challenges at that time. For example, officials from 11 of 12 partner agencies we interviewed reported coordination challenges related to the STC and ACTT, such as limited resource commitments by participating agencies and lack of common objectives. In particular, one partner with the ACTT noted that there had been operations in which partners did not follow through with the resources they had committed during the planning stages. Further, JFC and STC officials cited the need to improve the sharing of best practices across the various collaborative mechanisms, and CBP officials we interviewed identified opportunities to more fully assess how the mechanisms were structured. We recommended that DHS establish written agreements for some of these coordination mechanisms and a strategic-level oversight mechanism to monitor interagency collaboration. DHS concurred and these recommendations were closed as not implemented due to planned changes in the collaborative mechanisms.

CBP Has Established Mechanisms to Coordinate Its Use of Predator B UAS, but Could Benefit from Documented Procedures for Coordinating its Predator B UAS Operations

In February 2017, we found that as part of using Predator B aircraft to support other government agencies, CBP established various mechanisms to coordinate Predator B operations.¹⁰ CBP's Predator B aircraft are national assets used primarily for detection and surveillance during law enforcement operations, independently and in coordination with federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies throughout the United States. For example, at AMO National Air Security Operations Centers (NASOC) in Arizona, North Dakota, and Texas, personnel from other CBP components are assigned to support and coordinate mission activities involving Predator B operations.¹¹ Border Patrol agents

¹⁰[GAO-17-152](#).

¹¹As of fiscal year 2016, CBP operated nine Predator B aircraft from four AMO NASOCs in Arizona, Florida, North Dakota, and Texas. CBP's Predator B aircraft are launched and recovered at its NASOCs in Sierra Vista, Arizona; Corpus Christi, Texas; and Grand Forks, North Dakota; while the NASOC in Jacksonville, Florida remotely operates Predator B aircraft launched from other NASOCs. CBP's Predator B aircraft are equipped with video and radar sensors primarily to provide intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance capabilities.

assigned to support NASOCs assist with directing agents and resources to support its law enforcement operations and collecting information on asset assists provided for by Predator B operations. Further, two of DHS's joint task forces also help coordinate Predator B operations. Specifically, Joint Task Force – West, Arizona and Joint Task Force – West, South Texas coordinate air asset tasking and operations, including Predator B operations, and assist in the transmission of requests for Predator B support and communication with local field units during operations, such as Border Patrol stations and AMO air branches.¹²

In addition to these mechanisms, CBP has documented procedures for coordinating Predator B operations among its supported or partner agencies in Arizona specifically by developing a standard operating procedure for coordination of Predator B operations through its NASOC in Arizona. However, CBP has not documented procedures for coordination of Predator B operations among its supported agencies through its NASOCs in Texas and North Dakota. CBP has also established national policies for its Predator B operations that include policies for prioritization of Predator B missions and processes for submission and review of Predator B mission or air support requests. However, these national policies do not include coordination procedures specific to Predator B operating locations or NASOCs. Without documenting its procedures for coordination of Predator B operations with supported agencies, CBP does not have reasonable assurance that practices at NASOCs in Texas and North Dakota align with existing policies and procedures for joint operations with other government agencies. Among other things, we recommended that CBP develop and document procedures for Predator B coordination among supported agencies in all operating locations. CBP concurred with our recommendation and stated that it plans to develop and implement an operations coordination structure and document its coordination procedures for Predator B operations through Joint Task Force – West, South Texas and document its coordination procedures for Predator B operations through its NASOC in Grand Forks, North Dakota.

¹²Joint Task Force – West, Arizona's area of responsibility includes Tucson and Yuma Border Patrol sectors. Joint Task Force – West, South Texas's area of responsibility includes Rio Grande Valley, Laredo, and Del Rio Border Patrol sectors.

DHS and CBP Could Strengthen Efforts to Assess Use of Resources and Programs to Secure the Border

Border Patrol Could Benefit From Improving Its Methodology to Assess Effectiveness of its Consequence Delivery System Program

In January 2017, we reported that Border Patrol agents use the CDS to classify each alien apprehended illegally crossing the border and then apply one or more post-apprehension consequences determined to be the most effective and efficient to discourage recidivism, that is, further apprehensions for illegal cross-border activity.¹³ We found that Border Patrol uses an annual recidivism rate to measure performance of the CDS; however, methodological weaknesses limit the rate's usefulness for assessing CDS effectiveness. Specifically, Border Patrol's methodology for calculating recidivism—the percent of aliens apprehended multiple times along the southwest border within a fiscal year—does not account for an alien's apprehension history over multiple years. In addition, Border Patrol's calculation neither accounts for nor excludes apprehended aliens for whom there is no ICE record of removal from the United States. Our analysis of Border Patrol and ICE data showed that when calculating the recidivism rate for fiscal years 2014 and 2015, Border Patrol included in the total number of aliens apprehended, tens of thousands of aliens for whom ICE did not have a record of removal after apprehension and who may have remained in the United States without an opportunity to recidivate. Specifically, our analysis of ICE enforcement and removal data showed that about 38 percent of the aliens Border Patrol apprehended along the southwest border in fiscal years 2014 and 2015 may have remained in the United States as of May 2016.

