

Biden and Kamala Harris accused of 'playing' with border stats to create illusion that crossings are dropping in 'ground zero' swing state

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The Biden-Harris administration is cherry picking U.S. Customs and Border Protection data to fit their narrative that immigration issues are improving ahead of the election, according to a former Border Patrol agent.

Recent immigration data shows that the numbers of migrant encounters are dropping from record highs months ago, but that is not the entire picture, National Border Patrol Council Vice President Art Del Cueto, told DailyMail.com.

'The reality is, the numbers have dropped, but [the Biden administration] has played with the numbers somewhat,' he charged.

'The encounters [have dropped], as opposed to the "gotaways." No one really knows the gotaways,' he said, calling it the 'biggest issue' facing the nation.

Known 'gotaways' are migrants who entered the U.S. without being apprehended by authorities.

And it's particularly bad in the must-win swing state of Arizona. 'This is ground zero,' Del Cueto told DailyMail.com.

Gaining the support of voters in Arizona is key to winning the 2024 election - and [Kamala Harris](#) knows it.



National Border Patrol Council board member Art Del Cueto walks with U.S. Republican Presidential Candidate and former President Donald Trump along the U.S.-Mexico border on August 22, 2024 south of Sierra Vista, Arizona. Del Cueto told DailyMail.com the White House has played with the numbers of official migrant crossings

Del Cueto says millions have entered within the last roughly 3.5 years under [Joe Biden](#).

Immigration figures estimate that since Biden took office, there have been over eight million illegal migrants who entered the U.S. by way of the southern border. That number could reach 10 million by the end of his term.



'This is the number one area for got aways, and it has been for several years now,' Del Cueto told DailyMail.com at a [Donald Trump](#) campaign event in Cochise County, [Arizona](#).

But even with only roughly 58,000 encounters recorded by CBP in July, a low not seen since Trump was in office in 2020, many migrant crossings - if not the majority - go unaccounted.

'So every time that you hear gotaways, the answer that you hear from these [agents] is, 'potential gotaways,' or close to this amount,' Del Cueto clarified.

'They have two million [gotaways] is what they're saying right now,' he continued, citing numbers he was told from his sources inside the agency. 'But there's no way to really tell.'

'I mean, basically a lot of the two million gotaways that we count, it's counting footprints on the dirt.'



Del Cueto advised Trump on what was happening along the border in the Tucson Sector during the former president's visit to the area last week



Migrants make camp in Mexico just yards from the U.S. border wall as they prepare to cross and one looks out with binoculars



While at the Arizona border DailyMail.com spotted several presumed human smugglers dressed in camouflage



Along the border there were sections that appeared to be completely missing. Migrants were seen crossing over into the U.S. at the location pictured here



A group of men from Nepal and Bangladesh sit on a dirt path by the U.S.-Mexico border awaiting a ride from federal agents. These men were eventually encountered by authorities and would not be considered gotaways

Tracking the amount of migrants that slip through between ports of entry has been a notorious issue that has long plagued the agency.

Migrants that appear on sensors or video but continue unchecked are also counted among gotaways.

'You count the footprints, and you tell me that you're gonna get an accurate number,' Del Cueto said. 'And a lot of times, that's what they're looking at.'

Historically the agency has been able to catch roughly 40 percent of migrants that cross, but that number is internal and has not been reexamined in years.

'Before President Trump, in fact, we'll go back as far as before President Obama took over, they were saying that the effectiveness of what they were apprehending was 40 percent.'

'So 60 percent was getting away,' the former agent continued.

If that figure was correct, it would mean that 60 percent of migrants that illegally cross into the U.S. make it in without being encountered by a federal agent.

'So there's really no way for them to tell how many are truly getting away,' he told DailyMail.com.



Del Cueto charge the White House with 'playing' with the immigration numbers



Border Patrol eventually picked up the group of men from Asia

The remote stretch of border wall in Cochise County where Trump visited was 'dangerous' he noted at the time, and the former president's visit admittedly made him 'nervous.'

The Border Patrol union executive used to work out of the Tucson Border Patrol Sector, the one responsible for the area.

At the event along the border wall, [Trump announced new death penalty policies for illegal migrants](#) found guilty of heinous crimes at the event before leaving without incident.

When he was tipped off at the event there was a local manhunt underway in town for a man that made death threats to the former president, he agreed the area was perilous and [joked that he should leave right then and there.](#)



Migrants await a ride from Border Patrol in the remote reaches of the south Arizona desert



A group of migrants from India wait in the shade of the border wall for a ride from Border Patrol



There were 36 migrants who were encountered by authorities along a small stretch of road from Sasabe, Arizona, eastbound on Friday August 22, 2024. It was just one of three daily routine pick ups from the remote area

And the Border Patrol in the Tucson Sector as well as construction crews have been hard at work repelling migrant's and their cartel guide's efforts to breach the border wall.

'There are actually breaches on the wall itself,' he noted, indicating that cartels often try to cut holes to more easily smuggle people into the country.

'Every day there's more and more breaches,' he added.