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# **Management Alert – Security and Safety Concerns at Border Patrol Stations in the Tucson Sector (REDACTED)**

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Department of Homeland Security

Washington, DC 20528 / [www.oig.dhs.gov](http://www.oig.dhs.gov)

September 29, 2017

MEMORANDUM FOR: Kevin K. McAleenan  
Acting Commissioner  
U.S. Customs and Border Protection

FROM: John Roth   
Inspector General

SUBJECT: *Management Alert – Security and Safety  
Concerns at Border Patrol Stations in the Tucson  
Sector – Law Enforcement Sensitive*

For your action is our final report, *Management Alert – Security and Safety Concerns at Border Patrol Stations in the Tucson Sector*. We incorporated the formal comments provided by your office.

The report contains two recommendations aimed at improving physical and other security concerns. You concurred with the two recommendations. Based on information provided in your response to the draft report, we consider recommendation 1 open and unresolved. As prescribed by the Department of Homeland Security Directive 077-01, *Follow-Up and Resolutions for the Office of Inspector General Report Recommendations*, within 90 days of the date of this memorandum, please provide our office with a written response that includes your (1) agreement or disagreement, (2) corrective action plan, and (3) target completion date for the recommendation. Also, please include responsible parties and any other supporting documentation necessary to inform us about the current status of the recommendation. Until your response is received and evaluated, the recommendation will be considered open and unresolved.

Based on information provided in your response to the draft report, we consider recommendation 2 open and resolved. Once your office has fully implemented the recommendation, please submit a formal closeout letter to us within 30 days so that we may close the recommendation. The memorandum should be accompanied by evidence of completion of agreed-upon corrective actions.

Please send your response or closure request to  
[OIGInspectionsFollowup@oig.dhs.gov](mailto:OIGInspectionsFollowup@oig.dhs.gov).

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Consistent with our responsibility under the *Inspector General Act*, we will provide copies of our report to congressional committees with oversight and appropriation responsibility over the Department of Homeland Security. We will post a redacted version of the report on our website.

Please call me with any questions, or your staff may contact Jennifer L. Costello, Assistant Inspector General for Inspections and Evaluations, at (202) 254-4100.

Attachment



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## Management Alert

In April 2017, the Department of Homeland Security Office of Inspector General (OIG) conducted unannounced spot inspections of Border Patrol stations and the Tucson Coordination Center (TCC) in the Tucson Sector in Arizona. During these unannounced inspections, we toured the facilities, reviewed documentation from previous inspections, and interviewed Border Patrol staff. This alert describes physical security issues we identified that pose an immediate threat to Border Patrol agents, assets, and operations at stations within the Tucson Sector, as well as security issues related to cameras and access at two other Border Patrol stations and the TCC in the Tucson Sector.

### **Physical Security Issues at Stations within the Tucson Sector**

During our recent spot inspections of Border Patrol stations in the Tucson Sector, we observed, and Border Patrol agents corroborated, multiple physical security issues that raise concerns about agent safety at two locations. Both facilities have vulnerable outdoor storage containers secured with padlocks that could be easily opened with common bolt cutters. Container tops and walls could also easily be compromised with a blow torch or other widely available tools. The containers we inspected held ammunition; small arms; riot control explosives; proprietary surveillance equipment; seized drugs; and sensitive hardcopy prosecution, investigation, and personnel documents.

One station's 8-foot high perimeter wall has inadequate camera coverage and allows public access to the full perimeter and visibility of storage containers, as well as seized and Government vehicles. Further, poor outdoor lighting hinders night camera surveillance. At another station exterior cameras are inoperable, and the surrounding 6-foot high chain link fence allows public access to the full perimeter and visibility of Government vehicles, storage containers, structures, a fuel storage tank, and operations.





