



Office of the Inspector General U.S. Department of Justice

OVERSIGHT ★ INTEGRITY ★ GUIDANCE



Audit of the Drug Enforcement Administration's Controls over Weapons and Munitions



Executive Summary

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Objectives

The objectives of this audit were to evaluate: (1) the Drug Enforcement Administration's (DEA) controls over weapons and munitions; (2) the DEA's compliance with policies governing weapons and munitions; and (3) the accuracy of the DEA's weapons and munitions inventories.

The audit covers the DEA's weapons and munitions inventories, including firearms, ammunition, less lethal munitions, and diversionary devices from fiscal years (FY) 2014 through December 2018. To accomplish our objectives, we interviewed DEA personnel; evaluated DEA policies governing weapons and munitions; analyzed select data fields in the firearms inventory database; and reviewed firearm purchases. We also reviewed documentation related to firearms that were reported as lost or stolen during the scope of our audit to determine whether the DEA took appropriate action. Finally, we assessed compliance with DEA policy and conducted physical inventories at 16 DEA sites.

Results in Brief

We found that the firearms in our sample were recorded in the DEA's weapons database and in the custody of the assigned Special Agent or stored in a secure area as required. However, we identified weaknesses related to tracking weapons, ammunition, and less lethal munitions. We also identified concerns related to noncompliance with ammunition and less lethal munitions tracking requirements. Additionally, we found areas where DEA policies should be updated or revised to improve the safeguarding of its weapons and munitions.

Recommendations

Our report contains nine recommendations to improve the DEA's controls over its weapons, ammunition, less lethal munitions and diversionary devices. We requested a response to the draft audit report from the DEA, which can be found in Appendix 2. Our analysis of that response is included in Appendix 3.

Audit Results

As of February 2019, the DEA reported 14,337 firearms in its inventory. The DEA also maintains large quantities of ammunition for duty use, training, and periodic firearms qualifications. In addition, the DEA's Office of Training, maintains a variety of specialty weapons, less lethal munitions, and diversionary devices.

Controls Over Weapons - We found that the DEA has strong physical controls over its unassigned firearms, and Special Agents are personally responsible for properly safeguarding assigned firearms. The DEA tracks its weapons using the Weapons Database Inventory System (WDIS), its electronic firearms management system. During our physical inventory we were able to locate all weapons selected for our sample and trace a sample of weapons back to WDIS. We also determined that our sample of firearms purchased during a 6-month period were properly entered into WDIS in a timely manner.

However, we identified weaknesses in the DEA's controls over tracking its firearms in WDIS, which is a repeat finding that was first identified in a prior OIG audit report issued over 16 years ago. We also found that the DEA is circumventing its own policy requirements for issuing and tracking firearms assigned to Special Agents, in order to permanently assign more weapons to an individual than allowed by its policy.

Lost and Stolen Firearms - We noted that between FYs 2014 and 2018, the DEA reported 26 lost or stolen firearms in 24 separate incidences. For 17 of those cases the DEA suspended the Special Agent held responsible for the loss or theft. For the remaining seven cases, the DEA found that the Special Agents complied with DEA policy for storing firearms and no misconduct was identified. However, the DEA does not track data on whether any of the lost or stolen firearms were used in a crime. The OIG searched the serial numbers of the 12 recovered firearms in the National Crime Information Center (NCIC) database and found no records indicating they were used in a crime while outside of the DEA's control. Nonetheless, because of



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the risk associated with lost or stolen firearms, it is important that the DEA tracks the disposition of firearms after they are lost or stolen, including whether the firearms were used in a crime.

Ammunition – We found that the DEA stored its ammunition in secured areas with limited access available to designated employees. However, we also found that 5 of the 16 DEA sites included in our audit did not fully comply with the DEA's ammunition tracking and inventory requirements. Specifically, the ammunition logs were inaccurate or lacked the detailed information required by DEA policy. This increases the risk of ammunition being lost, misplaced, or stolen without detection.

Less Lethal Munitions and Diversionary Devices – Only 5 of the 16 DEA sites included in our audit maintained inventories of less lethal munitions and diversionary devices. We found that the DEA stored its less lethal munitions and diversionary devices in secure areas with limited access. However, the DEA's current policy for tracking less lethal munitions and diversionary devices is inadequate, increasing the risk of these sensitive items being lost, misplaced, or stolen without detection. We also found that certain types of less lethal munitions were not tracked and the less lethal munition and diversionary device inventories were not always accurate. Additionally, none of the five DEA offices were conducting an annual physical inventory of less lethal munitions and diversionary devices.

Seized Firearms and Ammunition – The DEA has strong controls over its seized weapons and munitions, including secure storage areas, limited access to designated officials, and effective tracking procedures. In addition, during our physical inventory of seized firearms and ammunition maintained at 12 of the 16 sites we visited, we were able to locate all of the items in our sample and trace a sample of items back to the DEA's evidence tracking system.

AUDIT OF THE DRUG ENFORCEMENT ADMINISTRATION'S CONTROLS OVER WEAPONS AND MUNITIONS

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AUDIT OF THE DRUG ENFORCEMENT ADMINISTRATION'S CONTROLS OVER WEAPONS AND MUNITIONS

INTRODUCTION

The Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) currently employs 4,317 Special Agents located throughout the world, including 222 domestic offices in 23 Divisions throughout the United States, and 90 foreign offices in 69 countries. In support of its operations, the DEA maintains weapons and munitions, including firearms, ammunition, less lethal munitions, and diversionary devices. In addition, the DEA's Office of Training maintains a variety of specialty weapons and munitions, including fully-automatic machine guns; projectile launching devices and less lethal projectiles; smoke grenades; and Noise Flash Diversionary Devices, commonly referred to as flash bang grenades.¹

DEA Special Agents are required to carry a primary-duty handgun, and may be issued supplemental handguns, rifles, and shotguns.² Special agents also have the option to carry oleoresin capsicum (OC) spray. As of February 2019 the DEA reported 14,337 firearms in its inventory, which are tracked through an automated property management system known as the Weapons Database Inventory System (WDIS). The DEA also maintains large quantities of ammunition for duty use, training, and periodic firearms qualifications, which is required to be tracked on handwritten logs.

As a result of its criminal enforcement activity, DEA Special Agents may seize firearms and ammunition if they have probable cause that: (1) the firearm is possessed illegally, (2) the items were used in a crime, (3) leaving the items as is would create a dangerous situation, or (4) the item is subject to forfeiture. From fiscal years (FY) 2014 through 2018, DEA Special Agents seized firearms and ammunition an average of 638 times per year. All seized firearms and ammunition are required to be tracked in the DEA's Centralized Evidence Reporting and Tracking System (CERTS). DEA procedure requires that firearms and ammunition seized as evidence are tagged as non-drug evidence, assigned an exhibit number, and input into CERTS by a designated non-drug evidence custodian and stored in a non-drug evidence vault.

