



U.S. Immigration
and Customs
Enforcement

FACT SHEET

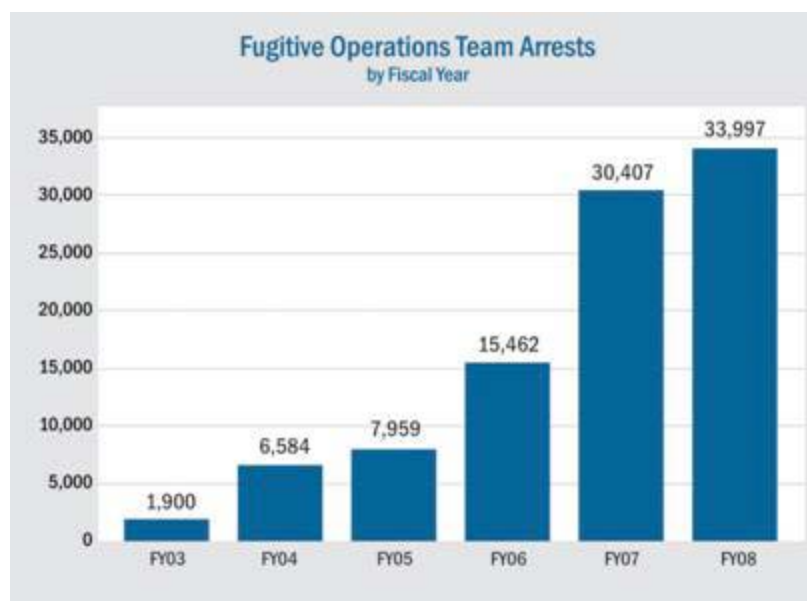
November 19, 2008

ICE Fugitive Operations

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) established the first Fugitive Operations Teams (FOT) in 2003 to dramatically expand the agency's efforts to locate, arrest and remove fugitives from the United States. An ICE "fugitive" is defined as an alien who has failed to leave the United States based upon a final order of removal, deportation or exclusion, or who has failed to report to ICE after receiving notice to do so.

ICE's fugitive operations agents give top priority to cases involving aliens who pose a threat to national security and community safety, including members of transnational street gangs, child sex offenders and aliens with prior convictions for violent crimes. The ICE FOT officers and agents use intelligence-based information and leads to locate and arrest aliens who have been ordered to leave the country by an immigration judge, but have failed to comply.

The National Fugitive Operations Program (NFOP) is responsible for reducing the fugitive alien population in the United States. ICE's databases show the targeted enforcement strategy is paying off as the nation's fugitive alien population continues to decline. At the end of FY 2008, there were approximately 558,000 fugitive alien cases—a decrease of nearly 37,000 since the beginning of the fiscal year. This is a historic reversal of the previous growth trend in fugitive cases.



Much of the credit for those results can be attributed to the rapid expansion of the program. When the initiative was launched in 2003, there were eight FOTs nationwide. Today, ICE has approximately 100 Fugitive Operations Teams deployed nationwide to pursue these types of cases. In FY 2008, those teams accounted for more than 34,000 arrests, more than double the total just two years ago.

Another key determinant of ICE's success in reducing the population of fugitive aliens has been the Fugitive Operations Support Center (FOSC), which was established in South Burlington, Vt., in 2006. Through the use of technology and partnerships with law enforcement agencies, the FOSC provides a specialized unit that analyzes the nature and characteristics of the U.S. fugitive alien backlog in ICE databases.

This effort has also aided in reducing the reported number of existing fugitives by reconciling records to eliminate those who have left the country voluntarily, successfully adjusted their status, or were discovered to be incarcerated and therefore are no longer fugitives.

The FOSC has screened and analyzed data associated with more than 180 National ICE enforcement initiatives, resulting in thousands of arrests. ICE's NFOP is just one facet of the Department of Homeland Security's overarching strategy to secure America's borders and reduce illegal immigration.

ICE

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement was established in March 2003 as the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security. ICE is comprised of five integrated divisions that form a 21st century law enforcement agency with broad responsibilities for a number of key homeland security priorities.