



**Homeland
Security**

FLETC Office of Artesia Operations Overview

The Federal Law Enforcement Training Centers (FLETC), Office of Artesia Operations (OAO), is one of three FLETC residential training sites in the United States. Named for the town where it is located in the heart of southeast New Mexico's oil and dairy belt, the 3,620-acre site includes a full range of facilities for conducting basic and advanced law enforcement training.

The FLETC acquired the campus of the former Artesia Christian College in 1989 and has since steadily improved and expanded the facilities there to support the growing need for quality training by the FLETC's Partner Organizations. In addition, the FLETC OAO houses certain specialized assets – notably a collection of grounded 727 aircraft – used to support a variety of anti-terrorism training programs, and four International Border Fences replicating barriers used throughout various areas on the border between the United States and Mexico. The fences provide realistic training venues for students participating in scenarios while attending basic and advanced programs.

Shortly after September 11, 2001 and in response to Congressional mandates, the focus at the FLETC OAO shifted heavily toward Air Marshal training. Within three months of the terrorist attacks, the FLETC developed and delivered a new basic training program for Federal Air Marshals (FAMs). Due to the requirements associated with training a Congressionally mandated number of FAMs, the FLETC OAO was identified as the permanent location for the FAM training program delivery. As a result, FLETC OAO's student population grew tenfold between January and September 2002, and FLETC OAO's staffing levels correspondingly increased by approximately 150%. Training for Air Marshals remains constant to date.

The Federal Flight Deck Officer (FFDO) training was added to the FLETC OAO's repertoire in September 2003. FFDOs are commercial pilots who volunteer their time to become part of the nation's first line of defense against terrorist acts. During the class, the pilots learn defensive tactics, firearms, flying armed, and judgmental pistol shooting.

The United States Border Patrol (USBP) consolidated all of its training activities at the FLETC OAO in September 2004. This further solidified the importance of the FLETC OAO in enabling the FLETC to meet our nation's homeland security objectives. The USBP continues to be a large presence at the FLETC OAO.

The FLETC OAO has been the home of the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) Indian Police Academy (IPA) since 1992. Basic, advanced and export training is conducted by the OAO staff for BIA and tribal police. Of great significance to the Indian Country law enforcement community is the presence of the BIA Memorial at the FLETC OAO. The Memorial honors the

service and sacrifice of those BIA and tribal officers who have died in the line of duty. For a complete list, see: <http://www.fletc.gov/about-fletc/locations/artesia/indian-country-law-enforcement-officers-memorial.html>.

In support of the significant growth in training programs, the FLETC OAO facility has expanded dramatically over the years. The site contains basic support facilities such as numerous classroom buildings containing classrooms, interview suites, a fully equipped courtroom, drug identification labs, and fingerprint labs. The 108,000 square foot Physical Techniques Building houses mat rooms, gymnasium, cardio room, weight rooms, an aquatic training center, and the Health Unit for students and staff. The firearms complex includes 450 firing points in both indoor and outdoor ranges, as well as three live-fire shoot houses, three non-lethal shoot house airplanes, mat rooms, classrooms, cover courses, skeet range (which is used to hit targets in motion, thereby providing more realistic training than static target shooting), and judgmental pistol shooting simulators. Other facilities are practical exercise sites with checkpoints, barns, confidence courses, rail yard inspection training area (including rail cars, vehicle inspection area with a tractor trailer rig and passenger buses), and support space. The driving courses include multiple sets of high-speed pursuit ranges, non-emergency vehicle operation courses, skidpans, and four-wheel drive courses, all which provide a wide range of real-world training opportunities.

Student support facilities include a dining hall that can feed more than 1,000 students per meal, and a student center featuring a convenience store and internet café. On-site housing includes single- and double-occupancy dormitories as well as modular dormitories. However, it is the dotted landscape of portable buildings that is the true sign of rapid growth. These buildings were constructed to provide additional language labs, classrooms, and office space. Construction and expansion of facilities include a language arts building, a Firearms Multi-Purpose Building, detention facility, and an Auditorium including office space which was completed in fiscal year (FY) 2014.

Training for USBP has stabilized from the FY 2008 level, when student numbers increased 52% compared to FY 2007. This was facilitated by the finalization of the USBP's new 55 day training program and 40 day Spanish immersion programs. This restructuring of training for USBP allowed agents fluent in Spanish to graduate sooner and be deployed to the border more quickly. In FY 2009 OAO began to see a gradual reduction in USBP enrollment as the Secure Border Initiative came to a close. Through the joint efforts of the FLETC and the USBP, the goal of the initiative was reached, allowing the USBP to begin concentrating on filling vacancies created by the normal attrition process. In FY 2010 three new programs – for the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, the United States Department of Agriculture, and the Bureau of Land Management – began training at the FLETC OAO.

The FLETC OAO's "can-do" attitude has been demonstrated repeatedly since September 11, 2001 and serves as a continuous reminder of the success of DHS and the FLETC OAO's ability to train those who protect our homeland.