



Department of Justice

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FACT SHEET: DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE EFFORTS TO COMBAT MEXICAN DRUG CARTELS

WASHINGTON – The increased efforts and reallocation of personnel recently announced by the Department of Justice builds on the foundation of expertise and experience gained from ongoing efforts to combat Mexican drug cartels in the United States and to help Mexican law enforcement battle cartels in its own country.

BUREAU OF ALCOHOL, TOBACCO, FIREARMS AND EXPLOSIVES (ATF)

ATF is on the frontline in the fight against violent crime, particularly firearms trafficking and gun-related violence associated with organized gangs and drug trafficking organizations. Working in conjunction with domestic and international law enforcement partners, ATF's efforts deny the "tools of the trade" to the firearms trafficking infrastructure of criminal organizations operating in Mexico and along the border.

ATF is relocating 100 personnel to the Houston Field Division to support the new ATF intelligence-driven effort, known as Gunrunner Impact Teams (GRITs). The teams will focus ATF's violent crime-fighting and firearms trafficking expertise, along with its regulatory authority and strategic partnerships, to combat violence along the U.S.-Mexico border.

Project Gunrunner:

Cooperation among federal, state and local law enforcement agencies and the government of Mexico is the foundation of Project Gunrunner, ATF's national initiative to stem firearms trafficking to Mexico by organized criminal groups. Project Gunrunner has resulted in approximately 650 cases by ATF, in which more than 1,400 defendants were referred for prosecution in federal and state courts and more than 12,000 firearms were involved.

As part of the Recovery Act funding, ATF received \$10 million for Project Gunrunner efforts, aimed at disrupting firearms trafficking between the U.S. and Mexico, to include hiring 25 new special agents, six industry operations investigators (IOIs), three intelligence research specialists and three investigative analysts. The funding will

establish three permanent field offices, dedicated to firearms trafficking investigations, in McAllen, Texas; El Centro, Calif.; and Las Cruces, N.M (including a satellite office in Roswell, N.M.). Previously, approximately 148 special agents were dedicated to investigating firearms trafficking on a full-time basis and 59 IOIs were responsible for conducting regulatory inspections of federally licensed gun dealers, known as federal firearms licensees (FFLs) along the Southwest border.

As the sole federal agency that regulates FFLs, ATF's cadre of IOIs work to identify and prioritize for inspection those FFLs with a history of noncompliance that represent a risk to public safety; who sell the weapons most commonly used by drug trafficking organizations in the region; and have numerous unsuccessful traces and a large volume of firearms recoveries in high-crime areas. Along the Southwest border, ATF inspected approximately 1,700 FFLs in FY 2007 and 1,900 in FY 2008.

eTrace:

The cornerstone of ATF's Project Gunrunner is eTrace, which allows law enforcement agencies to identify trends of drug trafficking organizations. In 2008, ATF deployed eTrace technology to the nine U.S. consulates in Mexico to facilitate the paperless exchange of gun crime data in a secure Web-based environment. eTrace allows law enforcement representatives to electronically submit firearms trace requests, to monitor the progress of traces, to retrieve completed trace results and to query firearm trace related data in a real-time environment. In FY 2008, Mexico submitted more than 7,500 recovered guns for tracing, most of which were traced to sources in Texas, California and Arizona.

ATF has analyzed firearms recovered in Mexico from 2005-2008 and has identified the following weapons most commonly used by drug trafficking organizations: 9mm pistols; .38-caliber revolvers; 5.7mm pistols; .223-caliber rifles; 7.62mm rifles; and .50 caliber rifles.

ATF is developing a Spanish-language eTrace to make firearms tracing easier and more accessible to law enforcement partners in Mexico and Central America. ATF's goal is to deploy the system to all 31 states in Mexico, giving law enforcement a better picture of firearms trafficking routes, trends and organizations throughout both nations.

Training and Awareness Efforts:

In calendar year 2008, ATF trained more than 750 law enforcement officers from various Mexican federal and state agencies on firearms identification, firearms trafficking, firearms tracing, eTrace, explosives identification and post-blast investigation. With the assistance of ATF's Mexico City office and the Narcotics Affairs Section of the U.S. Department of State, ATF anticipates conducting numerous additional courses in these subject areas in 2009.