OIG Audit Approach

Our objectives were to evaluate: (1) the DEA's controls over weapons and munitions; (2) the DEA's compliance with policies governing weapons and munitions; and (3) the accuracy of the DEA's weapons and munitions inventories. The scope of our audit generally covers the DEA's weapons and munitions

¹ DEA policy considers Noise Flash Diversionary Devices to be explosive devices. To maintain consistency with prior OIG audit reports, we refer to these items as diversionary devices.

² DEA employees have the option of using authorized personally owned firearms for duty use, including handguns, rifles, and shotguns; however, these are not tracked in WDIS.

inventories, including firearms, ammunition, less lethal munitions and diversionary devices from FYs 2014 through 2018.

To accomplish our objectives, we interviewed DEA personnel, including officials from the Office of Training, Office of Professional Responsibility, Office of Inspections, and Asset Forfeiture Section. In addition, we evaluated the DEA's policies governing weapons and munitions and reviewed documentation related to firearms purchases over a 6-month period to ensure that acquisitions were properly recorded. We also reviewed documentation related to firearms that were reported as lost or stolen during the scope of our audit to determine whether the DEA took appropriate action. Finally, we conducted site work at 16 DEA sites, as shown in Table 1.³

Table 1
DEA Offices Selected for Audit

| DEA Field Office | DEA Firearms | Seized Firearms |
|------------------------------------|--------------|-----------------|
| Denver Division | | |
| Denver Division Office | 152 | 44 |
| Cheyenne Resident Office | 28 | 0 |
| El Paso Division | | |
| El Paso Division Office | 141 | 21 |
| Albuquerque District Office | 69 | 259 |
| Las Cruces Resident Office | 47 | 69 |
| Los Angeles Division | | |
| Los Angeles Division Office | 445 | 101 |
| Riverside District Office | 87 | 10 |
| Seattle Division | | |
| Seattle Division Office | 210 | 87 |
| Tacoma Resident Office | 36 | 54 |
| Detroit Division | | |
| Detroit Division Office | 179 | 430 |
| New Jersey Division | | |
| Newark Division Office | 202 | 65 |
| New York Division | | |
| New York Division Office | 443 | 398 |
| Office of Training | | |
| Firearms Training Unit | 3,176 | |
| Personnel Recovery Training Unit | 31 | |
| Aviation Division | | |
| Aviation Operations Center | 144 | |
| El Paso Intelligence Center | | |
| El Paso Intelligence Center | 53 | |

Source: The DEA's WDIS; the DEA's CERTS

³ We selected a broad range of DEA offices and functions for our site work, including large division offices; smaller district and resident offices; the DEA's Office of Training; the Aviation Division; and the El Paso Intelligence Center.

The purpose of our site work was to assess the DEA's compliance with policies regarding its weapons and munitions, as well as the effectiveness of those policies. As applicable, we also conducted a physical inventory of a sample of weapons, as well as a 100-percent inventory of ammunition, less lethal munitions, and diversionary devices at the sites we visited. In addition, we assessed the DEA's compliance with policies regarding seized firearms and ammunition. Finally, we conducted a physical inventory of a sample of seized firearms and ammunition. Appendix 1 contains a more detailed description of our audit objectives, scope, and methodology.

AUDIT RESULTS

We found that the DEA has strong physical controls over its unassigned firearms and that Special Agents are personally responsible for properly safeguarding assigned firearms. However, we found that the DEA is circumventing its policy for issuing and tracking firearms assigned to Special Agents in order to permanently assign more weapons to individual Special Agents than permitted by DEA policy. Additionally, we identified weaknesses in the DEA's controls over tracking its firearms, less lethal munitions, and diversionary devices, which, in our judgement, create a risk that these sensitive items may be lost, misplaced, or stolen without detection. Specifically, we found that 5 of the 16 DEA sites included in our audit did not fully comply with the DEA's ammunition tracking and inventory requirements. We also found that the ammunition tracking records at 7 of the 16 sites were inaccurate. Finally, we determined that the DEA's requirements for tracking its less lethal munitions and diversionary devices are inadequate; as a result, the majority of these items were not effectively tracked and inventoried.

Controls over Weapons

The DEA tracks its firearms inventory, separate from all other accountable property, using a Microsoft Access database known as WDIS. The DEA also conducts an annual physical inventory of all of its firearms. During our site visits, we performed a physical inventory and were able to locate all of the weapons selected for our sample. We were also able to trace another sample of weapons back to WDIS, although we noted control weaknesses in the database and some data errors on firearm issuance paperwork. Additionally, from FY 2014 through October 2018, the DEA reported 26 of its firearms as lost or stolen.

Physical Security of Weapons

We found that the DEA had strong physical controls over unassigned firearms and other weapons. Special Agents are personally responsible for properly safeguarding their assigned firearms at all times. Additionally, DEA offices have designated staff, called Primary Firearms Instructors, who are responsible for all weapons that are not issued to an employee. When assigned weapons are not in the personal custody of Special Agents they must be placed in a secure, locked storage area to prevent unauthorized handling or unintentional discharge. At the 16 DEA sites we visited, we found that all of the weapons in our sample were either in the custody of the assigned Special Agent or stored in a secure area.

Accuracy of the DEA's Weapons Database Inventory System

As of February 2019 the DEA reported 14,337 firearms in its inventory, of which 3,646 (25 percent) were assigned to a Special Agent; 9,444 (66-percent) were designated as office use firearms that may be assigned, as needed, to Special Agents on a temporary basis; and 1,247 (9 percent) were unassigned firearms maintained by the Firearms Training Unit or DEA Headquarters. We selected a sample of 437 weapons from WDIS to ensure that they were physically accounted for and accurately tracked in the database. We selected an additional 134 weapons

while on site to ensure that the field sites' inventory records were complete and accurate. During our physical inventory, we located all 437 weapons in our sample and traced the additional 134 weapons back to WDIS. However, we identified problems in the way the DEA issues office use firearms.

Firearms are permanently assigned to Special Agents using a Form DEA-17, Firearms Control Record. This form is also used to transfer office use firearms between DEA offices. Once the Form DEA-17 is completed, it is forwarded to the DEA's Firearms Training Unit, where the firearm record is updated in WDIS. Additionally, DEA policy allows the use of Form DEA-12, Receipt for Cash or Other Items, to issue firearms to Special Agents in limited cases on a temporary basis. Instead of forwarding these forms to the Firearms Training Unit, they are maintained by the Primary Firearms Instructors at DEA division offices. As a result, while the locations of office use firearms are tracked in WDIS, the system is not updated to reflect Special Agent assignments using Form DEA-12.

