

Executive Secretary

U.S. Department of Homeland Security
Washington, DC 20528



**Homeland
Security**

February 25, 2019

MEMORANDUM FOR: CAPT Hallock N. Mohler Jr.
Executive Secretary
Department of Defense (DoD)

FROM: Christina Bobb 
Executive Secretary
Department of Homeland Security (DHS)

SUBJECT: Request for Assistance Pursuant to 10 U.S.C. § 284

I. Overview

As the government department tasked with border security, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), through U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP), is requesting that the Department of Defense assist DHS in its efforts to secure the southern border. The Secretary has directed me to transmit this request for assistance to your attention. This memorandum supersedes the February 22, 2019 version.

In Section 102 of the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996, as amended (IIRIRA), 8 U.S.C. § 1103 note, Congress has directed DHS to construct border infrastructure in areas of high illegal entry to deter illegal crossing of both drugs and people into the United States. Pursuant to Section 102, DHS has identified the areas set forth in Section II below as areas of high illegal entry where CBP must take action (the Project Areas).

Within the Project Areas, DHS is experiencing large numbers of individuals and narcotics being smuggled into the country illegally. The Project Areas are also used by individuals, groups, and transnational criminal organizations as drug smuggling corridors. Mexican Cartels continue to remain dominant in these areas, influencing and controlling narcotics and human smuggling operations, within their respective strongholds.

DHS must use its authority under Section 102 of IIRIRA to install additional physical barriers and roads in the vicinity of the United States border in order to deter and prevent illegal crossings within the Project Areas. The construction of border infrastructure within the Project Areas will support DHS's ability to impede and deny illegal entry and drug smuggling activities within the Project Areas.

The Project Areas identified are adjacent to some of the most densely populated metropolitan areas of Mexico and are also home to some of the strongest and most violent drug cartels in the world. Deterring and preventing illegal cross-border activity will help stem the flow of illegal narcotics and entries in these areas. Similarly, the improved ability to impede, deny, and be mobile within the Project Areas creates a safer operational environment for law enforcement.

To support DHS's action under Section 102 of IIRIRA, DHS is requesting that DoD, pursuant to its authority under 10 U.S.C. § 284(b)(7), assist with the construction of fences roads, and lighting within the Project Areas to block drug-smuggling corridors across the international boundary between the United States and Mexico.

II. Capabilities Requested

Within the Project Areas there is existing vehicle fence and dilapidated pedestrian fencing. Vehicle fencing is intended to stop vehicles from illegally entering the United States, but can be climbed over or under by individuals. Pedestrian fencing is intended to prevent and deter individuals and vehicles from illegally crossing into the United States.

DHS requests that DoD assist in the execution of projects, within the Project Areas set forth below, to: (1) replace existing vehicle barriers or dilapidated pedestrian fencing with new pedestrian fencing; (2) construct roads; and (3) install lighting.

The new pedestrian fencing includes a Linear Ground Detection System, which is intended to, among other functions, alert Border Patrol agents when individuals attempt to damage, destroy or otherwise harm the barrier. The road construction includes the construction of new roads and the improvement of existing roads. The lighting that is requested has an imbedded camera that works in conjunction with the pedestrian fence. The lighting must be supported by grid power.

The segments of fence within the Project Areas identified below are situated on federal property. DHS will be responsible for securing, to the extent required, any other real estate interest or instrument that is required for project execution. In the event a real estate interest or instrument that is needed for project execution cannot be obtained for a segment of fence within a Project Area in a time frame that is within the requirements of this request for assistance, the segment may be withdrawn from this request. In addition, DHS will be responsible for any applicable environmental planning and compliance to include stakeholder outreach and consultation associated with the projects.

Project Areas:

II.A. El Centro Sector

Within the United States Border Patrol El Centro Sector (El Centro Sector) DHS is requesting that DoD assist by undertaking road construction, by replacing approximately 15 miles of existing vehicle barrier with new pedestrian fencing, and by installing lighting in the specific locations identified below.

