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## **UNITED STATES BORDER PATROL: GENERAL FACTS, MAIN TASKS, AGENTS' TRAINING**

**Abstract.** The article deals with the information about the US Border Patrol, its modern role and main tasks. The article gives a general review on the structure of the US Border Patrol and training of its agents.

**Key words:** border protection, border security, law enforcement agency, agents.

The Border Patrol (USBP) is a federal law enforcement agency of the United States of America. Its main missions are to detect and prevent illegal migrants, terrorists and terrorist weapons from entering the United States, and prevent illegal trafficking of people and contraband. The BP an agency within U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP), a component of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS). In its turn, U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) is the largest federal law enforcement agency of the United States Department of Homeland Security. This agency is charged with regulating and facilitating international trade, collecting import duties, and enforcing U.S. regulations, including trade, customs, and immigration. CBP is the largest law enforcement agency in the United States.<sup>[1][2]</sup> It has a workforce of more than 45,600 sworn federal agents and officers. It has its headquarters in Washington, D.C [1].

It should be mentioned that the U.S. Border Patrol was founded on May 28, 1924, as an agency of the United States Department of Labor to prevent illegal entries along the Mexico–United States border and the Canada–US border. The first Border Patrol station began operations in Detroit, Michigan in June 1924 [3]. A second station in El Paso, Texas began operations in July 1924. Additional

operations were established along the Gulf Coast in 1927 to perform crewman control to ensure that foreign crewmen departed on the same ship on which they arrived.

Later, in 1932 the Border Patrol was divided into two offices: Mexican border operations were directed from El Paso, Texas and Canadian border operations were directed from Detroit, Michigan. The Canadian border operations from Detroit employed more men than the El Paso operations along the Mexican border because of a focus on the prevention of liquor smuggling during prohibition. Following the outbreak of World War II in Europe, Border Patrol staffing doubled to 1,500 in 1940, and the INS was moved from the Department of Labor to the U.S. Department of Justice [2].

Additional stations were temporarily added along the Gulf Coast, Florida and the Eastern Seaboard during the 1960s after Fidel Castro triumphed in the Cuban Revolution and that was followed by the Cuban Missile Crisis. INS was decommissioned in March 2003 when its operations were divided between CBP, United States Citizenship and Immigration Services, and U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement [3].

In the wake of the attacks of September 11, the Border Patrol was placed under the of the Department of Homeland Security, and preventing terrorists and terrorist weapons from entering the United States was added to its main missions. The Border Patrol's traditional mission continued: deterring, detecting and apprehending illegal aliens and individuals involved in the illegal drug trade who generally entered the United States at places other than through designated ports of entry.

In 2012, the U.S. Border Patrol employed 21,394 agents. The 1,969 miles of Mexican international border was patrolled by 18,516 of those agents while 2,206 additional agents were responsible for patrolling the 5,525-mile Canadian international border; 224 agents were patrolling the coastal waters surrounding the Florida Peninsula and the island of Puerto Rico. Agents are assigned primarily to

the Mexico–United States border, where they control drug trafficking and illegal immigration [4].

The Border Patrol's priorities have changed over the years. In 1986, the Immigration Reform and Control Act placed renewed emphasis on controlling illegal immigration by going after the employers that hire illegal aliens. The belief was that jobs were the magnet that attracted most illegal aliens to come to the United States. The Border Patrol increased interior enforcement and Form I-9 audits of businesses through an inspection program known as "employer sanctions". Several agents were assigned to interior stations, such as within the Livermore Sector in Northern California.

Employer sanctions never became the effective tool it was expected to be by Congress. Illegal immigration continued to swell after the 1986 amnesty despite employer sanctions. By 1993, Californians passed Proposition 187, denying benefits to illegal aliens and criminalizing illegal aliens in possession of forged green cards, identification cards, and Social Security numbers. It also authorized police officers to question non-nationals as to their immigration status and required police and sheriff departments to cooperate and report illegal aliens to the INS.

In November 2005, the U.S. Border Patrol published an updated national strategy. The goal of this updated strategy is operational control of the United States border. The strategy has five main objectives:

1. Apprehend terrorists and terrorist weapons illegally entering the United States;
2. Deter illegal entries through improved enforcement;
3. Detect, apprehend, and deter smugglers of humans, drugs, and other contraband;
4. Use "smart border" technology;
5. Reduce crime in border communities, improving quality of life [3].

