

Video Transcript: "A Message from the Inspector General: Audit of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives Controls Over Weapons, Munitions, and Explosives" April 2018

Hello, I'm Michael Horowitz, Inspector General for the U.S. Department of Justice.

Today, our office released a report examining the controls that the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, or ATF, has over weapons, munitions, and explosives.

We found that ATF generally had strong physical controls over its own weapons, explosives, and less lethal munitions. We were able to locate and identify records for all ATF-owned weapons, including firearms, in our sample. 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, which actually represented a substantial improvement over the loss rate that we found in our prior 2008 audit.

We did identify several significant deficiencies related to tracking and inventory of ammunition. For example, ammunition tracking records were understated by almost 31 thousand rounds at the 13 sites we audited. Given that the ATF has over 275 offices, the number of unaccounted ammunition rounds is likely much higher. When inventories are inaccurate, there is increased risk that ammunition may be lost, stolen, or misplaced without detection. Our findings are particularly concerning because prior audits identified similar issues, and recommended corrective action.

Our report made several other findings, including that discrepancies existed between actual and logged inventory quantities of explosives and less-lethal munitions, such as chemical agents and smoke canisters. And we identified issues with physical controls of seized evidence including firearms in ATF's custody.

To read the full report, please visit our website, oig.justice.gov. Thank you for joining us.