

THE U.S. MILITARY DEFENDS THE HOMELAND

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fulfillment of the requirements for the
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MASTER OF MILITARY ART AND SCIENCE
Homeland Security Studies

by

JASON D. IMBODEN, MAJOR, U.S. ARMY
B.S., Kaplan University, Davenport, Iowa, 2007

Fort Leavenworth, Kansas

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THESIS APPROVAL PAGE

Name of Candidate: Jason D. Imboden

Thesis Title: The U.S. Military Defends the U.S. Southwest Border

Approved by:

_____, Thesis Committee Chair
Albert C. Stahl, MMAS

_____, Member
O. Shawn Cupp, Ph.D.

_____, Member
Stephen V. Tennant, MSCE, MPA

Accepted this 14th day of June 2019 by:

_____, Director, Graduate Degree Programs
Robert F. Baumann, Ph.D.

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ABSTRACT

THE U.S. MILITARY DEFENDS THE HOMELAND, by MAJ Jason D. Imboden, 145 pages.

The southwest border remains a complex problem defending against resourceful drug trafficking organizations. This southern border supports the world's largest legal immigration and \$832 billion worth of trade through thirty-three ports of entry. The drug trafficking organizations exploit the porous border and distribute drugs into the U.S. Street gangs within every major U.S. city conduct retail level distribution saturating communities with drugs. Illicit drug sales generate an estimated annual \$136 billion dollars. Gangs ship drug proceeds and weapons back across Mexico fueling the next cycle of drug trafficking operations. The U.S. Customs Border Protection agents vigilantly defend the southwest border, but the drugs still make it into the U.S. streets. The border security problem requires additional resources. The U.S. Military may provide the critical capabilities necessary to defend the homeland.

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ACRONYMS

ADM	Army Design Methodology
ADRP	Army Doctrine Reference Publication
ADP	Army Doctrine Publication
AO	Area of Operation
ATF	Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives
CBP	Customs and Border Protection
CDS	Counter Drug Support
CGSC	Command and General Staff College
COG	Center of Gravity
CPD	Controlled Prescriptions
DEA	Drug Enforcement Agency
DHS	Department of Homeland Security
DOI	Department of the Interior
DIME	Diplomatic, Information, Military and Economic
DOD	Department of Defense
DTO	Drug Trafficking Organization
FBI	Federal Bureau of Investigations
FM	Field Manual
ICE	Immigration and Customs Enforcement
IPB	Information Preparation of the Battlefield
JTF-N	Joint Task Force – North
JP	Joint Publication
LEA	Law Enforcement Agency
LTC	Lieutenant Colonel

MDMP	Military Decision-Making Process
MNC	Multi-National Company
MOE	Measure of Effectiveness
MOP	Measure of Performance
OFO	Office of Field Operation
PMESII-PT	Political, Military, Economic, Social, Information, Infrastructure, Environment, and Time
POE	Point of Entry
NAFTA	North American Free Trade Agreement
NG	National Guard
ONDCP	Office of National Drug Control Policy
SGA	Small Group Advisor
TCO	Transnational Criminal Organization
UAS	Unmanned Aerial Systems
UCR	Uniform Crime reporting
USBP	U.S. Border Patrol

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The U.S.'s "War on Drugs" rages on. The U.S. Southwest border remains ground zero where U.S. Customs and Border Protection agents defend the country's border from the Drug Trafficking Organizations (DTO). The DTOs move countless narcotics across the border despite U.S. drug interdiction forces. America's sustained drug demands fuel DTOs operations providing billions of dollars in profit. DTOs maintain complex networks inside the U.S. and sell drugs through criminal street gangs.¹

Over the years, the DTOs associated with several national criminal gangs. The trusted gangs provide the interior infrastructure to transport, secure, and sell narcotics throughout the country. These gangs also provide access to almost every major city in the U.S. Each area the gang can influence provides more market areas to sell narcotics. The expansion of gangs' areas creates turf wars with rival gangs fighting for control of markets to increase revenue.

DTOs gained extensive capital that rivals many larger legitimate businesses. The DTOs survive large seizures of their products by U.S. agencies. Even with losses in the millions of dollars, the DTO sends more shipments across the border. For every DTO leader arrested or killed, another leader steps into their place.

The key to the survival of every DTO is the ability to move the billions of dollars of narcotic proceeds back across the border. The DTO distributes and deal drugs, the

¹ Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP), *National Southwest Border Counternarcotics Strategy* (Washington, DC: The White House, May 2016), 12.

most successful commodity known to man. Its product creates a perpetual cycle of addiction that fuels an endless supply and demand.

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS), Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA), The Bureau of Alcohol Tobacco and Firearms (ATF), Customs Border Protection (CBP), Department of Defense (DOD) Task Forces, and additional state and local agencies secure the 2,000-mile Southwest border. Even with the massive amount of federal and state resources, drugs still move across the border. For each successful seizure, hundreds of shipments make it across the border undetected. This border crisis demands real solutions. U.S. agencies have fought the good fight, but ultimately securing the southwestern border requires additional assets.

Purpose

This study utilizes the Operational Design methodology to determine if the U.S. military forces can support Law Enforcement Agencies (LEA) operations against DTOs at the SWB. Every day, illegal narcotics flow through the U.S. southwest border. The evils of drug addiction eat away at our national fabric. It breaks homes, pollutes communities, and lends itself to an insurgency against national interests. The war on drugs rages on with no end in sight. Even though current enforcement actions make measurable impacts, additional resources will win this fight.

Issues

The issues of this study focus on the DTOs and their illegal narcotics smuggled through the U.S. Southwest border. DTOs successfully transport extensive amounts of illicit drugs across the U.S. southwest border. The porous border provides DTOs

numerous access routes. The difficult terrain along this border reduces U.S. enforcement agencies ability to maneuver along or cover essential terrain.

Additionally, the large volume of trade between Mexico and the U.S. places extensive security demands on U.S. enforcement agencies. For example, the Office of Field Operation (OFO) agents inspect hundreds of vehicles while managing the vast amounts of traffic in trade. Mexican DTOs exploit the overwhelming traffic to move narcotics through the busy U.S. ports of entry. Additionally, pedestrian traffic, personal vehicles, and larger commercial semi-trailer trucks smuggle narcotics through. The DTOs sophistication at camouflaging and hiding drugs within these vehicles creates additional challenges for U.S. border enforcement agencies who already must balance detection efforts while keeping traffic moving through congested ports of entry.

U.S. criminal street gangs support the DTOs through transportation, storage, and retail sales of illicit drugs. The sales of these narcotics feed the increasing number of addicts and generate billions of dollars in revenue for the DTOs. These illegal proceeds transfer back across the border to the DTOs. These funds generate the next cycle of operations.

The U.S. deploys several federal and state agencies to stop the flow of narcotics. NHS, CBP, DEA Immigration Customs Enforcement (ICE), ATF, Joint Task Force North (JTF-N), and State National Guard organizations are just some of the organizations enforcing the border. To adequately secure the U.S. Southwest border, additional assets must occupy key terrain along the 2,000-mile-long border. The U.S. military can provide critical capabilities and resources to complete this mission.

The Problem

For decades, narcotic trafficking organizations have smuggled billions of dollars of illegal narcotics through the U.S. southern border. Several U.S. presidential administrations continued the “war on drugs” by implementing policies, creating laws, and creating several agencies to combat the constant insurgence of narcotics. FDA, NHS, ICE and JTF North assists U.S. Customs Border Protection (CBP) efforts along the southern border. Even with the sustained efforts of by the federal government, the flow of illegal narcotics continues. The U.S. southwestern border remains difficult to secure.

Research Question

The following questions provide an increased understanding of the complex problem securing the U.S. Southwest border.

1. Primary Question: How does the U.S. military defeat DTO operations at the Southwest Border?
2. Secondary question #1 What type of military unit is best suited to defeat the DTO?
3. Secondary question #2 What legal issues restrict U.S. military operations at the Southwest Border?

Assumptions

Based on relevant facts, policies, and conditions, the following assumptions apply:

1. Controlled substances like methamphetamine, heroin, cocaine, lysergic acid diethylamide LSD, fentanyl and ecstasy will remain scheduled class narcotics in accordance with the Controlled Substance Act 1970. The classification of marijuana

varies based on individual states. Currently, the federal government still lists Marijuana/cannabinoids as a schedule I narcotic in accordance with Public Law 91-513.²

2. The U.S. southwest border will not have physical barriers along the entire 2,000-mile stretch. Projected physical security improvements along the border will contain an unknown length of the reinforced wall. Based on the various types of terrain and the inaccessibility to certain parts of the border, some areas will be unprotected.

3. Illicit narcotics will remain profitable based on the past and current trends. Based on the levels of drug addiction within the U.S., the demand for illegal drugs remains high.

4. The DTO smugglers culture remains constant as it has for decades. The ability to earn higher wages from supporting DTO operations will recruit loyal members. Additionally, the proceeds from DTOs infiltrate local communities and provide resources Mexico's government will not. This social status of working for a powerful organization allows DTOs to recruit and maintain sufficient employees.

5. Criminal street gangs will remain affiliated with DTOs. Currently, there are 33,000 gangs located within the U.S.³ Within these gangs, an estimated 1,000,000 gang members operate in U.S. communities.⁴ This number exceeds the estimated 750,340 law

² Public Law 91-513.

³ Federal Bureau of Investigation, "What We Investigate: Gang," <https://www.fbi.gov/investigate/violent-crime/gangs>.

⁴ Federal Bureau of Investigation, "Gangs," (audio transcript, March 1, 2011), <https://www.fbi.gov/audio-repository/news-podcasts-inside-gangs-1.mp3/view>.

enforcement officers operating throughout the nation.⁵ The gang's numbers even dwarf the U.S. active duty members. The sheer number of gangs and the financial allure of illicit drugs and other crimes will sustain the gangs for many years to come.

6. Congressional controls over the deployment of the military forces will remain constant. The Posse Comitatus Act (PCA) restricts the U.S. military from performing civilian law enforcement functions. Even though other legal documents and titles provides some exceptions, the overall restrictions will remain.

Past Examples of This Study

Several previous studies examined the problem sets along the U.S. southwest border. In the review of prior literature, the following reports provide the foundation for future analysis:

And at Home: Homeland Defense Strategy at the Southwest Border, 2009

The United States must revise and fully implement its homeland defense strategy, in particular, at the Southwest border. The nation's security strategy and defense doctrine now recognize a broader range of threats not only to the national security in general but to the homeland in particular. However, the strategy and doctrine are confusing, with inconsistent threat identification and a corresponding inconsistency of roles and responsibilities against those threats. More than inconsistent, both strategy and doctrine are insufficient concerning the land domain. Worst of all, even as it exists, the nation's homeland defense strategy is not being fully implemented. Analysis of the situation along the Southwest border shows that the homeland is not defended. Identified threats to the homeland are

⁵ Duren Banks, Joshua Hendrix, Matthew Hickham, and Tracey Kyckelhahn, *National Sources of Law Enforcement Employment Data* (Washington, DC: Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Statistics, April 2016), 16.

unchecked in the strategic land approaches and, in fact, penetrating into the homeland.⁶

The Drug War: Diplomatic and Security Implications for Mexico and the United States, 2011

The drug war in Mexico is entering its fourth year as of 2011. The level of violence has spread throughout Mexico raising doubts as to Mexico's ability to win and assert its State authority. The violence in the Northern part of Mexico causes significant challenges for both Mexico and the United States. Not the least being the potential for violence spreading north of the Mexican border. Thus, the central research question is what are the diplomatic and security effects of the drug war in Mexico on the United States and Mexico relations? Is the United States doing enough to help Mexico in a war that has diplomatic, economic, and security implications for two nations that share more than a common border? The past interaction between Mexico and the United States may affect current diplomatic and security efforts to help Mexico succeed in the drug war. This paper applies a study of past diplomatic and security interactions to identify issues that hinder finding an appropriate solution that addresses the concerns of both nations in the drug war. Solutions for this ill-structured problem need to address Mexico's sovereignty and the United States' desire to prevent spillover violence into the Southwest Border States.⁷

An Approach to the 40-Year Drug War, 2012

This monograph proposes that the Mexican drug trafficking organizations are susceptible to the current strategy employed by the United States with a few modifications. The aim is to disrupt the Mexican drug trafficking organizations using operational shock. In order to accomplish this, this monograph uses select elements of an operational design consisting of arranging operations and effects. These two categories contain the concepts of depth, tempo, and simultaneity. This study asserts that within this operational environment these are essential elements when developing an operational approach. This study reveals that Mexican drug trafficking organizations employ these elements of operational design more effectively than the United States or Mexican government. At the conclusion, this study reveals that employing these select elements of operational design could

⁶ Ryan O'Connor, "And at home: Homeland Defense Strategy at the Southwest Border," (Master's thesis, U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 2013), ii.

⁷ Jesus Gonzalez, "The Drug War: Diplomatic and Security Implications for Mexico and the United States," (Master's thesis, U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 2011).

enhance the current strategy of the United States and lead to the disruption, through operational shock, of the Mexican drug trafficking organizations.⁸

U.S. Southwest Border Security: An Operational Approach

At the U.S. southwest border, there exists the intersection of two distinct cultures, economies, political systems, and ideas of what comprises the national security interests of the U.S. and Mexico. Those security interests stem from a desire to prosper in the global economy while assuring the safety and security of their respective populations. While the expeditious flow of licit capital, goods, and people across the southwest border provides for the national prosperity of the U.S. and Mexico, it remains a source of vulnerability to the national security and prosperity of each country as well. The vulnerabilities at the border include illegal migration, illicit trafficking in arms, drugs, people and black-market goods, and the drug-related violence and impunity in certain areas that permit illegal activities. Analysis of the transnational criminal networks reveals vulnerabilities that can be exploited by the U.S. using a whole of government approach to isolate and disintegrate key nodes of the network. A regionally focused task force that integrates interdiction, investigative and prosecutorial capabilities and provides unity of effort at the operational level will enable the U.S. to effectively target and disrupt and dismantle the networks of Mexican based transnational criminal organizations engaged in the illicit trafficking of drugs, people, weapons, and their illicit proceeds.⁹

The 2012 study titled, Southwest Border Security: An Operational Approach is the most comparable research to this report. The 2012 report analyzed the U.S. southwest border and defined a solution to defeat Mexico's DTO. The report used Army Design Methodology to determine the desired end state. After the analysis, the deployment of the U.S. military was as a possible solution to support ongoing U.S. Border enforcement agencies.

⁸ Dustin E. Phillips, "An Approach to the 40-Year Drug War," (Monograph, School of Advanced Military Studies, U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 2012), ii.

⁹ Steve Brackin, Justin Cole, Wesley Hester, Claudia Pena-Guzman, Robert Schroeder, Joshua Taylor, Marcus Young, "U.S. Southwest Border Security: An Operational Approach," (Seminar report, U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 2012), iv.

This 2012 research provides a foundation for a current study on the Southwest border. The study raised the need to answer how the U.S. military would stop drugs at the border. Many elements remain the same along the border, but drastic changes in U.S. strategic policies may reveal impacts on the security along the border. Additional research on this topic provides a greater understanding of the elements which leads to a viable solution. In this context, further research is not only feasible but essential.

Definition of Terms

Center of Gravity- The source of power that provides moral or physical strength, freedom of action or will to act..¹⁰

Decisive Point- A geographical place, a specific key event, critical factor, or function at when acted upon allows commanders to gain a marked advantage..¹¹

Defeat Mechanism- The method through which friendly forces accomplish their mission against the opposition..¹²

Interdiction- Law enforcement actions including any of the following results in terms of narcotics or their conveyances: ‘divert, disrupt, delay, intercept, board, detain, or destroy, vessels, vehicles, aircraft, people, cargo, and money..¹³

¹⁰ Headquarters, Department of the Army, Army Tactics, Techniques and Procedures 5-0 (Washington, DC: Government Publishing Office), 75.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS), Joint Publication (JP) 3-03, *Joint Interdiction* (Washington, DC: Government Publishing Office, 2012), vii.

Lines of Effort - A line that links multiple tasks using the logic of purpose rather than geographical references to focus efforts toward establishing operational and strategic conditions.¹⁴

Operational Environment- A composite of the conditions, circumstances, and influences that affect the employment of capabilities, and bear on the decisions of the commander.¹⁵

Planning- The art and science of understanding a situation, envisioning a desired future, and laying out effective ways of bringing that future about.¹⁶

Limitations

All the documents utilized for this research are unclassified. This study did not restrict the potential reading audience by including For Official Use Only (FOUO) documents. Research information originated from trusted text and digital sources. Based on time and resource restrictions, no interviews or terrain walks occurred.

Scope and Delimitations

The study will assess the Southwest border operational environment and define a suitable operational approach to defeat the DTOs. Additionally, this report will focus on the land-based problem along the Southwest border. The study will not address maritime counter-narcotics interdiction efforts. This report focuses primarily on the U.S. Southwest border. Additionally, the Operational Design Methodology operational approach analysis

¹⁴ JCS, JP 3-03, vii.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Ibid., 76.

focusses on U.S. Army resources. Even though Operational Design is a Joint Forces methodology, the study uses the U.S. Army based on its current role in support of Operation Faithful Patriot.

The Significance of the Study

The importance of this report is finding a potential solution to strengthen security at the southwest border and reduce drugs entering U.S. communities. Better security at the border security not only reduces narcotics, but prevents possible terrorist organizations infiltration. Additionally, strengthening the border may destabilize U.S. criminal gangs.

The U.S. and Mexico border is 2,000 miles stretching from the Pacific Coast to the Gulf of Mexico. The physical border is a mixture of natural terrain and manufactured barriers. The Rio Grande River forms a natural barrier which runs from El Paso, Texas to the Gulf of Mexico. This river snakes along the border at a variety of widths and depths. Depending on the season and the water level, some areas of the river are a limited obstacle.

Several manufactured barriers provide limited physical security along the porous border. These barriers vary from posted signs to large constructed walls. Most manufactured fence barriers are in populated areas. The type and height of fencing varies from location to location. Out of the 1,933 miles of the border, only 654 miles of the border possess physical barrier separating the U.S. and Mexico.¹⁷ The lack of

¹⁷ Syke Gould, Andy Kersz, and Michelle Mark, "US-Mexico Border Map Shows How Hard It Would Be to Build a Border Wall," *Business Insider*, last modified January 12, 2019, accessed February 21, 2019, <https://www.businessinsider.com/us-mexico-border-wall-photos-maps-2018-5>.

accessibility along the border causes degraded physical security. Most of the U.S. southern border does not have roads or any significant infrastructure. These remote areas limit travel to walking, horseback, or all-terrain vehicles.

The U.S./Mexico border separates two very different but dependent cultures. California, Arizona, New Mexico, and Texas form the U.S. southern border states. Baja California, Sonora, Chihuahua, Coahuila and Tamaulipas form Mexico's northern border. The complicated geography of the border spans from desolate desert areas to populated border towns. Approximately thirty-five border towns straddle the southern border with an estimated population of 12 million.¹⁸ The largest population centers separated by the border are San Diego-Tijuana and El Paso-Ciudad Juarez.

These border towns are both economically and socially interconnected. The U.S. economic opportunities may explain why large Mexican town populations exist at the SWB. Many Mexican residents legally work in the U.S. requiring daily commutes over the border. Additionally, some family members may live on one side of the border, while others live on the other. Most border towns are interdependent and share similar cultures. These towns are only separated by the fence that runs through the border.

Thirty-three Ports of Entry (POE) control migration and entry into the U.S. Southwest border. These ports of entry facilitate pedestrian, automobile and commercial

¹⁸ Migration Policy, "The U.S.-Mexico Border," last modified June 1, 2006, accessed February 21, 2019, <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/us-mexico-border>.

traffic entering and exiting the country. These U.S. ports of entry are the most active in the world, with an estimated crossing of 1,069,260 passengers and pedestrians a day..¹⁹

Summary and Conclusions

The U.S. Southwest border is a complex national security problem. The porous border enables DTO operations and hinders U.S. enforcement actions. This study analyzes the previous reports on the border to include current strategic policies and codes supporting U.S. military operations. Additionally, the Operational Design Methodology provides a detailed understanding of the operational environment. Based on this analysis, an Operational Approach identifies the DTO center of gravity and critical vulnerabilities. Ultimately, this report answers the question of how the U.S. military supports law enforcement agencies to defeat DTO at the SWB.

¹⁹ Customs and Border Protection, “On a Typical Day in Fiscal Year 2016, CPB...,” Department of Homeland Security, accessed February 13, 2017, <https://www.cbp.gov/newsroom/stats/typical-day-fy2016>.

CHAPTER 2

STRATEGIC OVERVIEW

Introduction

The U.S. Southwest border problem contains a multitude of connected but unique problems sets. The relationship between the U.S. and Mexico relies on a balance of trade and security. DTO operations negatively affect both vital elements at the border. This study begins with an examination of the U.S. strategies focused on securing the border. Several U.S. codes and policies define the current military restrictions. A historic review of the DTO sets the strategic foundation leading into the Operational Design methodology.

U.S. Drug Enforcement Strategies

The United States continues the war on drugs, with ongoing attempts to stop the DTOs at the U.S. southwest border meeting minimal success. Since terrorist attacks in September 2001 generated new emphasis focused on securing the southwest border to prevent terrorist organizations from infiltrating into the U.S. With the new threat, a new federal enforcement organization emerged. The Homeland Security Act of 2002 established the DHS which is tasked with securing the borders and combating homeland terrorist threats.²⁰ As part of the security mission, the DHS conducts operations against the DTOs. This study analyzed the following U.S. strategic policies, statutes and military publications relating to countering DTOs:

²⁰ Department of Homeland Security, "Homeland Security Act of 2002," last modified September 22, 2015, accessed November 3, 2018, <https://www.dhs.gov/homeland-security-act-2002>.

