



U.S. Customs and  
Border Protection

Commissioner

September 27, 2010

MEMORANDUM FOR: Janet Napolitano  
Secretary

FROM: Alan Bersin  
Commissioner *Alan Bersin*

SUBJECT: Alternatives for Securing the Border

Following our discussions on September 20, 2010 about *SBI<sub>net</sub>* and our proposed new plan for Arizona border security technology deployment, you asked for a revised decision memorandum on those topics. The purpose of this memorandum is to respond to your request and to request approval for the new plan.

As background, we briefed you on the proposed new plan on July 22, 2010. The plan is advised by a formal Analysis of Alternatives (AoA), which is the “quantitative, science-based assessment” you directed last January. In developing the new plan, we integrated the results of the AoA with the Border Patrol’s operational assessment.

In its original incarnation, *SBI<sub>net</sub>* was intended to cover the entire Southwest border with a highly integrated set of fixed sensor towers. Early in its design, *SBI<sub>net</sub>* gave little, if any, consideration to other technologies, as the presumption was that *SBI<sub>net</sub>* would handle all technology needs. Over time, CBP has come to recognize that proven, commercially available systems like the (b) (7)(E) fill critical gaps in capability—and that the original *SBI<sub>net</sub>* plans did not fill those gaps.

Thus, the assessment you ordered in January made clear that *SBI<sub>net</sub>* does not provide a single technological solution to border security, as it was originally intended.<sup>b</sup> For example, in

(b) (7)(E)  
(b) (7)(E)  
(b) (7)(E)  
(b) (7)(E) —but at a fraction of the cost of *SBI<sub>net</sub>*’s integrated towers (b) (7)(E)

Accordingly, the new border security technology plan we are proposing will utilize existing, proven technology tailored to (b) (7)(E) each border region—a significant departure from the original *SBI<sub>net</sub>* concept of a single, wide-ranging fixed tower-based solution across the entire border. This new plan will include a mixture of (b) (7)(E) (b) (7)(E) technologies. Where

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appropriate, this technology plan will also include elements of the former *SBI<sub>net</sub>* program that are already underway or complete and have proven successful, such as (b) (7)(E) and (b) (7)(E).

We believe, based in large part on consultation with the experts at the Department's Science and Technology Directorate and frontline officers and agents on the border, that the new plan provides better coverage, more effective balance between cost and capability tailored to each area of the border, faster deployment of technology, and better linkage between operations and technology.

At your direction earlier this year, we froze funding for *SBI<sub>net</sub>* beyond what is required to complete the ongoing deployments of (b) (7)(E) and we diverted \$50 million of Recovery Act funding from *SBI<sub>net</sub>* to other technologies. That \$50 million is being used to acquire:

- (b) (7)(E) for Border Patrol checkpoints (already delivered);
- (b) (7)(E) to our ports of entry (already delivered).
- (b) (7)(E) (to be delivered by early October)
- (b) (7)(E) (delivery scheduled to begin next March); and
- At least (b) (7)(E) (delivery scheduled to begin April 2011).

Going forward, we intend to redirect funding originally intended for *SBI<sub>net</sub>* – including the *SBI<sub>net</sub>* funds in the pending FY 2011 DHS appropriations bill – to the new border security technology plan for Arizona, and eventually the remainder of the border. The following chart summarizes, by focus area, the differences between what *SBI<sub>net</sub>* originally included and the proposed border security technology deployments under the new plan – demonstrating that the new plan will achieve both increased coverage and increased flexibility over the original *SBI<sub>net</sub>* plan.

### *Original SBI<sub>net</sub> Plan:*

<i>Focus Area 1</i>	<i>Focus Area 2</i>	<i>Focus Area 3</i>	<i>Focus Area 4</i>
(b) (7)(E)			
(b) (7)(E)			

### *Proposed Arizona Technology Deployment Plan:*

<i>Focus Area 1</i>	<i>Focus Area 2</i>	<i>Focus Area 3</i>	<i>Focus Area 4</i>
(b) (5)			

(b) (5)

(b) (7)(E)

We estimate that the cost to procure and deploy the new technology across Arizona would be (b) (5) beginning in FY 2011 and extending into FY 2014 – which represents a lower cost and faster deployment schedule than *SBI<sub>net</sub>* Block 1. The most recent detailed cost estimate, from late 2008, of the required funds to procure and deploy *SBI<sub>net</sub>* Block 1 across Arizona projected a total cost (b) (5) and completion in FY 2013 – and the more recent delays and cost overruns would have pushed the completion date into FY 2014 and further increased the final cost. In addition, the cost estimates for *SBI<sub>net</sub>* did not include needed provisions for upgrading (b) (7)(E) and deploying additional (b) (7)(E). In short, the new technology deployment plan appears very cost-effective when compared to the original *SBI<sub>net</sub>* plan.

Based on the results of our analysis, we propose the following recommendations:

- (b) (5)
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<sup>1</sup> This figure includes “sunk costs,” so the go-forward costs should have been less. However, this is likely offset by the impact of cost overruns.

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We request your approval to proceed with the new technology deployment plan for Arizona and to extend our AoA planning to the remainder of the Southwest border.

Approve/date J. N. A. 10-4-10 Disapproved/date \_\_\_\_\_  
Modify/date \_\_\_\_\_ Needs discussion/date \_\_\_\_\_

Attachment