



Defense Orientation Conference Association

Live: Virtual Conference

Post Conference Notes

Friday, June 18, 2021

National Security at Home: National Guard Disaster Response to Civil Unrest and Border Security Post Conference Summary

(All presentations were UNCLASSIFIED)

On June 18th, DOCA held a Virtual Conference focused on how the U.S. maintains national security in the U.S. and along its borders—on the ground, in the air, and on the seas. The agenda looked at two related areas. First, DOCA members were informed about the role the U.S. National Guard plays in supporting our nation during times of crisis. Highlighted crises included disaster responses for civil unrest and increased security from spikes of activity along the Southern borders. Then, two speakers from the Customs and Border Protection Service (CBP) addressed the ongoing border problems and how their teams are organized, trained, and equipped to successfully face multi-pronged threats.

National Guard Overview

Office of the Secretary of Defense for Defense Continuity & Mission Assurance

The speaker stressed multiple key points. When the DoD supports federal law enforcement, whether along the border or during times of civil unrest, the DoD stands in support of civil authority at the local, state, and federal levels. DoD actions are guided by law and rogue commanders are not tolerated. In addition it was emphasized that the DoD collects data and surveils for specific security purposes, but does not collect data and intelligence information on U.S. citizens. Lastly, it was stated that the DoD will always operate in support of other federal agencies. Any assistance requested by another agency requires approval by senior DoD leaders.

Furthermore, National Security Special Events (NSSEs) are supported by the DoD as well as by other federal agencies. NSSEs include the Presidential Inauguration event, the State of the Union Address, etc. and all the federal agencies bring unique capabilities (Cyber, CBRNE or Chemical, Biological, Radiation, Nuclear, and EMP) to keep events secure. By describing the background of proceedings leading up to the January 6 storming of the Capitol, the speaker clarified how the DoD and the National Guard troops reacted as quickly they could, following other agency requests. Questions about the insurgency and response time were answered, only to confirm that National Guard troops that were called to DC have redeployed home.

Regarding the Southern border, the speaker said the DoD has about 3-4,000 National Guard troops dispersed throughout the nine border sectors, all supporting the CBP. Direct support includes logistics and transportation support, delivering supplies when needed, and other various activities to assist the CBP agents. The National Guard neither works directly with migrants nor performs any duties involved with apprehending, processing, or transporting the migrants.



CBP Southern Border Security Operations Update

U.S. Border Patrol, Office of the Secretary of Defense and Policy

The presentation began with a slide show highlighting how the CBP is organized, explaining their overall mission, then described the biggest threats coming into America, including powerful gangs and drug cartels. Advanced technology capabilities allow CBP to detect and surveil migrant movements in real time. As migrant “tactics” shift, so do the operational approaches from the CBP.

The speaker educated the audience on the array of vehicles and sensors they use, in addition to explaining the necessary manpower, agent onboarding, and various training challenges within the CBP. Some “drivers and pulls,” or the multiple factors driving the migration of people from over 150 countries was discussed. In answering some DOCA member questions, the speaker explained how the Northern Canadian border differs the Southern Border operations, and how effective the latest border wall built during the Trump administration was.

Air and Marine Role in CBP Border Security Operations Overview

HQ Air and Marine Operations (AMO)

The AMO operates along an 1,850-mile Southern border with about 1,200 agents. Stressing that success is only achieved with great partnerships with other agencies like DHS, DOJ, and the DoD, the speaker explained their vision and mission areas including Air, Maritime, and Land Law Enforcement, Domain Awareness, Extended Border and Foreign Operations, and Contingency & National Security Operations.

During the presentation, the group received a visual description of the AMO’s fixed-wing and rotary-wing aircraft and maritime vessels. In addition, to support Domain Awareness, they have a modern Fusion Center that receives and processes data from multiple sensors into an integrated intelligence picture of the operational areas. AMO coordinates with the Joint Inter-Agency Task Force-South in Miami in order to ensure that they have the latest intelligence on air, land, and sea vessels attempting to illegally enter the U.S. The speaker clarified that the AMO does not spy on U.S. citizens. Lastly, the presentation shared that the AMO also supports NSSEs with the DoD when requested. Commonly, AMO is among the first called upon to support disaster relief operations.