

Border Security Fund
Arizona Department of Emergency and Military Affairs
Program Summary

Program Overview

The Border Security Fund was established in by Laws 2021, Chapter 403, consisting of legislative appropriations, gifts, grants, and other donations. The Department of Emergency and Military Affairs (DEMA) administers the fund which may be appropriated for preventing human trafficking and entry of aliens who are unlawfully present, terrorists and instruments of terrorism, and illegal contraband into the United States. DEM A also administers the planning, design, construction, and maintenance of the physical international border fence and administers grants to counties for prosecuting individuals who commit border-related crimes.

Program Funding

The FY 2023 budget diverted \$544.2 million from General Fund Transition Privilege Tax (TPT, also commonly known as sales tax) collections to the Border Security Fund. Of that amount, Laws 2022, Chapter 313, diverts \$209.2 million of TPT revenues in FY 2023 from the General Fund to the Border Security Fund to DEM A to administer various items that relate to non-border fence and border security technologies such as local and county law enforcement costs associated with prosecuting and imprisoning individuals with border related crimes, and one-time deputy sheriff compensation. The appropriations are non-lapsing and DEM A may transfer spending authority between programs and purposes with the review of the Joint Legislative Budget Committee (JLBC).

The remaining portion of the diverted TPT revenue was appropriated by Laws 2022, Chapter 334, which allocated \$335.0 million for physical border fence and technology to DEM A. The legislation also says DEM A will use existing infrastructure and fence materials for the construction of the physical border fence where feasible. U.S. Customs and Border Protection informed DEM A that border fencing materials previously acquired by the federal government are not available for the use by the state.

DEM A is required to submit a report to JLBC within 30 days of each calendar quarter until all monies from the \$544.2 million appropriation are fully expended. DEM A submitted the latest report on May 5, 2025, which accounts for the expenditures as of March 31, 2025 (see *Table 1*).

Expenditures

Border Fence and Border Security Technologies

As noted above, the FY 2023 budget provided \$335.0 million for border fence and border security technologies. Beginning in August 2022, 1,344 double-stacked shipping containers were installed in Yuma and Cochise counties along the federal border barrier at a cost of \$100.0 million. Per a federal court agreement signed on December 21, 2022, between the State of Arizona and the U.S. Department of Justice on behalf of the U.S. Departments of Agriculture and Interior, the shipping containers were removed at a cost of \$64.2 million. The final settlement agreement with the federal government required restitution of \$2.1 million which was paid on August 29, 2023. Additional containers were installed and removed in Nogales and Sierra Vista costing \$30.5 million, bringing the total costs of the barrier project to \$196.8 million. In March 2023, the shipping containers were transferred to ADOA for sale or disposal. As of March 31, 2025, 644 shipping containers had been sold for \$1.4 million.

The remaining funds have been allocated for grants to counties to deploy border security technologies that include cameras, sensors, software, and other types of equipment. DEM A established a Barrier Task Force consisting of representatives from all of Arizona's County Sheriff Offices to develop plans for border security and consider various models for implementation.

As of March 31, 2025, 30 grant applications have been approved. The total value of awarded grants was approximately \$132.0 million in March, of which \$30.5 million had already been disbursed.

