

**Special Report:
Challenges Facing DHS in
Its Attempt to Hire 15,000
Border Patrol Agents and
Immigration Officers**





DHS OIG SPECIAL REPORT

Challenges Facing DHS in Its Attempt to Hire 15,000 Border Patrol Agents and Immigration Officers

July 27, 2017

Why We Did This Review

On January 25, 2017, the President directed DHS to hire an additional 15,000 law enforcement officers. Our objective was to determine whether the Department and its components have the human capital strategies and capabilities to quickly and effectively hire a highly qualified and diverse workforce.

What We Recommend

While we made no recommendations, this report provides lessons learned from prior DHS OIG, Government Accountability Office, and DHS departmental reports on challenges relating to hiring and other important areas of human capital management.

For Further Information:

Contact our Office of Public Affairs at (202) 254-4100, or email us at DHS-OIG.OfficePublicAffairs@oig.dhs.gov

What We Found

The Department, U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP), and U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) are facing significant challenges in identifying, recruiting, hiring, and fielding the number of law enforcement officers mandated in the Executive Orders. Neither CBP nor ICE could provide complete data to support the operational need or deployment strategies for the additional 15,000 additional agents and officers they were directed to hire. Although DHS has established plans and initiated actions to begin an aggressive hiring surge, in recent years the Department and its components have encountered notable difficulties related to long hire times, proper allocation of staff, and the supply of human resources.

Proper workforce planning is needed to ensure correct staffing levels, ratios, and placements, and to guide targeted recruitment campaigns. Conversely, inadequate workforce planning will likely undermine the ability of CBP and ICE to achieve hiring mandates and perform mission essential duties and functions.



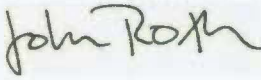
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Department of Homeland Security

Washington, DC 20528 / www.oig.dhs.gov

July 27, 2017

MEMORANDUM FOR: The Honorable General John F. Kelly
Secretary
Department of Homeland Security

FROM: John Roth 
Inspector General

SUBJECT: Special Report: *Challenges Facing DHS in Its Attempt to Hire 15,000 Border Patrol Agents and Immigration Officers*

Attached is our final special report, *Challenges Facing DHS in Its Attempt to Hire 15,000 Border Patrol Agents and Immigration Officers*. This report was conducted under the *Inspector General Act of 1978*, as amended, Section 2-2, to provide leadership and coordination and recommend policies for activities designed to promote economy, efficiency, and effectiveness in the administration of, and to prevent and detect fraud and abuse in, such programs and operations.

As the first report in a series of reviews of DHS' Human Capital Strategies and Management Capabilities, this report describes lessons learned from prior DHS Office of Inspector General (OIG), Government Accountability Office (GAO), and DHS departmental reports on challenges relating to hiring and other important areas of human capital management.

We provided a draft report for your comments. We received the Department's response and also received technical comments from CBP. We have included the Department's response as an appendix in this report and incorporated the technical comments as appropriate. Consistent with our responsibility under the *Inspector General Act*, we will provide copies of this report to appropriate congressional committees with oversight and appropriation responsibility over the Department of Homeland Security. We will post a version of the report on our website for public dissemination.

Please call me with any questions, or your staff may contact John V. Kelly, Deputy Inspector General, at (202) 254-4100.

Attachment



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Background

On January 25, 2017, the President issued two Executive Orders directing the Department of Homeland Security to hire an additional 5,000 Border Patrol Agents and 10,000 Immigration Officers. On February 20, 2017, the Secretary of Homeland Security issued implementing memoranda in support of the Executive Orders. The Secretary directed Customs and Border Protection (CBP) and Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) to ensure consistency in training and standards while taking action immediately to begin the hiring process. The memoranda also provide guidance for CBP and ICE to hire mission support staff to assist the 15,000 new agents and officers.

In response to the President's Executive Orders, CBP and ICE developed staffing estimates spanning human resources (HR), facilities, and information technology. CBP estimates it must hire more than 3,000 and ICE estimates it must hire more than 6,500 technical and operational support staff. The Secretary also directed CBP to hire 500 new Air and Marine Officers.

On April 5, 2017, the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) granted Direct Hire Authority to DHS to meet the critical hiring need created by the requirements of the Executive Orders.¹ The Direct Hire Authority is authorized for:

CBP to direct hire 8,721 personnel to fill mission critical positions at various grade levels at all geographic locations along the Southern Border as well as Florida and Caribbean duty stations; and ICE to direct hire 10,393 personnel to fill mission critical positions at various grade levels nationwide.

The Direct Hire Authority will expire on April 5, 2019. No new appointments may be made after this expiration date and all new employees must enter on duty on or before April 5, 2019.

