

TRAINING MORE BORDER AGENTS

HEARING

BEFORE THE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON MANAGEMENT,
INTEGRATION, AND OVERSIGHT

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ONE HUNDRED NINTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

—————
MAY 24, 2005
—————

Serial No. 109-15

—————

Printed for the use of the Committee on Homeland Security



Available via the World Wide Web: <http://www.gpoaccess.gov/congress/index.html>

—————

U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE

23-097 PDF

WASHINGTON : 2005

For sale by the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office
Internet: bookstore.gpo.gov Phone: toll free (866) 512-1800; DC area (202) 512-1800
Fax: (202) 512-2250 Mail: Stop SSOP, Washington, DC 20402-0001

COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY

CHRISTOPHER COX, California, *Chairman*

DON YOUNG, Alaska	BENNIE G. THOMPSON, Mississippi
LAMAR S. SMITH, Texas	LORETTA SANCHEZ, California
CURT WELDON, Pennsylvania, <i>Vice Chairman</i>	EDWARD J. MARKEY, Massachusetts
CHRISTOPHER SHAYS, Connecticut	NORMAN D. DICKS, Washington
PETER T. KING, New York	JANE HARMAN, California
JOHN LINDER, Georgia	PETER A. DEFAZIO, Oregon
MARK E. SOUDER, Indiana	NITA M. LOWEY, New York
TOM DAVIS, Virginia	ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON, District of Columbia
DANIEL E. LUNGREN, California	ZOE LOFGREN, California
JIM GIBBONS, Nevada	SHEILA JACKSON-LEE, Texas
ROB SIMMONS, Connecticut	BILL PASCRELL, JR., New Jersey
MIKE ROGERS, Alabama	DONNA M. CHRISTENSEN, U.S. Virgin Islands
STEVAN PEARCE, New Mexico	BOB ETHERIDGE, North Carolina
KATHERINE HARRIS, Florida	JAMES R. LANGEVIN, Rhode Island
BOBBY JINDAL, Louisiana	KENDRICK B. MEEK, Florida
DAVE G. REICHERT, Washington	
MICHAEL MCCAUL, Texas	
CHARLIE DENT, Pennsylvania	

SUBCOMMITTEE ON MANAGEMENT, INTEGRATION, AND OVERSIGHT

MIKE ROGERS, Alabama, *Chairman*

CHRISTOPHER SHAYS, Connecticut	KENDRICK B. MEEK, Florida
JOHN LINDER, Georgia	EDWARD J. MARKEY, Massachusetts
TOM DAVIS, Virginia	ZOE LOFGREN, California
KATHERINE HARRIS, Florida	SHEILA JACKSON-LEE, Texas
DAVE G. REICHERT, Washington	DONNA M. CHRISTENSEN, U.S. Virgin Islands
MICHAEL MCCAUL, Texas	BENNIE G. THOMPSON, Mississippi <i>Ex Officio</i>
CHARLIE DENT, Pennsylvania	
CHRISTOPHER COX, California <i>Ex Officio</i>	

CONTENTS

	Page
STATEMENTS	
The Honorable Mike Rogers, a Representative in Congress From the State of Alabama, and Chairman, Subcommittee on Management, Integration, and Oversight	1
The Honorable Kendrick B. Meek, a Representative in Congress From the State of Florida, and Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Management, Integration, and Oversight	2
The Honorable Christopher Cox, a Representative in Congress From the State of California, and Chairman, Committee on Homeland Security	
Oral Statement	15
Prepared Statement	3
The Honorable Bennie G. Thompson, a Representative in Congress From the State of Mississippi, and Ranking Member, Committee on Homeland Security	17
The Honorable Donna Christensen, a Delegate in Congress From the U.S. Virgin Islands	20
The Honorable Sheila Jackson-Lee, a Representative in Congress From the State of Texas	47
The Honorable Michael McCaul, a Representative in Congress From the State of Texas	18
The Honorable Bill Pascrell, Jr., a Representative in Congress From the States of New Jersey	22
WITNESSES	
Panel I	
Chief Thomas Walters, Assistant Commissioner for Training and Development, Bureau of Customs and Border Protection, Department of Homeland Security	
Oral Statement	4
Prepared Statement	6
Mrs. Connie Patrick, Director, Federal Law Enforcement Training Center, Department of Homeland Security	
Oral Statement	8
Prepared Statement	10
Panel II	
Mr. T.J. Bonner, President, National Border Patrol Council	
Oral Statement	31
Prepared Statement	33
Mr. Gary Jackson, President, Blackwater USA	
Oral Statement	35
Prepared Statement	37
APPENDIX	
Questions for Mrs. Connie Patrick:	
Questions from the Honorable Mike Rogers	57
Questions from the Honorable Bennie Thompson	58

TRAINING MORE BORDER AGENTS

Tuesday, May 24, 2005

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON MANAGEMENT,
INTEGRATION, AND OVERSIGHT,
COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY,
Washington, D.C.

The subcommittee met, pursuant to call, at 2:04 p.m., in Room 210, Cannon House Office Building, Hon. Mike Rogers [chairman of the subcommittee] presiding.

Present: Representatives Rogers, Cox, McCaul, Meek, Thompson, Pascrell, Christensen, and Jackson-Lee.

Mr. ROGERS. [Presiding.] This Committee on Homeland Security's Subcommittee on Management, Integration, and Oversight, will come to order.

I want to thank our witnesses first for taking the time out of their schedules to be with us here today.

We are holding this hearing to examine how the Department of Homeland Security can hire and train 2,000 new Border Patrol agents. We are also interested in finding out how much this will cost.

Last week, under the leadership of Chairman Cox, the House passed the first Department of Homeland Security authorization bill. This legislation included specific authorization for the Department to hire the 2,000 Border Patrol agents.

In my view, all of these agents are necessary to help secure our borders, and they must be hired as quickly as possible. But it is also important to hear from the Department about its capacity to hire these new agents and determine exactly how much they will cost to train.

Recently, the subcommittee's Ranking Member, Mr. Meek, and I wrote Secretary Chertoff requesting a detailed breakdown of the cost involved in hiring and training new agents. We specifically asked about the cost of recruitment, salaries, training, lodging, meals, training facilities, instructors, and equipment, among other things.

Although the Department has not yet submitted its official response, DHS did submit some preliminary figures to us last Friday evening. We will explore those dollar figures with our witnesses today.

We will also discuss the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center and explore how many agents the facility can train per year. We would also like to hear about the Center's current training capacity and determine how much it will cost to expand the Center

to accommodate a significant increase in training. We need to ensure the best possible training for Border Patrol agents while safeguarding taxpayer dollars.

To address these issues, we are pleased to have on our first panel, Chief Thomas Walters, the Assistant Commissioner of Training and Development at the Bureau of Customs and Border Protection, and we will also hear from Director Connie Patrick, from the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center.

Our second panel will include Mr. T.J. Bonner, the President of National Border Patrol Council, and Mr. Gary Jackson, the President of Blackwater USA. Blackwater is a private tactical training firm that has trained over 50,000 law enforcement, military, and civilian personnel.

We thank you for being here and look forward to your testimony.

And with that, I will yield to my colleague from Florida, the Ranking Member, Mr. Meek.

Mr. MEEK. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to thank you for calling this hearing today on the DHS's ability to increase training capacity for Border Patrol agents.

And to our witnesses, I want to welcome you to the subcommittee also.

It was my pleasure to join you, Mr. Chairman, on the letter to DHS in an attempt to get real numbers for training Border Patrol agents. Recently, the Department provided an unofficial response, and in that response they stated that the cost was \$179,000 per person to train a civilian to be a Border Patrol agent.

Mr. Chairman, we need to take a serious look at that number. As an oversight subcommittee, we have the responsibility to make sure that the costs for training a Border Patrol agent conforms with the same and similar costs and time for other agencies.

But that kind of comparison only tells half of the story. To assess the training program, we cannot begin and end with an examination of cost alone. We must also look at the contents of training itself.

Mr. Chairman, it does not include the training assessment of the terrain and vulnerability of each part of the American landscape.

In addition to the Southwest, we must include the northern border, the Gulf of Mexico and the Florida Keys to ensure that the Border Patrol can protect every part of our borders.

Mr. Chairman, I hope our witnesses here today can explain how the new risks and vulnerabilities experienced by this nation and the great importance of border security have played in the role in the development of a training program that supports and promotes and facilitates the national Border Patrol strategy.

Mr. Chairman, if there is not a direct link between training and the Border Patrol strategy, then we have to do a lot of work in this subcommittee also working with the Department to protect the American people.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, the purpose of this hearing is to examine the federal law enforcement training capacity. Let me say from the outset that if we determine from this hearing that the capacity of the training system is not standing within principles of the Congress and what the American people deserve, then we should make sure again, Mr. Chairman, that we work with this agency in mak-

ing sure that we put forth the best training for these Border Patrol officers as much as possible and as soon as possible.

Again, I want to thank you, Mr. Chairman, for calling the hearing, and I look forward to hearing from our witnesses.

Mr. ROGERS. I thank the gentleman.

The Chair now recognizes the Ranking Member of the full committee, the gentleman from Mississippi, Mr. Thompson, for any statement he may have.

Mr. THOMPSON. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Like you and the Ranking Member, I am happy that we are here for this hearing. As you know, Border Patrol is our key front line support for protecting our borders.

As part of the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004, Congress authorized the hiring of 2,000 additional Border Patrol agents annually for fiscal years 2006 through 2010. Recently, this committee authorized \$1.9 billion for border security, including the hiring of 2,000 new Border Patrol agents in the 2006 DHS authorization.

The Border Patrol within the U.S. Customs and border protection at DHS, is responsible for patrolling the border areas of the United States between the ports of entry and preventing terrorists and terrorists' weapons as well as undocumented immigrants in cargo from crossing the border.

In a post-9/11 world, the Border Patrol is our first defense at the border against terrorists hoping to cross into this country and cause harm.

Mr. Chairman, the following priorities must be fulfilled if we are to adequately address this problem. First, the administration must employ more agents as well as consider increasing the number of administrative and support personnel so that the agents we have can do their job as trained. Second, it must use the technology necessary to monitor every mile of the border 24 hours and 7 days a week. And using technology, we must examine the force multiplier effect that technology can provide.

Lastly, most important, Mr. Chairman, this administration must have a comprehensive Border Patrol strategy. The Department of Homeland Security must develop a Border Patrol strategy that reflects the threats and vulnerabilities this nation faces from terrorists.

Today, the democratic staff will release a report that examines the failure of the current border security strategy. This report highlights the staffing and technology deficiencies in the administration's current border priorities. I hope that the report will allow the committee to better assess how we can help the men and women of the Border Patrol do their job of securing our nation's borders.

I want to thank you for calling this hearing, and I look forward to hearing from our witnesses today.

PREPARED STATEMENT BY THE HONORABLE CHRISTOPHER COX, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA, AND CHAIRMAN, COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Today's hearing is focused on the process and costs associated with hiring, training and otherwise preparing new Border Patrol agents. This is an especially timely hearing given that the Department of Homeland Security Authorization Act for 2006 was passed by the House of Representatives last

week, which authorizes funding for hiring an additional 2,000 Border Patrol agents next year.

America's vast land borders are the longest undefended and undisputed borders in the world. Our borders are the gateway for billions of dollars in commercial trade, as well as for millions of visitors. These same borders can be exploited by terrorists seeking to enter the U.S. or transport weapons of mass destruction. The homeland security presence must be intensified on the border to deter and apprehend potential terrorists.

With approximately 10,800 agents on board presently, the Border Patrol has limited ability to provide coverage and response capabilities along the entire border. Additional agents are an important factor in enhancing such security, although they are just one part of the broader border security strategy we must deploy.

As part of this hearing, Members will have an opportunity to gain a greater understanding of the process and costs of training Border Patrol agents at the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center (FLETC), as well as the effectiveness of the current training regimen in preparing these agents for defending the border against the terrorist threat.

With the hiring of thousands of new agents over the next several years, it is critically important that we make sure that such training is done in the most cost-effective manner possible. We also need to make sure that we are focusing on the right tasks.

On May 19, 2004, CBP Commissioner Robert Bonner gave a speech at the opening of the Border Patrol Academy in Artesia, New Mexico. The Commissioner highlighted new components of the training program, which included training on "sophisticated detection, sensing, and surveillance technology;" biometric training in IDENT and IAFIS; interrogation techniques; and other "anti-terrorism" training.

Customs and Border Protection also has an Anti-terrorism Training Team, which operates in D.C. and Laredo, Texas. In 2004, Border Patrol agents received training on detecting terrorist trends and fraudulent documents. The issue of terrorist travel has been a major focus of this Committee over the past two years, and I'm interested in learning more about what training is being provided in this area and how it is coordinated with FLETC training and other DHS programs.

I look forward to further discussing with each of our witnesses the existing training capabilities and the counter-terrorism skills that this training is instilling among the new agents, so that we can truly maximize the opportunities to prevent terrorists from entering the United States.

I'd like to thank our witnesses for their appearance today and look forward to their testimony.

Mr. ROGERS. I thank the gentleman.

Again, I want to say how pleased we are to have both of you here, very distinguished guests, and we know you are going to be very informative.

I would point out that your full statements will be submitted for the record. If you just want to provide a summary during these introductory remarks, that is fine.

And now the Chair calls the first panel and recognizes Chief Thomas Walters, Assistant Commissioner for Training and Development at the Bureau of Customs and Border Protection.

The floor is yours.

STATEMENT OF CHIEF THOMAS WALTERS, ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER FOR TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT, BUREAU OF CUSTOMS AND BORDER PROTECTION, DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

Mr. WALTERS. Thank you, Chairman Rogers, Ranking Member Meek and distinguished members of the subcommittee. I am here today to discuss the capacity of CBP and FLETC partnership to train the quality and quantity of new Border Patrol agents that are needed.

At the core of my comments today, and the reason we train, is the mission of the Border Patrol. Right now it is just after 1400

hours on Tuesday, May 24, and as I speak to you, somewhere out along the border there is a lone agent taking 5 or 10 or perhaps as many as 50 aliens into custody by herself.

In a large railroad yard somewhere along the border, north or south, another team of agents is dodging in-bound and out-bound trains while they cross the rails and climb up and down every car in a long trail of rail cars searching for every little hiding place in a freight train that will soon head into our nation's interior.

And as I speak to you, hundreds of agents are interviewing the aliens they have apprehended in the Spanish language and are making decisions about the status of those aliens under the immigration laws and other laws based on these Spanish language interviews.

Other agents are out there flying helicopters, some are checking electronic databases and some, having just noticed some recently turned over pebbles or crushed grass somewhere along the border fence, are preparing to use the tracking skills they learned over the years, and they will track groups of illegal entrants through the deserts or forests until they catch them.

By the way, as I speak to you, more than half of the 11,000 agents that wear the uniform are just now waking up and will soon be getting ready to report for duty for the work shift to cover the hours of darkness where most of our illegal incursions occur and while most of our citizens, including myself, will be resting comfortably at home.

It is my task to make sure new agents are prepared to operate in the exotic legal cultural and physical environments that exist along our borders, north and south, east and west. It is my job to establish and maintain the continuous communication and interactions between the training we deliver and the tasks in the operating environment and the new tools and new technology added to our inventory and the changes in law, policy and procedures and tactics and the new directions we get from DHS and CBP leadership.

We build our basic training according to the best practices established in the academic community. We use a formal instructional system design and evaluation process that begins with a careful and continuous examination and assessment of the tasks that are performed in the field. We train to task.

We test how well the trainee performs, and we test the effectiveness of our own training methods and our own instructors. We evaluate the overall effectiveness of our training by training's real gold standard: How effectively are new agents performing their duties in the operating environment?

We take our responsibility to train seriously, and our investment in training reflects that reality. Our basic training program for Border Patrol agents is an intensive 10-month formal training process, roughly divided in half between in-residence training at the Border Patrol Academy and a post-graduate program that includes classroom and on-the-job training in the Border Patrol sectors.

At the heart of our basic training philosophy is the importance of bringing experienced Border Patrol agents into the training process to give context and to give credibility to the subjects we present

and just as importantly to fuel the engine that makes the Border Patrol so effective in the many environments in which they work, and that engine is esprit de corps.

Our practice of bringing field agents to the Academy benefits the new trainees, but it is also a career development opportunity for the field agents as well. While on assignment to the Academy as instructors, field agents increase their knowledge and skills in the areas they teach, become better prepared to participate as sector instructors in the post-graduate portion of basic training and learn and get practical experience in supervision and leadership.

Since 1977, we have worked in partnership with the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center to ensure that Border Patrol training is done professionally and that the return on our basic training investment is a positive one. Because of the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center, CBP and other organizations participating in the FLETC do not have to devote resources to building and managing training facilities and acquiring related training services.

Because the Federal Law Enforcement Training exists, the participating organizations do not have to continuously open and close training facilities as missions and budgets evolve, and because the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center exists, CBP and the other participating agencies can access law enforcement expertise from other organizations as needed.

I thank the members for giving me the opportunity to address this subcommittee today and stand ready to respond to any questions you might have. Thank you.

[The statement of Mr. Walters follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF CHIEF THOMAS J. WALTERS

Chairman Rogers, Ranking Member Meek, and Distinguished Committee Members, I am honored to appear before you today to discuss the successes and challenges of training more Border Patrol agents and to increasing training capacity more effectively, as demonstrated by the operations and law enforcement initiatives of the Department of Homeland Security, Customs and Border Protection (CBP), and the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center.

CBP, as the guardian of the Nation's borders, safeguards the homeland—foremost, by protecting the American public against terrorists and the instruments of terror; while at the same time enforcing the laws of the United States and fostering the Nation's economic security through lawful travel and trade. Contributing to all this is the Border Patrol's time-honored duty of interdicting illegal aliens and drugs and those who attempt to smuggle them across our borders. We cannot protect against the entry of terrorists and the instruments of terror without also reducing illegal migration across our borders. *And this can only occur if Border Patrol agents are properly trained.*

CBP Border Patrol's National Strategy has made a centralized chain of command at Headquarters a priority and has increased the effectiveness of our agents by using intelligence driven operations to deploy our mobile resources. The Strategy recognizes that border awareness and cooperation with our law enforcement partners is critical. CBP is committed to creating the right combination of personnel, technology, and infrastructure to gain operational control of our borders. Recognizing that we cannot control our borders by merely enforcing at the "line," our strategy incorporates a "defense-in-depth" component, to include transportation checks away from the physical border as well as checkpoints. We will not be able to achieve control of the border unless our apprehensions demonstrate the futility of attempting to enter the United States illegally. The additional agents used to man these checkpoints, blended with infrastructure and technology, increase the probability of arrest of those who attempt to circumvent primary inspection at the checkpoint. Permanent checkpoints allow CBP Border Patrol to establish an important second layer of defense.