1. The National Security Strategy of the United States of America 2017
2. The Department of Homeland Security Fiscal Years 2014-2018 Strategic Plan
3. National Southwest Border Counternarcotic Strategy, May 2016
4. The 2012-2016 U.S. Border Patrol Strategic Plan
5. Joint Publications 3-27 Homeland Defense, 10 April 2018.
6. Joint Publications 3-07.4 Counterdrug Operations, 5 February 2019
7. DODI 3025.21 Defense Support of Civilian Law Enforcement Agencies
8. Title 10 U.S. Code §284 – Support for Counterdrug activities and activities to counter transnational organized crime.

The National Security Strategy of the United States of America December 2017

The election of President Trump in 2017 led to a major shift in national policy and renewed focus on the southwest border. In the 2017 National Security Strategy, President Trump identified strengthening of border control and immigration control as a strategic focus. The 2017 National Security Strategy states, “Strengthening control over our borders and immigration system is central to national security, economic prosperity, and the rule of law. Terrorists, drug traffickers, and criminal cartels exploit porous U.S. borders and threaten U.S. security and public safety. These actors adapt quickly to outpace our defense.”²¹ The security strategy highlighted the porous border as a means for terrorists, drug traffickers and criminal cartels to achieve their goals, while ultimately affecting the U.S. security. The actor’s ability to quickly adapt often defeated security

²¹ U.S. President, *National Security Strategy of the United States of America* (NSS) (Washington, DC: The White House, December 2017), 4.

defenses. In summary, the security strategy addressed the strategic importance and security issues associated with the southwest border.

Subsequently, national strategy specifically highlighted the Chinese involvement in the supplying of precursors of fentanyl which is directly linked to thousands of drug overdoses within the U.S. Additionally, the strategy highlights the second and third order effects of allowing transnational criminal organizations to remain unchecked. DTOs set conditions for political subversion through corruption and violence. DTOs possess complex networks to expand their organizations globally. Many DTOs maintain complex global supply chains which rival legit commercial transportation organizations.²²

U.S. Department of Homeland Security Strategic Plan for Fiscal Years 2014-2018

According to the current 2014-2018 U.S. Homeland Security plan, the organization focuses on securing and managing the U.S. borders. The plan nests within the U.S. National Security Strategic plan and interrelated goals.

1. Secure U.S. land, air, sea borders / approaches
2. Secure the lawful trade and travel
3. Disrupt and dismantle the TCO and supporting actors.²³

According to the current Department of U.S. Homeland Security (DHS) outlook, cartels are increasing their reliance on illegal drugs proceeds. Criminal organizations maintain effective management and distribution capabilities, like multinational

²² U.S. President, NSS, 4.

²³ Department of Homeland Security (DHS), *Fiscal Years 2014-2018: Strategic Plan* (Washington, DC: DHS, n.d.), 20.

corporations.²⁴ The DHS targets the illicit funds that support the operations, specifically cash smuggling. Likewise, DHS plans to defeat the TCO through disrupting the organizations patterns. Finally, technology will assist in detection, identifying, monitoring, and tracking TCO assets.²⁵

In summary, the DHS controls the nation's borders while enabling legal migration and legitimate trade through multiple ports of entry. To accomplish these goals, the organization relies on a mixture of personnel, technology, and infrastructure.²⁶ Additionally, the DHS's second task centers on utilizing risk segmentation approach to separate the low risk people and trade from the high-risk targets.²⁷ Furthermore, DHS' third goal consists of disrupting and dismantling TCO and other illicit actors.

National Southwest Border Counternarcotic Strategy

The National Southwest Broder Counternarcotic Strategy Strategic provides an extensive overview of illicit drug trends. According to the report, DTOs remain the largest criminal threat to the U.S. through extensive distribution of heroin, methamphetamine, marijuana, fentanyl, and cocaine for retail sale by criminal street gangs.²⁸ The DTOs continue to expand their operational reach into the U.S. and global

²⁴ DHS, *Fiscal Years 2014-2018: Strategic Plan*, 23.

²⁵ Ibid., 24.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Ibid., 22.

²⁸ ONDCP, *National Southwest Border Counternarcotics Strategy*, 12.

markets. The 2016 policy provides the following six strategic objectives to counter the DTOs:

One, LEA enhance intelligence and information sharing capabilities and processes associated with the SWB. Several federal, state, and local enforcement agencies actively investigate drug cases along the border. Sharing information among the multiple agencies increases enforcement capabilities and limits duplication of efforts.²⁹ This strategy tasks federal agencies to increase accessibility of information to supporting local enforcement agencies. Building accessible repositories provides valuable information to synchronize or support multi-jurisdictional investigations.³⁰ Synchronization of efforts also deconflicts multi-jurisdictional agencies targeting the same actors. Detailed strategic analysis tools pushed to operational and local agencies provides increased intelligence capabilities. Furthermore, local agencies can push intelligence to higher levels informing and validating ongoing intelligence gathering operations.³¹

Two, LEA reduce the flow of drugs and illicit proceeds that cross the SWB, to include the land, air, and maritime approaches from Mexico. This strategy tasks agencies to utilize intelligence to drive operations. Counternarcotic operations should nest with national strategies. Additionally, U.S. LEA conduct integrity training to enforce mandatory corruption reporting. LEA also incorporates railroad enforcement operations occurring at the SWB.³²

²⁹ ONDCP, *National Southwest Border Counternarcotics Strategy*, 12.

³⁰ *Ibid.*

³¹ *Ibid.*, 22.

³² *Ibid.*, 27.

Three, LEA efforts strengthen communities. Effective enforcement relies on public and community support. Federal agencies support coalitions with communities while empowering them to action against drugs and crime. Enforcement agencies support health services-based intervention programs.

Four, LEA conducts effective investigations and criminal prosecutions. Agencies should enhance mechanisms and incentives to increase cooperation between LEA. U.S. Attorney Office must maintain resources to investigate cases within their jurisdiction. LEA, prosecutors, and Tribal resources should coordinate efforts to defeat DTO operations within Indian reservations. Finally, LEA report all police corruption cases to the FBI for investigation.³³

Five, enforcement agencies must stem the flow of illicit financial proceeds traveling back into Mexico. DTOs rely on bulk cash shipments and other financial networks. Enforcement agencies must disrupt bulk cash carriers providing resources to DTOs. The Department of Treasury target and prosecutes third party laundering networks through forensic accounting.³⁴ Agencies must share financial based laundering investigations among all levels. Finally, U.S. enforcement agencies should share financial investigations with Mexico to assist with their criminal prosecutions.³⁵

Six, enforcement agencies must stop the flow of weapons across the SWB. Effective interdiction requires shared enforcement resources and intelligence. The Export Enforcement Coordination Center provides deconfliction for law enforcement

³³ ONDCP, *National Southwest Border Counternarcotics Strategy*, 44.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 47.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 51.

investigations targeting weapon and ammunition exports. Additionally, ATF National Tracing Center assists federal and state agencies with trafficking data and trends.³⁶ Federal prosecutors support enforcement efforts by prosecuting weapon trafficking cases at the SWB.³⁷

Seven, LEA must stem the flow of illicit chemicals across the SWB. The objective increases law enforcements ability to detect narcotics dissolved in liquids or disguised as hazardous chemicals.³⁸ LEA will educate and support Mexico's enforcement agencies hazardous chemicals disposal protocols. Several Mexico based methamphetamine illegal laboratories provide extensive hazardous waste sites. All enforcement agencies must process and dispose of the hazardous chemicals.

Finally, the objective enhances U.S.- Mexican, Central America counterdrug efforts. The U.S. must support Mexico's criminal justice system and rule of law.³⁹ These U.S. efforts increase security through improving Mexico's and law enforcement organizations. Ultimately, Mexican prosecution of drug sales, money laundering and human trafficking weakens DTO operations.⁴⁰

³⁶ ONDCP, *National Southwest Border Counternarcotics Strategy*, 54.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 59.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 61.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 64.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

The 2012-2016 U.S. Border Patrol Strategic Plan

According to their Strategic Plan, the U.S. Border Patrol (USBP) will focus on securing America's borders and strengthening the border patrol organization. The USBP secures the southwest border in areas located between the ports of entry (POE).

The USBP strategic plan aligns with the President's strategy to defeat the transnational organized crime using a risk-based approach to securing the U.S. border.⁴¹ The USBP relies on obtainable intelligence for response to detected incidents. Early detection of border breaches allows the organization to deploy resources while mitigating agent's risk.

According to the strategy, the U.S. Border Patrol implements technology advances, including reconnaissance platforms to identify intrusions and sign cutting across the border.⁴² The organization shares intelligence obtained with other enforcement organizations.⁴³ The USBP also works with local, state and federal agencies to increase its ability to meet the challenges across the border. Better intelligence also enables rapid responses to incidents.⁴⁴

⁴¹ Customs and Border Protection, "2012-2016 U.S. Border Patrol Strategic Plan," Department of Homeland Security, accessed November 3, 2018, <https://www.cbp.gov/border-security/along-us-borders/strategic-plan>, 7.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

U.S. Joint Publication 3-27 Homeland Defense

According to the Joint Publication 3-27, the U.S. protects its sovereign border, domestic population centers, national infrastructure against external threats or aggression.⁴⁵ Homeland Defense requires the unified action and coordination with several government and non-government enforcement agencies to establish an effective defense. The publication defines the U.S. NORTHCOM as the lead agency responsible for coordinating security efforts.⁴⁶ Integration of U.S. military operations within the U.S. creates several legal issues which require analysis of the rules of engagement. Title 32 of the United States Code (USC) Section 502 provides authority for U.S. federal military forces to aid defense and security of civil authorities' missions. The DOD supports this Homeland Defense task through detecting, preventing, and defeating enemy actions.⁴⁷

U.S. Joint Publications 3-07.4 Counterdrug Operations

JP 3-07.4 outlines the Department of Defense support for the counterdrug operations along the southwest border. DOD supports this mission through its robust detection and monitoring capabilities.⁴⁸ The ability to detect and monitor potential drug operations enables U.S. enforcement personnel to conduct searches which result in drug seizures.

⁴⁵ Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Publication 3-27, *Homeland Defense* (Washington, DC: Government Publishing Office, April 10, 2018), vii.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, ix.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, I-3.

⁴⁸ Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS), Joint Publication (JP) 3-07.4, *Counter Drug Operations* (Washington, DC: Government Publishing Office, February 5, 2019), III-7.

DOD assets may detect drug operations from fixed or mobile platforms. DOD detection assets can originate from air, maritime or land. Upon detection, DOD tracks and monitors the potential violator to a point where the subject's resolution transfers to a U.S. enforcement agency.⁴⁹

The DOD counterdrug operations provide cueing or tipping information to U.S. enforcement operations. Often, law enforcement receives intelligence of drug operations from outside sources. Law enforcement agencies use reliable information as probable cause to conduct localized drug investigations.

Successful detection and monitoring capabilities relies on effective operational security between DOD and law enforcement agencies. DTOs utilize advanced security measures aimed at deceiving enforcement agencies. DTOs also rely on bribes, kidnapping, murders, and other tactics to disrupt law enforcement actions. Utilizing OPSEC mitigates the DTO's ability to utilize human intelligence and other intelligence gathering systems.⁵⁰

DODI 3025.21

Department of Defense Instruction 3025.21 provides guidelines for DOD personnel supporting U.S. Law Enforcement activities. This instruction outlines statutory restrictions, permissible direct assistance, use of equipment, and training.

First, the DODI outlines actions where the Posse Comitatus act restricts DOD personnel from directly participating in civilian law enforcement searches, arrests, and

⁴⁹ JCS, JP 3-07.4, III-7.

⁵⁰ Ibid., III-8.

seizures. Additionally, DOD personnel will not directly assist investigative stop and frisk activities or interrogations. Furthermore, DOD personnel will not collect evidence, man check points, or conduct traffic control operations in direct support of civilian law enforcement activities..⁵¹

DOD personnel are authorized to assist law enforcement agencies by operating equipment. The DODI provides examples of flying law enforcement personnel or logistical support of LE operations. ⁵² Additionally, DOD personnel can operate equipment to detect monitor and communicate the movement of air and maritime traffic..⁵³ Forces may also conduct aerial reconnaissance, intercept vessels or aircraft detected outside of the U.S. borders..⁵⁴ With the approval from the Secretary of Defense, DOD personnel may operate bases, detect and monitor weapons of mass destruction. DOD forces may also provide additional logistical support outside of the restrictions listed in DOD 3025.21.

United States Code

Title 10 U.S. Code Chapter 13 Section 1059

Public Law 114-92 Section 1059, November 2015, authorizes the Department of Defense to assist in securing the southern land border of the United States. The DOD

⁵¹ Department of Defense (DOD), DOD Instruction Number 3025.21, Subject: Defense Support of Civilian Law Enforcement Agencies (DOD, Washington, DC, February 27, 2013), 18.

⁵² Ibid., 19.

⁵³ Ibid., 20.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

provides direct assistance to DHS to secure the Southwest border. According to this section the DOD may employ regular and reserve component organizations of the Armed forces along the SWB. Additionally, the DOD is authorized to deploy manned aircraft, unmanned aerial surveillance systems, and ground-based surveillance systems. All the systems provide continuous surveillance of the U.S. Southwest border.⁵⁵

Title 10 U.S. Code Chapter 15 (§ 271-284)

Section 271 directs the Department of Defense to share relevant information with federal, state, and local law enforcement conducting investigating within their jurisdictions. DOD deliberately informs LEA of military operations in their respected jurisdictions. Additionally, DOD provides prompt drug interdiction related information to local law enforcement..⁵⁶

Section 272 directs DOD equipment and facilities support for law enforcement. This support identified any equipment or spare parts requested by federal, state, or local civilian law enforcement purposes. Additionally, based facilities or research facilities are also available for law enforcement support..⁵⁷

Under section 274 DOD may provide personnel for equipment maintenance for federal, state, or local law enforcement when these agencies are enforcing the Controlled Substance Act (21 U.S.C 801) or the Controlled Substances Import and Export Act (21

⁵⁵ United States Code (USC), “[USC04] 10 USC Ch. 15: Military Support for Civilian Law Enforcement Agencies,” U.S. Congress, House, last modified 2016, accessed April 13, 2019, <http://uscode.house.gov/view.xhtml?path=/prelim@title10/subtitleA/part1/chapter15&edition=prelim>.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

U.S.C).⁵⁸ The section also authorizes the DOD to provide personnel to operate related equipment for the following purposes:

1. Detection, monitoring, communication of air and sea
2. Detection, monitoring, and communication of the movement of surface traffic outside the U.S. boundary and 25 miles within the border.
3. Aerial reconnaissance
4. Interception of vessels or aircraft detected outside the U.S.
5. Transportation of civilian law enforcement or civilian personnel operating in joint operations with civilian law enforcement personnel.
6. The operation of base of operations for civilian law enforcement and supporting civilian / military personnel.
7. Transportation and related security of suspected terrorist personnel to trials.⁵⁹

Section 284 establishes the framework for military support of law enforcement counterdrug operations. This statute allows the military to support law enforcement in order to defeat transnational organized crime. These provisions are applicable to federal government, state, or local tribal law enforcement agencies.⁶⁰ For the military to assist, an official request must originate from the associated government official potentially affected by the DTO. Upon approval the military can provide the following assistance:

1. Maintenance and repair of equipment.

⁵⁸ USC, “[USC04] 10 USC Ch. 15: Military Support for Civilian Law Enforcement Agencies.”

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

2. Transportation of personnel, and equipment required for counterdrug operations.
3. Counterdrug training to law enforcement agencies.
4. Detection, monitor and communication of movement for air, maritime traffic operating 25 miles outside and 25 miles within the U.S. border. Surface traffic areas of operation include outside the border and within 25 miles of the border if the initial detection initiated outside of the border.
5. Construction of roads, fences, and barriers to block DTO traffic corridors.
6. Establishment of command, control networks to assist communications for U.S. Military and law enforcement integrated operations.
7. Providing linguist and intelligence analysis services
8. Aerial and ground reconnaissance.⁶¹

32 U.S.C § 112 National Guard Drug Interdiction and Counter-Drug Activities

Under section 112, DOD can authorize the National Guard under 502(f) to conduct State drug interdiction and counter-drug activities. This mission includes conducting counter drug law enforcement activities including drug demand reduction activities through the request of the State Governor. The DOD is responsible for defining National Guard's tasks during these counter-drug operations.⁶²

⁶¹ USC, “[USC04] 10 USC Ch. 15: Military Support for Civilian Law Enforcement Agencies.”

⁶² Legal Information Institute, “32 U.S. Code § 112 - Drug Interdiction and Counter-Drug Activities,” Cornell Law School, accessed April 13, 2019, <https://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/text/32/112>.

Title 18 U.S.C Section 1385

Title 18 U.S.C Section 1385, more commonly referred to the Posse Comitatus Act (PCA) provides restrictions for the use of military forces in direct support to of U.S. Law Enforcement agencies. This remarkably short and concise title states “Whoever except in cases under circumstances expressly authorized by the Constitution of Congress willfully uses any part of the Army or the Air Force as a posse comitatus or otherwise to execute the laws shall be fined under this title or imprisoned not more than two years or both.”⁶³

Posse Comitatus Act Exemptions

32 C.F.R § 215.4(b)

32 C.F.R § 215.4 outlines exceptions that override the Posse Comitatus Act (18 U.S. Code 1385). The first exemption, defined as the emergency authority (32 C.F.R. § 215.4 (c)(1)(i)), indicates the U.S. may utilize military forces to prevent loss of life or destruction of property during civil disturbances, or other disasters which disrupt normal government functions.⁶⁴

10 U.S.C. § 332

Title 10 U.S.C. 332 (Use of militia and armed forces to enforce Federal authority) authorizes use of military forces to enforce Federal law when unlawful obstructions or

⁶³ Legal Information Institute, “18 U.S. Code § 1385 - Use of Army and Air Force as Posse Comitatus,” Cornell Law School, accessed February 12, 2019, <https://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/text/18/1385>.

⁶⁴ Legal Information Institute, “32 CFR 215.4 - Legal Considerations,” Cornell Law School, accessed February 12, 2019, <https://www.law.cornell.edu/cfr/text/32/215.4>.

rebellion against the authority of the U.S. renders ordinary enforcement means unworkable.⁶⁵

Whenever the President considers that unlawful obstructions, combinations, or assemblages, or rebellion against the authority of the United States, make it impracticable to enforce the laws of the United States in any State or Territory by the ordinary course of judicial proceedings, he may call into Federal service such of the militia of any State, and use such of the armed forces, as he considers necessary to enforce those laws or to suppress the rebellion.⁶⁶

Drug Trafficking Organization History

The Mexico DTOs have operated in the illicit narcotic business for nearly a century. The DTO business model focusses on distributing their narcotics to markets through the most efficient means to maximize profits.⁶⁷ Their drug production and distribution centered on marijuana and heroin for decades. The profits increase DTOs influence on government and law enforcement agencies. DTOs frequently bribe officials for immunity from Mexican law enforcement. This immunity provides cover to strengthen the DTOs operational reach into the U.S. When the bribes were not effective, the DTOs simply applied violence to gain their objectives.

The Cocaine Market

During the 1980s, Mexican DTOs expanded their power while distributing Columbian cocaine to U.S. markets. The Columbian cartels dominated the cocaine

⁶⁵ Legal Information Institute, “32 CFR 215.4 - Legal Considerations.”

⁶⁶ United States Code, “Insurrection, 10 U.S.C. §§ 331-334 (Suppl. 4 1952),” Library of Congress, accessed February 19, 2019, <https://www.loc.gov/item/uscode1952-011010015/>.

⁶⁷ June S. Beittel, *Mexico: Organized Crime and Drug Trafficking Organizations*, Congressional Research Service Report for Congress (Washington, DC: Library of Congress, July 3, 2018), 6.

market throughout the early 1980s. The Columbians relied on maritime routes through the Caribbean to distribute mass shipments of cocaine to the US. Eventually the U.S. was able to target and shut down the once lucrative Caribbean routes. This forced the Columbians to find other distribution routes. Based on the geographic positioning, Colombian cartels used Mexican DTOs to move their cocaine over well-established land routes. Mexican DTOs received cocaine in lieu of cash to transport the Colombian cocaine.⁶⁸ Mexican DTOs quickly transitioned from cocaine couriers to wholesale distributors.

The Expansion of DTOs

According to the 2018 Department of Justice Drug Enforcement Agency report the following DTOs are the strongest organizations within Mexico: the Sinaloa Cartel; the Jalisco New Generation (CJNG) Cartel, the Juarez Cartel, the Gulf Cartel; Los Zetas, and the Beltran-Leyva Organization (BLO). The DTO's export large quantities of heroin, methamphetamine, cocaine, marijuana, and fentanyl. Narcotics smuggled through the Southwest border flow to aligned criminal street gangs for retail distribution.⁶⁹

Mexico's Political Shift

Under the 71-year rule of the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI), many of the cartels could operate without interference of Mexican authorities.⁷⁰ During this time,

⁶⁸ Beittel, *Mexico: Organized Crime and Drug Trafficking Organizations*, 8.

⁶⁹ Department of Justice (DOJ), Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), *2018 National Drug Threat Assessment* (Washington, DC: DOJ, October 2018).

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 8.

Mexican government suffered many levels of corruption which created a co-existing relationship with some of the DTOs.⁷¹ DTOs exploited Mexican law enforcement corruption and frequently used them to assassinate rivals. During the period of 1947 through 1985, certain corrupt government officials assisted DTOs and regulated access along the northern routes into the U.S.⁷² The political shift turned the PRI to the more democratic National Action Party (PAN). This political shift signaled challenge to the DTOs. In 2000, Mexico elected the PAN party candidate Vicente Fox President. Over the next eighteen years, the Mexican political administrations waged war against the DTOs.

In 2006, Mexico elected President Felipe Calderon who initiated a campaign (2006-2012) against the Mexican DTOs. The prominent organizations at this time were the Tijuana/Arellano Felix organization (AFO), Juarez/Vicente Carillo Fuentes Organization (CFO), the Sinaloa cartel and the gulf cartels.⁷³ During the campaign, President Calderon's government forces made significant arrests of DTO leaders but none were prosecuted or convicted.⁷⁴ Mexico and the U.S. increased security cooperation which led to the extradition of several DTO leaders. The U.S. successfully prosecuted many of the leaders, but these extraditions declined under new the new Mexican President Pena Nieto. President Nieto initially maintained a different approach which

⁷¹ DOJ DEA, *2018 National Drug Threat Assessment*, 8.

