

JOINT TESTIMONY OF

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“Fiscal Year 2014 Budget Request”

BEFORE

**HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY**

**APRIL 17, 2013
WASHINGTON, DC**

Introduction

Chairman Carter, Ranking Member Price, Members of the Subcommittee, it is an honor to appear before you today to discuss the work that U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) does in securing America's borders. CBP, with more than 60,000 employees, is the largest, uniformed, federal law enforcement agency in the country. We are America's frontline border security agency, the guardians of our borders, responsible for protecting the United States and the American people from the entry of dangerous goods and people. CBP's priority mission is keeping terrorists and their weapons out of the United States. CBP is also responsible for securing the border and facilitating lawful international trade and travel while enforcing hundreds of U.S. laws and regulations. This includes ensuring that all persons and cargo enter the United States legally and safely through official ports of entry (POEs), preventing the illegal entry of persons and contraband into the United States at and between POEs, promoting the safe and efficient flow of commerce into the United States, and enforcing trade and tariff laws and regulations.

CBP protects approximately 7,000 miles of land borders and 95,000 miles of coastal shoreline. Operating at 329 POEs across the United States, CBP welcomes almost one million travelers by land, sea, and air, facilitating the flow of goods essential to our economy. In FY 2012, CBP facilitated more than \$2.3 trillion in trade and welcomed a record 98 million air travelers, a 12-percent increase since FY 2009. CBP also collected \$39.4 billion in revenue, a six-percent increase over the previous year – illustrating the critical role of CBP not only with border security, but with economic security and continued growth. Trade and travel are absolutely vital to our economy, and according to the U.S. Travel Association, one new American job is created for every 33 travelers arriving from overseas.

We would like to acknowledge and thank this committee for the consistent support and commitment you have shown to the mission and people of CBP. As we mark the 10th anniversary of the creation of DHS and transition into the second half of Fiscal Year (FY) 2013, we will outline the current status of CBP resources and demonstrate how the

resources provided by Congress have been utilized more efficiently and effectively to improve lawful trade and travel and the security of our borders.

With the introduction of the Planning, Programming, Budgeting, and Accountability process, CBP can make more informed, cross-cutting operational and resource-based decisions. We have transitioned from a budget-centric process to a planning and programming process, driven by goals and objectives, which have increased transparency through more detailed, focused budget requests.

Sequestration Impact

Before we delve into the FY 2014 Budget request, we would like to briefly speak to the impacts of sequestration. Sequestration has been disruptive to CBP, our mission, and our Nation's security and economy. Although the FY 2013 Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act provides some additional funding for CBP and enables it to mitigate to some degree the impacts to its workforce, sequestration still requires nearly \$600 million in cuts across CBP, affecting operations in the short- and long-term. While CBP remains committed to doing everything it can to minimize risks and mitigate the impact of sequestration, we have already experienced significant impacts to cross-border activities.

Reduced CBP officer (CBPO) overtime availability at our Nation's ports has resulted in increased wait times for travelers across the country. International travelers have experienced extended wait times with some locations reporting wait times averaging between two and four hours. These automatic cuts have occurred against a backdrop of significant growth in travel and trade in all POE environments. Air travel at the major gateway airports is up by four percent, on top of a three-year increase of over 12 percent. Land border travel is up 3.6 percent through the fiscal year to date. Additionally, cargo volumes have increased in all environments over the past three years.

Delays affect the air travel environment, causing missed passenger connections, for both domestic and international flights. Reduced CBPO overtime availability at our Nation's

ports slows the movement of goods across the border and impedes CBP's capacity to facilitate and expedite cargo, adding costs to the supply chain and diminishing our global competitiveness.

Between the POEs, sequestration has led to significant reductions in areas like CBP's detainee transportation support contract, which increases non-law enforcement requirements for frontline Border Patrol agents. CBP has also cut operating expenses, including vehicle usage, affecting Border Patrol's ability to respond to requests from other law enforcement entities for assistance.

