



Official State Historical Center of the Texas
Rangers law enforcement agency.

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Rio Grande Valley Joint Operations Intelligence Center Issues

Operation Border Star Challenge Coin



Operation Border Star Challenge Coin, 20/100
Gift of Rio Grande Valley Joint Operations Intelligence Center
Cat. No. 2011.23.1

The Challenge Coin for the Rio Grande Valley Joint Operations Intelligence Center (RGV JOIC) is a unique combination of the military and the law enforcement agency of the Texas Rangers. There were only one hundred of these coins struck, with the first twenty-five being numbered. Coin #1 was presented to Texas Governor Rick Perry, and the remaining twenty-four were distributed to members of the JOIC team and various officials within the Texas Department of Public Safety, Texas Military Forces, and the US Border Patrol. Coin #20 was reserved for the Texas Ranger Hall of Fame and Museum. These coins will not be produced again.

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RGV JOIC Team Members

The JOIC concept is the base of operations along the border between the state of Texas and Mexico for Operation Border Star intelligence collection and dissemination. The JOIC is supervised by a staff lieutenant from the Texas Rangers, who is assisted by a border liaison officer and members of the Texas Military Forces (TMF). The RGV JOIC is housed within the United States Border Patrol RGV Sector Headquarters and is deeply integrated with the US Border Patrol in intelligence collection and distribution.

The Challenge Coin was designed by two members of the TMF JOIC team, Sergeant First Class Ron Smith and Sergeant First Class David Gutierrez. The front side of the coin is dedicated to the Texas Military Forces, which is comprised of the Texas State Guard, Texas Army National Guard, and the Texas Air National Guard. Soldiers and airmen from Operation Border Star and Texas Counter Drug are the operators who man the JOIC. The shield is the official insignia of the TMF. The palm trees represent the Rio Grande Valley, and the six stars represent the original six operators from the Texas State Guard who manned the JOIC from inception. (The JOIC TMF component has been increased in the number of team members since it began operation in 2008.)

The back of the coin has the distinctive *cinco peso* badge of the Texas Rangers, and this is the first time that a military unit and the Texas Rangers have been combined on a Challenge Coin. It is only fitting since both organizations, which trace their foundation back to 1835, have had significant interaction in many ways for over one hundred and fifty years. The seven stars under the Ranger badge represent the unity of the Texas Rangers and the Texas Military Forces in meeting the tasks and goals of Operation Border Star and protecting the citizens of Texas and the United States.

Only those persons who have physically entered the RGV JOIC are privileged to receive this coin. It is passed on in the traditional method of shaking hands between the JOIC Team member and the recipient.