The foundation of our border enforcement effort is the uniformed officer in the field and the training he/she receives.

Training

DHS has established a comprehensive training plan for our CBP Officers, Agriculture Specialists, and Border Patrol Agents. Carrying out the Nation's homeland security mission requires a workforce with the necessary skills and proficiency to fight terrorist threats while effectively carrying out our traditional missions of interdicting drugs, intercepting illegal immigrants, and facilitating legitimate trade and travel.

BP Academy in Artesia, New Mexico

Commissioner Robert C. Bonner dedicated the New Border Patrol Academy in Artesia, New Mexico on October 21, 2004. The Federal Law Enforcement Training Center (FLETC) hosts the Border Patrol Academy. This training facility consolidates all Border Patrol training assets at a primary facility, thus creating a cost-efficient, totally encompassed learning environment with regard to Border Patrol agent education. In the past, Border Patrol agents were trained in several different locations, including New Mexico, Texas, Alabama, Georgia and South Carolina. FLETC was an instrumental partner in our consolidation effort and we continue to work closely with them on issues affecting the Border Patrol Academy.

The consolidation of educational assets and expertise at a centralized location is an extraordinary benefit to both the agents and the agency. The agents receive specialized training and the agency receives a higher caliber of employees.

The Border Patrol Academy is responsible for addressing the basic and advanced training needs for more than 11,000 Border Patrol agents nationwide. New Border Patrol agents must complete a rigorous, 19-week training program that includes courses in anti-terrorism, federal Immigration and anti-drug laws, criminal law and statutory authority, behavioral science, intensive Spanish language training, Border Patrol Operations, care and use of firearms, physical training and motor vehicle operations. The Academy's New Mexico location provides a unique environment similar to the Southwest border where many Border Patrol agents are initially assigned.

Combining all of our tested methodologies and best practices under one roof allows us to more effectively and efficiently provide an advanced training environment that enables our agents to reach that state of readiness, that state of professionalism their fellow agents can depend on in the field and, more importantly, the American people depend on at home.

After graduating from the basic academy, probationary agents are required to complete a post-academy course of study. The Post Academy Training Program is committed to the continued basic training development of probationary agents for the U. S. Border Patrol. The program is managed and coordinated by the Post Academy Coordinator. Post Academy schedules are developed and are used as a weekly guide for instructional topics and assignments. The Post Academy examinations are administered at two intervals after basic training graduation, during the 28th and 40th week of the trainee's service. The exams consist of two parts, both of which are taken at each of the two intervals: LAW—a comprehensive written exam in immigration, criminal, statutory, and nationality law; and SPANISH—a comprehensive combination oral and written Spanish exam, administered by a Post Academy Examination Review Board, upon completion of the law portion.

Another important part of our basic training is our use of practical exercises throughout a trainee's 19 weeks at the Academy. These exercises require trainees to practice observational skills and questioning skills, while applying their job knowledge of documentation requirements, immigration issues, checkpoint operations, and vehicle stops.

CBP realized it needed to unify and integrate its existing operations and workforce. While new officers and agents receive a wide range of intensive training during their first two years, journeyman agents complete training based on operational priorities and workforce needs.

Agents receive formal instruction at their stations in Non Intrusive Inspection (NII) devices, including personal radiation detectors, which are utilized at all Border Patrol checkpoints. This field training is being incorporated into the Basic Academy curriculum and should be in the classroom materials in Artesia very soon. Expedited Removal training has been a vital tool in addressing the increased smuggling of Other than Mexicans (OTMs). Classes have been implemented for agents, train-the-trainer, and supervisory training on signatory authority. This training has recently expanded and is occurring in selected areas throughout the Southwest border in an effort to disrupt OTM smuggling and increase the number of aliens removed.

One of the specific areas addressed in the 9/11 Commission Report was fraudulent documents training. Under our new curriculum, basic trainees receive fraudulent

document training at the Academy that culminates with a graded practical exercise during which trainees examine characteristics of unique documents and determine if the documents are genuine, counterfeit or altered. The course highlights fraud indicators that may be present in evaluating any document for authenticity. Security features of U.S. entry documents and imposter detection are emphasized as well. Additionally, Fraudulent Document training for all Border Patrol agents is being conducted with a 2-day Anti-Terrorism course. This course will build on the instruction given at the Border Patrol Academy that integrates CBP directives with the agent's job responsibilities as the first line of defense.

Immigration and Customs Enforcement's Forensic Document Laboratory (FDL) teaches a 3-day intensive train the trainer session for the CBP Office of Field Operations and CBP Office of Border Patrol on fraudulent document detection. The FDL assists our frontline officers with any forensic document analysis, provides training, and issues intelligence alerts about current fraudulent document trends as needed, and does so on a recurring basis. A Pocket Guide Reference on Document Security Features and Printing Techniques has been provided to all frontline officers. CBP constantly evaluates and adjusts training in the field to meet the current operational need.

CBP has participated in Master Exercise Practitioner (MEP) training conducted by FEMA. As certified MEPs, Border Patrol agents have worked with CBP Officers at the Ports of Entry and other agencies to develop and deliver tabletop, functional, and full-scale exercises designed to detect, deter, or respond to terrorist threats and incidents.

CBP developed a Counter-Terrorism Response (CTR) protocol and training to address questioning and detaining possible terrorist subjects. CBP also has a Detecting Deception and Eliciting Responses (DDER) Course which is advanced training in non-coercive interviewing techniques and includes a day of classroom lectures on such topics as Behavioral Analysis and Interviewing Strategies, followed by 2 days of CBP specific "role playing" exercises. The primary focus of the DDER course is to enhance questioning skills and to build upon the officers' arsenal of interviewing techniques while confronting potential terrorists. The Office of Training and Development is focused on expanding these courses throughout CBP as quickly as possible.

CBP Office of Training and Development is working to validate Supervisor Technical Training and other Leadership, Management, Executive, and Communications courses that Border Patrol staff currently use. This effort will assist CBP in building a more coherent program that benefits all facets of our agency.

Conclusion

We have made much progress to deny terrorists the ability to travel freely into the U.S., identify potential alien smugglers, and constrain the mobility of known and suspected terrorists. In addition to the initiatives described above, we are working aggressively with our international partners to improve standards for travel documents, enhance aviation safety and port security, and speed the exchange of terrorist identifying information. DHS understands that we must engage in a global effort each day, through collaboration, information sharing and ongoing dialogue to bring the weight of our collective law enforcement and intelligence capabilities to bear against those who seek to do us harm.

I would be happy to answer any questions you have at this time.

Mr. ROGERS. Thank you, Chief Walters.

The Chair now recognizes Ms. Connie Patrick, the Director of the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center.

Ms. Patrick?

STATEMENT OF CONNIE PATRICK, DIRECTOR, FEDERAL LAW ENFORCEMENT TRAINING CENTER, DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

Mrs. PATRICK. Thank you.

Good afternoon, Chairman Rogers, Ranking Member Meek and distinguished members of the subcommittee. It is a pleasure to be with you here today to discuss training more Border Patrol agents: How the Department of Homeland Security can increase training capacity most effectively.

Seated behind me are the senior managers of the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center who have joined me today in the first row here.

I want to acknowledge the generous support that the Congress has long extended to the FLETC. I stand ready to work with you and direct the FLETC toward successful completion of the objectives set forth by the administration and Congress in the protection of our nation.

The FLETC's primary mission is law enforcement training, and each dollar provided to the FLETC goes for the use and benefit of all the 81 federal agencies that participate as FLETC partners.

The FLETC was founded on two guiding principles: quality in training and economies of scale. Neither of these can be achieved without the cooperation of its partner organizations and the concept of consolidated training, which means shared training knowledge and experience, better use of available funds and law enforcement training uniformity and standardization.

During FLETC's 35-year history, more than 600,000 agents and officers across all three branches of government have graduated from training programs conducted at the FLETC. This training includes mandatory requirements and other core elements such as ethics, firearms, vehicle operations, physical training, and investigative skills and techniques.

A consolidated approach provides the opportunity to deliver high-quality training using state-of-the-art facilities, a permanent cadre of trained instructors, and consistency of training content and quality. The daily interaction and training of students from different agencies encourages networking and agency cooperation. In addition to the permanent cadre of trained instructors, partner organizations also assign instructors to FLETC on a rotational basis.

The congressional authorization of rehired annuitant authority has also helped to provide an optimum mix of instructional staff. This combination of permanent detailed and recently retired staff provide a balance of experience and fresh insights from the field.

Training at the FLETC is conducted via a long-standing shared funding concept. Our partners pay for their travel, their meals and lodging for their trainees, and FLETC provides for the cost of basic tuition through directed appropriations from the Congress.

This shared funding concept ensures that newly hired federal law enforcement agents and officers are assured a standardized training regardless of the size or responsibility of their employing agencies.

Mr. Chairman, with the creation of the Department of Homeland Security, we entered a new era in law enforcement. The FLETC is an example of the spirit of cooperation and consolidation intended by the DHS legislation.

The FLETC also provides critical state, local, tribal and international law enforcement training activities that compliment the mission to secure our homeland.

Under departmental leadership, FLETC works closely with all elements of the DHS as well as other departments and independent agencies with law enforcement authority. FLETC, as a component of DHS, supports unity of command and the coordina-

tion and efficiencies being sought in the public law that created the Department.

The FLETC continues to demonstrate the ability to rapidly respond to emerging needs in a fiscally responsible manner while maintaining the integrity and quality of training. For example, in fiscal year 2004, the Border Patrol requested consolidation of all of their training at the FLETC's Artesia, New Mexico facility. The Border Patrol and the FLETC worked cooperatively to accomplish this task within 90 days.

Also, following 9/11 the FLETC trained thousands of federal air marshals while significantly increasing training levels for all its other partner organizations. Over the years, FLETC has experienced periods of substantial growth in the training request by its partner organizations, and using innovation and imagination to maximize resources, these increases have been accommodated. That ability continues.

Temporary adjustments, such as extending the training work week from 5 days to 6 days and less than optimal lodging options provide significant increases to training capacity at the FLETC's Artesia facility.

FLETC successfully implemented the 6-day training week for over 2 years to meet the 9/11 training needs. However, extraordinary measures such as 6-day training weeks are difficult to sustain, take a toll on both staff and facilities and are costly.

In closing, let me assure you that DHS and FLETC are committed to providing the highest quality law enforcement training at the lowest possible cost. Substantial savings are being realized through the operation of consolidated training sites.

I also want to commend the remarkable staff at CBP Border Patrol and FLETC, as well as our partner organizations who have contributed so much to the success of consolidated training. Their enthusiasm, flexibility and talented assistants will continue to be of great benefit.

Mr. Chairman, we invite you or any member of the committee to visit any of the FLETC training sites.

And, Mr. Chairman and members of the subcommittee, this concludes my prepared statement, and I will be pleased to answer any questions you may have.

[The statement of Mrs. Patrick follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF CONNIE L. PATRICK

Good afternoon Chairman Rogers, Ranking Member Meek, and distinguished members of the Subcommittee. It is a pleasure to be with you today to discuss "Training More Border Patrol Agents: How the Department of Homeland Security Can Increase Training Capacity Most Effectively." Seated behind me are the senior managers of Federal Law Enforcement Training Center (FLETC) who have joined me today.

OPENING REMARKS

I want to acknowledge the generous support the Congress has long extended to the FLETC. I stand ready to work with you and direct the FLETC towards successful completion of the objectives set forth by the Administration and Congress in the protection of our national security.

The FLETC's primary mission is law enforcement training, and each dollar provided to FLETC goes for the use and benefit of all of the 81 federal agencies that participate as FLETC partners. The FLETC was founded on two guiding principles: quality in training and economies of scale. Neither of these can be achieved without the cooperation of its partner organizations in the concept of consolidated training,

which means shared training knowledge and experience, better use of available funds, and law enforcement training uniformity and standardization. During FLETC's 35-year history, more than 600,000 agents and officers, across all three branches of government, have graduated from training programs conducted at FLETC. This training includes mandatory requirements and other core elements, such as ethics, firearms, vehicle operations, physical training, and investigative skills and techniques.

The consolidated approach provides the opportunity to deliver high-quality training using state-of-the-art facilities, a permanent cadre of trained instructors, and consistency of training content and quality. The daily interaction and training of students from different agencies encourages networking and agency cooperation. In addition to the permanent cadre of trained instructors, partner organizations assign instructors to FLETC on a rotational basis. The Congressional authorization of required annuitant authority has helped to provide an optimum mix of instructional staff. This combination of permanent, detailed, and recently retired staff provides a balance of experience and fresh insights from the field. Training at the FLETC is conducted via a long-standing, shared-funding concept. Our partners pay for travel, meals, and lodging for their trainees; and FLETC provides for the cost of basic tuition through direct appropriations from the Congress. This shared-funding concept ensures that newly hired federal law enforcement agents and officers are assured of standardized training, regardless of the size or responsibility of their employing agencies.

Mr. Chairman, with the creation of the Department of Homeland Security, we entered a new era in law enforcement. The FLETC is an example of the spirit of cooperation and consolidation intended by the DHS legislation. The FLETC also provides critical state, local, tribal, and international law enforcement training activities that complement the mission to secure our homeland.

Under Departmental leadership, FLETC works closely with all elements of the DHS, as well as all other Departments and independent agencies with law enforcement authority. FLETC, as a component of DHS, supports unity of command and the coordination and efficiency themes sought in the public law that created the Department.

The FLETC continues to demonstrate the ability to rapidly respond to emerging needs in a fiscally responsible manner, while maintaining the integrity and quality of training. For example, in fiscal year 2004, the Border Patrol requested consolidation of all of their training at the FLETC's Artesia, NM facility. The Border Patrol and FLETC worked cooperatively to accomplish this task within 90 days. Also, following 9/11, the FLETC trained thousands of Federal Air Marshals while significantly increasing training levels for its other partner organizations.

Over the years, the FLETC has experienced periods of substantial growth in the training requests by its partner organizations. Using innovation and imagination to maximize resources, these increases have been accommodated; that ability continues. Temporary adjustments, such as extending the training work week from five days to six days and less than optimal lodging options, provide significant increases to the training capacity at the FLETC's Artesia facility. FLETC successfully implemented the six-day training week for over two years to meet the 9/11 training needs. However, extraordinary measures, such as a six-day training work week, are difficult to sustain, take a toll on both staff and facilities, and are costly.

CLOSING

In closing, let me assure you that DHS and FLETC are committed to providing the highest quality law enforcement training at the lowest possible cost. Substantial savings are being realized through the operation of consolidated training sites. We are also aware of the important opportunities and challenges that remain ahead.

I also want to publicly commend the remarkable staff at CBP, Border Patrol, and FLETC, as well as our partner organizations who have contributed so much to the success of consolidated training. Their enthusiasm, flexibility, and talented assistance will continue to be of great benefit.

Mr. Chairman, we invite you and any member of the Committee to visit any of the FLETC training facilities.

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Subcommittee, this concludes my prepared statement. I would be pleased to answer any questions you may have at this time.

Mr. ROGERS. Excellent. Thank you.

I want to thank both of you for your statements. I would like to start off with some questions.

In anticipation of this hearing, as I said in my statement, Ranking Member Meek and I inquired about these training costs. It has

kind of been a hard number for us to get our arms around exactly how much it costs to train the Border Patrol officers. All of us in the Congress are determined to make sure that we have—our Border Patrol officers have whatever training they need and that we do it right.

Now, having said that, we have gotten different numbers as to what it costs. We have been given a number by the Congressional Budget Office of \$150,000 per agent, by the Administration of \$175,000, by the Department of Homeland Security of \$179,000, and the homeland security appropriations bill had \$189,000. So you can see it goes anywhere from \$150,000 to right at \$190,000.

But for the sake of this hearing, since you are here, Chief Walters, we will use your number of \$179,000.

I find that number just staggering, frankly. As I understand it, it is a 5-week in-house training program, and from your statement I understand there is another—I am sorry, 5-month training program.

Mr. WALTERS. Right.

Mr. ROGERS. And there is another 5 months of field training; is that right?

Mr. WALTERS. That is correct.

Mr. ROGERS. When I thought about that number it just seemed so—because that does not include, as I understand it, any construction monies. That is just for the training. That is just incredible.

So I had my staff yesterday—as I was flying into Washington, it occurred to me that we should compare this to some costs that people can relate to. So I had my staff contact the Administration—or the Admissions Office at Harvard University to get the costs for room and board, tuition and fees, the whole shooting match at Harvard, and it is just under \$40,000 per year. And what that is telling me is that it is going to cost more to train a Border Patrol officer in a 10-month program than it is to get a 4-year degree at Harvard University.

Explain to me how that is, Chief Walters.

Mr. WALTERS. Okay. What that cost includes is to recruit, hire, and train. So the recruiting and hiring fees, of course, that is not something that Harvard would worry about. It also includes the equipment for a Border Patrol agent, one-third of a car, one pistol, the leather, the uniforms. It also includes an estimated rental for office space and a computer and all those other costs. We can at some future time satisfy you, I think, that this is a reasonable cost.

But it is expensive, and that is why DHS, the Commissioner, and the organization is looking carefully at the right mix of agents and infrastructure, agents and the tools that they use, things like helicopters and sensors and all those things that you have heard us talk about. It is a high number, and it is a number that has to be balanced, but I think we can satisfy you as to what our thinking has been in order to arrive at that number.

Mr. ROGERS. Well, I look forward to getting those details, because it does seem—you know, when you look at a GS-7 pay and assume that they came in at a GS-7, for the year that is \$38,000. A third of a car might be \$10,000. I mean, as I try to mentally go through the exercise of adding it up, it does not, so I do look forward to getting some details.