Based on CBP's funding levels as of March 1, the sequester also necessitated CBP to take steps to achieve a reduction of 21,000 flight hours for CBP's fleet of 269 aircraft from a level of 69,000 hours to 48,000 hours, impacting CBP's ability to provide critical aerial surveillance and operational assistance to law enforcement personnel on the ground.

Based on funding provided in the FY 2013 Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act, CBP will work to restore flight hours to pre-sequestration levels.

Current State of CBP and FY 2014 Highlights

Our FY 2014 Budget request supports CBP's continued commitment to keeping terrorists and their weapons out of the United States, securing the border, and facilitating lawful international trade and travel. Our FY 2014 operational and budget priorities are:

- Strengthening and optimizing resources at our Nation's ports of entry to secure and facilitate increasing volumes of travel and trade.

- Strengthening critical frontline capabilities and increasing awareness through investments in technology and enhancements to targeting systems.

These priorities support the continued efforts of CBP's 21,370 Border Patrol agents (BPAs) and record 25,252 CBPOs at POEs who work 24/7 with state, local, and federal

law enforcement in deterring illicit trafficking in people, drugs, illegal weapons, and money, and promoting economic security by facilitating legitimate travel and trade.

Strengthening and Optimizing Resources at our Nation's Ports of Entry

Over the past decade, CBP has strengthened its law enforcement capabilities at the POEs. In support of our evolving, complex mission, the number of CBPOs ensuring the secure flow of people and goods into the Nation has increased from 17,279 customs and immigration inspectors in 2003, to more than 21,000 CBPOs and 2,300 agriculture specialists today. The FY 2014 Budget includes several proposals to invest in the men and women on the frontlines of our 329 POEs along the border and at airports and seaports across the country. Further, the Budget will enable CBP to continue investing in technology that increases the efficiency of processing travelers at air and land ports of entry.

Increase in CBP Officer Staffing

As travel volumes continue to increase, CBP faces significant staffing challenges at our busiest ports. CBP's FY 2014 Budget recognizes the need to maintain the highest levels of security and facilitation of trade and travel at our POEs and includes a request for 3,477 new CBPOs. Of this amount, 1,600 are requested through appropriated funding of \$210 million. Our request also supports legislative changes to user fee collections that would fund approximately 1,877 additional officers. The increase in CBPOs will enhance CBP's ability to facilitate processing of legitimate travelers and cargo, reduce wait times, and increase seizures of illegal items (guns, drugs, currency, and counterfeit goods). These new officers will also help the economy and lead to new jobs. A recent study released by the National Center for Risk and Economic Analysis of Terrorism Events (CREATE) at the University of Southern California found that an increase or decrease in staffing at ports has an impact on wait times and, therefore, on the U.S. economy. The impacts begin with changes in tourist and business travel expenditures and with changes in freight costs. These changes, in turn, translate into ripple, or multiplier,

effects in port regions and the overall U.S. economy. According to their results, the 3,477 new CBPOs supported in the Budget may have an estimated impact as high as:

- 115,000 annual jobs added;
- \$7 Billion increase in Gross Domestic product;
- 80,000 more enforcement actions (including \$140M drug seizure value increase, \$9.5M currency seizure value increase, and \$27M trade penalty assessment increase);
- \$8.5 million IPR seizures increase; and
- \$145 million liquidated damage assessment increase.

Increase in User Fees

User fees that support CBP travel operations have not been adjusted, in many cases, for more than a decade. The legislative changes to user fee collections, as proposed in the Budget, will further enable CBP to efficiently and effectively process the more than 350 million travelers annually — an industry that provides nearly \$150 billion in economic stimulus. CBP has proposed a \$2.00 increase to both the Immigration User Fee (IUF) and the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1985 (COBRA) air and sea passenger user fees, as well as proportional increases in other IUF and COBRA fee categories. The IUF increase is projected to provide approximately \$166 million in additional funding, supporting up to 974 additional CBPOs. The COBRA user fee increase is projected to provide approximately \$194 million in additional funding, supporting up to 903 additional CBPOs, along with officer overtime and enhancements to IT systems that support inspection activities. Because these fees are set by statute, the gap between fee collections and the operations they support is growing, and the number of workforce-hours fees-support decrease each year. In future budget requests, CBP will tie these fees to the Consumer Price Index so they keep pace with the rising costs of processing international trade and travel. In addition, CBP and the U.S. Department of Agriculture are evaluating financial models to achieve full cost recovery for agricultural inspectional services provided by CBP.