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Ibid., 2.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

involved allowing DTO leaders to remain in power. These views eventually changed and resembled those of his predecessor President Calderon.

The Merida Initiative

In 2008, the U.S. and Mexico created the bilateral Merida Initiative. Mexican President Calderon entered the initiative pledging to fight their internal crime and corruption. The U.S. pledged to reduce its high drug demand and restrict the DTOs ability to smuggle its proceeds back into Mexico.⁷⁵ The initiative contained a four-pillar strategy. The first pillar focused on combating the DTOs through cooperative intelligence and law enforcement operations.⁷⁶ The new focus also included targeted money laundering operations. The second pillar institutionalized the rule of law and protected human rights. Efforts included law enforcement training and overall justice reform.⁷⁷ The third pillar created a 21st century U.S. Mexican border. Additional resources improved Mexico's immigration enforcement and made physical improvements to Mexico's southern border. The fourth pillar centered on building strong and resilient communities. Education programs addressed the basis of drug demand and its associated violence.⁷⁸

Initial U.S. appropriations supported Mexico's government forces through foreign military financing (FMF). Approximately \$1.5 billion of helicopters, aircraft and

⁷⁵ Clare Ribando Seelke, "Evolution of the Merida Initiative, 2007-2019," (Report, Congressional Research Service, Washington, DC, updated March 11, 2019), 1.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

equipment supported Mexico's federal security forces.⁷⁹ U.S. agencies increased counternarcotic, border security and counterterrorism capabilities. The U.S. also provided Mexico's federal forces intelligence which resulted in targeting key DTO leaders.⁸⁰ Over the course of the ten-year initiative, the U.S. provided over \$2.9 billion to support Mexico's government. This year Congress provided an additional \$76.3 million to enable federal assistance to address the domestic opioid crisis, increase the southwest border security, and disrupt the DTOs.

Summary

The security along the U.S. Southwest border has national implications. Border security counter-drug operations incorporate national strategy and nested operational objectives. Several titles in U.S. code provide the legal and constitutional framework for U.S. military support along the border. Title 18 U.S.C Section 1385, the Posse Comitatus Act provides substantial restrictions on utilizing U.S. military to perform law enforcement. Active military cannot search, seize, or arrest violators during counter-drug operations. Even though active military forces cannot perform law enforcement actions, the military have broad support authorities. National Guard personnel acting under Title 32, Section 112 provide a direct law enforcement capability for counter-drug operations.

Conclusion

The DTOs remains a significant threat to the U.S. border. DTOs leadership and areas of operation adjust over time, but each organization still maintains the ability to

⁷⁹ Seelke, "Evolution of the Merida Initiative, 2007-2019," 1.

⁸⁰ Ibid.

distribute drugs into the U.S. The decades old war on drugs dramatically shapes politics on both sides of the border. DTOs not only impact the U.S. through drug trafficking, these organizations continually challenge Mexico's legitimacy. The ongoing border problem requires an effective problem-solving method to understand the operational environment and create a solution.

CHAPTER 3

OPERATIONAL DESIGN METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The DTO drug smuggling operation along the Southwest border presents the U.S. with a complex problem. The CBP stretches their limited resources across 2,000 miles of rough terrain. OFO searches millions of vehicles entering the thirty-three ports of entry (POE) while facilitating the legal flow of immigration and trade. Additionally, multiple U.S. federal, state, and local enforcement agencies work drug investigations aimed at stopping the flow of drugs into U.S. communities. Despite these efforts, the flow of drugs fueling drug addiction and associated crime remains a significant problem. The U.S. military may provide capabilities that could support law enforcement agency (LEA) operations against the DTO.

Defeating the DTO operations calls for a problem-solving methodology suited for military operations. Joint Publication 5-0 provides an effective tool to solve complicated problems. Operational Design incorporates Operational Art and methodology to obtain understanding and visualization of required operations to achieve end states.⁸¹

This chapter describes the framework for the Operational Design Methodology. Each step summarizes the types of information required for analysis in Chapter Four. The Operational Design methodology consists of four parts: the current state, desired state, the problem, and the operational approach. First, the current state incorporates the PMESII and RAFT analysis to obtain an understanding of the complex SWB operational

⁸¹ Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS), Joint Publication (JP) 5-0, *Joint Planning* (Washington, DC: Government Publishing Office, June 16, 2017), IV-5.

environments. Second, the operational design methodology presents the desired state. This section outlines the desired conditions enabling a successful end state. Third, the section compares the differences between the current and desired end state into a problem statement. The problem focuses on reducing obstacles to reach the identified end state. Finally, the fourth section identifies the operational approach designed to accomplish the end state. This section provides analysis of the DTO and U.S. capabilities, requirements, and vulnerabilities. Based on this assessment, operations can attack vulnerabilities to accomplish the mission. The operational approach also identifies lines of operation, lines of effort, tasks, and objectives required to defeat the DTO.

Operational Design Methodology

Operational Design is a four-step methodology that provides an understanding of the operational environment along with a visualization of an operational approach. This methodology focuses on the current state, the desired state, the problem, and an operational approach to reach the defined end state and carried out using the following steps:⁸²

1. Understand Strategic Guidance and Direction
2. Understand the Strategic Environment
3. Understand the Operational Environment
4. Define the current state
5. Define the desired state
6. Define the Problem

⁸² JCS, JP 5-0, IV-6.

7. Develop operational approach⁸³

Strategic Guidance and Direction

Strategic guidance and direction start at the executive branch of the U.S. government. The National Security Strategy document provides administration goals and end states. These end states transfer to other supporting strategic departments where their operational objectives synchronized or nested with national goals. Typically, National Security Strategy will generate supporting Department of Defense and other government strategy documents. These nested end states become operational goals assigned to geographic combatant commanders. Strategic guidance research included the following documents:

1. The National Security Strategy of the United States of America 2017
2. The Department of Homeland Security Fiscal Years 2014-2018 Strategic Plan
3. National Southwest Border Counternarcotic Strategy, May 2016
4. The 2012-2016 U.S. Border Patrol Strategic Plan

Strategic Environment

The U.S. shapes and manages its strategic environment through the application of power throughout the world. Power is the method of influencing others in support of national interests. Power sources include military, diplomatic, economic, and information. Each source provides its unique ways and means to reach an end state. This study examines the ongoing strategic connections between the U.S. and Mexico. Further,

⁸³ JCS, JP 5-0, IV-7.

analysis will identify how trade and the Merida Initiative impacts the strategic environment along the southwest border.

Operational Environment

The operational environment defines a series of systems associated with a geographic location or organization. Several inputs establish the understanding or definition of the operational environment. This study considers the strategic guidance, the nature of the DTO's operations, relevant history, and components of the U.S. SWB. Based on the complexity of multiple interacting systems this study uses a systems perspective analysis of the border. The political, military, economic, social, infrastructure, information (PMESII) areas compose the baseline for the systems analysis.

Current State

The first step identifies the current state at the SWB. The current state forms the question, what is going on at the SWB? The PMESII provides an understanding of the operational environment through a detailed analysis of Mexico and the U.S. southern borders systems. Additional analysis tools identify current relationships, actors, functions, and tensions (RAFT).⁸⁴ The RAFT analysis identifies the relevant actors to include the DTO components, Mexico's enforcement agencies, U.S enforcement organizations located along the SWB. The analysis also defines relationships and associated functions among the different DTO components. Finally, the RAFT identifies tensions between all the relevant actors. The methodology includes a graphic depicting

⁸⁴ Dale E. Eikmeier, "Design for Napoleon's Corporal," *Small Wars Journal* (May 2010): 4, accessed May 15, 2019, <https://smallwarsjournal.com/jrnل/art/design-for-napoleons-corporal>.

actors, relationships, functions, and tensions for a visual tool to better understand the current state.

Desired End State

The next step in the Operational Design methodology is defining the desired end state. This component asks, “What do you want to happen at the SWB?” The desired end state utilizes the same elements of the current state RAFT criteria. The desired end state analysis changes the relevant actors’ functions and tensions shaping the operational environment to the desired state. The study’s desired end state displays what success should look like if the U.S. military defeats DTO operations at the border. Like the current state, the end state analysis utilizes a graphic for visual understanding of the desired operational environment.

Tendencies and Potentials

Tendencies and potentials provide a further understanding of the operational environment. Actors behaviors and views change based on other influencing factors. Cause and effect shape how DTOs will act in their operations. The tendencies analysis covers the projected tendency without any significant change. Additionally, the tendency analysis shows the projected range of positive and negative tendencies. Potentials identify the capability of development with an actor.⁸⁵

⁸⁵ JCS, JP 5-0, IV-13.

Defining the Problem

The Operational Design methodology defines the DTO drug trafficking problem at the SWB. The Operational Design compares the current and desired end state of the SWB. Analysis of the changed RAFT components identifies the root of the problem. This process shows what requires action to accomplish the desired results.⁸⁶ Once the study defines the problem, the Operational Design methodology develops an approach to meet the desired end state.

Operational Approach

The Operational Approach visualizes actions that transform the current state into the desired state.⁸⁷ This step extends the previous analysis of the DTO and its operations. The DTO analysis identifies its objective, means, critical requirements, critical vulnerabilities, and the center of gravity. First, the DTO's objectives identify what drives their operations. It is essential to understand the DTO's real purpose. Without an established objective, any action recommended in the operational approach fails to defeat the enemy. Next, the study identifies the DTO's means to accomplish their goals. Breaking down relevant DTO components that enable their operations to present further analysis into potential targets. Since the DTO is a complicated organization that mitigates losses of profit and product, identifying internal parts of their organization is critical to locating their vulnerabilities. Once the analysis identifies the internal components the study will categorize potential weaknesses. If the study determines a critical

⁸⁶ JCS, JP 5-0, IV-14.

⁸⁷ Ibid., IV-16.

vulnerability, the U.S. military can exploit this weakness to defeat the DTO. The DTO's most critical vulnerability may identify the DTO's center of gravity.

Center of Gravity

According to the Joint Publication 5-0 Operations, the center of gravity is the power source that enables an entity to conduct its operations. The center of gravity is the single component, that if removed, prevents the DTOs from achieving their objective. The study also identifies the U.S. center of gravity (COG) to achieve the desired end state. Furthermore, the analysis identifies critical capabilities, critical requirements, and critical vulnerabilities.⁸⁸ Critical capabilities define the DTO's drug producing, transporting, and smuggling primary abilities.⁸⁹ Critical requirements identify the DTO's essential resources needed for their objectives.⁹⁰ DTO's critical vulnerabilities illustrate deficiencies or weaknesses in their operations.

Next, the study will analyze U.S. COGs. Analysis of U.S. COGs identify critical capabilities, requirements, and vulnerabilities. U.S. enforcement capabilities analysis verifies LEA can perform actions to meet the desired end state. Critical requirement analysis displays potential shortages or gaps to complete the mission. Identifying vulnerabilities presents likely targets for the DTO. Finally, understanding U.S. enforcement vulnerabilities creates solutions to strengthen U.S. enforcement operations.

⁸⁸ JCS, JP 5-0, IV-25.

⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰ Ibid.

Defeat and Stability Mechanisms

Based on the DTO's center of gravity analysis, this study identifies possible U.S. defeat and stability mechanisms. The defeat mechanism consists of two categories attrition, and disruption.⁹¹ Analysis of the DTO's center of gravity determines if the U.S. utilizes the destroy, dislocate, disintegrate, or isolate defeat mechanism. Additionally, analysis determines if the U.S. efforts involve stability mechanisms. U.S. military may employ compelling, controlling, influencing, or supporting stability operations in support of civilian agencies.⁹²

Decisive Points

The military defines a decisive point as any place, key event, or function, when actioned creates an obvious advantage.⁹³ The study identifies where key U.S. military enforcement actions enable success. Since the SWB stretches approximately 2,000 miles, it is critical the U.S. defines where it should deploy its resources. The U.S. military should target the DTO's COG at the decisive points.

Direct and Indirect Approach

The study analyzes how the U.S. targets the DTO's center of gravity. Based on Joint Doctrine, U.S. resources target the DTO COG directly or utilize indirect methods. Direct approaches may consist of U.S. enforcement operations massed directly on the

⁹¹ JCS, JP 5-0, IV-31.

⁹² Ibid., IV-32.

⁹³ Ibid., IV-26.

single DTO component. The analysis determines if this DTO COG is within operational reach.

Lines of Effort

Lines of Effort provide an organized mechanism to link tasks, objectives, and conditions to the end state.⁹⁴ Within each line of effort, measures of effectiveness (MOE) and indicators track completed objectives. This analysis defines a U.S. Military proposed end state or defined defeat mechanism against objective defeating DTO operations.

Research Methodology

Extensive research identified current material covering the dynamic U.S. SWB. First, the research incorporated multiple national strategic strategy publications. Next, the study located current statistics, historical data on DTOs, criminal street gangs, and books from current U.S. enforcement agencies. Each federal agency published current reports and strategy documents defining organizational objectives. Additional research located subject matter experts on inner DTO operations. Furthermore, the this study examines current events and statistics from agencies at the border.

The research material underwent a review to determine the feasibility, suitability, relevancy, and credibility of sources. Feasibility determined if the content answered one of the research questions. The suitable research material consisted of statistics or other references focused on the SWB. Research material created within the last five years proved relevant for this study. Research material from federal organizations,

⁹⁴ JCS, JP 5-0, III-6.

congressional research, national policies, and current business publications was deemed credible.

Research Question

Extensive reference material filtered through the Operational Design Methodology provides a detailed analysis of the posed research questions. The Operational Design Methodology provides answers for the following U.S. Southwest border questions:

1. Primary Question: How does the U.S. military defeat DTO operations at the Southwest Border?
2. Secondary question #1 What type of military unit possess the greatest critical DTO defeating capabilities?
3. Secondary question #2 What legal issues restrict U.S. military operations at the Southwest Border?

Summary

The Operational Design Methodology provides detailed analysis for this study. The four-part methodology illustrates the current operational environments through PMESII and RAFT systems perspectives. The analysis identifies the desired conditions and contrasts the variables needed for successful conditions. Analysis reveals the DTO's center of gravity and critical vulnerabilities. Based on the understanding of the operational environment, the methodology provides an operational approach designed to achieve U.S. objectives. Furthermore, specific efforts and actions define the U.S. military's abilities to defeat the DTO. Ultimately, the study research material and Operational Design Methodology answers the primary and secondary research questions.

Conclusion

Operational Design provides a proven methodology for analyzing the complicated SWB problem. The initial stages of the analysis define the current operational environment. The DTO's operations within Mexico and the U.S. require extensive analysis. Creating a real understanding of the operational environment and the DTO is vital for developing the true sense of the problem. Once we define the problem, the Design Methodology center of gravity analysis defines the DTO's greatest weakness. Once critical vulnerabilities are identified, an operational approach provides means to target DTO weaknesses resulting in positive changes to the operational environment.

CHAPTER 4

THE OPERATIONAL APPROACH

Introduction

According to the U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency 2017 report, Mexican drug trafficking organizations (DTO) are the greatest criminal threat to the U.S..⁹⁵ Their production and distribution of methamphetamine, heroin, cocaine, and fentanyl yields \$ billions of illicit profits annually. The lucrative narcotic trafficking business provides the resources to challenge Mexico's government forces.

In this chapter, analysis defines the current operational environment (OE) and the desired end state. Center of gravity analysis (COG) provides further understanding of the DTO and U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP). Analysis identifies each COG's critical capabilities, requirements, and vulnerabilities. Further review of these vulnerabilities provides possible DTO targets and CBP weaknesses that require additional resources.

The study further identifies decisive points where both DTO and CBP vulnerabilities should be actioned. Based on the OE, the study defines Operational ends, means and ways. Strategic guidance shapes the operational ends, while the OE and COG analysis defines the ways to achieve desired effects. Finally, the analysis determines means to accomplish tasks required to defeat the DTO at the Southwest Border. The study concludes with applying U.S. Military tactical objectives, tasks, and effects at each line of operation.

⁹⁵ Drug Enforcement Administration, 2017 Report.

Strategic Guidance and Direction

The 2017 National Security Strategy

The 2017 National Security Strategy of the U.S. identified the DTO's capabilities and the threat to national security. The increased security of the U.S. borders became a national strategic end state.⁹⁶

Strengthening control over our borders and immigration system is central to national security, economic prosperity, and the rule of law. Terrorists, drug traffickers, and criminal cartels exploit porous U.S. borders and threaten U.S. security and public safety. These actors adapt quickly to outpace our defense.⁹⁷

2014-2018 U.S. Homeland Security Plan

According to the current 2014-2018 U.S. Homeland Security plan, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) secures U.S. borders. The plan nests within Mission two of the National Security Strategy (NSS) and interrelated goals.

1. Secure U.S. land, air, sea borders / approaches
2. Secure the lawful trade and travel
3. Disrupt and dismantle the TCO and supporting actors.⁹⁸

National Southwest Border Counternarcotic Strategy

According to the National Southwest Border Counternarcotic Strategy, DTOs remain the largest criminal threat to the U.S. through distribution of heroin,

⁹⁶ U.S. President, NSS, 4.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ DHS, *Fiscal Years 2014-2018: Strategic Plan*, 20.

methamphetamine, marijuana, fentanyl, and cocaine.⁹⁹ The 2016 policy consist of the following strategic objectives:

1. Enhance intelligence and information sharing capabilities.
2. Reduce the flow of drugs, proceeds that cross the SWB to include land, air, and maritime approaches from Mexico.
3. Strengthen Communities.
4. Investigations and Prosecutions.
5. Stem the flow of illicit financial proceeds across the SWB.
6. Stem the flow of weapons across the SWB.
7. Stem the flow of illicit chemicals across the SWB.
8. Enhance U.S.- Mexican, Central America counterdrug efforts.

Strategic Environment

On July 1, 2018, President Andres Manuel Lopez-Obredor won Mexico's Presidential elections. President Lopez-Obredor's stance on combating Mexico's DTO appears to favor negotiations versus the previous use of force to combat the cartels. The newly appointed interior minister, Olga Sanchez, indicated the administration would look into long term goals of decriminalizing marijuana and the cultivation of opium for medical purposes.¹⁰⁰ Sanchez further stated Mexico would use examples from the

⁹⁹ ONDCP, *National Southwest Border Counternarcotics Strategy*, 12.

¹⁰⁰ Lizbeth Diaz and Diego Ore, "In Bloody Drug War, Mexico's New Leader May Try Negotiating," *Reuters*, last modified July 3, 2018, accessed November 3, 2018, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mexico-election-crime/in-bloody-drug-war-mexicos-new-leader-may-try-negotiating-idUSKBN1JS1BP>.

Columbian efforts against cartels to create “transitional justice” for DTOs.¹⁰¹ The current violence in Mexico displays how DTOs influence politicians throughout the country.

From Fall 2017 to June 2018, DTOs assassinated 136 political candidates.¹⁰²

In 2017, President Trump published the NSS and placed significant focus on improving security along the U.S. Southwest border. Within this strategic document, the first objective listed consisted of securing the U.S. Border and Territory.¹⁰³ Another objective listed strengthen the borders and immigration system. The document indicated the “terrorists, drug traffickers and criminal cartels exploit the porous borders and threaten U.S. security and public safety.”¹⁰⁴

Based on the President’s direction, the U.S. Border Patrol (USBP) and Homeland Security received additional resources. At this time, the USBP deploys 18,600 agents on its southern border.¹⁰⁵ With the increased focus along the southern border, President Trump requested that Congress authorize funding for a border wall.

Subsequently, on October 29, 2018, President Trump ordered approximately 5,200 active duty military forces to the southwest border. Military forces deployed in

¹⁰¹ Diaz and Ore, “In Bloody Drug War, Mexico’s New Leader May Try Negotiating.”

¹⁰² Kirk Semple and Paulina Villegas, “Criminal Groups Seek to Decide Outcome in Many Mexican Races,” *The New York Times*, July 2, 2018, sec. World, accessed November 3, 2018, <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/07/01/world/americas/mexico-election-assassinations.html>.

¹⁰³ U.S. President, NSS, 9.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

¹⁰⁵ Diana A. Soular, “Border Agents, and the risks at the edge of the line,” *USA Today*, <https://www.usatoday.com/border-wall/story/us-border-patrol-control-mexico/633139001>.

support of Customs and Border Protection (CBP) operations to prevent the illegal entry of caravans of illegal migrants..¹⁰⁶ The first caravan, estimated at approximately 3,500 migrants reached the border at Tijuana, Mexico..¹⁰⁷

Operational Environment / U.S. Southwest Border

The first step of framing the problem starts with studying the U.S. Southwest Border through a systems perspective. These systems include the following areas: Political, Military, Economic, Social, Information, Infrastructure. These systems help describe the current operational environment at the southwest border.

Political

Since September 16, 1810, the United Mexican States remains a federal presidential republic government, incorporating 32 states, with its capital located at Mexico City. Mexico's government consists of executive, legislative, and judicial branches..¹⁰⁸ On December 1, 2018, Mexico's President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador was inaugurated. During his campaign, President Lopez-Obrado pledged negotiations with DTOs versus former offensive actions. President Lopez-Obrado also talked about

¹⁰⁶ Tom V. Brook and David Jackson, "Pentagon to Deploy 5,200 Active Duty Troops to U.S.-Mexico Border to Halt Migrant Caravan," *USA TODAY*, accessed November 3, 2018, <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/world/2018/10/29/migrant-caravan-troops-border/1805864002/>.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

¹⁰⁸ Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), "The World Factbook: North America: Mexico," last modified October 23, 2018, accessed November 5, 2018, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/mx.html>.

legalizing marijuana and increasing opium production for legitimate healthcare opiate medications.