We found that the DEA is circumventing its policy for issuing and tracking firearms assigned to Special Agents in order to permanently assign more weapons to individual Special Agents than permitted by policy. Specifically, the DEA's current practice is to issue almost all office use firearms to Special Agents on a long-term basis using the temporary assignment Form DEA-12, rather than assigning the firearms to Special Agents using Form DEA-17. In our testing, we determined that 76 of the 437 firearms in our sample were issued to a Special Agent on a Form DEA-12, of which 45 of the 76 firearms were issued before January 2018, including 4 firearms issued nearly 15 years ago. We found that the 76 office use firearms in our sample issued to Special Agents had been assigned for an average of 3.3 years, despite that Form DEA-12 should only be used for temporary assignments.

Because weapon assignments using a Form DEA-12 are not reflected in WDIS, the DEA has no central record of all weapons assigned to agents and Special Agents are being assigned more weapons than allowed by DEA policy. Therefore, we recommend that the DEA issue all office use firearms assigned to Special Agents for long term use by completing Form DEA-17, in accordance with its policy.

Firearm Tracking

We also identified weaknesses in the DEA's controls over tracking its firearms in WDIS. In addition to each weapon's make, model, and serial number, WDIS identifies the Special Agent to whom the firearm is permanently assigned using Form DEA-17.⁴ However, WDIS does not track the location of the firearms assigned to Special Agents. Currently, in order to identify the location of an assigned firearm, the DEA's Firearms Training Unit has to manually match the firearm record in WDIS to its records in its Firearm Qualification Tracking System using the Special

⁴ As noted previously, WDIS does not identify the Special Agent for weapons assigned using Form DEA-12.

Agent's name and social security number.⁵ The Firearm Qualification Tracking System is maintained separately from WDIS, which makes locating assigned firearms an arduous task for the Firearms Training Unit.

Additionally, WDIS does not keep a history of firearm assignments and does not have the capability to track edits made to the inventory records. As a result, firearms records could be edited or deleted without any record of a change being made. This is an issue that was first identified in an OIG audit over 16 years ago.⁶ In response to the prior audit, the DEA limited WDIS access to personnel within the Firearms Training Unit and required Primary Firearms Instructors to conduct quarterly inventory reconciliations and annual physical inventories to improve the accuracy of WDIS. Based on our findings in this audit, we believe the DEA should take further action to continually improve the system's capabilities.

While these concerns ultimately did not impact our ability to locate the weapons included in our sample, the DEA's ability to track the whereabouts of its firearms is inefficient and could be improved. According to the official responsible for updating WDIS, the agency is currently in the process of combining WDIS, the Firearm Qualification Tracking System, and its weapons maintenance programs into one system. This upgraded system will maintain the same controls currently in place, but be streamlined to more easily provide information, including the location of the Special Agent in possession of the firearm. In our judgment, the DEA should take steps to implement these system enhancements as soon as possible. Additionally, we recommend that the DEA ensure its weapons tracking system includes the location and assignment history of all firearms, and tracks edits made to firearm inventory records.

Firearm Purchases

We did not identify any concerns related to the DEA's firearm purchases. According to the DEA's Unit Chief, Domestic Training Section, the Firearms Training Unit is the only office authorized to procure new firearms. The Firearms Training Unit orders and, in most cases, receives new firearms, and subsequently transfers them to the field offices or assigns them to Special Agents. Upon receipt of the firearm, designated personnel within the Firearms Training Unit verify the serial number against the shipping document, then forward the paperwork to the DEA contract employee responsible for entering the firearm information into WDIS. Infrequently, firearms may be shipped directly to the Primary Firearms Instructor for a DEA division. In these cases, the vendor submits shipping documents to both the Primary Firearms Instructor and the Firearms Training Unit. Once the firearm is delivered, the Primary Firearms Instructor must confirm the serial number and notify the Firearms Training Unit, who then enters the firearm into WDIS.

⁵ The Firearm Qualification Tracking System is the DEA's automated database system that electronically stores, tracks, and maintains each Special Agent's firearms qualification dates and scores.

⁶ U.S. Department of Justice Office of the Inspector General. The Drug Enforcement Administration's Control over Weapons and Laptop Computers, Audit Report 02-28, (August 2002).

We reviewed firearms purchases over a 6 month period, in order to determine if new firearms are properly entered into WDIS in a timely manner. Between April and October 2018, the DEA received 1,811 new firearms, all but 1 of which was delivered to the Firearms Training Unit. We found that all 1,811 firearms were correctly entered into WDIS after they were received.

Lost and Stolen Firearms

From FY 2014 through FY 2018, DEA Special Agents reported 26 lost and stolen DEA-issued firearms in 24 separate incidents. The DEA's Firearms Training Unit and Office of Professional Responsibility reported that 12 of the 26 lost or stolen firearms were recovered. During our prior audits of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives (ATF) and the United States Marshals Service (USMS), we found that these agencies tracked information about whether lost or stolen firearms were used in a crime.⁷ The DEA, on the other hand, does not track data on whether any of the lost or stolen firearms were used in a crime. The OIG searched the serial numbers of the 12 recovered firearms in the National Crime Information Center (NCIC) database and found no records indicating they were used in a crime while outside of the DEA's control. However, because of the risk associated with lost or stolen firearms, it is important for DOJ components to track the disposition of firearms after they are lost or stolen, including whether the firearms were used in a crime. This can inform subsequent appropriate actions, including disciplinary actions that may be warranted, if for example, the subsequent criminal investigation reveals that the Special Agent did not accurately disclose the facts related to the loss or theft when it was reported to the DEA. Therefore, we recommend that the DEA obtain and track information about whether lost and stolen firearms were used in a crime while outside of the DEA's control.

The details related to the 26 lost and stolen firearms included in our analysis are shown in Table 2.

⁷ Audit of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives Controls over Weapons, Munitions, and Explosives, Audit Report 18-21, March 2018; Audit of the United States Marshals Service's Controls over Weapons, Munitions, and Explosives, Audit Report 18-33, September 2018.