ATF will also concentrate training and industry awareness efforts on the Southwest Border. In partnership with the firearms industry association National Shooting Sports Foundation, ATF will conduct “Don’t Lie for the Other Guy” seminars in southern Texas, Arizona and California. The campaign educates licensed firearms dealers about the straw purchase of firearms, which is a federal felony offense, and helps them identify potential straw purchase transactions so they can confidently deny the sales.

ATF in Mexico:

ATF’s activities in Mexico are coordinated through the ATF attaché office located in Mexico City. ATF Southwest field divisions (Dallas, Houston, Los Angeles and Phoenix) have established border liaison special agent contacts with representatives from the Mexican Attorney General’s Office. The border liaisons meet regularly to coordinate firearms trafficking investigations. ATF has five personnel in Mexico at this time and will add an additional four personnel using a portion of the \$10 million that ATF received in stimulus funding. The Mexican Attorney General’s office also has a representative in ATF’s Phoenix Field Division.

DRUG ENFORCEMENT ADMINISTRATION (DEA)

In collaboration with Mexican law enforcement, DEA is actively working to systematically dismantle the cartels. As the largest law enforcement presence in Mexico with 11 offices, and a decades-long history of working with the Mexican government, DEA has a strategic vantage point from which to assess the drug trafficking situation in Mexico, the related violence, its causes and its historical context. DEA is placing 16 new positions in its Southwest border field divisions. With this increase, 29 percent of DEA’s domestic agent positions (1,180 agents) are now allocated to its Southwest border field divisions. DEA is also forming four additional Mobile Enforcement Teams (METs) to specifically target Mexican methamphetamine trafficking operations and associated violence, both along the border and in U.S. cities impacted by the cartels. MET Teams will be placed in DEA’s El Paso, Texas; Phoenix; Chicago; and Atlanta Field Divisions.

Shortly after Congress approved the Sensitive Investigative Unit (SIU) program in 1996, the Mexico City SIU was established, and DEA now works with a number of trusted counterparts throughout the country. DEA works closely with these vetted units to collect and analyze sensitive law enforcement information and to further the case development against and the prosecution of major drug trafficking organizations.

Working with Mexican counterparts, DEA and U.S. interagency partnerships have taken the offensive against Mexico-based cartels on their own turf and sought to systematically identify and dismantle U.S.-based cells of these Mexican cartels. Project Reckoning and Operation Xcellerator are recent examples of this U.S.-Mexico collaboration. Both actions were investigated and prosecuted in multiple Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Forces (OCDETF) cases, involving DEA and other OCDETF investigative agencies, state and local law enforcement, numerous U.S.

Attorneys' Offices, and the Department's Criminal Division.

Special Operations Division

The mission of the Special Operations Division (SOD), a multi-agency task force spearheaded by the DEA, is to establish seamless law enforcement coordination, strategies and operations aimed at dismantling national and international narco-trafficking, narco-terrorists and other criminal organizations by attacking their command and control structure. SOD is able to facilitate coordination and communication across and among multiagency networks with overlapping investigations to ensure that tactical and strategic intelligence is shared between all of SOD's participating agencies, including the U.S. Attorneys' Offices and various intelligence centers such as the El Paso Intelligence Center and the OCDETF Fusion Center.

Project Reckoning:

Project Reckoning was a 15-month operation targeting the Gulf Cartel and remains one of the largest, most successful joint law enforcement efforts ever undertaken between the United States and Mexico. Due to the intelligence and evidence derived from Project Reckoning, during 2008 the United States was able to secure indictments against Gulf Cartel leaders Ezekiel Antonio Cardenas-Guillen (brother of extradited Kingpin Osiel Cardenas-Guillen), Eduardo Costilla-Sanchez and Heriberto Lazcano-Lazcano, head of Los Zetas. Project Reckoning resulted in more than 600 arrests in the United States and Mexico, including 175 active Gulf Cartel/Los Zetas members, and the seizure of thousands of pounds of methamphetamine, tens of thousands of pounds of marijuana, nearly 20,000 kilograms of cocaine, hundreds of weapons, and \$71 million.

