

# Proctored, Web-Based Testing: Leveraging Test Centers and Technology at U.S. Customs and Border Protection

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# Overview

- Introduction to CBP
  - Agency
  - Testing Program
- Online Talent Management
- Test Centers
- Trained Test Proctors



CBP is the frontline agency of the Department of Homeland Security—charged with securing and managing our nation's borders.



- 18,000 CBP Officers
- 13,900 CBP Border Patrol Agents
- 2,000 Agriculture Specialists
- More than 590 CBP Pilots and more than 70 CBP Marine Officers
- 14,400+ other specialists and support staff



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# Who We Are:

## Personnel Research and Assessment Division

- Personnel Research and Assessment Division (PRAD)
  - Part of CBP's Office of Human Resources Management
  - Group of I/O psychologists who design, develop, validate, and implement a wide range of competency-based assessments
  - Serve CBP, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, and U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services
  - Customer base is over 70,000 employees (CBP, CIS, ICE) nationwide and internationally



# CBP Testing Program

- Occupations:
  - Since 2006: Border Patrol Agents, CBP Officers, Agriculture Specialists
  - Since 2007: ICE Special Agents & Detention and Removal Officers
- Online Assessments:
  - Critical Thinking Skills
  - Management Writing Skills
  - Job Knowledge Test
  - In-Basket Job Simulation



# Online Talent Management

- Access to test and eligibility information
- Self-scheduling of tests
- Reminder e-mails
- Access to testing status and scores
- 24/7 tech support



# Online Talent Management: Candidates' Perspective

- Benefits
  - Convenience
  - Access to information
- Limitations
  - Familiarity with and access to computers/Internet



# Online Talent Management: Program's Perspective

- Benefits
  - Program implementation
  - Test Security
  - Convenience
  - Access to information
- Limitations
  - Technology





# Test Centers

- Locations
  - Throughout the U.S.
  - Mobile test centers
  - International availability upon request
- State-of-the-Art Technology
- Uniform and Secure
  - Audited to ensure security and quality
- ADA compliant



# Test Centers



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# Test Centers



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# Test Centers: Candidates' Perspective

- Benefits
  - Convenient location
  - Technology provided
  - Secure environment conducive to testing
- Limitations
  - Travel to and from center required
  - Structured environment



# Test Centers: Program's Perspective

- Benefits
  - Eliminates need for travel to OPM designated locations
  - Increase in available days/times to test
  - Ensures security of testing location
  - Ensures all candidates take test in similar environments
  - Ensures quality and functionality of technology
- Limitations
  - Costs involved in contracting with test centers
  - May not be available in remote areas



# Test Proctors

- On site at all test centers
- Trained in the administration of tests, security standards, technology troubleshooting
- Greet testers as they arrive
- Check-in testers
  - Allow delivery of test to tester
  - Verify Identity
- Available throughout testing time to provide assistance



# Test Proctors: Candidates' Perspective

- Benefits
  - On-site support and feedback
  - Neutral administrator (i.e., Proctors are not employed by CBP)
- Limitations
  - May not be able to answer questions regarding promotion process





# Test Proctors: Program's Perspective

- Benefits

- Eliminates need for CBP personnel to arrange and coordinate proctoring
- Ensure security of process

- Limitations

- Must ensure all proctors are properly trained on program and consistently follow procedures
- Some candidate questions may not be addressed by proctor or, in some instances, may give incorrect information because they are not CBP personnel





# Summary of Program (Pro's)

- Customer friendly
- Professional test environment
- Testing in remote locations made easier
- Enhanced test security (no hard copies, no mailing)



# Summary of Program (Con's)

- Resource intensive by choice
- Costly (more mobiles, low candidate numbers)
- Test site/test proctor consistency



# Online Testing Program Implementation Suggestions

- Carefully select contractor to ensure needs are met
- Ensure contract allows for expansion
- Ensure your program office understands and supports the online testing process
- Anticipate program staffing needs to support this type of testing
- Ensure all written documentation is clear and concise (e.g., candidate instructions, marketing information, contractor communications, etc.)





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