Ms. Patrick, I would like to ask you, at FLETC, are you at maximum capacity already on training Border Patrol officers, or could you absorb more if they were sent to you without any extra money?

Mrs. PATRICK. We could absorb—As far as our chokepoint right now at our dormitory, we could absorb more, but they would have to double bunk. We would have to add more bunks into a single room. But up to certain numbers we can absorb.

Mr. ROGERS. What would you estimate that number to be?

Mrs. PATRICK. Well, right now with the supplemental that was just provided with the extra 500, right now with their base of about 700 plus the 500 that were in the supplemental, right now we were funded and we can deal with the current, that would be 1,400. In addition to that, I have numbers—

Mr. ROGERS. But now in order to do that, you would need the money that was in the supplemental.

Mrs. PATRICK. Right.

Mr. ROGERS. The \$189,000 per agent.

Mrs. PATRICK. No. Actually, what was provided to FLETC for that was \$1,882,000.

Mr. ROGERS. For 500 more officers.

Mrs. PATRICK. For 500 more. And we can do that without any additional facilities.

Mr. ROGERS. Okay.

Mrs. PATRICK. But if you add to that, it will require some additional capacities that would be accomplished over about a year period of time.

Mr. ROGERS. But you could do those without any structural enhancements.

Mrs. PATRICK. Right.

Mr. ROGERS. Okay. My time is up. I look forward to more questions in a minute, but at this time I will yield to my Ranking Member, Mr. Meek, for any questions he may have.

Mr. MEEK. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I had an opportunity to read both of your statements prior to the meeting and I just wanted to let you know that this subcommittee meeting is very important to us all and I am pretty sure to the Department.

There is a great deal of concern about the training. No one really wants to criticize the integrity of the training. I know that it is at the highest level that it could possibly be. But at the same time, we are talking almost \$180,000 to train one individual, and I understand that that includes vehicles, room and board, support staff that I would like to talk further about because the information that I have seen does not support the increase in support staff as it relates to the training.

But has the training changed, and I do not know, Chief, maybe this is for you, has the training changed since 9/11 of adding additional training? That is one question.

Second question is, why does every Border Patrol officer, Customs and Border Patrol Protection officer have to go to one place for their in-service training versus a diversity of areas? Like I mentioned, the Florida Keys is a different kind of border there. The Gulf of Mexico, different kind of effort there. If you can answer those two questions, and I have one more for you before my time runs out.

Mr. WALTERS. Okay. The change for the Border Patrol Academy basic training curriculum, and advanced training curriculum, and the training we give to our incumbent officers, has been significant. We are a new agency now, we are CBP, we are not what we used to be. We have a new priority mission, which is preventing the entry of terrorists, and our training has changed to reflect that reality.

For instance, we have a new basic training block—8 hours of anti-terrorism for basic agents; and for our agents out in the field already, we have a 2-day anti-terrorism course for our Border Patrol course that is also delivered. Plus an 8 hours fraudulent documents class which goes to incumbent agents as well.

We have made other changes, and I can tell you in CBP, including the Border Patrol Academy, preventing the entry of terrorists' weapons is somewhere in virtually all of our training modules. Whether it is the law classes or the Spanish classes or the PT classes, all of that is in there.

Your second question was why CBP officers—.

Mr. MEEK. I will remember my second question in a minute—just joking. The second question was, why does the training—well, what—.

Mr. WALTERS. Why do they have to be located in just—.

Mr. MEEK. Why does it have to be located where it is located versus training throughout the United States, especially where we have illegal border entry? I mentioned the Florida Keys, I mentioned the Gulf of Mexico. Also you have the U.S. Canadian border where you have a number of these issues.

Mr. WALTERS. We get the best training for our advanced officers, those that have already gone through the training program, the basic training program, wherever we can find it. Sometimes it is at the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center, and sometimes it is other locations.

For instance, we send CBP officers, including Border Patrol agents, to a weapons of mass destruction identification school, and that is in Washington State. And we have small boat schools that we send people to, including the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center but also others in Florida. So it is not exclusive.

When we talk about the uniform Border Patrol agent refresher training in their core duties that have to do with really being a Border Patrol agent, not management or supervision, we do try and locate that all in a single location and that is because our basic training feeds our advanced training, and it has to be in close contact.

Mr. MEEK. Let me just, if I can, Chief and Director Patrick, let me just mention something real quick. I know that there is an overall training. How much does it cost to train a law enforcement officer just basic training, like \$23,000 or something? How much does it cost just for the basic training, not the advanced training that the Chief was talking about?

Mrs. PATRICK. For tuition for one student for the total program, \$8,734.

Mr. MEEK. Okay. That is to get their certification.

Mrs. PATRICK. That is their tuition cost.

Mr. MEEK. Tuition costs.

Mrs. PATRICK. Right.

Mr. MEEK. And that will get them their certification.

Mrs. PATRICK. Right.

Mr. MEEK. Okay.

Well, Mr. Chairman, I hope that we can have a second round. We do have a number of members here that are attending this meeting, but thank you very much for your response to my questions.

Mr. ROGERS. I thank the gentleman.

The Chair now recognizes the chairman of the full committee, to the gentleman from California, Mr. Cox.

Mr. COX. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This is an exceptionally important array of topics, and I am sorry we have just this afternoon to delve into some of them.

Let me begin, Mr. Chairman, where you left off and see if I can understand, either from CBP or from the FLETC standpoint, how these numbers for recruiting, training, and hiring break down.

Since you were providing the numbers for us, Mr. Walters, I wonder if I could ask you this question. What we are looking at right now is a combined figure for recruiting, training, hiring, all mixed together. If you wash out the recruiting and the hiring, what fraction is the training of that total figure?

Mr. WALTERS. I can say that the salary and benefits for a half a year, not just the pay of GS-7 but all the other pieces that we do, the retirement and the—

Mr. COX. Yes, I am just interested in the training figure, which would not, presumably, include any salary or benefits.

Mr. WALTERS. The basic agent training piece for us is \$23,118, and that is the one-each cost, and that is things like the supplies and the bill-backs or the reimbursables we do with the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center. We order printing, they do the printing, we reimburse them for the printing, and that is sort of a one-each cost. That is what the \$23,000 each represents.

Mr. COX. So is it fair to say that the \$20,000 represents the training figure? Is that your answer to my question?

Mr. WALTERS. There is more to that figure. That is the basic one-each cost.

Mr. COX. Of the—

Mr. WALTERS. It does not include the instruction costs.

Mr. COX.—\$179,000 combined figure that you provided to the committee for recruiting, hiring, and training, what portion would be the training?

Mr. WALTERS. You are correct. The \$23,118 is the training portion of that \$179,000 figure.

Mr. COX. All right. And just to make sure that we are clear, I will do a little quick math and subtract \$23,000 from \$179,000 and get \$156,000. The amount for recruiting and hiring sum to \$156,000; is that right? That would be true if \$23,000 is the training figure.

Mr. WALTERS. The full cost of recruit, hire and train is \$179,000.

Mr. COX. Right.

Mr. WALTERS. So what you are doing is backing out the \$23,000 as training and saying that is other than the training costs. Is that—

Mr. COX. I am trying to check my math and make sure that we are agreed that the cost of training is \$23,000, which would leave us with \$156,000 remaining that we would allocate either to recruiting or to hiring.

Mr. WALTERS. That is one way of looking at it, yes, sir.

Mr. COX. And is that accurate?

Mr. WALTERS. That is accurate according to the spreadsheet if you divide the \$179,000. And that training, of course—I do not want to sound overly burdensome on this, but you cannot train unless you recruit and hire.

Mr. COX. All right. And that is where I am going next. Now, of the \$156,000, how much is recruiting?

Mr. WALTERS. The recruiting, pre-employment, background investigation, the medical, sending Border Patrol agents through the oral interviews, doing the recording of the applicants' application and tracking that is \$33,645.

Mr. COX. Thirty-three point six, so we will call that \$34,000. And then I will do some more quick math and subtract \$34,000 from \$156,000 and I get \$122,000. So are we then agreed that the \$122,000 figure applies to hiring?

Mr. WALTERS. Yes.

Mr. COX. All right. And what is embedded in the \$122,000 that we are calling the hiring costs?

Mr. WALTERS. The salary and benefits is another?

Mr. COX. The salary for 1 year?

Mr. WALTERS. It is a half-year salary and benefits.

Mr. COX. Half-year. Okay.

Mr. WALTERS. And that is \$56,700, so round off to \$57,000.

Mr. COX. The first-year starting salary for a Border Patrol agent is two times \$56.7K?

Mr. WALTERS. Yes. That is the salary and the benefits.

Mr. COX. Okay. And then that leaves us with \$122,000 minus \$57,000, \$65,000. And what is the rest of the \$65,000, hiring costs?

Mr. WALTERS. We provide equipment at \$45,000 each and other support, which is an aggregate cost of things like a computer, a telephone, X amount of square footage of office space, some portion of furniture and those kinds of issues, one each, for a Border Patrol agent.

Mr. COX. All right. So by far the largest cost is the hiring costs, and the hiring costs include, if I were an accountant, what I would call full costs for all allocable overhead—certain square footage of the offices desks, computers, et cetera. So we are not missing anything when we look at that \$122,000 figure for hiring. That is the full cost, right?

Mr. WALTERS. For the hiring piece, yes, sir.

Mr. COX. All right. And so to get back to the Chairman's initial concern about the training costs and comparing it to Harvard University and so on, it really is not as bad it looks because it really costs \$23,000 to train; is that right?

Mr. WALTERS. That is one way to perceive it, yes, sir.

Mr. COX. All right. Well, I see that my time is expired. I am happy to return to this, but at least we have got some of our basic assumptions nailed down.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. ROGERS. I thank the gentleman.

The Chair now recognizes the Ranking Member of the full committee, Mr. Thompson, for any questions.

Mr. THOMPSON. Thank you very much.

Ms. Patrick, how many different agents do you train on behalf of—

Mrs. PATRICK. We train 81 federal agencies as well as state, local, and tribal agencies.

Mr. THOMPSON. I know it will be time-consuming but can you provide us the training costs to this committee of each one of those agencies?

Mrs. PATRICK. I can.

Mr. THOMPSON. So we can look at the numbers?

Mrs. PATRICK. I could. I will.

Mr. THOMPSON. Is it standard and do you include salaries and other things in the cost of the other agencies also?

Mrs. PATRICK. No. Actually, our instructors, the shared costs that I mentioned in my remarks, we determine how many instructors it will take, and we provide half of those instructors. So if it requires additional staff, then we would have to determine what that would cost FLETC to provide the training, and that would be an expense that FLETC would need to bear for the cost of providing the training.

But with our permanent staff, which our total cadre is around 1,000 employees, we would actually, and I would have to get the exact number of trainers that we have, but currently we can meet with the Border Patrol—we can meet the numbers that have been provided so far with just the supplemental and their base, 700 plus the 500, with the existing staff that we have.

Anything in addition to that we would have to determine exactly how much we would have to provide, and then we would have to provide you what the added number of instructors would be.

Mr. THOMPSON. Well, if we now say that we will train 2,000 additional Border Patrol agents, do you have capacity to provide that training?

Mrs. PATRICK. We do. There are a few things that we would have to do if we were going to reach the 2,000 number in addition to what we are already doing with the supplemental. We had to build some capacity for sewage, just the infrastructure with the city that we have had to do that and some IT adjustments, and that was just to deal with the supplemental. But if the numbers were to go to the 2,000 mark, we could, in the short term, we can double bunk our—chokepoint our dormitories. We could double bunk.

Now, we could actually go outside to nearby communities, Carlsbad and Roswell, and use housing in the economy, but, idealistically, when you have basic training students, it is better to house them in close proximity to one another and near the facilities. And over the long term, we would have to build additional capacity in the dormitories to accommodate 2,000.

Mr. THOMPSON. Mr. Walters, from your perspective, do you get feedback from agents that they have been trained for one job but when they get on the job they are required to do jobs for which they have not been trained for?

Mr. WALTERS. I do not get that feedback.

Mr. THOMPSON. So it is your testimony here today that to your knowledge every Border Patrol agent that you know of is only doing Border Patrol work that he was trained. They are not doing auto mechanic work, they are not doing administrative work over and above whatever is required for Border Patrol agents.

Mr. WALTERS. Oh, no, sir, I cannot say that. I did not mean to intimate that. It is clear to me based on my experience and what I know today that Border Patrol agents do whatever it takes to get the job done, and sometimes they do those kinds of administrative tasks in order to get the mission accomplished. We try not to do it that way on the Border Patrol side of the house. Sometimes we do it that way, because we do not have enough support staff in all the right places, at all the right times, on every occasion to get it done the right way.

Mr. THOMPSON. So you are now saying you do know that they are doing something beyond what they have been trained to do, because it is getting the job done.

Mr. WALTERS. Yes, sir. I understood your first question to be, are Border Patrol agents coming to me and saying, "I am not trained to do welding or I am not trained to do administrative work," and I have not heard that, but in fact I do know that they are doing that kind of work when they are pressed to do that.

Mr. THOMPSON. So now that you know that, what have you done in your capacity to change that?

Mr. WALTERS. Well, since we became an organization in CBP and we united all the different pieces together, we have looked hard at how to best structure the Border Patrol, and that is an ongoing process right now. What is the right level of infrastructure, administrative support and those kinds of things that lets the Border Patrol agent be a good Border Patrol agent and focus on those tasks and not focus on other tasks. That is clearly an exercise that has been going on for a little while.

We did not have it right when we were on the other side of the house in INS. We are trying to get there. I do not think we are there yet, but I think we are on the way. We are doing the work, the background work, to decide what that package ought to look like.

Mr. THOMPSON. So you are saying you are doing the background work but you have not done anything yet.

Mr. WALTERS. I have not, but I know it is being worked on. I am really the training expert and the Chief of the Border Patrol Academy and Assistant Commissioner for Office of Training and Development, and I know from the other side of the house the Chief of the Border Patrol, David Aguilar, and the Commissioner and the Deputy Commissioner are all in discussions on how best to structure the Border Patrol. And a lot of that is going on right now.

In other words, I am not qualified to give you the best answer on that, sir, but I will take that back with me.

Mr. THOMPSON. I caught you. Thank you very much.

Mr. ROGERS. I thank the gentleman.

The Chair now recognizes the gentleman from Texas, Mr. McCaul, for any questions he may have.

Mr. MCCAUL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I would like to follow up on a question that Chairman Cox asked regarding salary, and I believe you testified that it is \$57,000 for 6 months for salary?

Mr. WALTERS. For salary and benefits, yes.

Mr. MCCAUL. And benefits.

Mr. WALTERS. Right.

Mr. MCCAUL. So if you double that per year, it is \$114,000 salary and benefits. A U.S. attorney makes that much money; an assistant U.S. attorney makes less than that. I find that hard to believe that that is the actual number.

Mr. WALTERS. I have some experience in a past life with looking at budget for individuals in the federal government and I do know that the salary that you get in your paycheck is different from the total investment by the government, by the organization, and it is significant, again, as I said earlier.

Mr. MCCAUL. And this is for someone hired out of the field, I mean, brand new, and they are making \$114,000 a year, plus benefits—

Mr. WALTERS. No, no. That is the benefit?

Mr. MCCAUL. I mean, yes.

Mr. WALTERS. That would include the benefits; yes, sir.

Mr. MCCAUL. Yes. I am looking at basically the initial salary. It is at a GS-5 to GS-7 level to hire a Border Patrol agent, which is between \$34,000 to \$38,000. So—

Mr. WALTERS. I cannot certify to the granularity of that figure. It may be that it is not the average of a GS-5 or a 7 or a 9. It may be the average grade of every Border Patrol agent. I do not know that for a fact, but I can certainly—

Mr. MCCAUL. So then you are telling me the average is \$114,000.

Mr. WALTERS. I am sorry, I do not know the answer to that here today, sir.

Mr. MCCAUL. Okay. Because that would be—if you subtract the salary even on the high end, GS-7, that equates to \$77,000 and benefits. I do not know what those benefits could be. I guess I am just confused about that. Perhaps if you could maybe come back to the committee and let me know what it is that we are paying these guys when they start working, both salaries and benefits, and what are the benefits. That would help me.

Secondly, I live in a border state, and we, just as you know, authorize and appropriate 2,000 additional Border Patrol agents, and my constituents, first and foremost, want to know how soon they can get it going and get to work. How soon can we hire, train and get 2,000 agents on the border? We have got a real serious situation down there from a national security standpoint, in my view. Now we have volunteers lining up to try to tackle what should be the federal government's responsibility.

Can you give me some idea of how long it would take to fully train and put them down on the border?

Mr. WALTERS. The program itself, the Academy program, of course, is 20 weeks long. The recruiting and hiring process is ongoing right now. So we will train our target number and we will get to 500 net new by the end of fiscal year 2005. Right now we assume that we will add another 210 to that, and in the meantime we will also compensate for whatever losses we have through attri-

tion, retirees or people going to other employment or those kinds of things. We are able to do that.

And by the time this next budget cycle comes around and we have come to some certainty of what the number will be, we will also be able to adjust to that, but it will take us I think 2,000 is probably near the maximum per year that we could hope to add net new without significantly going on the other side of risk management.

But we can do it, sir, and we can do it within a year. We can hire them and put them into training within the year. Of course some of them will graduate in following fiscal years.

Mr. MCCAUL. And I am just curious, you hear a lot about the retention rate, it is hard to keep Border Patrol agents. Do you know what the retention rate is, on average?

Mr. WALTERS. The last figure I saw, which is about a month old, was on the order of 6 percent or less for the Border Patrol as a whole. That includes Border Patrol and Border Patrol pilots of every age and grade.

Mr. MCCAUL. And then final question: Can you speak to the detention space at all or is that out of your expertise?

Mr. WALTERS. I can say this about detention space: We need it, we cannot do our job without it, but I cannot talk to it as an issue; no, sir.

Mr. MCCAUL. Well, I know you do, and that is why we appropriated 4,000 additional beds.

Mr. WALTERS. We appreciate that.

Mr. MCCAUL. My question would be how soon we could build that, but that is probably for another witness.

Mr. WALTERS. Yes, sir.

