



January 2014

# DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

## Ammunition Purchases Have Declined since 2009

# GAO Highlights

Highlights of [GAO-14-119](#), a report to congressional requesters

## Why GAO Did This Study

DHS and its components have homeland security and law enforcement missions that require agents and officers to carry and be proficient in the use of firearms. DHS has more than 70,000 firearm-carrying personnel—the most of any department. DOJ has the next largest with approximately 69,000 firearm-carrying personnel. GAO was asked to examine DHS's ammunition purchases and management of ammunition and firearms.

This report addresses trends in DHS's ammunition purchases since fiscal year 2008, how DHS's purchases compare with DOJ's, and what factors affect DHS's purchase decisions. GAO analyzed data from six DHS and three DOJ components that have law enforcement missions, require agents and officers to carry firearms, and purchase ammunition themselves or through their respective departments. Specifically, GAO analyzed data on ammunition purchases, usage, costs, and inventories, among other things, for fiscal years 2008 through 2013 for DHS, and for fiscal years 2011 through 2013 for DOJ. GAO assessed the reliability of these data and found them sufficiently reliable. Data on DOJ ammunition purchases prior to fiscal year 2011 were not readily available; therefore, GAO excluded them, as discussed in the report.

## What GAO Recommends

GAO is not making any recommendations.

View [GAO-14-119](#). For more information, contact David Maurer at (202) 512-9627 or [MaurerD@gao.gov](mailto:MaurerD@gao.gov).

January 2014

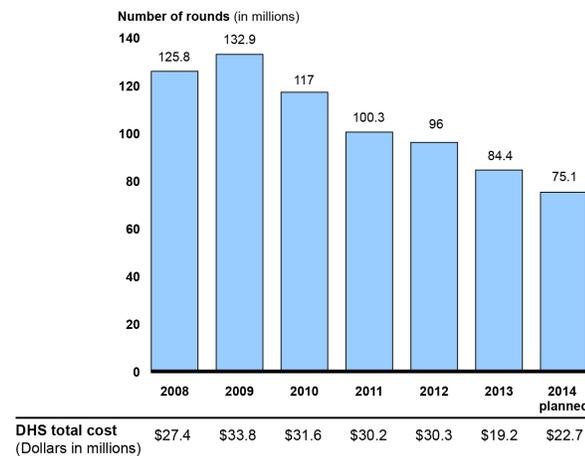
## DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

### Ammunition Purchases Have Declined since 2009

## What GAO Found

The Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) annual ammunition purchases have declined since fiscal year 2009 and are comparable in number to the Department of Justice's (DOJ) ammunition purchases. In fiscal year 2013, DHS purchased 84 million rounds of ammunition, which is less than DHS's ammunition purchases over the past 5 fiscal years, as shown in the figure below. DHS component officials said the decline in ammunition purchases in fiscal year 2013 was primarily a result of budget constraints, which meant reducing the number of training classes, and drawing on their ammunition inventories. From fiscal years 2008 through 2013, DHS purchased an average of 109 million rounds of ammunition for training, qualification, and operational needs, according to DHS data. DHS's ammunition purchases over the 6-year period equates to an average of 1,200 rounds purchased per firearm-carrying agent or officer per year. Over the past 3 fiscal years (2011-2013), DHS purchased an average of 1,000 rounds per firearm-carrying agent or officer and selected DOJ components purchased 1,300 rounds per firearm-carrying agent or officer.

## Total Department of Homeland Security Ammunition Purchases for Fiscal Years 2008 through 2013



Source: GAO analysis of DHS data.

DHS ammunition purchases are driven primarily by firearm training and qualification requirements. Most DHS firearm-carrying personnel are required to qualify four times per year, though requirements vary by component, as do the number of rounds of ammunition typically used for training and qualification. DHS components also reported considering other factors when making ammunition purchase decisions, such as changes in firearms, usage rates, and ammunition inventories. DHS components maintain inventories of ammunition to help ensure they have sufficient ammunition for the training and operational needs of their officers, as there can be months-long delays between placing an order for ammunition and receiving it. As of October 2013, DHS estimates it had approximately 159 million rounds in inventory, enough to last about 22 months to meet the training and operational needs of its firearm-carrying personnel. Ammunition inventory data provided by DOJ components indicated that inventory ranged from about 13 months' worth to about 20 months' worth.

---

# Contents

---

Letter		1
	Background	5
	DHS's Ammunition Purchases Have Declined in Recent Years and Vary Based on Numerous Factors; Annual Ammunition Purchases are Comparable to DOJ's	10
	DHS Has Policies and Guidance for Firearms and Ammunition Inventory Management	24
	Agency Comments	29
Appendix I	Objectives, Scope, and Methodology	31
Appendix II	Commonly Used Ammunition and Issued Firearms at DHS	38
Appendix III	Department of Homeland Security Ammunition Contracts, as of October 1, 2013	40
Appendix IV	Comments from the Department of Homeland Security	43
Appendix V	GAO Contact and Staff Acknowledgments	45
Tables		
	Table 1: Law Enforcement Missions of Selected Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and Department of Justice (DOJ) Components and Number of Personnel Authorized to Carry Firearms in Fiscal Year 2013	6
	Table 2: Annual Average Number of Rounds of Ammunition Purchased, per Firearm-Carrying Agent or Officer, by Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Law Enforcement Component in Our Review, Fiscal Years 2008-2013	14
	Table 3: Selected Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Components' Estimated Ammunition Inventory by Total	

---

Rounds and by the Number of Months' Supply at Three Points in Time Over 1 Year	22
Table 4: Approximate Number of Rounds of Ammunition Purchased per Agent or Officer for the Department of Homeland Security and Department of Justice Components in Our Review for Fiscal Years 2011 through 2013	23

---

Figures

Figure 1: Members and Goals of the Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) Weapons and Ammunition Commodity Council	9
Figure 2: Total Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Ammunition Purchases for Components in Our Review from Fiscal Years 2008 through 2013	12
Figure 3: Number of Rounds of Ammunition Purchased, by Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Component in Our Review, from Fiscal Years 2008 through 2013	13
Figure 4: Estimated Ammunition Used by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Components in Our Review from Fiscal Years 2008 through 2013	20
Figure 5: Ammunition Commonly Purchased by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE)	38
Figure 6: Firearms Commonly Issued by Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Components	39

---

---

### Abbreviations

ATF	Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives
CBP	U.S. Customs and Border Protection
DEA	Drug Enforcement Administration
DHS	Department of Homeland Security
DOJ	Department of Justice
FACTS	Firearms, Armor, and Credentials Tracking System
FAMS	Federal Air Marshal Service
FAR	Federal Acquisition Regulations
FBI	Federal Bureau of Investigation
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
FFDO	federal flight deck officer
FLETC	Federal Law Enforcement Training Centers
FPDS	Federal Procurement Data System
FPS	Federal Protective Service
HSAR	Homeland Security Acquisition Regulation
HSAM	Homeland Security Acquisition Manual
ICE	U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement
IDIQ	indefinite delivery, indefinite quantity
mm	millimeter
NFTTU	National Firearms Tactical and Training Unit
NPPD	National Protection and Programs Directorate
TSA	Transportation Security Administration
USSS	U.S. Secret Service
WACC	Weapons and Ammunition Commodity Council

This is a work of the U.S. government and is not subject to copyright protection in the United States. The published product may be reproduced and distributed in its entirety without further permission from GAO. However, because this work may contain copyrighted images or other material, permission from the copyright holder may be necessary if you wish to reproduce this material separately.



January 13, 2014

The Honorable Tom A. Coburn, M.D.  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs  
United States Senate

The Honorable Michael T. McCaul  
Chairman  
Committee on Homeland Security  
House of Representatives

The Honorable Jeff Duncan  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Oversight and Management Efficiency  
Committee on Homeland Security  
House of Representatives

The Honorable Richard Hudson  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Transportation Security  
Committee on Homeland Security  
House of Representatives

The Honorable John L. Mica  
Member  
House of Representatives

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and five of its components—U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP), National Protection and Programs Directorate/Federal Protective Service (FPS), U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), Transportation Security Administration (TSA), and the U.S. Secret Service (USSS)—have homeland security and law enforcement responsibilities and missions that require law enforcement agents and officers to carry and be proficient in the use of firearms and ammunition.<sup>1</sup> DHS employs more

---

<sup>1</sup>DHS defines a firearm as any weapon (excluding flare and starter guns) that will, or that is designed to, or may be readily converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive to include the frame or receiver of any such weapon or any sound suppression device. DHS classifies a firearm as a “Dangerous and Hazardous Sensitive Asset.”