¹³GAO, *Border Patrol: Actions Needed to Improve Oversight of Post-Apprehension Consequences*, [GAO-17-66](#) (Washington, D.C.: Jan. 12, 2017). Under U.S. immigration law, an "alien" is any person that is not a U.S. citizen or national. See 8 U.S.C. § 1101(a)(3). According to the National Institute of Justice, recidivism refers to a person's relapse into criminal behavior, often after the person receives sanctions or undergoes intervention for a previous crime.

To better inform the effectiveness of CDS implementation and border security efforts, we recommended that, among other things, (1) Border Patrol strengthen the methodology for calculating recidivism, such as by using an alien's apprehension history beyond one fiscal year and excluding aliens for whom there is no record of removal; and (2) the Assistant Secretary of ICE and Commissioner of CBP collaborate on sharing immigration enforcement and removal data to help Border Patrol account for the removal status of apprehended aliens in its recidivism rate measure. CBP did not concur with our first recommendation and stated that CDS uses annual recidivism rate calculations to measure annual change, which is not intended to be, or used, as a performance measure for CDS, and that Border Patrol annually reevaluates the CDS to ensure that the methodology for calculating recidivism provides the most effective and efficient post apprehension outcomes. We continue to believe that Border Patrol should strengthen its methodology for calculating recidivism, as the recidivism rate is used as a performance measure by Border Patrol and DHS. DHS concurred with our second recommendation, but stated that collecting and analyzing ICE removal and enforcement data would not be advantageous to Border Patrol for CDS purposes since CDS is specific to Border Patrol. However, DHS also stated that Border Patrol and ICE have discussed the availability of the removal and enforcement data and ICE has agreed to provide Border Patrol with these data, if needed. DHS requested that we consider this recommendation resolved and closed. While DHS's planned actions are a positive step toward addressing our recommendation, DHS needs to provide documentation of completion of these actions for us to consider the recommendation closed as implemented.

CBP Collects Data that Could be Useful in Assessing How Border Fencing Contributes to Border Security Operations but Needs Metrics to Assess the Contribution to Its Mission

In February 2017, we reported on CBP's efforts to secure the border between U.S. ports of entry using tactical infrastructure, including fencing, gates, roads, bridges, lighting, and drainage.¹⁴ For example, border fencing is intended to benefit border security operations in various ways, according to Border Patrol officials, including supporting Border Patrol agents' ability to execute essential tasks, such as identifying illicit-cross border activities. CBP collects data that could help provide insight into how border fencing contributes to border security operations, including the location of illegal entries. However, CBP has not developed metrics that systematically use these data, among other data it collects, to assess the contributions of its pedestrian and vehicle border fencing to its mission. For example, CBP could potentially use these data to determine the extent to which border fencing diverts illegal entrants into more rural and remote environments, and border fencing's impact, if any, on apprehension rates over time. Developing metrics to assess the contributions of fencing to border security operations could better position CBP to make resource allocation decisions with the best information available to inform competing mission priorities and investments.

To ensure that Border Patrol has the best available information to inform future investments and resource allocation decisions among tactical infrastructure and other assets Border Patrol deploys for border security, we recommended, among other things, that Border Patrol develop metrics to assess the contributions of pedestrian and vehicle fencing to border security along the southwest border using the data Border Patrol already collects and apply this information, as appropriate, when making investment and resource allocation decisions. DHS concurred with our recommendation and plans to develop metrics and incorporate them into the Border Patrol's Requirements Management Process. These actions, if implemented effectively, should address the intent of our recommendation.

¹⁴GAO, *Southwest Border Security: Additional Actions Needed to Better Assess Fencing's Contributions to Operations and Provide Guidance for Identifying Capability Gaps*, [GAO-17-331](#) (Washington, D.C.: Feb. 16, 2017). Ports of entry are facilities that provide for the controlled entry into or departure from the United States. Specifically, a port of entry is any officially designated location (seaport, airport, or land border location) where DHS officers or employees are assigned to clear passengers, merchandise, and other items; collect duties; and enforce customs laws; and where DHS officers inspect persons seeking to enter or depart, or applying for admission into, the United States, pursuant to U.S. immigration law.