Reimbursable Agreements and Public-Private Partnerships

To further facilitate rising volumes of travel, and to meet the needs of our partners and stakeholders in the travel and trade industries, the FY 2014 Budget request also includes a legislative proposal for reimbursable agreements authority. This proposal will provide CBP the authority to engage in public-private partnerships to fund enhanced CBP services. The public-private partnerships are intended to fund overtime and enable CBP to expand inspection services as requested by public and private stakeholders. All of these legislative proposals will lead to a reduction in wait-times for travelers and cargo and an increase in seizures of illegal and counterfeit goods, resulting in a positive impact on the Nation's economy.

Technology Enhancements for Facilitating Travel

CBP leverages advanced technology to enhance security operations and facilitate legitimate international travel. The FY 2014 Budget includes \$19 million for investing in technology to improve processing at air and land ports of entry. Of this amount, \$8 million supports the acquisition of 60 kiosks at airports and at 8 high volume pedestrian crossings. These 8 high volume sites process approximately 73 percent of the total 40 million annual pedestrian crossings. This investment will allow CBP to better facilitate legitimate travelers and focus on higher-risk passengers and cargo. The remaining \$10.8 million will fund the acquisition of additional hand-held mobile devices to further speed the processing of travelers and cargo.

Sustaining Critical Frontline Capabilities

The border is more secure than ever before with historic levels of personnel, technology, and infrastructure. The Border Patrol is staffed at a higher level than at any time in its 88-year history: BPAs have doubled, from nearly 10,000 in 2004 to more than 21,000 agents today. Along the Southwest border, DHS has increased the number of law enforcement officers on the ground from approximately 9,100 BPAs in 2001 to over 18,500 today. At our Northern border, the force of 500 agents that we sustained 10 years ago has grown to more than 2,200. Law enforcement capabilities at the POEs have also been reinforced, and, as discussed above, to support our evolving, complex mission, the

FY 2014 request provides for more than 3,400 additional CBPOs to expedite travel and trade and strengthen security at our nation's ports of entry.

In addition to building our workforce, DHS has made unprecedented investments in border security infrastructure and technology, the primary driver of all land, maritime, and air domain awareness. In addition to the 651 miles of fence that we now have along the Southwest border, technology assets such as integrated camera towers, mobile surveillance units, and thermal imaging systems act as force multipliers increasing agent awareness, efficiency, and capability to respond to potential threats. As we continue to deploy border surveillance technology, particularly along the Southwest border, these investments allow CBP the flexibility to shift more BPAs from detection duties to interdiction and resolution of illegal activities on our borders. CBP's FY 2014 Budget supports CBP's border security mission by increasing and enhancing border security technology, tactical communications, air and marine capabilities, and targeting systems.

Border Security Technology

The FY 2014 Budget supports the continued deployment of proven, effective surveillance technology along the highest trafficked areas of the Southwest border. CBP will soon augment and upgrade our existing resources with additional deployment of integrated fixed towers (up to 50 tower sites in 6 Border Patrol Station areas of responsibility) in Arizona and upgraded Remote Video Surveillance Systems in critical focus areas along the Southwest border. In 2013, we will deploy 49 new Mobile Surveillance Capability vehicles, which will double the current number of mobile surveillance systems, greatly increasing our situational awareness along the border. Additionally, we will be incorporating other technology, to include: low-flying aircraft detection and tracking systems, maritime surveillance and data integration/data fusion capabilities, cargo supply chain security, and border surveillance tools tailored to the Southwest and Northern borders (e.g., unattended ground sensors/tripwires, camera poles, and wide area surveillance).