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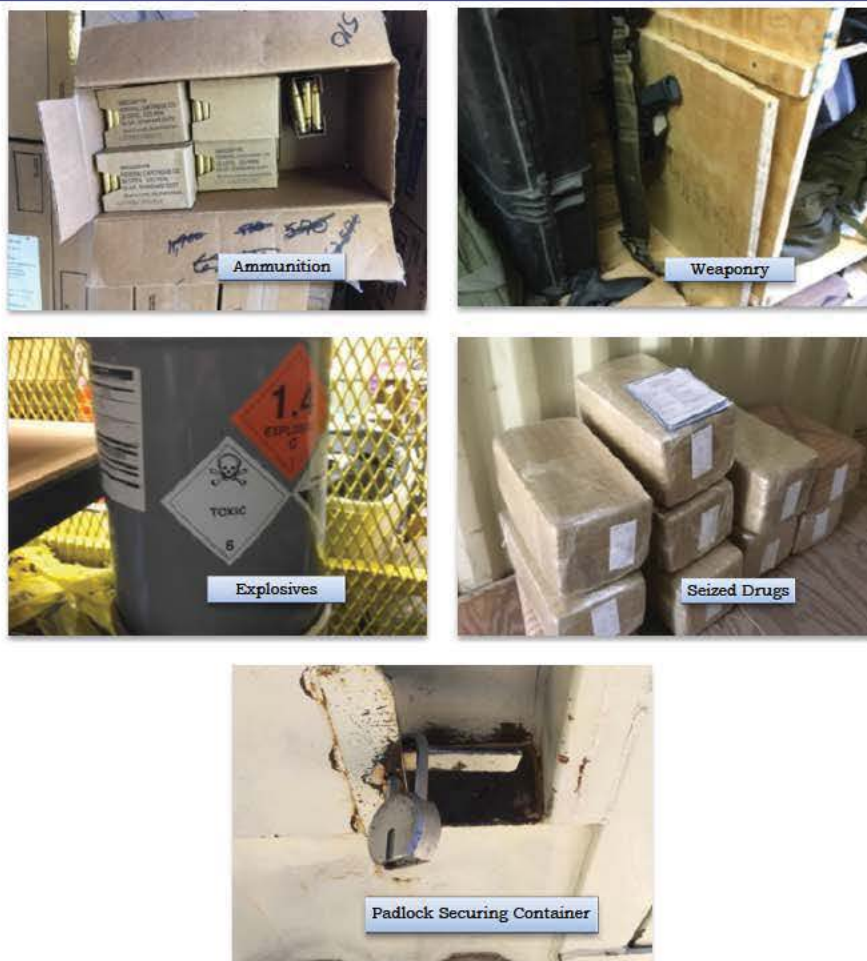


Figure 1. Photos taken during inspection of storage containers at stations in the Tucson Sector showing a sample of dangerous and sensitive items in easily accessible padlocked containers.

Source: OIG

During interviews with Border Patrol agents, we learned of other security risks:

- An “intelligence” trailer<sup>1</sup> at one station in a vulnerable location near the perimeter fence;
- Incidents at one station in which detainees forced open detention cells; and
- Agents having to park their personal vehicles in a public lot adjacent to the station because of insufficient space

<sup>1</sup> Agents assigned to the Tucson Sector Intelligence Unit occupy the intelligence trailer, which is designated for processing and handling Border Patrol intelligence information.



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Station Perimeter Wall



Station Perimeter Wall



Intel Trailer



Gas Storage

Figure 2. Photos taken during OIG inspection of the station perimeter walls and adjacent public area.



Source: OIG

During our spot inspection of stations in the Tucson Sector, we discussed the physical security issues described above with supervisory Border Patrol agents and agree with their concerns that these are serious potential threats to agent safety and mission execution.

### Security Issues at Three Other CBP Facilities in the Tucson Sector

During our inspections, we also observed security issues related to camera visibility at three additional stations. Specifically, at two facilities, control room monitor displays that cover detainee cells were either not functional, too blurry to provide detail, or too small to be effective. At the third station, we were able to follow Border Patrol vehicles through the main gate, access the facility, and roam the vehicle storage areas, all unchallenged by staff in the station compound.

### Recommendations

**Recommendation 1:** We recommend that CBP promptly upgrade the infrastructure at Tucson Sector stations and ensure Border Patrol agent safety by providing the resources necessary to correct the urgent physical security issues.

**Recommendation 2:** We recommend that CBP review the security policy and procedures at Border Patrol stations and CBP facilities in the Tucson Sector to





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ensure cameras are operable and facility access is secure.

### **Management Comments and OIG Analysis**

CBP concurred with the recommendations and provided comments to the draft report. A summary of CBP's response and our analysis follows. We have included a copy of CBP's management comments in their entirety in Appendix A. CBP also provided technical comments to our report. We made changes to incorporate those comments, as appropriate.

**Recommendation 1:** We recommend that CBP promptly upgrade the infrastructure at Tucson Sector stations and ensure Border Patrol agent safety by providing the resources necessary to correct the urgent physical security issues.

**CBP Response: Concur.** According to its response, CBP has a Policy and Compliance Team which verified operability of the entrance gate camera and confirmed that personnel continuously monitor that camera feed at the Tucson Sector facility. CBP also has a Facility Security Plan in place which mandates Closed Circuit Television coverage of critical areas and systems.