Operation Xcellerator:

Operation Xcellerator began in May 2007 from an investigation in Imperial County, Calif., and targeted the Sinaloa Cartel. Operation Xcellerator was recently concluded and resulted in more than 700 arrests, the seizure of more than \$59 million in U.S. currency, 1,200 pounds of methamphetamine, 12,000 kilograms of cocaine, 1.3 million ecstasy pills, three aircraft and three maritime vessels.

El Paso Intelligence Center (EPIC):

Led by the DEA, EPIC is a national tactical intelligence center that focuses its efforts on supporting law enforcement efforts in the Western Hemisphere, with a significant emphasis on the Southwest border. Through its 24-hour watch function, EPIC provides immediate access to participating agencies' databases to law enforcement agents, investigators and analysts. This function is critical in the dissemination of relevant information in support of tactical and investigative activities, deconfliction and officer safety. EPIC also provides significant, direct tactical intelligence support to state and local law enforcement agencies, especially in the areas of clandestine laboratory investigations and highway interdiction efforts.

EPIC's Gatekeeper Project is a comprehensive, multi-source assessment of trafficking organizations involved in and controlling movement of illegal contraband through "entry corridors" along the Southwest border. The analysis of Gatekeeper organizations not only provides a better understanding of command and control, organizational structure and methods of operations, but also serves as a guide for policymakers to initiate enforcement operations and prioritize operations by U.S. anti-drug elements.

Implementation of License Plate Readers (LPR) along the Southwest border has provided a surveillance method that uses optical character recognition on images that read vehicle license plates. The LPR Initiative combines existing DEA and other law enforcement database capabilities with new technology to identify and interdict devices being utilized to transport bulk cash, drugs, weapons, as well as other illegal contraband.

The National Seizure System (NSS) consists of seizure information relating to drugs, weapons, currency, chemicals and clandestine laboratory seizures reported to EPIC by federal, state and local law enforcement agencies from Jan. 1, 2000, to the present. The NSS database contains approximately 400,000 records of seizure events.

In support of the Bulk Currency Program, EPIC established a depository for detailed bulk currency seizure information from both domestic and foreign law enforcement agencies. In addition, EPIC analyzes volumes of bulk currency seizure data and develops various reports such as state link reports which are routinely sent to federal law enforcement agencies throughout the country to provide investigative leads. EPIC also responds to requests for bulk currency seizure data from agents and officers in the field.

The ATF Southwest Border Unit, which also houses the EPIC Gun Desk, serves as the focal point for the collection, analysis, and dissemination of weapons related investigative leads derived from federal, state, local and international law enforcement agencies.

DEA Work with Mexico

DEA and the Department of State, Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs have provided training to Mexican officials on a variety of investigative, enforcement and regulatory methods related to methamphetamine trafficking and enforcement. This training included instruction on clandestine laboratory investigations, precursor chemical investigations and drug identification. During FY 2008, 1,269 Mexican federal, state and local counterparts were trained. DEA has also donated eight refurbished trucks used in clandestine laboratory enforcement operations to Mexico.

DEA established a joint program with U.S. Customs and Border Patrol to monitor

and investigate the importation of precursor chemicals into the United States, headed for Mexico. The program targets containerized cargo consignments and air cargo.

U.S. MARSHALS SERVICE (USMS)

USMS has stepped-up its efforts along the Southwest border, deploying 94 additional Deputy U.S. Marshals during the last eight months and sending four additional deputies to Mexico City to assist the USMS Mexico City Foreign Field Office (MCFFO).

Twenty-five new Criminal Investigators-Asset Forfeiture Specialists have been placed in USMS asset forfeiture units in the field. The new positions are unique in that they will be solely dedicated to the USMS Asset Forfeiture Division and will support U.S. Attorneys' Offices and investigative agencies in investigations of cartels and other large-scale investigations.

International Fugitive Investigations:

The USMS Investigative Operations Division (IOD) coordinates international investigations with USMS-led district and regional fugitive task forces, and other U.S. law enforcement, and provides guidance and direction on the international process.