Mr. MCCAUL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. ROGERS. I thank the gentleman.

The Chair now recognizes the gentlelady from the Virgin Islands, Ms. Christensen.

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And welcome to the panelists.

Ms. Patrick, I am not really clear about the relationship between FLETC and the Artesia Training Facility. I see you worked together to set it up, but maybe you could explain to me what the training relationship is between FLETC.

Mrs. PATRICK. And Border Patrol?

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. And you can add if you like, Mr. Walters.

Mrs. PATRICK. Okay. Just real briefly, the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center, the way I describe it to the community leaders, is that we have become a training corporation, basically, that our headquarters is located in Glynco, Georgia, and we have training facilities located in different sites within the U.S.

One is in Artesia, New Mexico, one is in Charleston, South Carolina, one is Cheltenham, Maryland, and we also are responsible for the International Law Enforcement Academy in Botswana, Africa and will soon be developing with the State Department and Justice the ILEA, International Law Enforcement Academy in South America. That is what FLETC does.

The Artesia campus is predominantly—right now we train Border Patrol, the Bureau of Indian Affairs, the FFDOs, the flight deck officers, and the—

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. But it is a part of FLETC.

Mrs. PATRICK. Right.

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. It is not separate. Okay.

Mr. Walters, some concerns have been raised about salary, and can you tell us whether the salary is for a 5-day week or a 6-day week? And I ask that because in the Department of Homeland Security appropriations bill, there is a section that talks about back pay for officers for FLETC training, and they were not paid for the sixth day of training each week that they were there.

So could you tell me first whether the salaries are a 5-day week or a 6-day week?

Mr. WALTERS. The salary figures that you see estimated are for the standard 5-day work week. We have not added anything into that. But I understand that other issue has been resolved. But let me take that back.

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. The issue has been resolved?

Mr. WALTERS. Let me take that back and make certain of that. I do not want to misspeak on that.

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Is there an overtime cap in place, and if so, what is that?

Mr. WALTERS. There is an overtime cap. I think it is in the order of \$30,000 plus per year is the cap, but this body thought it important enough to put in a waiver that the Commissioner could grant if that occasion comes up. So I do not see that as a major issue.

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. So you will report back to the committee on the resolution of the back pay issue from January 2002 to October 2004?

Mr. WALTERS. I will certainly give you a status report; yes, ma'am.

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Thank you.

Chief Walters again, I have open waters as our border. I represent the U.S. Virgin Islands, 170 miles plus of it. And with all of the focus on the southwest and the northern borders, is there training as well for Border Patrol agents on patrolling and interdiction in this kind of setting as well?

Mr. WALTERS. Yes, there is, and we have a Border Patrol sector in Puerto Rico, and we also have major coastal areas, things like a sector in Miami, we have a sector in New Orleans, and we do work closely with them to make sure that they are trained to operate small boats and operate in that kind of environment and get on and off ships and freighters and that kind of thing.

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. And you are aware that even though there is a Border Patrol unit in Puerto Rico, they are pretty much stationed in the Mona Passage and they do not have the additional capacity to patrol St. James, St. Thomas and St. Croix.

Mr. WALTERS. Yes, ma'am, I am familiar with that issue.

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Is any other language taught in the training? I know there is Spanish, but you said that since 9/11, of course, the focus is now on antiterrorism. Is there any other language besides Spanish that is offered or taught?

Mr. WALTERS. For basic trainees, no, ma'am, and Spanish is taught both to Border Patrol agents and to those going to certain select ports that are mainly Spanish-speaking on the CBP officer side as well. But I am not aware of any other language capacity that belongs to CBP. Spanish is taught to basic.

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. If you are concerned about terrorism, I mean, you are not necessarily concerned—you have to place some degree of focus on people other than persons crossing over from Mexico.

Mr. WALTERS. Yes, ma'am.

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. But there may not be any other language being—

Mr. WALTERS. There is not an official program within CBP to teach any language other than Spanish.

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. I think my time is up, but I may have questions on a second round.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. ROGERS. I thank the gentlelady.

The Chair now recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey, Mr. Pascrell, for any questions he may have.

Mr. PASCRELL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Walters, in the past, border agents have had an attrition rate of between 20 and 30 percent. I want to know, would like to know, and I am sure the panel would like to know, what is the attrition rate right now?

Mr. WALTERS. The attrition rate for all Border Patrol agents is around 6 percent, sir.

Mr. PASCRELL. Are you telling me that the attrition rate has dropped from where it was prior to 9/11 to 6 percent?

Mr. WALTERS. The current is 6 percent. In the past, I have known for the Border Patrol, as an entity, to have the attrition rate globally to go up around 15 percent, and that was right after 9/11 we lost a lot of agents to our air marshals. They went and staffed that program and decided to change jobs. So I am aware that it was higher, but I am not aware that it ever went up to 20 percent.

Mr. PASCRELL. Other folks on this panel have asked you a question about whether or not you would be able to handle the number of recruits. Just how many applications are you getting now?

Mr. WALTERS. I do not know the answer to that. I am not as familiar as I probably ought to be with that. I can get back to you on that. But your question is, what are the number of applications? I can say that generally we have a strong interest in the Border Patrol occupation, and when we announce it publicly, we get a good response.

Mr. PASCRELL. So even in terms of numbers, if we wanted to go up to what many folks are talking about in the House, and that is 2,000 agents, you would be able to have enough qualified applicants in a pool to choose.

Mr. WALTERS. It would certainly be a task for us to take on. I can say that we do not have that in the pool today, but if we are given the opportunity to train 2,000 more Border Patrol agents, we would find a way to do that. We have doubled the Border Patrol in the past, and we found ways to recruit and hire that many people.

Mr. PASCRELL. Chief Walters and Director Patrick, I am going to ask you a question the rest of my time on the following subject: Most of the interest is upon how many people we interdict trying to get this border illegally, all our borders.

I want to deal with something other than people. I want to deal with what is coming across the borders. For instance, what training goes into a border agent with the trucks that are coming across the border from Mexico, which are now able to move into this country freely? What training do you give? What do they look at in these trucks? I mean, if they cannot find cocaine, how are they going to find weapons of mass destruction, you tell me?

Mr. WALTERS. If we are looking at the Border Patrol piece, the Border Patrol agents do a traffic checkpoint, and it is usually someplace other than right at the border. So they use what they can, and things like dogs, canine and non-intrusive inspection devices, density meters and those kinds of things are common.

Mr. PASCRELL. What percentage of trucks do they stop to look at?

Mr. WALTERS. I have no idea, sir.

Mr. PASCRELL. Would you be surprised if I told you less than 5 percent?

Mr. WALTERS. I have no idea to know whether that is a good number or a bad number, sir.

Mr. PASCRELL. Would you get back to us, to every member of this committee, to tell us what is being inspected that comes over, not only from the South but from the North? I mean, how in God's name are we going to stop weapons coming into this country if most of the vehicles that come into this country are not properly inspected? You tell me.

Mr. WALTERS. We do inspect every vehicle at some point, at some level, but if you are talking about taking apart, unloading it, and doing a thorough inspection of every piece of it; no, we do not do that. But what we try and do operationally is target and profile the kinds of vehicles that are likely to hold contraband or weapons of mass destruction. We do not get to all the millions of vehicles and do a thorough inspection on all the millions of vehicles that come in, that is true; but we do, I think, a very good job of targeting and looking at a high proportion at least of high-risk vehicles.

Mr. PASCRELL. I have heard a lot of discussion concerning what we inspect at our ports, but indeed coming across our borders we have very little idea what is coming into this country right now, whether it is vegetables or weapons, do we?

Mr. WALTERS. If you are talking about in between the ports of entry, you are right, we do not know what we do not know.

Mr. PASCRELL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. ROGERS. Thank you.

I want to go back to the capacity we were talking about a little while ago. If the money was appropriated, whatever the accurate figure is—I would like for both of you to answer this—could you train 2,000 new officers over the next 12 months—18 months?

Start with you, Chief.

Mr. WALTERS. Yes. If we are given the opportunity to add 2,000 Border Patrol agents and get them into training before the end of the next fiscal year, we can do that. I have every confidence.

Mr. ROGERS. Ms. Patrick?

Mrs. PATRICK. I agree.

Mr. ROGERS. The reason I ask the question is, earlier this year we had another hearing and Asa Hutchinson was one of our panelists. He was asked that question and he said it was not possible to train that many officers in a year and I find that startling. I cannot help but think that if you did not have the capacity, then we could contract out to supplement what you can do.

Mrs. PATRICK. Well, based—

Mr. ROGERS. Go ahead.

Mrs. PATRICK. I was going to say, based on what I know our capacity to be, and we continue to build up our facilities over time, especially after 9/11 when we had to build capacity for the Air Marshal Program, which is not being fully utilized now. So we have capacity to meet the numbers that you are suggesting.

And I do not know what the time reference was when he was testifying and how far along we were in terms of building facilities, but we have made a lot of progress, particularly in Artesia. But to meet the numbers, 2,000, we can do that.

Mr. ROGERS. With existing infrastructure?

Mrs. PATRICK. We have—I have done estimates not exactly at 2,000 but close to 2,000 and, as I said, emergency measures are doubling up in the rooms will give us additional capacity. That will work for some time, but after a period of time it would be necessary to build additional—a dormitory or use rooms in the community in order to house them, because it would just be too cramped.

The one thing we are currently using in Artesia is a swimming pool that belongs to the city to do aquatic training, and in light of two Border Patrol officers dying last years in a drowning, it is a very important part of the curriculum to have that number of students, depending on the school to train them in an aquatic facility at some point in time, we would need to build a training facility. And other than that, other than from about \$1 million for sewage enhancements and IT, we could do it.

Mr. ROGERS. Let me ask this question then: What is the dollar amount that you believe, Ms. Patrick, that you need to train 2,000 new officers over the next 12 to 18 months?

Mrs. PATRICK. To be exactly precise, I would rather give that to you in writing so I could—because my numbers are not at 2,000. I have got numbers between 1,600 and 2,350, and I will provide all that to you.

Mr. ROGERS. I look forward to receiving that.

Mrs. PATRICK. Okay.

Mr. ROGERS. Help me understand the relationship—according to your numbers, we need \$179,000 per Border Patrol officer to train them. The total number, yes, we are still a little sketchy on that, but just for the sake of this, \$179,000.

Ms. Patrick, do you need anything over and above that to train those officers?

Mrs. PATRICK. Yes.

Mr. ROGERS. What would you need?

Mrs. PATRICK. The tuition money that I spoke to, in our base, we are already funded for 700 new starts every year for Border Patrol. That covers their attrition, that is already funded. Anything above that would require tuition.

Mr. ROGERS. So the tuition number is not incorporated in your number of \$179,000, Chief Walters?

Mrs. PATRICK. No. And that is—

Mr. ROGERS. That is my question.

Chief Walters, the \$179,000 per Border Patrol officer that you suggested does not include the tuition to send them to FLETC?

Mr. WALTERS. There may be some overlap there. We would better check that. I think that for the first 700 that I would have to train, I have included tuition as a reimbursable, but everything over that I probably did not. But rather than let me speculate here, let me go back and do a good job on that and get you a report on it.

Mr. ROGERS. Go back to something I asked a little earlier: If you did not receive any new money, as I understand it, you could take the one point some odd million dollars that you have just received and train a large number of Border Patrol officers?

Mrs. PATRICK. About 1,400.

Mr. ROGERS. Fourteen hundred. Okay.

Has there been a history, Chief Walters, with any contracting out with universities, law enforcement departments, or any entities like that to meet these surge demands for Border Patrol officer training?

Mr. WALTERS. For basic training, no, we have never used contract employees directly. No, sir.

Mr. ROGERS. My time has expired.

I recognize the Ranking Member, Mr. Meek.

Mr. MEEK. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Once again, I am just so pleased that we are having this hearing, because it is actually unfolding quite a bit. Some that I am encouraged to hear good answers on and some that I am still not clear on.

I can also say that there is a three-prong issue here. One, the training that you are already providing, which we are examining now; two, you have a private sector that is walking the halls of Congress saying that, "Listen, we are willing to serve our country in any way." Interesting, the next panel we will have not only a member but the president of Blackwater USA that has stepped up to the bat, many of whom serve this country in a military capacity before, willing to stand up and do what they have to do and offer their services in this area. And there are a couple of other people, a couple other U.S. companies that are willing to do so.

And then you have this third thing that makes this whole debate very interesting. You have U.S. citizens that have now taken it upon themselves to try to protect our borders, and this is something that we thought that we would never come to or get to the point where we would have that happen. Now that is happening, and it is not going away anytime soon.

So that means one of two things: One, either we have to look at the way we are doing business or, two, do business better or either start talking about other alternatives in protecting our borders. We know our men and women that are out there on the border, as you mentioned, Chief, in a very eloquent way, and I just want to say to the—I know that you are the Assistant Commissioner of Training and Development for the Bureau, but you can shake the Commissioner's hand when you see the Commissioner. Let it be known

that you are pleased to come before the committee anytime to answer these very tough questions.

But it is important that we rise to the occasion to get these numbers right. And I know the men and women out there are doing the best they can. You mentioned the work that they are doing, the next shift that is coming on as it relates to the nightshift, but there are private sector companies that are out there saying without any hesitation that they can train 2,000 new border protection and patrol individuals to rise to the occasion.

The last thing that I know that I want, and I do not want to speak for other members of the committee, the U.S. taxpaying citizens, many of whom that have served their country, have to take it upon themselves to get a yard chair and sit out on our borders to stop individuals from coming in.

And that brings about the pivotal question here and I think that is the thrust mainly behind this whole debate.

Now, I think that once we start looking at the way we do business, I think that we can do business better, and that is making sure that we not only train but we preserve the Department and the Customs and Border Protection officers' integrity of the reason why they joined the Patrol in the first place.

I used to be a state trooper, and I bring this up like once every meeting, because I think it is important. I have been on the front line, and it has always been a question of privatization—always. We never had individuals in the State of Florida saying, "Well, I am retired, I have some military background. I want to go out and be a state trooper because there is just lawlessness in the streets." But we have that in this case.

And so I do not want to be a Member of Congress with a conspiracy theory of saying that those that are in power, those who are in control of training and making the decisions over at DHS want to set the stage for the private sector to come in and do the job that we should be doing anyway. One may say in some circles, "Let's put the cookie on the bottom shelf so that everyone can reach it."

I just want to know how do you feel mainly, Chief, and if you want to, Director, you can chime in, how do you feel about this ever-growing threat of two things: One, American citizens by the numbers continuing to go out and try to protect our borders; two, the private sector's ongoing push of saying that, "We are here to serve if we are asked to do so." Is that a discussion within the Bureau, because it is definitely reality?

Mr. WALTERS. I would like to take that first, if I might. The involvement of the citizenry, of course, as the Commissioner has noted in previous hearings, is really at the heart of the democracy. We appreciate the citizens' involvement and we appreciate the interest. And as long as the line is drawn where they do not try and go too far with that and try and make arrests or insert themselves and make the problem worse. I do not think we have hit that point yet, I am not saying that.

I appreciate all the attention that we have brought to bear on this by the citizen involvement, but I agree with you that there is a limit to citizen involvement and that we need to do a better job

and keep that about where it is now would be as far as I would want to go with that.

And then as far as the private sector involvement in training, you are right, it is a sensitive issue. It is a sensitive issue at the state law enforcement level, same with the federal government. Our gold standard so far has been our training is evaluated by how well the agents perform in the field. So far they have been performing pretty well, and so I do not have the impetus to try and change that formula for basic training very much.

Now, for advanced training that is a different story, and that is not the subject of the hearing today, but for basic training it is very important, I think, that the green shirts be perceived to give context to that training and be able to speak the details of policy and procedure and not just the mechanics of the subject that is being trained.

Mr. MEEK. Well, Mr. Chairman, I see that my time has run out.

But I want to thank you, Chief, for responding in a way, because I know a lot of the frontline men and women are very concerned about the criticism that the Department is receiving, especially the Bureau, on the issue of the cost of training.

So hopefully we can hammer it out and members of Congress can be educated more on the ins and outs of it, and hopefully we can work together in making sure that we keep integrity of what we have right now and build on it.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. ROGERS. Thank you.

And the Chair now recognizes the chairman of the full committee, Chairman Cox, for any additional questions he may have.

Mr. COX. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

As you know, the purpose of this hearing is to find out how the Department of Homeland Security can increase training capacity more effectively, and for that reason, we are trying to understand how much it costs us to do it the way we are doing it; whether or not we have any capacity we can take advantage of; whether there are other ways that we can help you to train more people and place them into service as quickly as they are needed.

In listening to the testimony thus far, I am going to recap what I think I have learned for the record, and please correct me, Director Patrick or Chief Walters, if any of this is incorrect.

The full cost of recruiting, training, and hiring a new Border Patrol agent, which includes almost a half-year's salary—42 percent of a full year, five-twelfths—and associated overhead—computers, phones, cars, uniforms, equipment and so on—is \$179,000. Of that, the actual training cost is \$23,000. Am I right so far?

Mr. WALTERS. Yes, sir.

Mrs. PATRICK. I can speak to how much it costs us. I do not know what his additional costs are. I know what our costs are.

Mr. COX. Why don't you speak to that and make sure we are?

Mrs. PATRICK. It is \$8,734 per person. And that is for the?

Mr. COX. Eight thousand seven hundred and thirty-four dollars is the tuition we were speaking of earlier?

Mrs. PATRICK. Tuition, correct. And actual tuition is \$5,754, and the instructor cost per student is \$2,980. So the total is \$8,734 per

student for what it costs us to train that person with our instructors and our tuition.

Mr. COX. All right. Because the numbers are sufficiently manageable, I am not going to inquire into why tuition is separate from instructor costs, but?

Mrs. PATRICK. That is our total cost for producing the training.

Mr. COX. What most of us would understand to be tuition, which pays for that, is \$8,734.

And, Chief Walters, is that embedded in the \$23,000 figure you gave us for training?

Mr. WALTERS. No, I do not believe it is.

Mr. COX. So can you tell us what the \$23,000 is for?

Mr. WALTERS. The \$23,000 covers reimbursable type things one use each, things like supplies and things that the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center does for us, specifically for our employees that we reimburse them for.

