

1 WO

2

3

4

5

6

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

7

FOR THE DISTRICT OF ARIZONA

8

9

United States of America,

)

CR-11-561-TUC-JGZ (DTF)

10

Plaintiff,

)

**ORDER**

11

vs.

)

12

Omar Ruiz-Perez,

)

13

Defendant.

)

14

15

16

On October 5, 2011, Magistrate Judge D. Thomas Ferraro issued a Report and Recommendation (“R&R”) (Doc. 61) in which he recommended that Defendant’s Motion to Suppress Evidence (Doc. 36) be denied. The R&R provided that any party could file written objections within fourteen (14) days after being served with a copy of the R & R. On October 31, 2011, Defendant filed his Objections to Magistrate’s Report and Recommendation (Doc. 70); the government filed a Response to Defendant’s Objections on December 15, 2011. (Doc. 74.) After review of the Objections and Response, the Court set this matter for evidentiary hearing. (Doc. 82.) Additional evidence was heard on February 15, 2012. (Doc. 93.) At the evidentiary hearing, the parties also submitted a Stipulation of Facts. (Doc. 94.)

26

**STANDARD OF REVIEW**

27

The Court reviews *de novo* the objected-to portions of the Report and Recommendation. 28 U.S.C. § 636(b)(1); Fed. R. Civ. P. 72(b). The Court reviews for clear

28

1 error the unobjected-to portions of the Report and Recommendation. *Johnson v. Zema*  
2 *Systems Corp.*, 170 F.3d 734, 739 (7th Cir. 1999); *see also Conley v. Crabtree*, 14 F.Supp.2d  
3 1203, 1204 (D. Or. 1998).

#### 4 **FACTUAL BACKGROUND**

5 The factual background contained in Magistrate Ferraro's R & R (Doc. 61) is  
6 uncontested.<sup>1</sup> As such, it is adopted by reference herein.

7 The Court adopts the Stipulation of Facts and finds that: (1) the primary purpose of  
8 the I-19 Immigration Checkpoint is immigration and (2) at the time Agent Kouris signaled  
9 Agent Thornton to stop Defendant's truck, traffic at the checkpoint was being flushed as  
10 instructed by the checkpoint supervisor.

11 Based on the February 15, 2012 testimony of Border Patrol Agent Greg Smith, a  
12 supervisor at the I-19 Checkpoint, the Court further finds as follows. The checkpoint has  
13 three lanes, with one lane designated for commercial trucks. Approximately one and one-  
14 half miles before the checkpoint, a sign indicates that traffic should slow down. As vehicles  
15 approach the checkpoint, the vehicles are divided into three lanes, each marked with a stop  
16 sign. Each vehicle is stopped for a short primary inspection lasting approximately 20  
17 seconds. Agents have discretion to wave vehicles through the primary inspection without  
18 stopping them. Agents may also refer vehicles to secondary inspection if they suspect an  
19 immigration violation.

---

20  
21 <sup>1</sup> Defendant did not challenge any specific factual finding of the Magistrate, but included in  
22 a footnote in the "Facts" section of his Objections to the Magistrate's R&R stating "to the extent  
23 these facts differ from the Magistrate's findings, Mr. Ruiz-Perez objects to the findings of fact."  
24 Defendant bears the burden of raising specific objections to the Magistrate's factual findings. *See*  
25 *Thomas v. Arn*, 474 U.S. 140, 142 (1985); *Jones v. Wood*, 207 F.3d 557, 562 n. 2 (9th Cir. 2000)  
26 (failure to object to a magistrate judge's recommendation waives all objections to the judge's  
27 findings of fact.). The Court declines to bear the burden of identifying facts to which Defendant may  
28 object and concludes that Defendant has not contested Magistrate Ferraro's factual findings. The  
Court further notes that in the Stipulation of Facts filed by the parties on February 15, 2012, the  
parties specifically accepted the findings of facts set forth in Magistrate Ferraro's R&R at page 2,  
paragraphs 1-2 and page 5, paragraph 3. (Doc. 94, ¶ 1.)