CBP also noted they cannot control the station maintenance schedule because the buildings are leased. As such, CBP stated they are unable to make facility improvements. CBP also cited the leased status as the reason for limited parking for agents' personal vehicles, but stated that issue will be resolved through attrition.

CBP disagreed with OIG's assessment that the outdoor containers were vulnerable and stated that there is a recessed lock on the outdoor storage containers and, as such, they cannot be breached using bolt cutters. CBP noted the dual locking mechanism on the weapons storage container met the requirements outlined in the applicable Code of Federal Regulations.

CBP addressed OIG's concerns with the poor outdoor lighting at one station by referencing an April 2017 Federal Protective Service Vulnerability Survey Report which deemed the facility lighting to be uniform and sufficient. CBP noted that the fence around the Tucson facility has concertina wire atop it, which serves as a deterrent.

**OIG Analysis:** CBP concurred but the comments and proposed actions are not fully responsive to the recommendation. CBP cited the leased status of the Tucson sector facilities as the reason they are unable to make facility improvements or control maintenance schedules. CBP must fully and transparently accept risks to agent safety, regardless of building ownership.



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CBP provided a photo of one storage container with dual locking mechanisms. Nonetheless, the OIG report noted that the security risk is due to several factors and is not limited to the locking mechanism. CBP also noted the April 2017 Federal Protective Service Vulnerability Survey Report, which deemed the Tucson facility lighting to be uniform and sufficient, was a functionality test to determine if lighting was operational and properly maintained. The inspection occurred over six months prior to the OIG site visit. Conditions can and do change and while on site OIG staff observed that the lighting conditions hindered night camera surveillance. CBP provided photo evidence of the concertina wire atop the chain link fence; however, OIG maintains the fence is still easily breached below the wire, especially when surveillance cameras are inoperable.

This recommendation is considered unresolved and open until CBP can provide a corrective action plan that addresses the risk to agent safety identified in the report.

**Recommendation 2:** We recommend that CBP review the security policy and procedures at Border Patrol stations and CBP facilities in the Tucson Sector to ensure cameras are operable and facility access is secure.

**CBP Response: Concur.** In response, CBP provided a copy of the Facility Security Plan which outlines requirements for closed circuit television systems in critical areas. CBP indicated they have a Policy and Compliance team in place to identify security vulnerabilities and bring them into compliance. This team will conduct a review to ensure detention area cameras are operational and feeds are visible. CBP also noted they have a pending work order to install seven cameras at the Tucson facility, but this project is on hold due to funding.

**OIG Analysis:** CBP's response to this recommendation addresses the intent of the recommendation. This recommendation is considered resolved and will remain open until CBP provides evidence that it has reviewed security plans for other Tucson Sector facilities identified by OIG as having vulnerabilities due to non-functioning cameras or unmanned camera feeds and secured funding to remedy the cameras it has already deemed need replacement.





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AUG 22 2017



1300 Pennsylvania Avenue NW  
Washington, DC 20229

**U.S. Customs and  
Border Protection**

MEMORANDUM FOR: John Roth  
Inspector General  
Department of Homeland Security

FROM: Sean M. Mildrew   
Senior Component Accountable Official  
U.S. Customs and Border Protection

SUBJECT: Management Response to OIG Management Alert *Security and Safety Concerns at Main and Satellite Border Patrol Stations and Security Concerns at Other Stations* (OIG-17-XXX-ISP-CBP)

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on this draft management alert. U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) appreciates the work of the Office of Inspector General (OIG) in planning and conducting its review and writing this alert.

The U.S. Border Patrol's mission requires a formal, comprehensive security mechanism to identify, evaluate, and monitor risks in a focused manner. As such, the U.S. Border Patrol implemented a robust Policy and Compliance Division to conduct periodic internal inspections of sector facilities. In 2015, a Facility Security Team was established within the Policy and Compliance Division. This team identifies potential physical security vulnerabilities, conducts facility security assessments, and takes prompt action to bring any physical security vulnerabilities into compliance, in accordance with CBP Directive 1440-027, *U.S. Customs and Border Protection's Security Liaison Program*, dated August 30, 2015.

CBP would like to highlight that Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Federal Protective Service (FPS) recently conducted a Physical Security Vulnerability Assessment at a U.S. Border Patrol Station inspected by the OIG. The final FPS report of findings was issued in April 2017, and the FPS report did not identify any vulnerabilities with the facility lighting.

The draft report contained two recommendations with which CBP concurs. Attached please find our detailed response to each recommendation.



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Management Response to OIG Management Alert, *Security and Safety Concerns  
At Main and Satellite Border Patrol Stations and Security Concerns at Other Stations* (OIG-17-  
XXX-ISP-CBP)  
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Again, thank you for the opportunity to comment on this draft report. Technical comments were previously provided under separate cover. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions. We look forward to working with you again in the future.