Tactical Communications

In addition to border surveillance and technology upgrades, CBP is pursuing vital updates to tactical communications equipment for our frontline officers and agents. The FY 2014 request includes \$40 million for development and deployment of CBP's Land Mobile Radio TACCOM systems. TACCOM systems are the primary communications lifeline for more than 44,000 agents and officers that are critical to the success of CBP missions and operations. The TACCOM program upgrades and expands legacy analog handheld radio communications to provide new digital technology with advanced encryption protection, expanded coverage and capacity, and enhanced interoperability.

Air and Marine Capabilities

CBP also employs a variety of resources in the air and maritime domains, 269 aircraft (including fixed wing, rotary, and unmanned aircraft systems), and 293 patrol and interdiction vessels. These assets provide critical aerial and maritime surveillance, interdiction, and operational assistance to our ground personnel. CBP's Office of Air and Marine (OAM) P-3 aircraft have been instrumental in detecting and intercepting illegal aircraft and vessels thousands of miles from the U.S. border. CBP's FY 2014 request includes \$74 million to enhance OAM's operations and capabilities through the procurement of Multi-Role Enforcement Aircraft, the P-3 Service Life Extension Program, Coastal Interceptor Vessels, and sensor upgrades for tactical aircraft.

In the maritime environment, OAM's marine assets are combined with state-of-the-art intelligence, long-range communications, and highly mobile tactical units to create a defense in depth strategy for conducting strategic law enforcement operations in the maritime domain. The FY 2014 Budget requests \$3.5 million for marine vessels and will allow CBP to procure up to five additional Coastal Interceptor Vessels. In FY 2012, CBP Marine Interdiction agents conducted more than 46,000 underway hours, arrested more than 760 individuals, apprehended more than 900 migrants, and seized more than 53,000 pounds of narcotics.

Additionally, in support of OAM operations, CBP is scheduled to take over ownership of the Tethered Aerostat Radar System (TARS) Program from the Department of Defense in

FY 2014. TARS has assisted CBP and its legacy agencies with interdicting suspect aircraft for more than 20 years – it is a multi-mission capability that supports the Counter-Narcotics, Air Surveillance, and U.S. Air Sovereignty missions.

Targeting Systems and Capabilities

CBP employs an intelligence-based framework to direct resources to counter dynamic and evolving threats. CBP gathers and analyzes this intelligence and data to inform operational planning and to extend our borders—ensuring that our POEs are not the last line of defense, but one of many. With advanced travel information, CBP assesses risk in air, land, and sea environments at each point in the travel continuum—long before a traveler arrives at a POE. Before an international flight departs for the United States from the foreign point of origin, commercial airlines transmit passenger and crew manifest information to CBP. CBP’s National Targeting Center (NTC) reviews traveler information to identify travelers who would be determined inadmissible upon arrival.

The FY 2014 Budget supports our targeting framework with an increase of \$70.5 million for additional system enhancements, including improvements to the Automated Targeting Systems (ATS) and the NTC. This will enable CBP to implement enhanced targeting capabilities that will stratify cargo and travelers according to their potential threat. Additionally, the Budget includes \$13 million to fund the initial cost of consolidating CBP’s targeting centers to better meet mission needs, including strategic co-location of appropriate groups to improve effectiveness.

Improvements in targeting lead to greater efficiencies (broader functionality, time savings, and improved accuracy) in the field and allow CBP to focus on higher-risk passengers and cargo. Increased system functionality in core areas throughout the land, passenger and cargo modules plays a critical role in increasing the identification and tracking down known and suspected terrorists, terrorist weapons, and transnational crime in the country of origin for passenger travel and cargo shipments with foreign partners. Building on this history of innovation in order to develop new capabilities in support of

targeting and operations will be a critical factor in taking the CBP law enforcement targeting enterprise to the next level.

CBP will continue enhancing and improving the ATS to support efforts to target and identify known and unknown threats to the homeland. The Budget supports time-sensitive technical requirements, continued technical support for maintenance of the targeting framework, advanced targeting capabilities, and ATS hardware and software upgrades.

