

Narco Blockades



TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY
BORDER SECURITY OPERATIONS CENTER



April 10, 2011



Narco Blockades



Narcobloqueos

In recent months, Mexican Drug Trafficking Organizations (DTOs) operating throughout the US-Mexican border are utilizing street blockade tactics, or Narcobloqueos. Mexico has seen extensive use of blockades to close lines of communication, either to directly ambush rival DTO members, police and military patrols, or to isolate a geographic area



during their operations preventing access to first responders which might be able to disrupt their plans. Individuals use high caliber weapons to take keys from motorists and employ their vehicles as obstacles to block the streets. Numerous blockades can be conducted simultaneously in the middle of cities following the carjacking of large tractor trailers, automobiles, public transportation buses and even school buses.

Monterrey – March '10



Guadalajara – Feb '11



Monterrey – April '10



Monterrey – Aug '10





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Numerous reports have been made indicating that armed men are boarding city buses, ordering passengers to hand over their valuables and forcing them off. The bus/buses are doused with gasoline and set on fire, not only blocking the street and thus emergency responders, but prohibiting an expeditious and efficient clean up.

Monterrey – March '10



Nuevo Laredo – July '10



Morelia – Dec '10



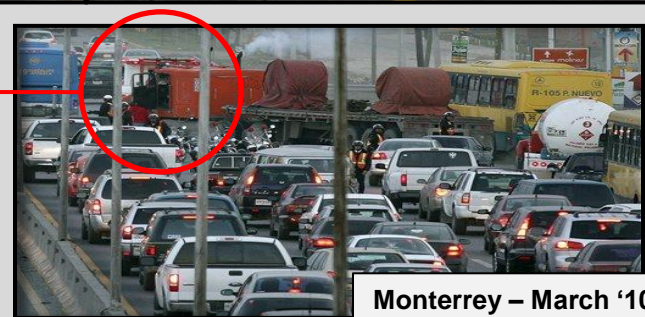
Apatzingan – Dec '10



Law Enforcement is required to have industrial strength tow trucks or other heavy equipment readily available to clear the un-manned wreckage.



Stock Photo



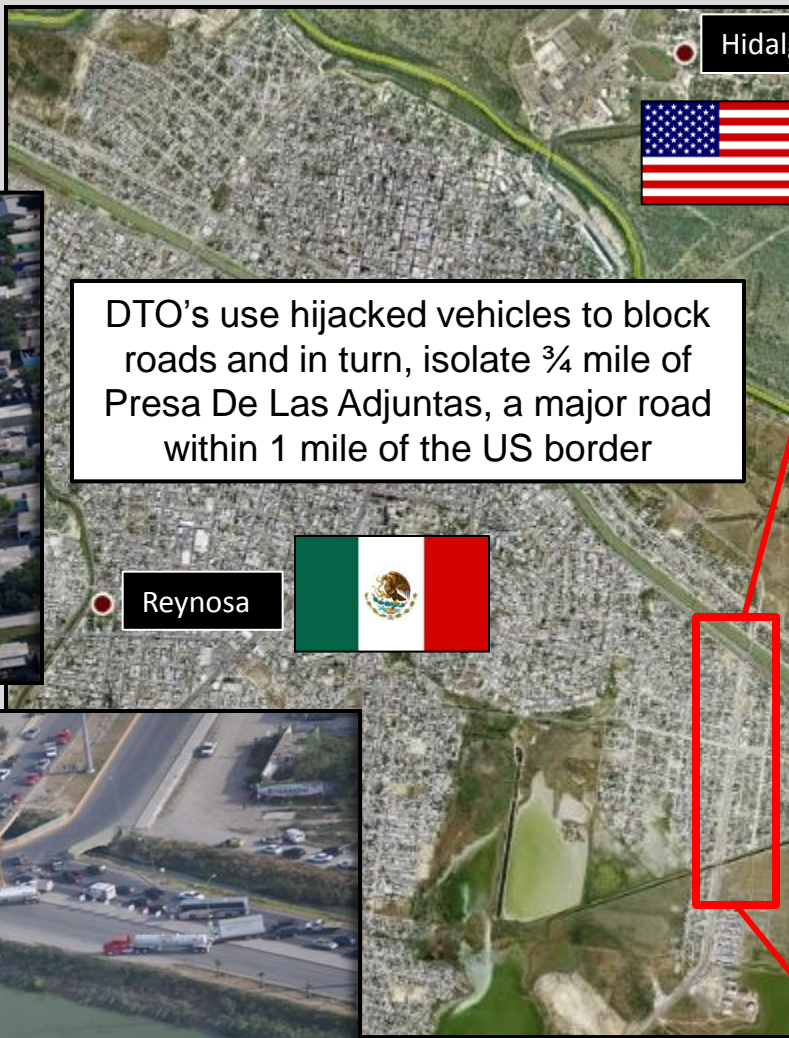
Monterrey – March '10



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Reynosa, Mexico:



Hidalgo

DTO's use hijacked vehicles to block roads and in turn, isolate 3/4 mile of Presa De Las Adjuntas, a major road within 1 mile of the US border