---

firearm-carrying law enforcement personnel than any other department—more than 70,000, according to DHS data, and DHS components purchase ammunition for these personnel.<sup>2</sup> Firearm-carrying personnel at DHS include Border Patrol agents, federal air marshals, and Secret Service agents, among others. In addition, another DHS component—the four interagency training sites that constitute the Federal Law Enforcement Training Centers (FLETC)—also purchases ammunition. FLETC trains an average of over 66,000 federal, state, local, tribal, and international law enforcement personnel every year, according to DHS officials. Ammunition purchased by FLETC is utilized by all students who train on firearms at its facilities. For comparison, the Department of Justice (DOJ) and its components—including the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF); Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI); U.S. Marshals Service; Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA); and the Federal Bureau of Prisons—have the second largest number of federal personnel authorized to carry firearms, with approximately 69,000 agents and officers authorized to carry firearms as of October 2013, according to DOJ data.

At both DHS and DOJ, federal law enforcement agents and officers are authorized to carry firearms, and are required to train in their use and pass certain firearms qualification standards. Firearms proficiency is a key component of an officer's ability to successfully fulfill the component's mission and protect life and public safety. To help ensure the firearms proficiency of their firearm-carrying workforce, these agencies purchase a variety of types of ammunition for training, qualifications, and operational purposes.

Because DHS's law enforcement missions require the department, through its components, to purchase ammunition and manage various types of firearms, effective management and oversight of ammunition and firearms is an important aspect of DHS's overall mission. It is incumbent

---

<sup>2</sup>The number presented here—more than 70,000—represents the number of DHS personnel required to carry a firearm, according to data provided by DHS, as of October 2013. The specific number of DHS personnel required to carry a firearm is considered sensitive security information and therefore is not included in this report. This is because the specific number of DHS personnel would include the number of TSA firearm-carrying personnel, such as federal air marshals and federal flight deck officers—and those numbers are considered sensitive security information. In addition to these more than 70,000 civilian DHS law enforcement officers, the U.S. Coast Guard—a DHS component—has over 41,000 uniformed members of the military who also train with and carry firearms in the performance of their duties.

---

upon agencies to ensure the effective and efficient management of ammunition and firearms as stewards of taxpayer resources. You asked us to examine DHS's ammunition purchases and its management of both ammunition and firearms. This report addresses the following questions:

1. What are the trends in DHS's ammunition purchases since fiscal year 2008, what factors affect its purchase decisions, and how do DHS's purchases compare with DOJ's?
2. What policies and guidance does DHS have for managing firearms and ammunition inventories?

To address our first question, we obtained available data from DHS and DOJ law enforcement components with firearm-carrying personnel regarding their ammunition purchases, costs, usage, inventory, and the size of the authorized firearm-carrying workforce. We also obtained data on DHS planned ammunition purchases for fiscal year 2014. Specifically, we selected all DHS law enforcement components with firearm-carrying personnel—CBP, ICE, TSA, USSS, FPS, as well as FLETC.<sup>3</sup> We excluded the U.S. Coast Guard—a DHS component with firearm-carrying personnel—because the U.S. Coast Guard does not procure ammunition through DHS; rather, the U.S. Coast Guard procures its ammunition through Department of Defense contracts. Similarly, we selected all DOJ law enforcement components with firearm-carrying personnel. However, the Federal Bureau of Prisons could not provide ammunition purchase data comparable to that of the other components based on its method of record keeping and data retention policy. We determined that data from the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) were not sufficiently reliable for our purposes, because DEA could only provide estimates of purchases. Therefore, the DOJ components included in our review are ATF, FBI, and U.S. Marshals Service. We included these DOJ law enforcement agencies in our review to provide context to help understand DHS's ammunition purchases relative to those of other federal law enforcement agencies.

---

<sup>3</sup>While other DHS components, such as the Office of the Inspector General and the Federal Emergency Management Agency, may have a small number of personnel authorized to carry firearms for whom they purchase ammunition, these components are not law enforcement components, and thus we did not include them in our review. The number of TSA firearm-carrying personnel is considered sensitive security information. Accordingly, some information on TSA ammunition purchases and usage that could identify the number of TSA firearm-carrying personnel was excluded from this report.

---

We selected fiscal year 2008 as the starting point for our analysis because data on DHS ammunition purchases, cost, and usage were not readily available or reliable prior to 2008, according to DHS officials. Nevertheless, obtaining data going back 5 fiscal years provides historical perspective on DHS's ammunition purchases and use over time, and allows for comparisons with purchases in fiscal year 2013 and planned purchases for fiscal year 2014. We analyzed the data to identify any changes in the amount of ammunition purchased or used year to year and interviewed knowledgeable agency officials to understand the reasons why changes occurred. For each fiscal year, we calculated the amount of ammunition purchased per agent and officer authorized to carry firearms at each DHS and DOJ component in our review, using component-provided data on the amount of ammunition purchased and the number of firearm-carrying personnel. We calculated the average number of rounds purchased per agent or officer per year for fiscal years 2008 through 2013 at DHS, excluding FLETC, by determining the average amount of ammunition purchased across DHS law enforcement components in each fiscal year and dividing that by the average number of agents or officers at DHS for each fiscal year. We determined that ammunition purchase data for DOJ components were not sufficiently reliable prior to 2011 for all components, so we used data from fiscal years 2011 through 2013 to do the same calculation. We analyzed the amount of ammunition purchased per agent or officer authorized to carry firearms to account for the varying sizes of the different departments and components. We selected ammunition purchases by DOJ to provide a comparison with DHS's ammunition purchases as DOJ has the second largest number of personnel authorized to carry firearms. However, our DOJ analysis is not to suggest that the department represents a model or standard against which DHS is assessed. Differences in the amount of ammunition purchased per firearm-carrying agent or officer reflect a number of factors, including unique mission requirements and training needs.

To assess the reliability of these data, we reviewed DHS ammunition procurement contract files and interviewed knowledgeable officials at DHS and DOJ responsible for collecting and reporting these data. In addition, for the data we obtained from DHS components on ammunition purchases and costs, we compared the data with corroborating evidence, such as information from the Federal Procurement Data System (FPDS), to determine data consistency and reasonableness. We found the data on ammunition purchase, usage, cost, and inventory, as well as workforce data, to be sufficiently reliable for our purposes, with caveats and exceptions noted throughout the report. We also interviewed DHS component officials from each of the components in our review

---

responsible for overseeing the ammunition procurement process and determining ammunition requirements at the component level. We also discussed the purpose of quality testing the ammunition, and to understand the context of why proficiency among firearm-carrying personnel is important. Finally, for additional context, we visited the ICE National Firearms Testing Lab, which performs quality control testing on ammunition and firearms, and maintains an inventory of ammunition and firearms for distribution to DHS field locations.

To address our second question, we reviewed DHS-wide and DHS component-level policy documents, such as acquisition and personal property management directives, and firearms and ammunition guidance and operating procedures. We interviewed knowledgeable officials from the DHS Office of the Chief Procurement Officer, CBP, FLETC, FPS, ICE, TSA, and USSS regarding their management and oversight of ammunition and firearms and the related policies and procedures for DHS and its components. We also reviewed available DHS Inspector General audit and component inspection reports related to the oversight over ammunition and firearms. We did not assess if the components' policies, procedures, and process for managing their firearms and ammunition inventories were working as intended, as that was outside the scope of our review. For more information on our scope and methodology, see appendix I.

We conducted this performance audit from May 2013 to January 2014 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.

---

## Background

---

### DHS and DOJ Components in Our Review with Firearm-Carrying Personnel

DHS and DOJ have several components with law enforcement functions whose personnel are authorized to carry firearms in support of accomplishing their respective missions. Table 1 describes the various law enforcement and homeland security missions of the DHS and DOJ components within our review, as well as the number of personnel authorized to carry firearms in fiscal year 2013.