Mr. COX. Since that is roughly three times the tuition, can you give me an example of a reimbursable or one-time use supply?

Mr. WALTERS. Printing costs to run telephones?

Mrs. PATRICK. Have you accounted for the per diem?

Mr. WALTERS. No, that is not part of the \$23,000.

Mrs. PATRICK. Oh, it is not? Oh.

Mr. COX. Printing is not very expensive. Telephone use, likewise, it is very cheap. How do you get to \$23,000?

Mr. WALTERS. I will have to get some more detail on that, obviously, for you, sir.

Mr. COX. All right. Let me now ask another question. So somewhere in the neighborhood of \$31,000 is the training costs then. Is that right, 23 plus 8, or 23 plus 9? Am I in the right neighborhood for the training costs?

Mr. WALTERS. Your addition is correct, sir.

Mr. COX. Okay. And what we are teaching according to the Border Patrol agent fact sheet distributed by CBP, the U.S. Customs and Border Protection Office of the Department of Homeland Security, is the following: We are teaching immigration nationality law, Spanish, PT and firearms. Do people ever waive out of any aspect of that training? If I show up and I say, "I already know all this immigration law, can I just test out?"

Mr. WALTERS. No. It is more like a military boot camp where everybody participates at the same level and we build unit cohesiveness.

Mr. COX. And what happens if I actually speak English as my second language, and I am amazingly literate in Spanish? Can I test out of that?

Mr. WALTERS. No, not in the current procedures, but you can help your classmates to hone their skills in Spanish.

Mr. COX. Now, when I show up I am supposed to be able to do 25 sit-ups and 20 push-ups and also a step test. And when I finish the PT course, I am supposed to be able to run one and a half miles in 13 minutes, supposed to be able to do the 220 yard dash in 46 seconds, and I am supposed to complete the confidence course in two minutes and a half. What happens if I can do that when I come? Will you just let me see if I can show you I can already do that?

Mr. WALTERS. No. We do not test out the individual elements of the program. Graduating classes graduate together.

Mr. COX. So let me ask you this: Would it be an option if we are trying to increase the throughput and we have training capacity constraints, would it be an option to let people test out?

You already let them apply online on the Internet. Could we not let them, through some secure means, show that they are already literate in Spanish and that they already understand all the immigration nationality law that they need to know; maybe make them physically show up for one day and perform their marksmanship and also do the PT exit course? And, if they meet the standards, then you can place them right into the apprenticeship where they really have the on-the-job training that is so important.

Mr. WALTERS. I hear what you are saying. We have looked at that in the past, and we have looked at it often.

What the Border Patrol Academy really does is provide the entire context for a Border Patrol agent before this new Border Patrol agent goes out to the field and begins his on-the-job training. So we have to be certain that he has all the pieces so that he is not a risk to himself or to the people out there or to other agents when he gets out there. So we have not allowed people to test out.

It is also the advantageous to us to bring people in as a group and testing them as a group because it helps to build unit cohesiveness and esprit de corps. That is an important piece of what we are trying to accomplish.

Mr. COX. Director Patrick, do you want to add to that?

Mrs. PATRICK. Like Mr. Walters, we have looked at that same scenario. After 9/11, with the Federal Air Marshals Program, we actually did end up doing some of that prior law enforcement experience—there were abbreviated training programs for those officers to get them out faster. And so we have experience doing that.

The policy in terms of liability, et cetera, usually the agency makes a determination of what they are willing to do, and then we will help develop the appropriate requirements for whatever the training will be. But we have discussed it before in a different context and have actually done it in the past.

Mr. COX. Well, Mr. Chairman, I think we need to explore this.

Obviously, the main object of all of this exercise is, first, to prevent the entry of terrorists and terrorists' weapons onto U.S. soil. Second, to enforce the immigration laws and the drug laws.

We are not really getting on to that business if we are making people go through the motions of things they already know. We ought to get on to that more meaningful training, and I think we have some avenues to do that and to do it more efficiently for the taxpayer.

I appreciate this interchange. We want to give you all the support that we possibly can.

And thank you, Mr. Chairman, for the extra time.

Mr. ROGERS. I thank the gentleman.

The Chair now recognizes the gentleman from Mississippi, Mr. Thompson, for any additional questions he may have.

Mr. THOMPSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chief Walters, could you explain a detailing of people for training from the Department's standpoint? One of the concerns we hear as

a committee is that when details occur, areas are left understaffed. And I would like to know whether or not that is the case and if it is, have you looked at addressing what is acquired so that we will not have to get in the situations of being short-staffed?

Mr. WALTERS. Yes. Well, the formula that we came up with is to allow the Chief Patrol agents out in the sectors to determine which people are going to be assigned on temporary assignment. When we were under the highest class load that we have ever been on, we have had as many as perhaps 250 Border Patrol agents detailed from the field to the Academy. And that was a good thing, but we were at about 11,000 Border Patrol agents. So that is less than 3 percent—that is probably fewer people than were on sick leave that day.

For that return on investment, we bring in and we add another 1,000 or 2,000 Border Patrol agents that year by virtue of having these people come in from the field. So to us that is a good sensible investment and we manage the risk part by letting the people in the field tell us which people can come and which ones cannot.

Mr. THOMPSON. So it is your testimony that when the detailing occurs, from your professional standpoint, we are not put in any vulnerable position or anything like that?

Mr. WALTERS. For the training piece, I can speak to the training piece, sir, and it is not large enough to make that kind of a difference in this organization, in the Border Patrol organization.

Mr. THOMPSON. Thank you.

Mr. ROGERS. I want to thank both of you for being here and taking the time to—oh, I recognize the gentleman from Florida, Mr. Meek.

Mr. MEEK. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chief, I really would appreciate if we could have some comparisons of—I know that, Madam Director, you have, I believe, somewhere in the neighborhood of about 81 different law enforcement agencies that actually go through your basic training.

Chief, I think it would be helpful for us all to see a comparison to other training agencies that actually train law enforcement officers in advanced training of costs that is associated with that. I think it will not only bring about a level of clarity for members of the committee, but also I would assume maybe defend some of the things that you have mentioned here today that goes into that training.

And, Mr. Chairman, if we could disseminate that amongst the committee and get it to us as soon as possible, I think it would be helpful in our work.

Mr. WALTERS. Thank you for the opportunity.

Mr. ROGERS. We will do that.

Again, I thank both the witnesses, and this panel is excused, and we will call up the second panel.

The Chair now calls the second panel and recognizes Mr. T.J. Bonner, President of the National Border Patrol Council, for any statement that you may have.

**STATEMENT OF T.J. BONNER, PRESIDENT, NATIONAL BORDER
PATROL COUNCIL**

Mr. BONNER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, other distinguished members of the subcommittee.

Without question, the Border Patrol faces an incredible challenge. Last year alone the officers apprehended nearly 1.2 million illegal entrants into this country. Most alarmingly, however, they estimate that for every person they catch, two or three get by them. We need reinforcements desperately and we need them yesterday.

More important than anything else is to bear in mind the reason for these additional Border Patrol agents. It is for securing our nation's borders. You can never lose sight of that. It is not simply an exercise to see whether we can bring on 2,000 people or 3,000 people. It is finding the right people, providing them with the right training, giving them the right support, and providing them with the right infrastructure.

Currently, far too many Border Patrol agents are assigned to duties that should be done by support personnel. They are manning cameras, looking at sensors, they are repairing vehicles, they are transporting illegal aliens, do all manner of jobs that should be done by other support personnel that are not in place. We have a number of other weaknesses in the existing infrastructure. The buildings that we occupy, in many cases, are far too small for even the existing number of people, and when we increase the number of people, the problem will only get worse.

The weapons that we carry in some cases are prone to failure. These are weapons that are breaking down after as few as 5,000 rounds, and many of these weapons now have 15,000, 20,000 rounds of ammunition that have been fired through them through the quarterly qualification process. Body armor that our agents have been issued in many cases is long overdue for replacement, and in some cases it is of a material that is defective, that is wearing out within a matter of months rather than years and yet we have not replaced these things.

I do not know what the true cost of hiring a Border Patrol agent is. We have heard a lot of figures here, but this I can tell you: We do not have enough infrastructure right now, and this figure that has been batted about of \$57,000 for a half year's salary, when we start these agents out we are paying them about \$35,000. So they are not the highest paid, and that is one of the reasons that we are losing these agents.

They look around at other parts of the federal law enforcement community, and even state and local, where these agents, after 5 years on the job, are making between \$50,000 and \$60,000 a year. They see a police officer in San Diego, for example, being hired at that same amount, and it is a real temptation to go over and work for a different agency.

We need to do something about all of these types of issues if we are going to be able to attract people to the United States Border Patrol and, more importantly, to hang on to these people.

And the Academy training is just the beginning of the process. The most important part of the training is that one-on-one mentoring that goes on when that agent comes back to the field. It is critical that we have enough experienced agents there to take these

new agents by the hand and show them how to do that job, because it is not just the factory where we are cranking out new Border Patrol agents. We are trying to train people so that they can do the job properly, so that we respect the rights of those who are being encountered.

Not everybody that is encountered by an immigration officer is an illegal alien, and it is very important that these officers have the training so that they do the job properly and do not violate the rights of United States citizens or aliens who are in this country lawfully.

I would like to talk a little bit about what it is going to take to hang on to some of the folks that we have. Pay is very important, as I mentioned. We are underpaid in comparison to the rest of the federal law enforcement community.

Job satisfaction is another thing. Some of the strategies that are being employed right now, such as the so-called strategy of deterrence where our agents are forced to sit in one place for the entire 8-, 10-hour shift is just mind-numbing, and it is moronic in this post-9/11 environment to think that a terrorist is going to be deterred by an agent just sitting in one spot. These agents need to be allowed to pursue people who are crossing our borders.

As I said, the most important thing to bear in mind through this entire discussion is why we are hiring these agents. There is a crying need for agents, clearly, which is borne out by the call for citizen patrol groups, military on the border.

Clearly, we are not doing our job, but the reason we need more Border Patrol agents is to secure our borders. We need to spend whatever it takes, not try and do it on the cheap; not try and figure out how we can cut corners to hire as many Border Patrol agents as possible, but to spend whatever it takes to support these men and women so that they can go out there, give them the policies that they need.

For example, one of the most important things that this Congress can do to support the Border Patrol is to pass legislation that makes it easy for Immigration agents, not necessarily Border Patrol agents, but for Immigration agents to crack down on employers who are hiring illegal aliens. We know that is why 98 percent of the people are coming across the borders, and yet millions of people are in this country as we speak working without fear of being removed from this country.

If we eliminate that employment magnet, it would make the job of the Border Patrol 10 times easier than it is now because we would reduce the amount of traffic from millions of people coming across the border on an annual basis to thousands of people. And then what you would have would be criminals and terrorists coming across, and we could focus on that.

And I believe that with a workforce of 20,000 Border Patrol agents, we actually could secure the borders, which would solve a lot of the problems that you have with the citizen patrols being up in arms and saying, "The government is not doing its job." We are not doing our job, but we need support from Congress in the form of laws that are easy to enforce, and we need support from Congress in the form of enough money so that we have not just the

agents out there but the infrastructure to support those agents, and its sorely lacking right now.

I thank you for your time and look forward to your questions.
[The statement of Mr. Bonner follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF T.J. BONNER

On behalf of the 10,000 front-line employees that it represents, the National Border Patrol Council appreciates the opportunity to share its views and recommendations regarding the challenges presented by the public mandate to significantly increase the number of Border Patrol agents.

Beyond a doubt, our Nation's borders are out of control. With only 10,700 agents responsible for patrolling about 8,000 miles of land and coastal borders, the Border Patrol is simply overwhelmed by the volume of traffic that constantly streams across our borders. Front-line agents estimate that between three and four million people cross our borders illegally every year, yet they are only able to apprehend slightly more than one million of them. The most troubling aspect of this problem is the fact that we know nothing about those who successfully enter our country illegally. Although the overwhelming majority of them are searching for employment opportunities, it has now been confirmed that a significant number are criminals. In the first three months after the integration of the Border Patrol and the FBI automated fingerprint systems last September, more than 23,500 criminals—about 8% of the total number of all persons apprehended—were arrested, including 84 homicide suspects, 37 kidnaping suspects, 151 sexual assault suspects, 212 robbery suspects, 1,238 suspects for assaults of other types, and 2,630 suspects implicated in dangerous narcotic related charges.¹ It is not unreasonable to extrapolate that same percentage to the millions of people who avoid apprehension, nor is it unrealistic to assume that some terrorists are also taking advantage of our porous borders.

In order to bring our borders under control, a comprehensive enforcement strategy is needed. By far, the most important step that can be taken is to directly confront the problem at its source rather than continuing to tinker with the symptoms. Without question, the overwhelming majority of people enter the United States illegally in search of economic opportunities. In order to change this dynamic, the employment magnet must be eliminated. The only way to do this is by enacting legislation that makes it easy for employers to know which applicants are authorized to work in this country, and painful for them to hire those who are not. H.R. 98, the "Illegal Immigration Enforcement and Social Security Protection Act of 2005," achieves these goals. Even this measure, however, would not eliminate the need for significant growth of the Border Patrol in order to enhance its ability to effectively deal with the increasing problem of criminals and terrorists seeking to enter our country.

This expansion presents a number of challenges. In addition to significantly increasing the number of Border Patrol agents, there must be a commensurate growth in the infrastructure that supports them. Adequate equipment, facilities, and support personnel are all necessary in order to ensure that the new agents are able to effectively carry out the mission of the agency. Currently, even the existing workforce is plagued by deficiencies in all of these areas. Thus, these additional expenses must be factored not only into the cost of hiring new employees, but also into upgrading support for current employees. To cite but a few examples:

- The number of support personnel is wholly inadequate, causing able-bodied Border Patrol agents to be assigned to duties such as monitoring cameras and sensors, operating communications equipment, and repairing vehicles. Not only does this waste money by having lower-graded work performed by higher-paid employees, it detracts from the accomplishment of the agency's core mission by diverting trained law enforcement personnel away from their primary duties.
- Numerous buildings were designed for only a small fraction of the employees that are currently assigned there, and even more facilities are woefully inadequate for the number of employees that are projected to be assigned there in the near future.
- The overall condition of the Border Patrol's vehicle fleet is deplorable. A large percentage of vehicles have mileage that far exceeds the recommended amount for law enforcement vehicles, and need to be sold or scrapped. Inordinate amounts of time and money are being spent to keep these vehicles operating. In many locations, the few vehicles that are serviceable at a given moment are being operated 24 hours a day, accelerating their breakdown. This situation also

¹ Customs and Border Protection press release, December 20, 2004.

forces agents to wait for the previous shift to bring in vehicles, causing needless gaps in coverage along the border.

- Many Border Patrol agents are still carrying handguns that are prone to breakdowns after firing as few as 5,000 rounds of ammunition, a threshold that was surpassed several years ago.
- In most locations, numerous employees have to share a single computer terminal, causing countless hours to be wasted waiting to access these workstations.
- Far too many Border Patrol agents are wearing body armor that has expired or is made out of defective material that deteriorates in a matter of months when exposed to ultraviolet light or perspiration.
- The communications system in many areas is filled with large expanses where radios are unable to transmit or receive, needlessly endangering agents in the field.
- Front-line employees deeply appreciate the recognition by Congress of the need to quickly reinforce the thin ranks of the Border Patrol. The process of hiring and training substantial numbers of new agents will be complicated by a variety of problems, however:
 - The recruitment program needs to be significantly expanded. When the decision to drastically scale back on the recruitment and hiring process was made early last year, it stranded thousands of interested applicants in the hiring pipeline. Unfortunately, most of them have since moved on to other careers.
 - The screening process, wherein suitable candidates are identified through testing, interviews and thorough and timely background checks, is a critical part of the recruitment process. The temptation to cut corners on these processes for the sake of expediency must be resisted at all costs. A lack of attention to these important matters up front can be incredibly damaging and costly later.
 - The training process entails much more than just teaching new recruits the fundamentals in the structured environment of the Border Patrol Academy. Following that 19-week course, new-hires continue their academic studies at least once a week for the next six months. Even more importantly, they are paired up with experienced agents during that same period to receive one-on-one field training. This critical aspect of the training process limits the number of agents that can be trained at any given time. For this reason, the National Border Patrol Council believes that it would be a mistake to attempt to increase the size of the Border Patrol by more than 25% annually. The addition of 10,000 Border Patrol agents over the next five years as authorized by the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004 is well within this margin, however. The Border Patrol was able to absorb a similar increase following the passage of the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996, which also authorized a doubling of the Border Patrol workforce. That legislation called for the addition of 1,000 Border Patrol agents and 300 support personnel for each of the following five fiscal years. Despite the skepticism surrounding those ambitious hiring goals, they were in fact met during the first four years. The latest authorization actually represents a smaller annual percentage increase than the previous build-up, and is likewise attainable.
 - The training facility in Artesia, New Mexico is less than ideal for training large numbers of new Border Patrol recruits. It is remotely located, and the existing facilities are inadequate. Although a substantial investment in facilities will undoubtedly need to be made regardless of where the training facility is located, some thought needs to be given to the desirability of the location from the viewpoint of the potential pool of permanent and temporary instructors. It will be difficult to entice an adequate number of volunteer instructors to go to Artesia for a minimum of six months, and it would be foolish to force employees to go there as instructors for any length of time. Impressionable new-hires deserve to be trained by instructors who are both highly-qualified and highly-motivated.
 - The Border Patrol needs to revamp and standardize its field training program to ensure that new-hires are learning all of the requisite skills in a systematic and comprehensive manner. The current system is too haphazard, and is in need of vast improvements.
 - The recent practice of requiring former Border Patrol agents to complete the entire 19-week Border Patrol Academy course again after they are re-hired is a waste of time and precious resources. These employees have already proven their mettle, and any refresher training that might be necessary could be accomplished in much less time.

