



U.S. Immigration  
and Customs  
Enforcement

# Media Plan

April 23, 2009  
Contact: Gillian Brigham  
202-732-4217

## Get the Facts: Secure Communities media plan for April 26-30

### **Background:**

Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are preparing for a one-week series of events around the country April 26-30 to express their opposition to ICE and law enforcement collaboration. The events focus on ICE's Secure Communities strategy, a FOIA request about this strategy and overall opposition to removal policies. Several of their media events claim that they will announce requests of information from local law enforcement about their participation in ICE programs. This series of events follows a similar series of events organized by NGOs in March.

Locations of events as this time: San Bernardino, Calif; Miami; Morristown, N.J.; New York City; Atlanta; Washington, DC; Houston, Texas; and Raleigh, N.C.

### **Media outreach**

#### **Op-eds:**

On Sunday, April 25, OPA will submit for publication Monday morning a "Secure Communities: Get the Facts" op-ed signed by A/S Morton to major newspapers in the eight cities where protests are planned. This op-ed will highlight the incredible success of the program and the support it provides to state and local law enforcement at no cost to them, as well as hit back against allegations that it encourages racial profiling and is not an effective means to remove criminal aliens from the community.

#### **National-level interviews:**

OPA will arrange for A/S Morton to be interviewed by Julia Preston from *The New York Times*, Suzanne Gamboa from the *Associated Press*, Antonieta Cádiz from *La Opinion* and possibly Lori Montenegro from *Telemundo* to discuss the success of Secure Communities.

BBC's "The World" has already reached out to ICE to talk about Secure Communities and 287(g) in light of next week's events. Reporter would like to interview an ICE official on-the-record Monday afternoon for the story. A/S Morton or Dave Venturella would both be appropriate officials to respond, depending on who is available.

### **Regional outreach and interviews:**

Regional PAOs will reach out to English and Spanish language reporters initially in the eight cities where protests are planned on Monday, April 23, to discuss the program and highlight its successes in that local area. PAOs will have their FODs available for on-the-record interviews about the program.

PAOs will also reach out to the Sheriffs' press officers to coordinate messaging and encourage local law enforcement to go on-the-record with reporters to discuss the value of Secure Communities.

### **Web site:**

On Monday, April 26, OPA will post a "Secure Communities: Get the Facts" document on the front page of [www.ice.gov](http://www.ice.gov) setting the record straight on Secure Communities.

### **Sound bites:**

- Because of Secure Communities, there are fewer murderers, rapists and drug dealers walking the street of your city.
  - Since its inception in October 2008, Secure Communities has identified more than 18,000 aliens charged with or convicted of Level 1 crimes, such as murder, rape and kidnapping — 4,000 of whom have already been removed from the United States.
- Secure Communities is not about immigration. It's about information sharing with local law enforcement agencies so they have all the facts about the people in their jails.
  - What's more, Secure Communities gets the job done without imposing a major cost or resource burden on local law enforcement.
- Secure Communities is a color blind system. Fingerprint-matching databases don't lie and they can't tell what race you are.
  - Secure Communities reduces the opportunity for allegations of racial and ethnic profiling because the fingerprints of every individual arrested and booked into custody are checked against immigration records, not just those manually submitted by local officers
  - Also, because biometrics are unique and virtually impossible to forge, this means criminal aliens can no longer hide behind a long list of aliases.

### **Talking Points:**

- U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) is the Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) largest investigative agency. ICE's mission is to protect the security of the American people and homeland by vigilantly enforcing the nation's immigration and customs laws.
- Congress, DHS and ICE recognize that identifying and removing criminal aliens from the United States is a priority and essential to our nation's security. ICE's Secure Communities strategy is leading the agency's efforts to improve and modernize the identification and removal of criminal aliens from the United States.