1 vehicle without a search.” (Defendant’s Reply to Government’s Response to Defendant’s  
2 Motion to Suppress Evidence, Doc. 44, p. 1, citing *United States v. Preciado-Robles*, 964  
3 F.2d 882, 884 (9<sup>th</sup> Cir. 1992).) The I-19 Checkpoint is a fixed checkpoint. Defendant’s  
4 vehicle was stopped at the checkpoint and Defendant was asked a few brief questions relating  
5 to immigration.

6 The Magistrate Judge, however, found that an “articulable suspicion or a minimal  
7 showing of suspicion” was required to stop the Defendant’s truck at the I-19 Checkpoint  
8 based on Agent Kouris’s subjective beliefs about Defendant’s vehicle. The Magistrate found  
9 that Agent Kouris directed Agent Thornton to stop Defendant’s vehicle because the vehicle  
10 fit the description provided in an ICE lookout for certain trucks suspected of smuggling  
11 drugs. Because the checkpoint was being flushed, the Magistrate Judge reasoned that  
12 Defendant would not have been stopped at the checkpoint but for the drug lookout. The  
13 Magistrate Judge concluded that although Defendant could have been stopped for an  
14 immigration inspection without individualized suspicion, the agent’s subjective intent to  
15 investigate a suspicion of drug trafficking while the checkpoint was being flushed required  
16 an articulable suspicion or a minimal showing of suspicion. (Doc. 61, pg. 6.) Defendant  
17 contends that this legal standard is incorrect, and that in fact a “reasonable suspicion” is  
18 required. The Court disagrees with the Magistrate Judge and Defendant, but concludes that  
19 the stop was nevertheless constitutional.

20 The Ninth Circuit applies a two-step analysis in evaluating the constitutionality of a  
21 stop at an immigration checkpoint. First the court must “determine whether the primary  
22 purpose of the [checkpoint] was to advance the general interest in crime control. If it is, the  
23 stop is invalid under the Fourth Amendment.” *United States v. Fraire*, 575 F.3d 929, 932  
24 (9<sup>th</sup> Cir. 2009) (internal quotations and citations omitted). Second, “[i]f the checkpoint is not  
25 *per se* invalid as a crime control device, then the court must judge the checkpoint’s  
26 reasonableness, hence its constitutionality, on the basis of the individual circumstances.”  
27 *Id.* (internal quotations and citations omitted).

1           There has been no allegation that the I-19 Checkpoint was intended to serve as a  
2 general crimes checkpoint. The parties agree that the primary purpose of the I-19 Checkpoint  
3 is immigration. As the Ninth Circuit noted in *Fraire*, the Supreme Court has upheld the  
4 constitutionality of permanent immigration checkpoints. *Fraire*, 575 F.3d at 932 (*United*  
5 *States v. Martinez-Fuerte*, 428 U.S. 543, 556 (1976) upheld immigration checkpoints because  
6 primary purpose was not detection or ordinary criminal wrongdoing). In *Martinez-Fuerte*,  
7 the Supreme Court reasoned that although a stop at a permanent immigration checkpoint  
8 constitutes a seizure within the meaning of the Fourth Amendment, given the strong public  
9 interest in enforcing immigration law and the minimal intrusion on privacy, such a seizure  
10 is constitutional even absent reasonable suspicion about a vehicle’s occupants. *Martinez-*  
11 *Fuerte*, 428 U.S. at 556-60. Thus, a stop for brief questioning routinely conducted at  
12 permanent immigration checkpoints does not require a showing of individualized suspicion.  
13 *Martinez-Fuerte*, 428 U.S. 543, 566 (1976).

14           As the immigration purpose of the I-19 Checkpoint is distinguishable from the general  
15 interest in crime control, the checkpoint is not *per se* unconstitutional. Therefore, the Court  
16 next looks to the reasonableness on the basis of the individual circumstances. Factors to  
17 consider in the reasonableness analysis include: the gravity of the public concerns served by  
18 the seizure; the degree to which the seizure advances the public interest; and the severity of  
19 the interference with individual liberty. *Fraire*, 575 F.3d 934-35. Applying these factors,  
20 the Court concludes that the stop of the Defendant at the I-19 Checkpoint is reasonable, and  
21 therefore constitutional.