Table 2
Lost and Stolen DEA Firearms

| Type of Loss | Type of Firearm | Firearm Recovered | Involved in a Crime | Synopsis | Disciplinary Action |
|--------------|-----------------|-------------------|---------------------|---|---------------------|
| Stolen | Carbine | No | Unknown | Theft from a government vehicle | 35-day suspension |
| Stolen | Handgun | No | Unknown | Theft from residence | None |
| Stolen | Shotgun | No | Unknown | Theft from residence | None |
| Lost | Handgun | No | Unknown | Missing from last known location | 5-day suspension |
| Stolen | Handgun | No | Unknown | Theft from a government vehicle | 5-day suspension |
| Lost | Handgun | Yes | No | Left in hotel room | 5-day suspension |
| Lost | Handgun | Yes | No | Misplaced in another Special Agent's government vehicle | None |
| Lost | Handgun | Yes | No | Lost while riding motorcycle | 5-day suspension |
| Lost | Handgun | Yes | No | Lost while hunting | 3-day suspension |
| Lost | Handgun | Yes | No | Left on trailer | 5-day suspension |
| Stolen | Handgun | No | Unknown | Theft from personal vehicle | 4-day suspension |
| Stolen | Carbine | Yes | No | Theft from a government vehicle | 8-day suspension |
| Stolen | Handgun | Yes | | | |
| Stolen | Handgun | No | Unknown | Theft from a government vehicle | 10-day suspension |
| Lost | Handgun | No | Unknown | Lost during DEA training exercise | None |
| Stolen | Handgun | No | Unknown | Theft from a government vehicle parked in garage | None |
| Stolen | Handgun | Yes | No | Theft from residence | None |
| Stolen | Carbine | No | Unknown | Theft from a government vehicle | 5-day suspension |
| Lost | Handgun | Yes | No | Left in vehicle | 5-day suspension |
| Stolen | Handgun | No | Unknown | Theft from a government vehicle | 7-day suspension |
| Lost | Handgun | No | Unknown | Left in a government vehicle | 5-day suspension |
| Lost | Handgun | Yes | No | Left in a government vehicle | 5-day suspension |
| Lost | Handgun | Yes | No | Left in a restaurant | 5-day suspension |
| Stolen | Handgun | Yes | No | Theft from a government vehicle | 5-day suspension |
| Lost | Handgun | No | Unknown | Missing during annual inventory | None |
| Lost | Handgun | No | | | |

Source: The DEA's Office of Professional Responsibility and Firearms Training Unit

We reviewed the DEA's records to determine whether it took disciplinary action in response to these lost or stolen firearms incidents. We found that in 17 of the 24 incidents, the Special Agent responsible for the loss or theft was suspended between 3 and 35 days; the most common suspension was 5 days. The remaining seven cases did not result in disciplinary action, because the DEA's Office of Professional Conduct determined that the employee complied with DEA policy for securing firearms and no misconduct was identified.

To ensure the accuracy of the DEA's tracking information, we also reviewed WDIS records for the 14 lost or stolen firearms that remain missing and confirmed that none of them appear in WDIS's active inventory record. Similarly, we confirmed that the inventory records for all 12 recovered firearms had been appropriately updated in WDIS.

Finally, we assessed the rate of loss of DEA firearms over a 60-month period from FY 2014 through FY 2018 to determine how it compared to the loss rate identified in our prior 2002 and 2008 OIG audits.⁸ We found that the loss rate decreased by approximately 69 percent since our 2008 audit from 1.38 firearms per month to 0.43 per month. The most recent loss rate was also a decrease from the 0.62 per month rate in the 2002 audit. In addition, the agency did not experience large fluctuations in the loss rate from FY 2014 through FY2018 – between 3 and 8 firearms per year. While the DEA has substantially reduced the rate of lost and stolen firearms since our last audit, it must continuously work towards reducing this rate.

Controls over Ammunition

We found that the DEA had internal control policies in place to secure ammunition at the 16 sites we visited. However, we determined that 5 of 16 DEA sites did not fully comply with the DEA's ammunition tracking requirements. Most significantly, one DEA site did not begin tracking any of its 600,000 rounds of ammunition until August of 2018. In our judgment, the issues we identified related to tracking ammunition primarily resulted from inadequate enforcement of the DEA's ammunition policy. We also identified areas where the DEA ammunition policy could be improved.

Physical Security of Ammunition

DEA policy requires that ammunition be stored in a secure area. At all 16 sites included in our audit, we found that the ammunition was kept in a vault, safe, or other secure storage area. We also found that the sites limited access to the secure ammunition storage areas to specified personnel. Although this is not explicitly required by DEA policy, we consider it to be a best practice.

⁸ U.S. Department of Justice Office of the Inspector General. The Drug Enforcement Administration's Control over Weapons and Laptop Computers Follow-Up Audit, Audit Report 08-21, March 2008.

Ammunition Tracking

Strong controls over ammunition requires an inventory management system that maintains accurate, current, and historical data—to include increases and decreases in inventory and the reason for the changes in quantity over time. DEA policy requires Primary Firearms Instructors to maintain bound ammunition logbooks detailing every ammunition transaction including the date, caliber, quantity in or out, purpose of the transaction, and the remaining balance for all ammunition on hand. Additionally, Primary Firearms Instructors are required to conduct an inventory of all ammunition on hand at each of the offices in their area of responsibility and submit the results to the Office of Training on an annual basis. We determined that the most recent annual inventory was performed, as required, at each of the sites we visited. However, we noted that DEA policy does not have a retention requirement for its ammunition logbooks. During our prior audits of the ATF and USMS, we found that these agencies retain ammunition tracking records for 3 years, which we consider to be a best practice. Therefore, we recommend that the DEA revise its policy to require that ammunition logbooks and inventory records are retained for at least 3 years.

We found that 5 of the 16 DEA sites included in our audit did not fully comply with the DEA's ammunition tracking requirements, as shown in Table 3.

Table 3
Ammunition Tracking Deficiencies

| DEA Site | Tracking Issue |
|----------------------------------|---|
| Personnel Recovery Training Unit | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Did not track ammunition prior to August of 2018.• Logbook missing a running balance of ammunition on hand. |
| Detroit Division Office | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Logbook entries did not specify the exact number of rounds added or removed. |
| Albuquerque District Office | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Additions or withdrawals of ammunition were not consistently recorded in the ammunition logbook. |
| Riverside District Office | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Logbook missing a running balance of ammunition on hand. |
| Tacoma Resident Office | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Logbook entries did not specify the exact number of rounds added or removed.• Logbook missing a running balance of ammunition on hand. |

Source: OIG analysis of the DEA's ammunition logbooks and inventories

Specifically, we found that three DEA sites did not record a running balance of ammunition on hand. One site did not consistently document additions or withdrawals of ammunition in the ammunition logbook, meaning that there were unexplained changes in the inventory balances. Additionally, two sites only tracked ammunition transactions by full cases or boxes instead of specifying the exact number of rounds added or removed. Finally, one DEA site did not track any of its 600,000 rounds of ammunition prior to August of 2018.

We believe that these are control weaknesses that increase the risk of ammunition being lost, misplaced, or stolen without detection. Therefore, we

recommend that the DEA immediately communicate to all Primary Firearms Instructors the DEA's ammunition inventory policies and the importance of accurate and consistent tracking of all ammunition on hand.