The specific Project Area identified below is located in Imperial County, California and has been identified by the Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) as a High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA). Multiple local transnational criminal organizations known for smuggling drugs into Calexico from Mexico using a variety of tactics, techniques, procedures, and varying concealment methods operate in this area, including *Cartel De Jalisco Nueva Generación* (CJNG) as well as remnants of the *Beltran Leyva* Organization and *La Familia Michoacana* organizations. CJNG, based in Jalisco, was previously a faction of the *Sinaloa* Cartel. CJNG broke away from the *Sinaloa* Cartel and has become an established Mexican Cartel. The Mexican government has declared CJNG as one of the most dangerous cartels in the country.

Due to the close proximity of urban areas on both sides of the border, the El Centro Sector suffers from some of the quickest vanishing times – that is, the time it takes to illegally cross into the United States and assimilate into local, legitimate traffic. These quick vanishing times enable the illegal activities of transnational criminal organizations, whether they are smuggling people or narcotics.

Border Patrol's own experience with apprehensions between border crossings bears this out. In fiscal year 2018, there were over 29,000 apprehensions of illegal entrants attempting to enter the United States between border crossings in the El Centro Sector. Also in fiscal year 2018, Border Patrol had approximately 200 separate drug-related events between border crossings in the El Centro Sector, through which it seized over 620 pounds of marijuana, over 165 pounds of cocaine, over 56 pounds of heroin, and over 1,600 pounds of methamphetamine.

The specific Project Area is as follows:

- *El Centro Project 1:*
 - The project begins approximately 10 miles west of the Calexico Port of Entry continuing west 15.25 miles in Imperial County.
 - Start coordinate: 32.63273, -115.922787; End coordinate: 32.652563, -115.662399

II.B. Yuma Sector

Within the United States Border Patrol Yuma Sector (Yuma Sector) DHS is requesting that DoD assist by undertaking road construction, by replacing approximately 36 miles of existing vehicle barrier and approximately 6 miles of dilapidated pedestrian fencing with new pedestrian fencing, and by installing lighting in the specific locations identified below. The specific areas identified below are located in Yuma County, Arizona.

Yuma County has been identified by the ONDCP as a HIDTA. Of particular note is the operation of the *Sinaloa* Cartel in this area. The *Sinaloa* Cartel continues to be the most powerful cartel in the country and controls illicit networks and operations in the United States. Despite the arrest of Joaquin "El Chapo" Guzman-Loera, its narcotics business has continued uninterrupted. As a result, there have been no significant changes within the *Sinaloa* Cartel's hierarchy, or any changes in the illicit operations conducted by the *Sinaloa* Cartel.

Border Patrol's own experience with apprehensions between border crossings bears this out. In fiscal year 2018, there were over 26,000 apprehensions of illegal entrants attempting to enter the United States between border crossings in the Yuma Sector. Also during fiscal year 2018, Border Patrol had over 1,400 separate drug-related events between border crossings in the Yuma Sector, through which it seized over 8,000 pounds of marijuana, over 78 pounds of cocaine, over 102 pounds of heroin, over 1,700 pounds of methamphetamine, and over 6 pounds of fentanyl.

The replacement of ineffective pedestrian fencing in this area is necessary because the older, wire mesh design is easily breached and has been damaged to the extent that it is ineffective. Additionally, this area is notorious for border violence and narcotics smuggling. Furthermore, while the deployment of vehicle barrier in the Yuma Sector initially curtailed the volume of illegal cross-border vehicular traffic, transnational criminal organizations quickly adapted their tactics switching to foot traffic, cutting the barrier, or simply driving over it to smuggle their illicit cargo into the United States. Thus, in order to respond to these changes in tactics, DHS now requires pedestrian fencing.

