

Message

From: (b)(6), (b)(7)(C)
Sent: 4/6/2021 12:32:10 AM
To: ESPINOSA, MARSHA (b)(6)
(b)(6)
Subject: Re: CBP release/ Watchlist

Marsha:

I am being told it was released at the request of BP El Centro Sector after being cleared by the FBI in San Diego. I have let folks know this should never have been released by CBP and it should have been elevated for a determination on releasability.

Please let (b)(6), (b)(7)(C) know about the local FBI angle as I am sure she will want to address it.

(b)(6), (b)(7)(C)
Deputy Assistant Commissioner
Office of Public Affairs
U.S. Customs and Border Protection
Office: (b)(6), (b)(7)(C)
Mobile: (b)(6), (b)(7)(C)
Email: (b)(6), (b)(7)(C)

From: (b)(6), (b)(7)(C)
Sent: Monday, April 5, 2021 7:38:58 PM
To: ESPINOSA, MARSHA (b)(6)
Subject: Re: CBP release/ Watchlist

Sorry, I have not heard yet. Will re-engage with the team.

(b)(6), (b)(7)(C)
Deputy Assistant Commissioner
Office of Public Affairs
U.S. Customs and Border Protection
Office: (b)(6), (b)(7)(C)
Mobile: (b)(6), (b)(7)(C)
Email: (b)(6), (b)(7)(C)

From: ESPINOSA, MARSHA (b)(6)
Sent: Monday, April 5, 2021 5:34:12 PM
To: (b)(6), (b)(7)(C)
Subject: FW: CBP release/ Watchlist

Flagging. Were you able to find out why they issued?

From: (b)(6), (b)(7)(C) (OPA) (FBI) (b)(6), (b)(7)(C)
Sent: Monday, April 5, 2021 5:23 PM
To: (b)(6) ESPINOSA, MARSHA (b)(6)

Cc: (b)(6), (b)(7)(C) (OPA) (FBI) (b)(6), (b)(7)(C)

Subject: Re: CBP release/ Watchlist

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of DHS. DO NOT click links or open attachments unless you recognize and/or trust the sender. Contact your component SOC with questions or concerns.

I need to alert you that our folks at the (b)(7)(E) are pretty upset that anyone's watchlist status was discussed.

From: (b)(6)

Sent: Monday, April 5, 2021 5:18 PM

To: (b)(6), (b)(7)(C) (OPA) (FBI) (b)(6), (b)(7)(C) ESPINOSA, MARSHA (b)(6)

Cc: (b)(6), (b)(7)(C) (OPA) (FBI) (b)(6), (b)(7)(C)

Subject: [EXTERNAL EMAIL] - RE: CBP release/ Watchlist

Hi (b)(6) – We've both been in back to back meetings but I am glad to call you as soon as I can. As Marsha mentioned, this was not flagged for us before it was released and we do not know why it was released. These are old arrests.

From: (b)(6), (b)(7)(C) (OPA) (FBI) (b)(6), (b)(7)(C)

Sent: Monday, April 5, 2021 4:54 PM

To: ESPINOSA, MARSHA (b)(6)

Cc: (b)(6), (b)(7)(C) (OPA) (FBI) (b)(6), (b)(7)(C)

Subject: CBP release/ Watchlist

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of DHS. DO NOT click links or open attachments unless you recognize and/or trust the sender. Contact your component SOC with questions or concerns.

Could one of you please call me about the CBP release?

Thanks.

(b)(6), (b)(7)(C)

FBI National Press Office

(b)(6), (b)(7)(C)

Message

From: (b)(7)(E)
Sent: 4/6/2021 3:00:49 AM
To: ESPINOSA, MARSHA (b)(6)
(b)(6)
Subject: Re: Yemenis at border?

I have made it abundantly clear the release should not have been posted/distributed. My feelings are not hurt that we are pulling it down.

I mentioned to (b)(6), (b)(7)(C) earlier about briefing AC1 but have not heard the results. Will circle back.