The DEA's Office of Inspections uses a checklist to conduct inspections of DEA ammunition inventories, including a review of ammunition logbooks to ensure that they are accurate, current, and list all transactions. However, the checklist does not specifically ensure the logbooks keep a running balance of ammunition on hand. In our judgment, the Office of Inspections should ensure its offices comply with all of the ammunition tracking requirements. Therefore, we recommend that the DEA revise its inspection checklist to ensure transactions recorded in the ammunition logbook include a remaining balance of all ammunition on hand, in accordance with DEA policy.

Results of the Ammunition Inventory

In order to assess the accuracy of the DEA's ammunition inventories, we conducted a 100-percent physical inventory of ammunition at 15 of the 16 sites we visited.⁹ Based on our physical inventories, we found that the ammunition logbooks at 7 of the 16 sites were inaccurate by between 8 and 14,056 rounds. In total, the balances recorded in the ammunition logbooks were understated by 27,769 rounds, meaning that the DEA had more ammunition on hand than what was documented. This represents a variance of 0.2 percent of the 10.7 million rounds that were tracked using ammunition logbooks. We make two recommendations in the section above regarding Ammunition Tracking to ensure that ammunition is tracked in accordance with DEA policy.

Controls over Less Lethal Munitions and Diversionary Devices

We found that the DEA has strong physical controls over its less lethal munitions and diversionary devices at the five locations we visited that maintained such items. Almost all of the less lethal munitions and diversionary devices that we observed were located at the DEA's Personnel Recovery Training Unit. However, much of the DEA's policy related to controls over diversionary devices is outdated. Specifically, the requirements pertain mostly to Foreign-deployed Advisory and Support Teams that were recently disbanded, and there was no policy regarding chemical agents and other less lethal munitions. In addition, we identified deficiencies related to the DEA's tracking of its less lethal munitions and diversionary devices. We also found that the DEA was not conducting annual physical inventories of less lethal munitions and diversionary devices.

Physical Security of Less Lethal Munitions and Diversionary Devices

We found that the DEA has strong physical controls over its less lethal munitions and diversionary devices. DEA policy includes a general requirement that ammunition and other forms of enforcement equipment and supplies must be

⁹ While we did conduct a partial inventory, due to logistical challenges, we were unable to count all of the ammunition at the New York Division Office.

stored in a secure area. At all five sites, less lethal munitions and diversionary devices were stored in secure areas with access restricted to designated personnel.

Tracking Less Lethal Munitions and Diversionary Devices

Strong controls over less lethal munitions and diversionary devices requires an inventory management system that maintains accurate, current, and historical data—to include increases and decreases in inventory and the reason for the changes in quantity over time. However, the DEA's policy is silent with regard to chemical agents and other less lethal munitions. Instead, the DEA's policy primarily addresses controls for diversionary devices, such as flash bang and smoke grenades, used by previously disbanded Foreign-deployed Advisory and Support Teams.

The DEA's current policy requires each use of diversionary devices to be recorded in a bound ledger that contains the date, type of device, amount received or issued, the person receiving or being issued the items, and remaining balance on hand. In our judgment, this method of tracking diversionary devices is effective and should be implemented throughout the agency for both diversionary devices and all less lethal munitions.

According to the DEA's Unit Chief of the Domestic Training Unit, when the Foreign-deployed Advisory and Support Teams were disbanded, their equipment, including less lethal munitions and diversionary devices, was transferred to the Personnel Recovery Training Unit. We reviewed the Personnel Recovery Training Unit's inventory of flash bang and smoke grenades, as well as its inventory of less lethal munitions, including breaching munitions and impact projectiles.

We found that the Personnel Recovery Training Unit was tracking less lethal munitions and diversionary devices using three separate methods, all of which were deficient in ensuring the accuracy of the inventory. Specifically, while the Personnel Recovery Training Unit recorded movement of less-lethal munitions in a bound logbook, the logbook did not specify exact quantities used, returned, or the ending balance. Instead, ending balances for all items were maintained on an Excel spreadsheet. However, the spreadsheet entries were not always dated, and thus, we could not trace the transactions in the logbook to the ending balances in the spreadsheet. The Personnel Recovery Training Unit also provided us with a memorandum listing expended flash bang grenades and the dates and circumstances under which they were used. However, the quantity of flash bang grenades expended per the memorandum did not match the ending balances in the spreadsheet. In our judgment, the Personnel Recovery Training Unit did not adequately track its less lethal munitions and diversionary devices inventory and over-complicated the tracking of these items by using three separate documents to track product movement and current balances. Furthermore, each method that the Personnel Recovery Training Unit used to track these items, in and of itself, lacked the detail required by current DEA policy.

Four other DEA offices we visited had a total of approximately 425 canisters of OC spray; however, none of the four offices were tracking the inventory of these

items because DEA policy does not require OC spray or any other less lethal munition to be tracked and inventoried. In our judgment, the DEA's current tracking policy is inadequate and increases the risk of less lethal munitions and diversionary devices being lost, misplaced, or stolen without detection. Given that only 4 of the 16 sites included in our audit maintained inventories of OC spray, it is clear that Special Agents are not using these items on a regular basis, if at all. This is further supported by the fact that several of the canisters we examined expired in 2004. Therefore, we recommend that the DEA develop and implement policy requiring all offices to track the acquisition, use, and current balance of all types and quantities of less lethal munitions and diversionary devices. In lieu of tracking unwanted or expired OC spray, we recommend that the DEA issue guidance for disposing unwanted or expired OC spray.

Finally, we determined that none of the five DEA offices were conducting an annual physical inventory of less lethal munitions and diversionary devices. The DEA's current policy requires annual inventory reports to be prepared for flash bang and smoke grenades on hand as part of the annual ammunition inventory. However, the policy is specific to the disbanded Foreign-deployed Advisory and Support Teams and does not specifically require annual inventories for other less lethal munitions and diversionary devices. Conducting an annual physical inventory ensures the accuracy and accountability of the less lethal munitions inventory records. Therefore, we recommend that the DEA develop and implement policy requiring all offices to conduct annual physical inventories of their less lethal munitions and diversionary devices.

Results of the Less Lethal Munitions and Diversionary Devices Inventory

We conducted a 100-percent physical inventory of the Personnel Recovery Training Unit's less lethal munitions and diversionary devices, including its flash bang grenades. For all items that the DEA tracked, we compared the inventory log balance to the quantity on-hand. Based on our physical inventory, we identified two discrepancies between the balances recorded in the logbooks and the quantities on-hand. Specifically, the inventory of flash bang grenades was overstated on the spreadsheet by 59 units and one type of smoke grenade was overstated by 10 units. An official from the Personnel Recovery Training Unit explained that this was because DEA employees responsible for updates forgot to update the ending balances after the most recent training reflected in the bound logbook. However, we were unable to confirm the accuracy of this statement because exact quantities of flash bang grenades were not recorded in the logbook. Additionally, the quantity of smoke grenades recorded in the logbook still left two units unaccounted for in the spreadsheet. The Personnel Recovery Training Unit subsequently corrected the ending balances in the spreadsheet to reflect the results of our physical inventory.