**Table 1: Law Enforcement Missions of Selected Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and Department of Justice (DOJ) Components and Number of Personnel Authorized to Carry Firearms in Fiscal Year 2013**

Department and component	Law enforcement mission	Number of personnel authorized to carry firearms in fiscal year 2013
<b>DHS</b>		
U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP)	CBP's priority mission is to keep terrorists and their weapons out of the United States, while upholding a responsibility for securing and facilitating trade and travel. CBP's law enforcement functions include enforcing a wide range of U.S. regulations, including immigration and customs laws.	43,000 <sup>a</sup>
Federal Law Enforcement Training Centers (FLETC)	FLETC provides career-long training to law enforcement professionals to help them fulfill their responsibilities safely and proficiently. FLETC has four training sites that train an average of about 66,000 federal, state, local, tribal, and international law enforcement personnel every year.	16
Federal Protective Service (FPS)	A subcomponent of the National Protection and Programs Directorate, FPS is a federal law enforcement agency that provides integrated security and law enforcement services to the General Service Administration's federally owned and leased buildings, facilities, properties, and other federal properties.	955
U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE)	ICE is the principal investigative arm of DHS and promotes homeland security and public safety through the enforcement of federal criminal and civil laws governing border control, customs, trade, and immigration.	13,234
Transportation Security Administration (TSA)	TSA protects the nation's transportation systems to ensure freedom of movement for people and commerce. The largest firearm-carrying components of TSA are the Federal Air Marshals Service (FAMS) and federal flight deck officers (FFDOs). Federal air marshals deploy on U.S. aircraft world-wide, and conduct protection, response, detection, and assessment activities in airports and other transportation systems. Under the federal flight deck officer program, eligible flight crew members are authorized by TSA to use firearms to defend the flight deck against an act of criminal violence or air piracy.	The number of FAMS and FFDOs is considered sensitive security information
U.S. Secret Service (USSS)	USSS safeguards the nation's financial infrastructure and payment systems to preserve the integrity of the economy and protects national leaders; visiting heads of state; as well as government, designated sites, and national special security events.	5,014
<b>DOJ</b>		
Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI)	The FBI protects and defends the United States against terrorist and foreign intelligence threats; upholds and enforces the criminal laws of the United States; and provides leadership and criminal justice services to federal, state, municipal, and international agencies and partners.	13,856
Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives (ATF)	ATF protects communities from violent criminals, criminal organizations, the illegal use and trafficking of firearms, the illegal use and storage of explosives, acts of arson and bombings, acts of terrorism, and the illegal diversion of alcohol and tobacco products.	3,051
U.S. Marshals Service	The U.S. Marshals Service protects the federal judiciary, apprehends federal fugitives, manages and sells seized assets acquired by criminals through illegal activities, houses and transports federal prisoners, and operates the Witness Security Program.	9,235

Source: GAO analysis of DHS and DOJ information.

---

<sup>a</sup>The data from CBP include a rounded number of personnel for one of CBP's sub-components. Therefore, we report CBP's data rounded to the thousands.

In support of their law enforcement missions, both DHS and DOJ law enforcement officers and agents use a number of different types of firearms, which require a variety of ammunition. Examples of firearms include side arms, such as pistols, and long guns, such as rifles. Commonly used ammunition includes .40 caliber, .223 caliber, and 9 millimeter, according to our analysis of data provided by DHS. More examples of commonly used firearms and ammunition can be found in appendix II.<sup>4</sup>

---

## DHS Procurement of Ammunition

### Example of an ICE Strategic Sourcing Contract

ICE has a strategic sourcing contract for .40 caliber ammunition that was initiated in January 2012 and will expire in January 2017. This is an indefinite delivery, indefinite quantity contract with base year and options for 4 additional years, from which other components, such as TSA and CBP, can place purchase orders to fulfill their .40 caliber ammunition needs. The maximum number of rounds of ammunition on the contract, if all 5 years are optioned, is 450 million rounds for a total cost of \$109 million.

Source: GAO analysis of DHS data.

In 2003, DHS began its strategic sourcing program to leverage its buying power and secure competitive prices for a variety of goods and services, resulting in cost savings through collective procurement actions (e.g., buying in bulk quantities at lower prices).<sup>5</sup> DHS developed its first strategically sourced ammunition procurement in 2005. DHS's strategic sourcing contract vehicles include contracts or agreements that have been established for use by two or more components, and these types of contracts have been used by DHS components to procure ammunition. The Office of Management and Budget's Office of Federal Procurement Policy has cited DHS's efforts among best practices for implementing federal strategic sourcing initiatives, and we have also reported on DHS's strategic sourcing initiatives.<sup>6</sup>

DHS procures ammunition using two types of contracts—strategic sourcing and individual contracts. The decision of whether to use a strategic sourcing contract is driven by collective component needs, according to DHS officials. That is, if more than one component needs a specific type of ammunition, then that ammunition procurement is a candidate for strategic sourcing. Most of DHS's ammunition contracts, whether strategically sourced or individual contracts, are indefinite

---

<sup>4</sup>Commonly used firearms and ammunition refer to the firearms issued and largest amounts of ammunition purchased by the components in our review.

<sup>5</sup>DHS defines strategic sourcing as a structured process of analyzing DHS spending and using a collaborative approach to make business decisions about acquiring and managing commodities and services more effectively and efficiently across multiple components or the entire department.

<sup>6</sup>Among other things, we reported that DHS had the most initiatives and had the highest percentage of spending through strategic sourcing of the four selected agencies we reviewed. GAO, *Strategic Sourcing: Improved and Expanded Use Could Save Billions in Annual Procurement Costs*, [GAO-12-919](#) (Washington, D.C., Sept. 20, 2012).

---

delivery, indefinite quantity (IDIQ) contracts, which are typically negotiated for a base year with additional options for purchasing ammunition up to a certain maximum number of rounds, or contract ceiling. These IDIQ contracts allow components to lock in the price, specifications, delivery costs, and other requirements and then place purchase orders throughout the negotiated time frame of the contract (e.g., indefinite delivery) for varying quantities as needed (e.g., indefinite quantity), rather than placing a single order for large amounts of ammunition. DHS orders based on the contracts as needed and pays for the ammunition on delivery. DHS is required to buy only a minimum that represents about 1 month of the projected DHS requirement, according to DHS officials.

In August 2012, DHS began requiring components to use strategic sourcing contract vehicles for procurements, including ammunition, unless procurements met certain exceptions, such as specialized types of ammunition not commonly used across components or ammunition requiring certain technical specifications.<sup>7</sup> Ammunition that is either not commonly used or has specifications needed by a single component can be acquired through individual component contracts according to DHS officials. Within the DHS Office of the Chief Procurement Officer, the Strategic Sourcing Program Office helps components develop, implement, and maintain sourcing strategies to enhance acquisition efficiency. According to DHS officials, the strategic sourcing process for procuring ammunition for multiple components has saved an estimated \$2 million since fiscal year 2008.<sup>8</sup> See appendix III for a complete list of all active DHS ammunition contracts, as of October 2013.

Given the number of law enforcement and security personnel across the department, DHS established the Weapons and Ammunition Commodity Council (WACC) in October 2003 to consolidate weapons, ammunition, and other enforcement equipment requirements. While DHS components are responsible for determining their own ammunition requirements and needs, WACC is to serve as the coordinating mechanism for DHS components' ammunition and weapons procurements. Rather than have

