



U.S. Immigration  
and Customs  
Enforcement

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# Statement

## **TERRORIST THREAT AND DISRUPTION EFFORTS BY ICE**

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) is the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security. As part of its homeland security mission, ICE seeks to maintain the integrity of the immigration system through effective enforcement of our immigration laws. ICE also seeks to protect the homeland by targeting immigration violators who may pose a threat to national security.

ICE has been working for the past several months at a heightened level in direct support of the government-wide Interagency Security Plan that will remain in effect through the 2005 Presidential Inauguration. ICE's stepped-up enforcement actions involve the re-prioritization of existing leads on suspected immigration status violators according to national security criteria. This initiative combines the resources of the ICE Office of Investigations, the Office of Detention and Removal and the Office of Intelligence to apply real-time threat information to detect, prevent, and disrupt potential terrorist activities.

**This initiative builds upon ICE's continued efforts to target immigration status violators in America – without regard to race, ethnicity or religion.**

Acting on the prioritized leads, ICE agents in the field will locate suspected immigration status violators. If ICE investigators determine that the individual is out of status, then the individual will be arrested. Determinations on detention will be decided on a case-by-case basis in keeping with standard ICE detention policy. Anyone subject to detention will be afforded access to counsel as permitted under national standards.

When appropriate, and as resources allow, ICE agents will be supported by other law enforcement agencies through the nation's Joint Terrorism Task Forces.

What ICE is not doing:

- ICE is not conducting a "round-up" or a "sweep" in any community.
- ICE is not profiling based on race or religious affiliation.
- ICE is not instituting a blanket detention policy.

As the recent 9/11 Commission Staff monograph on terrorist travel notes, at least three of the 9/11 hijackers violated the terms of their visas before carrying out their attacks. The 9/11 Commission report further added that: "Had the immigration system set a higher bar for determining whether individuals are who or what they claim to be – and ensuring routine consequences for violations – it could have potentially excluded, removed, or come into further contact with several hijackers."

To detect and deter such abuses, ICE's Compliance Enforcement Unit routinely researches and assigns immigration status violator leads to ICE field offices nationwide based on data from the Student Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS), the National Security Entry/Exit Registration System (NSEERS), and the United States Visitor and Immigrant Status Indicator Technology program (USVISIT).

# ICE #

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