Controls over Seized Firearms and Ammunition

The DEA maintained seized firearms and ammunition at 12 of the 16 sites included in our audit. We found that the DEA has strong physical controls over its seized non-drug evidence, including firearms and ammunition. During our physical inventory of seized firearms and ammunition, we were able to locate all items in

our sample and trace a sample of items back to the DEA's evidence tracking system. However, during our physical inventory, we identified seized firearm records with the incorrect serial number listed in the evidence tracking system.

Physical Security of Seized Firearms and Ammunition

We determined that the DEA has strong physical controls over seized firearms and ammunition. The DEA stores its seized non-drug evidence, including firearms and ammunition, in a storage configuration that is similar at each location. In addition to the non-drug evidence storage room, each site had ways to temporarily store evidence outside of the main storage area when the evidence custodian was unavailable, including lockers or a one-way drop box located in the wall of the storage area. At the DEA sites we visited, we found that access to the storage area requires a key or keycard and most require an alarm deactivation code. Access was also limited to designated evidence custodians.

Accuracy of the DEA's Seized Firearms and Ammunition Inventory

The DEA provided us with inventory lists of seized firearms and ammunition stored in the DEA's non-drug evidence vaults from CERTS and its predecessor, the Enhanced Non-drug Evidence Database System (ENEDS).¹⁰ In accordance with DEA policy, all items of non-drug property seized by the DEA are documented on a DEA Form 7a, Acquisition of Non-drug Property Seizures, assigned an exhibit number, sealed, and submitted to the non-drug evidence custodian within 10 working days of seizure. Within 72 hours of receiving the seized item, the evidence custodian must use the information on DEA Form 7a to manually enter the item into the ENEDS, which is then automatically populated in CERTS.¹¹ All seized non-drug evidence can then be tracked in CERTS using the case and exhibit numbers, or any other unique identifier, such as the item description.

From FYs 2014 through 2018, the DEA reported between 545 and 733 annual firearm and ammunition seizures. To verify the accuracy of the DEA's seized non-drug evidence database, we selected a sample of 176 seized firearms and 69 ammunition seizures from the inventory lists provided by the DEA to ensure they were properly accounted for in CERTS. In addition, we selected 53 seized firearms and 17 ammunition seizures located in the DEA's non-drug evidence vaults and attempted to trace those items back to the inventory lists to ensure that the seized evidence records were complete and accurate. During our physical

¹⁰ We encountered some difficulty obtaining comprehensive inventory lists of all seized firearms and ammunition stored in the DEA's non-drug evidence vaults. The DEA's evidence tracking system does not easily allow evidence custodians to generate inventory lists of certain types of non-drug evidence. As a result, the lists they provided to us often had to be compiled using a word-search query of the description of each seized firearm and ammunition. The results of this search varied because the description field for seized firearms and ammunition did not always contain the same information. However, we did not take exception to this issue because the lists were only required for the purposes of our audit and seized firearms and ammunition are tracked in the DEA's evidence database.

¹¹ According to DEA officials, seizure records stored in ENEDS were migrated into CERTS in 2018. Evidence custodians can view ENEDS records, but cannot edit them.

inventory, we located all 245 seized firearms and ammunition in our sample and we traced 68 of 70 seized firearms and ammunition back to the inventory lists. We found that one of the two seizures we examined did not appear on the inventory lists because the item did not properly transfer when the office migrated from ENEDS to CERTS. The remaining seizure was not included in the inventory list because it was mistakenly coded as drug evidence when it was entered into ENEDS. In both instances, the non-drug evidence custodian corrected, or was in the process of correcting, the error. As a result, we are not making a recommendation related to this issue.

Although we located all seized items in our sample, we identified nine seized firearm records at five DEA offices with the incorrect serial number listed in CERTS. We determined that the errors we identified were the result of the Special Agent incorrectly recording the serial numbers on the DEA Form 7a, which then resulted in incorrect information being input into ENEDS. For all nine errors we identified, the DEA subsequently amended the DEA Form 7a by attaching a DEA Form 6, Report of Investigation, with the correct serial number. Because the errors have been corrected, we will not make a recommendation related to this issue.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The DEA has strong physical controls over its firearms and ammunition. However, the DEA needs to improve its controls over tracking weapons, ammunition, and less lethal munitions and diversionary devices. The DEA also needs to improve compliance with its requirements for tracking ammunition. Without sufficient controls over its sensitive property, the DEA cannot be assured that its inventories of weapons and munitions are adequately safeguarded. Most significantly, the deficiencies we identified increase the risk that the DEA's weapons and munitions can be lost, misplaced, or stolen without being detected. As a result, we make nine recommendations to improve the DEA's controls over weapons and munitions.

We recommend that the DEA:

1. Issue all office use firearms assigned to Special Agents for long term use by completing Form DEA-17, in accordance with its policy.
2. Ensure its weapons tracking system includes the location and assignment history of all firearms, and tracks edits made to firearm inventory records.
3. Obtain and track information about whether lost and stolen firearms were used in a crime while outside of the DEA's control.
4. Revise its policy to require that ammunition logbooks and inventory records are retained for at least 3 years.
5. Immediately communicate to all Primary Firearms Instructors the DEA's ammunition inventory policies and the importance of accurate and consistent tracking of all ammunition on hand.
6. Revise its inspection checklist to ensure transactions recorded in the ammunition logbook include a remaining balance of all ammunition on hand, in accordance with DEA policy.
7. Develop and implement policy requiring all offices to track the acquisition, use, and current balance of all types and quantities of less lethal munitions and diversionary devices.
8. Issue guidance for disposing unwanted or expired OC spray.
9. Develop and implement policy requiring all offices to conduct annual physical inventories of their less lethal munitions and diversionary devices.

STATEMENT ON INTERNAL CONTROLS

As required by the Government Auditing Standards, we tested, as appropriate, internal controls significant within the context of our audit objectives. A deficiency in an internal control exists when the design or operation of a control does not allow management or employees, in the normal course of performing their assigned functions, to timely prevent or detect: (1) impairments to the effectiveness and efficiency of operations, (2) misstatements in financial or performance information, or (3) violations of laws and regulations. Our evaluation of the DEA's internal controls was not made for the purpose of providing assurance on its internal control structure as a whole. The DEA's management is responsible for the establishment and maintenance of internal controls.

As noted in the Audit Results section of this report, we identified deficiencies in the DEA's internal controls that are significant within the context of the audit objectives and based upon the audit work performed that we believe adversely affect the DEA's ability to adequately track weapons, ammunition, and less lethal munitions and diversionary devices. As a result, the DEA cannot ensure that these sensitive items are properly safeguarded.