Table 1		
Border Security Fund		
	<u>Allocations</u>	<u>Spending/Encumbrance Through March 31, 2025</u>
Border Fence and Border Security Technologies ^{1/}	\$ 335,000,000	\$ 328,610,700
Cochise County Jail	20,000,000	0
Local ICE Reimbursement ^{2/}	7,600,000	0
Antihuman Trafficking Grant Fund	10,000,000	9,473,500
Local Prosecution Costs ^{2/ 3/ 4/}	24,800,000	22,654,000
Arizona National Guard ^{3/}	20,000,000	19,553,200
Emergency Testing and Care ^{2/}	4,600,000	4,600,000
Asylum Transportation ^{2/}	23,000,000	17,333,300
Deputy Sheriff Compensation	53,405,000	52,345,000
State Guard – Chain of Command	800,000	0
Emergency Operations Center ^{4/}	2,322,800	572,100
Local Border Support ^{4/}	12,232,900	12,232,900
Border Drug Interdiction ^{4/}	15,444,300	15,444,300
Coordinated Response Center	<u>15,000,000</u>	<u>15,000,000</u>
Total ^{1/}	\$544,205,000	\$497,819,000
<p>^{1/} Data from the Arizona Financial Information System suggests that spending and encumbrances from the fund totaled \$501,989,800 as of March 31, 2025, including \$310,938,800 from the Border Fence and Border Security Technologies allocation.</p> <p>^{2/} At the January 2023 JLBC meeting, the Committee approved the following reallocations: 1) increase local prosecution by \$4,800,000; 2) increase asylum transportation by \$8,000,000; 3) decrease local ICE reimbursement by \$(7,400,000); and 4) decrease emergency care and testing by \$(5,400,000)</p> <p>^{3/} At the December 2022 JLBC meeting, the Committee approved a transfer of \$10,000,000 from the local prosecution cost allocation to the Arizona National Guard allocation.</p> <p>^{4/} Laws 2024, Chapter 209 made the following reallocations: 1) \$12,232,900 to DPS for local border support; 2) \$15,444,300 to DPS for border drug interdiction 3) decrease emergency operations center by \$(27,677,200)</p>		

Cochise County Jail

Laws 2022, Chapter 313 allocated \$20.0 million in FY 2023 to Cochise County for the construction of a new county jail facility. The monies allocated are intended to fund up to 20 percent of the total jail facility construction cost, not to exceed \$20.0 million. The monies will not be distributed until Cochise County has submitted to the Director of the JLBC, the Director of the Governor's Office of Strategic Planning and Budgeting, and the Director of the Department of Administration (ADOA) a report that the county has raised sufficient monies to fund the remainder of the project's budget. Any monies that remain unexpended and unencumbered on June 30, 2027, revert to the Border Security Fund.

In May 2023, voters approved a new 0.5% sales tax to be used for the construction, operation, and maintenance of the county's jail system. The county estimates that multiple years of tax proceeds (estimated at \$8.5 million annually) would allow the county to meet its obligation to fund 80 percent of the new jail's construction costs. In June 2023, a lawsuit was initiated challenging the validity of the special election in which the tax was passed. In March 2025 the parties mutually agreed to settle the lawsuit and to hold a new election. In May 2025, the Judge approved the settlement and dismissed the lawsuit. A new election will be held on November 5, 2025.

No monies have been spent or encumbered for the Cochise County Jail construction.

Local ICE Reimbursement

Laws 2022, Chapter 313 allocated \$15.0 million in FY 2023 to reimburse county or local law enforcement agencies costs incurred for participating in a program with the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). DEMA have met with representatives from Arizona's law enforcement community including the Yavapai County Sheriff, Pinal County Sheriff, and Mesa Police Department, among others, to identify all eligible law enforcement agencies around the state involved in the program and communicate the reimbursement opportunity to those law enforcement agencies.

At its January 2024 meeting, the JLBC favorably reviewed a transfer of \$7.4 million from local ICE reimbursement to local prosecution costs and asylum transportation.

As of March 31, 2025, no law enforcement organization has requested reimbursement for participating in the program.

Antihuman Trafficking Grant Fund

Laws 2022, Chapter 313 allocated \$10.0 million in FY 2023 for a deposit into the Anti-Human Trafficking Grant Fund. DEMA distributes the monies from the fund to programs to reduce human trafficking or improve identification of and services to trafficking victims. Of this amount, \$2.0 million is distributed to the DPS Arizona Counter Terrorism Information Center for anti-human trafficking operations. The remaining \$8.0 million is distributed in award grants to city, town, and county law enforcement agencies, in the amount of no more than \$500,000 per agency, for programs that reduce human trafficking.

Applicants may be eligible for these awards for any of the following: 1) Provide training to law enforcement agencies, prosecutorial agencies, and the public on preventing and identifying human trafficking, or to provide personnel financial resources to attend locally or nationally accredited training. 2) Allow for full or partial funding of new or existing staff positions that would allow for the investigation, prosecution, program coordination, or direct service provision for identified victims. 3) Purchasing of new equipment, software, or program licenses to aid in the investigation, prosecution, service provision or data collection and analysis of human trafficking. 4) Provide services to victims of human trafficking. This can include, but is not limited to, increasing support for forensic interviewing, developing victim-centered, trauma-informed support for victims, and victim advocates.

