

Border Patrol History

- 1904: U.S. Commissioner General of Immigration assigns a mounted guard of about 75 men to patrol the southern border, with headquarters at El Paso. Commissioner General concerned with Chinese immigrants prohibited from entering the United States under the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 and with Europeans unable to pass inspection at Ellis Island.
- 1914: A separate unit of border guards are organized, supplemented with boat and car patrols. Immigrants from China are still a main concern.
- 1914-18: World War One erupts in Europe. Travel restrictions apply and the assignment of U.S. military troops along the border during the course of the war (U.S. enters war in 1917). Wartime greatly reduces illegal immigration, and other associated criminal activity.
- 1917: Immigration Act of 1917 imposes per-head tax of \$8 on Canadians and Mexicans. The act subjects them both, like others immigrating, to a reading test. The act contributes to widespread illegal border crossings, and an increase in smuggling.
- 1919: Commissioner General of Immigration request funds for a patrol service to devote all its energies to guard the United States land borders and coastlines. **Congress DENIES the request.**
- 1920: Prohibition begins January 16, 1920, marking the start of liquor smuggling. The cities of El Paso and Juarez both profit from Prohibition. Juarez establishes bars for thirsty Americans, and citizens of El Paso begin to advertise a visit to the border as a two-nation vacation.
- 1920s: The rumrunners of the 1920s prove to be as ruthless as the drug smugglers of today. By the time Prohibition ends on December 5, 1933, 30 federal officers lose their lives.
- 1921-24: The Immigration Quota Acts of 1921 and 1924 establish the nation's first limits on the number of people legally admitted each year. The act contributes to the rise of illegal immigration and points out the need for a more effective border patrol.
- May 28, 1924: Congress passes an act that creates the **United States Border Patrol**. At first, 450 "Patrol Inspectors" are authorized, with headquarters in El Paso. Sectors are created along the southern border as well as Detroit, Michigan. Agents are provided a badge, but no uniform.
- 1924: An official uniform is adopted. Spanish-speaking border residents nickname the Patrol Inspectors "los planchados," (the ironed ones) for their pressed uniforms and drill-sergeant hats.
- 1934: Patrol Inspectors attend first training school located at Camp Chigas, El Paso. Inspectors are provided four hours of training each day without physical training. Session one graduates March 17, 1935.
- 1935: The United States Border Patrol installs and uses radios in vehicles and stations.
- 1945: The United States Border Patrol begins using fixed-wing aircraft.
- 1956: Agents develop and begin using drug-sniffing dogs. Canine units prove helpful in many aspects of Border Patrol work.
- 1956: Training schools become known as "Border Patrol Academies." Agents attend a 19 week course with eight hour training days, which includes 2 hours of physical training.
- 1961: Border Patrol agents are deputized as U.S. Marshals during the nation's first airline hijacking in El Paso.

—Continued—

Border Patrol History

- 1962: Border Patrol agents are deputized as U.S. Marshals during civil rights disorders in Mississippi and Montgomery, Alabama.
- 1973: Border Patrol agents are deputized as U.S. Marshals during the Native American protest at Wounded Knee, South Dakota.
- 1975: The United States Border Patrol Academy Session 107 graduates the first class with female agents.
- 1977: All training schools are not conducted at the Border Patrol Academy in Glynco, Georgia.
- 1980: The Border Patrol begins using helicopters. The agency also now employs the use of closed-circuit television monitoring equipment and electronic sensors. Agents utilize a variety of modes of transportation, but old-fashioned horse patrols and on-foot tracking are still vital in remote areas.
- 1996: Charleston, South Carolina becomes the site of a satellite Border Patrol Academy to accommodate more agent trainee classes.
- 1999: The Border Patrol becomes the largest uniformed federal agency in the nation, with 8,000 highly trained agents operating in 22 states. Agents prevent the illegal traffic of people and contraband. They patrol the border by foot, air, vehicle, boat, bicycle, snowmobile, all-terrain vehicles and horseback.
- 2001: September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks show need to prevent and deterring entry of terrorist and terrorist weapons. Agents deploy to all major airports, and to the northern border to fulfill this mission. The United States Border Patrol becomes the premier border law enforcement agency in the United States.
- 2003: After the creating of the Department of Homeland Security in March of 2003 the United States Border Patrol becomes part DHS and its new bureau, U.S. Customs and Border Protection.
- 2004: All U.S. Border Patrol Academy locations are consolidated and moved to Artesia, New Mexico.
- 2008: The U.S. Border Patrol has approximately 14,000 agents, 20 sectors, and 142 stations. The El Paso Sector has approximately 2400 Border Patrol Agents and 11 stations.

