



OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL

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DOJ OIG Releases Report on ATF's Controls over Weapons, Munitions, and Explosives

Department of Justice (DOJ) Inspector General Michael E. Horowitz announced today the release of a report examining the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives' (ATF) controls over weapons, munitions, and explosives. The DOJ Office of the Inspector General (OIG) found that ATF generally has strong physical controls over its own weapons, explosives, and less lethal munitions. However, the OIG identified deficiencies related to safeguarding ammunition and seized evidence, munitions tracking, the accuracy of ATF's munitions inventories, and compliance with munitions and explosives policies that create a risk that sensitive items may be lost, misplaced, or stolen without detection. The OIG also identified areas where ATF's policies should be strengthened to improve the safeguarding and accountability of ATF-owned and seized weapons and munitions.

Specifically, the report includes the following findings:

- ATF has strong physical controls over its own weapons, including firearms, Tasers, and silencers, and its monthly rate of lost firearms decreased by over 55% since a prior 2008 OIG audit. However, we noted that between fiscal years 2014 and 2017, ATF reported 23 instances of firearms being lost by or stolen from ATF Special Agents.
- ATF's controls over its ammunition inventories are inadequate and do not provide accurate inventory counts. For example, ATF's ammunition tracking records were understated by almost 31,000 rounds at 13 sites where the OIG performed a physical inventory of ammunition. The quantity of unaccounted for ammunition is likely much greater, given that ATF has over 275 offices.
- Discrepancies existed between quantities of actual and logged explosives and less lethal munitions, such as chemical agents and smoke canisters.
- At the time of the audit, ATF did not have policy specifically related to tracking most of its less lethal munitions. As a result, ATF issued a memorandum to address the issue; however, the policy has not yet been fully implemented.

- At 9 of 13 locations, seized firearms and other evidence were temporarily stored outside of the inner evidence vaults, which creates a risk that the evidence may be lost, misplaced, stolen, or otherwise compromised.

Today's report makes 10 recommendations to improve ATF's controls over its ammunition, explosives, less lethal munitions, as well as its seized weapons and ammunition. ATF agreed with all of our recommendations.

Report: Today's report can be found on the OIG's website under "Recent Reports" at the following link: <https://oig.justice.gov/reports/2018/a1821.pdf>.

Video: To accompany today's report, the OIG has released a 2-minute video of the Inspector General discussing the report's findings. The video and a downloadable transcript are available at the following link: <https://oig.justice.gov/multimedia/>.

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