CBP Has Taken Actions to Assess the Effectiveness of Its Predator B UAS and Aerostats for Border Security, but Could Improve Its Data Collection Efforts

In February 2017, we found that CBP has taken actions to assess the effectiveness of its Predator B UAS and tactical aerostats for border security, but could improve its data collection efforts.¹⁵ CBP collects a variety of data on its use of the Predator B UAS, tactical aerostats, and TARS, including data on their support for the apprehension of individuals, seizure of drugs, and other events (asset assists). For Predator B UAS, we found that mission data—such as the names of supported agencies and asset assists for seizures of narcotics—were not recorded consistently across all operational centers, limiting CBP’s ability to assess the effectiveness of the program. We also found that CBP has not updated its guidance for collecting and recording mission information in its data collection system to include new data elements added since 2014, and does not have instructions for recording mission information such as asset assists. In addition, not all users of CBP’s system have received training for recording mission information. We reported that updating guidance and fully training users, consistent with internal control standards, would help CBP better ensure the quality of data it uses to assess effectiveness. For tactical aerostats, we found that Border Patrol collection of asset assist information for seizures and apprehensions does not distinguish between its tactical aerostats and TARS. Data that distinguishes between support provided by tactical aerostats and support provided by TARS would help CBP collect better and more complete information and guide resource allocation decisions, such as the redeployment of tactical aerostat sites based on changes in illegal cross-border activity for the two types of systems that provide distinct types of support when assisting with, for example, seizures and apprehensions.

To improve its efforts to assess the effectiveness of its Predator B and tactical aerostat programs, we recommended, among other things, that CBP (1) update guidance for recording Predator B mission information in its data collection system; (2) provide training to users of CBP’s data collection system for Predator B missions; and (3) update Border Patrol’s data collection practices to include a mechanism to distinguish and track asset assists associated with tactical aerostats from TARS. CBP concurred and identified planned actions to address the recommendations, including incorporating a new functionality in its data collection system to include tips and guidance for recording Predator B mission information and updating its user manual for its data collection

¹⁵[GAO-17-152](#). Tactical aerostats are relocatable unmanned buoyant craft tethered to the ground and equipped with video surveillance cameras. As of fiscal year 2016, CBP deployed six tactical aerostats sites along the U.S.-Mexico border in south Texas.

system; and making improvements to capture data to ensure asset assists are properly reported and attributed to tactical aerostats, and TARS, among other actions.

CBP Uses Other Assets to Provide Security at the Arizona Border, and Would Benefit from Reporting and Tracking Asset Assist Data

In March 2014, we reported that CBP had identified mission benefits for technologies under its Arizona Border Surveillance Technology Plan—which included a mix of radars, sensors, and cameras to help provide security for the Arizona border—but had not yet developed performance metrics for the plan.¹⁶ CBP identified mission benefits such as improved situational awareness and agent safety. Further, a DHS database enabled CBP to collect data on asset assists, instances in which a technology—such as a camera, or other asset, such as a canine team—contributed to an apprehension or seizure, that in combination with other relevant performance metrics or indicators, could be used to better determine the contributions of CBP’s surveillance technologies and inform resource allocation decisions. However, we found that CBP was not capturing complete data on asset assists, as Border Patrol agents were not required to record and track such data. We concluded that requiring the reporting and tracking of asset assist data could help CBP determine the extent to which its surveillance technologies are contributing to CBP’s border security efforts.

To assess the effectiveness of deployed technologies at the Arizona border and better inform CBP’s deployment decisions, we recommended that CBP (1) require tracking of asset assist data in its Enforcement Integrated Database, which contains data on apprehensions and seizures and (2) once data on asset assists are required to be tracked, analyze available data on apprehensions and seizures and technological assists, in combination with other relevant performance metrics to determine the contribution of surveillance technologies to CBP’s border security efforts. DHS concurred with our first recommendation, and Border Patrol issued guidance in June 2014 and Border Patrol officials confirmed with us in June 2015 that agents are required to enter this information into the database. These actions met the intent of our recommendation. DHS also concurred with our second recommendation, and as of September 2016 has taken some action to assess its technology assist data and other measures to determine contributions of surveillance technologies to its

¹⁶GAO, *Arizona Border Surveillance Technology Plan: Additional Actions Needed to Strengthen Management and Assess Effectiveness*, [GAO-14-368](#) (Washington, D.C.: Mar. 3, 2014).

mission. However, until Border Patrol completes its efforts to fully develop and apply key attributes for performance metrics for all technologies to be deployed under the Arizona Border Surveillance Technology Plan, it will not be well positioned to fully assess its progress in determining when mission benefits have been fully realized.

Chairwoman McSally, Ranking Member Vela, and members of the subcommittee, this concludes my prepared statement. I will be happy to answer any questions you may have.