(b)(6), (b)(7)(C)

Deputy Assistant Commissioner
Office of Public Affairs
U.S. Customs and Border Protection

Office: (b)(6), (b)(7)(C)

Mobile: (b)(6), (b)(7)(C)

Email: (b)(6), (b)(7)(C)

From: ESPINOSA, MARSHA (b)(6)

Sent: Monday, April 5, 2021 10:51:38 PM

To: (b)(6), (b)(7)(C)

Subject: RE: Yemenis at border?

I'm sure whoever pushed for this release will reach out to reporters if it's taken down. You may want to have a holding statement ready if asked about why it violated policy. I just don't want someone to falsely claim again that I am "muzzling" CBP. What did the FO say?

From: (b)(6), (b)(7)(C)

Sent: Monday, April 5, 2021 10:43 PM

To: ESPINOSA, MARSHA (b)(6)

Subject: Re: Yemenis at border?

I have asked to have the release pulled off the newsroom.

(b)(6), (b)(7)(C)

Deputy Assistant Commissioner
Office of Public Affairs
U.S. Customs and Border Protection

Office: (b)(6), (b)(7)(C)

Mobile: (b)(6), (b)(7)(C)

Email: (b)(6), (b)(7)(C)

From: (b)(6), (b)(7)(C)

Sent: Monday, April 5, 2021 10:38:53 PM

To: ESPINOSA, MARSHA (b)(6)

Subject: Re: Yemenis at border?

I did not get a name but will track that down.

(b)(6), (b)(7)(C)

Deputy Assistant Commissioner
Office of Public Affairs
U.S. Customs and Border Protection
Office: (b)(6), (b)(7)(C)
Mobile: (b)(6), (b)(7)(C)
Email: (b)(6), (b)(7)(C)

From: ESPINOSA, MARSHA (b)(6)

Sent: Monday, April 5, 2021 10:37:35 PM

To: (b)(6), (b)(7)(C)

Subject: RE: Yemenis at border?

Yes- do you know who so we can pass that along?

From: (b)(6), (b)(7)(C)

Sent: Monday, April 5, 2021 10:36 PM

To: ESPINOSA, MARSHA (b)(6)

Subject: Re: Yemenis at border?

Understood.

Did you see my direct reply that FBI San Diego cleared it? It still should have been elevated and not released.

(b)(6), (b)(7)(C)

Deputy Assistant Commissioner
Office of Public Affairs
U.S. Customs and Border Protection
Office: (b)(6), (b)(7)(C)
Mobile: (b)(6), (b)(7)(C)
Email: (b)(6), (b)(7)(C)

From: ESPINOSA, MARSHA (b)(6)

Sent: Monday, April 5, 2021 10:31 PM

To: (b)(6), (b)(7)(C)

Subject: RE: Yemenis at border?

Just us here. This release put our colleagues at the FBI in a very bad position. They frankly cannot answer questions on this – even if CBP refer reporters to them. Please make sure your leadership is tracking and I recommend taking the release down since it was a mistake to issue in the first place.

From: (b)(6), (b)(7)(C)

Sent: Monday, April 5, 2021 9:27 PM

To: ESPINOSA, MARSHA (b)(6)

Cc: (b)(6), (b)(7)(C)

(b)(6), (b)(7)(C)

(b)(6), (b)(7)(C)

Subject: Re: Yemenis at border?

The horse is out of the barn - taking the release down would probably become part of the story.

This is the cleared statement we are using when folks inquire:

Our border security efforts are layered and include multiple levels of rigorous screening that allow us to detect and prevent people who pose national security or public safety risks from entering the United States. DHS works with our international partners to share intelligence and other information, including to prevent individuals on the terrorist watchlist from entering the United States. CBP adjudicates individuals encountered at and between our ports of entry against several classified and unclassified databases to determine if they pose a threat to national security, consistent with the law. While encounters of known and suspected terrorists at our borders are very uncommon, they underscore the importance of the critical work our agents carry out on a daily basis to vet all individuals encountered at our borders.

(b)(6), (b)(7)(C)

Deputy Assistant Commissioner

Office of Public Affairs

U.S. Customs and Border Protection

Office: (b)(6), (b)(7)(C)

Mobile: (b)(6), (b)(7)(C)

Email: (b)(6), (b)(7)(C)

From: ESPINOSA, MARSHA (b)(6)

Sent: Monday, April 5, 2021 9:17:31 PM

To: (b)(6), (b)(7)(C)

Cc: (b)(6), (b)(7)(C)

(b)(6), (b)(7)(C)

Subject: RE: Yemenis at border?