Because we are not expressing an opinion on the DEA's internal control structure as a whole, this statement is intended solely for the information and use of the DEA. This restriction is not intended to limit the distribution of this report, which is a matter of public record.

STATEMENT ON COMPLIANCE WITH LAWS AND REGULATIONS

As required by the Government Auditing Standards we tested, as appropriate given our audit scope and objectives, select transactions, records, procedures, and practices, to obtain reasonable assurance that the DEA's management complied with federal laws and regulations for which noncompliance, in our judgment, could have a material effect on the results of our audit. The DEA's management is responsible for ensuring compliance with applicable federal laws and regulations. In planning our audit, we did not identify laws and regulations that concerned the operations of the auditee that were significant within the context of the audit objectives.

OBJECTIVES, SCOPE, AND METHODOLOGY

Our objectives were to evaluate: (1) the DEA's controls over weapons and munitions; (2) the DEA's compliance with policies governing weapons and munitions; and (3) the accuracy of the DEA's weapons and munitions inventories.

We conducted this performance audit in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives. We believe that the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives.

Our audit covers the DEA's weapons and munitions inventories, including firearms, ammunition, less lethal munitions, and diversionary devices from FY 2014 through December 2018. To accomplish our objectives, we interviewed personnel responsible for the DEA's inventory of firearms, ammunition, less lethal munitions and diversionary devices at 16 DEA sites throughout the United States, as well as officials at the DEA's Headquarters. This included officials from the Asset Forfeiture Section, Office of Professional Responsibility, and Office of Inspections. We also evaluated the DEA's policies governing weapons and munitions. Our primary references were the DEA's Firearms Training Directive, and pertinent sections of the DEA Agents Manual.¹² Additionally, we examined Form DEA-17, Firearms Control Record; Form DEA-12, Receipt for Cash or Other Items; DEA Form 7a, Acquisition of Nondrug Property Seizures; and DEA Form 6, Report of Investigation.

We conducted site work at 16 DEA office locations. We judgmentally selected these sites in order to examine a broad range of DEA offices and functions, including large division offices; smaller district and resident offices; the DEA's Office of Training; the Aviation Division; and the DEA's El Paso Intelligence Center.

The purpose of our site work was to assess the DEA's compliance with policies regarding its weapons and munitions, as well as the effectiveness of those policies, and to determine if the DEA's weapons and munitions inventories were accurate. We also wanted to determine if the DEA's controls over weapons and munitions varied among different locations. We interviewed officials at each location, including supervisors, firearms instructors, and evidence custodians. We observed the physical security of the sites' weapons and munitions inventories. We also reviewed Weapons Database Inventory System (WDIS) records for firearms and supporting documents, such as certificates of disposal; ammunition logbooks; and less lethal munitions and diversionary device tracking forms.

¹² According to a DEA official, policy directives are no longer authorized. As a result, the Firearms Training Directive was replaced by a 2018 interim policy that is currently under review by the DEA's Office of Compliance.

We conducted a physical inventory of DEA-owned weapons and munitions. This included verifying the existence of a sample of weapons at all of the sites, which were selected from WDIS. We also selected a sample of weapons while on-site and traced those items back to WDIS, in order to determine if the inventory records were complete. We then analyzed select data fields in WDIS in order to assess the accuracy of those fields. In addition, we conducted a physical inventory of 100-percent of the sites' ammunition on-hand to determine if all of the rounds were properly accounted for on ammunition registers. Similarly, we conducted a physical inventory of seized firearms and ammunition. This included verifying the existence of a sample of firearms and ammunition from the non-drug evidence inventory lists at each location. We also selected a sample of seized firearms and ammunition while on-site and traced those items back to the inventory list to determine if the seized inventory records were complete. With the exception of ammunition, less lethal munitions, and diversionary devices, in each of our physical inventory efforts, we employed a judgmental sampling design, which focused on sensitive items stored at locations throughout the institution. However, this non-statistical sample design does not allow a projection of the test results for the entirety of its physical inventory or the DEA's inventory as a whole.

We reviewed documentation related to firearms purchases over a 6 month period to ensure the firearms were received and properly added to WDIS in a timely manner. This included looking at invoices and receiving documents for firearms received by the DEA between April and October 2018.

Finally, we reviewed documentation provided by the DEA's Office of Professional Responsibility and Board of Professional Conduct related to firearms that were reported as lost or stolen between FY 2014 and October 2018 to determine whether the DEA took appropriate action. We also examined the list of recovered and unrecovered lost or stolen firearms to ensure that they were properly reflected in WDIS.

THE DEA'S RESPONSE TO THE DRAFT AUDIT REPORT



U. S. Department of Justice
Drug Enforcement Administration


www.dea.gov

Washington, D.C. 20537

JUL 30 2019

MEMORANDUM

TO: Jason R. Malmstrom
Assistant Inspector General for Audit
Office of the Inspector General

FROM: Mary B. Schaefer 
Chief Compliance Officer
Office of Compliance

SUBJECT: DEA Response to the OIG Formal Draft Report: "Audit of the Drug Enforcement Administration's Controls over Weapons and Munitions"

The Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) has reviewed the Department of Justice (DOJ) Office of the Inspector General's (OIG), Audit Division, report entitled "Audit of the Drug Enforcement Administration's Controls over Weapons and Munitions." DEA acknowledges and is appreciative of the role the OIG played in identifying areas of weakness to improve the DEA's controls over its weapons, ammunition, less lethal munitions and diversionary devices.

DEA provides the following responses to the nine recommendations:

Recommendation 1. Issue all office use firearms assigned to Special Agents for long term use by completing Form DEA-17, in accordance with its policy.

DEA RESPONSE

DEA concurs with the recommendation. To address the recommendation, DEA will issue all firearms on a DEA-17 in accordance with existing policy. Guidance is being drafted to be distributed to all Office of Training (TR) staff re-iterating the necessity of compliance with this policy.

Recommendation 2. Ensure its weapons tracking system includes the location and assignment history of all firearms, and tracks edits made to firearm inventory records.

DEA RESPONSE

DEA concurs with the recommendation. TR and the Office Information Systems will work to include location tracking edits and firearms history in the Firearms Qualification Tracking System (FAQTS).

Recommendation 3. Obtain and track information about whether lost and stolen firearms were used in a crime while outside of the DEA's control.

DEA RESPONSE

DEA concurs with the recommendation. TR will routinely run checks on lost or stolen DEA firearms and track whether such firearms have been used in a crime. TR is drafting guidance to all Primary Firearms Instructors and TR staff on the protocol of the routine checks.

Recommendation 4. Revise its policy to require that ammunition logbooks and inventory records are retained for at least 3 years.

DEA RESPONSE

DEA concurs with the recommendation. To address the recommendation, DEA is updating its Firearms Directive to require ammunition logbooks to be retained for three years.