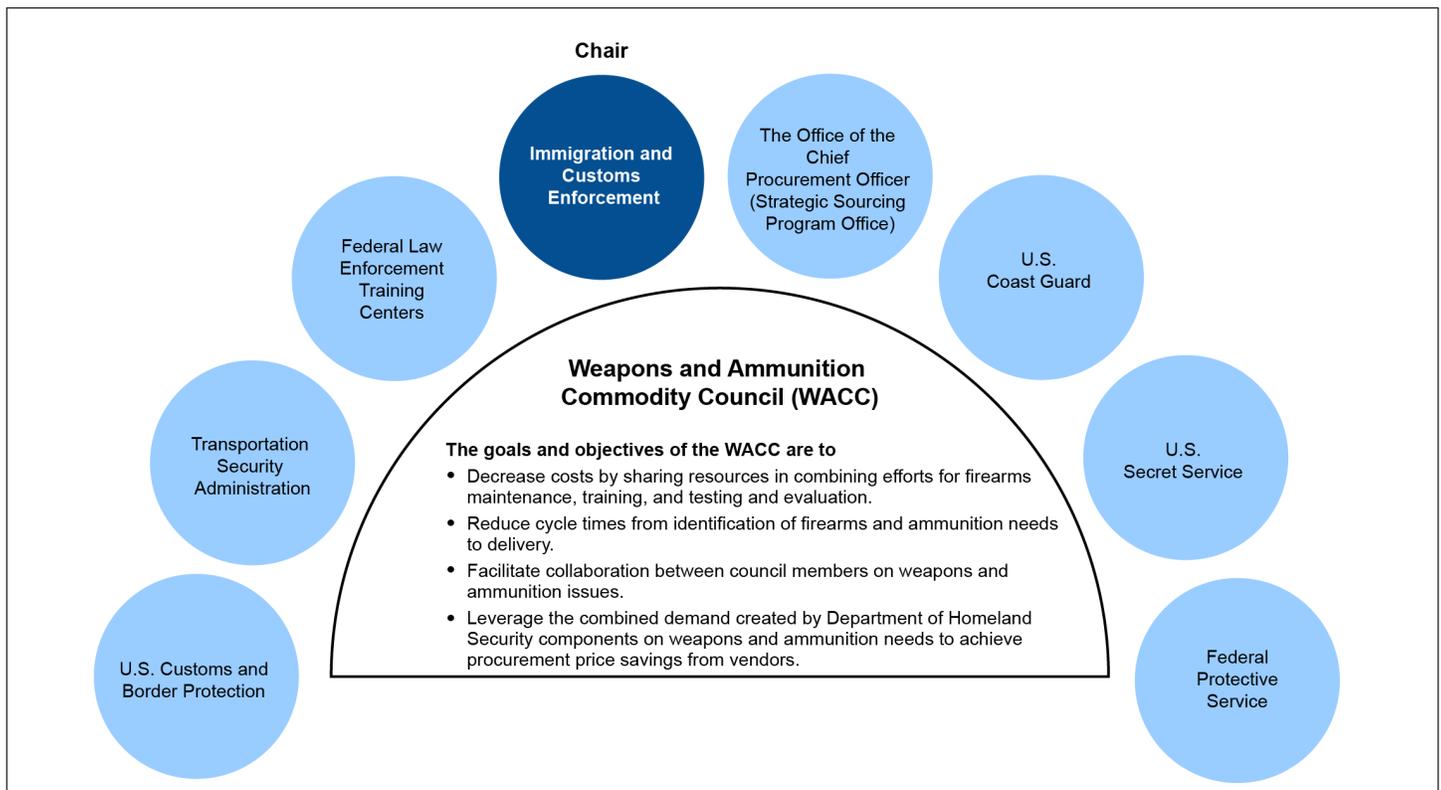
---

<sup>7</sup>Prior to August 2012, strategic sourcing contract vehicle use was encouraged by DHS, but not required.

<sup>8</sup>DHS estimated savings based on past government orders and open market pricing when available. Starting in fiscal year 2013, DHS officials said that DHS strategic sourcing contracts will calculate savings based on market research and past government orders now that information is more readily available.

each component procure ammunition and weapons individually or draw exclusively on its own history for best practices, the members of WACC, as shown in figure 1, are to meet monthly to explore ways to maximize procurement savings, according to DHS officials. According to DHS officials, to further coordinate ammunition and weapons procurements, DHS is exploring the feasibility of broadening the scope of WACC to also track and approve ammunition purchases across the department. As of October 2013, DHS said these plans are in the development stage.

**Figure 1: Members and Goals of the Department of Homeland Security’s (DHS) Weapons and Ammunition Commodity Council**



Source: DHS.

## DHS Organizational Responsibilities for Firearm and Ammunition Inventory Management

DHS’s Office of the Chief Readiness Support Officer, within the Management Directorate, is responsible for department-wide asset management. Within each component, property management officers or firearm program managers are responsible for the component’s firearm program, including ammunition. In general, component firearm instructors or firearms and weapons custodians are responsible for maintaining

---

oversight for the shipment, receipt, issuance and periodic inventory of firearms and ammunition. At the headquarters level, the DHS Assistant Deputy for Mobile Assets and Personal Property has overall responsibility for the oversight and management of DHS firearm assets. This includes ensuring that components have an approved firearm asset management system of record and documented firearm accountability policies and procedures. The Chief Readiness Support Officer disseminates DHS's asset management program requirements, provides oversight of the program, and sets department policy. The DHS Office of the Chief Readiness Support Officer's Sensitive Asset Manager's responsibilities include evaluating, auditing, and assessing component-level firearm asset management systems of record and accountability programs to ensure compliance with laws, regulations, policies, and directives, and working with components to develop standard and uniform DHS-wide firearms accountability policies and guidelines.

---

## DHS's Ammunition Purchases Have Declined in Recent Years and Vary Based on Numerous Factors; Annual Ammunition Purchases are Comparable to DOJ's

In fiscal year 2013, DHS purchased 84 million rounds of ammunition for its authorized firearm-carrying workforce, which is less than DHS's ammunition purchases each year over the past 5 fiscal years. DHS ammunition purchases are driven primarily by the firearms training and qualification requirements for the firearm-carrying workforce, though other factors are also considered by DHS when making ammunition purchase decisions.<sup>9</sup> For selected DOJ components, for fiscal years 2011 through 2013, the average number of rounds of ammunition purchased per authorized firearm-carrying personnel per year was comparable to that for DHS law enforcement components.<sup>10</sup> All DOJ components in our review identified similar considerations in determining their annual ammunition requirements.

---

<sup>9</sup>Qualification training involves the safe handling, proficient application, and justifiable use of firearms to help ensure a law enforcement officer's ability to safely handle required weapons.

<sup>10</sup>The selected DOJ components are FBI, ATF, and U.S. Marshals Service. Data on DOJ ammunition purchases prior to fiscal year 2011 were not readily available; therefore, we included fiscal years 2011 through 2013.

---

## DHS's Ammunition Purchases Have Decreased since Fiscal Year 2009 and Vary by Component

From fiscal year 2008 through fiscal year 2013, DHS purchased an average of 109 million rounds of ammunition per year. Yearly purchases ranged from a high of 133 million rounds in fiscal year 2009 to a low of 84 million rounds in fiscal year 2013. In comparison, the total consumer ammunition market for 2012 was approximately 9.5 billion rounds, according to the National Shooting Sports Foundation.<sup>11</sup> DHS's ammunition purchases over the 6-year period equate to an average of 1,200 rounds of ammunition purchased per agent or officer per year.<sup>12</sup> The annual total cost for these ammunition purchases ranged from \$19 million to \$34 million per year, with an average of \$29 million for the 6-year time period.

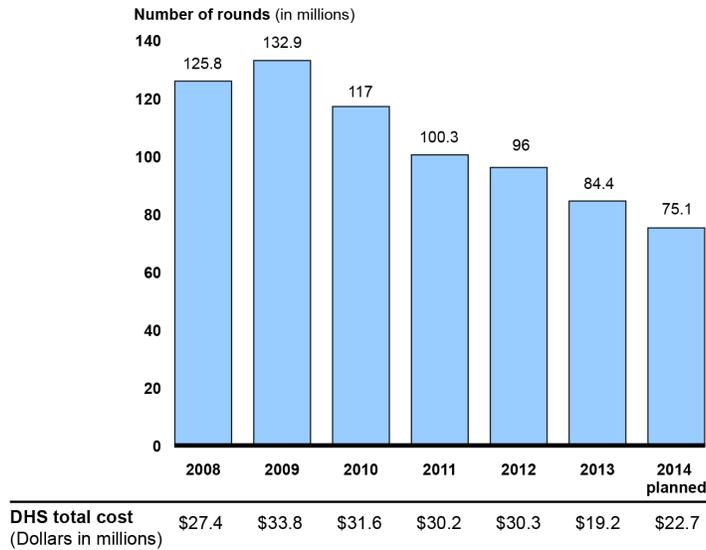
In fiscal year 2013, DHS purchased 84 million rounds of ammunition for its authorized firearm-carrying workforce, equaling an average of 900 rounds per agent or officer that year, and a total annual cost of \$19 million. According to senior DHS officials, the decline in ammunition purchases in fiscal year 2013 is the result of budget constraints, reduced training, and in one case the expiration of an ammunition contract. These officials said that although ammunition purchases declined in fiscal year 2013, DHS components relied on their ammunition inventories to maintain basic qualification and operational needs. In fiscal year 2014, DHS plans to purchase about 75 million rounds of ammunition (see fig. 2). According to DHS contract data as of October 1, 2013, the 29 existing DHS ammunition contracts extend over the next 4 fiscal years and have a remaining contract limit of approximately 704 million rounds (for various ammunition types), if every option for purchasing ammunition were exercised into fiscal year 2018. The total contract dollar ceiling on these 29 active contracts is about \$285 million. The approximately 704 million rounds of ammunition represent the limit on the combined active contracts, against which orders from the manufacturers may be placed over the next several fiscal years. See appendix III for a complete list of all active DHS ammunition contracts, as of October 1, 2013.

---

<sup>11</sup>The National Shooting Sports Foundation is a trade association for the firearms industry, representing more than 8,000 manufacturers, distributors, firearms retailers, shooting ranges, sportsmen's organizations and publishers.

<sup>12</sup>We excluded FLETC from our per officer analysis because FLETC has few firearm-carrying officers for which it purchases ammunition. Ammunition purchased by FLETC is utilized by all students who train on firearms at its facilities, including DHS and other federal law enforcement personnel, as well as state, local, tribal, and international law enforcement personnel.