The specific Project Areas are as follows:

- *Yuma Project 1:*
 - The project begins approximately 1 mile southeast of the Andrade Port of Entry continuing along the Colorado River for approximately 5 miles in Yuma County.
 - Start coordinate: 32.704197, -114.726013; End coordinate: 32.642102, -114.764632)

- *Yuma Project 2:*
 - The project involves the replacement of two segments of primary pedestrian fencing in Yuma Sector for a total of approximately 6 miles. This includes approximately 2 miles of fencing along the Colorado River.
 - Start coordinate: 32.37755528, -114.4268201; End coordinate: 32.3579244, -114.3623999;
 - The project also includes replacement of primary pedestrian fencing approximately 17 miles east of the San Luis Port of Entry, on the Barry M Goldwater Range, continuing east for approximately 4 miles.
 - Start coordinate: 32.51419938, -114.8011175; End coordinate: 32.49350559, -114.8116619

- *Yuma Project 3:*
 - The project begins approximately 0.4 miles east of the Barry M. Goldwater Range continuing approximately 31 miles east through the Cabeza Prieta National Wildlife Refuge in Yuma County.
 - Start coordinate: 32.232935, -113.955211; End coordinate: 32.039033, -113.33411

III.C. Tucson Sector

Within the United States Border Patrol Tucson Sector (Tucson Sector) DHS is requesting that DoD assist by undertaking road construction, by replacing approximately 86 miles of existing vehicle barrier with new pedestrian fencing, and by installing lighting in the specific locations identified below. The specific areas identified below are located in Pima, Cochise, and Santa Cruz Counties, Arizona.

Pima, Cochise and Santa Cruz Counties have been identified by the ONDCP as a HIDTA. The *Sinaloa* Cartel relies on their local associates to coordinate, direct, and support the smuggling of illegal drugs and aliens from Mexico to the United States. Since Arizona is contiguous with the U.S.-Mexico International Boundary, the Tucson and Phoenix metropolitan areas are major trans-shipment and distribution points for contraband smuggling. Plaza bosses operate as a *Sinaloa* Cartel leader within their specific area of operation along the Sonora-Arizona corridor of the U.S.-Mexico International Boundary.

Border Patrol's own experience with apprehensions between border crossings bears this out. In fiscal year 2018, there were over 52,000 apprehensions of illegal entrants attempting enter the United States between the border crossings in the Tucson Sector. Also in fiscal year 2018 Border Patrol had over 1,900 separate drug-related events between border crossings in the Tucson Sector, through which it seized over 1,600 pounds of marijuana, over 52 pounds of cocaine, over 48 pounds of heroin, over 902 pounds of methamphetamine, and over 11 pounds of fentanyl.

In addition, the absence of adequate pedestrian fencing, either due to the presence of vehicle barrier only or ineffective pedestrian designs, in the Tucson sector continues to be particularly problematic as it pertains to the trafficking of illegal narcotics. Rival transnational criminal organizations frequently employ “rip crews” who leverage the remote desert environment and lack of infrastructure to steal one another’s illicit cargo resulting in increased border violence.

The terrain also provides high ground to scouts seeking to protect and warn smuggling loads being passed through the area. Transnational criminal organizations have successfully utilized this advantage in furtherance of their illicit activity and for this reason the area is in need of an improved capability to impede and deny illegal crossings or people and narcotics. In addition, the area hosts a number of tourist attractions that allow illegal activity to blend into legitimate activity; avoiding detection and evading interdiction.

The specific Project Areas are as follows:

- *Tucson Project 1:*
 - The project includes replacement of two segments of vehicle barriers. The first segment begins approximately 2 miles west of the Lukeville Port of Entry continuing west approximately 30 miles.
 - Start coordinate: 32.038278, -113.331716; End coordinate: 31.890032, -112.850162
 - The second segment project begins approximately 3 miles east of the Lukeville Port of Entry and continues east approximately 8 miles in Pima County, Arizona.
 - Start coordinate: 31.8648, -112.76757; End coordinate: 31.823911, -112.634298