In FY 2008, the USMS opened 790 international fugitive investigations, with 303 fugitive cases sent to Mexico. Of these cases, 206 were investigated and closed. For FY 2009 to date, the USMS has opened 376 international fugitive investigations, with 143 fugitive cases sent to Mexico. A total of 120 arrests have been made in Mexico through March 31, 2009.

Foreign Fugitive Investigations:

Once a foreign fugitive is located, an investigation is conducted to determine if the fugitive is in the United States legally. In FY 2008, the USMS opened 707 foreign fugitive investigations, with 290 requests from Mexico. Sixty-six individuals were arrested and returned to Mexico. For FY 2009 to date, the USMS has opened 180 foreign fugitive investigations, with 69 requests from Mexico. A total of 37 have been arrested through March 31, 2009. There has been nearly a 250 percent increase in the number of fugitive arrests since 2003.

Mexico Investigative Liaison Program (MIL):

The Mexico Investigative Liaison Program (MIL) was created to address international fugitive matters along the Southwest border. The purpose of this district-based, cross-border violent crime initiative is to enhance the effectiveness of the USMS in the investigation and apprehension of U.S. fugitives located in Mexico and to coordinate the location and apprehension of foreign fugitives from Mexico.

The MIL currently has 33 Deputy U.S. Marshals assigned to the five Southwest border districts, as well as two adjoining USMS districts, who operate under the auspices of the MCFFO and Chief of Mission when conducting cross-border investigations. They were responsible for investigating more than 240 cross-border investigations and 50 arrests in 2008.

Mexico Foreign Field Office (MCFFO):

The MCFFO program helps to coordinate, support and train foreign law enforcement in an aggressive approach to apprehending and extraditing international fugitives – particularly those wanted in the United States – with special attention given to violent criminals and upper-level drug trafficking fugitives.

Located at the U.S. Embassy, the MCFFO is staffed by three full-time criminal investigators. Deputy U.S. Marshals in foreign field offices serve as the primary liaisons for fugitive investigations, provisional arrest warrants, extraditions and deportations, oversight of USMS cross-border investigations, and international law enforcement training.

The Marshals Service's chief law enforcement partners in Mexico are the Procuraduría General de la República (PGR-Mexico Attorney General's Office), the Agencia Federal de Investigación (AFI-Mexico Federal Law Enforcement Agency), the Instituto Nacional de Migración (INM-Mexico Immigration), and various state judicial police entities, including the Sonora State Police.

International Law Enforcement Training:

USMS will also enhance efforts under the International Training Program to meet the training needs of Mexican law enforcement agencies on the federal and state level, in the areas of fugitive apprehension, tactical operations, judicial security and dignitary protection, witness protection, prisoner custody, housing and transportation and asset forfeiture. The next two training classes are scheduled for April and May 2009. The USMS has been providing training to its Mexican counterparts since 2001.

Eighteen officers from the Instituto Nacional de Migración (INM-Mexico Immigration), a Special Unit from the Mexico State of Tamaulipas, and the newly-formed Secretaría de Seguridad Pública del Distrito Federal (SSP) in Mexico were trained as part of this program during a two-week fugitive investigative course sponsored by IIB and the USMS Southern District of Texas, Laredo Division.

Since the inception of the Mexico Fugitive Investigators Training Program in 2001, 185 law enforcement officers from Mexico have been trained in fugitive apprehension techniques. As a result, there has been a 240 percent increase in the number of cross-border fugitive felon arrests since the inception of the program.

Domestic Fugitive Investigations – Southwest Border Districts:

Currently, the USMS is the lead agency for 82 district-managed fugitive task forces, and seven Regional Fugitive Task Forces (RFTFs), including the following task forces in the five Southwest Border districts:

- The Pacific Southwest Regional Fugitive Task Force (Southern California)
- The District of Arizona High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA) Enforcement Agencies Task Force
- The District of New Mexico Southwest Investigative Fugitive Team
- The Western District of Texas Lone Star Fugitive Task Force
- The Southern District of Texas Gulf Coast Violent Offenders Task Force

The task forces operate in areas ranging from major metropolitan cities to rural, isolated areas along the Mexican border. Most of the district task forces operating directly on the Southwest border are partnered with all federal agencies and specifically support the Southwest Border HIDTA and the initiatives sponsored by the various partner agencies. These partnerships permit the USMS to act as a force multiplier well beyond the traditional fugitive apprehension role.