**Figure 2: Total Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Ammunition Purchases for Components in Our Review from Fiscal Years 2008 through 2013**

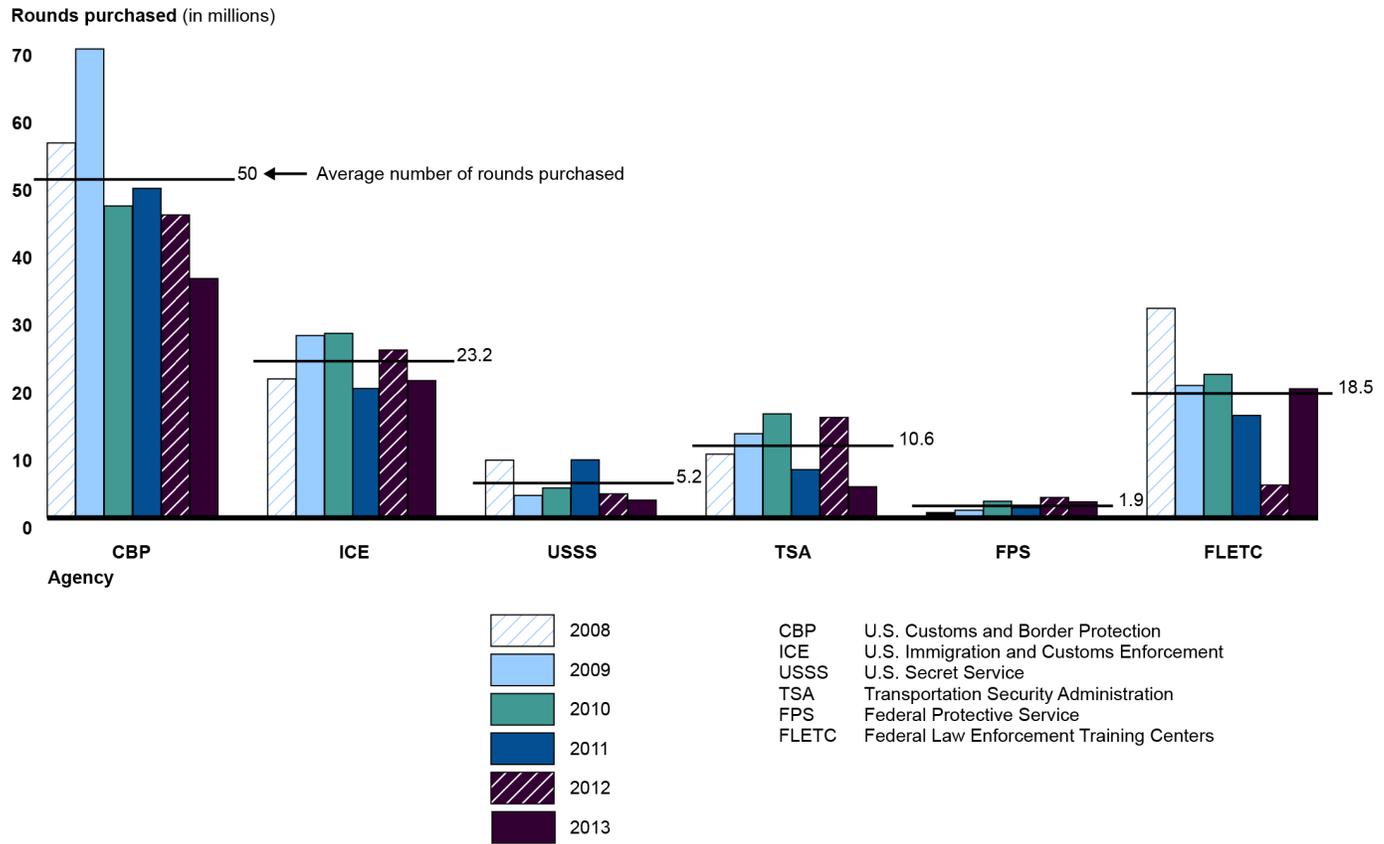


Source: GAO analysis of DHS data.

Although the amounts of DHS’s overall ammunition purchases have fallen since fiscal year 2009, the yearly changes in the amount of ammunition purchased by its component agencies have varied, as shown in figure 3. CBP—which has the most firearm-carrying personnel of the DHS components—purchased the largest amount of ammunition, on average, from fiscal year 2008 through 2013, accounting for approximately 46 percent of DHS’s average purchases of ammunition for this time period. The average amount of ammunition purchased by components from fiscal years 2008 through 2013 ranged from approximately 50 million rounds of ammunition for CBP to a low of approximately 1.9 million rounds of ammunition for FPS.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>13</sup>FPS ammunition data represent ammunition purchases for the federal FPS workforce, not the contracted guard staff. FPS does not provide ammunition for its approximately 13,500 contracted guard staff.

**Figure 3: Number of Rounds of Ammunition Purchased, by Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Component in Our Review, from Fiscal Years 2008 through 2013**



Source: GAO analysis of DHS data.

A number of factors contribute to variation in ammunition purchases from year to year by component, such as changes in the size of the firearm-carrying workforce. For example, CBP and ICE increased their firearm-carrying workforces in fiscal years 2008 and 2009, which also increased ammunition needs for those components, as new hires needed to be trained to gain firearms proficiency prior to entering the field for duty. According to CBP data, new Border Patrol agents each use approximately 3,300 rounds during training and qualification, compared with experienced officers who might use about 600 rounds. DHS components provided data on the amount of ammunition typically used by a new law enforcement hire, which ranged from 2,000 to 5,000 rounds. From fiscal years 2008 through 2013, the DHS components in our review trained thousands of new law enforcement agents and officers, according

to DHS data. Other factors that account for changes in ammunition purchases year to year include qualification and training requirements and amount of ammunition in inventory, as discussed later in this report. In addition, it is important to note that components purchase ammunition throughout the year, and orders placed in 1 fiscal year might not arrive or be used until future years, which can also contribute to variation in purchases from year to year.

The amount of ammunition each component purchases for its firearm-carrying personnel also varies. We analyzed DHS data on ammunition purchases and the size of the firearm-carrying workforce for fiscal years 2008 through 2013 and found the average number of rounds of ammunition purchased per year per firearm-carrying agent or officer by component for this time period ranged between approximately 1,000 and 2,000 rounds, as shown in table 2. This variation exists because each component independently decides, based on its operational needs, how much ammunition to allocate to its firearm-carrying personnel for training and qualification each year. For example, FPS provides each officer 250 rounds per quarter per handgun for firearm qualification, while ICE provides 100 rounds per quarter per handgun for firearm qualification.

**Table 2: Annual Average Number of Rounds of Ammunition Purchased, per Firearm-Carrying Agent or Officer, by Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Law Enforcement Component in Our Review, Fiscal Years 2008-2013**

Department of Homeland Security component	Annual average number of rounds of ammunition purchased per agent or officer, fiscal years 2008-2013
U.S. Customs and Border Protection	1,200
Immigration and Customs Enforcement	1,700
U.S. Secret Service	1,000
Transportation Security Administration (TSA)	<sup>a</sup>
Federal Protective Service (FPS)	2,000 <sup>b</sup>

Source: GAO analysis based on DHS data.

Notes: Table 2 does not include rounds of ammunition purchased by Federal Law Enforcement Training Centers (FLETC) for training of law enforcement officers. While DHS law enforcement officers take training at FLETC, the numbers in table 2 reflect only those rounds of ammunition purchased by components for their officers.

<sup>a</sup>The annual average number of ammunition rounds purchased per TSA firearm-carrying officer is considered sensitive security information and is not included in table 2.

<sup>b</sup>FPS ammunition data represents ammunition purchases for the federal workforce, not the contracted guard staff. FPS does not purchase ammunition for its approximately 13,500 contracted guard staff.

---

## Training and Qualification Are the Biggest Drivers of DHS's Ammunition Purchase Decisions; Few Rounds Are Actually Fired in the Line of Duty

When determining annual ammunition requirements, the primary consideration for DHS components is the amount of ammunition needed to support the training and qualification of the firearm-carrying workforce, according to DHS officials. Training and qualification requirements vary for the components in our review, as do the number of rounds of ammunition typically used for training and qualification purposes. However, for all the components in our review, most firearm-carrying personnel are required to qualify four times per year on their issued firearms. We analyzed available data on DHS's ammunition requirements for the 6-year period from fiscal years 2008 through 2013. We found that the ammunition purchased by the components was reasonable given their annual expected training and operational needs.<sup>14</sup>

## DHS Qualification and Training Requirements

DHS's more than 70,000 firearm-carrying personnel have qualification requirements they must fulfill to ensure firearms proficiency. Failure to qualify on firearms may result in the denial, suspension or revocation of credentials to carry firearms.<sup>15</sup> Depending on how rigorous a component's qualification requirements are and how many firearms an officer is authorized to carry, each DHS component may require a larger or smaller supply of ammunition to conduct its qualifications. Officers generally carry one or more firearms and must qualify on each firearm they carry. For example, a component may allow an officer to carry a personally owned firearm in addition to his or her duty-issued firearm, and the officer must qualify on both weapons, using ammunition provided by the relevant DHS component. DHS law enforcement officers across the department are typically required to perform quarterly firearms qualifications on their issued weapons (e.g., handgun), and in some cases demonstrate familiarity and proficiency on long guns, such as rifles and shotguns, even

---

<sup>14</sup>To conduct this analysis, we estimated how much ammunition DHS components might be expected to use in a given year by considering the size of the firearm-carrying workforce, the number of agents qualified on how many types of firearms, and the amount of ammunition typically allotted for each firearm qualification by component. For more information on our methodology, see appendix I.