- *Tucson Project 2:*
 - The project includes approximately 5 miles of primary pedestrian fence replacement around the Lukeville Port of Entry extending from approximately 2 miles west of the port to approximately 3 miles east of the port.
 - Start coordinate: 31.8899921, -112.850162; End coordinate: 31.8648, -112.76757

- *Tucson Project 3:*
 - The project includes three segments of vehicle barrier replacement beginning approximately 18 miles west of the Naco Port of Entry and continuing to approximately 25 miles east of the Douglas Port of Entry (or approximately 5 miles west of the Arizona/New Mexico state line) for approximately 20 miles of non-contiguous vehicle barrier replacement in Cochise County, Arizona.
 - Start coordinate: 31.333754, -110.253863; End coordinate: 31.333767, -110.250286;
 - Start coordinate: 31.334154, -110.152548; End coordinate: 31.334137, -110.147464;
 - Start coordinate: 31.333995, -109.453305; End coordinate: 31.332759, -109.129344

- *Tucson Project 4:*
 - The project begins approximately 9 miles east of the Nogales Port of Entry and continues eastward for approximately 30 miles with approximately 26 miles of non-contiguous vehicle barrier replacement in Santa Cruz and Cochise Counties, Arizona.
 - Start coordinate: 31.333578, -110.79579; End coordinate: 31.333511, -110.775333;
 - start coordinate: 31.33328, -110.70545; End coordinate: 31.333602, -110.288665)
 - Note: An additional approximately 0.3 miles of new pedestrian fence could be built between the existing segmented vehicle barrier locations to fill existing gaps if appropriate real estate interest can be verified

- *Tucson Project 5:*
 - The project includes approximately 2 miles of vehicle barrier replacement beginning approximately 4.5 miles east of the Sasabe Port of Entry continuing east in six non-continuous segments for approximately 15 miles in Pima and Santa Cruz Counties, Arizona.
 - Start Coordinate: 31.460175, -111.473171; End Coordinate: 31.459673, -111.471584;
 - Start Coordinate: 31.453091, -111.450959; End Coordinate: 31.449633, -111.440132;
 - Start Coordinate: 31.440683, -111.412054; End Coordinate: 31.437351, -111.40168;
 - Start Coordinate: 31.423471, -111.358336; End Coordinate: 31.422541, -111.355444;
 - Start Coordinate: 31.42221, -111.354379; End Coordinate: 31.421321, -111.351608;

- Start Coordinate: 31.386813, -111.243966; End Coordinate: 31.385462, -111.239759)

II.D. El Paso Sector

Within the United States Border Patrol El Paso (El Paso Sector) DHS is requesting that DoD assist by undertaking road construction, by replacing approximately 70 miles of existing vehicle barrier with new pedestrian fencing, and by installing lighting in the specific locations identified below. The specific areas identified below are located in Luna, Hidalgo and Doña Ana Counties, New Mexico. Luna, Hidalgo and Doña Ana Counties have been identified by the ONDCP as a HIDTA.

There are three specific transnational criminal organizations of interest operating in the El Paso Sector - the *Sinaloa* Cartel as well as remnants of the *Juarez* Cartel and the *Beltran Leyva* Organization. In the El Paso Sector the *Sinaloa* Cartel employs a variety of tactics, techniques and procedures depending upon the terrain and environment to move drugs across the border. While the *Sinaloa* Cartel has a strong presence and control of territories at the flanks of the Sector, it does not have full control of the territory throughout the El Paso Sector. The *Juarez* Cartel, traditionally a major trafficker of marijuana and cocaine, has become an active member in opium cultivation and heroin production.

Border Patrol's own experience with apprehensions between border crossings bears this out. In fiscal year 2018, there were over 31,000 apprehensions of illegal entrants attempting to enter the United States between border crossings in the El Paso Sector. Also in fiscal year 2018, Border Patrol had over 700 separate drug-related events between border crossings in the El Paso Sector, through which it seized over 15,000 pounds of marijuana, over 342 pounds of cocaine, over 40 pounds of heroin, and over 200 pounds of methamphetamine.