For FY 2009 to date, these five task forces have arrested 6,912 federal, state and local fugitives, including 208 alleged gang members, 143 individuals wanted for murder, 376 individuals wanted on weapons charges and 2,242 individuals wanted on narcotics charges. Through March 31, 2009, the five task forces have closed 8,335 warrants. They also have seized 114 firearms, 19 vehicles, more than \$84,000 in cash, and approximately 240 kilograms of narcotics. In FY 2008, these five task forces arrested 15,564 federal, state, and local fugitives, closed 19,157 warrants, and seized 267 firearms, \$648,333 in cash, and more than 2,730 kilograms of narcotics.

The USMS has apprehension authority for approximately 90 percent of all fugitives wanted under the OCDETF program, which is an important element of the Department's drug supply reduction strategy. Of the more than 7,200 active OCDETF warrants nationwide, more than 1,100 originate in the Southwest region. In FY 2008, the OCDETF Program along the Southwest border cleared 189 fugitive warrants. In FY 2009 to date, the OCDETF Program along the Southwest border has cleared 44 fugitive warrants.

The USMS task force network is supported by the Technical Operations Group (TOG), which provides critical, state-of-the-art electronic and air surveillance in fugitive investigations, judicial security investigations and protection details, and supports other USMS missions. To increase its intelligence-gathering capabilities, the TOG has designed a radio system in response to a critical needs assessment in the Southern District of Texas with plans to begin construction soon along the Texas-Mexico border.

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION (FBI)

The FBI is taking proactive measures to assess and confront this heightened threat to public safety on both sides of the U.S.-Mexico border, by creating a Southwest Intelligence Group (SWIG), which will serve as a clearinghouse of all FBI activities involving Mexico. The FBI will also increase its focus on public corruption, kidnappings and extortion relating to Southwest border issues.

In addition, the FBI is participating in multiple bi-lateral multi-agency meetings and working groups to hone strategies to address the problem. The FBI is well-equipped to deal with cartels, through established entities such as the National Gang Intelligence Center. The FBI has task forces throughout the country working to disrupt gang activity. The FBI's San Antonio division currently operates two Safe Street/Gang task forces addressing border violence in San Antonio, Texas, and the Rio Grand Valley.

In calendar year 2008, the FBI's offices in San Diego; Albuquerque, N.M.; Phoenix; El Paso, Texas; Houston; Dallas; Los Angeles; and San Antonio, Texas, maintained hundreds of Organized Drug Enforcement Task Forces Program (OCDETF) and criminal enterprise cases with a nexus to Mexican drug trafficking. The FBI has several hundred agents working these issues in these eight Divisions, resulting in thousands of arrests, indictments and convictions in FY2008.

The FBI has established six Border Corruption Task Forces focusing on drug and general border corruption tied to the southwest border, and is actively encouraging southwest border field offices to expand their use of Border Corruption Task Forces.

TAG Initiative:

The Transnational Anti-Gang (TAG) Initiative was developed and implemented in October 2007 to enhance cooperation, coordination and augmenting investigative capabilities between the FBI and law enforcement agencies in El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Mexico. The goal of the initiative is to aggressively investigate, disrupt and dismantle violent gangs whose activities rise to the level of criminal enterprises and who pose the greatest multi-jurisdictional threat.

Already, the TAG has seen successes, such as in September 2008, when TAG investigators arrested five MS-13 gang members who were transporting a cache of anti-tank weapons and military small arms. Also, FBI agents from Charlotte, N.C., worked with TAG investigators in actions that led to the indictment of 26 MS-13 gang members in June 2008, including Manual Ayala, who allegedly directed gang activities in the United States from his jail cell in El Salvador.