Although DHS has established plans and initiated actions to begin the hiring surge, in recent years the Department and its components have encountered difficulties related to long hire times, proper allocation of staff, and the supply

¹ A Direct Hire Authority is an appointing (hiring) authority that the Office of Personnel Management can give to Federal agencies for filling vacancies when a critical hiring need or severe shortage of candidates exists. A Direct Hire Authority enables an agency to hire, after public notice is given, any qualified applicant without regard to 5 United States Code 3309-3318, 5 Code of Federal Regulation (CFR) part 211, or 5 CFR part 337, subpart A. A Direct Hire Authority expedites hiring by eliminating competitive rating and ranking, veterans' preference, and "rule of three" procedures. When using the numerical ranking process, OPM's "rule of three" means selections must be made from the three highest ranked applicants.



OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

Department of Homeland Security

of human resources. In October 2016, OIG reported that additional steps in the DHS hiring process for law enforcement applicants contribute to lengthy hiring times, and that components did not have the human resources staff or comprehensive automated systems needed to hire personnel as efficiently as possible.²

In December 2016, the DHS Office of the Chief Human Capital Officer issued the *Human Capital Accountability Plan* (plan). This plan was designed to ensure Department and component level human capital programs, policies, and services align with mission accomplishment and operate efficiently and effectively. Among other things, the plan helps to ensure human capital management activities are guided by results-oriented, data-driven processes. The same office also issued the *DHS Workforce Planning Guide* (guide) in 2012. This guide outlines steps, tools, and resources to plan for current and future organizational and workforce needs.

To better inform and prepare the Department as it embarks on this large scale hiring effort, this report highlights human capital management approaches (or fundamentals) necessary to achieve successful workforce planning. The report is intended to help DHS, ICE, and CBP meet aggressive hiring goals while avoiding pitfalls that could lead to improper need determinations, poor hiring choices, inadequate operational implementation, and excessive cost inefficiencies.

Fundamentals Necessary to Achieve Successful Workforce Planning

The Department, CBP, and ICE are facing significant challenges in identifying, recruiting, hiring, and fielding the number of law enforcement officers mandated in the Executive Orders. Proper workforce planning is needed to ensure correct staffing levels, ratios, and placements, and to guide targeted recruitment campaigns.

Conversely, inadequate workforce planning will likely undermine the ability of CBP and ICE to achieve hiring mandates and perform mission essential duties and functions.

Without proper human capital needs analysis, CBP

Key Elements for Successful Workforce Planning

- *Using a Workforce Staffing Model*
- *Defining operational needs and deployment strategies*
- *Ensuring adequate human resources staffing*
- *Developing Recruitment and Retention Strategies*

Source: OIG Analysis

² *DHS Is Slow to Hire Law Enforcement Personnel* (OIG-17-05; October 2016)



OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

Department of Homeland Security

and ICE are not able to identify clearly the number and type of employees required, positions that must be filled, or where to deploy employees for greatest impact. Additionally, without enough sufficiently trained HR staff and comprehensive recruiting strategies to attract qualified candidates, even the best workforce staffing plans cannot be completed.

CBP and ICE Must Use a Comprehensive Workforce Staffing Model

According to OPM, workforce planning serves as the foundation for managing an organization's human capital. Workforce plans enable organizations to strategically meet current and future workforce needs and prevent unnecessary disruptions in maintaining a steady-state workforce. Workforce plans assist organizations to fill positions with the right employees, with the necessary competencies, and meet future organizational goals and objectives. The more effective the workforce plan, the better the organization can leverage its human capital to accomplish its strategic goals. OPM lists five key components to an effective workforce plan:

- Set Strategic Direction
- Analyze Workforce, Identify Skill Gaps
- Develop Action Plan
- Implement the Plan
- Monitor, Evaluate and Revise the Plan

Without a comprehensive workforce model, DHS will continue to struggle to accomplish its missions in a cost-effective manner. For example, in April 2016 we determined CBP did not: 1) properly assess the major duties its criminal investigators perform, 2) conduct an adequate analysis of its staffing needs, or 3) develop performance measures to assess the effectiveness of its investigative operations.³ Without a comprehensive process and analysis, CBP may have improperly spent approximately \$3.1 million and as much as \$22.6 million over 5 years for questionable Law Enforcement Availability Pay.

Likewise, in July 2014, OIG reported that CBP's Office of Field Operations' Workforce Staffing Model results may not be accurate because CBP did not ensure that the data entered into the model was reliable.⁴ Improving data reliability and strengthening internal controls over the Workload Staffing Model would ensure that CBP is efficiently allocating staffing resources and submitting budget requests that accurately reflect staffing needs.