22           The first two factors are easily met. Immigration checkpoints such as the one at issue  
23 in this case serve a public interest in securing the border. The Supreme Court and the Ninth  
24 Circuit have repeatedly recognized the high public interest in border security. *See, e.g.*  
25 *United States v. Brignoni-Ponce*, 422 U.S. 873, 878 (1975) (finding that the public interest  
26 demands effective measures to prevent the illegal entry of aliens at the Mexican border); *see*  
27 *also United States v. Cortez-Rocha*, 394 F.3d 1115, 1123-24 (9<sup>th</sup> Cir. 2005) (describing the  
28 nation’s “compelling” interest in border security). The degree to which a checkpoint serves

1 the public interest in securing the border may be measured “by the relationship of the  
2 checkpoint to its objective, rather than by any measurable results, or by any results period.”  
3 *Fraire*, 575 F.3d at 934 (citation omitted). While the parties did not introduce evidence  
4 regarding the statistical effectiveness of the I-19 Checkpoint in identifying and arresting  
5 illegal aliens, the Ninth Circuit has held that a permanent immigration checkpoint which  
6 carries out a program of routine stops for brief questioning is effective in supporting the  
7 public’s substantial interest in controlling the flow of illegal aliens. *See United States v.*  
8 *Vasquez-Guerrero*, 554 F.2d 917, 919 (9<sup>th</sup> Cir. 1977) (citing *Martinez-Fuerte*, 428 U.S. 556  
9 at 558). Agent Smith’s testimony establishes that the I-19 Checkpoint is a typically-  
10 functioning permanent immigration checkpoint and the parties do not dispute that the primary  
11 purpose of the checkpoint is the investigation of immigration crimes.

12         The third factor - the severity of the interference with individual liberty - is “gauged  
13 by the objective intrusion, measured by the duration of the seizure and the intensity of the  
14 investigation, and by the subjective intrusion, measured by the fear and surprise engendered  
15 in law-abiding motorists by the nature of the stop.” *Fraire*, 575 F.3d at 934. The objective  
16 intrusion of the I-19 Checkpoint is minimal. In *Martinez-Fuerte*, the Supreme Court  
17 emphasized that the scope of a stop at a primary immigration checkpoint is limited to a few  
18 brief questions, the possible production of a document indicating the detainee's lawful  
19 presence in the United States, and a “visual inspection of the vehicle ... limited to what can  
20 be seen without a search.” *Martinez-Fuerte*, 428 U.S. at 556. There is no evidence that  
21 Agent Thornton’s stop of Defendant’s vehicle at the I-19 Checkpoint exceeded the ordinary  
22 scope of an immigration inspection. Agent Kouris told Agent Thornton to take a look at  
23 Defendant’s truck because there was an old lookout from ICE on the trucking company.  
24 Agent Thornton testified that being told to do an inspection on a vehicle coming through the  
25 checkpoint means looking at the vehicle and the individuals in the vehicle to see if anything  
26 looks out of place or inconsistent, if it is weighed down or if there are people trying to hide  
27 in the vehicle. Agents ask the occupants of the vehicle if they are U.S. citizens and examine  
28

1 documents. If the agents don't see anything that warrants further investigation, the vehicles  
2 are sent on their way.

3 Having been directed by Agent Kouris to do an inspection of Defendant's vehicle,  
4 Agent Thornton stopped Defendant's vehicle in primary inspection and asked Defendant if  
5 he was a United States citizen, if anyone else was in Defendant's vehicle, what cargo he was  
6 carrying, and if he had a bill of lading. (TR 41.) After reviewing the bill of lading, Agent  
7 Thornton asked Defendant if the agents could look in the back of the truck. When Defendant  
8 assented, Agent Thornton directed Defendant to the secondary inspection area. (TR 41.)  
9 Only a minute to a minute and a half had elapsed from the time Agent Thornton stopped the  
10 truck until he directed Defendant to secondary inspection.<sup>2</sup> (TR 51.) *See Martinez-Fuerte*,  
11 428 U.S. at 546-47 (average delay of three to five minutes without individualized inspection  
12 held reasonable). There was minimal objective intrusion in the stopping of Defendant's  
13 truck.