Hiring large numbers of new employees will accomplish very little if they merely use the Border Patrol as a springboard for other law enforcement careers. For a variety of reasons, the Border Patrol has experienced a considerable amount of difficulty in retaining agents beyond a few years:

- Lack of job satisfaction. The most commonly-cited complaint concerns the so-called “strategy of deterrence” wherein agents are required to sit in stationary positions for eight to ten hours a day instead of being allowed to pursue those who are crossing our borders illegally. This “scarecrow strategy” never deterred anyone from crossing—at the most it merely pushed traffic to another part of the border—and has facilitated the entry of countless criminals and terrorists.
- Low pay. Border Patrol agents are paid considerably less than many other Federal, State and local law enforcement officials performing tasks of comparable complexity and danger. Because of their training and reputation, Border Patrol agents have no problem finding employment with other law enforcement agencies.
- Lack of mobility. Agents have very little choice in their initial assignment, and then find it very difficult to subsequently relocate. Even though the National Border Patrol Council convinced the agency to participate in a test program that dramatically reduced the cost of relocations, the agency has used this authority sparingly, and recently even canceled more than 150 transfers that had previously been approved. As might be imagined, this has had a devastating effect on morale.
- New personnel system. The recent changes in the personnel system authorized by the Homeland Security Act of 2002 have caused numerous employees to reconsider their decision to remain with the Federal Government. All employees want to be treated and paid fairly, and to have a say in the decisions that affect their working conditions. Although the new rules purport to be progressive measures that will reward and encourage superior performance and hold all employees accountable, they are in fact throwbacks to the corrupt, cronyism-based nineteenth century civil service system that nearly ruined public service in this country. Even though this system has not yet been officially implemented, disturbing evidence of management abuses of power in anticipation of this new authority is already coming to light.

Although the attrition rate has stabilized at a relatively low level lately, this will not last, as the aforementioned problems have not been resolved. The current level is artificially low for two primary reasons:

- The dearth of recent new-hires skews the rate lower than normal, as the attrition rate has historically been highest among employees during their first three years of employment.
- Budgetary shortfalls at all levels of government—Federal, State, and local—are temporarily keeping dissatisfied employees in place. As soon as these other agencies begin hiring large numbers of employees, a mass exodus of Border Patrol agents will undoubtedly occur, as was the case when the Federal Air Marshal Service began its hiring expansion and the Border Patrol’s attrition rate soared to nearly 20%.

While the aforementioned challenges are formidable, they are not insurmountable. Many of them will require substantial expenditures to address, but the security of our Nation’s borders is a worthwhile investment. It must constantly be remembered that the goal is not simply to hire more Border Patrol agents—the underlying reason for this build-up is the security of our borders. Every decision related to the hiring of Border Patrol agents must therefore reflect that overarching goal and purpose. Shortchanging this process will ultimately diminish the security of our Nation.

Mr. ROGERS. Very good. Thank you.

And the Chair now recognizes Mr. Gary Jackson, President of Blackwater USA, for any statement you may have.

**STATEMENT OF GARY JACKSON, PRESIDENT, BLACKWATER
USA**

Mr. JACKSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
Congressman Meek, thank you.

And I hope you heard my first part of my testimony, and I hope that my testimony is helpful to the committee in determining how we can most effectively train more Border Patrol agents.

Our Border Patrol agents have a daunting, overwhelming task providing security for thousands of miles of border to prevent terrorist activity, illegal immigration, and drug trafficking.

I look forward to discussing ways Blackwater may be able to assist in making this daunting task to secure our borders more effective.

Blackwater was founded in 1997 from a clear vision of the need for innovative, flexible training, and security solutions in support of national and global security challenges. Both the military and law enforcement agencies needed additional capacity to fully train their personnel to the standards required to keep our country secure. Because these constraints on training venues continue to increase, Blackwater believes that the U.S. government would embrace outsourcing of quality training. We built Blackwater's facility in North Carolina to provide the capacity that we thought our government would need to meet its future training requirements.

Over the years, Blackwater has not only become an industry leader in training but at the cutting edge in five additional business units. These units completely support the training center itself. They are target systems, security consulting, aviation worldwide services, canine services and Raven Development Group, which is a construction company.

As we grew, we quickly realized the value to the government of one-stop shopping. While there are other companies who offer one or two distinct training services, none of them offer all of our services and certainly not at one location, except for FLETC.

The importance of this cannot be overstated. Being able to conduct training at a centralized locality is the most cost-effective, efficient way of ensuring that new federal law enforcement agents are trained to the level demanded by today's national and homeland security challenges.

The Federal Law Enforcement Training Center, FLETC, can be proud of the way in which it recruits and trains our Department of Homeland Security law enforcement professionals. The sites at Glynco, Artesia, Charleston, and Cheltenham continue to be professionally managed, and when the scheduled renovations are completed, the FLETC network should be fully capable of providing the capacity needed to train the required numbers of agents.

As a private firm, Blackwater is not in competition with FLETC. However, as a company of committed Americans, we are prepared to and fully capable of supporting the FLETC mission when surge capacity is required. We already enjoy a very good relationship with FLETC. Both of our organizations benefit from the wisdom of many retired military and law enforcement professionals, and we continually see people with whom we have worked and served with during our government service.

Based on limited information, this is from me, sir, we have drawn up a rough order of magnitude as to what the costs would be to provide a turnkey solution to train 2,000 new Border Patrol agents at Blackwater. Again, on limited information that I have at our facility, that solution would cost approximately \$40,000 per person for the 18-to 20-week course. Now, there is a 19-week course and a 20-week course. The course I am led to believe is a 19-week course utilizing a one-week transit.

When I give that price, we are pricing a full burdened number that accounts for overhead, general and administrative expenses, and is based on what it costs for tactical driving, firearms, classroom training at our facility.

Further, we believe it would take us approximately one year to train all 2,000 agents. Blackwater successfully conducts a similar public-private partnership with the Department of State to recruit, train, deploy and manage diplomatic security specialists in Iraq and other areas of interest.

Securing our borders will continue to be a challenge for our nation. The urgency is clear: history repeatedly demonstrates that innovation and efficiency are what alter the strategic balance and Blackwater offers both in support of training of new Border Patrol agents.

Just as the private sector has responded in moving mail and packages around the world in a more efficient manner, so too can Blackwater respond to CBP's emerging and compelling training needs. We are committed to supporting the United States, the Department of Homeland Security, the Customs and Border Patrol Service, and the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center in fulfilling their mission, in securing our borders, and keeping all citizens safe.

I hope my brief comments have highlighted some of the alternatives available to most effectively augment our border security efforts, and I look forward to hearing your questions and observations.

[The statement of Mr. Jackson follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF GARY JACKSON

Thank you Mr. Chairman, Congressman Meek, and Committees Members for the opportunity to explore with you concerns surrounding our border security. It is an honor for me to appear before you today. I hope that my testimony is helpful to the committee in determining how we can most effectively train more Border Patrol Agents.

Our Border Patrol agents have a daunting, overwhelming task; provide security for thousands of miles of border to prevent terrorist activity, illegal immigration, and drug trafficking. I look forward to discussing ways Blackwater may be able to assist in making this daunting task to secure our borders more effective.

Blackwater was founded in 1997 from a clear vision of the need for innovative, flexible training and security solutions in support of national and global security challenges.

Both the military and law enforcement agencies needed additional capacity to fully train their personnel to the standards required to keep our country secure. Because the constraints on training venues continued to increase, Blackwater believed that the U.S. Government would embrace outsourcing of quality training. We built Blackwater's facility in North Carolina to provide the capacity that we thought our government would need to meet its future training requirements.

Over the years, Blackwater (www.blackwaterusa.com) has become only an industry leader in training, but at the cutting edge in five additional business units: Blackwater Target Systems, Blackwater Security Consulting, Blackwater Aviation Worldwide Services, Blackwater Canine, and Raven Development Group.

Blackwater is the nation's largest private tactical and firearms training facility. Our 6000 acre facility was ready when the country needed it. The bombing of the USS Cole in Yemen had sent a ripple through the U.S. Navy, and after the tragedy of September 11, 2001, that ripple was felt worldwide. The Navy appropriately responded realizing that in order to combat today's terrorist threat, all Sailors would need substantial training in basic and advanced force protection techniques. The Navy moved swiftly to create a sound training program, but realized that it did not have the requisite infrastructure or capacity to execute its plan.

Because of our ability to support our government's emergent and compelling needs, Blackwater was selected in an open and competitive bid to assist the Navy and we now execute and manage that contract all over the country. Sailors the world over are now better prepared to identify, appropriately engage, and defeat would-be attacks on naval vessels in port and underway. To date, Blackwater has trained approximately 35,000 Sailors.

As we grew, we quickly realized the value to the government of "one-stop shopping". While there are other companies who offer one or two distinct training services, none of them offer all of our services, and certainly not at one location. The importance of this cannot be overstated; being able to conduct training at a centralized locality is the most cost-effective, efficient way of ensuring that new federal law enforcement agents are trained to the level demanded by today's national and homeland security challenges.

The Federal Law Enforcement Training Center (FLETC) can be proud of the way in which it recruits and trains our Department of Homeland Security law enforcement professionals. The sites at Glynco, Artesia, Charleston, and Cheltenham continue to be professionally managed and when the scheduled renovations and upgrades are completed, the FLETC network should be fully capable of providing the capacity needed to train the required number of agents.

As a private firm, Blackwater is not in competition with FLETC. However, as a company of committed Americans we are prepared to and fully capable of supporting the FLETC mission when surge capacity is required. We already enjoy a good relationship with FLETC. Both of our organizations benefit from the wisdom of many retired military and law enforcement professionals and we continually see people with whom we've worked and served with in during our government service.

Based on limited information, we have drawn up a rough order of magnitude as to what the cost would be to provide a turnkey solution to train 2,000 new Border Patrol Agents at Blackwater. That solution would cost approximately \$40,000.00 per person for the 18-week course. That is a fully burdened number that accounts for overhead, general and administrative expenses, and is based on what it costs for tactical driving, firearms, and classroom training at our facility. Further, we believe it would take us approximately one year to train all 2,000 agents.

Blackwater successfully conducts a similar public-private partnership with the Department of State to recruit, train, deploy and manage Diplomatic Security Specialists in Iraq and other areas of interest.

Securing our borders will continue to be a challenge for our nation. The urgency is clear. History repeatedly demonstrates that innovation and efficiency are what alter the strategic balance, and Blackwater offers both in support of training new Border Patrol agents.

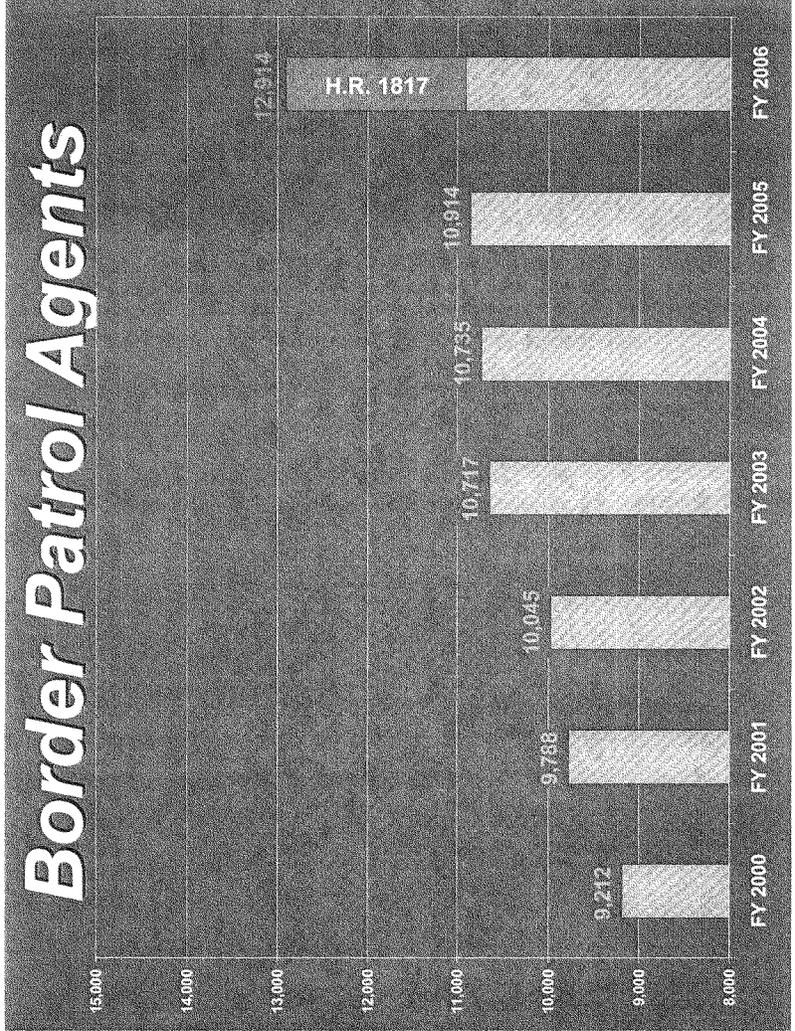
Just as the private sector has responded in moving mail and packages around the world in a more efficient manner, so too can Blackwater respond to the CBP emergent and compelling training needs. We are committed to supporting the United States, the Department of Homeland Security, the Customs and Border Patrol Service, and the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center in fulfilling their missions in securing our borders and keeping all citizens safe.

I hope my brief comments have highlighted some of the alternatives available to most effectively training augment our borders security efforts and I look forward to hearing your questions and observations.

Mr. ROGERS. Great. I thank you both.

At this time, I would like to ask for unanimous consent to post a board up that is an illustration of the Border Patrol agent level. Without objection.

If you will look over here, you will see over the years what our level of agents has been. Currently, it is at 10,914. With H.R. 1817, it would go to almost 13,000, which I think you touched on that, Mr. Bonner, in your statement, the need.



Let me ask you, aside from the infrastructure enhancements that you have referenced that we need and other enhancements as far as pay that deal with job satisfaction, would that level of agents adequately meet our Border Patrol needs in this country if we were to go to that 13,000 level?

This is for Mr. Bonner.

Mr. BONNER. No, I do not believe it would, not if we continue to pursue the current strategy. I believe that you could put hundreds of thousands of Border Patrol agents out there. As long as the employment magnet is switched on, people who are making \$2 or \$4 a day are going to continue to come across. These are very desperate people. That is why hundreds of them die crossing the deserts every year. They really have very little to lose. They will do anything to get into this country because they know that there is a pot of gold at the end of that rainbow; that being?

Mr. ROGERS. So you are saying there is no number of Border Patrol officers that can stop the flow of illegal immigrants into this country.

Mr. BONNER. Not under the current strategy, sir. Now, I believe that if you combine this strategy with a strategy that turns off that employment magnet, then you could achieve it with probably about a doubling of our current workforce, allowing us to go after the roughly 2 percent of the traffic that is out there now who are criminals and terrorists who are breaching our borders. I believe that we could control that.

Mr. ROGERS. Go back to the training we talked about a little bit earlier. Do you believe that the 2,000 agents that we have authorized could be trained in the next 12 months with our existing infrastructure?

Mr. BONNER. I believe so. I think the real bottleneck is that on-the-job training. I think that theoretically you could put any number of people through a basic academy, but you need that one-on-one mentoring very desperately in a law enforcement environment, and I think that about the most that you can reasonably do in any given year is to increase by 25 percent, and this is within that figure.

Mr. ROGERS. What steps could we take to better integrate these officers, these new officers in?

Mr. BONNER. Well, I think it is not so much just a matter of integrating them in, but I think it is a matter of supporting them with the infrastructure so that you have enough support personnel so that they are not forced to do these jobs that you could actually be hiring someone in at a lower grade who wants to, for example, monitor a camera. This agent hired on to do a specific job, they wanted to be a law enforcement officer, and if they are stuck in one spot monitoring a camera or repairing vehicles, very soon they say, "I think I am going to look for another job."

Mr. ROGERS. Yes. You made the reference earlier in your statement that we need to be careful, not try to meet these Border Patrol officer levels on the cheap. Did you find—I know you were present for the first panel's testimony—did you find surprising the number of \$179,000 to train each additional officer, not including FLETC's tuition?

Mr. BONNER. I have not seen the breakdown, so I do not know what they are factoring into that. Now, if it factors in everything that you need, your vehicles, your share of the support personnel, I think the number would be low, but I do not know exactly what they are including.

Mr. ROGERS. You think \$179,000 would be low?

Mr. BONNER. Would be low if you are including the entire package. If when you hire a Border Patrol agent you say, "Okay, this is what it is going to take," you have to have your part of the communications network, including the radio dispatchers, the radio infrastructure, and you have to have your part of the vehicle that this person is going to drive, and you have to have your part of the weaponry and the uniforms and all that. I think that number would be low. But as I said, I have not seen a breakdown, so I do not know what all they are including in there.

Mr. ROGERS. All right. Let me shift gears a minute.

Mr. JACKSON, you talked about \$40,000 being a figure based on the limited information that you have got that you could train these Border Patrol agents. Is that using the same curriculum, as you understand the curriculum, as currently offered?

Mr. JACKSON. Sir, as I did state in my statement, we have minimal information here. We understand it is about a 19-week course. We did some due diligence. We understand that 7 weeks of it, probably 6, 7 weeks of law enforcement. You did mention in your statement about the firearms training. There is the firearms training, there is the driver training. There is a 6-or 7-week Border Patrol operations training, which we are assuming is on-the-job type training under the basic school level.

So what we did is we took our GSA, our Government Services Administration, validated pricing, utilizing the JFTR, the Joint Federal Travel Regulation, and tried to take that period of time, use it against the training that we do now for a lot of different government entities and basically came up with a rough order of magnitude for that period of time about a 20-week course. It is fully burdened. That would be ammunition. That means we would provide the guns, we would provide everything for them, and they would basically supply us with a ready candidate on day one, and 19 weeks later we would hand back to the government a fully trained—

Mr. ROGERS. Let me ask this question, then my time is running out. If we, as the Federal Government, were to offer you \$100,000 per officer, could you assure us that you would give them equal or better training than they are receiving from FLETC?

Mr. JACKSON. Yes, sir, I could assure you of that.

Mr. ROGERS. Okay. I have got more questions, but I will wait until the next round.

The Chair now recognizes the gentleman from Florida, Mr. Meek.

Mr. MEEK. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and it is an honor, President Bonner, having you before the committee.

Also, President Jackson.

Mr. Bonner, I am familiar with your advocacy on behalf of the men and women in Border Patrol and we appreciate it.