<sup>15</sup>Demonstrating proficiency may include displaying proper handling techniques and dexterity, such as holstering, loading, unloading, and operating the firearm; shooting with the left and right hands; demonstrating safely handling firearms and ammunition; achieving at least a minimum numerical score on courses of fire from varying distances from the target; and completing advanced firearms training exercises, among other requirements.

---

if they are not required to carry a long gun as part of their duties.<sup>16</sup> For some officers, depending on the DHS component and the requirements of their unit, more frequent qualifications or advanced firearms training is required. For example, advanced firearms training may include “down and disabled” firearms training or reduced light firearms training, among others.<sup>17</sup> DHS components also may have specialized units, such as tactical teams, that may require hundreds or thousands of rounds of ammunition during training activities. For example, CBP’s Border Patrol Tactical Unit and Special Response Team—which enhance field operations with specialized tactics and techniques—use specialized firearms that are not otherwise issued to other CBP firearm-carrying staff. Officers in these teams are required to qualify on these additional specialized weapons, and can use more ammunition during training activities, according to CBP officials.

Along with the other five DHS components, FLETC’s purchases of ammunition are to support the training of law enforcement officials to help them fulfill their responsibilities safely and proficiently. From fiscal year 2008 through 2013, FLETC has trained over 398,000 federal, state, local, tribal, and international law enforcement personnel, according to FLETC data—approximately 66,000 on average per year. FLETC provides the ammunition for the training courses provided to these law enforcement officers. FLETC officials said they determine their annual ammunition requirements based on the projected number of classes, students, and

---

<sup>16</sup>CBP, ICE, FPS, TSA’s FAMS, and USSS firearm-carrying personnel are required to qualify on firearms at least four times per year. TSA’s FFDOs are required to qualify two times per year on handguns.

<sup>17</sup>“Down and disabled” firearms training is intended to ensure proficiency even after an officer has been wounded during an event requiring use of force.

---

---

DHS Data Show Few Rounds of Ammunition Fired by Officers in the Line of Duty

ammunition needs per class.<sup>18</sup> According to FLETC officials, fluctuations in FLETC's ammunition needs occur throughout the year, as a result of canceled classes, added classes, and varying numbers of students.

An officer's training and proficiency on issued firearms help to ensure the safety of the officer and the public, should the officer require the use of deadly force in the line of duty. Following firearms qualification, DHS's more than 70,000 firearm-carrying personnel are issued ammunition to carry while on duty.<sup>19</sup> Although these officers are required by DHS to carry ammunition for their firearms, very few rounds of ammunition are actually fired in the line of duty.<sup>20</sup> According to DHS data, from fiscal year 2008 through fiscal year 2012, all DHS components reported firing a total of 862 rounds of ammunition in the line of duty.<sup>21</sup> In fiscal year 2013, all

---

<sup>18</sup>According to component officials from FLETC, USSS, and ICE, these components have explored the use of simulation technology to support law enforcement training needs. Simulated firearms training technology may provide benefits to law enforcement personnel during basic marksmanship training. For example, simulation training with laser-fired firearms could allow instructors to carry on normal conversations while instructing students in the proper stance, grip, sight alignment, and trigger control, since hearing protection would not be necessary. Also, instructors could get closer to students to see errors in weapon handling, especially with respect to grip and trigger press, that could not have normally been seen with live fire weapons. Other potential benefits of using simulators are reduced ammunition usage and range maintenance costs. FLETC's annual recurring costs for simulators are \$73,000 per year. However, component officials have also raised concerns about the need for officers to train on live fire firearms to gain full proficiency on their weapons, since simulation training does not currently accurately replicate recoil on firearms. Component officials have also said that while there would be reduced need for ammunition, the simulator technology would also require regular maintenance and upgrades, which would also come with a cost.

<sup>19</sup>DHS components generally use the same type of ammunition for training and qualification as they use for duty (operational use). According to DHS, this is because delivering and storing different types of ammunition for training and operational use creates complex logistical challenges, and could create an officer safety issue if the wrong ammunition is used in the field. FLETC primarily uses Reduced Hazard Training Ammunition, which is free of lead and other toxic substances, in its firearms training curriculum.

<sup>20</sup>The number of rounds carried by an officer or agent on duty varies by factors such as DHS component, firearm type, and number of firearms, among other factors.

<sup>21</sup>According to CBP, it did not have data on ammunition fired on duty for fiscal years 2008 and 2009 because prior to January 1, 2010, CBP did not require reporting the number of rounds fired for officer-involved shootings. After January 1, 2010, CBP began recording all use of force incidents in the CBP Use of Force Reporting System, which required more detailed information regarding incidents. Because CBP data prior to January 2010 may not account for all rounds fired, fiscal years 2008 and 2009 were not included in CBP's responses.

---

DHS components reported a combined total of 331 rounds of ammunition fired in the course of their duties compared with their total combined ammunition purchases of over 84 million rounds for that year.<sup>22</sup>

---

### Additional Factors That Affect Ammunition Purchase Decisions

In addition to citing training and qualification requirements, senior DHS officials cited delivery and quality issues with ammunition, changes in firearms, historical usage rates, and the amount of ammunition currently in inventory as other factors they consider when making ammunition purchase decisions.

**Delivery and ammunition quality issues:** Senior DHS component officials told us that another factor they consider when determining ammunition requirements is the time lag due to the ammunition delivery and quality testing process. Officials from all DHS components within our review reported time lags between placing orders for ammunition and receiving them. For example, the time lag can range from 3 to 18 months. Senior DHS component officials said that the Department of Defense gets first priority for ammunition orders from manufacturers, and supplying the military can delay orders for DHS and other federal law enforcement agencies, not only because of military priority, but also because production of other types of ammunition may be halted while manufacturers work to produce the ammunition needed by the Department of Defense. These officials also stated that while the ammunition they purchase comes from the same manufacturers that provide ammunition for commercial supply, the ammunition DHS purchases is manufactured according to DHS contract specifications, and is higher quality than commercial off-the-shelf ammunition. Senior component officials said they take this into account when determining how much and when to order ammunition, including when ammunition inventories need to be replenished. While awaiting delivery of ordered ammunition, DHS components reported using their existing ammunition inventories to meet mission requirements, such as for training and qualification.

Ammunition quality and testing are also factors in developing annual ammunition requirements for DHS. Components, such as USSS, ICE, and FLETC, have testing facilities to help ensure the ammunition ordered meets the specifications outlined in contracts with manufacturers. For

---

<sup>22</sup>These totals may include rounds that were accidentally discharged.

---

example, ICE's National Firearms Tactical and Training Unit (NFTTU)—which purchases ammunition on behalf of ICE, CBP, and FPS, and provides technical assistance to TSA—operates a ballistics laboratory for the testing of ammunition, among other purposes. This unit conducts quality tests on a sample of each ammunition order before approving the acceptance and distribution of the total ammunition order.<sup>23</sup> According to the Assistant Director of ICE's NFTTU, if the ammunition tested does not meet NFTTU's quality standards, the batch is returned to the manufacturer and the total order is not accepted and approved until the ammunition meets standards. According to NFTTU data, this has occurred 17 times from fiscal year 2009 through fiscal year 2013, representing 3 percent of total tested batches.

**Changes in firearms and ammunition types:** Another factor components consider when developing their annual ammunition requirements is changes in the types of firearms and ammunition used by components, according to senior DHS officials. When these changes occur, additional ammunition is required to ensure officers' proficiency on the new firearm or ammunition. For example, in August 2011, ICE management made changes to the types of authorized weapons officers could carry as their primary weapon—expanding the list of authorized 9 millimeter (mm) firearms. Prior to this change, the standard duty firearm was a .40 caliber firearm. After authorizing more 9 mm firearms, ICE experienced a 60 percent increase in the amount of 9 mm ammunition consumed, according to ICE, which resulted in ICE's inventory of 9 mm ammunition to be depleted. According to ICE officials, ICE needed to amend the existing contract for 9 mm ammunition to allow for additional purchases of ammunition to ensure officers who chose to use those 9 mm firearms had sufficient ammunition for firearms qualification and operations. As this change came at the end of fiscal year 2011, purchases increased in fiscal year 2012, as previously shown in figure 3.

