



Anti-Trafficking Coordination Teams

October 21, 2016

Fiscal Year 2016 Report to Congress



**Homeland
Security**

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement

Message from the Deputy Under Secretary for Management and Chief Financial Officer

I am pleased to present the following report, “Anti-Trafficking Coordination Teams,” which has been prepared by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement in collaboration with the U.S. Department of Justice.

This report was compiled pursuant to Senate Report 114-68, which accompanies the *Fiscal Year 2016 Department of Homeland Security Appropriations Act* (P.L. 114-113).

Pursuant to congressional guidelines, this report is being provided to the following Members of Congress:



The Honorable John R. Carter
Chairman, House Appropriations Subcommittee on Homeland Security

The Honorable Lucille Roybal-Allard
Ranking Member, House Appropriations Subcommittee on Homeland Security

The Honorable John Hoeven
Chairman, Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Homeland Security

The Honorable Jeanne Shaheen
Ranking Member, Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Homeland Security

Inquiries relating to this report may be directed to me at (202) 447-5751.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Chip Fulghum". The signature is stylized and cursive.

Chip Fulghum
Deputy Under Secretary for Management and Chief
Financial Officer



Anti-Trafficking Coordination Teams

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I. Legislative Requirement

This report was compiled in response to legislative language in Senate Report 114-68, which accompanies the *Fiscal Year 2016 Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Appropriations Act* (P.L. 114-113).

Senate Report 114-68 states:

HUMAN TRAFFICKING

The Committee strongly supports ICE's continued efforts to combat human trafficking, particularly the coordinated approach of its Anti-trafficking Coordination Teams [ACTeams]. ACTeams bring together Federal agents and investigators from the Federal Bureau of Investigation, ERO, HSI, the Department of Labor's Wage and Hour Division, and prosecutors from U.S. Attorneys' Offices to conduct human trafficking investigations and prosecutions. However, the Committee notes that despite the high level of human trafficking occurring along the Interstate 95 corridor, there are no ACTeams located on the east coast north of Atlanta. The Committee directs the Department to provide a report not later than 120 days after the date of enactment of this act on the feasibility and advisability of creating additional ACTeams, particularly in the northeast region.

II. Background

The Anti-Trafficking Coordination Team Initiative, an interagency collaboration of DHS, the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ), and the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL), was launched under the leadership of DOJ in 2011. Anti-Trafficking Coordination Teams (ACTeams) bring federal agents of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) Homeland Security Investigations, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), DOL's Wage and Hour Division, and DOL's Office of the Inspector General together with federal prosecutors from U.S. Attorneys' Offices and DOJ's specialized Human Trafficking Prosecution Unit to develop high-impact federal investigations and prosecutions involving forced labor, international sex trafficking, and sex trafficking of adults by force, fraud, and coercion, while other initiatives focus on sex trafficking of minors within the United States.

On February 1, 2011, at the annual meeting of the President's Interagency Task Force on Human Trafficking, DHS Secretary Janet Napolitano, Secretary of Labor Hilda L. Solis, FBI Director Robert Mueller, and Attorney General Eric H. Holder Jr. announced an interagency Human Trafficking Enhanced Enforcement Initiative designed to streamline coordination of federal human trafficking investigations and prosecutions. This initiative was developed collaboratively by DOJ, DHS, and DOL through the interagency Federal Enforcement Working Group, chaired by DOJ's Human Trafficking Prosecution Unit, which brings together federal investigators and federal prosecutors to strengthen performance on developing human trafficking investigations and cases.

As part of the initiative, the Federal Enforcement Working Group convened federal ACTeams in select districts nationwide, which were designated by unanimous interagency consensus following a rigorous, competitive, interagency selection process conducted by the working group. These ACTeams provide a coordination structure among federal enforcement agencies to eliminate duplication of effort and enhance capacity to identify, investigate, and prosecute human trafficking offenses. Each team serves under the joint interagency leadership of the U.S. Attorney for the relevant judicial district and the highest-ranking official of each federal investigative agency in the regional field offices of the FBI, ICE, and DOL, and each ACTeam coordinates closely with anti-trafficking subject matter experts in DOJ's Human Trafficking Prosecution Unit and FBI, ICE, and DOL headquarters. Existing human trafficking task forces have brought federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies together with nongovernmental organizations, expanding capacity to identify human trafficking indicators and assist potential victims. ACTeams coordinate with existing task forces and working groups, but experience demonstrated the need for a coordinated, proactive strategy among federal agencies aimed specifically at generating and advancing federal investigations and prosecutions. In February 2011, DOJ, DHS, and DOL launched

Phase I of the Anti-Trafficking Coordination Team Initiative by initiating the competitive, nationwide selection process, which culminated in the designation of Phase I Pilot ACTeams in the following jurisdictions, beginning in July 2011:

- The Northern District of Georgia
- The Central District of California
- The Southern District of Florida
- The Western District of Missouri
- The Western District of Tennessee
- The Western District of Texas

Drawing together federal agents and prosecutors from multiple investigative agencies, ACTeams streamlined coordination on the front lines of federal human trafficking investigations and prosecutions, and enhanced collaboration between front-line enforcement efforts and national human trafficking subject matter experts in DOJ's Human Trafficking Prosecution Unit and Executive Office of U.S. Attorneys, ICE, the FBI's Civil Rights Unit, and DOL's Wage and Hour Division and Office of the Inspector General.

