

FACT SHEET

11/7/00

Over 1,700 New Agents Hired

Border Patrol FY 2000 Recruiting and Hiring Report

Innovative approaches the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) took to recruit and hire Border Patrol Agents in FY 2000 have paid off. The agency hired more than 1,700 new agents. The new agents were selected from a record number of applicants, 91,366 or 73 percent more than in FY 1999.

New approaches to recruiting and hiring included training Border Patrol agents as recruiters, intensifying advertising, offering a \$2,000 signing bonus for new agents and establishing a Headquarters task force to oversee the entire process. Border Patrol recruiting and hiring was so successful that it will serve as the model for other INS officer recruiting.

Border Patrol Recruiters

The record increase in Border Patrol applicants is due, in part, to the work of the agent-recruiters who cultivated local contacts to organize and attend more than 1,400 recruiting events across the country, ranging from attending campus job fairs to setting up booths at local malls. The recruiters also initiated a number of innovative efforts, including putting up billboard advertisements and targeting the Midwest, an area INS had not focused on in previous years. The first 200 agent-recruiters were trained at the end of FY 1999, while another 100 were added to the recruiting force last year.

The recruiters' personal contact with potential applicants proved to be the best tool in attracting new agents to the Border Patrol. By keeping in touch with applicants to remind them of the different application requirements, the recruiters increased the number of applicants who stay with the process. For example, the number of applicants that show up for the Border Patrol exam increased by 40 percent over FY 1999.

Task Force

Designating and training agents as recruiters was one of many innovations initiated by a Headquarters-led task force that was organized in FY 1999 to oversee the recruiting and hiring process. After assessing the existing recruiting situation, the task force provided direction to reform the process. Its coordination of efforts at Headquarters with those in the field produced a highly productive partnership between the Border Patrol and the INS Office of Human Resources and Development.

The task force also strengthened INS' working relationship with the Office of Personnel Management (OPM), spurring a number of new ideas that dramatically reduced the application processing time. This included the use of compressed testing, a new concept that allowed applicants to take the test and receive their results immediately upon completion of the exam. Now, more than 50 percent of Border Patrol applicants come through compressed testing, which is offered at 10 sites—San Diego, El Paso, Harlingen, Tucson, San Antonio, Albany, Puerto Rico, Dallas, Orlando and Los Angeles.

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Other measures implemented under the direction of this task force include:

- A \$2,000 recruitment bonus for new Border Patrol Agents;
- Outreach to press and congressional offices to gain support for recruitment efforts;
- A 1-800 toll free number for applicants; and,
- Development and dissemination of promotional materials, including a popular, action-oriented Border Patrol recruitment poster.

Advertising Initiatives

Creative approaches to advertising also helped attract new agents. In FY 2000, INS began advertising in movie theaters and on the Internet. INS' Western Regional Office created the first TV ad, which debuted in Tucson, Ariz.

In FY 2000, INS focused on recruiting and advertising on-line—80 percent of Border Patrol applicants applied through the Internet. By advertising on popular Web sites like Monster.com, INS was able to reach a broader audience. In addition, INS also actively searched career Web sites, downloading résumés and contacting those interested in law enforcement career opportunities.

In total, INS placed 250 different advertisements and coordinated advertisement campaigns with local recruitment efforts to enhance the recruiters' efforts.

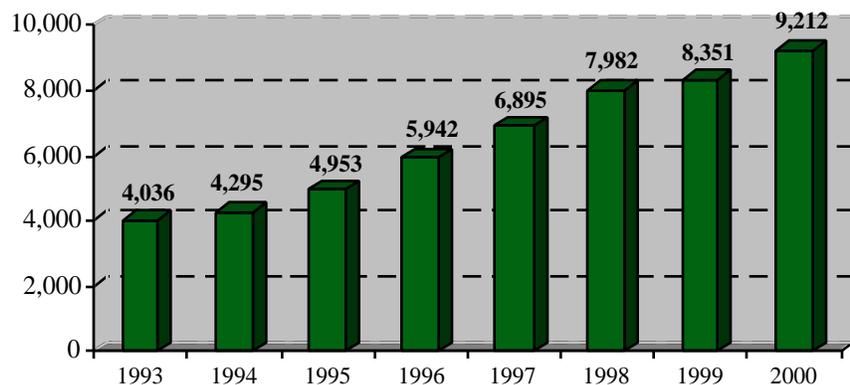
Hiring Status

From FY 1996 through FY 1998, INS met or exceeded its hiring goals. In FY 1999, however, a strong economy that afforded applicants multiple job opportunities caused INS and other law enforcement entities to fall short of their hiring goals. The military services also experienced significant difficulties in recruiting and hiring.

In FY 2000, INS needed to net 1,030 agents to make up the shortfall of 600 from FY 1999 and to hire the 430 new agents provided by Congress in FY 2000. INS was successful in hiring 1,708 new agents. After attrition (due to retirements, resignations and career changes), the agency netted a total of 861 new agents. This left INS with a shortfall of only 165 agents. With the continuing rise in Border Patrol applicants, INS will be able to hire the remaining agents in FY 2001.

To qualify for the Border Patrol, applicants must:

Border Patrol Agents On-Board
(including aircraft pilots)



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- Hold a valid driver's license;
- Be under 37 years old;
- Have a year of experience—demonstrating decisiveness under stress, analytical ability and good interpersonal skills—or a bachelor's degree; and
- Pass a written test and an oral interview.

An applicant who qualifies must then pass a background investigation, a drug test and a medical exam and complete 19 weeks of rigorous training (including Spanish language classes) at the INS Border Patrol Academy.

For More Information:

Call 1-800-238-1945 or log on to the Border Patrol Website at www.usborderpatrol.gov.

Note: Due to the success of recruitment efforts and the number of current applicants in the hiring pipeline, INS is not accepting applications in November and December for Border Patrol positions.

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