U.S. President Trump's administration focused on southwest border security and illegal immigration into the United States. Many of the President's policies received political opposition. Several policy debates centered on immigrants gaining legal status through the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals Program (DACA). Additional restrictions were directed at "chain" migration.¹⁰⁹ The Southwest border problem is stopping drugs entering the U.S..¹¹⁰ President Trump authorized hiring 5,000 additional U.S. Customs Border Protection agents to increase security at the border..¹¹¹ President Trump also enacted an executive order enforcing federal laws targeting transnational criminal organizations trafficking operations..¹¹² In April 2018, President Trump ordered

¹⁰⁹ Maya Rhodan, "Congress Waits for President Trump to Close Immigration Deal | Time," *Time*, last modified January 17, 2018, accessed November 6, 2018, <http://time.com/5107116/daca-immigration-congress-trump/>.

¹¹⁰ Christopher Woody, "Trump Wants to Beef up Border Security to 'knock the Hell out of the Drug Flow' — but It Could Still Miss Most of the Smuggling," *Business Insider*, accessed November 6, 2018, <https://www.businessinsider.com/trump-increasing-border-security-overlooks-smuggling-2018-4>.

¹¹¹ U.S. President, "Executive Order: Border Security and Immigration Enforcement Improvements," The White House, last modified January 25, 2017, accessed November 6, 2018, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/executive-order-border-security-immigration-enforcement-improvements/>.

¹¹² U.S. President, "Presidential Executive Order on Enforcing Federal Law with Respect to Transnational Criminal Organizations and Preventing International Trafficking," The White House, last modified February 9, 2017, accessed November 6, 2018, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/presidential-executive-order-enforcing-federal-law-respect-transnational-criminal-organizations-preventing-international-trafficking/>.

4,000 Army National Guard personnel to support security operations at the border.¹¹³ In October 2018, approximately 5,000 active duty U.S. Military personnel deployed along the Southwest Border to support the CBP response to illegal immigrant caravans approaching the U.S. border.¹¹⁴

Economy

Mexico is the 11th largest economy in the world with a \$2.4 trillion based economy including \$2.458 trillion gross domestic product rating.¹¹⁵ Based on 2017 data, Mexico exported 406 billion dollars with the U.S. receiving 80% of its total exports. Mexico's 2017 imports consisted of \$417 billion dollars, including 46% of its imports from the U.S.¹¹⁶ The trade between Mexico and the U.S. was regulated through the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFATA).¹¹⁷ In November 2018, the United States, Mexico, and Canada entered into the new United States, Mexico and Canada Agreement (USMCA).¹¹⁸

¹¹³ Greg Myre, "President Trump Signs Proclamation To Send National Guard Troops To Mexican Border," *NPR*, last modified April 4, 2018, accessed November 6, 2018, <https://www.npr.org/2018/04/04/599436746/president-trump-to-sign-proclamation-to-send-national-guard-troops-to-mexican-bo>.

¹¹⁴ Brook and Jackson, "Pentagon to Deploy 5,200 Active Duty Troops to U.S.-Mexico Border to Halt Migrant Caravan."

¹¹⁵ CIA, "The World Factbook: North America: Mexico."

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁸ The Economist, "America, Canada, and Mexico Agree to a New Trade Deal - Trade Deals," accessed November 6, 2018, <https://www.economist.com/finance-and-economics/2018/10/01/america-canada-and-mexico-agree-to-a-new-trade-deal>.

Trade ties Mexico to the U.S. In total imports and exports, approximately 823 billion dollars of trade crosses the SWB every year. Much of the trade travels by tractor-trailer vehicles entering multiple ports of entries (POE) at the border. The U.S Department of Transportation (DOT) indicates the Laredo, Texas port of entry maintains the highest amount of commercial truck traffic with 2,313,967 trucks entering in 2018. This figure breaks down to 192,831 trucks every month; with a 6,428-daily average.¹¹⁹ Otay-Mesa, California Port of Entry maintains the second largest truck volume with 251,513 2nd quarter 2018. The monthly breakdown is 62,878; and a daily volume of 2,095 trucks

The Mexican Military

The Secretariat of National Defense directs Mexico's military. The armed forces form five different branches of service: Army, Air Force, Navy, Naval Air Force, and Naval Infantry Corp.¹²⁰ All 18-year-old males must complete one-year of conscripted service. Females may enter the service voluntarily and serve within the Army, Navy and Air Force. Mexico's total number of military personnel is approximately 383,575

¹¹⁹ Department of Transportation, "Workbook: Border Crossing Annual Data," last modified 2019, accessed April 9, 2019, https://explore.dot.gov/t/BTS/views/BTSBorderCrossingAnnualData/BorderCrossingTableDashboard?:embed=y&:showShareOptions=true&:display_count=no&:showVizHome=no.

¹²⁰ CIA, "The World Factbook: North America: Mexico."

Soldiers. Out of this number 273,575 are active duty with an additional 110,000 reserves.¹²¹

The Mexican military maintains modern weapon systems. Mexico's Army possesses 695 armored fighting vehicles, 12 self-propelled howitzers, and 375 towed artillery systems.¹²² The Mexican Navy operates 6 frigates, 131 patrol vessels; and 11 mine laying ships.¹²³ The Mexican Air Force operates 217 helicopters, 177 training aircraft; 198 transports; 36 attack aircraft.¹²⁴

Mexico Police Organizations

Mexico's law enforcement agencies consist of two federal police forces, 31 state police forces, and approximately 1,600 additional municipal police forces. Mexico's law enforcement organizations receive frequent criticism for human rights violations. In 2014, Mexico's security forces allegedly caused the disappearance of forty-three students after a protest. This incident traced back to DTO linked corruption within the unit. From 2006 through 2016, Human Rights Watch groups accredited the Mexico security forces with killing approximately twenty-seven thousand civilians.¹²⁵

¹²¹ Global Firepower, "2018 Mexico Military Strength," accessed November 6, 2018, https://www.globalfirepower.com/country-military-strength-detail.asp?country_id=mexico.

¹²² Ibid.

¹²³ Ibid.

¹²⁴ Ibid.

¹²⁵ Brianna Lee and Danielle Renwick, "Mexico's Drug War," Council on Foreign Relations, last modified May 25, 2017, accessed November 10, 2018, <https://www.cfr.org/background/mexicos-drug-war>.

Drug Trafficking Organizations

Mexico contains several criminal groups defined as the drug trafficking organization (DTO). Based on the 2018 U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency analysis, the Sinaloa Cartel controls the largest border areas in Mexico and maintains the largest footprint within the US.¹²⁶ The Sinaloa Cartel exports illicit drugs to the following U.S. cities: Phoenix, Los Angeles, Denver and Chicago.¹²⁷ Their primary smuggling corridors are in California, Arizona, New Mexico, and West Texas. Furthermore, the Sinaloa Cartel maintained contacts within the Partido Accion Nacional (PAN). These political ties may have spared the Sinaloa Cartel from the numerous anti cartel operations waged by Mexico's President Fox and Calderon. Today the Sinaloa Cartel operates in 17 Mexican states and over 40 countries worldwide.¹²⁸

The Jalisco New Generation Cartel (CJNG) located in Guadalajara Mexico is one of the fastest growing cartels. The CJNG focuses on the distribution of cocaine, methamphetamine, heroin, and fentanyl through major distribution centers located in Los Angeles, New York, Chicago, and Atlanta.¹²⁹ This DTO is known for violent operations against Mexico's enforcement agencies and rival cartels.

The Juarez Cartel survived several wars with the rival Sinaloa Cartel and remains an active DTO. The Juarez Cartel currently traffics marijuana, cocaine,

¹²⁶ DOJ DEA, *2018 National Drug Threat Assessment*, 97.

¹²⁷ Ibid.

¹²⁸ Juan Fern, "Sinaloa Cartel," In Sight Crime, last modified January 24, 2018, accessed November 3, 2018, <https://www.insightcrime.org/mexico-organized-crime-news/sinaloa-cartel-profile/>.

¹²⁹ DOJ DEA, *2018 National Drug Threat Assessment*.

methamphetamine, and heroin to its distribution centers in El Paso, Denver, Chicago, and Oklahoma City. Additionally, the Juarez Cartel is associated with an increase in opium cultivation throughout the Mexican State of Chihuahua.¹³⁰

The Gulf Cartel operates out of the Mexican State of Tamaulipas. This DTO exports cocaine, marijuana, heroin, and methamphetamine through the Texas border. The Gulf Cartel distributes wholesale exports to Atlanta, Houston, and Detroit.¹³¹

The Los Zetas cartel divided into two rival factions identified as the Escuela Vieja (EV) and the Cartel Del Noreste (CDN) which operate out of the Nuevo Laredo Mexico. This DTO exports heroin, cocaine, marijuana, and methamphetamine through the border with Texas between Del Rio and Falcon Lake Texas.¹³² The Los Zetas Cartel distributes their wholesale shipments to Laredo, Dallas, New Orleans, and Atlanta.¹³³

The Beltran-Leyva Organization (BLO) splintered from the Sinaloa cartel and operates in small cellular organizations. The Los Guerreros Unidos faction exports methamphetamine, heroin, cocaine, and marijuana to distribution centers in Los Angeles, Chicago, and Atlanta.¹³⁴

Even though estimates range significantly on how many different types of DTOs operate in Mexico, each group conducted defensive and offensive operations against

¹³⁰ DOJ DEA, *2018 National Drug Threat Assessment*, 98.

¹³¹ Ibid.

¹³² Ibid.

¹³³ Ibid.

¹³⁴ Ibid.

Mexico's security forces. Recent reports provided examples of growing weapon and tactics capabilities. DTOs generally equip their organizations with a variety of weapons.

According to Alcohol Tobacco and Firearms (ATF) statistics, Mexican security forces seized 49,500 weapons from 2009-2014. Approximately half of the seized weapons were shotguns and semi-automatic rifles.¹³⁵ Additionally, Mexican enforcement agencies seized 53,100 pistols. Most of the seized weapons traced back to the U.S. border states, with approximately 41% originating from Texas.

In April 2018, Mexico's law enforcement authorities seized a cache of weapons from Nuevo Laredo. The weapons included AK-47s, AR-15s, machine guns, grenades, grenade launchers, 13 rocket launchers, 13 dynamite sticks, numerous military tactical protective vests, and over 100,000 rounds of small arms ammunition.¹³⁶

Autodefensas

Many Mexican communities use armed militias to counter the DTOs. These militia "autodefensas" attempt to restore local order when Mexico's security forces cannot.¹³⁷ The Autodefensas made significant progress in Guerrero, Oaxaca, and Michoacan. Even though the Autodefensas originated as a defense against the DTOs, many groups have now focused on their local crime. The local community often deals

¹³⁵ Jessica Farb, *Firearms Trafficking, US Efforts to Combat Firearms Trafficking to Mexico Have Improved, but Some Collaboration Challenges Remain* (Washington, DC: Government Accountability Office, January 2016), 14.

¹³⁶ Brandon Darby and Ildefonso Ortiz, "Mexican Military Seize Cartel's Rocket Launchers, Dynamite, Grenades near U.S. Border," *Breitbart*, last modified April 29, 2018, accessed November 10, 2018, <https://www.breitbart.com/border/2018/04/29/drug-cartel-rocket-launchers-dynamite-grenades-mexican-border-city/>.

¹³⁷ Lee and Danielle Renwick, "Mexico's Drug War."

with suspected thieves, rapists, and murders. These vigilante actions stem from unreliable and corrupt police forces.

U.S.

Customs Border Protection

U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) conducts customs and border enforcement along the U.S. Southwest Border. The CBP divides surface ground security operations into the Office of Field Operations (OFO) and the U.S. Border Patrol (USBP). The OFO conducts security and screening at the POEs. USBP operates along the SWB between the POEs.

CBP increases border security through the Customs-Trade Partnership Against Terrorism (CTPAT) Program, Screening and Inspection Program, Container Security Initiate (CSI), 24- Hour Rule, and utilization of innovative technology.¹³⁸ CTPAT sets baseline security standards for 5,800 business improving supply chain container security.¹³⁹ CPB screens cargo entering the U.S. CPB inspects high-risk cargo based on intelligence and supporting technologies. Additionally, CPB inspects high-risk containers bound for the U.S. at foreign ports. Additional security measures include mandatory submission of manifest 24 hours before cargo arrives in U.S. ports. CBP uses x-ray and radiation sensors on cargo and agents use biometrics to confirm foreign identifies.¹⁴⁰

¹³⁸ Department of Homeland Security, “Multi-Layered Defense,” last modified July 6, 2009, accessed April 14, 2019, <https://www.dhs.gov/multi-layered-defense>.

¹³⁹ Ibid.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid.

Office of Field Operations

The Office of Field Operations (OFO) is the largest subsection of the CBP consisting of approximately 27,000 employees. OFO agents enforce customs laws and regulations at the southwest border POE. The OFO mission is to prevent illegal human trafficking, drugs, and contraband from entering the U.S..¹⁴¹ OFO agents possess search powers from 19 C.F.R. 162.6.¹⁴²

U.S. Border Patrol

The U.S. Border Patrol (USBP) is the mobile law enforcement arm of the CBP. USBP operates within nine southwest border sectors including Big Bend, Del Rio, El Centro, El Paso, Laredo, Rio Grande Valley, San Diego, Tucson and Yuma..¹⁴³ The USBP's primary mission is line watch along the 2,000 miles of the SWB. Line watch activities include detection, search, and apprehensions. USBP also conducts surveillance,

¹⁴¹ Customs and Border Protection, "What We Do," Department of Homeland Security, last modified 2019, accessed April 13, 2019, <https://www.cbp.gov/careers/cbpo-what-we-do>.

¹⁴² Customs and Border Protection, "CBP Search Authority," Department of Homeland Security, last modified January 5, 2018, accessed April 13, 2019, <https://www.cbp.gov/travel/cbp-search-authority>.

¹⁴³ Customs and Border Protection, "U.S. Border Patrol Southwest Border Apprehensions by Sector FY2018," Department of Homeland Security, accessed May 17, 2019, <https://www.cbp.gov/newsroom/stats/usbp-sw-border-apprehensions>.

responds to sensors, operates checkpoints, and conducts city patrols.¹⁴⁴ Approximately 18,500 personnel secure the U.S. southwest border.¹⁴⁵

Additionally, fixed wing aircraft, helicopters, and unmanned aircraft vehicles (UAV) provide reconnaissance support. The Predator B UAV recon asset provides an extensive suite of intelligence surveillance reconnaissance systems (ISR). Additionally, vehicle and dismount exploitation radar (VADAR), Minotaur, and the Hawkeye system provide target tracking and identification capabilities. In 2017, the UAS program flew over 5,625 hours and completed 635 missions.¹⁴⁶

In 2018, the CBP seized large quantities of cocaine, heroin, marijuana, methamphetamine, fentanyl along the border. OFO and USBP collectively effected 27,925 criminal warrants and seized over \$71,918,080. Additionally, 683,178 detentions of inadmissible people occurred at the border. OFO maintained a higher number of drug seizures at the ports of entry, except for marijuana. OFO led every other category except detentions of inadmissible people.¹⁴⁷

¹⁴⁴ Customs and Border Protection, “Along U.S. Borders,” Department of Homeland Security, accessed April 13, 2019, <https://www.cbp.gov/border-security/along-us-borders>.

¹⁴⁵ Department Homeland Security, “Border Security Results,” last modified August 2, 2012, accessed April 14, 2019, <https://www.dhs.gov/border-security-results>.

¹⁴⁶ Office of Inspector General (OIG), Department of Homeland Security (DHS), *DHS OIG Highlights: CBP Has Not Ensured Safeguards for Data Collection Using Unmanned Aircraft Systems* (Washington, DC: DHS, September 21, 2018).

¹⁴⁷ Customs and Border Protection, “CBP Enforcement Statistics FY2018,” Department of Homeland Security, last modified August 2018, accessed January 21, 2019, <https://www.cbp.gov/newsroom/stats/cbp-enforcement-statistics>.

FY 2018 CUSTOMS AND BORDER PROTECTION		
ACTIONS	OFFICE OF FIELD OPERATIONS	U.S. BORDER PATROL
Cocaine	51,713 Lbs.	6,550 Lbs.
Heroin	5,205	568
Marijuana	300,289	461,030
Methamphetamine	56,362	11,314
Fentanyl	1,785	388
Inadmissibles	279,036	404,142
Warrants Arrests	19,677	8,248
Asset Seizures	\$64,741,939	\$7,176,142

Figure 1. FY2018 Customs and Border Protection Statistics

Source: Customs and Border Protection, “CBP Enforcement Statistics FY2018,” Department of Homeland Security, last modified August 2018, accessed January 21, 2019, <https://www.cbp.gov/newsroom/stats/cbp-enforcement-statistics>.

U.S. Military

Joint Task Force North (JTF-N) provides operational, engineering, intelligence, and technology-based support to federal law enforcement agencies. JTF-N assists organizations with additional ISR assets to include the UAS and ground sensor systems. Their engineer assets provide road and bridge construction, as well as personnel and vehicle barriers. JTF-N enhances the CBP mission with tunnel detection and provides transportation support. Biometric systems assist agencies with quick identification of contacts along the border. JTF-N also assists with coordination among multiple agencies to include LEA from Mexico and other nations. DOD units conduct training with the

JTF-N at the border area, which provides extensive training opportunities for military units.¹⁴⁸

Southwest Border Deployment

In November 2018, approximately 5,200 active duty U.S. Army personnel assisted DHS in support of Operation Faithful Patriot. The force hardened the southwest border by providing additional man-power along ports of entry. Engineer assets constructed fences and other obstacles preventing the entry of illegal immigrants. Additionally, Faithful Patriot provided other support to include: command and control, intelligence, maneuver elements, sustainment, and medical support to counter of approximately 4,000 people caravan.¹⁴⁹ The U.S. National Guard conducts Operation Guardian in support of CBP operations along the SWB. Approximately 2,092 National Guardsman provide logistical, transportation and engineering assets.¹⁵⁰ According to the CBP Security Report FY2018 statistics, National Guard actions resulted in 23,000 arrests and 37,000 pounds illegal drug seizures.¹⁵¹

¹⁴⁸ Laura L. Yeager, “Joint Task Force North- Protecting the Homeland,” (Department of Defense, October 2017), 1.

¹⁴⁹ Department of Defense, “More Troops Deploy to Support DHS/CBP Southwest Border Mission,” last modified October 29, 2018, accessed November 10, 2018, <https://www.defense.gov/explore/story/Article/1675862/more-troops-deploy-to-support-dhscbp-southwest-border-mission/>.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid.

¹⁵¹ Customs and Border Protection (CBP), *CBP Border Security Report: Fiscal Year 2018* (Washington, DC: CBP, March 2019), 8.

Information

Mexico possesses several modern media markets blanketed with newspaper and television news programs. The media outlets include 821 television and 1,745 radio stations, with a majority owned by private businesses.¹⁵² Many news organizations run 24 hours a day programming.

Social media plays an important part in Mexico's information system. Mexico Facebook users rank second in Latin America and the fifth most user in the world.¹⁵³ Many Mexican social media users post critical comments about dangerous cartels or corrupt politicians. Further, violent actors target social media journalists and their respective organizations for critical views.¹⁵⁴ Many social media sites receive digital attacks through distributed denial of services (DDOS), website hijacking and malware infections.¹⁵⁵

The DTOs use social media platforms for their intimidation and extortion operations. Many DTOs post hit lists of targeted officials or rivals. DTOs also use social media applications to conduct extortions for ransoms. Like other criminal organizations, DTOs use social media for recruitment and promoting their organizations brand.¹⁵⁶

¹⁵² World Population Review, "Brownsville, Texas Population 2018 (Demographics, Maps, Graphs)," accessed November 9, 2018, <http://worldpopulationreview.com/us-cities/brownsville-tx-population/>.

¹⁵³ Freedom House, "Mexico Country Report" last modified November 14, 2017, accessed May 17, 2019, <https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-net/2017/mexico>.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid.

¹⁵⁶ Omar Ornelas and Rebecca Plevin, "'We're Going to Find You': Mexican Cartels Turn Social Media into Tools for Extortion, Threats and Violence," *Desert Sun*, last modified February 28, 2019, accessed May 17, 2019, <https://www.desertsun.com/in->

Current circulated music videos depict glamorous cartel life. Music videos also celebrate famous DTO leaders like El Chapo Guzman.¹⁵⁷

Social

Mexico's population in 2017 was approximately 124,574,795 people with over 21 million residing in Mexico City. The ethnic breakdown consists of 62% Meridian-Spanish, 21% predominantly Amerindian, 7% Amerindian, and 10% European ethnicity.¹⁵⁸ Spanish is the primary language throughout the country. Religious preference is 87% percent Roman Catholic followed by Pentecostal at 1.6%.¹⁵⁹ The religious cult, La Santa Muerte, also known as "Lady Death" or the smuggler's saint is growing in popularity with some DTOs within Mexico and the United States. Smugglers commonly pray to La Santa Muerte for the spiritual protection of their drug shipments against law enforcement personnel.¹⁶⁰

Border Towns

The SWB is the line that separates two different cultures. Over the years, border town populations have steadily increased. Many of these towns are socially and

depth/news/2019/02/27/mexican-drug-cartels-use-social-media-for-extortion-threats-violence-facebook-whatsapp-youtube/2280756002/.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid.

¹⁵⁸ CIA, "The World Factbook: North America: Mexico."

¹⁵⁹ Ibid.

