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Apprehensions and rescues increase in Border Patrol Tucson Sector

Migrant apprehensions and rescues have reached record highs in Border Patrol's Tucson Sector, making it the busiest sector in the nation, with nearly half of the migrants being families.

by [Danyelle Khmara](#)



Border officials process 241 migrants who crossed the border near Ajo, Arizona, on May 10, 2023, the day before the end of Title 42.
Danyelle Khmara

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Migrant apprehensions and rescues are climbing to record highs in Border Patrol's Tucson Sector, as the sector's deputy chief calls it the busiest sector in the nation. Tucson Sector agents have apprehended migrants nearly 34,000 times in July, according to tweets from Chief John Modlin.

Deputy Chief Justin DeLaTorre says while across the nation, Border Patrol has seen a 9% decrease in the number of apprehensions, the Tucson Sector has seen a 28% increase compared to last year.

"We're at a 20% increase just from last week," he says. "For example, just yesterday alone we're at over 1,900 encounters, and that, I believe, is our second busiest day this year."

Migration trends can shift month to month, but are largely driven by criminal organizations that control human smuggling at the border.

"They're not doing that on their own," DeLaTorre says. "Those are decisions by the criminal organizations that facilitate that smuggling activity. And so those organizations are deliberately placing them in the most remote regions of our area in order to pull our resources off of our patrol functions."

Tucson Sector has also seen a shift in the demographics. DeLaTorre says that last year the majority of migrants were single adults trying to evade apprehension and now nearly half the migrants are families. As well, about 80% of all the migrants are turning themselves in to border officials.

The number of rescues has dramatically increased as well. Huge groups are crossing in remote areas and calling 911.

"Absent that 911 call, if they delay too long, it does not take too long in this summer's heat to become a medical casualty," DeLaTorre says.

The Pima County Medical Examiner has counted 39 sets of human remains from border crossers found in June and July, the months where the highest number of remains are found. Over all, 37% of deaths are attributed to environmental reasons; in another 51% of cases, the cause of death is undetermined.

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