Recommendation 5. Immediately communicate to all Primary Firearms Instructors the DEA's ammunition inventory policies and the importance of accurate and consistent tracking of all ammunition on hand.

DEA RESPONSE

DEA concurs with this recommendation. TR is drafting guidance for communication to all Primary Firearms Instructors on the DEA's ammunition inventory policies and the importance of accurate and consistent tracking of all ammunition on hand.

Recommendation 6. Revise its inspection checklist to ensure transactions recorded in the ammunition logbook include a remaining balance of all ammunition on hand, in accordance with DEA policy.

DEA RESPONSE

DEA concurs with the recommendation. The Office of Inspections (IN) has updated the Firearms Checklist requiring verification that the transactions recorded in the ammunition logbook include a remaining balance of all ammunition on hand, in accordance with DEA policy. An updated copy of the new Firearms Checklist will be sent under separate cover.

Based on this documentation, DEA requests closure of this recommendation.

Recommendation 7. Develop and implement policy requiring all offices to track the acquisition, use, and current balance of all types and quantities of less lethal munitions and diversionary devices.

DEA RESPONSE

DEA concurs with this recommendation. DEA will develop policy which will require tracking of less lethal and diversionary devices in logbooks in the same manner as ammunition.

Recommendation 8. Issue guidance for disposing unwanted or expired OC spray.

DEA RESPONSE

DEA concurs with this recommendation. DEA will update current lesson plans to include guidance for disposing unwanted or expired OC spray and notify the field of changes through the Division Training Coordinators.

Recommendation 9. Develop and implement policy requiring all offices to conduct annual physical inventories of their less lethal munitions and diversionary devices.

DEA RESPONSE

DEA concurs with this recommendation. DEA will develop policy which will require an annual inventory of less lethal and diversionary devices in the same manner as ammunition.

Thank you for the opportunity to respond and address the OIG's concerns. If you have any questions regarding this response, please contact DEA's Audit Liaison Team at 202-307-8200.

**OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL
ANALYSIS AND SUMMARY OF ACTIONS
NECESSARY TO CLOSE THE REPORT**

The OIG provided a draft of this audit report to the DEA. The DEA's response is incorporated in Appendix 2 of this final report. In response to our audit report, the DEA concurred with our recommendations and discussed the actions it will implement in response to our findings. As a result, the status of the audit report is resolved. The following provides the OIG analysis of the response and summary of actions necessary to close the report.

Recommendations for the DEA:

- 1. Issue all office use firearms assigned to Special Agents for long term use by completing Form DEA-17, in accordance with its policy.**

Resolved. The DEA concurred with our recommendation. The DEA stated in its response that it will issue all firearms on a DEA-17 in accordance with existing policy, including drafting and distributing guidance to all staff in the Office of Training reiterating the necessity of compliance with this policy.

This recommendation can be closed when we receive evidence that guidance has been drafted and distributed to all Office of Training staff reiterating the requirement for all firearms to be issued on a DEA-17.

- 2. Ensure its weapons tracking system includes the location and assignment history of all firearms, and tracks edits made to firearm inventory records.**

Resolved. The DEA concurred with our recommendation. The DEA stated in its response that the Office of Training and the Office Information Systems will work to include location tracking edits and firearms history in the Firearms Qualification Tracking System (FAQTS).

This recommendation can be closed when we receive evidence that the Firearms Qualification Tracking System includes location tracking edits and firearms history capabilities, and that FAQTS and the Weapons Database Inventory System have been combined into one system.

- 3. Obtain and track information about whether lost and stolen firearms were used in a crime while outside of the DEA's control.**

Resolved. The DEA concurred with our recommendation. The DEA stated in its response that the Office of Training will routinely run checks on lost or stolen DEA firearms and track whether such firearms have been used in a crime. The Office of Training will also issue guidance to all Primary Firearms Instructors and Office of Training staff on the protocol of the routine checks.

This recommendation can be closed when we receive evidence that the Office of Training has begun tracking whether lost or stolen DEA firearms have been used in a crime, and issued guidance communicating the protocol of routine checks of lost or stolen DEA firearms.

4. Revise its policy to require that ammunition logbooks and inventory records are retained for at least 3 years.

Resolved. The DEA concurred with our recommendation. The DEA stated in its response that it is updating its Firearms Directive to require ammunition logbooks to be retained for 3 years.

This recommendation can be closed when we receive evidence that the DEA has updated its Firearms Directive to require ammunition logbooks to be retained for 3 years.

5. Immediately communicate to all Primary Firearms Instructors the DEA's ammunition inventory policies and the importance of accurate and consistent tracking of all ammunition on hand.

Resolved. The DEA concurred with our recommendation. The DEA stated in its response that the Office of Training will issue guidance to all Primary Firearms Instructors communicating the DEA's ammunition inventory policies and the importance of accurate and consistent tracking of all ammunition on hand.

This recommendation can be closed when we receive evidence that the DEA has issued guidance to all Primary Firearms Instructors communicating the DEA's ammunition inventory policies and the importance of accurate and consistent tracking of all ammunition on hand.

6. Revise its inspection checklist to ensure transactions recorded in the ammunition logbook include a remaining balance of all ammunition on hand, in accordance with DEA policy.

Closed. The DEA concurred with our recommendation. With its response, the DEA provided an updated Office of Inspections Firearms Checklist requiring verification that the transactions recorded in the ammunition logbook include a remaining balance of all ammunition on hand, in accordance with DEA policy.

We reviewed the updated Office of Inspections Firearms Checklist and determined that it adequately addresses our recommendation. Therefore, this recommendation is now closed.

7. Develop and implement policy requiring all offices to track the acquisition, use, and current balance of all types and quantities of less lethal munitions and diversionary devices.

Resolved. The DEA concurred with our recommendation. The DEA stated in its response that it will develop policy requiring tracking of less lethal munitions and diversionary devices in logbooks similar to those used for tracking ammunition.

This recommendation can be closed when we receive the policy requiring less lethal munitions and diversionary devices to be tracked in logbooks in the same manner as ammunition.

8. Issue guidance for disposing unwanted or expired OC spray.

Resolved. The DEA concurred with our recommendation. The DEA stated in its response that it will update current lesson plans to include guidance for disposing unwanted or expired OC spray and notify the field of changes through the Division Training Coordinators.

This recommendation can be closed when we receive evidence that the current lesson plan has been updated to include guidance for disposing unwanted or expired OC spray.

9. Develop and implement policy requiring all offices to conduct annual physical inventories of their less lethal munitions and diversionary devices.

Resolved. The DEA concurred with our recommendation. The DEA stated in its response that it will develop policy requiring an annual inventory of less lethal munitions and diversionary devices in the same manner as ammunition.

This recommendation can be closed when we receive the policy requiring an annual inventory of less lethal munitions and diversionary devices.



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