As of March 31, 2025, 20 applicants have received awards/agreements to proceed with projects. Including the DPS distribution, the fund has spent or encumbered \$9.5 million.

Local Prosecution Costs

Laws 2022, Chapter 313 allocated \$30.0 million in FY 2023 to local governments for costs associated with prosecuting and imprisoning individuals charged with drug trafficking, human smuggling, illegal immigration, and other border-related crimes. At its December 2022 meeting, the JLBC favorably reviewed a transfer of \$10.0 million from the local prosecution allocation to the Arizona National Guard for a southern border deployment. This transfer resulted in \$20.0 million being available for the Arizona National Guard (see below for more information) and \$20.0 million available for local government prosecution.

At its January 2024 meeting, the JLBC favorably reviewed an increase of \$4.8 million to local prosecution's allocation to cover \$4.3 million for pending recipients of DPS's local border support program, bringing the total allocation to \$24.8 million.

The DPS local border support program is not part of the Border Security Fund, but instead is funded from a FY 2024 General Fund appropriation. DPS had more applications than could be funded with its original \$12.2 million appropriation.

As of March 31, 2025, 24 applicants have received grant awards totaling \$22.7 million, of which \$7.4 million had already been disbursed.

Arizona National Guard

As described in the prior allocation, \$20.0 million is available to the Arizona National Guard. The Guard may use these monies to support DPS and local law enforcement agencies relating to violations of the laws in the southern Arizona border region. The Arizona National Guard had approximately 90 soldiers and airmen on state active duty orders in support of the Southern Arizona Law Enforcement (SALE) mission in Cochise, Maricopa, Pinal, Santa Cruz, and Yuma Counties as of September 30, 2023. DEMA did not provide an estimate of deployment levels beyond September 2023, but DEMA reports that this program has ended.

As of March 31, 2025, the Arizona National Guard has spent or encumbered \$19.6 million. DEMA is still completing the final closeout phase for this program, so we are unsure if the remaining allocation of \$446,824 will be utilized.

Emergency Testing and Care

Laws 2022, Chapter 313 allocated \$10.0 million in FY 2023 for emergency health care and testing for immigrants along the southern Arizona border. DEMA is working with the Arizona Department of Health Services (DHS) to disburse funds that can target emergency healthcare and testing to migrants via county health departments and the University of Arizona.

At its January 2024 meeting, the JLBC favorably reviewed a transfer of \$5.4 million out of emergency testing and care to local prosecution costs and asylum transportation, leaving \$4.6 million for this allocation.

As of March 31, 2025, DEMA reports that DHS has spent or encumbered \$4.6 million for contracts with Maricopa County, Pima County, Santa Cruz County, Yuma County, and the University of Arizona.

Asylum Transportation

Laws 2022, Chapter 313 allocated \$15.0 million in FY 2023 for transportation of individuals who entered Arizona seeking asylum to other states in the United States, including the cost of meals, onboard staffing, and support. DEMA is supporting local Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO) located in southern communities to transport migrants referred to them by U.S. Customs and Border Protection to Washington, D.C., to a location near their intended travel destination. Migrants are connected with another NGO at the location to coordinate last-mile travel arrangements.

At its January 2024 meeting, the JLBC favorably reviewed a transfer of \$8.0 million from other allocations (local ICE reimbursement and emergency testing and care) to increase total funding to \$23.0 million.

Since the beginning of the mission on July 1, 2022, through March 31, 2025, DEMA has spent \$17.3 million for the transportation of migrants. Of that amount, \$10.0 million was used for 234 interstate buses to transport 10,466 migrants and \$5.7 million for 3,186 buses to transport 149,477 migrants within the state. Utilization of this

program appears to be decreasing, as only 40 intrastate buses were used to transport 1,350 migrants in the period between January 1, 2025 and March 31, 2025.