14 The subjective intrusion of the I-19 Checkpoint as measured by the fear and surprise  
15 engendered in law-abiding motorists by the nature of the stop is minimal. The Supreme Court  
16 has found that the subjective intrusion from a checkpoint stop is significantly less than other  
17 types of seizures, such as random stops. *Martinez-Fuerte*, 428 U.S. at 558. Here, as in  
18 *Martinez-Fuerte*, the checkpoint is clearly marked. Signs prior to the checkpoint warn  
19 drivers to slow down. Each vehicle is stopped for a short primary inspection or waved  
20 through. The checkpoint is staffed with uniformed Border Patrol agents. *See Fraire*, 575

21 \_\_\_\_\_  
22 <sup>2</sup>Defendant's testimony largely corroborated Agent Thornton's testimony: Defendant  
23 testified that Agent Thornton asked him what he was hauling, what kind of produce he was hauling,  
24 whether anyone else was in the trunk, where he had picked up his load, where he was headed, and  
25 if he could review Defendant's bill of lading. (TR 91-92.) After reviewing Defendant's bill of  
26 lading, Agent Thornton asked Defendant if he could look in the back of Defendant's truck and, when  
27 Defendant replied that he "didn't care," Agent Thornton directed him to secondary inspection. (TR  
28 95.) Defendant testified that approximately 7 to 10 minutes passed from the time he was stopped  
and the time he was referred to secondary. The Magistrate found Agent Thornton's testimony more  
credible than Defendant's testimony on this issue. (TR 51.) As the Magistrate observed, it is  
unlikely that agents would stop a car for 7 to 10 minutes at a primary inspection point when they had  
just been issued a directive to flush traffic in order to alleviate delay.

1 F.3d at 934 (subjective intrusion minimal where checkpoint accompanied by signs  
2 announcing it, rangers operating it were uniformed and all approaching vehicles were  
3 stopped). Although the traffic lanes at the I-19 Checkpoint were being flushed at the time that  
4 the Defendant's truck was stopped, this would not significantly increase the level of fear and  
5 surprise to a law-abiding motorist. During a flush, the checkpoint is still operational. Agents  
6 remain at their posts and continue to monitor traffic. Supervisory Agent Smith testified that,  
7 even during a flush, agents may stop vehicles bearing indicia of smuggling for immigration  
8 inspection. Defendant's vehicle was stopped pursuant to this standard practice. Once  
9 Defendant's vehicle was stopped, Agent Thornton followed standard procedure, detaining  
10 Defendant for less than two minutes in order to ask Defendant routine immigration inspection  
11 questions. There is no evidence that the agents deviated from a routine procedure such that  
12 the stop of Defendant's vehicle was an abuse of power.

13 Agent Kouris' subjective belief that Defendant's vehicle may be smuggling drugs  
14 does not affect the analysis the reasonableness of the stop. Although subjective intent has  
15 been considered in evaluating the subjective intrusiveness of a checkpoint stop, the key  
16 consideration is the subjective belief of the traveler, not the officer. *See e.g. United States*  
17 *v. Hawkins*, 249 F.3d 867, 874 (9<sup>th</sup> Cir. 2001) (stating "in some instances, the failure to stop  
18 every vehicle could raise concerns over subjective intrusiveness," but finding no Fourth  
19 Amendment violation where Defendant was not treated differently from other drivers and no  
20 law-abiding motorist would have been unduly surprised or afraid because of this stop).<sup>3</sup> In  
21 fact, the Supreme Court has indicated that some discretion and motive is inherent and  
22 permissible in routine checkpoint operations. For example, in *Martinez-Fuerte*, the Court

---

23  
24  
25 <sup>3</sup>Subjective intent has also been considered in evaluating the programmatic purposes of a  
26 checkpoint. *See, e.g., United States v. Soyland*, 3 F.3d 1312, 1314 (9<sup>th</sup> Cir. 1993) (suggesting that  
27 an agent's subjective intent could be relevant if evidence suggested that narcotics training of Border  
28 Patrol agents led to a practice of searching for illegal drugs under the pretext of searching for  
undocumented aliens). However, that consideration is not relevant here as there has been no  
allegation that the I-19 Checkpoint was operating as a general crimes checkpoint or that it was  
anything other than a checkpoint with the primary purpose of immigration inspection.