Although the deployment of vehicle barrier in the El Paso Sector initially curtailed the volume of illegal cross-border vehicular traffic, transnational criminal organizations quickly adapted their tactics switching to foot traffic, cutting the barrier, or simply driving over it to smuggle their illicit cargo into the United States.

Thus, in order to respond to these changes in tactics, CBP now requires pedestrian fencing. Successfully impeding and denying illegal activities or transnational criminal organizations in this area is further complicated by the close proximity of New Mexico Highway 9 to the border. In some cases the highway is less than a half a mile, allowing illegal cross-border traffic to evade detection and apprehension and quickly vanish from the border area.

The specific Project Areas are as follows:

- *El Paso Project 1:*
 - The project includes 46 miles of vehicle barrier replacement beginning approximately 17.5 miles west of the Columbus Port of Entry continuing east in non-contiguous segments to approximately 35 miles east of the Columbus Port of Entry within the Luna and Doña Ana Counties, New Mexico.
 - Start Coordinate: 31.7837, -107.923151; End Coordinate: 31.783689, -107.679049;
 - Start Coordinate: 31.783672, -107.573919; End Coordinate: 31.783741, -107.038154

- *El Paso Project 2:*
 - The project includes 23.51 miles of Vehicle Barrier replacement in non-contiguous segments within Hidalgo and Luna Counties, New Mexico. The first segment begin approximately 5.1 miles east of the New Mexico/Arizona Border continuing east 4.55 miles.
 - Start Coordinate: 31.332323, -108.962631; End Coordinate: 31.332292, -108.885946;
 - The second segment begins approximately 3 miles west of the Antelope Wells Port of Entry to 3 miles east of the port of entry for 6.12 miles of Vehicle Barrier replacement.
 - Start Coordinate: 31.333368, -108.582412; End Coordinate: 31.333407, -108.47926;
 - The third segment begins approximately 20 miles west of the Columbus Port of Entry extending west 12.84 miles.
 - Start Coordinate: 31.783722, -108.182442; End Coordinate: 31.783708, -107.963193;

III. Technical Specifications

As set forth above, DHS requires road construction, installation of lighting, and the replacement of existing vehicle barrier or dilapidated pedestrian fencing with new pedestrian fencing within the Project Areas. DHS will provide DoD with more precise technical specifications as contract and project planning moves forward.

Given DHS's experience and technical expertise, DHS plans to coordinate closely with DoD throughout project planning and execution, to include review and approval of design specifications, barrier alignment and location, and other aspects of project planning and execution.

IV. Sequencing

The DHS request for assistance includes approximately 218 miles in which DHS requires road construction, the installation of lighting, and the replacement of existing vehicle fencing or dilapidated pedestrian fencing with new pedestrian fencing within the Project Areas. DHS requests that DoD's support under 10 U.S.C. § 284 address the requirements in order of priority as DoD resources allow. The DHS order of priority is as follows:

1. Yuma Sector Project 1
2. Yuma Sector Project 2
3. El Paso Sector Project 1
4. El Centro Sector Project 1
5. Tucson Sector Project 1
6. Tucson Sector Project 2
7. Tucson Sector Project 3
8. Tucson Sector Project 4
9. Yuma Sector Project 3
10. El Paso Sector Project 2
11. Tucson Sector Project 5

V. Funding

DHS requests that DoD provide the above-referenced border fences, roads, and lighting on a non-reimbursable basis as support to block drug smuggling corridors.

DHS will accept custody of the completed infrastructure and account for that infrastructure in its real property records.

DHS will operate and maintain the completed infrastructure.

VI. Conclusion

DHS requests DoD assistance under 10 U.S.C. § 284 to construct fences, roads, and to install lighting in order to block drug smuggling corridors in the Project Areas set forth above. The Project Areas set forth above are also areas of high illegal entry under IIRIRA § 102(a), and the requested fences, roads, and lighting will assist in deterring illegal crossings in the Project Areas.