Deputy Sheriff Compensation

Laws 2022, Chapter 313 allocated \$53.4 million in FY 2023 to distribute to ADOA for deputy sheriff compensation. Of this amount, \$48.3 million is allocated to counties for a \$10,000 one-time payment to line-level deputies and detention officers employed by each county sheriff's office as of May 1, 2022. County Sheriff Offices have informed ADOA that as of September 30, 2022, a total of 4,673 employees are eligible for the one-time payment of \$10,000. Additionally, \$5.1 million is allocated to counties for a \$5,000 one-time payment to line-level deputies and detention officers hired after May 1, 2022.

As of June 30, 2023, DEMA has transferred the entire allocation to ADOA to fund the quarterly payments for those employed prior to May 1, 2022. Rather than quarterly distributions, Arizona Laws 2023, Chapter 121 amended the program to require ADOA to distribute all remaining one-time employee payments by October 30, 2023. The remaining unencumbered funds will be used by counties for additional funding for \$5,000 payments to newly hired officers.

ADOA has distributed a total of \$52.3 million as of March 31, 2025, for both recruitment and retention payments. This program concluded in October 2023, and we anticipate the remaining \$1.1 million will remain unspent.

State Guard – Chain of Command

Laws 2022, Chapter 313 allocated \$800,000 in FY 2023 to establish a chain of command with the Arizona State Guard. Laws 2022, Chapter 222 authorized new supervisory positions in the State Guard, that would be funded by this allocation.

As of June 30, 2024, DEMA had not encumbered or spent any of the State Guard – Chain of Command allocation. DEMA stopped providing updates on this allocation in its most recent quarterly report and we are unsure if DEMA intends to utilize the remaining allocation.

Emergency Operations Center

Laws 2022, Chapter 313 allocated \$30.0 million in FY 2023 for the construction costs of a new State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC). The SEOC is located at Papago Park Military Reservation in Phoenix where DEMA coordinates the State response for emergencies from the facility. Prior to expending the monies, DEMA is required to submit the scope, purpose, and estimated cost of the project to the Joint Committee on Capital Review (JCCR) for review. In December 2022, JCCR gave a favorable review to \$2.0 million of the \$30.0 million allocated from the Border Security Fund for the renovation and expansion of the SEOC. The \$2.0 million will be used to cover the architectural design costs for the SEOC renovation and expansion project.

Laws 2024, Chapter 209 reallocated \$27.7 million from this allocation for local border support and border drug interdiction. As of March 31, 2025, \$1.8 million remains available. We do not expect DEMA to utilize the remaining allocation.

Local Border Support

As noted above, Laws 2024, Chapter 209 reduced the existing Emergency Operations Center allocation by \$27.7 million. Of this reduction, \$12.2 million was reallocated to DPS for its local border support program. The purpose of this program is to help local law enforcement agencies deter and combat drug trafficking, human smuggling, illegal immigration, and other border-related crimes.

This new allocation does not represent a net increase in funding for the program, as Laws 2024, Chapter 209 reduced the DPS General Fund appropriation for local border support by the same amount.

DPS expects to spend the full \$12.2 million allocation in FY 2025.

Border Drug Interdiction

As noted above, Laws 2024, Chapter 209 reduced the existing Emergency Operations Center allocation by \$27.7 million. Of this reduction, \$15.4 million was reallocated to DPS for its border drug interdiction program in FY 2025. The Border Drug Interdiction program is a multi-agency law enforcement task force that targets drug and human trafficking organizations and activities along the Arizona-Mexico border.

This new allocation does not represent a net increase in funding for the program, as Laws 2024, Chapter 209 reduced the DPS General Fund appropriation for border drug interdiction by the same amount.

Coordinated Response Center

Laws 2022, Chapter 313 allocated \$15.0 million in FY 2023 to the DPS for the construction costs of a Southern Border Coordinated Response Center. Prior to any expending of the monies, DPS is required to submit the scope, purpose, and estimated cost of the project to JCCR for review. In December 2022, the JCCR gave a favorable review to DEMA's plan to purchase and renovate a facility located in Tucson to be used as the Southern Border Coordinated Response Center. Once the building's purchase has been finalized, DPS will begin designing the renovations. The building's purchase price is \$8.2 million. The balance of the funding, \$6.8 million, will be used for the renovations.

As of March 31, 2025, all \$15.0 million has been expended or encumbered by DPS for the Coordinated Response Center.

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