1 rejected concern that a standard procedure which refers only a small percentage of cars to  
2 secondary inspection is stigmatizing, even when the referrals are based at least in part on  
3 apparent Mexican ancestry. 428 U.S. at 560. The Court reasoned: “As the intrusion here is  
4 sufficiently minimal that no particularized reason need exist to justify it, we think it follows  
5 that the Border Patrol officers must have wide discretion in selecting motorists to be diverted  
6 for the brief questioning involved.” *Id.* at 564. Similarly, in *United States v. Soto-Camacho*,  
7 58 F.3d 408 (9<sup>th</sup> Cir. 1995), the Ninth Circuit approved the use of a temporary immigration  
8 checkpoint even though the decision as to when the checkpoint would be operated was based  
9 in part on drug intelligence. *Id.* at 412. The Court found the stop of the vehicle permissible  
10 because “the stop and search had an ‘independent administrative justification,’ and ‘did not  
11 exceed in scope what was permissible under that administrative justification.’” *Id.*

12 In sum, the gravity of the public concerns served by the I-19 Checkpoint are high, the  
13 checkpoint was reasonably related to these concerns, and the severity of the interference with  
14 individual liberty was minimal. Therefore, the stop of the Defendant’s truck at the I-19  
15 Checkpoint was reasonable. Agents were not required to have individualized suspicion to  
16 stop Defendant’s vehicle at the checkpoint for routine immigration inspection. As the I-19  
17 Checkpoint is a lawful immigration checkpoint, agents were permitted to stop Defendant’s  
18 vehicle at the primary inspection area, even if it was upon a subjective belief of drug  
19 trafficking, and conduct an inspection for the purpose of detecting immigration violations.

## 20 21 2. *Articulable Suspicion*

22 Defendant challenges the Magistrate Judge’s finding that the agents’ decision to send  
23 Defendant’s vehicle from primary to secondary inspection was supported by a minimal  
24 showing of articulable suspicion. (Doc. 61, pgs. 7-8.) The Court concludes that the  
25 Magistrate’s application of the articulable suspicion standard to the referral to secondary  
26  
27  
28

1 inspection is misplaced.<sup>4</sup> A vehicle may be referred from primary to secondary inspection  
2 for further brief questioning “in the absence of any individualized suspicion...” so long as  
3 agents continue to operate within the scope of a legitimate immigration stop. *See United*  
4 *States v. Soyland*, 3 F.3d 1312, 1314 (9<sup>th</sup> Cir. 1993); *Barnett*, 935 F.2d 178, 180 (9<sup>th</sup> Cir.  
5 1991). In the present case, Agent Thornton’s decision to refer Defendant to secondary was  
6 routine: after asking Defendant standard immigration inspection questions, he asked  
7 Defendant for permission to look into the back of his truck. Upon receiving Defendant’s  
8 consent, Agent Thornton referred Defendant to secondary, where Defendant’s vehicle was  
9 scanned by an x-ray truck. At this point, agents could have objectively believed that  
10 Defendant’s truck, based on its size, contained evidence of alien smuggling such that  
11 Defendant was committing an immigration violation. Agent Smith testified that the agents  
12 stationed at secondary who facilitate the x-ray inspections of trucks referred there are trained  
13 to identify both narcotics and people in an x-ray image. There is no evidence that  
14 Defendant’s referral to secondary deviated from standard inspection practice.