¹⁶⁰ Fox News, "Mexican Folk Religion Involving Human Sacrifice Gaining Status among Criminals," last modified July 17, 2017, accessed November 6, 2018, <https://www.foxnews.com/us/mexican-folk-religion-involving-human-sacrifice-gaining-status-among-criminals>.

economically dependent on each other. Most border towns contain at least one POE at the border which enables frequent local crossings. For example, many families live in Mexico and cross the border every day to work in U.S. based businesses. There are seven prominent sets of cities separated by the border. According to the worldpopulationreview.com, the most prominent border towns consist of the following population centers:

1. San Diego CA, U.S. (1,419,516), Tijuana, MX, (1,376,457)
2. Yuma, AZ, U.S. (95,502), San Luis, MX, (139,254)
3. Nogales, AZ, U.S. (20,076), Nogales, MX, (185,882)
4. El Paso, TX, U.S. (683,577), Juárez, MX, (1,512,354)
5. Del Rio, TX, U.S. (36,006)¹⁶¹, Acuna, MX, (144,669)
6. Laredo, TX, U.S. (260,654), Nuevo Laredo, MX, (349,550)
7. Brownsville, TX, U.S. (183,299)¹⁶¹, Matamoros, MX, (104,024)

Infrastructure

Mexico possesses modern day utilities which supply services to 90% of its residents. The country's communication infrastructure supports fixed and mobile cellular networks along with approximately 60% of its population receiving internet services.¹⁶² The transportation system contains 1,714 airports (243 paved), 137,000 kilometers of paved roadways; 15,000 kilometers of a railway that stretch across the country. Mexico also maintains six major seaports: Altamira, Coatzacoalcas, Lazaro Cardenas,

¹⁶¹ World Population Review, "Brownsville, Texas Population 2018 (Demographics, Maps, Graphs)."

¹⁶² CIA, "The World Factbook: North America: Mexico."

Manzanillo, and Veracruz. Mexico maintains Highway 2 which runs East to West. Highway 2 runs parallel with the U.S. Southwest border from Playa Bagdad / Brownsville to Ciudad Acuna. On the U.S. north side, Highway 83 parallels the SWB from McAllen, TX to Laredo TX.¹⁶³ Traveling west, the next largest highway 8, runs from Yuma, AZ to San Diego, CA. Additionally, many Arizona major road networks do not run parallel to the border.¹⁶⁴

Avenues of Approach

The U.S. Southwest border is the focus of the physical environment assessment. The stretch of approximately 2,000 miles of the southwest border creates nine Border Patrol Sectors. These sectors include El Paso, TX; Big Bend Sector, TX; Del Rio Sector, TX; El Centro Sector, CA; Laredo Sector, TX; Rio Grande Valley Sector, TX; San Diego Sector, CA; Tusco Sector, AR; Yuma Sector, AZ.¹⁶⁵ Each Sector manages several additional stations and check points within its area of responsibility. Additionally, Mexico possesses railroad networks which enter the U.S. via the SWB. The railroad POE include the following: 5 Texas, 3 Arizona, and 2 California.¹⁶⁶

¹⁶³ Google Maps, accessed November 10, 2018, <https://www.google.com/maps/@25.911036,-97.9682346,9.09z>.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid.

¹⁶⁵ Customs and Border Protection, "Border Patrol Sectors," Department of Homeland Security, accessed November 10, 2018, <https://www.cbp.gov/border-security/along-us-borders/border-patrol-sectors>.

¹⁶⁶ On The World Map, "Mexico Railway Map," last modified 2018, accessed November 10, 2018, <http://ontheworldmap.com/mexico/mexico-railway-map.html>.

The Southwest POEs process millions of vehicles from Mexico. According to the 2017 U.S. Department of Transportation data, El Paso tops the list with 12,615,101 passenger vehicles traveling through the POE. The POE must balance security with reasonable traffic flow, minimizing delays to the large volume of trade.

Current State Operational Environment

The analysis of the current state operational environment analysis utilized the PMESII and RAFT systems tools. The study identified three of actors: The U.S., Mexico, and DTOs. The complicated problem starts and ends with the DTO.

The DTOs successfully smuggle billions of dollars of drugs for retail distribution by criminal gangs in the U.S. Their profits provide resources that destabilize Mexico's government. Trade between the U.S. and Mexico creates an imbalance where lucrative trade sometimes outweighs the requirement for border security. Miles of desolate terrain, along with conjoined border towns provide multiple routes to cross the border. DTOs move drugs across in remote areas, but they also take advantage of saturated border POE that service thousands of vehicles and pedestrian traffic each day. The DTOs also smuggle billions of dollars and weapons into Mexico. DTOs use these critical resources to destabilize Mexico's security forces.

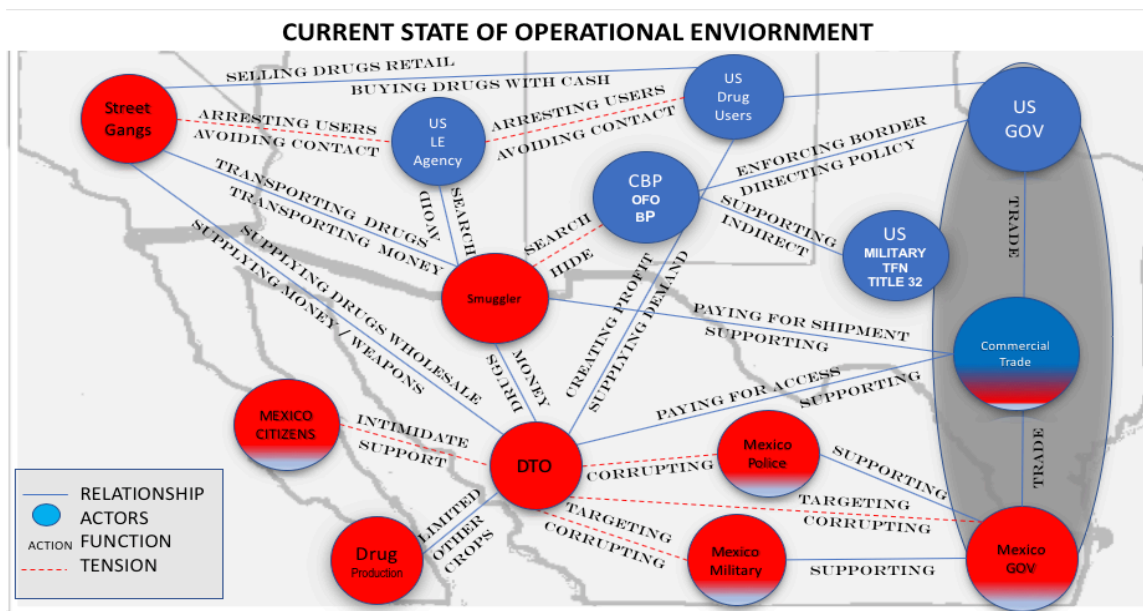


Figure 2. Current Operational Endstate

Source: Created by author.

DTO Actors

The DTO's rely on the following actors to obtain their objectives. Each actor provides a direct or indirect effect on the DTO's operations. All actors play a unique role in the cycle of operations. The following is a summative list of required actors:

1. Drug Production- Farmers grow poppies (opium/ heroin) coca plants (Cocaine HCL), and marijuana. These crops form the necessary un-refined foundation of the drug. Coca plant crops grow in Columbia, Peru, and Bolivia. ¹⁶⁷ The final processing step occurs when precursors create a chemical reaction resulting in a finished consumable

¹⁶⁷ Tom Blickman, "Coca Leaf: Myths and Reality," Transnational Institute, last modified August 5, 2014, accessed January 26, 2019, <https://www.tni.org/en/primer/coca-leaf-myths-and-reality>.

product. Each drug requires different steps to reach a finished product ready for the consumer.¹⁶⁸

2. Drug Trafficking Organization (DTO)- Defined levels of management, control, organize personnel, transportation, and process that travel across transnational borders. DTOs maintain the ability to hire, finance, direct and control the entire illicit drug operation. Additionally, the DTOs must control at least one of the seven largest SWB crossings to smuggle products into the U.S..¹⁶⁹ The crossings typically located along population centers utilize ports of entry for large drug shipments. Many border towns also provide safe houses and staging areas for smuggling operations.

3. Corrupt Officials- DTOs rely on corrupt officials to enable their operations. DTOs commonly target politicians, various levels of law enforcement, port authorities or other government employee who provides access to conduct un-detected DTO operations. The recent “El Chapo” court trial in 2019 disclosed alleged claims of millions of dollars’ worth of bribes to two former Mexican Presidents, Enrique Pena Nieto, Felipe Calderon, and current President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador.¹⁷⁰

4. The Smuggler- The DTO’s drug operations originate in Mexico or South America, and their product must cross the U.S. SWB. The smuggler can be a pedestrian,

¹⁶⁸ Drug Enforcement Administration, “Coca: Production & Distribution,” last modified 2019, accessed January 13, 2019, <https://www.deamuseum.org/ccp/coca/production-distribution.html>.

¹⁶⁹ Tom Wainwright, *Narconomics: How to Run a Drug Cartel* (New York: Public Affairs, 2016). 33.

¹⁷⁰ Elizabeth Llorente, “Three Mexican Presidents Linked to El Chapo Corruption as Trial Raises Bribery Claims,” *Fox News*, last modified January 17, 2019, accessed January 26, 2019, <https://www.foxnews.com/world/three-mexican-presidents-linked-to-el-chapo-corruption-as-trial-raises-bribery-claims>.

an operator of a personally owned vehicle, a bus occupant, an airline passenger or the operator of a commercial semi-tractor trailer. The smuggler crosses into the U.S. through the SWB with drugs. Once a smuggler crosses the border undetected, the drugs travel to U.S. city distribution centers. The transportation network may include multiple shipments directly to distribution points or consolidate in central holding areas.¹⁷¹ Additionally, the smuggler moves bulk cash or weapons back into Mexico.¹⁷²

5. Street Gang- The street gang sells drugs received from the DTO as a primary source of income.¹⁷³ Many gangs originate in larger cities but commonly expand to smaller populations to increase their available market. Gangs also colonize other gangs increasing their operational reach.¹⁷⁴ Many gangs like MS-13 operate internationally. In 2018, Homeland Security Investigations arrested 3,635 gang members including 959 MS-13 gang members.¹⁷⁵

6. The Drug User- The U.S. provides an ever-increasing number of users of illicit drugs. These users create the market for heroin, fentanyl, synthetic opioids, cocaine,

¹⁷¹ Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), “DEA Releases 2018 National Drug Threat Assessment,” last modified November 2, 2018, accessed January 13, 2019, <https://www.dea.gov/press-releases/2018/11/02/dea-releases-2018-national-drug-threat-assessment-0>.

¹⁷² T. Michael Andrews, *The Border Challenge, An Insider’s View of Stopping Drugs at America Borders* (Lanham MD: University Press of America, INC., 2012). 52.

¹⁷³ James Densley, Robert McLean, and Grace Robinson, “The Rise of Drug Dealing in the Life of the North American Street Gang,” *Societies* 8, no. 90 (September 18, 2018): 2.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid.

¹⁷⁵ Immigration and Customs Enforcement, “Combating Gangs,” Department of Homeland Security, last modified December 21, 2018, accessed January 26, 2019, <https://www.ice.gov/features/gangs>.

methamphetamine, marijuana, and other new psychoactive substances like bath salts/spice.¹⁷⁶ A 2018 Center for Disease Control (CDC) report estimates the following:

1. Opioids- According to 2016 statistics, 18% of the U.S. population equaling 48,501,00 persons.¹⁷⁷
2. Heroin- .4% of the U.S. population resulting in 948,000 users.¹⁷⁸
3. Cocaine- 1.9% of the U.S. population, equaling 5,071,000 persons.¹⁷⁹
4. Methamphetamine- .5% of the U.S. population, equaling 1,391,000 users.

Desired State Operational Environment

The desired end state of the operational environment is increased security that defeats the DTOs ability to smuggle narcotics through the border. The CBP has additional resources to detect DTO attempts to smuggle narcotics and money across the SWB. The CBP seizes large drugs shipments resulting in loss of DTO's revenue. With these seizures, the CBP successfully reduces the DTO's profits eventually defeating their critical capabilities. The DTO's loses power and influence among its local community, providing legitimacy to Mexico's government. The DTOs lose their operational reach and cannot serve U.S. drug market demands.

¹⁷⁶ DOJ DEA, *2018 National Drug Threat Assessment*, vi.

¹⁷⁷ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, *2018 Annual Surveillance Report of Drug-Related Risks and Outcomes* (Washington, DC: CDC, August 31, 2018), 13.

¹⁷⁸ Ibid.

¹⁷⁹ Ibid.

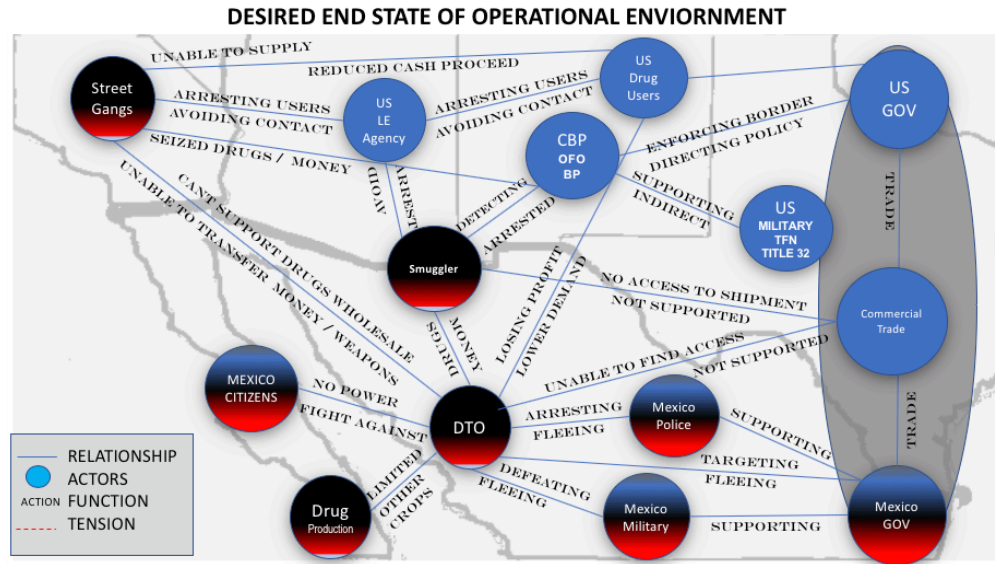


Figure 3. Desired end state Operational Environment

Source: Created by author.

Based on the shortage of drugs, U.S. gangs lose profits and influence from retail drug sales. The reduction of drugs in the U.S. communities reduces the number of new drug users, addictions, and potential overdoses. Criminal activity within communities decreases. Secure and effective trade between Mexico and the U.S. drives economic growth increasing the quality of life in Mexico. Mexico becomes a more stable state and provides economic opportunities for its citizens, resulting in a reduction of DTOs.

Key Conditions in Future OE

The desired operational environment requires several favorable conditions. These conditions include: effective detection between ports of entry, sufficient workforce, and detection at ports of entry; consistent seizures of drugs, money, and weapons. These positive conditions disrupt DTO operations at the SWB.

Detection of smuggling activities in the rural areas of the SWB located between the ports of entry is critical. Dedicated resources must monitor key terrain and provide immediate response for all illegal entries. Detection and response must occur in real time. CBP must locate and detain smugglers before they reach populated areas inside the border area.

The thirty-three SWB ports of entry manage thousands of vehicle and pedestrian traffic each day. The high volume of traffic helps conceal drug shipments. The commercial traffic and the daily commuting population create heavy CBP manning requirements. OFO personnel focus on detecting drugs, currency, and weapons. OFO must also detect bulk cash and weapons leaving the U.S. Improved strategies and detection tactics must identify sophisticated concealment techniques in all types of commercial/private vehicles.

The key condition for an improved operational environment is the seizure of drugs, currency, and weapons. Each seizure plays an essential part in the overall reduction of DTO assets. The seizure of heroin, cocaine, and fentanyl are critical. DTOs are the primary importer of these drugs. Without DTOs, the supply of these specific drugs would quickly dissipate and create an immediate shortage.

Additionally, seizures of currency and weapons leaving the U.S. have significant impacts on the DTOs ability to maintain their operations. Billions of dollars of illegal drug proceeds filter their way back across the SWB. The lack of profits would eventually lead to a lack of financial ability to support global distribution efforts. More importantly, the DTOs would also lose the ability to influence recruits or influence the communities through financial rewards. Additionally, weapons smuggled across the border supply the

DTOs with the tools required to engage Mexico's security forces or to defend their base of operations against government forces and rival DTOs.

Relevant Actor Objectives

Based on the analysis of the operational environment there are several key actors. Each of these actors pursues objectives to either continue or affect change within their operational environment. This study focusses on the U.S., Mexico, DTOs, and Gangs. Many of the relevant actors' objectives directly conflict with others as they clash along the border.

The U.S. objectives focus on securing its borders; detecting and defeating DTO drug operations. Additionally, the U.S. desires decreased drug addiction; overdoses and overall drug-related crime. Furthermore, the U.S. desires to sustain its \$900 billion import/export trade with Mexico.

Mexico's main objective is economic stability through effective U.S. trade relations. Additionally, Mexico cooperates with the U.S. Merida Initiative for governmental and enforcement improvements. Mexico's government aims to defeat DTOs and increase legitimacy among its population.

DTO's objective consists of maintaining capabilities for global drug distribution. Additionally, DTOs defend their base of operations to maintain freedom of movement for continued operations. DTOs also defeat other DTO competition to maximize profits.

U.S. criminal gangs' objectives are maintaining supportive relationships with DTO to continue their lucrative drug business. Gangs also focus on controlling transportation routes and profitable drug operation areas. Furthermore, gangs defend their

operations through intimidation and exploitation of weak law enforcement to continue effective operations.

Projected Tendencies

The operational environment is dynamic and always fluid. A change in PMESII elements may affect one or all remaining factors. The tendencies of the operational environment consist of: projected tendency, negative tendency, and positive tendency. The projected Southwest Border Operational Environment remains consistent without significant change. The U.S. SWB ports of entry remain saturated with trade based commercial and civilian traffic. The massive throughput of these POEs conceal DTOs drug shipments. DTOs smuggle larger quantities of drugs through the POE. DTOs increase frequency of smuggling across rural border routes. Overall, DTOs maintain increased drug supplies to meet U.S. drug demands. Criminal street gangs maintain influence and control of U.S. retail level drug sales. The constant drug supply increases U.S. addictions. DTOs supply fentanyl to U.S. drug market resulting in unprecedented drug overdose deaths. Mexico fights DTOs for security while countering internal corruption. DTOs maintain control over key plazas at the border. Based on the DTO compartmentalized organizations, eliminating leaders creates limited impacts on production and distribution levels.

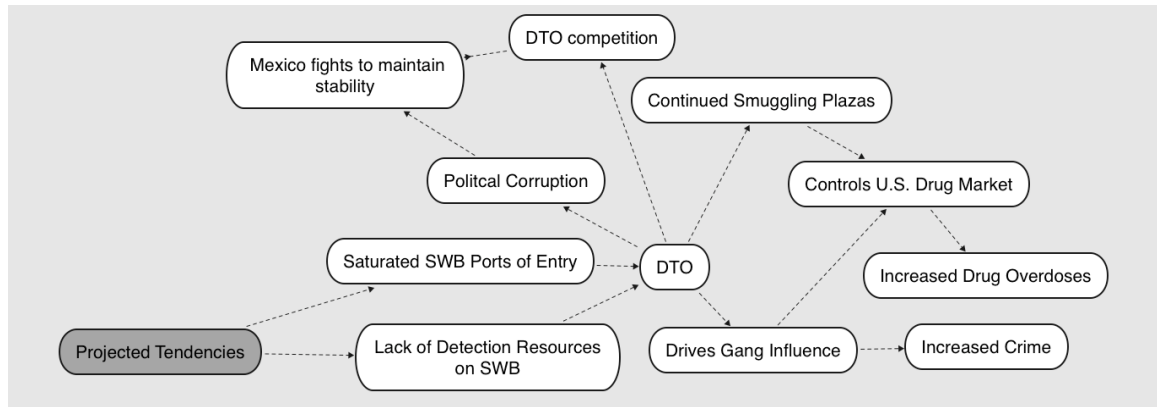


Figure 4. Projected Tendencies

Source: Created by author.

Projected Negative Tendencies

Based on the recent changes to the political environment in Mexico President Andres Manuel Lopez-Obrador indicated he would take more of a negotiations approach to combating the DTOs. His staff also stated they would be looking at the legalization of marijuana and increasing the production of opium for medical uses. Additionally, the level of corruption forced by the political assassinations raises the question of how much influence the DTOs may have on Mexico's President Lopez-Obrador.

The legalization of marijuana may provide DTOs the ability to increase the production of Marijuana resulting in increased smuggling across the borders. If the DTOs can flood the U.S. markets with a cheaper and higher quality product, their proceeds will financially enable further attacks on Mexico's security operations. Additionally, the more marijuana harvested the greater ability to replace any seizures at the border. Mexico's potential increase in Opium presents another threat to U.S. interests. The legalization or

increased Opium poppy cultivation provides the DTOs increased opportunities to control the Opium markets directly or indirectly and increase heroin production.

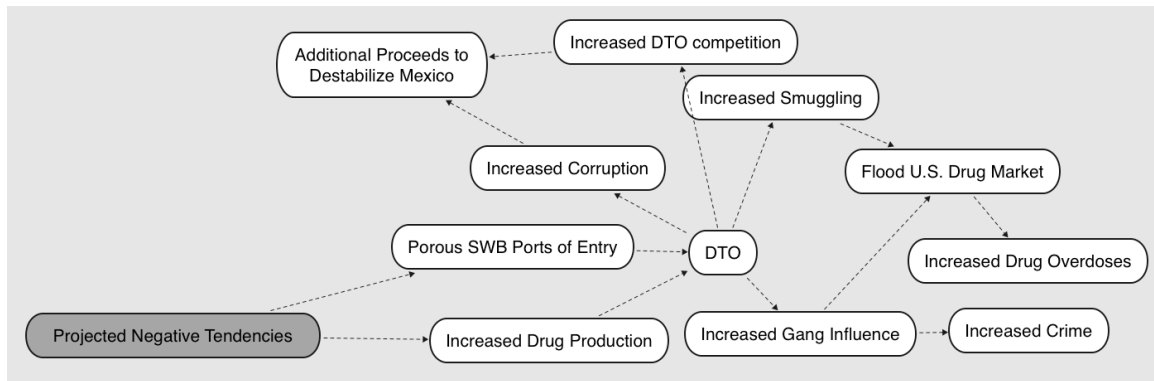


Figure 5. Projected Negative Tendencies

Source: Created by author.