During the ACTeam Phase I period, which spanned Fiscal Years 2012–2013, federal human trafficking prosecutions involving forced labor, international sex trafficking, and sex trafficking of adults rose by 35 percent nationwide, reflecting strong partnerships among U.S. Attorneys' Offices; the Civil Rights Division's Human Trafficking Prosecution Unit; federal, state and local law enforcement agencies; and nongovernmental victim assistance organizations and task forces led by U.S. Attorneys' Offices.

The ACTeams played a significant role in leading these nationwide advances. In ACTeam Districts, prosecutions of such cases rose even more markedly than they did nationally, because of the force-multiplier effect of interagency commitment to implementing coordinated, joint anti-trafficking strategies and because of advanced training, expertise, and operational support provided to the Phase I ACTeams. Comparing federal forced labor, international sex trafficking, and adult sex trafficking prosecutions during the ACTeam Phase I period of Fiscal Years 2012–2013 to the pre-Phase I period of Fiscal Years 2010–2011:

Cases filed increased by:

- 119 percent in ACTeam Districts,
- 18 percent in non-ACTeam Districts, and
- 35 percent nationwide.

Defendants charged increased by:

- 114 percent in ACTeam Districts,
- 12 percent in non-ACTeam Districts, and
- 28 percent nationwide.

Defendants convicted increased by:

- 86 percent in ACTeam Districts,
- 14 percent in non-ACTeam Districts, and
- 26 percent nationwide.

In October 2014, on the basis of the demonstrated successes achieved during Phase I of the initiative, the Federal Enforcement Working Group unanimously resolved to launch Phase II, convening ACTeams in additional jurisdictions.

On May 18, 2015, Attorney General Loretta E. Lynch signed a memorandum authorizing the ACTeam Phase II launch, and on June 25, 2015, the Attorney General, Secretary of Homeland Security, and Secretary of Labor jointly announced the launch of Phase II, beginning with the distribution of implementation packages to all U.S. Attorneys. Jurisdictions competed for designation as Phase II ACTeam sites by submitting self-nomination packages prepared jointly by the U.S. Attorney and the ranking ICE, FBI, and DOL officials in the district, who committed to implement a coordinated, interagency anti-trafficking enforcement strategy. As in Phase I, the selection process involved the Federal Enforcement Working Group's collaborative, interagency review of applications, which were evaluated according to criteria delineated in the implementation package, including the strength of each applicant's proposed anti-trafficking strategy; the demonstrated capacity of each partner agency to commit to its implementation; the nature and extent of the documented regional human trafficking threat; relevant data on pending and recent trafficking investigations, prosecutions, and victim identification efforts; unique challenges and opportunities identified; and the varying sizes, staffing structures, demographics, external partnerships, geographic distribution, and levels of anti-trafficking experience reflected in each nomination package. Selection criteria aimed to convene ACTeams in a diversity of contexts, to pilot innovative anti-trafficking strategies both in jurisdictions with strong prosecution track records and jurisdictions with limited trafficking prosecution experience.

On December 17, 2015, DOJ, DHS, and DOL jointly announced the designation of six new Phase II ACTeam sites selected by unanimous consensus through the competitive, interagency application process. The following cities were designated as Phase II ACTeam sites:

- Cleveland, Ohio
- Minneapolis, Minnesota
- Newark, New Jersey
- Portland, Maine
- Portland, Oregon
- Sacramento, California

With Phase II ACTeams currently operating in Newark, New Jersey, and Portland, Maine, the Anti-Trafficking Coordination Team Initiative currently extends significantly further into the northeast region of the United States.

III. Conclusion

The Attorney General, the Secretary of Homeland Security, and the Secretary of Labor each have identified the fight against human trafficking as one of their highest priorities, and have highlighted their commitment to the Anti-Trafficking Coordination Team Initiative as an integral part of their broader efforts to secure justice for victims of human trafficking. Working collaboratively through the DOJ-led Federal Enforcement Working Group, all ACTeam partner agencies continue to provide designated ACTeams with advanced training, guidance, and operational support, and continue to pilot advanced anti-trafficking strategies in the context of the unique challenges and opportunities encountered in different ACTeam jurisdictions. DOJ, DHS, and DOL will continue to provide updates to the Committee on the status of the Anti-Trafficking Coordination Team Initiative, including plans for any future expansion, as requested.