CAFÉ Initiative:

The Central American Fingerprint Exploitation Initiative (CAFÉ), a criminal file/fingerprint retrieval initiative, was developed by the MS-13 National Gang Task Force and the Policia Nacional Civil (PNC) to store criminal fingerprints of gang members from Chiapas, Mexico, and the Central American countries of El Salvador,

Guatemala, Belize and Honduras. This information is incorporated into the FBI's Criminal Justice Information Services database and is available to all U.S. local, state and federal law enforcement agencies. By incorporating these records into a searchable database, law enforcement agencies like the PNC can access the data through their own Automated Fingerprint Identification Systems.

Since 2006, the FBI has searched, processed and incorporated more than 72,000 criminal records from El Salvador, Guatemala, Belize, Honduras and Chiapas, Mexico, into the FBI's Integrated Automated Fingerprint Identification System.

CRIMINAL DIVISION

Office of International Affairs (OIA):

Mexico and the United States continue to make positive strides to increase the number of fugitives returned to the country where they committed serious crimes. Extradition records have been consistently broken for the past three years. In 2008, Mexico extradited a total 95 fugitives, 78 of whom were Mexican nationals, and 23 of whom were extradited for drug charges, to the United States. In addition, Mexico deported approximately 172 fugitives to the United States in 2008.

Extraditions from the United States to Mexico improved dramatically in 2008 as well. The United States surrendered 32 fugitives to Mexico in 2008, compared to 12 surrendered in 2007. Approximately 20 fugitives are currently undergoing extradition proceedings in U.S. courts.

In addition to achieving record numbers of extraditions from Mexico, OIA also increases the joint cooperation between Mexican and U.S. law enforcement authorities by responding to requests for mutual legal assistance from Mexico for evidence in hundreds of matters each year. OIA is represented at the U.S. Embassy in Mexico City by a Department of Justice attaché and deputy attaché.

Narcotic and Dangerous Drug Section (NDDS):

NDDS has a broad mission to combat domestic and international drug trafficking and narco-terrorism.

NDDS litigation unit attorneys prosecute those individuals and criminal organizations posing the most significant drug trafficking threat to the United States. NDDS attorneys recently indicted 17 members of the Gulf Cartel, including three leaders, for violations involving the extraterritorial manufacture or distribution of cocaine and marijuana destined for the United States. Also, in May 2008, NDDS attorneys were the first federal prosecutors to secure a conviction under the new narco-terrorism statute.

NDDS attorneys are responsible for the oversight of several classified projects, as well as the integration and dissemination of classified intelligence information to

domestic criminal prosecutions. These attorneys coordinate the efforts of law enforcement and prosecutors worldwide to maximize the Department's effectiveness against international narco-traffickers. NDDS attorneys assisted with the coordinated takedowns in Project Reckoning and Operation Xcellerator.

Merida Initiative:

The Merida Initiative was designed and presented to Congress as a U.S. interagency response to trans-border crime and security issues affecting the United States, Mexico and the countries of Central America. The Merida Initiative seeks to strengthen partner countries' capacities to combat organized criminal activities that threaten the security of the region. Merida assistance is focused three main areas: counter-narcotics, counterterrorism and border security; public security and law enforcement; and institution building and the rule of law.

Through the Criminal Division and law enforcement components, the Department is working now on Merida project planning, design, assessment and implementation. In fact, the Arms Trafficking Prosecution and Enforcement Strategy Session underway now is a bi-lateral Merida program, in which the Department of Justice, working with Mexican and U.S. interagency partners, played a substantial role in developing and presenting. Additional working-level assistance is anticipated to focus on effectively combating illegal arms trafficking.

The Department is working with Mexican counterparts on Merida projects designed to strengthen tracking and management of seized and forfeited assets; to enhance polygraph capability; and to review and strengthen internal integrity mechanisms. Additionally, the Department will be working with Mexican counterparts on prosecutorial capacity building programs; evidence collection, preservation and admissibility; forensics; extradition; and victim/witness protection.

Asset Forfeiture and Money Laundering Section (AFMLS):

AFMLS and its Mexican counterpart co-chair the Anti-Money Laundering and Asset Forfeiture SLEP sub-working group where cooperation to combat money laundering and enhance asset forfeiture cooperation between the countries is discussed. Most recently, AFMLS provided a detailed paper with comments on draft Mexican legislation that would allow for non-conviction based forfeiture in Mexico and would enhance Mexico's ability to cooperate on asset forfeiture matters with foreign countries, including the United States.