³ *CBP Needs Better Data to Justify Its Criminal Investigator Staffing* (OIG-16-75; April 2016)

⁴ *U.S. Customs and Border Protection's Workload Staffing Model* (OIG-14-117; July 2014)



OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

Department of Homeland Security

Proper workforce staffing processes include, but are not limited to, identifying mission-critical occupations and competencies to achieve strategic goals. These processes systematically define the size of the workforce needed to meet organizational goals; and use workforce planning reports, studies, and benchmarks to determine the most effective work levels, workloads, and resources for efficient operations. Completing these actions first is necessary to ensure DHS and its components identify and clearly define their operational needs, deployment strategies, and mission support personnel required for success. This approach also creates the foundation for building realistic, fact-based cost estimates to fulfill the Department's mission.

CBP and ICE Must Determine Operational Needs and Develop Deployment Strategies

DHS struggles to identify and align its components' operational needs and deployment strategies to achieve the most efficient, effective, and economical operational outcomes. An operational needs assessment identifies and characterizes gaps in existing capabilities that are significant impediments to achieving the mission area objectives. In our fiscal year 2016 report on Federal Protective Service Fleet Management,⁵ we determined that the Federal Protective Service did not justify its operational need when procuring vehicles for its officers. As a result, it was not operating the most efficient fleet and was missing opportunities to save the government more than \$2.5 million in FY 2014.

Deployment strategies ensure management decisions are aligned with organizational goals and objectives. CBP and ICE have developed estimates regarding potential future deployment locations for the mandated agents and officers. CBP plans to initially send all 5,000 agents to the Southwest Border to various stations, and then at some future time, move 1,650 to other locations, including the Northern and Coastal borders, CBP's special operations group, and Border Patrol headquarters. ICE, on the other hand, plans to immediately disperse the majority of its 10,000 newly hired officers nationally to its various regions over the next 5 years.

According to our FY 2014 report, *Transportation Security Administration's Deployment and Use of Advanced Imaging Technology*,⁶ TSA would have benefited from using a strategic deployment plan to guide its placement of Advanced Imaging Technology screening equipment. Similarly, staffing deployment plans for the current DHS hiring surge would provide CBP and ICE

⁵ *The FPS Vehicle Fleet Is Not Managed Effectively* (OIG-16-02; October 2015)

⁶ *Transportation Security Administration's Deployment and Use of Advanced Imaging Technology* (OIG-13-120 (Revised); March 2014)



OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

Department of Homeland Security

a baseline to respond to and plan for evolving threats, goals, and priorities. By using deployment strategies for the current hiring surge, CBP and ICE would ensure both existing and newly hired personnel are aligned with DHS's highest priority areas.

The consequences of a lack of an effective workforce deployment strategy can be seen in our recent inspection report on ICE deportation operations.⁷ We found that the deportation workloads in various ICE field offices was uneven, resulting in some deportation officers being overwhelmed with their caseloads. ICE could not adequately explain the reasons for the workload differences at the locations we visited. Many of those working with non-detained aliens reported they had difficulty fulfilling all their responsibilities, such as working with embassies and consulates to obtain travel documents necessary for deportation, interviewing aliens under their supervision, and running criminal checks on aliens in their docket. Yet, ICE has not collected or analyzed workload data to determine the time and effort Deportation Officers need to adequately supervise and facilitate the deportation of non-detained aliens. Without workload data, ICE cannot ensure its caseload distribution is balanced and that non-detained workloads are achievable. ICE also cannot measure performance and apply lessons learned to ensure effective and efficient supervision and deportation of aliens.

Neither CBP nor ICE could provide complete data to support the operational need or deployment strategies for the additional 15,000 agents and officers they were directed to hire. CBP officials explained they had been working for 3 to 4 years already, but are still 3 to 4 more years away from implementing a process to obtain and analyze accurate operational needs and deployment data. Without well-defined operational needs and comprehensive deployment strategies, DHS may not be able to achieve the correct number, type, and placement of personnel.