In the cargo environment, receiving advanced shipment information allows CBP to assess the risk of cargo before it reaches a port. Since 2009, the Importer Security Filing (ISF) and other regulations have required importers to supply CBP with an electronically filed ISF 24 hours before lading for cargo shipments that will be arriving into the United States by vessel. These regulations increase CBP's ability to assess the scope and accuracy of information gathered on goods, conveyances, and entities involved in the shipment of cargo to the United States via vessel. To augment these regulations the Budget includes \$3.3 million for the Single Transaction Bond Centralization Initiative. CBP continues to make improvements to increase collections of customs revenue. Automation and centralization of these bonds will improve current revenue collection procedures, consistent with recommendations made by General Accountability Office.

Building on Past Progress

This deployment of resources over the past ten years has, by every measure, led to significant progress along the border. In FY 2012, Border Patrol apprehension activity remained at a historic low, with apprehensions in California, Arizona, and New Mexico continuing a downward trend. In FY 2012 apprehensions were 78 percent below their peak in 2000, and down 50 percent from FY 2008. At POEs in FY 2012, CBPOs arrested nearly 7,700 people wanted for serious crimes, including murder, rape, assault, and robbery. Officers prevented nearly 145,000 inadmissible aliens from entering the United States. Collectively, CBP's National Targeting Center and Immigration Advisory Program prevented 4,199 high-risk travelers from boarding flights destined for the United

States, an increase of 32 percent compared to FY 2011. From FYs 2009 to 2012, CBP seized 71 percent more currency, 39 percent more drugs, and 189 percent more weapons along the Southwest border as compared to FYs 2006 to 2008. Nationwide, CBPOs and agents seized more than 4.2 million pounds of narcotics and more than \$100 million in unreported currency through targeted enforcement operations.

In FY 2012, in the air and marine environment, P-3 crews were involved in the interdiction of more than 117,000 pounds of cocaine and nearly 13,000 pounds of marijuana. In the first quarter of 2013 P-3 crews have been involved in the interdiction of more than 33,000 pounds of cocaine. Combined air and surface operations by CBP, the U.S. Coast Guard, and the U.S. Navy along the maritime drug lanes from South America to southern Mexico and the coastal approaches to the United States have been instrumental in preventing bulk drugs from ultimately reaching the United States. Additionally, OAM's tactical air assets flew over 81,000 hours in support of border security operations, as well as investigative support missions, which resulted in more than 1,600 arrests, over 64,000 migrant apprehensions, and the seizure of more than 900,000 pounds of illegal narcotics.

Path Forward

Today, our borders are more secure, and our border communities are among the safest communities in our country. Despite these improvements, however, our immigration system remains broken and outdated. The Department stands ready to implement common-sense immigration reform that would continue investments in border security, crack down on companies that hire undocumented workers, improve the legal immigration system for employment-sponsored and family-sponsored immigrants, and establish a responsible pathway to earned citizenship. Comprehensive immigration reform will help us continue to build on this progress and strengthen border security by providing additional tools and enabling DHS to further focus existing resources on preventing the entry of criminals, human smugglers, and traffickers, and on national security threats.

Conclusion

We want to thank the Subcommittee for the strong support of CBP. Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today, and we look forward to your questions.

Kevin K. McAleenan

Acting Deputy Commissioner, U.S. Customs and Border Protection



Kevin K. McAleenan was named acting deputy commissioner, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, effective March 30, 2013. As such, McAleenan becomes the chief operating official of the 60,000-employee border agency.

Previously, McAleenan served as the acting assistant commissioner of the CBP Office of Field Operations, leading the agency's port security and facilitation operations. He was named to the position December 31, 2011. He previously served as deputy assistant commissioner, Office of Field Operations between July 2010 and December 2011. OFO is the largest component in CBP and is responsible for securing the U.S. border at ports of entry while expediting lawful trade and travel. With OFO, McAleenan was responsible for overseeing CBP's antiterrorism, immigration, anti-smuggling, trade compliance, and agriculture protection operations at 20 major field offices, 331 ports of entry, and 70 international locations in more than 40 countries. He administered a staff of more than 28,000 employees, and an operating budget of more than \$3.5 billion.