**Historical usage rates:** Historical usage rates—that is, the amount of ammunition used in previous years—is also a factor components consider to determine how much ammunition to purchase, according to senior DHS component officials. DHS component officials told us they estimate how much ammunition they have used by reviewing how much

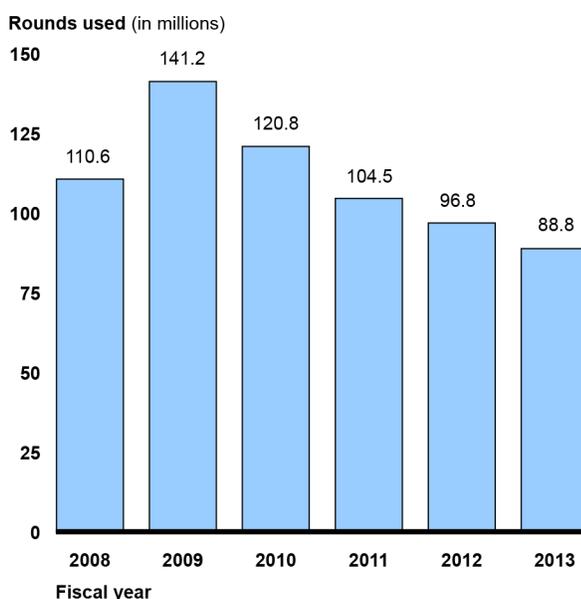
---

<sup>23</sup>NFTTU assists ICE by providing personnel with firearms, intermediate force weapons, protective equipment, training, guidance, as well as tactical and logistical support. The unit's mission is to increase safety and improve the tactical proficiency of the armed workforce while maintaining accountability for property.

---

ammunition they purchased in previous years, the number of authorized firearm-carrying personnel, and related training and qualification requirements.<sup>24</sup> According to our analysis of estimated ammunition usage data provided by DHS components, for fiscal years 2008 through 2013, DHS components in our review estimated using, on average, approximately 110 million rounds of ammunition per fiscal year, with a high of about 141 million rounds in fiscal year 2009 to a low of about 89 million rounds in fiscal year 2013 (see figure 4).

**Figure 4: Estimated Ammunition Used by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Components in Our Review from Fiscal Years 2008 through 2013**



Source: GAO analysis of DHS data.

<sup>24</sup>Components do not centrally track historical ammunition usage rates, in large part because their data management systems are not designed to track ammunition usage. As of 2013, the database used by ICE, CBP, and FPS—Firearms, Armor, and Credentials Tracking System (FACTS)—had the ability to track ammunition primarily through the order and receipt process, and ammunition usage was tracked, sometimes manually, at the field level before balances were updated in FACTS. According to ICE officials, ICE and CBP are working to enhance the ability of the ammunition module within FACTS to develop a more accurate accounting ability that is to allow for precise tracking of ammunition usage at the headquarters level. According to ICE, the enhanced module is planned to be deployed by January 2014. We determined these data were sufficiently reliable to report general trends in usage when rounded to the hundred thousands.

---

**Ammunition inventory:** The amount of ammunition components have in inventory is also a factor to determine how much and when to order more ammunition, according to DHS component officials. DHS components determine how much ammunition to keep in inventory, and when to replenish ammunition inventories. The six DHS components in our review stated they strive to maintain about 12 to 24 months' of ammunition inventory to meet the training, qualification, and operational ammunition needs of firearm-carrying personnel. As stated earlier, there can be months-long delays between placing an order for ammunition and receiving it. To help ensure components have sufficient ammunition on hand to support the training and operational needs of their officers, DHS components maintain inventories of ammunition. For example, TSA officials said they try to keep a large ammunition inventory on hand, because the FFDOs (trained and armed pilots) are allowed to provide as little as 24 hours notice to perform their qualification, based on their fluctuating schedules.

Ammunition is stored in limited supply in the field offices of the various components, as DHS component officials have said there is limited storage for ammunition in the field. Officials added that while ammunition is typically shipped directly from the manufacturers to the field offices that placed the orders, there are occasions when production delays require components to ship ammunition from their reserves stored in armories to resupply the field. It is important to note that inventory levels reflect a point in time and that inventory fluctuates throughout the year as ammunition orders arrive from manufacturers and ammunition is used for firearms qualification and other purposes in the field. Therefore, it is not possible to provide an average ammunition inventory for a year or past years, because the inventory is constantly fluctuating. Table 3 shows how much ammunition DHS components had in inventory (in both estimated rounds and approximate number of months' supply) at three different points in time between November 2012 and October 2013, as reported to us by DHS components. We provide these estimates at three points in time to show, by component, how ammunition inventory fluctuates over the course of 1 year.

**Table 3: Selected Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Components' Estimated Ammunition Inventory by Total Rounds and by the Number of Months' Supply at Three Points in Time Over 1 Year**

<b>DHS component</b>	<b>Estimated rounds in inventory, November 2012</b>	<b>Estimated rounds in inventory, April 2013</b>	<b>Estimated rounds in inventory, October 2013</b>
U.S. Customs and Border Protection	94 million (32 months)	94 million (33 months)	72 million (25 months)
Immigration and Customs Enforcement	42 million (21 months)	29 million (14 months)	40 million (20 months)
Secret Service	6 million (17 months)	6 million (18 months)	7 million (21 months)
Transportation Security Administration <sup>a</sup>	30 million	27 million	14 million
Federal Protective Service	3 million (15 months)	3 million (16 months)	3 million (17 months)
Federal Law Enforcement Training Centers	19 million (18 months)	17 million (16 months)	23 million (21 months)
<b>DHS total</b>	<b>193 million (26 months)</b>	<b>178 million (24 months)</b>	<b>159 million (22 months)</b>

Source: GAO analysis of DHS data.

Notes: To determine approximate number of months' supply of ammunition in inventory for each component, we used fiscal year 2013 estimated ammunition usage data provided by DHS components and divided that number by 12 to get an estimate of monthly ammunition usage. We then divided the components' inventory figures by the monthly ammunition usage estimate to get estimated months' worth in inventory for those three points in time. For more information on our analysis, see appendix I.

In 2013, CBP and TSA made changes to their inventory reporting protocols, which officials said can explain the changes in inventory between the dates.

DHS components' records may not always reflect the exact quantities of the ammunition inventory at a given time. For example, because inventory data may not be updated in real time, quantities of ammunition actually available and those reflected on the inventory records may differ. To assess the reliability of these data, we reviewed the extent to which the agencies have procedures and controls for ensuring that the data are consistent and accurate, and interviewed knowledgeable officials responsible for collecting and reporting the data. We determined the data to be sufficiently reliable to be reported rounded to the millions. To maintain an acceptable level of accuracy in inventory records, DHS officials said that DHS and the components have established inventory control policies and procedures, including taking physical inventories and conducting audits to verify ammunition balances, as discussed later in this report.

<sup>a</sup>The approximate number of months' supply for TSA is considered sensitive security information and is not included in table 3.

Each component is responsible for maintaining and recording its own ammunition inventory, and, according to senior DHS component officials, ammunition balances may not always be up to date and generally are estimates. For example, a field location may show more ammunition in inventory than other field offices, but that could reflect that the officers have not yet completed a quarterly firearms qualification or the inventory tracking system has not yet been updated to reflect changes. In addition, components may also consider ammunition that has been ordered, but not yet arrived, to be part of their "current" inventory. For example, TSA reported an inventory level of almost 30 million rounds in November 2012,

but TSA officials said that number included ammunition orders that had been placed with the manufacturer, but were not yet in physical inventory. According to TSA, the quantity of ammunition in TSA's physical possession at the time of the inquiry was approximately 19 million rounds.

**DOJ Components Cited Similar Factors in Determining Ammunition Requirements for Personnel Authorized to Carry Firearms and Annual Ammunition Purchases are Comparable to Those of DHS**

Similar to DHS, the DOJ components in our review also purchase ammunition to ensure their personnel authorized to carry firearms are equipped to carry out their various law enforcement missions. For the three DOJ components in our review, ammunition purchases are driven primarily by the firearms training and qualification requirements for their firearm-carrying workforce. According to DOJ data, DOJ component firearm qualification requirements range from semi-annual to quarterly, depending on the component; however, most require quarterly firearms qualification on an officer's primary weapon. As shown in table 4, the approximate number of rounds of ammunition purchased per firearm-carrying agent or officer for the three DOJ law enforcement agencies in our review for fiscal years 2011 through 2013 were similar to the amounts for DHS components in our review.<sup>25</sup>

**Table 4: Approximate Number of Rounds of Ammunition Purchased per Agent or Officer for the Department of Homeland Security and Department of Justice Components in Our Review for Fiscal Years 2011 through 2013**

	2011	2012	2013
<b>Number of rounds purchased per agent or officer at the Department of Homeland Security</b>	1,100	1,200	900
<b>Number of rounds purchased per agent or officer at the Department of Justice</b>	1,400	1,300	1,200

Source: GAO analysis of Department of Homeland Security and Department of Justice data.