Border Patrol Agents Are Not Always on the Border

CBP officials provided the Border Patrol's *Table of Organization* to show which sectors and duties the 21,370 authorized Border Patrol Agents are assigned. CBP officials also provided the *Border Patrol's Staffing Structure*, which lists the planned number and percentage of workforce to be assigned to leadership and staff positions. As shown in figure 1, as of April 1, 2017, approximately 4,704 (24 percent) of the 19,565 active duty agents were assigned to leadership or administration duties in the Southwest Border Region. This leaves about 12,013 (61 percent) assigned to directly engage in conducting apprehensions

⁷ *ICE Deportation Operations* (OIG-17-51; April 2017)



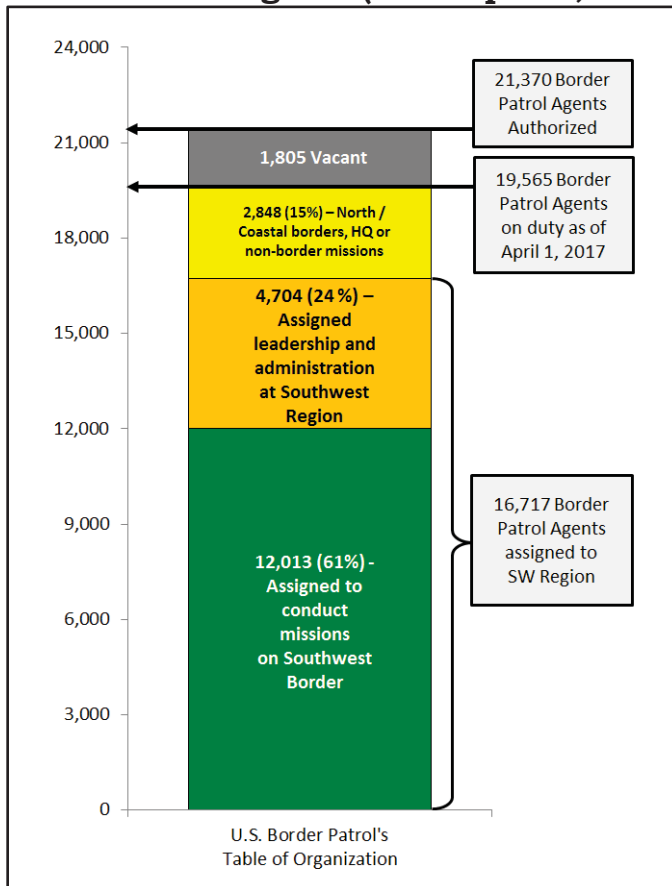
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and arrests on the Southwest Border. The remaining 2,848 agents (15 percent) are assigned to the North and Coastal borders, headquarters, or other non-border missions.

Moreover, this may actually understate the number of agents doing leadership and administrative work, because not all Border Patrol agents are completing their duties in accordance with the *Table of Organization*. For example, Border Patrol officials stated the Border Patrol has 1,074 billets specifically designated for intelligence positions for agents. However, Border Patrol headquarters officials conducted analysis and discovered that senior management in the field are detailing agents to intelligence positions (as many as 2,000) without properly notifying headquarters. This means about 900 Border Patrol Agents are conducting intelligence duties contrary to their assigned duties in the *Table of Organization*.

Figure 1. Location and Organizational Assignments of Border Patrol Agents (as of April 1, 2017)



Source: OIG estimates based on CBP data. Note: “Assigned leadership and administration at Southwest Region” positions include *Supervisory Border Patrol Agents* that also operate in the field.



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Department of Homeland Security

CBP Uses Border Patrol Agents to Conduct Intelligence Work

Workforce planning includes an analysis of which workforce is best suited to perform the work. This analysis is an important workforce planning activity. CBP currently does not follow proper workforce planning and management processes. A simple comparison illustrates this point.

ICE currently has 673 Intelligence Specialists (GS-132) in its workforce, equating to approximately 1 Intelligence Specialist for every 20 ICE officers and agents. CBP has 205 Intelligence Specialists, equating to approximately 1 Intelligence Specialist for every 233 CBP officers and agents.⁸ However, Border Patrol officials estimated 2,000 Border Patrol Agents are actually performing intelligence work, which brings its ratio down to 1 employee conducting intelligence work for every 21 CBP officers and agents (see table 1).

Table 1. Comparison of Intelligence Specialists Supporting Law Enforcement, and Law Enforcement Performing Intelligence Work

CBP Ratios		ICE Ratios	
1 Intelligence Specialist for every 233 CBP officers and agents	1 to 233	1 to 20	1 Intelligence Specialist for every 20 ICE officers and agents
CBP estimates it has 2,000 Border Patrol Agents performing intelligence work...		ICE has no other officers and agents conducting intelligence work, so ICE's ratio stays same...	
1 employee conducting intelligence work for every 21 CBP officers and agents	1 to 21	1 to 20	1 Intelligence Specialist for every 20 ICE officers and agents

Source: OIG estimation based on OPM's *FedScope* Employee Data (March 2017), and CBP and ICE statements

The use of Border Patrol Agents performing duties not directly tied to “ensuring complete operational control of the border” calls into question the Department’s

⁸ Based on OPM's *FedScope* (as of March 26, 2017), which houses all status and dynamic data submitted by the agencies from their own separate personnel systems.



OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

Department of Homeland Security

operational need for 5,000 new agents. As discussed previously, proper workforce planning uses ratios to determine how many support personnel are required for every operational employee. Without a balanced workforce fulfilling the proper functions, components will not be able to use their employees' skills in the most efficient, effective, or economical manner.

Further, if a significant portion of the approximately 12,000 Border Patrol Agents CBP assigned to conduct missions on the Southwest Border are actually conducting intelligence or non-direct law enforcement work, CBP should consider deploying current Border Patrol Agents serving in alternate roles to the border to address the perceived imminent need for increased border security. By doing so, CBP can then discern better the need for additional personnel to perform non law-enforcement functions. Similar to what we identified in our report *Transportation Security Administration Office of Inspection's Efforts to Enhance Transportation Security*,⁹ CBP may be incurring increased expenses for using law enforcement officers when other employees may be able to perform the same work at a lower cost. We plan to conduct a separate audit on DHS' use of law enforcement officers.

Border Apprehensions

In addition to examining current employee skills and placements, DHS workforce staffing models should factor in operational trends and anticipated future requirements. As shown in figure 2, CBP reported the number of Border Patrol Agents decreased by 7 percent from FYs 2012 to 2016; and apprehensions increased by 15 percent. However, in March 2017, U.S. Border Patrol Agents apprehended 12,193 individuals between ports of entry along the Southwest Border, compared to 18,754 in February 2017 (35% decrease) and 31,577 in January 2017 (61% decrease). These trends may impact the number of new Border Patrol Agents needed.

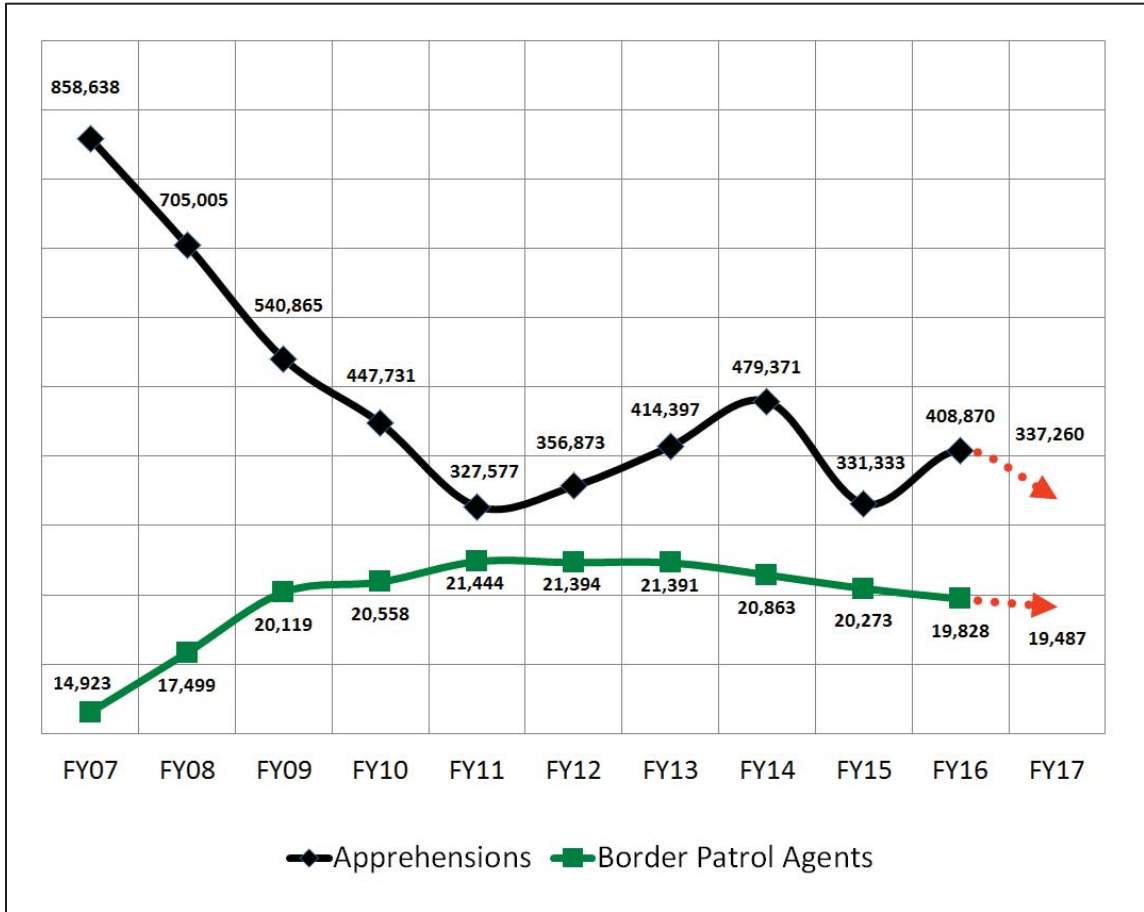
⁹ *Transportation Security Administration Office of Inspection's Efforts To Enhance Transportation Security* (OIG-13-123, September 2013).



OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

Department of Homeland Security

Figure 2. Southwest Border Patrol Agents and Apprehension, FYs 2007 – 2017



* FY17 Apprehensions were extrapolated based on the total number of Border Patrol Agents' apprehensions for the year as of May 31, 2017; FY17 Border Patrol Agents on duty as of May 31, 2017. Source: OIG compilation of U.S. Border Patrol data

DHS defines an apprehension as the arrest of a removable alien. Each apprehension of the same alien in a fiscal year is counted separately.

Since CBP does not track or account for the total number of monthly illegal border crossings, a direct correlation between staffing levels and apprehensions is not possible. In February 2017, we reported that although CBP had implemented many new programs to address border security issues, it had struggled to develop measures of effectiveness.¹⁰ Both OIG and GAO have found that using apprehension numbers to measure performance is a flawed approach. It limits accountability, whether to DHS or Members of Congress, and does not show actual program results.

¹⁰ CBP's Border Security Efforts – An Analysis of Southwest Border Security between the Ports of Entry (OIG 17-39; February 27, 2017).



OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

Department of Homeland Security

The decrease in apprehensions is an element to consider in developing both short- and long-term operational needs documents and deployment strategies. Regardless, Border Patrol officials should continually reassess their staffing levels based on a broader portfolio of long-range threat assessments.

DHS Must Have Sufficient Human Resources Staffing to Support the Hiring Surge

The Department needs to ensure it has sufficient, well-trained HR staff to complete the hiring surge. In October 2016, we reported that while additional steps in the hiring process for law enforcement applicants contribute to lengthy hiring times, DHS components do not have the staff or comprehensive automated systems needed to hire personnel as efficiently as possible.¹¹ Similarly, GAO reported that DHS' HR administrative environment includes fragmented systems, duplicative and paper-based processes, and little uniformity of data management practices. DHS recognized that these problems inhibited its ability to perform basic workforce management functions.¹²

DHS' Office of the Chief Human Capital Officer (OCHCO) *2016 Accomplishment's Report* outlined that HR offices are understaffed. The attrition rate for DHS' HR occupations was 11.8 percent, and the Department's HR servicing ratio ranked last among all large Federal agencies: 1 to 148 – 1 HR position for every 148 employees vs. the broader average of 1 to 94. Further, most DHS HR staffing and classification personnel had not received the necessary training to become more knowledgeable of available resources to support their customers.

Upon release of the Executive Orders, both CBP and ICE reviewed their current HR staffing and determined that both components needed HR staff to support the hiring surge. CBP determined it will need 160 additional HR positions to expand its Human Resource Management hiring capacity. ICE determined it will need to hire 200 additional HR personnel.

To meet the DHS HR personnel shortage, OCHCO officials stated they have been working with OPM and other Executive Agencies to detail HR personnel to DHS. Although this may help temporarily, DHS needs a more permanent plan to ensure a sufficient number of fully trained HR specialists.

¹¹ *DHS Is Slow to Hire Law Enforcement Personnel* (OIG-17-05; October 2016)

¹² *Oversight of Neglected Human Resources Information Technology Investment Is Needed* (GAO-16-253; February 2016)



OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

Department of Homeland Security

DHS Must Address Recruitment and Retention Challenges

As we have previously reported, DHS' inability to hire personnel in a timely manner has led to staffing shortfalls, which can affect productivity and morale, and disrupt mission critical operations.¹³ OCHCO recognizes this challenge, and on April 5, 2017, the Office of Personnel Management approved the Department's request for direct hiring authority for a number of positions having critical hiring needs at DHS, including CBP Border Patrol Agents and Human Resource Specialists, as well as ICE Deportation Officers, Criminal Investigators, and Human Resource Specialists. In addition, DHS needs to continue to improve its background investigations, screening, and polygraph processes to hire people more quickly for certain positions.¹⁴

DHS has adopted the OPM *Staffing Indicators Worksheet* to organize, document, and analyze data on staffing, including:

- Recruitment Indicators (e.g., hiring rate, time to hire data, etc.);
- Retention Indicators (e.g., separation rate, employee viewpoint survey data, etc.); and
- Environmental Condition Indicators (e.g., market demand for occupation, etc.).¹⁵

Collected data indicated that CBP will not be able to hire to its operational need and a large number of applicants are still unable to meet CBP's employment requirements, such as successful completion of the polygraph exam. Additionally, CBP must compete with Federal, state, and local law enforcement organizations for applicants, including the concurrent hiring effort at ICE. CBP is concerned that the more desirable duty locations, lack of a polygraph mandate, and higher compensation at ICE will greatly hinder its hiring efforts.