Reynosa



Sierra de La Garza

1

2

3

4

Ernesto

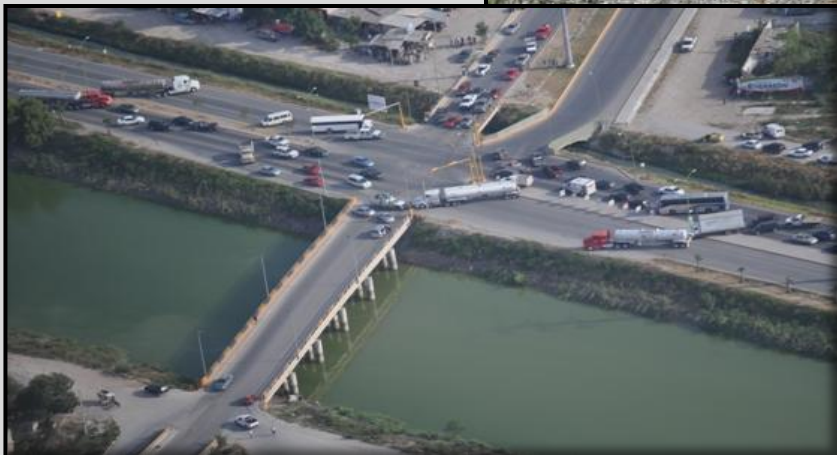
Las Delicias

5

Juan Escutia

6

6 separate intersections were blocked by up to 47 vehicles, including 7 tractor-trailer rigs, and 16 buses





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"El Tori"

Hector Raul Luna aka "El Tori", the head of the Zetas drug cartel for the state of Nuevo Leon was arrested by the Mexican Army in the city of Monterrey, after which armed attacks and road blockages occurred throughout the city. Minutes after his detention, a series of blockades were thrown up by armed men who hijacked buses, tractor trailers, cars and pick-ups throughout the metropolitan area. The vehicles were then placed across 19 main intersections in order to block access. Some of the main roadways had up to 4 different blockages in place.



Monterrey –
June '10



Many vehicles used in the blockages had their tires shot out or were otherwise damaged to make the task of removal more difficult. At many of the intersections, authorities took more than three hours to react and were kept busy for hours. Traffic flow was severely disrupted and reports describe a city in chaos.



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PROJECT



In Nuevo Leon, July 2010 a cartel group set up a narco blockade to directly ambush rival DTO members. The road blocking tactic was utilized at many intersections to funnel the target(s) to predictable paths and to deter interference from federal elements. This particular incident allowed them to engage in a firefight for over two hours.



Following the arrest of several La Familia leaders, gunmen blockaded President Felipe Calderon's hometown of Morelia. Drivers were forced

from cars, trucks and buses and vehicles set ablaze at all 5 entrances to the city.

Law Enforcement Sensitive//For Official Use Only

Monterrey – Nov '10



This blockade occurred after Mexican Marine's killed one of Mexico's top kingpins, Ezequiel "Tony Tormenta" Cardenas



Narco Blockades

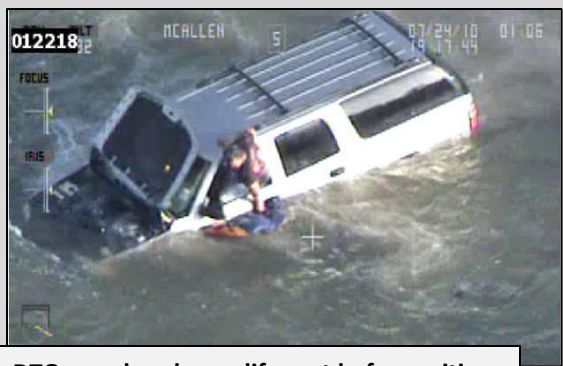


Of increasing importance, US law enforcement agencies along the Mexican border have seen the use of mobile blockades, in the form of cars running interference for a fleeing drug load vehicle on major roadways or in the event of an impending splashdown. Mobile blockades can be very effective in buying time for the fleeing subject in tight urban areas. Splashdowns are a tactic where DTOs re-route a compromised vehicle directly into the river where associates will be waiting in rafts or boats. Much/most of the narcotics will float out of a submerging vehicle, allowing DTOs to retrieve their load and try again another day.



Vehicle splashdown
in Los Ebanos, TX

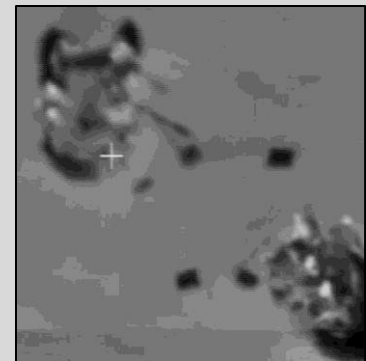
DTO members recovering narcotics loads after splashdown.



DTO member dons a life vest before exiting.



DTO raft crew responding to vehicle splashdown.





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On February 15, 2011, ICE Agents Jaime Zapata and Victor Avila were ambushed by unknown gunmen in their armored SUV with diplomatic plates after being stopped by a narco blockade. After the Agents identified themselves as US Citizens and diplomats, the gunmen opened fire. The pair were traveling in a region of central Mexico increasingly under the influence of drug traffickers. Agent Zapata was critically wounded and later succumbed to his wounds, while Agent Avila was shot twice in the leg.



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On 24 April, 2010, this Jeep Grand Cherokee was used to transport Minerva Bautista, head of the Secretaria de Seguridad of Michoacan, Mexico. The office of the Secretaria de Seguridad is the equivalent of our State Department of Public Safety. She survived the assassination attempt due to the level 5 armored vehicle she was traveling in. Assailants created a blockade with a tractor-trailer and showered the vehicle with over 350 impacts from AK-47, AR-15, 40mm RPG, and .50 Barret.



**THIS PRODUCT WAS RESEARCHED BY AND CREATED IN PARTNERSHIP WITH US ARMY SOLDIERS
FROM THE WOUNDED WARRIOR PROJECT AT TEXAS DPS HEADQUARTERS**

If any comments or questions arise from this product, please contact:

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