As deputy assistant commissioner, McAleenan was particularly involved in the development of CBP's Advanced Air Cargo Screening program, the development of CBP's new trade agenda, and efforts to optimize management of resources through business process transformation and modeling.

Prior to assuming these positions with CBP Field Operations, McAleenan served in several leadership capacities at CBP and the former U.S. Customs Service. In the aftermath of September 11th, McAleenan played an integral role in the development and implementation of CBP's antiterrorism strategy. In August 2003, McAleenan was named Director, Office of Anti-Terrorism, where he was responsible for ensuring that CBP maximized its antiterrorism efforts with regard to CBP's border security mission, and within the federal law enforcement community, national intelligence community, and homeland security structure. He coordinated the establishment of CBP-wide antiterrorism policy directives, including procedures for responding to encounters with potential terrorists seeking to enter the U.S., and protocols for resolving radiation detection alarms, as well as the development of CBP's incident management and operations coordination capabilities.

From 2006 to 2008, McAleenan served as the area port director, Los Angeles International Airport, where he managed more than 1,000 employees and directed CBP's border security operations at LAX and 17 other airport facilities. Combined the facilities screened 9 million passengers and more than 1.5 million cargo shipments annually.

McAleenan received a Service to America Medal, Call to Service Award, in 2005 and was selected as a member of the Senior Executive Service in 2006.

Prior to his government service, McAleenan practiced law in California. He received his Juris Doctor degree from the University of Chicago Law School after earning a Bachelor of Arts Degree, cum laude, from Amherst College.

Office of Border Patrol Organizational Information

Chief's Biography and About the Office of Border Patrol

Michael J. Fisher Chief



Michael J. Fisher is the Chief of the U.S. Border Patrol and a member of the Senior Executive Service. He is responsible for planning, organizing, coordinating, and directing enforcement efforts designed to secure our Nation's borders.

Chief Fisher entered on duty with the U.S. Border Patrol in June 1987 as a member of Class 208. His first duty assignment as a Border Patrol agent was at the Douglas Station in the Tucson Sector. He successfully completed the selection process for the Border Patrol Tactical Unit (BORTAC) in 1990 and was later selected as a Field Operations Supervisor for BORTAC in El Paso, Texas. Over a four-year period, he planned and executed operations throughout the United States and nine foreign countries. Chief Fisher later served as the Deputy Chief Patrol Agent of the Detroit Sector and as an Assistant Chief Patrol Agent in the Tucson Sector.

During the transition to the Department of Homeland Security in March 2003, Chief Fisher was appointed Deputy Director for the U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) Office of Anti-Terrorism in Washington, DC, where he staffed and directed the office during periods of increased threats and served as the CBP liaison to the inter-agency intelligence community for anti-terrorist planning and operational coordination. Chief Fisher later served at Border Patrol Headquarters as an Associate Chief and in 2004 was promoted to Senior Associate Chief. He returned to the field in February 2006 as the Deputy Chief Patrol Agent of San Diego Sector. He was promoted to Chief Patrol Agent of San Diego Sector in June 2007. He was named Acting Chief of the Border Patrol on January 3, 2010, and assumed his current position on May 9, 2010.

Chief Fisher earned a bachelor's degree in criminal justice and a master's degree in business administration. He is a graduate of the Senior Executive Fellows Program at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University. He also completed the CAPSTONE program at the National Defense University in 2009.

About

The United States Border Patrol, headed by the Chief, U.S. Border Patrol, is the primary federal law enforcement organization responsible for preventing the entry of terrorists and their weapons from entering the United States between official Customs and Border Protection ports of entry. The Border Patrol is also responsible for preventing the illicit trafficking of people and contraband between the official ports of entry.