Mr. Jackson, I just want to let you know that you all run a very professional outfit. I have had an opportunity to see some of your

people work firsthand, not only in Iraq but also in Afghanistan due to my visits abroad.

Mr. Bonner, President Bonner, you mentioned something about Border Patrol agents and you said they are doing jobs that others can do. Can you elaborate on some of the positions that may exist already in the Patrol that those kind of individuals can handle the monitoring of television monitors, alarms that may go off? Can you elaborate a little further on how we can possibly get more of our men and women out doing the work of being a Border Patrol officer versus being in the office?

Mr. BONNER. Well, for example, we have what are called law enforcement communications assistants who are supposed to be manning the radios, the cameras, the sensors. Unfortunately, when you do not have enough money to hire those people at a lower grade than you would hire a Border Patrol agent, then someone has to do that.

You have immigration enforcement officers who belong to ICE now who are supposed to be handling all of the transportation of illegal aliens. But, for various reasons, one of which is the Border Patrol no longer controls these resources, so instead of just saying, "Hey, we need you to go pick these people up," you have to make high-level calls and beg to have the work done. And, eventually, you just throw your hands up and say, "We will do it ourselves." But then you are paying a journeyman Border Patrol agent at the GS-11 level to do something that could be done by someone at the GS-9 level.

Mr. MEEK. Which can hopefully put them back on, I guess, patrol.

Mr. BONNER. Right. I mean, you have trained these officers, these Border Patrol agents to go out and enforce immigration laws, so you should be using them for that purpose. They should not be in a garage, for example, helping to repair vehicles because you do not have enough mechanics and not enough money in the budget to hire the mechanics. You should figure out a way to get those support positions filled so that you can free up all of your resources.

I mean, at any given time, at the very best, we only have 25 percent of that 10,700 agents working on the line, because we are running 3 shifts a day, 7 days a week. But when you strip away the people who are in support positions, at any given moment there are probably fewer than 2,000 Border Patrol agents out there protecting America.

Mr. MEEK. Okay. On the tail end of your answer there, I sure would appreciate if the counsel would put together some sort of white paper on how we can improve the efficiency of the Department, especially the Bureau, in being able to help the Border Patrol officers from having to carry out those kind of duties that you mentioned.

I am pretty sure as we move forth in trying to put more agents on our borders that we can even increase that number by relieving those that are doing lesser duty and putting them out in the effort in protecting our borders. So if you can advance that to the committee, I sure would appreciate it, because it could be a part of the solution.

One other thing I want to ask you, because I have to ask President Jackson a question quickly: Where are we losing our Border Patrol officers? Where are they going? That is one part of it.

The second part is, what are the law—the chairman mentioned something a little earlier. If you are already trained in the area, 9 times out of 10 you already have your law enforcement certification, your Academy may be shorter than the average person that comes off of the street, because you are coming, one, under law enforcement experience, and you have a certification. That happens in many of our state law enforcement agencies and local law enforcement agencies.

Where are we losing our men and women? I mean, we are training them and then they are going off and others are benefiting from it.

Mr. BONNER. Historically, we lost most of our agents to other federal law enforcement agencies. We are seeing a trend now emerging where they are going off to the state and local law enforcement agencies as well. One of the reasons that the current attrition rate is relatively low is twofold: One, we have not hired that many people, and we lose most of the agents either during that first year or in the next couple of years.

The—excuse me for just a second.

Mr. MEEK. Well, while you are taking a water break there, I am not going to—hopefully, President Jackson, I will get back to you, but is it true that when someone goes—let's say, for instance, an individual leaves from the Border Patrol and goes to the Federal Air Marshal Program. They do not have to go through the whole training experience all over again. Is that a correct statement would you believe?

Mr. BONNER. When they did the air marshals ramp-up, they had a reduced course for those who had prior federal law enforcement training. One of the disturbing things is when we are hiring people back—such as I believe we hired about 400 of our Border Patrol agents back from the Air Marshal Program—many of those agents were required to undergo the entire 19 weeks of training, even though they had already done that just a few years prior to that. These were people that if the law had changed slightly, maybe a week refresher course and they would have been back up to speed. It was just a tremendous waste of resources and money.

Mr. MEEK. Well, Mr. President, I mean, I think you just answered the prevailing question that was asked by the chairman of the other panel. In many instances, these individuals are already trained, and they are being double counted, and I mean that is an extremely awful lot of money that this Congress is being told. Even on the rehire because you do have people that are coming back and you have people that are cross-pollinating through the federal law enforcement experience. They want to be a Border Protection officer, some may leave, I do not know, ATF, but they have that basic law enforcement training.

Mr. BONNER. I think they could do much better, sir. I think they could figure out?make modules and say, "Okay, you already know general arrest authority, you already know this, so we are going to give you a little bit of refresher on that and we are going to heavy

up on the immigration law because you have never been taught that." But I think that is something that needs to be looked at.

Mr. MEEK. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for the extended time.

Mr. ROGERS. I thank the gentleman.

The Chair now recognizes the gentleman from California, Mr. Cox.

Mr. COX. Thank you.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to begin by asking Mr. Jackson the same question you asked him with a different figure. You asked him if he could provide thorough training for \$100,000. I want to ask if you could provide thorough training for \$32,000, because that is the figure, as I understand it, that we were just given by the first panel for the training piece itself, not including hiring, recruiting and so on.

And when people come to you as surge capacity instructees, they have already been recruited and we are going to put them in the field and pay them at the government's expense, not yours. They will be paid in fact while they are taking training, so the comparable figure that we should be asking about, if I am not mistaken, is \$32,000. Is that in the ballpark of what you could do?

Mr. JACKSON. Yes, sir. It is well in the ballpark, but I would then question what does the \$32,000 cover? Again, I do not have the requirements. I do not know the specified requirements that the Border Patrol needs to get through that 19 weeks of training.

Mr. COX. All right. So we may be asking you an unfair question in the sense that you have not been able to do a formal presentation of what you could do for X amount because they have not told you exactly what would be required.

Mr. JACKSON. If I knew what the requirements were. Does that include the officer's gun, his primary weapon and secondary weapon at the end of training? Does he walk away with that gun? I train a lot of people and I provide the weapons.

Our prior performance, our number one prior performance on this type of evolution would be the U.S. Navy. The Navy came to us after the USS Cole and said, "We cannot train our men and women, sailors, in firearms and force protection because we do not have any instructors left. So they came to us 3 years ago, opening a competitive bid. We did that, and we have trained about 35,000 sailors across the United States, in San Diego, San Antonio, Texas, Virginia and North Carolina. We do that for anywhere from 1-to 3-week types of courses. They gave us the curriculum, here is the curriculum, the U.S. Navy curriculum, and said, "This is exactly what you will teach," and that is exactly what we did.

They provide us with a qualified person on Monday morning, and we provide them with a fully certified student, graduated on either the first, second, or third week depending on how long the course is. Utilizing our GSA, our costing models, that is how I came to you with that number. So what are the requirements for a 19-week course? I do not know the exact specified requirements, though. If they gave that to me, I could come back to you with a detailed pricing, but it would cost as an outsourced solution.

Mr. COX. But you are certainly interested in pursuing that option?

Mr. JACKSON. We are always interested in pursuing—helping the U.S. government. That is what we do. I have a medium-sized company with a lot of—probably 90 percent of our staff is former law enforcement or former military, anywhere from the minimum 4 years to the maximum 30-something years in service. We have 1,300 people working for Blackwater around the world today, and, again, probably somewhere around 85 to 90 percent of those people are former something U.S. government, and that is what we do.

Mr. COX. Mr. Bonner, you certainly appreciate what we want this training to produce. You know what we really need on the job.

I am intrigued by the interchange you just had with Mr. Meek about your interest in modules for training that might take advantage of different levels of preparedness that trainees bring to their basic training.

The Government Accountability Office when it reviewed FLETC operations said that it was not really taking advantage of alternative instructional methods, including e-learning. Do you think there is any opportunity, particularly on the legal side, for that kind of training?

Mr. BONNER. I am sorry, which kind of training was that?

Mr. COX. E-learning; that is to say distance learning, Internet and so on. Is it possible that for the book learning part of this the Internet could be one means of reducing the cost?

Mr. BONNER. It is a possibility, but one of the concerns I have at this level of a person's career is part of what you are doing is evaluating that person to make sure that they have the right stuff to be a federal law enforcement officer. You just do not want to give anyone a badge and a gun and arrest authority and throw them out there, because that would be an invitation to disaster. Probably more important in that is that on-the-job training would occur when they get back from the Academy where you are really scrutinizing—

Mr. COX. I could not agree with you more. In fact, what I would like to see is the training being more focused on that aspect. I am concerned that we are placing a significant emphasis on the very rudimentary parts.

Mr. BONNER. I could not agree with you more. One of the things that has troubled me for a long time is the fact that the Border Patrol goes through the pretense of firing people based on suitability through their 6-and 10-month law and Spanish examinations and artificially lowers the number to get rid of people when they should just tell them, "Look, you are not working out. Based on what we have seen out in the field, you are just not working out," and they do not really need a reason.

And that is the current state of civil service law. You can fire someone within that first year based on that gut feeling you have that they are just not going to work out. And they would be doing a favor to these people instead of saying, "You know, you got a 69.99 on the Spanish test. You almost made it. Have a nice life."

Mr. COX. Well, I thank you, Mr. Chairman. My time is expired.

Mr. ROGERS. I thank the gentleman.

The Chair now recognizes the ranking member from Mississippi, Mr. Thompson, for any questions he may have.

Mr. THOMPSON. Thank you very much.

Mr. Bonner, one of the discussions that we have constantly had to address here is with respect to how Border Patrol relates to other law enforcement officials, and you will have some members of Congress who would like to see some of that responsibility passed on to local law enforcement through some kind of training component, reimbursement component. What has been the experience of the Border Patrol along those lines with other law enforcement? Do they want to get involved in those issues or would they rather see it remain at the federal level?

Mr. BONNER. Most law enforcement officers that we interface with at the state and local level would like to have limited authority to deal with situations where they feel it is appropriate to take action, but they do not want to become full-time immigration law enforcement officers, especially in communities that have a very large percentage of illegal immigrants, because it would just tie up all of their resources and prevent them from going out and doing the other aspects of their work, such as protecting the citizenry.

Mr. THOMPSON. Mr. Jackson, you know, when you look at the numbers that you have presented to us today, to be quite honest with you, they are startling, going from \$40,000 to somewhere, \$179,000 or \$180,000. And if I glean from your testimony, as someone in the private sector, you would not be adverse to having the opportunity of training any of these law enforcement personnel for these various responsibilities.

Mr. JACKSON. No, sir. We are standing by.

Mr. THOMPSON. And have you approached any of these agencies with this offer up to this point?

Mr. JACKSON. Not on this particular requirement. But over the years, we are 8 years old and we have approached many, many entities on giving them different solutions. And we do a lot of them today. Again, we do the Navy, we have the Department of State. These are major, major programs that we run today.

Mr. THOMPSON. Well, if the Border Patrol module could be provided to you and you could cost it out and you could come back and say for one-half of what you are presently spending I could give you that same individual that would meet every qualification or requirement that is presently put in this manual, so you are saying you could do it.

Mr. JACKSON. There is absolutely no doubt that we could do it. I would say to you, sir, that we are probably the only private company in the United States today that could do that. And the reason I say that is we are really the only private company in the U.S. that has a 6,000 acre private training facility of a—maybe not on the FLETC standard because it is not paid with taxpayers' money—it is on our standard. It is on a very, very high standard, and we are training tens of thousands of people every year. These are everybody from your tier one, your best of the best of the military, to your best of the best of the federal law enforcement.

Mr. THOMPSON. Mr. Bonner, are there any lateral transfers into the Border Patrol under existing standards, to your knowledge? In other words, if I am in another federal service, am I allowed to transfer?

Mr. BONNER. You are allowed to transfer, but they will make you go through the entire 19-week Border Patrol Academy. Even if you

are a—let's say you are a 20-year veteran with all kinds of commendations, they will still make you go through the entire 19-week Border Patrol Academy.

Mr. THOMPSON. Thank you very much.

Mr. ROGERS. Thank you.

The Chair now recognizes the gentlelady from Texas, Ms. Jackson-Lee, for any questions she may have.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE. I thank the chairman and I thank the Ranking Member for this hearing, and I thank the witnesses.

I apologize for being delayed. I was in a Judiciary Committee hearing on the other side of the campus, but this is a very important hearing and raises a very important question. I think some weeks ago, Mr. Bonner might have been present, I raised issues about the largeness of the Homeland Security Department—180,000 strong that may speak to some of the concerns being expressed about the question of capacity.

And capacity for me is equal to security and equal to the securing of the homeland, the ability to provide the resources on an ongoing basis. I am still committed to the 9/11 authorization bill, which authorized 2,000 Border Patrol agents per year, as I understand, over a 5-year period and 800 ICE agents over a 5-year period.

I want to just raise the comments of Connie Patrick to frame my question and also to provide some insights on how crucial I think or what a state of crisis we are in without putting crisis and alarmist together but that we need to move energetically. That is why I compliment the chairman and the Ranking Member of the subcommittee and the chairman and Ranking Member of the full committee, because I think their efforts have really focused on the urgency of the work of the Homeland Security Committee.

But, Ms. Patrick said over the years FLETC has experienced periods of substantial growth in the training requests by its partner organizations. Using innovation and imagination to maximize these resources, these increases have been accommodated. That ability continues. But at the close of that paragraph, she said, "However, extraordinary measures, such as a 6-day training work week, are difficult to sustain, take a toll on both staff and facilities and are costly."

In the last 24 hours in Houston, a federal law enforcement organization was able to capture an individual who allegedly came to Houston under the pretense of meeting with Al-Qa'ida to sell them a bomb-making formula or to sell them a bomb. I think that says to us in the backdrop of the near scare that we had a couple of weeks ago of a Cessna that seemed to have broken through all of our security here in Washington, D.C., that homeland security should be a very high level of concern.

I also add my concern of giving a sense to the American people that they have got to do it themselves. I point out the minutemen. Today, in Texas, a number of state legislatures have asked the minutemen through all of their patriotism to stay home, because Texas poses, even though I know many of us have indicated and respect their concern and their patriotism, but they can create a volatile situation on the border for untrained, unauthorized individuals.

My question to both of you would be, is the issue of not being able to have the capacity to train an overall management issue of an overly big corporation, such as the Department of Homeland Security? And in the course of just a side question, does the federal training also have training in languages such as Spanish?

Mr. Jackson, do you have capacity in your training?

But, Mr. Bonner, in particular, are we overwhelmed by the largeness of the department. Should we have a narrow training facility that deals specifically with training of border patrol agents and not have this sort of comprehensive hand that does law enforcement, maybe local and state involvement, but really focused because we say that homeland security is a priority. Should that not be separated out, distinguishable in order to secure the homeland?

I thank the gentleman, and I would appreciate an answer from Mr. Bonner and Mr. Jackson.

Mr. BONNER. The Border Patrol does have its own unique training facility, which was incorporate by FLETC back in 1977, I believe. It has managed to maintain pretty much an independent role there, although there are some courses that FLETC oversees.

Probably the biggest mistake that the Border Patrol has made of late is one that was not so much their doing but a political consideration: moving from Charleston out to Artesia. I do not believe that community has the infrastructure to support that large of an operation, and, certainly—and this is no slam on the Chamber of Commerce there—it is not something as enticing as, say, Charleston, South Carolina or the St. Simons Island near Brunswick, Georgia where you want to take your family while you go instruct for 6 months to bring them out into the middle of nowhere in Artesia, New Mexico.

That presents a challenge. We need to look at different ways of doing things if we are going to step up and meet the challenge of training, not just these 2,000 but the bill, the 9/11 bill calls for 2,000 agents being trained every year for the next 5 years. And I think that is really a minimum figure if we want to secure our borders. We need to train as many people as possible, so we need to look at different ways of achieving that goal.

Mr. JACKSON. Ma'am, again, I came today to say that I could help FLETC if their capacity was not—if they were not prepared for that emerging and compelling capacity. We are prepared to do that. We have grown over the last 8 years utilizing a modular system, and, again, I have heard modular a couple of times a day. We use a modular system and it is scalable. It scales up, it scales down.

We are prepared to scale up to support a FLETC Border Patrol emerging and compelling requirement if that was requested of us. And we also are prepared to go forward and we could sustain that through a longer period of time if that was required.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE. Can I ask the gentleman just an indulgence on the question I asked about Spanish language training? Do you have that capacity?

Mr. JACKSON. Oh, yes, ma'am. We have every capacity that—not to sound big-headed here, but we have every capacity that the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center has. We work with a lot of the exact same people. We work with the exact same technologies.

We understand e-training. We are working some federal programs right now with these e-training distance learning through the Internet, or law enforcement training people. So, yes, ma'am, we are completely prepared for that.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE. Mr. Chairman, if I might, I guess, inquire both of you and the Ranking Member and also imposing it. As I listened to Mr. Bonner, and I did not hear his earlier testimony and scanned his written testimony, but I would hope that in this hearing we are looking at giving the Border Patrol agents greater capacity for training Border Patrol agents.

And I am not sure whether we are looking to give them an opportunity to be trained elsewhere. I just think their mission is so unique that it is important that they are trained by those who know the uniqueness of their mission. Both northern and southern border and. Also the teaching of their technology that I hope that they will be getting is particularly specific.

Mr. Bonner, are you looking to be trained elsewhere or you want more capacity in your own training facility?

Mr. BONNER. I think that in order to entice instructors who are fully qualified and highly motivated, I think we need to explore other locations beyond Artesia, and I concur with you that there are parts of that training where it is very critical that we have Border Patrol agents, people who have actually been there, done that instructing.

There are other parts that are not as critical, but certainly some parts, especially when it comes to immigration law and Border Patrol operations, where you just cannot teach that to an instructor. You cannot incorporate that into a module, because you have that interface with those trainees and those students. And talking to them not only during the class but after class so that they can understand the culture of the Border Patrol and the mission of the Border Patrol and that they assimilate those important considerations.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Thank the Ranking Member.

Thank you.

Mr. ROGERS. Thank you.

