

MIDDLE EAST HUMAN SMUGGLING NETWORKS OPERATING AT ARIZONA MEXICO BORDER

- 6 Middle Eastern men were apprehended in Arizona illegally entering the United States in November 2015.
- The six men were traveling in a group and were captured in Arizona near Patagonia.
- The group composed of 5 Pakistani men and 1 man from Afghanistan was captured by U.S. Border Patrol - Tucson Sector.
- AZ Attorney General Financial Crimes Task Force began an investigation into money transfers from the Middle East into Mexico.
- Agents conducted a comprehensive geographic analysis of possible terrorist related transactions and/or money transfers involving human smuggling networks.
- AZAG Financial Crimes Task Force identified money being transferred to Mexico from the Middle East or from people with Middle Eastern names.
- Most money transfers were sent to individuals in Tapachula on the Southern Mexico border and Nogales on the Northern Mexico border.
- In 2015, one human smuggler received 70 money transfers from 69 senders.
- All of the 69 sender names appeared to be of Middle Eastern origin.
- 15 of the 69 of the money transfers originated from Middle Eastern or African countries.
- Tapachula is a known human smuggling hub for Central and South American migrants.
- In Mexico, Tapachula ranks #1 in money transfers sent by Middle Eastern senders.
- In Mexico, Nogales ranked #2 in receiving wire transfers from Middle Eastern senders.

- The Southwest Border Anti-Money Laundering Alliance was the result of a Settlement Agreement reached between the Arizona Attorney General's Office and Western Union Financial Services, Inc. The purpose of this alliance was to enhance and better coordinate investigations and prosecutions of money laundering in the Southwest Border and other areas affected by money laundering, as well as enhance coordination of the Alliance states with information sharing.
- The Arizona Attorney general, through TRAC, has worked parallel investigations with law enforcement and regulatory agencies from the Republic of Mexico. These partnerships have resulted in the completion of cases with arrest on both sides of the border. In addition we have also conducted numerous training programs in Mexico to share insight into criminal activity using investigative tools like TRAC as well as intelligence from the United States.