



## U.S. Customs and Border Protection

## Border Patrol Tactical Unit (BORTAC)

The Border Patrol Tactical Unit provides an immediate-response capability to emergent and high-risk incidents requiring specialized skills and tactics. BORTAC has a cadre of full-time team members headquartered in El Paso, Texas and non-full-time members dispersed throughout the United States. The teams can be called upon to deploy immediately when needed.

The unit is unique in that it conducts training and operations both in the United States and in other countries in furtherance of the U.S. Border Patrol's mission. BORTAC also trains and equips Sector Special Operations Detachments that provide Sector Chief Patrol Agents with the same specialized rapid-response capability in their respective areas of responsibility.

The unit was created in 1984 to serve a civil disturbance function in response to rioting at legacy Immigration and Naturalization Service detention facilities. It quickly evolved and acquired additional skill sets in high-risk warrant service; intelligence, reconnaissance and surveillance; foreign law enforcement / Border Patrol capacity building; airmobile operations; maritime operations; and precision marks- man/observer.

BORTAC is unique in that it provides a global response capability. The unit has conducted training and operations with foreign and domestic law enforcement and



A BORTAC sniper and his spotter taking a shot during their qualifications to pass the BORTAC Sniper Certification .

military entities throughout the United States and around the world, including support of Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom.

BORTAC's Selection and Training Course (BSTC) was designed to mirror aspects of the U.S. Special Operations Forces' selection courses. The grueling BSTC, which may last over a month, begins with physical testing involving push-ups, sit-ups, pull-ups, a 1.5 mile run and a pistol qualification. Candidates who pass the initial testing must then complete a timed, six-mile ruck march with a weighted pack. Additional testing is performed for swimming, treading water, and drown-proofing.

After completing the entire testing phase, candidates undergo weeks of intense training in small unit tactics, operational planning, advanced weapon skills, defensive tactics, and airmobile operations. Before graduating and putting the BORTAC wings on their uniforms, candidates must demonstrate the ability to function in a team environment under stress and sleep deprivation conditions. BSTC graduates then will return to their respective sectors and work alongside other operators while learning advanced techniques in weapons and tactics. ❖



BORTAC Team members practice immediate action drill training.