I want to follow up and make sure I understand what you are saying. Do you believe—maybe this is what Ms. Jackson-Lee was getting at—do you believe that we can comparably train these people outside the existing Border Patrol infrastructure if it is through a private contractor or maybe a major university with a law enforcement department.

Do you believe that you could get a product out of that infrastructure that would be satisfactory to you?

Mr. BONNER. I think there are parts that could be contracted out, but I think there are other parts that have to be taught by Border Patrol agents.

Mr. ROGERS. Okay. Are those part—you know, we heard earlier in the first panel that there was a 5-month, 19-week training program that was kind of on campus, and then another 5 months after that, there was training in the field. Do you believe that the 5-month on-campus training could be contracted out pretty readily?

Mr. BONNER. Only certain parts of it. There are other parts that I believe would have to have Border Patrol agents as the instructors. Now, I mean, one of the things that they have done now is rehired annuitants, bringing them back to instruct—people who served an entire career with the Border Patrol and that is something that could be explored.

Mr. ROGERS. So if the contractor or university were to hire as part of their faculty former Border Patrol officers, do you believe, do you believe the end product would be just as good as what you are receiving from the current infrastructure?

Mr. BONNER. I believe it would be close. I am not sure that it would be quite to the level, because I do not believe there is any substitute for active field agents who are out there confronting the problems every day and who can pass along some of what they have gleaned over their careers.

Mr. ROGERS. You talked earlier about the need, in your view, for us to really pay more attention to what it is going to take to retain our Border Patrol officers: compensation, benefits, as well as infrastructure enhancements. When looking to the Congress, if we can find a way to prudently and effectively train these officers at a fraction of what is being suggested here, don't you believe a significant amount of that money we could direct to compensation?

Mr. BONNER. I am real unclear when they threw out these numbers of \$179,000, \$189,000—what all is going into that mix.

Mr. ROGERS. That makes several of us.

Mr. BONNER. Yes. If they are including your equipment, your facilities, and your support personnel, your communications devices, all of these things that are really necessary to do the job, then the number does sound unreasonable, in fact it sounds a little low. Now, if they are just talking about the cost of a half-year salary and the actual training, then it sounds very high to me.

Mr. ROGERS. Let me skip to Mr. Jackson real quick. You talked earlier in your introductory remarks that you have a very complimentary relationship with FLETC. You work together and you are there more to help supplement or enhance any capability requirements that might exist. Has your company in the past ever had any contractual relationship with FLETC that was in fact a supplemental or complimentary relationship?

Mr. JACKSON. No, sir, not supplemental in the training side. We have on the target side, on a few other issues, we have done some work. We were down there as little as 2 weeks ago. Again, not on the training side, plus he is been able to handle their load.

I would just like to mention, Ms. Jackson-Lee, there were a couple of issues there that were going around. One was the facilities. Facilities today are very, very expensive, as I am sure you guys well, well know. There is one out there right now, a Department of State cask facility. It started at \$55 million 2 years ago and 3 years ago. It is at somewhere between \$600 million and \$900 million today in Aberdeen, Maryland.

When you start talking about building new facilities to have some place to train here because it is this kind of?the reason that the FLETC has waited, the reason that Blackwater has waited is we bring those people to our position and we try to get everything that we can get done done there. Start moving people all around

the country, flying them in, flying them out, put them on buses doing this, you lose travel days, you lose a lot of training time.

The 19-week course, again, sir, I do not know exactly what the curriculum looks like. Should it be 19 weeks? I am listening to Mr. Bonner here. Should it be 19 weeks? There is the first thing that somebody needs to look at. Does it really need to be 19 weeks long?

As a private company, we hire former Border Patrol agents to do our instructing to Border Patrol personnel. If we are going to do FBI training for HRT, we hire former FBI HRT personnel to teach that. We do not use law enforcement to teach military, we do not use military to teach law enforcement. That has been our mantra since the day we opened up, and that is what we are doing today.

Mr. ROGERS. Thank you very much.

Do you have any additional questions?

I yield to the gentleman from Florida, Mr. Meek.

Mr. MEEK. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I once again want to say that this hearing is very informative to me but I know also to the committee.

President Jackson, I did not have an opportunity to ask you the questions that I wanted to ask you. Did share with you that I know that you are able and you are very good. We are not in competition. But, you know, competition is good sometimes. I mean, the U.S. Postal Service is what it is today because of competition.

And I was in the state legislature before I got to Congress, and there was always a concern about privatization and the private sector and the good and bad that comes along with that. But as it comes down to the protection of the homeland and your company is an exception to the rule and companies like it of being able to help this country meet its objectives as it relates to protecting the homeland. So I do not think that is anything that you need to worry about your colleagues questioning in the law enforcement community, your integrity of making sure that we commend what we have in place now. But we want to continue to compliment.

So I want to just ask you just a round of questions that maybe you can help clarify, because I believe this committee, like it or not, we are going to have to play a role in how we do business, because from what I am hearing and what I have read and what I have received from the Department, it is not necessarily something that I feel quite comfortable with at this point. And that is the reason why on the last panel I asked a question of the individuals that are in charge, the Deputy Commissioner, Chief of.

Do we have a new way of thinking and training? I mean, are we just looking at it in a way because this is the way we have always done it? And so that is where I believe you come in.

I want to ask you, as it relates to the State Department security agents, how many of those agents have you trained thus far, and how many have you have at one time in training at your 6,000 acre facility?

Mr. JACKSON. We are averaging today at Blackwater training multiple units, usually between 10 and 15 units a day, averaging this year for Monday through Friday, 450 students a day, every day, day in and day out, another 100, 150 over the weekend, every single day. We bus them in, we drive them in, they live at our property, however they get there, about 450 students every day.

Our capacity right now would be 1,000 students a day, which is—we have got some mid-term goals to get there.

Mr. MEEK. Okay. You are doing training but you also provide services as it relates to the State Department and the military. I know that you are doing some things in Iraq. It is giving an after-life to many of our men and women that are in the specialty areas, special forces. I was down in Central Command and they know that you are quite effective in recruiting some of their guys over to Blackwater.

Do you see any future, not just for your company but companies like your company that may very well see a market in this, getting into the issue of border protection?

Mr. JACKSON. Well, sir, listening to those numbers of pay for starting Border Patrol agents, with those types of numbers, I can put as many men together as you need, trained and on the borders.

Mr. MEEK. Okay. I want to ask this question because I am not?my history in public service is not really one that pushed privatization. I have some questions as it relates to the TSA and the privatization project that they have there, but I would much rather deal in a way to be able to let the Department know in this hearing and also get the information with the Department for those men and women that are in uniform trying to do the things that they can do, because I believe that when it comes down to protecting the homeland that there is room for innovation. There is room for us to be able to look at hopefully getting a bigger bang for our buck.

And it is interesting that you would be on the same panel with Mr. Bonner who may have another view and another opinion as it relates to that. And I mentioned in the last panel that we have a third tier here. Well, I guess we are the third tier, as elected citizens representing the taxpayers of the United States. And now we have citizens that are kind of saying, “Well, I know I am paying taxes, I am retired, ex-military, what have you, but I am going out to protect my border.”

Now, Ms. Jackson-Lee time after time mentioned the fact that those that are in elected service on a bipartisan level, but, please, we thank you but do not do it. We have that. That is not going away in my opinion. It is going to continue. I do not care what we tell people. So that means we have to reform ourselves. So I am very interested in how we are going to proceed from this point, and both of you are going to be very helpful in that process in providing us some very accurate information.

The last thing that I would want to do, Mr. Chairman, is set the stage, an uneven stage, that would put the Department in a posture where it is not on equal footing of the private sector if we are going to start to legislatively, respectfully introduce the private sector into protecting our borders and homeland. That is just my 2 cents that I want to put into this, but I think it is very, very important.

Mr. Bonner, I look forward to receiving that information from the Council on how we can use assistance or you mentioned—I am sorry, I wrote it down on another page—those individuals that can take over monitoring and transportation of individuals that are apprehended.

And Mr. Jackson, please feel free to share with me and other members of the committee on how Blackwater USA can serve in the capacity of protecting our borders and training and in other areas so that we know exactly what we are doing. But we are very serious about this, because all we need is one or two incidents to have us legislating in haste and then we do not get what we want.

And so, Mr. Chairman, we have had more subcommittee hearings than I thought we would have, and I would like to thank you for—than we would have had in this entire Congress, but I am glad that we are starting to look at the finer details of the Department to be able to help the Department make itself better and protecting the homeland. So I look forward to working with you and not only members of our panel but our other colleagues in making sure that we do what we need to do for the American people.

Thank you.

Mr. ROGERS. I thank the gentleman.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE, do you have any additional questions?

Ms. JACKSON-LEE. I do, as the Ranking Member did, Mr. Chairman, and have some concluding remarks and make sure that I just pose another question to Mr. Bonner.

Mr. Jackson, I think all of us who have advocated in different committees the importance of American businesses and business being done on our soil and you are doing that, we are certainly interested in the resources that you have and the partnerships you have already established.

Might I just, as an aside, hope that you are—I think you are in North Carolina, if I am not mistaken. You are in a university state. I hope that you are interfacing with some of the training techniques or opportunities with some of our colleges. I would suggest historically black colleges and Hispanic-serving colleges just because there are resources there. There are also people there, potential trainees, that may be of value. I hope that there is some partnership going there.

But I think that Mr. Meek has made a very valuable point along with Mr. Rogers on this whole issue of capacity and doing it the right way, not doing it the wrong way. I just heard another statistic about the percentage of Americans who said, “Yes, we need military at the border.” That may speak to my distinguished Ranking Member’s comment that people are going to do what they want to do. If they do not see military at the border, and they are thinking they need to go themselves. So maybe 2,000 is not even enough.

And finding ways to share even the training might be an approach to take, and I am interested in that. But, again, I emphasize, I think, the idea of online Border Patrol agents and ICE agents are the best to train their fellow men and women, and I do not want to get away from that.

Mr. Bonner, tell me if you can just clarify, you seem to suggest that you have a bad facility and you need to have either a new location or an enhanced facility or somewhere else that would encourage individuals to transfer over or to apply for the first time to be Border Patrol agents which then ups your numbers. Is that what I was hearing that is one of the solutions that you are offering today?

Mr. BONNER. The concern I have is with attracting the qualified and motivated instructors. You can train someone for that 19-week period and it really does not matter where they go because that is just 19 weeks of their life. They are brand new and they do not know that from anything. It is a question of can you entice people.

And the last thing you want to do is force someone to take a Border Patrol agent and say, "We are forcing you to go there to be an instructor." They are doing that now, and regardless of whether it is consciously or unconsciously, that is going to rub off. That dissatisfaction will rub off on those very impressionable new hires when this person gets up and says, "Boy, this outfit has treated me terribly," and they go, "What did I get myself into?"

So you want a place where people want to go. As I said before, this is not a slam on the good people or Artesia, but the infrastructure simply is not there to support such a large expansion. Perhaps they need to look at finding facilities elsewhere.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE. But you do believe that we have a capacity in the United States to find individuals that would either transfer and/or for the first time be interested in Border Patrol agents.

Mr. BONNER. We have no shortage of people wanting to apply to be Border Patrol agents. Our problem is hanging on to people once they come over and we mistreat them; either with the low pay or some of the personnel regulations that are now being implemented that strip away their rights and protections. And these things are factors that are going to drive good people away from federal service, and we have to look at all of these things to make sure that not only do we attract the best and the brightest, but that we manage to hang on to them.

Because it is a very expensive proposition to train someone. We should not just be a springboard for all of these other federal, state and local agencies. I mean, the training is top-notch, and all of these other agencies are more than willing to hire Border Patrol agents.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE. We need to be able to retain them.

Mr. BONNER. Exactly.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE. Let me thank the chairman and the Ranking Member and Mr. Jackson as well. Maybe we can find common ground on working together.

Chairman I would also offer that we could do this for the Transportation Security Administration. I would venture to say to you that they need some training. And for those of us who are consumers of their lack thereof on a regular basis, this might be the committee where we have them come in and give us—and I support TSA. I support the process or that structure that we now put in place, but I would welcome the opportunity for us to help them fix the training and the recruitment and the need for greater professionalism in order to do the nation's work.

I thank both gentlemen. Thank you.

I yield back.

Mr. ROGERS. I thank the gentlelady.

And I want to thank our witnesses for their testimony and I, thank the members for their questions.

We would like to let you know some of the other members who were not here may have some questions they would submit to you.

We are going to keep the record open for the next 10 days, so if somebody does submit a written question, I would ask you to make a written response to that.

And with that, we stand adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 4:35 p.m., the subcommittee was adjourned.]

APPENDIX

QUESTIONS AND RESPONSES FOR THE RECORD

QUESTIONS FROM THE HONORABLE MIKE ROGERS FOR CONNIE L. PATRICK

Question: Of the 19 training weeks, (1) what is involved; (2) who teaches each course?

Answer: The U.S. Border Patrol (USBP) Training Program is a 747-hour/91-day curriculum that includes course work in law and Spanish, as well as Border Patrol operations training, firearms training, physical training, and drivers training. The curriculum requires some 2,652-instructor hours to deliver. Federal Law Enforcement Center (FLETC) instructors, some of whom are rehired annuitants with USBP experience, teach the courses.

Question: Can we get the syllabus and course descriptions and schedule of classes?

Answer: The program syllabus and Schedule of classes for the US Border Patrol Integrated Basic Training Program are attached as an electronic file.

Question: What would be the total cost of training 2,000 additional agents at Artesia.

Answer: FLETC estimates the total cost would be \$61,645,535. Additional cost information is provided in the table that follows.

Additional FLETC Cost for Increased Border Patrol Agent Training 700 Attrition in
Budget Base ¹
Salary and Expenses

Basic Training Tuition (40 classes, 2,000 students)	\$11,507,240
Instructors (66 FTEs)	5,810,885
S&E Subtotal	\$17,318,125
Acquisition, Construction, Improvements and Related Expense.	
Temporary Facilities/Infrastructure, ^{2,3}	\$8,237,410
Aquatic Training Center ⁴	3,000,000
2 350-room Dorms ⁵	33,000,000
ACI&RE Subtotal	\$44,327,410
TOTAL	\$61,645,535

¹The FLETC budget for Fiscal Year 2006 already includes funding for 700 students, which is considered currently to be U.S. Border Patrol's attrition.

²Temporary facilities include, but are not limited to, modular classrooms, office space, break-out rooms, computer and Spanish lab, sewer enhancements.

³The temporary facilities requirement is reduced by \$1,882,000, which was provided in chapter 2 of the Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act for Defense, the Global War on Terror, and Tsunami Relief, 2005, Public Law 109-13, 119 Stat. 231,270.

⁴One-time construction cost.

⁵One-time construction cost.

QUESTION FROM CONGRESSMAN BENNIE THOMPSON FOR CONNIE L. PATRICK

Question: Can you provide training costs for each of the other agencies that train at FLETC?

Answer: This information is attached as an electronic file. (Maintained in the Committee's File.)

FEDERAL LAW ENFORCEMENT TRAINING CENTER
Basic Training Programs

Program	Acronym
Basic Police Officer Training Program	BPOTP
Customs and Border Protection Integrated	CBPI
Criminal Investigator Training Program	CITP
Federal Air Marshal Training Program	FAMTP
Immigration and Customs Enforcement Detection and Removal	ICE—D
Mixed Basic Police Training Program	MBPTP
United States Border Patrol Integrated	USBPI
United States Marshals Service Integrated	USMSI
Land Management Police Training	LMPT
Air Force Office of Special Investigations	AFOSI FB
Air Force Office of Special Investigations, Pre Basic	AFOSI PB
Alcohol Tobacco and Firearms, Special Agent Basic Training	ATF SABT
Alcohol Tobacco and Firearms, Industry Operations Investigator Training Program	ATF IOITP
Administrative Office of the United States Courts, Abbreviated Probation & Pretrial Services	AOUSC APPSTP
Basic Corrections Officer Training Program	BCOTP
Basic Juvenile Corrections Officer Training Program	BJCOTP
Bureau of Prisons Basic Training Program	BOP P
Basic Telecommunications Officer Training Program	BTOTP
Customs and Border Protection, Basic Import Specialist A	CBP BISA
Customs and Border Protection, Basic Import Specialist B	CBP BISB
Customs and Border Protection, Spanish Training Program	CBP STP
Central Intelligence Agency, Special Police Training Program	CIA SPTP
Citizenship and Immigration Service, Applications Adjudications Basic	CIS AAB
Citizenship and Immigration Service, Asylum Center Adjudications Officer	CIS ACAO
Citizenship and Immigration Service, District Adjudications Officer	CIS DAO
Citizenship and Immigration Service, Immigration Information Officer	CIS IIO
Citizenship and Immigration Service, Immigration Officer Anti Fraud	CIA OAFTP
Defense Criminal Investigative Service, Special Agent Basic	DCIS SAB
Environmental Protection Agency, Environmental Investigations Basic	EPA EIB
Food and Drug Administration, Special Agent Training Program	FDA SATP
Federal Protective Service, Pre Basic	FPS PB
Federal Protective Service, Follow On	FPS FB
Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Basic Intelligence Training Program	ICE BIT
Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Equivalency Training Program	ICE ETP
Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Special Agent Training Program	ICE SAT
Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Technical Enforcement Officer School	ICE TEOS
Inspector General, Investigator Training Program	IG ITP
Internal Revenue Service Criminal Investigations, Pre Basic	IRSC PB
Internal Revenue Service Criminal Investigations, Special Agent Basic Training	IRS SABT
Naval Criminal Investigative Service, Basic Intelligence Officer Training Program	NCIS BIOTP
Naval Criminal Investigative Service, Special Agent Basic Training	NCIS SABT
National Marine Fisheries Service, Basic Agent	NMFS BA
National Park Service, Pre Basic	NPS PB
National Park Service, Ranger Basic Training Program	NPS RBTP
Treasury Inspector General Tax Administration, Special Agent Basic Training	TIGTA SABT
United States Marshal Service, Abbreviated Basic Deputy	USMS APB
United States Marshal Service, Detention / Aviation Enforcement Officer	USMSDEO
United States Marshal Service, Deputy United States Marshal	USMS DUSM
United States Park Police, Follow On Basic	USPP FB

