



Unreleased DHS Report Says Only 54 Percent of Illegal Border Crossers Are Caught

A 98-page report completed by the Department of Homeland Security in May found that only 54 percent of people who entered our nation illegally between border crossings got caught during the 2015 fiscal year. The report was prepared for DHS by the Institute for Defense Analyses, a federally funded research organization.



Though DHS has not released the findings of the report, the Associated Press obtained a copy from a government official involved in border issues. AP said that the official acted on the condition of anonymity because the department has not made the report public. The story was posted on the website of KCRA-TV in Sacramento, California.

A DHS spokeswoman, Marsha Catron, downplayed the significance of the report, saying that it was “one building block provided by a research organization” toward developing more reliable measures of border security and that its methodology needed refinement. “DHS does not believe it is in the public interest to release, and it would be irresponsible to make policy or other judgments on the basis of analysis that is incomplete and remains a work in progress,” Catron said.

Though Catron would not be expected to admit it, considering the relative positions on illegal immigration of the two presidential candidates, it obviously would not be in the interest of the Hillary Clinton campaign to release findings that illegal border crossings are out of control before next month’s election.

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Regarding the specifics of the report, it revealed that 170,000 illegal border crossers eluded capture during the 2015 fiscal year, 210,000 during the 2014 fiscal year, and 1.7 million in FY 2005. Furthermore, the number of people who eluded capture is even larger than these figures indicate, when those who escaped detection at border crossings or who entered by sea are included, because those areas are the responsibility of DHS agencies outside the Border Patrol. Adding those, 200,000 people avoided apprehension last year, 260,000 in 2014, and 1.9 million in 2005.

In its report, AP noted a difference in methodology between how Homeland Security measures its effectiveness in securing the border in its reports released to the public and how the news agency interpreted the data it obtained on its own.

The reports that Homeland Security have released to the public count the number of Border Patrol arrests, which tells how many people were apprehended but not how many evaded capture.

Over the last two years, notes AP, DHS has released what it calls an “interdiction effectiveness rate”



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that measures the percentage of people who were caught among all who attempted to enter between crossings on the Mexican border. But this figure includes those who set foot in the United States and turned around as well as asylum-seekers. By this method, DHS claimed an 81 percent success rate in the fiscal year that ended September 30, 2015.

The report obtained by the AP uses a different methodology, however. It does not credit the DHS with apprehending those border crossers who turn around or turn themselves in to agents to seek asylum. The latter is a common occurrence among Central American women and children who have entered the country in large numbers over the last five years, because they have been told that if they do so, the United States will grant them asylum.

The report obtained by AP noted that there were 140,000 such asylum seekers who crossed the Mexican border last year and 170,000 in 2014, compared to about 20,000 a year a decade ago. AP noted that Homeland Security's practice of counting those as "captures" largely accounts for DHS's claim that its success rate was much higher than the actual numbers indicate.

Brandon Judd, president of the National Border Patrol Council (NBPC), said even the new report inflates the DHS's success rate, because it counts as successful apprehensions thousands of people who are briefly detained but then released because of Obama administration policies. "We've refuted those numbers forever," Judd said. "Being an agent myself, I know those numbers just aren't true.... It's just disappointing that they've been lying to the American people for so long."

Judd has been an outspoken critic of the Obama administration's immigration and border enforcement policies for some time. As we noted in [another article posted last February](#), Judd testified before the House Judiciary Committee's Subcommittee on Immigration and Border Security on February 4 that DHS and the U.S. Attorney's office have come up with a new policy that undermines immigration law enforcement. The policy, said Judd, makes it mandatory for Border Patrol agents to release — without a Notice to Appear (NTA) before an immigration judge — any person they arrest for being in the country illegally.

Furthermore, noted Judd, this policy is in effect as long as the aliens do not have a previous felony arrest conviction and as long as they *claim* to have been continuously in the United States since January 2014.

"Immigration laws today appear to be mere suggestions" and "there are little or no consequences for breaking the laws and that fact is well known in other countries. If government agencies like DHS or CBP are allowed to bypass Congress by legislating through policy, we might as well abolish our immigration laws altogether," complained Judd.

We noted in a [more recent article in September](#) that Border Patrol Agent Hector Garza, acting in his role as president of NBPC Local 2455, appeared on Fox News Channel recently and pointed out: "Eight out of ten people that are caught entering our country illegally are not deported and are allowed to stay in the United States."

Garza's appearance on Fox News was heavily quoted in an article posted by Breitbart News on September 5. The NBPC official stated further: "Unfortunately for Border Patrol agents, we are trying to do our jobs as best we can with the very limited resources that we have."

Back in March, the NBPC issued a press release announcing that the union was endorsing Donald Trump for president, noting that it was its first-ever endorsement of a candidate in a presidential primary. Judd explained this decision afterwards: "Our union endorsed Donald Trump because he is the



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only candidate, Democratic or Republican, who is speaking to what is actually going on at the border.”

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