DHS needs to gather better data on attrition and understand why employees are leaving so it can potentially improve the use of incentives, both monetary and nonmonetary, for human resource and law enforcement positions. CBP projects an annualized attrition rate of 6 percent (approximately 1,380 losses per year) for CBP law enforcement positions while ICE projects a rate of 4 percent (approximately 795 losses per year) for ICE law enforcement positions.

Entry requirements for law enforcement occupations are intentionally rigorous. Individuals typically must pass an entrance exam, qualifications review, interview, medical exam, drug screening, physical fitness test, polygraph examination, and background investigation. While these requirements are

¹³ *DHS Is Slow to Hire Law Enforcement Personnel* (OIG-17-05; October 2016)

¹⁴ We are currently conducting a separate audit on DHS use of polygraphs.

¹⁵ *DHS Workforce Planning Guide* (November 2012)



OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL
Department of Homeland Security

important to securing well-qualified individuals, they make recruitment and hiring inherently challenging and complicated.

Based on CBP and ICE’s current hiring and attrition rates, table 2 shows the estimated number of applicants necessary to meet Executive Order hiring goals.

Table 2. Number of Applicants Necessary to Meet Executive Order Hiring Goals

For to increase by:	...the component will need about:
CBP	5,000 Border Patrol Agents	750,000 applicants
ICE	10,000 Immigration Officers	501,750 applicants

Sources: OIG compilation of CBP and ICE data

Developing Sound Recruitment Strategies

Following the issuance of the Executive Orders, components planned or initiated various recruitment strategies including:

- CBP’s collaboration with Department of Defense (DOD) to
 1. expedite the hiring of veterans by waiving the pre-employment polygraph examination for those who left military service with security clearances in good standing, and
 2. increase recruitment at military installations.
- CBP’s piloting of its 2015-2016 “Hiring Hub” program to compress multiple steps in the hiring process.
- ICE’s “Super One Stop” hiring events to accept applications without linkage to a specific vacancy announcement. ICE plans to perform qualifications analysis, interview, and issue tentative selection letters all on site.

Although these recruitment strategies may offer a good start, DHS has not evaluated whether they will ultimately address retention challenges as well as the new hiring mandates.



OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

Department of Homeland Security

Conclusion

As DHS attempts to hire 15,000 Border Patrol Agents and ICE Officers in combination with almost 9,600 technical and operational support staff, it must address proactively significant historical and current challenges. CBP officials determined CBP needs to be able to reduce attrition and increase the overall number of applicants, which in light of ICE's simultaneous hiring efforts, would require significant enhancements to CBP's recruitment and retention efforts. Further, CBP officials estimated to reach full Border Patrol Agent staffing calls for a 25 percent increase in applicants, and a 10 percent decrease in attrition. Lastly, CBP stated that pay parity with ICE will be essential as well as enhanced mobility for CBP personnel.

Without comprehensive staffing models, operational needs analyses, and deployment strategies, CBP and ICE will not be able to identify clearly the correct number and type of employees required, what positions must be filled, or where to deploy those employees. Finally, without enough sufficiently trained HR staff and comprehensive recruiting strategies to attract qualified candidates, even the best workforce staffing plans cannot be completed.

OIG Analysis of Management Comments

We obtained written comments on a draft of this report from the Director of the Departmental GAO-OIG Liaison Office. We have included a copy of the comments in their entirety in appendix A. In its comments, DHS stated that it is committed to ensuring correct staffing levels, ratios, and placements to guide targeted recruitment campaigns for priority mission critical occupations. DHS also discussed actions that the U.S. Border Patrol and the Office of the Chief Human Capital Officer are taking to improve workforce planning models throughout the Department.

Scope and Methodology

On January 25, 2017, the President issued Executive Order 13767 - *Border Security and Immigration Enforcement Improvements* and Executive Order 13768 - *Enhancing Public Safety in the Interior of the United States*.