That makes sense, but since the release is out, how are you responding to the current inquiries? Is the release going to be revised or taken down?

From: (b)(6), (b)(7)(C)

Sent: Monday, April 5, 2021 8:54 PM

To: (b)(6), (b)(7)(C)

Cc: ESPINOSA, MARSHA (b)(6), (b)(7)(C)

(b)(6), (b)(7)(C)

Subject: Re: Yemenis at border?

(b)(6), (b)(7)(C)

The CBP release should not have gone out. I suggest we get back in our lane and refer media inquiries to the FBI, which owns the watchlist. It is not a perfect solution but it stops us from digging a deeper hole.

(b)(6), (b)(7)(C)
Deputy Assistant Commissioner
Office of Public Affairs
U.S. Customs and Border Protection
Office: (b)(6), (b)(7)(C)
Mobile: (b)(6), (b)(7)(C)
Email: (b)(6), (b)(7)(C)

On Apr 5, 2021, at 8:33 PM, (b)(6), (b)(7)(C) wrote:

Hi – Any updates on this? And are you responding to (b)(6), (b)(7)(C)? He reached out to us as well. Have you gotten other inquiries? There has been a fair amount of national coverage of the press release.

(b)(6), (b)(7)(C): Just saw the release about the two Yemeni men caught along the southern border earlier this year. I've reached out directly to CBP, but wanted to touch base with DHS as well. Can DHS share anything more about their terror affiliation or how these two men got onto the terror watch and no-fly lists? Are they linked to Iran? Al-Qaida? ISIS? If DHS can't be specific as to the group, can you say if they are considered Sunni terrorists or Shia terrorists? Will either of them face any terrorism charges, here or in another country? And if they are just removed from the US, who will take custody of them upon their release?

From: (b)(6), (b)(7)(C)
Sent: Monday, April 5, 2021 3:21 PM
To: ESPINOSA, MARSHA (b)(6)
(b)(6), (b)(7)(C)
Subject: RE: Yemenis at border?

Marsha:

I just saw this local release from the El Centro Sector posted: <https://www.cbp.gov/newsroom/local-media-release/two-yemeni-men-arrested-border-patrol-identified-fbi-s-terrorism-watch>

This is the first we (CBP OPA) have seen it – trying to run down how this got released without a heads-up.

(b)(6), (b)(7)(C)
Deputy Assistant Commissioner
Office of Public Affairs
U.S. Customs and Border Protection
Office: (b)(6), (b)(7)(C)
Mobile: (b)(6), (b)(7)(C)
Email: (b)(6), (b)(7)(C)

From: ESPINOSA, MARSHA (b)(6)

Sent: Monday, April 5, 2021 1:10 PM

To: (b)(6), (b)(7)(C)

(b)(6), (b)(7)(C)

Subject: RE: Yemenis at border?

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From: (b)(6), (b)(7)(C)

Sent: Monday, April 5, 2021 12:46 PM

To: (b)(6), (b)(7)(C)

(b)(6), (b)(7)(C)

Cc: ESPINOSA, MARSHA (b)(6)

Subject: FW: Yemenis at border?

Hi CBP team – See below from the AP. Do you know if this is about the same story that got traction a few weeks ago, or have you heard anything new?

From: (b)(6)

Date: April 5, 2021 at 10:59:32 AM EDT

To: (b)(6) (PAO)" (b)(6), (b)(7)(C) (PAO)"

(b)(6), (b)(7)(C)

Subject: Yemenis at border?

Hi (b)(6), (b)(7)(C)

A colleague of mine who covers news at the SW border says he's heard something about two Yemeni "terrorists" being apprehended (I assume by CBP). I guess if this is true, this perhaps might be an NSD matter, but unfortunately, I don't have more to offer on this tip. I was just wondering if this might ring a bell, and to the extent that it does, if there is anything you might be able to offer even for planning purposes.

Thanks,

(b)(6)

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