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**Attachment:** Management Response to OIG Management Alert *Security and Safety Concerns at Border Patrol Stations and Security Concerns at Other Stations* (OIG-17-XXX-ISP-CBP)

The Office of Inspector General (OIG) recommended that the Commissioner of CBP:

**Recommendation 1:** We recommend that CBP correct the physical security issues at the Station, including ensuring storage of appropriate items in properly secured containers, operable cameras with adequate coverage, adequate lighting, secure fencing, and enough parking within a secure perimeter for agents' privately owned vehicles.

**Response:** Concur. The U.S. Border Patrol (Border Patrol) Sector Station is a leased facility. As a CBP leased facility, all maintenance requests for the buildings and parking lot are required to have a work orders submitted. CBP does not maintain control of when the maintenance will be completed and is unable to make any facility improvements without approval from the lessor.

Each station in the CBP Border Patrol Sector has a Facility Security Plan, which outlines the requirement to ensure that all critical areas and systems are protected by the facility Closed-Circuit Television System (CCTV) that is properly operated by responsible individuals. The Facility Security Plan mandates periodic testing and maintenance of the security system.

In addition, the Border Patrol Sector has a comprehensive Policy and Compliance Division that conducts internal inspections of the facilities. This team identifies potential physical security vulnerabilities, conducts facility security assessments, and takes prompt action to bring any physical security vulnerabilities into compliance. At the Vehicle Maintenance Facility (VMF), the team verified that a camera is pointed at the entrance gate and is fully operational with the Vehicle Control Officer monitoring the gate on the screen 24 hours a day, 7 days a week (24/7).

The container with seized property only holds seized marijuana. The OIG's management alert incorrectly identified this container as having only one lock that may be vulnerable with bolt cutters; however, this container has two locks on it and the second lock is recessed and cannot be accessed with bolt cutters. The container has 24/7 operational camera surveillance, as well as an operable intrusion detection system (an alarm if the door is opened by an unauthorized person).

A Vulnerability Survey report issued in April 2017 by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Federal Protective Service (FPS) found that the lighting at the facility was sufficient. On page 25 of the FPS report states, "On November 23, 2016, a functionality test was conducted on the lighting by the FPS. The FPS visited the site during hours of darkness and low light conditions to determine if lighting was operational and properly maintained. Upon inspection, the facility lighting appeared to be uniformed and sufficient. The results of the test were rated as adequate." The report stated "**Vulnerabilities and Recommendations:** There are no vulnerabilities for this section."

The OIG report states that the VMF has a surrounding six foot chain link fence. However, the report did not detail that there is concertina wire on the top of the fencing as a deterrence and does not allow "public access" to the perimeter. Visibility of Government vehicles, storage containers, structures, etc. through a chain link fence does not violate any federal policy. Each





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Management Response to OIG Management Alert, *Security and Safety Concerns At Main and Satellite Border Patrol Stations and Security Concerns at Other Stations* (OIG-17-XXX-ISP-CBP)

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station, to include sector headquarters, has some form of fencing that allows visibility through them.

The Border Patrol Station is limited in parking spaces and cannot extend the area due to facility perimeters at the leased facility. The parking issues at the Border Patrol Station will be mitigated through attrition.

CBP is confident that it has met the intent of the recommendation and respectfully requests closure.

**Recommendation 2:** We recommend that CBP review the security policy and procedures at Border Patrol stations and CBP facilities in the Sector to ensure cameras are operable and facility access is secure.

**Response:** Concur. Each Station in the CBP Border Patrol Sector has a Facility Security Plan, which outlines the requirement to ensure that all critical areas and systems are protected by the facility Closed-Circuit Television System (CCTV) that is properly operated by responsible individuals. The Facility Security Plan mandates periodic testing and maintenance of the security system.

In addition, the Border Patrol Sector has a comprehensive Policy and Compliance Division that conducts internal inspections of the facilities. This team identifies potential physical security vulnerabilities, conducts facility security assessments, and takes prompt action to bring any physical security vulnerabilities into compliance. As part of the team's reviews, they will ensure that cameras are operational and live feeds are visible in the detention area. During a recent review of the Station, it was noted that cameras were operational and live feeds are visible in the detention area. In addition, at the Vehicle Maintenance Facility (VMF), the team verified that a camera is pointed at the entrance gate and is fully operational with the Vehicle Control Officer monitoring the gate on the screen 24/7.

CBP is confident that it has met the intent of the recommendation and respectfully requests closure.



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