



U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement

Fact Sheet

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ICE Fugitive Operations Program

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) established the first Fugitive Operations Teams in 2003 to dramatically expand the agency's efforts to locate, arrest, and remove fugitives from the United States. An ICE fugitive is defined as an alien who has failed to depart the United States based upon a final order of removal, deportation, or exclusion; or who has failed to report to a Detention and Removal Officer after receiving notice to do so.

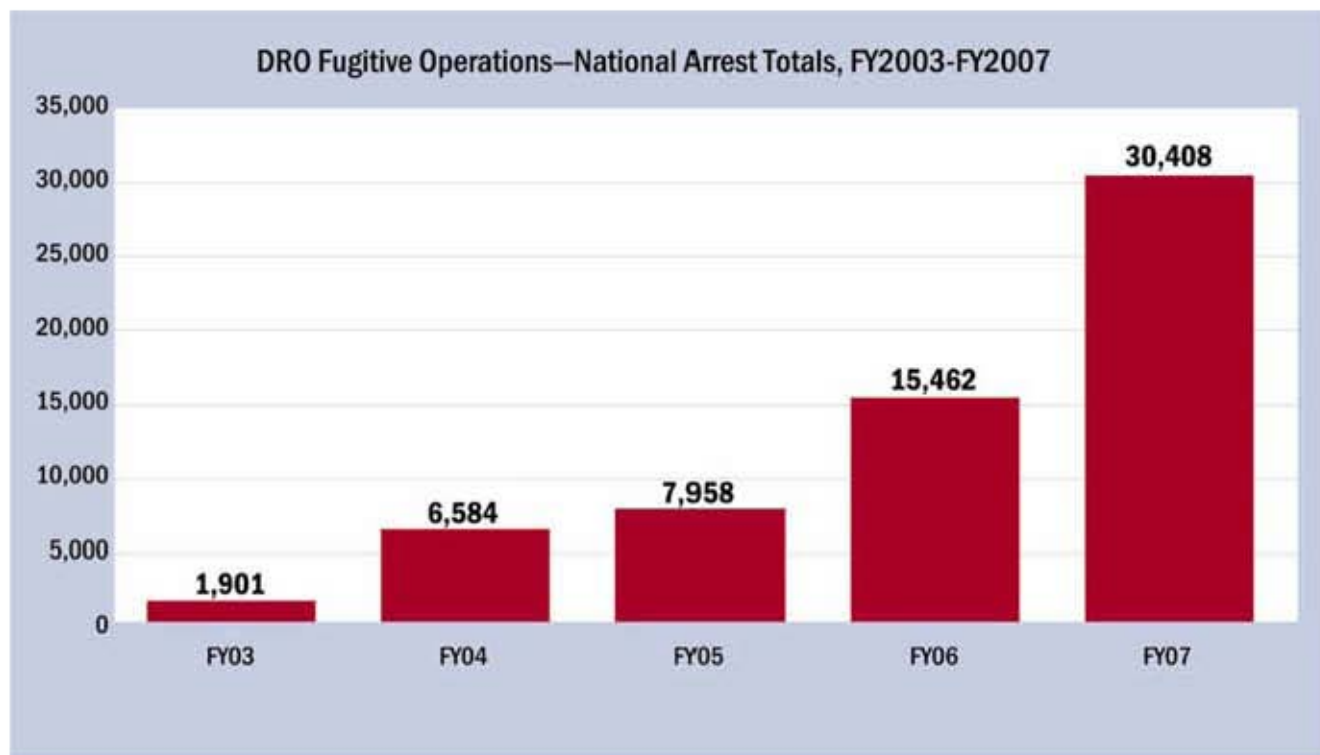
ICE's Fugitive Operations Teams give top priority to cases involving aliens who pose a threat to national security and community safety, including members of transnational street gangs, child sex offenders, and aliens with prior convictions for violent crimes. The Fugitive Operations Team officers and agents utilize intelligence-based information and leads to locate and arrest aliens who have been ordered to leave the country by an immigration judge, but have failed to comply.

The National Fugitive Operations Program is responsible for reducing the fugitive alien population in the United States. ICE's databases show the targeted enforcement strategy is paying off. Earlier this year, the nation's fugitive alien population declined for the first time. As of October 1, 2007, ICE's fugitive case backlog consisted of less than 595,000 fugitive aliens which is approximately 38,000 fewer fugitives than the population recorded on October 1, 2006.



Much of the credit for those results can be attributed to the rapid expansion of the program. When the initiative was launched in 2003, there were eight fugitive operations teams nationwide. Today, ICE has 75 teams deployed across the country, including 12 in California. Of those teams, 23 were added in the last fiscal year.

The deployment of the new teams has resulted in a dramatic increase in overall arrests. As the accompanying chart shows, the number of arrests made by ICE Fugitive Operations Team officers and agents has nearly doubled in the past year, exceeding 30,000 for the first time.



Last year, to further increase the efficiency of the Fugitive Operations Teams, ICE established the Fugitive Operations Support Center (FOSC) in Burlington, Vermont. The center aids with gathering and analyzing file information and electronic data on fugitive cases across the country. Since its inception, the center has disseminated more than 150,000 case leads to Fugitive Operations Teams in the field. This effort has also aided in reducing the reported number of existing fugitives by reconciling records to eliminate those who have left the country voluntarily, successfully adjusted their status, or were discovered to be incarcerated and therefore no longer fugitives. This accounts for the difference between the estimated decrease in fugitives and the number of reported fugitive arrests.

ICE's National Fugitive Operations Program is just one facet of the Department of Homeland Security's overarching strategy to secure America's borders and reduce illegal migration. Given the success of the fugitive operations effort, ICE is proposing to add six more Fugitive Operations Teams in fiscal year 2008.

ICE

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) was established in March 2003 as the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security. ICE is comprised of five integrated divisions that form a 21st century law enforcement agency with broad responsibilities for a number of key homeland security priorities.