Projected Positive Tendencies

Positive tendencies would increase security at the SWB. LEA focus on searches and seizures at the POE along with additional detection assets along the rural SWB. In this projected positive tendency, the DTO would lose significant drug and currency assets by law enforcement detection along the SWB. The loss of profits would eventually result in the loss of power to influence and corrupt Mexico's government agencies.

Additionally, the DTO would not be able to meet the demands from the U.S. drug using market. The lack of supplies would further diminish the street gangs proceeds and their ability to influence communities. Overall the reduced number of drugs entering the U.S. could lower drug addiction rates and result in fewer drug-related overdoses.

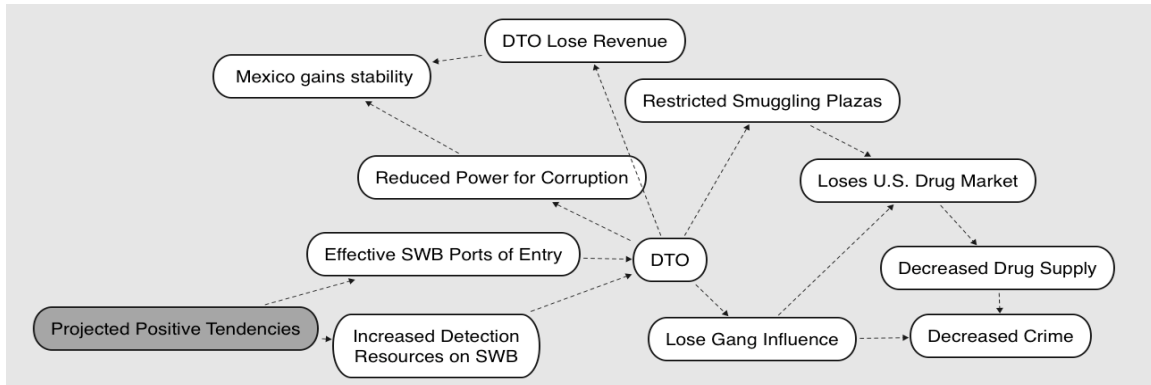


Figure 6. Projected Positive Tendencies

Source: Created by author.

Identified Assumptions

Based on the analysis of the operational environment through the operational lens, the financial gains created by U.S. and Mexico trade overshadow any attempt to increase the security of the SWB. The \$830 billion U.S. and Mexico trade travels in a high volume of commercial traffic entering the U.S. The potential impacts of enforcing stricter entry procedures to include physical inspections of all or most commercial imports would create delays. The reduced flow of trade at the major ports of entry could cost importers significant revenue. The power of commerce would create significant political conflict in an already problematic area. Overall the profit incentive will conflict with increasing detection and security at the SWB POE.

Next, the U.S. partisan political battleground creates obstacles to making border policy changes. Many security improvements like the southwest border wall are still awaiting congressional support. The differing political views about border security generate controversy about migration and other high-profile issues. Most border security

efforts will require significant time and funds to achieve. The U.S. focus on security may depend on the current administration's objectives which may change with each new election. This presidency may run out of time or political power to significantly improve security at the border.

Furthermore, the Posse Comitatus Act (PCA) 18 U.S.C. section 1385, expressly limits the executive branch from utilizing armed military forces to conduct law enforcement actions.¹⁸⁰ Even though the President can deploy troops to provide CBP logistical type support this often generates political debate. The strained political relationships between federal and some state governments may also limit how military forces can assist enforcement actions. Overall, deployment of active duty military units may generate congressional opposition and potentially lead to judicial review by the U.S. Supreme Court.

Framing the Problem

The next step of the Operational Design Methodology focused on framing the main problem. The problem frame identifies the desired end state elements/conditions that differ from the current operational environment. A side by side analysis of the current and desired end state answers the question, "What is the difference between the current and desired operational environment?" These differences center on relationships with relevant actors.

¹⁸⁰ Jennifer K. Elsea, *The Posse Comitatus Act, and Related Matters: The Use of Military to Execute Civilian Law*, Congressional Research Service Report for Congress (Washington, DC: Library of Congress, November 6, 2018), 3.

at a retail rate. Consequentially, lower sales resulted in a loss of cash revenue for the street gangs and DTOs.

d. U.S. drug users- The increased drug interdiction at the SWB affected the supply of drugs to U.S. communities. The reduced drug sale volumes created a significant loss of anticipated revenue with the DTO. Additionally, the street gang's inability to provide consistent drug supplies, reduced their influence in the communities. This interdependent relationship change should increase drug sale prices. The increase in drug price may provide the only calculatable indicator that shows the DTO is unable to meet the U.S drug consumer demands.

e. Commercial trade- The U.S. border patrols increased detection and drug seizure should include several commercial trade company transports. The loss of commercial revenue will deter most smuggling attempts. Furthermore, the DTO's reduced access to commercial trade smuggling opportunities will greatly reduce the overall drugs transported across the border.

f. Mexico Police- The loss of projected revenue from drug sales proceeds may reduce the DTO's ability to influence and corrupt law enforcement. Without consistent bribes, many law enforcement personnel may actively arrest DTO members.

g. Mexico Military- If the U.S. Border Patrol agents successfully increase detection capabilities at the border, less weapons enter Mexico. If the DTOs cannot arm themselves, Mexico's military defeat DTO strongholds.

h. Mexico citizens- Any loss of revenue or the ability to counter Mexico enforcement actions, should result in deteriorating relations with the community. If DTOs appear to lose strength and the ability to buy support, many communities will attempt to

force the DTOs out of their area. Furthermore, citizens may cooperate with local police and military operations resulting in further eroding of the DTOs influence.

The Problem Statement

The Operational Design Methodology provided the process to analyze the highly complicated and intertwined elements to define the actual problem. Based on the constraints of this analysis, the focus falls on the geographic location of the U.S. Southwest border. Within this context, this analysis formed the following problem statement. How does the U.S. Military support CBP operations in order to defeat DTOs at the SWB? Based on Operational Design methodology, the next step defines an operational approach solving the stated problem.

DTO Ends- Objectives

The DTO objectives vary greatly based on the organization. Many organizations primarily focus on trafficking narcotics through the U.S. or to other countries for profit. For several smaller DTOs, their inability to compete equally with larger cartels may resort to using bribes, extortion, and kidnapping to meet their financial goals.¹⁸¹. For this study, we will focus on the general goal of trafficking drugs into the U.S. The proposed objective is to sell drugs in the U.S. market to maximize financial gains.

¹⁸¹ Edgar Gonzalez Jr., “On Drugs and Cartels: History and Strategy | Harvard Political Review,” *Harvard Political Review*, last modified April 9, 2016, accessed January 21, 2019, <http://harvardpolitics.com/world/cartels/>.

Center of Gravity Analysis

DTO Center of Gravity

According to the Joint Publication 5-0 Planning, the center of gravity (COG) is the power source that enables an actor to conduct its operations. The COG is the single component, that if removed, prevents the actor from achieving their objective. The COG analysis answers the question, “What to target and what to defend?” Analysis identifies each COG’s critical capabilities, requirements, and vulnerabilities. Understanding COG vulnerabilities defines potential targets to affect an entity. Furthermore, this study identified potential DTO COG targets and U.S. COG vulnerabilities to defend.

Since an organization’s source of power or symbol of strength defines the center of gravity, the DTO’s center of gravity is the smuggler network.¹⁸² Without the physical action of the smuggler, the drug product will not travel from Mexico to the lucrative U.S. drug market. Not only will the drugs not cross the SWB, but illicit cash and weapons also will not return to Mexico. As the DTO center of gravity, the smuggler network is now the primary objective. Fortunately, the smuggler network operates at the U.S. Southwest Border well within operational reach of U.S. military forces. The study identified the following critical requirements, capabilities, and vulnerabilities:¹⁸³

Smuggler Critical Capabilities

The smuggler possesses critical capabilities to achieve its desired end states. Each action directly or indirectly leads to accomplishing the smuggler’s goal. The smuggling

¹⁸² JCS, JP 5-0, IV-23.

¹⁸³ Ibid., IV-25.

network must successfully cross the SWB, conceal drug shipments and maintain mobility within the U.S. to deliver drug shipments for retail sales. The smuggling network performs the following critical capabilities:

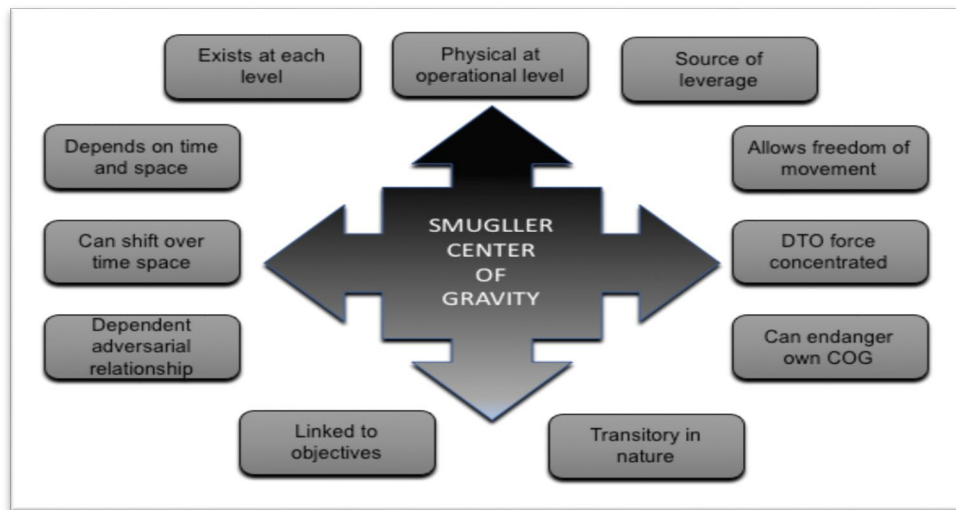


Figure 8. Smugler Center of Gravity

Source: Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Publication 3-0, *Joint Operations* (Washington, DC: Government Publishing Office, 2018).

1. Crosses the SWB- Smugglers enter the U.S. through the border or through POE carrying illegal drugs. Smugglers cross the border assuming risk of arrest or loss of lucrative drugs. DTO intimidation and enforcement threats increase the smuggler's occupational hazards. Smugglers must travel through U.S. OFO screening officials and convincingly answer security questions. Smugglers must maintain composure and avoid unnecessary attention. Additionally, smugglers may navigate difficult terrain and severe weather conditions to cross the rural SWB. Crossing the border is a prerequisite to selling drugs in the U.S. market.

2. Concealment- Each shipment entering the U.S. may result in a CBP seizure. The DTO smuggler uses several concealment techniques based on the mode of transportation and the amount/type of drugs. Techniques can range from concealing drugs in interior parts of a vehicle, to altering the physical state of the drug. Water-soluble drugs like methamphetamine and cocaine are commonly liquified to avoid detection. Large semi-truck trailers carrying agriculture provide several methods for concealment. Semi-tractor trailers possess false floors, walls, and ceilings adding deception while carrying full commercial loads. DTOs are constantly developing and refining new concealment techniques.

CBP uses X-ray, canine detection, and physical inspections at ports of entry. X-ray machines assist CBP by identifying vehicles with irregular configurations, hollow compartments, or other custom modifications. These irregularities require additional inspections. CBP uses canines trained to detect multiple types of drugs on POE. Canines alert on drug odors emitting from vehicles. Canine teams locate concealed drugs through preliminary screening of cars waiting to cross the border. Successful concealment requires airtight containers preventing canine alerts.

3. Mobility- Smuggler networks utilize mobility to prevent detection by U.S. enforcement agencies. At the SWB between the POE, the smuggler crosses through unguarded terrain to reach populated areas for onward movement of product. Smugglers determine USBP agent locations and then use routes providing concealment. The smuggler moves to populated areas or links up with waiting associates before USBP agents respond. The smuggler uses urban areas to blend in with the population, defeating

USBP efforts. Additionally, smugglers rely on mobility as they travel from the border to their target destinations.

Smuggler Critical Requirements

Critical requirements are essential resources or means that enable the COG's ability to conduct operations.¹⁸⁴ The loss of requirements diminishes the DTO COG's ability to achieve its objectives. The COG must maintain the following critical requirements:

1. Drugs- The smuggler exists to transport drugs or other profitable commodities. Processed cocaine, methamphetamine, marijuana, heroin, and fentanyl provide the means for profit. The lucrative U.S. drug market provides a significant return on profit. For example, one kilogram of cocaine sells in Columbia for \$800. The same kilo of cocaine sales at the mid-level distributor for \$19,500. This profit dramatically increases to \$78,000 when gangs sell drugs at retail value in the U.S..¹⁸⁵

2. Routes - Regardless of where the drugs originated from, the product must travel through a series of routes across the SWB called plazas. The Plaza gatekeepers, cartels or other organized criminal groups control these routes for a fee..¹⁸⁶ Failure to secure routes through contested areas create additional obstacles in reaching the U.S. markets.

3. Distribution networks- DTOs use criminal street gangs to transport and distribute drugs at the retail level. The proceeds of drug trafficking are the leading

¹⁸⁴ JCS, JP 5-0, IV-25.

¹⁸⁵ Wainwright, *Narconomics: How to Run a Drug Cartel*, 25.

¹⁸⁶ Andrews, *The Border Challenge, An Insider's View of Stopping Drugs at America Borders*. 63.

income source for criminal street gangs.¹⁸⁷ Based on the 2018 U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency analysis, the Sinaloa Cartel exports wholesale amounts of illicit drugs to the following U.S. cities: Phoenix, Los Angeles, Denver, and Chicago.¹⁸⁸ The Jalisco New Generation Cartel (CJNG) focuses on the distribution of cocaine methamphetamine, heroin, and fentanyl through major distribution centers located in Los Angeles, New York, Chicago, and Atlanta.¹⁸⁹ The Juarez Cartel currently traffics marijuana, cocaine, methamphetamine, and heroin to its distribution centers in El Paso, Denver, Chicago, and Oklahoma City.¹⁹⁰ The Gulf Cartel exports cocaine, marijuana, heroin, and methamphetamine through along the border with Texas, between Rio Grande Valley and the South Padre Island. They wholesale distribute to Atlanta, Houston, and Detroit.¹⁹¹ The Los Zetas cartel exports heroin, cocaine, marijuana and methamphetamine through the border with Texas between Del Rio and Falcon Lake Texas.¹⁹² The Los Zetas Cartel distributes their wholesale shipments to Laredo, Dallas, New Orleans, and Atlanta.¹⁹³ The Beltran-Leyva Organization (BLO) exports methamphetamine, heroin, cocaine, and marijuana to distribution centers in Los Angeles, Chicago, and Atlanta.¹⁹⁴

¹⁸⁷ DEA, “DEA Releases 2018 National Drug Threat Assessment.”

¹⁸⁸ DOJ DEA, *2018 National Drug Threat Assessment*.

¹⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 98.

¹⁹¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁹² *Ibid.*

¹⁹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

Smuggler Critical Vulnerabilities

Critical vulnerabilities are aspects of an entities critical requirements which provide a weakness to direct or indirect acts that achieve significant results..¹⁹⁵ Enforcement agencies may target critical vulnerabilities to defeat the DTO smuggler network. Based on the analysis, the smuggler possesses vulnerabilities directly linked to crossing the SWB.

1. Entering POEs- Recent statistics show increased drug seizures at the POE. The OFO deploys a variety of capabilities aimed at detecting illegal drugs entering the U.S. These tools include trained canine teams, x-ray machines, radiation detectors, primary, and secondary screening points. The CBP deploys approximately 1,500 canine detection teams at POEs..¹⁹⁶

2. Possession of high-value commodity- Smugglers often transport large drug shipments valued at millions of dollars. Smugglers also transport large bulk cash shipments south into Mexico. The high value of drugs and cash places the smuggler at risk. Rival DTOs and criminal elements often target these high valued shipments. Even the DTO poses a potential threat to the smuggler. DTOs may eliminate the smuggler to prevent law enforcement or rival cartel infiltration.

3. Crossing the SWB- Smugglers frequently avoid entering the U.S. through POEs. These rural routes expose the smuggler to harsh terrain and extreme weather conditions. Well-traveled routes eventually fall under U.S. Border Patrol surveillance.

¹⁹⁵ JCS, JP 5-0, IV-25.

¹⁹⁶ Customs and Border Protection, “Canine Program,” Department of Homeland Security, last modified April 1, 2014, accessed April 15, 2019, <https://www.cbp.gov/border-security/along-us-borders/canine-program/background>.

USBP detains, investigates, and detects illegal entry. Additionally, other criminal groups and rival DTOs operating in the area place smugglers in danger. Rival DTOs and criminal elements commonly steal smuggler's shipments. Even if competing elements do not kill the smuggler, the DTO may execute the smuggler for losing their profits.

4. Informants- DTO smugglers are vulnerable to infiltration of their organizations or rival DTO intimidation. Arrested smugglers face intense pressure to cooperate with enforcement agencies in exchange for more lenient sentencing. Many successful U.S. Law enforcement drug investigations utilize informants for information and access to higher members within an organization. Rival DTOs may threaten the smuggler's life or the lives of their family. Rival DTOs may also request inside information on the movement of shipments or access to higher members of the DTO.

U.S. Center of Gravity Results

Based on the operational environment, the U.S. source of power or center of gravity rests with the CBP. The CBP with its subordinate OFO and USBP offices secure the SWB. The DTOs must cross the defended border. CBP provides the first opportunity to detect DTO at the SWB or POE. The DTO avoids contact with CBP to prevent arrest and seizure of their drug shipments. CBP operations focus on detecting and seizing DTO shipments at the SWB. The CBP COG analysis identified the following critical capabilities, requirements, and vulnerabilities:

CBP Critical Capabilities

The NSS, DHS plan and the National Southwest Border Strategy identified securing the border as a strategic objective. The nested operational level border security objective requires means or capabilities to secure the SWB. This study identified

command and control, detection, and search / seizure as critical capabilities to reach the objective. The following capabilities provide means to accomplish mission objectives:

1. Command and Control- CBP must organize, synchronize, and direct multi-organization resources along the border. Effective command and control enables CBP deployment of resources based on sensor alerts and intelligence.

2. Detection- CBP must employ technology to detect incursions between the POE or illicit cargo at the POE. The CBP utilizes a series of ground electronic sensors, cameras, aerial surveillance, and barriers supported by ground forces. The CBP utilizes canine detection teams at POE resulting in frequent drug seizures. CBP deploys approximately 1,500 canine teams at the border. CBP canine teams completed fentanyl detection training resulting in a 68 percent increase of fentanyl seizures..¹⁹⁷

3. Search and Seizure- CBP maintains the legal authority to conduct searches, seize narcotics and make arrests at the border. Search and seizure activities may disrupt DTO drug shipments entering the SWB. These operations may seize bulk cash from illicit drug proceeds and weapons returning to Mexico. Effective search and seizure operations target DTOs COGs in order to disrupt their critical capabilities.

CBP Critical Requirements

1. Command and Control- C2 establishes shared OE understanding through information management, knowledge sharing and effective collaboration..¹⁹⁸

¹⁹⁷ CBP, *CBP Border Security Report: Fiscal Year 2018*, 4.

¹⁹⁸ Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS), Joint Publication (JP) 3-0, *Joint Operations* (Washington, DC: Government Publishing Office, 2018), III-14.

a. Information management- Multiple LEAs provide valuable intelligence.

Organizations must store, organize, and control information to provide real time intelligence for ongoing investigation efforts. CBP manages collected information on its traveler enforcement compliance system (TECS) data center.¹⁹⁹

b. Knowledge sharing-Local, state, federal and DOD assets must share intelligence through all levels. Many DTO operations affect multiple jurisdictions and LEAs. If LEAs withhold information, other agencies may not receive information to solve related investigations. Additionally, failure to share information may increase officer safety risks while interdicting DTOs. CBP uses the Interagency Border Inspection System (IBIS) to access the FBI's national crime information center (NCIC) data through approximately 24,000 computer terminals.

c. Effective collaboration- All enforcement organizations must maintain a shared understanding of the operational environment. Local, state, federal, and DOD enforcement efforts must synchronize to prevent duplication of efforts. Liaisons are effective means to synchronize multiple organizations. Additional network systems like IBIS and the Advance Passenger Information System provide enforcement related information across multiple agencies.²⁰⁰

2. Detection – Enforcement agencies use security vulnerabilities assessments, physical security functions, and physical security measures to increase detections of DTO

¹⁹⁹ CBP, "CBP Search Authority."

²⁰⁰ Ibid.

crossing the SWB. Each of these requirements must overlap and provide security in depth.²⁰¹

a. Security vulnerability assessments- Enforcement agencies must analyze physical security enforcement along the entire SWB. The analysis should identify physical security vulnerabilities and potential operational solutions. Enforcement agencies must apply additional resources to prevent DTOs from exploiting known weaknesses.

b. Physical security functions- Enforcement agencies conduct physical security at the border and at POE. USBP patrols, monitors surveillance systems, and responds to DTOs and asylum seekers entering the border. OFO screens vehicles, passengers and cargo entering the POE. CBP canine teams search vehicles, busses, trains, and containers at the ports. USBP in conjunction with other LEAs conduct secondary check points near the SWB area to interdict DTOs.

c. Physical security measures- Security lighting, fencing, standoff areas, electronic sensors, and electronic surveillance provide increased detection capabilities. Enforcement agencies should deploy physical security measures in areas to prevent DTO from crossing the border. Additionally, physical security measures should overlap and provide constant surveillance to detect DTO movement.²⁰²

3. Search and Seizure- Enforcement agencies use personnel, legal search authorizations and funding to conduct search / seizure operations at the SWB.

²⁰¹ JCS, JP 3-0, III-41.

