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# **FIRST CONTACT SPANISH FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT**

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1.

## THE ISSUES OF UNDERSTANDING FIRST CONTACT

Political correctness and social sensitivities put aside, there are certainly many arguments circulating about the practical needs for Law Enforcement Personnel to have a working knowledge of the *Spanish* language. Whether it be *Castillian* ( proper ) or a version that is locally *ethnic* or *slang*.

The *author* will happily divulge ( *previous to marriage to an Hispanic & this manual* ) of having no real working understanding of the Spanish language. However he will also agree that not making an effort to learn the language, may indeed prove counter-productive in the long term, with regard to *Officer Safety* and the ability to *protect and serve* those people who do not understand the national language of the USA.

There is probably no argument over the fact that there are huge numbers of *Illegal Aliens* ( undocumented persons ) now residing within the borders of the USA. *Not all* are *Mexican* in origin, many are Cubans and Chinese. The vast majority do not *speak* or *comprehend* the written English language.

Hispanic Americans are residents of the USA who belong to a Spanish speaking ethnic group or community. The facts show that the numbers of residents both *legal* and *illegal* continue to climb. The 1990 US census reported the following :

1. The increase of HO persons to be over 22,350.000 which is 9% of the US recorded population.
2. The HO groups in the State of Texas number 4,294.120. This set against a population that totals 16,986,510 in other words over 25%. Studies indicate that as we move further into the 21st century that number will increase by a further 21% and possibly even greater.

None of the above statistics can accurately reflect the vast numbers of illegal Aliens that add to the numbers. Most of the HO population is of Mexican birth and ancestry, with a deep seated culture base. What has been termed by some as *Tex Mex* or *Mexican - Anglo*. Mexican - Americans are a mixture of both cultures. Others aliens include Cuban and Chinese.

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Traditionally their concentration has been regional to the South west and especially in *Texas* and *California*. In recent years however there has been a steady increase in nearly all US States. Florida, South Carolina, Arkansas, and Tennessee are included. Wherever there is a unskilled labor need.

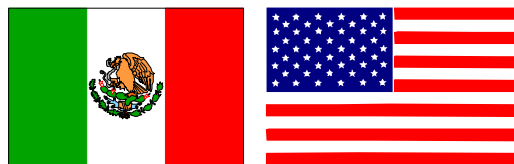
This working manual does not wish to involve itself in the reason behind the migrations, but without a doubt the social and economic advantages of seeking work in the US whether *legal* or *illegal*, is a huge motivating force. At this time *illegal* and also *documented* immigration, is on the increase.

What can be said without any fear of argument is that the USA national language of *English* is being diluted at an ever increasing rate with *Spanish*. Commercial business has recognized this fact and has already begun to print and communicate in bilingual messaging. This can be evidenced in other countries such as *Canada* where it is law that all writings must be displayed in English and in the French language.

As with any *Group of Individuals* crime, and the criminal element will always be present. If there is an additional failure to understand culture and language, then all Law Enforcement *Professionals* are at risk for a possible *attack* and subject to *subterfuge*.

The ever present criminal elements who deal in *Human Trafficking* as well as *Illegal Narcotic Smuggling*, and the additional specter of *Terror Groups* have shown that Law Enforcement Groups perse` need to be flexible in communication skills, and intelligence gathering abilities.

We need to accept that our communities are changing, and it will be permanent not short term. To resist or deny change is a denial of reality.



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**Forward - *The reasons why we must learn***

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