

Full Committee Print

U:\2008REPT\15REPT\15REPT.008

43

ADVANCED TRAINING CENTER

The Committee provides \$40,200,000 for Phase IV of the Advanced Training Center [ATC] Master Plan which was submitted to the Committee on April 4, 2007, by the Department of Homeland Security Under Secretary for Management. The ATC, located in West Virginia, opened in September 2005. It provides advanced training to over 2,000 CBP law enforcement personnel, managers, and supervisors per year and will train approximately 5,200 per year by the end of 2009 (Requested by: Byrd).

LACK OF BORDER PATROL CONSTRUCTION PROJECT OVERSIGHT

This Committee has been a strong proponent, on a bipartisan basis, of ensuring that newly hired Border Patrol agents and CBP officers are provided with the tools they need to perform their critical national security duties. This includes ensuring that they receive proper training as well as vehicles and equipment. A critical component of this comprehensive approach is ensuring that these agents and officers also have appropriately-sized facilities, such as Border Patrol stations, to accommodate the major increases in hiring. Congress has tried to provide CBP with the resources to get ahead of the curve. Between fiscal years 2005 and 2007, the Congress appropriated approximately \$450,000,000 above the President's requests to try and achieve an appropriate balance between people, support, and facilities, which included funding an additional 3,500 new Border Patrol agents.

This Committee has worked hard to provide CBP with the construction resources necessary to match the growth in Border Patrol personnel. Unfortunately, CBP did not bring the planning and management skills to oversee the construction program to the table. A prime example of the lack of planning, and more seriously, the lapse in oversight of the leadership of CBP, is that a comprehensive survey of current facilities was not initiated until almost 2 years after the surge in agent hiring began. The belated realization that the facilities planning and the staffing planning were disconnected may lead to as much as \$125,000,000 in appropriated construction funds being diverted to temporary trailers or other short-term housing. Further, the timeline for completing all of the needed projects may be extended for several years. It is incomprehensible to the Committee how CBP allowed this situation to occur.

The Committee has reduced the Headquarters Management request by \$5,000,000, to be taken from programs other than facilities management, to make clear its strong concern about the loss of time and planning. Further, the Committee is aware of discussions to move the oversight and responsibility of port-of-entry facility construction from the General Services Administration [GSA] to CBP. It is clear that CBP is in no way prepared at this time for such an expansion of its responsibilities in this arena.

Finally, absent the official submission of a revised budget for this account, it is difficult to appropriate any funds for currently unknown construction activities for fiscal year 2008. The Committee makes an unspecified reduction of \$15,000,000 to the amount requested in the budget and directs the submission of a revised con-