²⁰² Ibid.

a. Personnel- Enforcement agencies field personnel to cover 2,000 miles of border and thirty POE. Based on the geographic border areas and heavy traffic entering the POE, the CBP employed approximately 23,477 officers and 19,555 USBP agents in FY 2018.²⁰³

b. Search Authority- Enforcement agencies use search activities to detect contraband and narcotics. Enforcement agencies require legal search authorizations compliant with the U.S. Constitution's fourth amendment. CBP is authorized to search all persons, baggage and merchandise entering the U.S. under 19 C.F.R. 162.6.²⁰⁴

c. Funding- The CBP 2018 FY budget was \$4.5 billion. Funding provided training, vehicles, and supporting technological surveillance equipment required for border security. Without funding, critical equipment like vehicles, aerial platforms, sensors, and cameras age out, significantly degrading CBP capabilities.²⁰⁵

CBP Critical Vulnerabilities

Critical vulnerabilities are aspects of an entities' critical requirements. These vulnerabilities identify potential weaknesses which DTOs may target to achieve significant results.²⁰⁶ This study identified vulnerabilities with CBP's command and control, detection, search and seizure and funding requirements.

²⁰³ CBP, *CBP Border Security Report: Fiscal Year 2018*. 6

²⁰⁴ CBP, "CBP Search Authority."

²⁰⁵ CBP, *CBP Border Security Report: Fiscal Year 2018*. 6

²⁰⁶ JCS, JP 5-0, IV-25.

1. Command and Control- Effective information management, knowledge sharing and collaboration relies on cooperation from multiple LEAs. Failure to share knowledge between LEAs and jurisdictions creates significant border security vulnerabilities. DTO operations occur throughout the SWB that involve multiple jurisdictions. Local, state, and federal enforcement agencies may conduct independent narcotic investigations that unknowingly transcend jurisdictional boundaries. LEAs may withhold information that may benefit other agencies' investigations. Enforcement systems like the FBI criminal justice information services databases (CJIS) rely on updated investigation data.²⁰⁷ Failure to establish a shared enforcement understanding prevents U.S. efforts to synchronize enforcement capabilities required to defeat DTO operations.

2. Detection- CBP uses vulnerability assessments, physical security functions and physical security measures to secure the SWB. Despite raising staffing levels and recruitment incentives, CBP remains understaffed and requires an additional 4,000 agents.²⁰⁸ CBPs lack of staffing presents a significant vulnerability to detect DTOs at the SWB.

a. Vulnerability assessment- The SWB includes rough terrain, populated border towns and multiple POEs. DTOs exploit this terrain to smuggle drugs into the U.S. The DTO quickly identifies and exploits border security weaknesses. For example, if LEAs

²⁰⁷ Office of the Director of National Intelligence, "Law Enforcement Information Sharing," accessed May 18, 2019, <https://www.dni.gov/index.php/who-we-are/organizations/ise/ise-archive/ise-additional-resources/2142-law-enforcement-information-sharing>.

²⁰⁸ Homeland Security Today, "Bipartisan Senate Effort Aims to Fill CBP Ports of Entry Staffing Shortages," last modified April 3, 2019, accessed May 18, 2019, <https://www.hstoday.us/federal-pages/dhs/cbp/bipartisan-senate-effort-aims-to-fill-cbp-ports-of-entry-staffing-shortages/>.

resolve one security vulnerability, the DTOs shift operations to a less protected border area. The SWB requires a whole border security approach to defeat the DTOs objectives.

b. Physical Security Functions- The SWB contains difficult terrain that hinders USBP operations. Rough terrain conceals movement especially during hours of darkness. Water features and high terrain limits USBP mobility required to cover large areas. Seasonal vegetation provides additional cover and concealment in the Rio Grande River area. Border Patrol operations require higher personnel levels to cover these operational challenges. Some patrols operate in areas far away from LEA assistance or back up. USBP agents commonly contact tens to hundreds of asylum seekers at the border. USBP personnel shortages place agents at risk and decrease their operational reach. The USBP manning requirement creates a significant vulnerability for detecting DTOs at the SWB.

OFO screen high volumes of inbound vehicle and pedestrian traffic at the SWB POE. Thousands of commercial tractor trailer trucks, busses, trains, personally owned vehicles (POV) and pedestrians enter the U.S. POE each day. The DTOs exploit the high volume of traffic by concealing vehicles containing drug shipments among thousands of vehicles entering POEs. Managing the high volume of traffic quickly consumes OFO resources at the POE. OFO may close inbound lanes to account for personnel shortages. OFO manning shortages at the POE is a critical vulnerability to border security.

c. Physical Security Measures- CBP uses fences, lighting, electronic sensors, electronic surveillance equipment to assist in disrupting DTO operations at the SWB. The CBP incorporates several types of fencing in its tactical infrastructure. At the completion of this study the SWB contains approximately 700 miles of fencing and barriers. On February 2019, Congress passed legislation authorizing construction of 55 miles of

border wall along the SWB.²⁰⁹ The remaining 1,300 miles of open SWB remains a significant weakness to USBP's operations.

3. Search and Seizure - DTO smugglers capitalize on the quantity of inbound traffic at POE. DTO smugglers trends indicate drug shipment sizes are decreasing while the number of smuggler shipments increased.²¹⁰ OFO's immigration and other criminal enforcement require significant manning requirements. OFO agents detained approximately 280,000 illegal entries at the POEs, while USBP detained approximately 404,000. In 2018, OFO and USBP combined detentions totaled 683,178.²¹¹ The immigration enforcement consumes OFO resources needed for detecting DTO drug shipments. The high number immigration enforcement actions create additional security vulnerabilities at the border.

4. Funding- Operating enforcement actions and physical security measures at the border is expensive. Congress controls appropriations and funding these programs. Current immigration policies create political conflict at the SWB. Partisan politics and views may affect funding for maintaining or increasing border security. Political views indirectly create potential funding vulnerabilities in sustaining security operations at the SWB.²¹²

²⁰⁹ Federation for American Information Reform (FAIR), "The Current State of the Border Fence," last modified May 2019, accessed May 18, 2019, <https://www.fairus.org/issue/national-security/current-state-border-fence>.

²¹⁰ Ibid., 99.

²¹¹ CBP, *CBP Border Security Report: Fiscal Year 2018*. 1

²¹² FAIR, "The Current State of the Border Fence."

Decisive Points

According to JP 5-0, a decisive point is geographic location or critical factor, function when actioned upon provides a marked advantage to accomplish an objective.²¹³ The decisive point analysis answers the question, “Where do you target the DTO COG?” The study of the operational environment identified the SWB as a geographic decisive point. Based on the complex geographic region, this study divided the border into two distinct OEs. Both environments operate under unique operational capabilities, requirements, and vulnerabilities. This study defines the SWB OE as the border sections that connect the POEs. The POE OE includes avenues of approach located in and around the ports. Both the SWB and POE provide U.S. enforcement agencies a marked advantage to secure the SWB border. These two operational decisive points control the means to reach a secure border end state.

Decisive Point- Ports of Entry

The POEs are the first decisive point. DTOs smuggling operations use the POE to move large shipments of drugs. The POE maintains trained CPB agents assisted by canine and x-ray detection capabilities. Commercial tractor-trailer trucks carrying large shipments of drugs must travel through a POE. The DTOs conceal drugs within legitimate trade transporters to avoid detection. Statistics indicate OFO at the POE seize larger quantities of drugs. For example, recent November 2018 statistics show CPB conducted 120 seizures. Approximately 82 of these seizures occurred at the POE.²¹⁴ The

²¹³ JCS, JP 5-0, xxii.

²¹⁴ Philip Bump, “Analysis: Want to Know Where Most Drugs Cross the Border? Look at the Border Patrol’s News Releases,” *Washington Post*, last modified February 1, 2019, accessed February 2, 2019,

weight of the POE seizures was approximately 25,000 pounds compared to 7,600 pounds located along the Texas SWB.²¹⁵ These statistics support the POE's strategic importance for DTO operations. Unfortunately, the DTO consistently displays the ability to assess and adjust tactics to further their operation. U.S. enforcement agencies must control the POE decisive point in order to achieve operational end states.

Decisive Point- SWB between Ports of Entry

DTOs successfully use advanced tactics countering CBP operations. Large drug seizures at the POE force DTOs to select alternate routes across the border. The border routes located between the POE provide an acceptable alternative. In remote locations, the DTO uses the terrain to conceal movement. DTOs display sophisticated counter-surveillance tactics to avoid the USBP. DTOs use unmanned aerial systems or drones to identify USBP locations.²¹⁶ DTOs coordinate their movements in areas where USBP are out of position. Additionally, DTOs use ultralight aircraft for drug drops within proximity of the SWB.²¹⁷ DTOs use subterranean tunnels providing the ability to move several tons of drugs.²¹⁸ U.S. enforcement agencies must control the SWB decisive point in order to achieve operational end states.

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2019/02/01/want-know-where-most-drugs-cross-border-look-border-patrols-press-releases/>.

²¹⁵ Ibid.

²¹⁶ DOJ DEA, *2018 National Drug Threat Assessment*, 99.

²¹⁷ Ibid.

²¹⁸ Ibid.

Operational Approach

The analysis defined the strategic and operational environment at the SWB. The study identified COG and its critical capabilities, requirements, and vulnerabilities. This view exposed possible DTO weakness to target and CBP vulnerabilities to defend. Overall, these views provide an in-depth understanding of the complex SWB problem. The analysis identified the CBP requires additional resources to defend the SWB and POEs. Specifically, CBP requires additional resources to provide a layered defense capable of detecting DTOs in the austere SWB and the congested POEs. The Operational Approach now creates a course of action that identifies a valid end state, ways to create desired effects, and the means available to complete this mission. The Operational Approach uses the following ends, ways and means to solve the complex problem at the SWB.

Ends

The Operational Approach incorporates National strategic end state. According to the NSS, the U.S. must strengthen control of U.S. borders and immigration. The strategic guidance drives the following U.S federal agency objectives: U.S Homeland Security secures borders, controls immigration, enables lawful trade and travel while dismantling TCO,, and supporting actors. Based on these strategic objectives, this Operational Approach uses the following end state: CBP secures decisive points at the SWB in order to stem the flow of drugs, weapons, illicit chemicals, financial proceeds and defeat DTO

operations.²¹⁹ Now the Operational Approach identifies ways or how to accomplish this end state.

Ways

Defeat and stability mechanisms supplement the COG analysis and identify ways to achieve end states. This mechanisms analysis answers the question, “How do we solve the DTO Problem?”²²⁰ Based on the OE, defeat and stability mechanisms must place effects on DTO operations at the SWB. Defeat mechanisms aim at the DTOs COG vulnerabilities at decisive points while stability mechanism support CBP vulnerabilities.

Defeat Mechanism

CBP uses defeat mechanisms to dislocate and isolate DTO operations.²²¹ CBP applies these effects against the DTO vulnerabilities as it crosses decisive points at the SWB. The CBP COG apply the following effects to target DTO COG vulnerabilities:

a. Dislocate- CBP COG dislocates DTO operations through occupying key terrain and known drug routes. DTOs use alternate routes to avoid contact with LEA and CBP COG. DTOs use alternate routes that disrupt normal operations and timelines. CBP COG attrit DTO COG resources by detecting operations at the SWB. Sensor platforms detect DTO COG then direct USBP agents to interdict drug shipments. DTO COG drug seizures decreases the DTOs critical resources.

²¹⁹ ONDCP, *National Southwest Border Counternarcotics Strategy*, 12.

²²⁰ JCS, JP 5-0, IV-31.

²²¹ *Ibid.*

c. Isolate- CBP COG isolates DTO operations through detecting weapon and bulk cash shipments returning to Mexico. CBP COG detects DTO COG movement then interdict DTO's weapon and bulk cash shipments. The loss of DTO's resources marginalizes DTO capabilities and decreases their ability to influence local communities..²²²

Stability Mechanism

The U.S. applies stability mechanisms to maintain sovereignty over the SWB. CBP COG applies stability effects at decisive points in order to defend CBP COG vulnerabilities. CBP COG applies the following effects to protect vulnerabilities:

a. Control- CBP controls decisive points at the SWB. CBP COG occupy key terrain, enforce sovereign borders, and protect of critical resources against DTO operations. CBP COG control of key terrain enables freedom of movement for CBP operations..²²³

b Support- U.S. Military forces support CBP operations at decisive points along the SWB and POE. U.S. Military applies the Joint Functions in support of CBP operations..²²⁴

²²² JCS, JP 5-0, IV-31.

²²³ Ibid.

²²⁴ JCS, JP 3-0, III-1.

Means

U.S. Military Joint Functions

Joint Functions are categories of capabilities that provide the U.S. Military means to conduct defeat and stability mechanism-based operations. Joint Functions use military organizations, personnel, and systems to achieve operational objectives.²²⁵ Based on this study's analysis, Joint Functions provide the means for the U.S. Military to target DTO vulnerabilities while reinforcing CBP weaknesses. Joint Functions provide the following operational capabilities required to secure the SWB.

a. Command and Control- U.S. Military commanders use command and control (C2) to direct assigned forces to accomplish an objective.²²⁶ C2 capabilities also include communication systems that extend control to geographically separated units. Military units use command post operations to enable information management, knowledge sharing, and effective outside agency collaboration.²²⁷

b. Intelligence- U.S. Military forces use intelligence to understand the OE.²²⁸ Units rely on joint intelligence preparation of the operational environment (JIPOE) to inform military commanders. The Intelligence function also conducts information gathering through surveillance and reconnaissance using aerial and ground-based

²²⁵ JCS, JP 3-0, III-1.

²²⁶ Ibid., III-2.

²²⁷ Ibid., III-15.

²²⁸ Ibid., III-27.

platforms. Counterintelligence (CI), Human Intelligence (HUMINT) and Identity Intelligence (I2) provide additional information to supported LEAs.²²⁹

c. Fires- Fires Joint Function capabilities support defeat and stability mechanisms. Fires provides joint targeting capabilities through prioritizing targets and matching appropriate U.S. Military capabilities. Targeting in this OE applies to non-lethal activities, cyberspace attacks, electronic warfare attacks, and Military Information Support Operations (MISO).²³⁰

d. Movement and Maneuver- U.S. Military use movement to deploy or position resources within the area of operation. Military may use land, aerial or maritime modes of transportation. U.S. Military maneuvers units to obtain achieve a position of advantage or seize key terrain.²³¹

e. Protection- U.S. Military use protection capabilities to construct infrastructure at the SWB border. Units can erect barriers, build facilities, and construct roads. Protection forces defend command posts, lines of communication and logistical supplies from criminal elements. Increased infrastructure supports USBP freedom of movement to interdict DTOs at the SWB.²³²

f. Sustainment-U.S. Military forces use sustainment capabilities to increase endurance and extend its operational reach.²³³ Sustainment delivers food, fuel, and

²²⁹ JCS, JP 3-0, III-25.

²³⁰ Ibid., III-37.

²³¹ Ibid., III-37, 38.

²³² Ibid., III-40.

²³³ Ibid., III-47.

essential equipment to operational units. Forces also maintain and repair military support vehicles. Sustainment assets deploy health services to support deployed personnel.

Sustainment forces enable continued U.S. Military operations along the SWB.

U.S. Army

The U.S. Army can apply Joint Functions to support CBP security operations at the SWB. The Army provides the means to achieve the defined operational ends. The U.S. Army provides the following capabilities to defeat the DTO:

The U.S. Army maintains approximately 427,047 Active, 219,000 Reserve and 345,153 National Guard Soldiers.²³⁴ This land component force possesses personnel and equipment resources required for prolonged operations. The U.S. Army active component maintains 31 Brigade Combat Teams. The brigade combat teams include 11 Armor Brigade Combat Teams (ABCT), 20 Infantry Brigade Combat Teams (IBCT) and 7 Stryker Brigade Combat Teams (SBCT).²³⁵ The National Guard possess an additional 5 ABCTs, 20 IBCTs, and 2 SBCTs.²³⁶

²³⁴ Statista, “U.S. Military Force Numbers, by Service Branch and Reserve Component 2017,” accessed May 19, 2019, <https://www.statista.com/statistics/232330/us-military-force-numbers-by-service-branch-and-reserve-component/>.

²³⁵ U.S. Army Public Affairs, “Army Announces Conversion of Two Brigade Combat Teams,” U.S. Army, accessed February 2, 2019, https://www.army.mil/article/211368/army_announces_conversion_of_two_brigade_combat_teams.

²³⁶ Todd South, “The Army Is Converting Two BCTs as It Beefs up Its Fighting Force for the next Big War,” *Army Times*, last modified September 20, 2018, accessed April 18, 2019, <https://www.armytimes.com/news/your-army/2018/09/20/the-army-is-converting-two-bcts-as-it-beefs-up-its-fighting-force-for-the-next-big-war/>.

Infantry Brigade Combat Team

The IBCT unit is a stand-alone self-sufficient tactical combat force consisting of approximately 4,000 Soldiers.²³⁷ The IBCT consists of a light, airborne and air assault variants. The light IBCT contains infantry transported by organic wheeled vehicles or assisted by attached helicopter support units. The Airborne IBCT is another infantry unit capable of parachute assaults. The Air Assault IBCT employs helicopter transport capabilities that enable them to conduct large scale air assault operations.²³⁸ The IBCT flexibility and tactical mobility provide robust capabilities required to detect and defeat DTO operations outside of the SWB POE.

U.S. Marine Corps Capabilities

The U.S. Marine Corps maintain approximately 184,400 Active and 104,400 Reserve Marines to sustain global operations.²³⁹ The Marines provide amphibious assault capabilities and scalable units to match operational needs. U.S. Marine formations include: Marine Expeditionary Forces (MEF), Marine Expeditionary Brigades (MEB), Marine Expeditionary Units (MEU). MEF unit strength ranges from 40,000 to 80,000 Marines. MEB strengths include 14,000 to 17,000 Marines. The MEU deploys with 2,200 Marines. Each Marine unit are scalable Marine Air Ground Task Force (MAGTF) organizations. MAGTF includes Ground Combat Element (GCE), Aviation Combat

²³⁷ Andrew Feickert, *Infantry Brigade Combat Team (IBCT) Mobility, Reconnaissance, and Firepower Programs*, Congressional Research Service Report for Congress (Washington, DC: Library of Congress, October 4, 2018), 1.

²³⁸ *Ibid.*, 2.

²³⁹ Statista, “U.S. Military Force Numbers, by Service Branch and Reserve Component 2017.”

Element (ACE), Logistics Combat Element (LCE) and a Command Element (CE) capabilities.²⁴⁰

Marine Expeditionary Brigade

Based on the OE and area of operations at the SWB, the Marine Expeditionary Brigade (MEB) provides capabilities to reach operational end states. The MEB deploys approximately 16,000 Marines to conduct global operations. The MEB possess the following MAGTF capabilities:

a. Command Element- The CE provides C2, reconnaissance, signal, intelligence platform, and engineer assets from external construction regiments.²⁴¹

b. Ground Combat Element- The GCE provides one infantry regiment with additional artillery, reconnaissance, engineer, and amphibious units.²⁴²

c. Air Combat Element- The ACE provides transport and utility helicopters. The element also maintains fighter fixed wing aircraft, electronic warfare aircraft, refuelers and additional unmanned aircraft reconnaissance systems.²⁴³

²⁴⁰ Commandant of the Marine Corps (CMC), Marine Corps Doctrine Publication (MCDP) 1-0, *Marine Corps Operations* (Washington, DC: Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps, 2017), 2-10-2-11.

²⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 2-11.

²⁴² *Ibid.*

²⁴³ *Ibid.*

d. Logistics Command Element- The LCE is a regiment sized unit that provides logistical support, engineering, transportation, and medical capabilities. The LCE also provides maintenance support and landing support for logistical port operations.²⁴⁴

Title 32 National Guard Military Police Battalions

Title 32 National Guard Military Police Battalions provide robust capabilities. State Governors deploy National Guard forces during incidents. Under Title 32, National Guard units may enforce state laws. National Guard Military Police provide direct law enforcement support to CBP agents. U.S. border states possesses the following National Guard Military Police units:

- a. New Mexico National Guard- 226th Military Police Battalion
- b. Texas National Guard- 136th Military Police Battalion
- c. California National Guard- 49th Military Police Brigade and 185th Military Police Battalion.
- d. Arizona National Guard- 850th Military Police Battalion.²⁴⁵

Military Police units conduct similar duties as their civilian counter parts. Many National Guard Military Police units include personnel working as civilian law enforcement. Military units conduct the following missions:

- a. Area security.
- b. Reconnaissance.

²⁴⁴ CMC, MCDP 1-0, 2-11.

²⁴⁵ Wikipedia, "List of United States Army Military Police Corps Units," May 26, 2019, accessed May 30, 2019, https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=List_of_United_States_Army_Military_Police_Corps_units&oldid=898905217.

- c. Surveillance.
- d. Antiterrorism measures.
- e. Physical security procedures.
- f. Military working dog support.
- g. Detention
- h. Prisoner Transport
- i. Seizure and evidence collection
- j. Arrests and investigations.²⁴⁶

Restrictions

Posse Comitatus Act, U.S. Code. Title 18 U.S.C Section 1385 and DOD regulations restrict DOD Title 10 forces from conducting civilian law enforcement. The PCA prevents DOD Title 10 forces from searching, seizing, and arresting DTO actors at the SWB. DOD forces operating under authorized support authorities for LEAs may only conduct detection and monitoring operations within a 25-mile distance from inside the SWB. Any aerial surveillance support must initiate outside of the border where the subjects enter through and continue advancement into the U.S territory.

Risks

Deploying U.S. military forces to support LEA operations at the SWB provide strategic and operational level risks. The SWB is dynamic with DTOs focused on maintaining their lucrative drug proceeds. DTOs could draw U.S. Military into an armed

²⁴⁶ Headquarters, Department of the Army, Field Manual 3-39, *Military Police Operations* (Washington, DC: Government Publishing Office, April 2019), 2-2.

confrontation with strategic implications. Deployment of any U.S. Military branch may also lead to unforeseen casualties to Soldiers or potentially non-compliant asylum seekers who create a use of force incident. Additionally, U.S. military SWB deployments may decrease resources required to conduct global combat operations. Further, U.S. Marine forces provide unique amphibious capabilities that extend U.S. strategic reach. Using these amphibious forces at the border may prevent deployments to other combat operations. Finally, the U.S. Military may provide the answer to a secure SWB that ultimately leads to a permanent presence at the border. Continued deployment may affect unit rotational deployments to other regions.