The Border Patrol was officially established on May 28, 1924 by an act of Congress passed in response to increasing illegal immigration. As mandated by this Act, the small border guard in what was then the Bureau of Immigration was reorganized into the Border Patrol. The initial force of 450 officers was given the responsibility of combating illegal entries and the growing business of alien smuggling. Today, the Border Patrol has a work force of more than 20,000 agents and 2,000 mission support personnel.

The Border Patrol is specifically responsible for patrolling the 6,000 miles of Mexican and Canadian international land borders and 2,000 miles of coastal waters surrounding the Florida Peninsula and the island of Puerto Rico. Agents work around the clock on assignments, in all types of terrain and weather conditions. Agents also work in many isolated communities throughout the United States.

Office of Air and Marine Organizational Information

Assistant Commissioner's Biography and About the Office of Air and Marine

Randolph D. Alles Assistant Commissioner



Randolph D. "Tex" Alles is the Assistant Commissioner for U.S. Customs and Border Protection, Office of Air and Marine. The Office of Air and Marine is the world's largest aviation and maritime law enforcement organization with 1,200 Federal agents, operating from 84 air and marine locations utilizing 276 aircraft and 289 maritime vessels. The mission of the Office of Air and Marine is to protect the American people and Nation's critical infrastructure through the coordinated use of integrated air and marine forces to detect, interdict, and prevent acts of terrorism and the unlawful movement of people, illegal drugs, and other contraband toward or across the borders of the United States. The Office of Air and Marine is the most experienced operator of Unmanned Aircraft Systems in the Homeland Security mission set on the world stage.

Appointed as the Assistant Commissioner in January 2013, Mr. Alles joined the Office of Air and Marine as the Deputy Assistant Commissioner in March 2012. Before joining the Office of Air and Marine, Mr. Alles served in the U.S. Marine Corps for 35 years, retiring in 2011 as a Major General. Throughout his military service, he gained extensive experience in air training, standardization, operations, quality assurance, logistics, and aviation maintenance.

Following his commissioning in 1976, he attended flight school and was designated a Naval Aviator at Naval Air Station, Kingsville, Texas, in September 1978. Mr. Alles flew the F-4, F-5, F-16, F/A-18, and A-4 aircraft, flying in combat and serving as an instructor at the U.S. Navy Fighter Weapons School. Mr. Alles has attained more than 5,000 flight hours in multiple aircraft types including over 300 combat hours.

Mr. Alles has served in numerous leadership positions in both the Marine Corps and joint commands. These positions include Commanding Officer, Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 312; Chief of the Strategy and Policy Division (J-53), U.S. Pacific Command; Commanding Officer, Marine Aircraft Group 11 during Operation Iraqi Freedom; Head of the USMC Aviation Weapons Systems Requirements Branch and Deputy Director for Operations at the National Military Command Center. He concurrently served as Commanding General, Marine Corps Warfighting Laboratory and Vice Chief of Naval Research from 2005 to 2007. During 2008 he was assigned as Commanding General, Third Marine Aircraft Wing (Forward) participating in Operation Iraqi Freedom while serving simultaneously as Commanding General, Al Asad Air Base in Al Anbar Province, Iraq. His final assignment was as the Director for Strategic Planning and Policy (J-5) at the U.S. Pacific Command from 2009 until his retirement in 2011.

Mr. Alles received his bachelor's degree from Texas A&M University in 1976 and his Master of Arts in National Security and Strategic Studies from the Naval War College in 1999. His squadron (VMFA-312) was awarded the 1997 Robert M. Hanson Award for Marine Corps Fighter Attack Squadron of the Year. His military honors include the Distinguished Service Medal, the Defense Superior Service Medal with Oak Leaf cluster, the Legion of Merit with Combat V and Gold Star, the Meritorious Service Medal with Gold Star, the Air Medal with strike/flight numeral 3, and the Navy Commendation Medal with Gold Star.

About

The mission of U.S. Customs and Border Protection, Office of Air and Marine is to protect the American people and Nation's critical infrastructure through the coordinated use air of integrated air and marine forces to detect, interdict and prevent acts of terrorism and the unlawful movement of people, illegal drugs and other contraband toward or across the borders of the United States.