15 If an agent continues the detention beyond the scope of an ordinary checkpoint stop,  
16 whether solely because of drug-related concerns or because of a subjective belief that some  
17 other criminal offense has been committed, an articulable suspicion is required.<sup>5</sup> *See United*  
18 *States v. Taylor*, 934 F.2d 218, 221 (9<sup>th</sup> Cir. 1991). However, even if the Court were to  
19 conclude that the referral of Defendant’s vehicle to secondary inspection exceeded the scope  
20

---

21  
22 <sup>4</sup> Magistrate Ferraro’s conclusion relied on *United States v. Lewis*, 2011 WL 2692914 (D.  
23 Ariz. July 12, 2011), which in turn relies on *United States v. Taylor*, 934 F.2d 218, 221 (9<sup>th</sup> Cir.  
24 1991). *Taylor* applies the articulable suspicion standard to continued detention at secondary  
25 inspection, not the decision to refer a vehicle from primary to secondary. In *Taylor*, the parties did  
26 not dispute “the propriety of the initial stop nor that referral to the secondary station was justified  
27 by the nervous behavior of the vehicle occupants. The heart of their disagreement lies in the legality  
28 of the actions that took place after the trunk of the car had been searched and the immigration  
purposes of the stop had been served.” 934 F.2d at 220. *Lewis* appears to have incorrectly applied  
*Taylor* to a referral to secondary inspection.

<sup>5</sup> As stated in sections 1 and 3, the stop and detention of Defendant’s vehicle was within the  
scope of an ordinary immigration inspection.

1 of an ordinary immigration inspection and was akin to the continued detention at issue in  
2 *Taylor*, the stop would be supported by an articulable suspicion. As the Magistrate  
3 concluded, at the time Defendant’s vehicle was referred to secondary, Agent Thornton had  
4 noticed numerous indicia of alien or drug smuggling: an ICE lookout, a high DOT number,  
5 ghost-lettering and handwritten bills of lading. *See, e.g. Taylor*, 934 F.2d at 221  
6 (nervousness alone is sufficient to support a finding of articulable suspicion). Accordingly,  
7 Defendant’s objection is overruled.

8           3.     *Scope and Duration of the Detention*

9           Defendant challenges the Magistrate’s finding that Defendant’s detention at the  
10 primary and secondary checkpoints was within the scope and duration of a permissible  
11 checkpoint stop. The scope of a stop at a primary immigration checkpoint is limited to a few  
12 brief questions, the possible production of a document indicating the detainee's lawful  
13 presence in the United States, and a “visual inspection of the vehicle ... limited to what can  
14 be seen without a search.” *Martinez-Fuerte*, 428 U.S. at 556. Beyond this limited intrusion,  
15 continued detention must be supported by probable cause or consent to search. *Id.* at 567.  
16 However, upon a showing of “minimal, articulable suspicion,” an officer may prolong an  
17 immigration checkpoint stop for “brief further delay,” such as the 60 seconds necessary to  
18 conduct an inspection by a narcotic-detection dog. *See United States v. Taylor*, 934 F.2d  
19 218, 221 (9<sup>th</sup> Cir. 1991).

20           In the present case, Agent Thornton credibly testified that when he stopped Defendant  
21 at the primary inspection area, he asked him if he was a United States citizen, if anyone else  
22 was in Defendant’s vehicle, what cargo he was carrying and if he had a bill of lading. (TR  
23 41.) After reviewing the bill of lading, Agent Thornton asked Defendant if the agents could  
24 look in the back of the truck; when Defendant assented, Agent Thornton directed Defendant  
25 to the secondary inspection area. (TR 41.) Defendant’s testimony largely corroborated  
26 Agent Thornton’s testimony: Defendant testified that Agent Thornton asked him what he was  
27 hauling, what kind of produce he was hauling, whether anyone else was in the trunk, where  
28 he had picked up his load, where he was headed, and if he could review Defendant’s bill of

1 lading. (TR 91-92.) After reviewing Defendant's bill of lading, Agent Thornton asked  
2 Defendant if he could look in the back of Defendant's truck and, when Defendant replied that  
3 he "didn't care", Agent Thornton directed him to secondary inspection. (TR 95.) Agent  
4 Thornton testified that only a minute to a minute and a half had elapsed from the time he  
5 stopped the truck until he directed Defendant to secondary inspection. (TR 51.) Even if that  
6 additional minute were not attributable to Agent Thornton's routine inspection, it would be  
7 permissible pursuant to *Taylor*, given the articulable suspicion discussed in section 2.