GAO Contact and Staff Acknowledgments

For further information about this testimony, please contact Rebecca Gambler at (202) 512-8777 or gablerr@gao.gov. In addition, contact points for our Offices of Congressional Relations and Public Affairs may be found on the last page of this statement. Individuals making key contributions to this statement included Kirk Kiester (Assistant Director), as well as Stephanie Heiken, David Lutter, Sasan “Jon” Najmi, and Carl Potenzieri.

Related GAO Products

Southwest Border Security: Additional Actions Needed to Better Assess Fencing's Contributions to Operations and Provide Guidance for Identifying Capability Gaps. [GAO-17-331](#). Washington, D.C.: February 16, 2017.

Border Security: Additional Actions Needed to Strengthen Collection of Unmanned Aerial Systems and Aerostats Data. [GAO-17-152](#). Washington, D.C.: February 16, 2017.

Border Patrol: Actions Needed to Improve Oversight of Post-Apprehension Consequences. [GAO-17-66](#). Washington, D.C.: January 12, 2017.

Border Security: DHS Surveillance Technology Unmanned Aerial Systems and Other Assets. [GAO-16-671T](#). Washington, D.C.: May 24, 2016.

Southwest Border Security: Additional Actions Needed to Assess Resource Deployment and Progress. [GAO-16-465T](#). Washington, D.C.: March 1, 2016.

Border Security: Progress and Challenges in DHS's Efforts to Implement and Assess Infrastructure and Technology. [GAO-15-595T](#). Washington, D.C.: May 13, 2015.

Border Security: Opportunities Exist to Strengthen Collaborative Mechanisms along the Southwest Border. [GAO-14-494](#). Washington, D.C.: June 27, 2014.

Arizona Border Surveillance Technology Plan: Additional Actions Needed to Strengthen Management and Assess Effectiveness. [GAO-14-368](#). Washington, D.C.: March 3, 2014.

Arizona Border Surveillance Technology: More Information on Plans and Costs Is Needed before Proceeding. [GAO-12-22](#). Washington, D.C.: November 4, 2011.

This is a work of the U.S. government and is not subject to copyright protection in the United States. The published product may be reproduced and distributed in its entirety without further permission from GAO. However, because this work may contain copyrighted images or other material, permission from the copyright holder may be necessary if you wish to reproduce this material separately.

GAO's Mission

The Government Accountability Office, the audit, evaluation, and investigative arm of Congress, exists to support Congress in meeting its constitutional responsibilities and to help improve the performance and accountability of the federal government for the American people. GAO examines the use of public funds; evaluates federal programs and policies; and provides analyses, recommendations, and other assistance to help Congress make informed oversight, policy, and funding decisions. GAO's commitment to good government is reflected in its core values of accountability, integrity, and reliability.

Obtaining Copies of GAO Reports and Testimony

The fastest and easiest way to obtain copies of GAO documents at no cost is through GAO's website (<http://www.gao.gov>). Each weekday afternoon, GAO posts on its website newly released reports, testimony, and correspondence. To have GAO e-mail you a list of newly posted products, go to <http://www.gao.gov> and select "E-mail Updates."

Order by Phone

The price of each GAO publication reflects GAO's actual cost of production and distribution and depends on the number of pages in the publication and whether the publication is printed in color or black and white. Pricing and ordering information is posted on GAO's website, <http://www.gao.gov/ordering.htm>.

Place orders by calling (202) 512-6000, toll free (866) 801-7077, or TDD (202) 512-2537.

Orders may be paid for using American Express, Discover Card, MasterCard, Visa, check, or money order. Call for additional information.

Connect with GAO

Connect with GAO on [Facebook](#), [Flickr](#), [LinkedIn](#), [Twitter](#), and [YouTube](#). Subscribe to our [RSS Feeds](#) or [E-mail Updates](#). Listen to our [Podcasts](#). Visit GAO on the web at www.gao.gov and read [The Watchblog](#).

To Report Fraud, Waste, and Abuse in Federal Programs

Contact:

Website: <http://www.gao.gov/fraudnet/fraudnet.htm>

E-mail: fraudnet@gao.gov

Automated answering system: (800) 424-5454 or (202) 512-7470

Congressional Relations

Katherine Siggerud, Managing Director, siggerudk@gao.gov, (202) 512-4400, U.S. Government Accountability Office, 441 G Street NW, Room 7125, Washington, DC 20548

Public Affairs

Chuck Young, Managing Director, youngc1@gao.gov, (202) 512-4800, U.S. Government Accountability Office, 441 G Street NW, Room 7149, Washington, DC 20548

Strategic Planning and External Liaison

James-Christian Blockwood, Managing Director, spel@gao.gov, (202) 512-4707, U.S. Government Accountability Office, 441 G Street NW, Room 7814, Washington, DC 20548



Please Print on Recycled Paper.