- A key part of the strategy is using a biometric information-sharing capability to identify aliens in local custody more accurately and efficiently. Biometrics, in this case fingerprints, are accurate, reliable and virtually impossible to forge.
- ICE focuses first on removing those criminal aliens who pose the greatest threat, such as those charged with or convicted of homicide, rape, robbery, kidnapping, major drug offenses and threats to national security.
- Since its inception in October 2008, Secure Communities has identified more than 18,000 aliens charged with or convicted of Level 1 crimes, such as murder, rape and kidnapping — 4,000 of whom have already been removed from the United States.
- The aliens identified through the biometric information-sharing capability are most often charged with major drug offenses. Serious traffic offenses—of which driving under the influence accounts for the overwhelming majority—are the second largest group of charges.
- ICE is committed to transparent and accountable immigration enforcement and continues to inform the public, non-governmental organizations, law enforcement agencies and other stakeholders about the Secure Communities strategy.
- Secure Communities will continue to maintain an open dialogue with organizations to ensure that ICE's criminal alien enforcement efforts are effective, efficient and fair.
- ICE takes any concerns about the Secure Communities strategy seriously and is committed to taking action should specific cases be identified.

*If asked about allegations of racial profiling or other abuses raised by non-governmental organizations (NGO):*

- ICE is committed to ensuring that the biometric identification technology capability, known as IDENT/IAFIS Interoperability, is used appropriately to identify and remove dangerous criminal aliens. ICE encourages reporting of any allegations of racial profiling, due process violations, or other violations of civil rights or civil liberties related to the use of IDENT/IAFIS Interoperability. All complaints should be filed with the DHS Office of Civil Rights and Civil Liberties (CRCL), on the [CRCL complaint intake Web site](#).
- ICE regularly meets with NGOs, including those organizing this week's events such as the National Day Laborers Organizing Network, Immigration Policy Center, the ACLU and the Rights Working Group, among others.
- ICE has routinely encouraged these organizations to provide specific cases where racial profiling or other abuses are suspected so that it may take appropriate action. To date ICE has received no such information.

**Q&A:**

**IF SECURE COMMUNITIES IS PRIORITIZING THE IDENTIFICATION AND REMOVAL OF CRIMINAL ALIENS CHARGED WITH OR CONVICTED OF LEVEL 1 OFFENSES, WHY IS ICE IDENTIFYING AND REMOVING MORE ALIENS CHARGED WITH OR CONVICTED OF LEVEL 2 AND 3 OFFENSES?**

ICE is identifying more aliens charged with or convicted of Level 2 and Level 3 offenses because more individuals commit and are arrested for crimes falling under these levels.

However, ICE prioritizes the removal of aliens charged with or convicted of Level 1 offenses, which is demonstrated by the overall higher removal percentages for aliens charged with or convicted of Level 1 offenses, versus the percentage of removals of aliens charged with or convicted of Level 2 and 3 offenses.

**WHY DOES INTEROPERABILITY SOMETIMES IDENTIFY CRIMINAL ALIENS FOR POTENTIAL REMOVAL WHO ARE SIMPLY CHARGED WITH CRIMES INSTEAD OF FOCUSING SOLELY ON THOSE ACTUALLY CONVICTED OF CRIMES?**

ICE's mission is to protect the security of the American people by vigilantly enforcing the nation's immigration and customs laws. As such, ICE has the authority to take enforcement action toward any alien subject to removal.

Interoperability identifies aliens charged with or convicted of crimes at the earliest possible opportunity—when they are arrested booked into jail or prison. By identifying these individuals early in the criminal justice process, ICE has the necessary time to determine appropriate enforcement action against aliens who pose a threat before they are released from local custody.

Interoperability also reveals previous criminal history information to ICE officers which may make the individual in custody charged with a crime subject to removal based on prior convictions.

**HOW DOES INTEROPERABILITY REDUCE OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALLEGATIONS OF CULTURAL OR RACIAL PROFILING? HOW DOES SOMEONE FILE A COMPLAINT?**

To date, ICE has not received any complaints of racial profiling.

The deployment of interoperability introduces no change to local law enforcement's operating procedures. Existing processes are in place at the local, state and federal levels to report allegations of racial profiling or abuse occurring in local law enforcement agencies.

Because DHS and ICE are serious about responding to reported allegations of racial profiling, due process violations, or other violations of civil rights or civil liberties relating to the use of interoperability, the DHS Office of Civil Rights and Civil Liberties (CRCL) expanded the existing complaints process to include Secure Communities. The complaint process can be found on the Secure Communities Web site at

[http://www.ice.gov/secure\\_communities/complaint\\_process.htm](http://www.ice.gov/secure_communities/complaint_process.htm).