There are 20 Border Patrol sectors, each headed by a Sector Chief Patrol Agent:

*Northern Border (West to East):*

- Blaine Sector (Western Washington, Oregon, and Alaska.) - stations; Bellingham, Blaine, Port Angeles, Sumas.
- Spokane Sector (Eastern Washington State, Idaho and Western Montana) - stations: Oroville, WA; Curlew, WA; Colville, WA; Metaline Falls, WA; Bonners Ferry, ID; Eureka, MT; Whitefish, MT
- Havre Sector Eastern (Montana)
- Grand Forks Sector (North Dakota) Stations; Duluth MN, Grand Forks ND, Grand Marais, International Falls, Pembina ND, Portal, Warroad. Grand Forks is the only Sector to Deploy the new Resident Agent Program. This program was launched in late 2009 early 2010. The Resident Agent Program allows Border Patrol agents to work with Local, County, State, and other Federal Agencies to gain maximum effectiveness over such vast area.
- Detroit Sector (Selfridge Air National Guard Base, Michigan) - stations; Downtown Detroit, Marysville, Gibraltar, Sault Sainte Marie, Sandusky Bay.
- Buffalo Sector (New York) - stations; Buffalo, NY, Erie, PA, Niagara Falls, Oswego, Rochester, Wellesley Island.
- Swanton Sector (Vermont)(New Hampshire)
- Houlton Sector (Maine)

*Southern Border (West to East):*

- San Diego Sector, stations; Imperial Beach, Chula Vista, Brown Field, El Cajon, Campo, Boulevard sub-station, Temecula, and San Clemente (San Diego County, California)
- El Centro Sector, stations; El Centro, Calexico, (Imperial County, California) Indio, and Riverside (Riverside County, California)
- Yuma Sector (Western Arizona) - stations; Wellton, Yuma, Blythe

- Tucson Sector (Eastern Arizona) - stations; Ajo, Casa Grande, Tucson, Nogales, Sonoyta, Naco, Willcox, and Douglas.
- El Paso Sector (El Paso County, Texas and New Mexico) - stations; El Paso, Fabens (Clint), Fort Hancock, Ysleta, Alamogordo, Albuquerque, Deming, Las Cruces, Lordsburg, Santa Teresa, Truth or Consequences.
- Marfa Sector (Big Bend Area of West Texas) - stations; Alpine, Amarillo, Big Bend, Fort Stockton, Lubbock, Marfa, Midland, Pecos, Presidio, Sanderson, Sierra Blanca, Van Horn
- Del Rio Sector (Del Rio, Texas) - stations; Abilene, Brackettville, Carrizo Springs, Comstock, Del Rio, Eagle Pass North, Eagle Pass South, Rocksprings, San Angelo, Uvalde
- Rio Grande Valley Sector (Rio Grande Valley Area) - stations; Brownsville, Corpus Christi, Falfurrias, Fort Brown, Harlingen, Kingsville, McAllen, Rio Grande City, Weslaco
- Laredo Sector (South Texas) - stations; Cotulla, Dallas, Freer, Hebbronville, Laredo North, Laredo South, Laredo West, San Antonio, Zapata
- New Orleans Sector (Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, and West Florida)
- Miami Sector (Florida East and South)

*Caribbean:*

- Ramey Sector (Puerto Rico and U.S. Virgin Islands) - station; Aguadilla. It's the only Border Patrol Sector located outside the continental US [5].

Speaking about the system of training, it must be admitted that all Border Patrol agents spend a minimum of 13 Weeks at the Border Patrol Academy (if they are fluent in Spanish) in Artesia, New Mexico, which is a component of the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center (FLETC) [1]. Those who are not fluent in Spanish spend an additional eight weeks at the Academy for a total of 21 weeks. Border Patrol Agent Trainees are instructed in courses including; criminal law, nationality law, and administrative immigration law, police sciences, self-defense

and arrest techniques, firearms training with pistol, shotgun and rifle, police vehicle driving, and other Border Patrol / federal law enforcement subjects. Once they arrive back at their duty station, Trainees then must graduate from the Field Training Officer (FTO) program, an on-the-job training program, which varies in length from a minimum of 12 weeks to a maximum of over 16 weeks long, depending on the practical demands of the duty station and local management. They must also successfully complete the Post Academy Training Program, an extension of the Border Patrol Academy where Trainees complete additional classroom-based training over the course of their first nine months back at their duty station [2].

All in all, with over 21,000 agents, the U.S. Border Patrol still remains to be one of the largest law enforcement agencies in the United States.

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