Border patrol business impact analysis

The rate of illegal immigration to the US has escalated in the last few decades, prompting the federal government to take more seriously the issue of border monitoring. After the 2001 terrorist attacks, it became very necessary that the federal government seal the land borders more tightly. The Border Patrol is an agency responsible for monitoring the US land border in the north and in the south. They are supposed to: • Enforce immigration laws at the borders. • To keep off terrorists from entering U. S. territory. • Keep off illegal immigrants. • Prevent drug traffickers from using the land borders.

The task of monitoring the Canadian and Mexican borders is an enormous one. The sheer length of the borders is a big challenge. The Mexican border is about 2, 000 miles long and the Canadian border is about 5, 500 miles long. This means that many men and women are needed to monitor these borders. The necessary equipment should also be provided in order for the exercise to be efficient and effective. With approximately 500 million people crossing the borders each year, the task is not an easy one (Bodenheimer, et al, 2003). Mexico and Canada are members of the North America Free Trade Area (NAFTA) and therefore these borders cannot be sealed.

The volume of trade between the US and these countries is high. In the year 2000, $653 was traded between the US and these two neighboring countries. A problem comes in balancing between the income generated in this trade and the amount incurred in monitoring the borders. Employing the personnel and equipping them with the necessary and modern equipment is an expensive affair. The old ways in which the borders were monitored using gates, guards and guns are disappearing to be replaced by

moderntechnologyequipment. The situation is that funds are limited, the border to be monitored is extensive and trade must not be hurt.

The factors that are critical to the continued application of technology in border patrol include: a) Interoperability This refers to a system which will give Border Patrol directcommunicationand access to the visa and immigration databases. This system is vital for effective monitoring of the borders but on the other hand is very expensive. b) Availability Availability of off the ready made technologies is another important factor because it is easier to purchase, better when dealing with terrorists because they are available on demand and fewer contracts need to be signed.

It therefore takes a very short time to purchase off-the -shelf technology as compared with designer technology. c) Adaptability The climate of the Canadian border is quite different from that in the Mexican border. The apt equipment ought to be operable in both regions i. e. in the hot Mexican border and the snowy Canadian border. d) Legislature Congress has given the direction of the technology. One is that the technology should be interoperable. This is provided in the Enhanced Border Security Act and Visa Entry Form Act of 2002. e) Acquisition of relevant Technology Some of the latest advances in technology for border patrol include:

• Biometric recognition – the facial features of a person are used to identify him or her using advanced software. • Motion sensors – consisting of infrared detectors and camera-on-poles integrated equipment. • Aerial surveillance – helicopters are used to look for tracks on the ground and to check on signs of established routes of entry. In addition to the helicopters, remotely navigated aircrafts called drones are also proving useful (Department of

Homeland Security, 2010). Conclusion The task of maintaining effective border surveillance in the U. S. is going to be a very expensive undertaking.

Covering the extensive borders with enough personnel will be very expensive and therefore the federal government should press on the use of mote advanced technology at the benefit of limiting the number of personnel. Bibliography Bodenheimer, David Z. , (2003). Journal of Homeland Security, Technology for Border Protection: Homeland Security Funding and Priorities. URL: http://www. homelandsecurity. org/journal/Articles/bodenheimer. html. Created: August 2003, Retrieved: May 8, 2010. Department of Homeland Security. (2010). Securing America's Borders. cbp. gov. URL: http://www. cbp. gov/xp/cgov/home. xml. Retrieved May 8, 2010.