#### 8 4. *Scope of Defendant's Consent*

9 The Magistrate concluded that the x-ray of Defendant's truck was within the scope  
10 of his consent to search because a reasonable person lawfully engaging in commercial  
11 trucking would find an x-ray scan far less intrusive than a physical search and because  
12 Defendant was free to withdraw his consent at any time. Defendant challenges both of these  
13 findings.

14 "The standard for measuring the scope of a suspect's consent under the Fourth  
15 Amendment is that of 'objective' reasonableness—what would the typical reasonable person  
16 have understood by the exchange between the officer and the suspect?" *United States v.*  
17 *Cannon*, 29 F.3d 472, 477 (9<sup>th</sup> Cir. 1994). Defendant challenges the Magistrate's finding that  
18 an x-ray is less intrusive than a physical inspection (and therefore within the scope of a  
19 consent to search), relying on *United States v. Montoya*, 731 F.2d 1369 (9<sup>th</sup> Cir. 1984), which  
20 has been overruled. *See United v. Montoya de Hernandez*, 473 U.S. 531 (1985). The Court  
21 agrees with the Magistrate that the x-ray was less intrusive than a physical search, which  
22 bears the risk of disturbing or damaging cargo. *See, e.g., United States v. Okafor*, 285 F.3d  
23 842, 845 (9<sup>th</sup> Cir. 2002) (an x-ray examination of luggage requires no force, poses no risk to  
24 the bag's owner or to the public, and does not harm the baggage. Nor should anyone be afraid  
25 to use a suitcase merely because it has been scanned by an x-ray. X-ray examination of  
26 luggage, bags, and other containers at a border is routine and requires neither warrant nor  
27 individualized suspicion). In addition, the Court notes that at the February 15, 2012 hearing,  
28 Agent Smith testified that x-ray operators are routinely stationed at permanent immigration

1 checkpoints. A commercial truck driver passing through a permanent immigration  
2 checkpoint could reasonably anticipate that a search of his trailer might include an x-ray of  
3 the vehicle's contents.

4 Defendant also argues that the Magistrate's conclusion that Defendant was free to  
5 withdraw his consent at any time was unreasonable, given that Defendant was not present  
6 for the search and did not know that the vehicle was being x-rayed. The Court need not  
7 consider this issue, however, as it concurs with the Magistrate's conclusion that the x-ray was  
8 within the scope of Defendant's consent to the search.

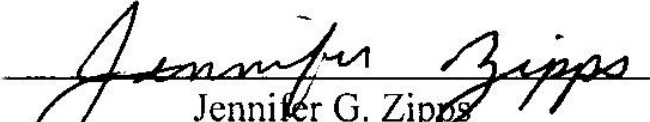
9 **CONCLUSION**

10 Accordingly, after an independent review of the pleadings, exhibits and transcript,

11 **IT IS HEREBY ORDERED** that:

- 12 1. The Report and Recommendation (Doc. 61) is **ACCEPTED AND**  
13 **ADOPTED** as the findings of fact and conclusions of law of this Court, with  
14 the modifications discussed in this Order;
- 15 2. Defendant's Motion to Suppress Evidence (Doc. 36) is **DENIED**;
- 16 3. This matter remains referred to Magistrate Judge D. Thomas Ferraro for all  
17 pretrial proceedings and Report and Recommendation in accordance with the  
18 provisions of 28 U.S.C. § 636(b)(1) and LR Civ. 72.1(a), Rules of Practice for  
19 the United States District Court, District of Arizona (Local Rules).

20 DATED this 30<sup>th</sup> day of March, 2012.

21  
22   
23 Jennifer G. Zipps  
24 United States District Judge  
25  
26  
27  
28