We reviewed:

- The Secretary's memoranda, *Implementing the President's Border Security and Immigration Enforcement Improvements Policies* and



OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

Department of Homeland Security

Enforcement of the Immigration Laws to Serve the National Interest issued on February 20, 2017;

- DHS' *Human Capital Strategic Plan Fiscal Years 2015–2019*;
- DHS Office of the Chief Human Capital Officer's *2016 Accomplishments Report*, and the *FY 2017 DHS Human Capital Operational Plan*;
- CBP's memo, *Hiring Challenges in Frontline Law Enforcement Occupations* (February 15, 2017), and the Commissioner's memo, *Request for Approval: Executive Order Hiring Surge* (February 17, 2017); and
- *ICE Executive Order Hiring Plan* (February 7, 2017).

We also examined human capital strategy documents issued by the Office of Personnel Management, GAO, and DHS OCHCO.

To identify historical examples where DHS experienced similar challenges, we reviewed relevant DHS OIG and GAO reports for lessons learned. A full listing of these reports is included in appendix B. We interviewed the DHS Chief Human Capital Officer; CBP and ICE Human Resource Officers; CBP U.S. Border Patrol personnel; and personnel at ICE's Office of the Chief Financial Officer.

We conducted this OIG Special Report review from February to April 2017. DHS Office of Inspector General was established by the *Homeland Security Act of 2002* (Public Law 107–296) by amendment to the *Inspector General Act of 1978*. Under Article 2, clause 2 of the *Inspector General Act*, this Special Report is for the purpose of providing leadership and coordination and recommending policies for activities designed to promote economy, efficiency, and effectiveness in the administration of, and to prevent and detect fraud and abuse in, such programs and operations. Our review focused on determining whether the Department and its components have the human capital strategies and capabilities to quickly and effectively hire a highly qualified and diverse workforce. The work performed in this review does not constitute an audit in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards.



OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL
Department of Homeland Security

Appendix A
Management Comments


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



**Homeland
Security**

July 17, 2017

MEMORANDUM FOR: John Roth
Inspector General

FROM: Jim H. Crumpacker, CIA, CFE
Director
Departmental GAO-OIG Liaison Office 

SUBJECT: Management's Response to OIG Draft Report: "Challenges Facing
DHS to Hire 15,000 Border Patrol Agents and Immigration Officers"
(Project No. 17-052-AUD-DHS)

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on this draft report. The U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) appreciates the work of the Office of Inspector General (OIG) in planning and conducting its review and issuing this report. DHS remains committed to ensuring correct staffing levels, ratios, and placements to guide targeted recruitment campaigns for priority Mission Critical Occupations.

In particular, we are working closely with the U.S. Customs and Border Protection's (CBP) U.S. Border Patrol (USBP) to ensure that its Personnel Requirements Determination model documents current and future staffing levels directed by the President's Executive Order on Border Security, and needed because of emerging operational needs and changes in technology. These collaborative efforts include a status update briefing from USBP by July 31, 2017, periodic updates as the model moves toward completion, and DHS Office of the Chief Human Capital Officer (OCHCO) assistance to USBP regarding validation/verification of future updates to the model.

Similarly, OCHCO is finalizing a manpower model registry that will assign an identification code to all models that have been validated by OCHCO and will summarize key attributes of each. The registry will ensure documentation of the operational assumptions, and reliability of workload data for all models OCHCO has identified as "valid," thereby resolving a shortcoming previously identified by OIG. Throughout the Department, validated models and associated registry numbers will identify all positions whose work requirements were determined by manpower models.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on this draft report. Technical comments were provided under separate cover. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions. We look forward to working with you in the future.



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Department of Homeland Security

Appendix B Relevant DHS OIG and GAO Reports

DHS OIG

- *ICE Deportation Operations* – (OIG-17-51; April 2017)
<https://www.oig.dhs.gov/assets/Mgmt/2017/OIG-17-51-Apr17.pdf>
- *CBP's Border Security Efforts – An Analysis of Southwest Border Security Between the Ports of Entry* – (OIG-17-39; February 2017)
<https://www.oig.dhs.gov/assets/Mgmt/2017/OIG-17-39-Feb17.pdf>
- *DHS Drug Interdiction Efforts Need Improvement* (OIG-17-09; November 2016) <https://www.oig.dhs.gov/assets/Mgmt/2017/OIG-17-09-Nov16.pdf>
- *Major Management and Performance Challenges Facing DHS* (OIG-17-08; November 2016) <https://www.oig.dhs.gov/assets/Mgmt/2017/OIG-17-08-Nov16.pdf>
- *DHS Is Slow to Hire Law Enforcement Personnel* (OIG-17-05; October 2016) <https://www.oig.dhs.gov/assets/Mgmt/2017/OIG-17-05-Oct16.pdf>
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