AFMLS is also working on a project to provide software and training to Mexican officials that will allow Mexico to better track and maintain assets it seizes and freezes so that it can maximize the value of those assets once it has lawfully forfeited them.

Office of Overseas Prosecutorial Development, Assistance and Training (OPDAT):

OPDAT has worked with Mexican counterparts since 2006 to develop greater collaboration and capacity in combating trafficking in persons. Most recently, an Assistant U.S. Attorney from Arizona has worked in Mexico City since October 2008 as an OPDAT Resident Legal Advisor (RLA) for Trafficking in Persons (TIP). The RLA is developing and coordinating workshops in collaboration with Mexican government officials and U.S. government partners (including DHS/ICE) to implement Mexico's newly passed anti-human trafficking law. Focus areas include greater cooperation between prosecutors and investigators on trafficking in persons cases; task force development concepts to include prosecutors, investigators, victim/witness specialists and members of relevant non-governmental organizations; and the importance of victim detection, rescue and protection in trafficking in persons cases.

The RLA has coordinated training for approximately 200 Mexican government officials in basic human trafficking law, victim identification, victim interviewing techniques, and trafficking case development. The Department and ICE have coordinated with the PGR to develop a training calendar for FY 2009, which includes more advanced trainings specifically tailored to human trafficking cases that focus on victim attention and assistance, evidence collection and preservation, crime scene management, and investigative techniques. Moreover, the RLA and ICE and the Government of Mexico regularly contact U.S. prosecutors regarding bi-national case coordination, as well as intelligence and information sharing related to ongoing investigations and prosecutions.

The Senior Law Enforcement Plenary (SLEP):

The SLEP is a U.S.-Mexico working group that consists of representatives from DHS, State Department and ONDCP, as well as DEA, FBI, USMS and ATF. SLEP working groups allow for information sharing between U.S. and Mexico representatives in the areas of: law enforcement and counternarcotics; interdiction; chemical controls; fugitives and legal issues; asset forfeiture and money laundering; organized migrant smuggling and trafficking in persons; arms trafficking; prisoner transfer; cyber and intellectual property crimes; and law enforcement training and technical assistance.

U.S. ATTORNEYS' OFFICES

The U.S. Attorneys' Offices in the five Southwest border districts are on the frontlines of the national effort to prosecute criminal offenses arising at the border with Mexico, including the prosecution of narcotics trafficking, gun-smuggling, violent crimes and immigration offenses. The U.S. Attorneys' Offices also coordinate with Mexican prosecutors to share evidence in appropriate cases to ensure that justice is achieved either in U.S. courts or in Mexican courts.

Each of the Southwest border U.S. Attorneys' Offices work closely with ONDCP and federal, state, and local investigative agencies in initiatives such as the multi-agency Border Enforcement Security Task Forces, OCDETF Strike Forces, HIDTAs, and the Gatekeeper Initiative to attack complex criminal organizations; Project Gunrunner to

reduce the smuggling of weapons across the border; bulk cash smuggling initiatives to restrict the flow of drug proceeds to Mexico; and the Border Fence Initiative, Tunnel Task Force, and maritime initiatives to detect illegal cross-border movement of people, drugs, money and guns.

ADDITIONAL PROGRAMS AND FUNDING

The Department's Office of Justice Programs and OCDETF will be investing \$30 million in stimulus funding to assist with state and local law enforcement to combat narcotics activity coming through the southern border and in high intensity drug trafficking areas. State and local law enforcement organizations along the border can apply for COPS and Byrne Justice Assistance grants from the \$3 billion provided for those programs in the stimulus package.

The OCDETF Fusion Center (OFC):

OFC is a comprehensive intelligence data center containing drug and related financial data. Through SOD, it provides critical support for long-term and large-scale investigations. OFC conducts cross-agency and cross-jurisdictional integration and analysis of drug related data to create comprehensive pictures of targeted organizations.

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