Course of Action

Based on the understanding of the OE, the operational ends, ways and means, this study identified a course of action to defeat DTO operations at the SWB. This study defined two decisive points, the POE and border areas located in between. These decisive points have unique OEs that requires their separate lines of effort. Lines of effort link tasks to missions to reach strategic or operational objectives.²⁴⁷ Each line of effort includes effects and tasks required to meet operational end states. These lines of effort link the tactical ways to U.S. Military means to reach the defined end state at the SWB:

²⁴⁷ JCS, JP 5-0, III-6.

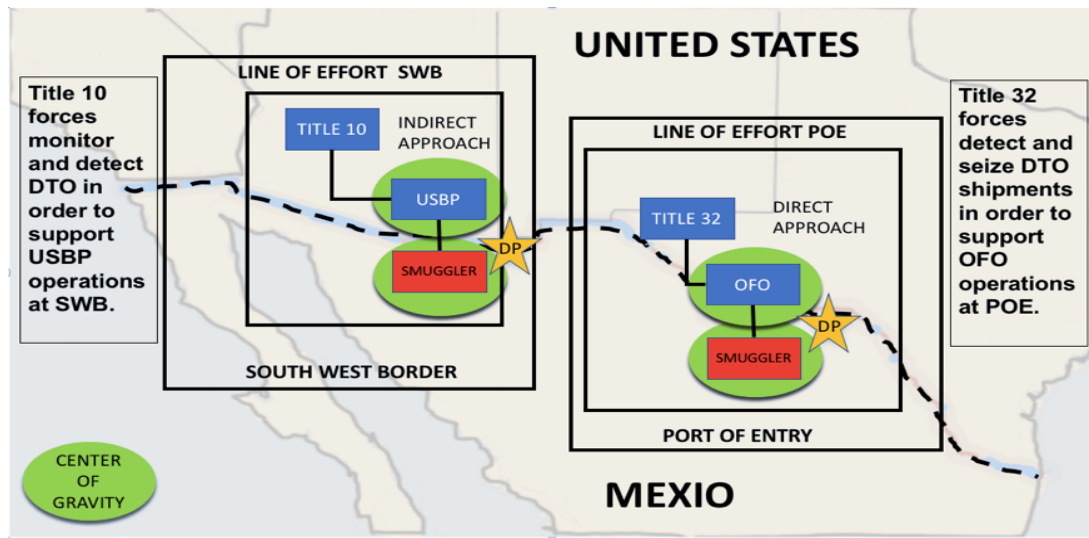


Figure 9. Lines of Effort

Source: Created by author.

Line of Effort USBP Support at SWB

USBP conducts detection and patrolling operations at the SWB sections located between POE. U.S. Military Title 10 (T10) forces reinforce USBP to reduce vulnerabilities through indirect support. U.S. military forces support USBP through indirect support. U.S. forces support USBP through the following actions:

1. Monitoring through reconnaissance personnel, aerial platforms.
2. Detecting- Monitors sensors and camera systems.
3. Transportation of USBP and other supporting agencies.
4. Operating and maintaining military equipment in support of operations.
5. Creating infrastructure roadways and obstacle barriers.
6. Provides base of operations for security operations.
7. Enables secure communications and command/control.

Additionally, U.S. T10 Military conducts operations at the SWB in order to achieve defined objectives. The SBW objective includes the following: U.S. Military T10 supports USBP IOT interdict DTO's drugs, weapons, illicit chemicals, and proceeds at the SWB. T10 forces achieve this objective through conducting the following tactical tasks to create desired effects on DTOs:

1. U.S. T10 forces occupy DTO smuggling network routes in order to neutralize DTOs ability to move drug shipments across the SWB.
2. U.S. T10 forces conduct area reconnaissance in order to interdict DTO movements at the SWB.
3. U.S. T10 forces provide support for Civilian Law Enforcement Agencies in order to defeat DTO through seizures of critical resources at the SWB.
4. U.S. T10 forces screens SWB area in order to identify DTO smugglers for action by USBP agents.

Line of Effort Support OFO at POE

OFO conducts detection and makes arrests at the SWB POE. U.S. Military forces support OFO through direct approach enforcement actions. U.S. Military Title 32 (T32) forces supplement OFO resources and increase law enforcement capabilities at the POEs. U.S. T32 forces support OFO operations by the following actions:

- a. Detecting DTOs by using Military Police canine teams at inbound POE lanes.
- b. Arresting, seizing, and investigations under T32 authorities.
- c. Transportation of OFO and other supporting LEAs.
- d. Operating and maintaining military equipment in support of operations.

- e. Occupying administrative positions to allow more OFO agents to detect DTOs at the inbound POE lanes.

Additionally, U.S. T32 Military conducts operations at the POE in order to achieve defined objectives. The POE objective includes the following: U.S. T32 Military supports OFO in order to interdict DTO's drugs, weapons, illicit chemicals, and proceeds from entering the SWB POEs. T32 forces achieve this objective through conducting the following tactical tasks to create desired effects on DTOs:

- a. U.S. T32 forces provide support for Civilian Law Enforcement Agencies in order to defeat DTO through seizures of critical resources at the SWB.
- b. U.S. T32 forces screens SWB area in order to interdict DTO smugglers with USBP agents.
- c. U.S. T32 forces conducts traffic operations in order to interdict DTO smuggling networks at the SWB POE.

Summary

The SWB remains the decisive point for the war on drugs. The border combines desolate terrain, border towns and saturated POEs. The border remains the only thin line of defense between the determined DTOs and U.S. communities. Thousands of CBP personnel stand at the line, but the drugs still get through. The complex SWB presents the full range of strategic, operational, and tactical problems. This analysis presented an in-depth understanding of the SWB OE. It identified the DTO smuggler network and CBP centers of gravity. Each entity maintains unique critical capabilities, requirements, and vulnerabilities. These findings indicated the DTO smuggling network is a critical target.

More importantly, the analysis identified a CBP capabilities gap that required additional means to fill.

Next, the analysis created an operational approach to solve the problem. The Operational Approach presented ends, ways and means to reach strategic and operational objectives. COG analysis identified defeat and stability mechanisms that placed desired effects on the DTO. Finally, U.S. Military forces provided the means to fill CBP capabilities gaps at the border and POE.

U.S Military provides C2, intelligence, fires targeting, movement and maneuver, protection, and sustainment capabilities to support CBP operations. Even though each U.S. Military branch provides many of these joint function capabilities, the U.S. Army and Marine Corps provide land forces well suited for extended operations at the SWB.

The U.S. Army IBCT and U.S Marine MEB provide robust capabilities to endure extended operations. These units also include sustainment assets that increase operational reach. Further, both type of units contain infantry forces. Light infantry can operate in rough austere terrain. This capability is critical at the SWB where infrastructure and roadways are limited. Even with U.S. Code and Title authority limitations, the U.S. Military provides the means to solve the nation's strategic and operational problem at the SWB.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The SWB remains a complex problem with strategic and operational implications. The border facilitates the largest daily migration in the world and enables a \$830 billion trade between the U.S. and Mexico. This border also allows DTOs access to sell retail level drugs in the U.S. DTO's drugs fuel the U.S.s growing drug demand, addictions, and lethal overdoses. The CBP and additional federal LEA deploy countless resources to defeat DTO operations. Despite the dedicated work of LEAs, the DTOs still ship large quantities of drugs across the border.

This study analyzed the complex problem at the border. Operational design provided the framework to understand the multilayered OE. COG analysis further identified CBP and DTO critical capabilities, requirements, and vulnerabilities. Analysis showed the CBP required additional resources to secure the border. An Operational Approach established the ends, ways and means required to support the CBP. Further, the study found potential answers to relevant research questions. Even though the analysis provided in depth details, there are additional elements that require further research. Ultimately, the U.S. Military forces may provide the solution to solve the SWB problem.

Summary of Findings

U.S. National Security Strategy calls for secure borders. Even though border security is a common theme across multiple administrations, previous efforts have failed to reduce illicit traffic of goods and people. This study examined several interconnected factors of the complicated SWB problem. As the border stands today, DTOs frequently exploit border security. The study incorporated a legal literature review with the current

operational environment. Operational Design Methodology provided analytic tools to understand the Operational Environment. These products shaped an operational approach ultimately answering the intended research questions.

Primary Question: How does the U.S. military defeat
DTO operations at the Southwest Border?

The analysis identified the CBP as the U.S. COG. The OFO secures the thirty-three POEs along the SWB. The USBP provides border security between established POEs. Further, CBP manages legal migration, extensive commercial trade and counterdrug operations with its limited personnel resources. This study found the U.S. military can support CBP resulting in a defeat of DTO operations at the SWB.

The U.S. Code provides constitutional authorization for U.S. military forces supporting U.S. Homeland Security. These authorizations include Title 10 active / reserve military and Title 32 National Guard units. Title 10 and Title 32 provide different authorities and operational restrictions. The following codes provide authorization for U.S military support:

Title 10 U.S. Code Chapter 13, Section 1059 authorizes DOD U.S.C Title 10 support of U.S. Homeland Security missions at the SWB. Additional U.S. Codes 271 through Code 274 and section 284 specifically authorized DOD to perform the following missions:

- a. Detection, monitoring, and communication support.
- b. Detection, monitoring, and communication of the movement of surface traffic outside the U.S. boundary and 25 miles within the border.
- c. Aerial reconnaissance
- d. Interception of vessels or aircraft detected outside the U.S.

- e. Transportation of civilian law enforcement or civilian personnel operating in joint operations with civilian law enforcement personnel.
- f. The base of operations for Civilian law enforcement and supporting civilian/military personnel.
- g. Transportation and security of suspected terrorist personnel to criminal trials..²⁴⁸

Title 32 U.S.C § 112 authorizes National Guard Drug Interdiction and Counter-Drug Activities. This mission includes conducting counter-drug law enforcement activities including drug demand reduction activities through the request of the State Governor. Under the State's Governor's direction National Guard forces may enforce state laws within their respective jurisdictions. Title 32 provides National Guard the legal framework to search, seize and arrest in support of counter-drug operations. This provision enables National Guard direct support to any law enforcement agency within its jurisdiction.

Based on the legal authority, the U.S. military may conduct operations in support of DHS at the border. The unique OE requires two separate lines of effort. These two areas consist of the SWB and the POEs. The U.S. military may deploy Title 10 and Title 32 forces to support these lines of effort.

The POE are large facilities designed to accommodate high volumes of traffic. Most of these facilities maintain support services and infrastructure. The OFO conducts security operations at these POEs. The high volume of traffic decreases the chances of

²⁴⁸ USC, "[USC04] 10 USC Ch. 15: Military Support for Civilian Law Enforcement Agencies."

detecting a DTO smuggler. The POE requires U.S. military forces with legal search authorities to conduct vehicle searches and assist OFO drug seizures. Title 32 National Guard units meet this capability. Many Title 32 National Guard units possess trained law enforcement personnel well suited for POE operations. For this line of effort, Title 32 defeats the DTO by detecting and seizing illegal drug shipments at the POE. Each DTO smuggler apprehension reduces the DTOs critical resources. Over time, the DTO loses resources and influence within their region. The loss of power and influence creates additional defeating mechanisms inside Mexico. If DTOs lose power, the local Mexican government gains legitimacy and increases its ability to target illegal organizations.

The USBP conducts security operations on the SWB between POEs. The challenging terrain creates a different mission set than that of the POE. The USBP conducts patrols through the vast area. USBP's limited resources cannot cover the entire border. In this operational area, terrain restricts movement and provides the DTO ample areas to hide. The rural area does not provide roads or other essential utilities. Based on the DTO smuggler's counter-surveillance tactics, USBP requires additional support to fill the gaps. Title 10 U.S. military units can provide this capability. Many Title 10 units possess capabilities well suited for SWB operations. For this line of effort, Title 10 defeats the DTO by detecting and monitoring DTO smugglers at the SWB. The isolated environment requires extensive sustainment capabilities for prolonged operations. Title 10 U.S. sustainment assets extend land force's operational reach. The Posse Comitatus Act (PCA) restricts Title 10 forces conducting direct law enforcement actions. Because of PCA restrictions, Title 10 forces may indirectly contribute to defeating DTOs through supporting USBP operations. Title 10 forces detect and monitor DTOs crossing the SWB.

These units then direct USBP agents to arrest smugglers and seize DTO's critical resources. Over time, the DTO loses resources and influence within their region. The loss of power and influence creates additional defeating mechanisms inside Mexico. If DTOs lose power, the local Mexican government gains legitimacy and increases its ability to target illegal organizations.

Secondary Question #1 What type of military unit is best suited to defeat the DTO?

Military Units Supporting SWB Areas between POE

The Light Infantry Brigade Combat Team provides the best capability to defeat the DTO at the SWB. The IBCT incorporates critical capabilities that can support the USBP. The SWB terrain restricts movement in areas located between POEs. The IBCT utilizes light infantry tactical vehicles to conduct movement in restricted terrain. Infantry and Cavalry forces can conduct dismounted movement in areas where vehicles are not permissible. Each IBCT possesses inherent capabilities for C2, intelligence, fires, movement/ maneuver, protection, and sustainment functions. The IBCT includes the follow battalion sized formations that may increase endurance and operational reach at the SWB:

- a. Brigade Engineer Battalion- Provides the ability to build roads and base camps to house military units. Each BEB unit contains two Combat Engineer Companies, One Signal Network Support Company, and one Military Intelligence Company.
- b. Cavalry Squadron- Consists of four troop elements capable of dismounted reconnaissance and surveillance. Each Cavalry Squadron contains one Headquarters Troop, two mounted Cavalry Troops and one Dismounted

Cavalry Troop.

- c. Field Artillery Battalion- Consists of three Battery formations with the ability to conduct reconnaissance and patrol operations. This unit may also support personnel and equipment movement.
- d. Infantry Battalions- Possess infantry rifle platoons, medical, scout, mortar, and signal support platoons. Infantry units are capable of long-distance personnel movements through dense and rough terrain. Each Battalion contains three Rifle Companies and one Weapons Company.
- e. Brigade Support Battalion- Provides logistical support to Forward Support Companies and enables prolonged IBCT operations in austere environments.²⁴⁹ Each BSB contains one Distribution Company, one Field Maintenance Company, and one Medical Company. The Medical Company includes one Treatment Platoon and one Medical Evaluation Platoon. The BSB's strength consists of four Forward Support Companies attached with the BCT battalions

The IBCT force provides flexible options on how to deploy its forces. Each Battalion maintains organic C2 and communication platforms to enable mission command over extended distances. Each Battalion's command and control extends to its subordinate companies capable of independent security operations. The IBCT provides intelligence capabilities throughout its formations. Several units maintain organic unmanned aerial reconnaissance platforms. More importantly, units maintain tactical

²⁴⁹ Headquarters, Department of the Army, Field Manual 3-96, *Brigade Combat Team* (Washington, DC: Government Publishing Office, October 2015), 1-2.

control of their UAVs systems. This control provides real time intelligence gathering capabilities that may support the IBCT and USBP operations. Ultimately the IBCT can occupy and control key terrain at the border. This enduring capability provides critical support for USBP interdiction operations at the SWB.

Military Units Supporting POE

Title 32 Military Battalions provide the best capabilities in support of OFO operations at the POE. Military Police conduct area security, reconnaissance, surveillance, apply antiterrorism measures, implement physical security procedures, and provide experienced military working dog support. The Military Police's capabilities are similar to OFO missions conducted at the ports. Many Title 32 Military Police units contain experienced personnel who work civilian law enforcement jobs. Applying experienced personnel trained in law enforcement skills provides the best support for the OFO. The Title 32 National Guard units may conduct direct law enforcement actions when deployed under the Governor of the State IAW State Law. Since most POE possess modern facilities and infrastructure, Title 32 units do not require extensive sustainment support. Additionally, the Title 32 Military Police Battalion may disperse its organic Companies to multiple POE within its state jurisdiction.

Secondary Question #2 What legal issues restrict U.S. military operations at the Southwest Border?

The use of military forces on the SWB poses its own unique operational problems. Title 18 U.S.C Section 1385, more commonly referred to the Posse Comitatus Act, prevents military forces from conducting law enforcement activities. National Guard Title 32 forces, when deployed by their respective State Governor, can directly support

civilian law enforcement IAW State Law. Even though the National Guard provides a critical capability, funding frequently limits their use. Without Title 10 funding, deployment of State National Guard units become cost prohibitive. Unfortunately, when National Guard units deploy under Title 10, they also fall under the same U.S. Code. Title 18 U.S.C Section 1385 restrictions. Partisan politics may impact deployment of National Guard forces at the border. Controversial policies like immigration reform may place border states in conflict with federal directives. Under Title 32, State Governors may elect not to support regional enforcement operations. Border state cooperation is critical to a whole SWB security plan. States that fail to support border enforcement may create security vulnerabilities that DTOs will exploit.

Significance

The SWB is critical to national security. The U.S. must secure the border against DTOs, illegal immigration and potential terrorist groups. Securing 2,000 miles of border is a daunting task. The CBP must cover the entire border. If CBP secures one area, but leaves another area unmonitored, the DTOs cross where there is no enforcement. DTOs successfully use illegal migrants to distract USBP resources. Once USBP responds to illegal entries, the USBP is out of position to cover areas where DTOs cross.

This scenario plays out every day at the border. CBP operations at POE face the same DTO tactics. The volume of vehicle traffic entering and exiting the POE is staggering. Thousands of vehicles cross through the ports. Finding one vehicle embedded among several hundred is very challenging. Canine teams help, but how many drug shipments pass through?

Commercial trade adds to the complexity at the POE. Thousands of tractor trailer vehicles cross POEs every day. These trucks carry billions of dollars in legitimate commerce. Large drug seizures found within commercial trucks prove the DTOs are exploiting commercial shipment vulnerabilities. Programs like the Trade Partnership Against Terrorism (C-TPAT) focus on expediting border crossing for trusted commercial transport companies. Expedited entry may create additional vulnerabilities that DTOs that can exploit. Like the remote border areas, the POE require additional resources. POE staff shortages result in diminished detection capabilities. OFO requires additional resources to maintain security at the POE. The U.S. military can provide those critical resources.

If border security is truly a national strategy then further employment of U.S. military resources may become a reality. The IBCT and National Guard MP units provide the best capabilities for the task. During the period of this study, the U.S. deployed military forces along POEs. Active duty military and National Guard Title 32 forces supported the CBP security mission. Title 10 forces erected barriers around California POE. Title 10 forces also filled nonsupport positions increasing CBP field agent operations. Even though additional assets arrived, the U.S. military deployment focused on engineer and obstacle building activities.

This study shows the importance of understanding the separate mission sets at the border. POE require additional assistance through military police increasing detection capabilities. A separate mission along remote border regions require the capabilities of an IBCT to secure terrain. Both interconnected missions require a coordinated effort. If the POE successfully interdict drug shipments, the DTO will move through uncontested border plazas. Likewise, if the border interdicts DTO passage, shipments shift to the POE. The DTO repeatedly exploit border vulnerabilities. Increased security must incorporate both the POE

and outside border areas. The U.S. Military provides the ways and means to achieve Strategic and Operational ends. The U.S. Military must defend the homeland.

Recommendations for Further Study

The study revealed several commercial companies receive expedited entry into the POE. The expedited entry posed several security questions. Thousands of commercial semi-tractor trailers cross the POE. Many of these trucks cross the POE without formal inspection. Trade Partnership Against Terrorism (C-TPAT) programs allow expedited entry into the U.S..²⁵⁰ At this time, over 11,240 trade companies are active members of CTPAT. The CBP provides the CTPAT status for the business that attends security measures training program.²⁵¹ Even though the CTPAT decreases delays to commercial trade entering the U.S., is this process providing a means for DTOs moving concealed shipments across the border? CTPAT security vulnerabilities require additional research.

The research identified another area requiring additional research. The Posse Comitatus Act is outdated. PCA provides too many restrictions on Title 10 forces. With the increasing security risks at the border, CBP needs assistance. New legislation should update the PCA to allow Title 10 enforcement at the border. Congress could also provide new funding provisions for State National Guard deployments under Title 32. Without funding, most border states cannot afford to deploy their Title 32 forces. Further research

²⁵⁰ Marisela Molina, “The US-Mexico Commercial Border Crossing Process,” *TECMA*, last modified September 4, 2014, accessed February 17, 2019, <https://www.tecma.com/us-mexico-commercial-border-crossing-process/>.

²⁵¹ Customs and Border Patrol, “CTPAT: Customs Trade Partnership Against Terrorism,” Department of Homeland Security, last modified September 21, 2018, accessed February 17, 2019, <https://www.cbp.gov/border-security/ports-entry/cargo-security/ctpat>.

should identify how Congressional action can change PCA restrictions and authorize Title 10 law enforcement activities at the SWB.

Summary and Conclusion

The crisis at the border will continue to impact our national security. DTOs exploit the porous border and its saturated Ports of Entry. The DHS is responsible to secure borders but lacks resources to meet this end state. DTOs move through border areas with limited CBP enforcement. Once DTOs cross the border, they quickly transport drug shipments to significant population centers within the U.S. DTOs supply U.S. criminal street gangs who sell drugs at retail prices. DTOs use gangs as an insular layer while they collect billions of dollars from drug proceeds. DTOs make billions while constant drug supplies deteriorate U.S. communities. The cost of drug addiction includes broken homes, incarceration, and rising overdose deaths.

This study analyzed the border problem through Operational Design Methodology. The analysis identified the current operational environment and relevant actors. The desired end state defined what elements require change. The study identified the smuggling network and CBP as centers of gravity. Both centers of gravity contain critical requirements, capabilities, and vulnerabilities. This study answered the primary and secondary research questions by identifying two lines of effort affecting the unique border areas. One line of effort focused on supporting the USBP with Title 10 resources. The second line of effort utilized Title 32 National Guard forces in support of OFO operations at POE. Based on SWB's status, CBP requires assistance securing the entire border. The U.S. military provides the best solution. The border crisis demands action. The U.S. military must defend its homeland.

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