For DOJ components, the average number of rounds of ammunition purchased per authorized firearm-carrying agent or officer per year across fiscal years 2011 through 2013 was approximately 1,300 rounds.

<sup>25</sup>We used data from fiscal years 2011 through 2013, because those years represent the most readily available data for DOJ components within our review—FBI, ATF, and the U.S. Marshals Service. The data from ATF included an estimated number of task force officers per year, so the approximate number of rounds for a DOJ officer could be higher or lower depending on the actual number of task force officers who trained with ATF during those 3 years. A task force officer is a sworn state, county or local law enforcement officer who is formally assigned, on a full-time basis, to an ATF task force. For a full description of our methodology, see appendix I.

---

For DHS, the average number of rounds of ammunition purchased per authorized firearm-carrying agent or officer per year for fiscal years 2011 through 2013 was approximately 1,000 rounds.

Senior DOJ officials also reported similar considerations when making ammunition purchases, such as ammunition delivery lead time, quality issues, and the amount of ammunition in inventory. As with DHS officials, DOJ officials reported that the type of ammunition they use is manufactured to a higher standard than ammunition purchased by the civilian market and is not considered off-the-shelf. According to DOJ component officials, the ammunition purchased by DOJ is produced after an order is placed with a manufacturer, and the time between placing an order and receiving it can be several months. Quality testing of ammunition is also part of DOJ components' procurement process, to help ensure ammunition performs as expected in the field. Additionally, DOJ components also consider the amount of inventory on hand when determining ammunition requirements. According to officials from the DOJ components in our review, the amount of inventory components try to maintain ranged from a minimum of 6 months to a maximum of 24 months. Ammunition inventory data provided by two of the three DOJ components indicated that inventory ranged from about 13 months' worth to about 20 months' worth.<sup>26</sup> This range is similar to the range reported by DHS components.

---

## DHS Has Policies and Guidance for Firearms and Ammunition Inventory Management

---

<sup>26</sup>The FBI provided inventory data as of January 30, 2013. ATF provided inventory data as of May 1, 2013. The U.S. Marshals Service was unable to provide current on-hand inventory data during the time allotted to respond during this review, citing its decentralized system of recording ammunition data.

---

## DHS Components Have Inventory Management Policies and Procedures and Are in the Process of Implementing Revised DHS Firearms Asset Policy

Each of the DHS components in our review has policies, procedures, and processes that describe the requirements and guidance necessary to ensure inventory management, control and accountability for firearms and ammunition.<sup>27</sup> These policies include describing who is responsible and accountable for firearms and ammunition, tracking and accounting for firearms and ammunition throughout their life cycles, and periodically conducting physical inventories to verify the existence and location of the firearms and ammunition recorded in the accountability records. For example, FLETC requires the firearms and weapons custodian to perform a daily audit of all ammunition issues and receipts occurring at specified issue points. TSA requires supervisors to conduct unannounced employee firearm inspections and recommends that TSA offices conduct random, selective, periodic, or unannounced internal audits to ensure proper inventory controls and accountability. In addition, ICE, CBP, and FPS use an automated system called Firearms, Armor, and Credentials Tracking System (FACTS) to provide visibility of and oversight over their firearms inventories. We did not assess if the components' policies, procedures, and process for managing their firearms and ammunition inventories were working as intended.

In 2010, the DHS Inspector General reported that the department's management and oversight of components' safeguards and controls over firearms were not effective, because DHS did not have specific firearms policies and procedures in place.<sup>28</sup> The report noted that DHS relied on components to modify existing policies and procedures with specific guidance for controlling firearms, but component personnel did not always follow component policies, resulting in a loss of firearms. Further, according to that report, DHS did not require independent third parties to conduct annual firearm inventories to ensure that components were accountable for firearms. Consequently, the DHS Inspector General

---

<sup>27</sup>In addition to issuing guidance on inventory management related to firearms and ammunition, DHS has issued guidance that components are to follow regarding the procurement of firearms and ammunition, as well as for other supplies and services. In addition to the Federal Acquisition Regulation, the primary regulation for use by all federal executive agencies in their acquisition of supplies and services with appropriated funds, DHS and its components are guided by the Homeland Security Acquisition Regulation and the *Homeland Security Acquisition Manual*, which are the primary DHS policies for the procurement of ammunition and firearms.

<sup>28</sup>Department of Homeland Security Inspector General, *DHS Controls over Firearms*, OIG-10-41, (Washington, D.C.: Jan. 25, 2010).

---

report recommended, among other things, that DHS develop department-wide policies and procedures for safeguarding and controlling firearms.<sup>29</sup>

In response to the findings and recommendations of the report, in 2012 DHS issued the DHS Firearm Asset Policy (firearm policy) to govern the components' management of firearms, including inventory management requirements. According to the firearm policy, components are responsible for developing their own controls and for overall management of their respective firearms programs, which includes adhering to DHS requirements for firearms management. The components are to integrate the firearm policy into their operations during fiscal year 2013, with a planned full implementation by the end of fiscal year 2014. Among other things, DHS's firearms policy requires five specific inventory control measures, noted below:

- **Establish policies and guidance:** Components are responsible for establishing policies and guidelines to ensure that the firearm asset management system of record is updated throughout the asset life cycle to document all transactions and events.
- **Conduct annual physical inventory:** The component's property management officer or firearm program manager is to ensure that the component's inventory plan incorporates an annual physical inventory for all firearms. For internal control purposes, there are to be at least two individuals conducting a firearm physical inventory. Data on every firearm shall be recorded and maintained in the firearm asset management system of record.<sup>30</sup>
- **Conduct independent third party audits:** Components or DHS's Chief Readiness Support Officer's Office are to engage independent third parties to conduct an annual audit of at least 15 percent of their firearm inventory.

---

<sup>29</sup>Specifically, the DHS Inspector General recommended that those policies and procedures include requirements for properly securing firearms, timelines for recording acceptances and transfers in the inventory system, requirements for reporting lost firearms, and inventory procedures that include having an independent third party observe annual inventories. OIG-10-41.

<sup>30</sup>A firearm record shall, at a minimum, contain authorized asset user, organization code, manufacturer, model number, serial number, type of firearm, acquisition date, acquisition cost, date of receipt, and location.

- 
- **Ensure inventory accuracy:** Supervisors are to conduct unannounced inventory verifications to ensure accuracy of firearms inventory.
  - **Verify issued firearms:** In addition to an annual physical inventory, each component's property management officers or firearm program managers are to ensure quarterly firearm inventory verifications are conducted for all firearms issued.<sup>31</sup>

For the six DHS components in our review, we found that each of the components established policies and guidelines to manage firearms assets, and some of the components were already implementing aspects of the new firearm policy.<sup>32</sup> For example, all six components' policies require that they conduct a complete annual physical inventory of all firearms. Two of the components' policies require them to engage an independent third party to conduct an annual audit of at least 15 percent of their firearm inventories. In addition, three of the six components have procedures in place to ensure quarterly firearm inventory verifications are conducted for all firearms issued. DHS officials said that components are not expected to address all of the requirements in the DHS firearm policy until the end of fiscal year 2014. Therefore, it is too early to know if components will meet all of the requirements within this time frame. Component officials we spoke with said that the implementation time frame may require additional time to work through the feasibility of certain requirements. For example, ICE officials noted that components with collective bargaining units, such as CBP and ICE, for example, would need agreement by the collective bargaining unit representing a component's law enforcement personnel before certain aspects of the new firearm policy can be implemented.

---

<sup>31</sup>A quarterly verification involves verifying a firearm issued to an officer matches the firearm serial number in the component's records. Components may conduct the verification during quarterly firearms qualifications.

<sup>32</sup>We reviewed the firearm policy manuals or related documentation from CBP, FLETC, FPS, ICE, TSA, and USSS to determine whether the manuals specifically addressed the five firearm inventory management requirements identified in the DHS directive. We also interviewed component firearms management officials to discuss their firearms inventory management practices.

---

## DHS Components Have Policies and Procedures for Managing Ammunition Inventory

DHS issued a manual in 2013 on personal property asset management that provides a general description of controls for managing property, including ammunition, which is considered a sensitive asset requiring certain controls.<sup>33</sup> Specifically, with respect to inventory management of ammunition, the DHS manual requires that ammunition be physically inventoried at least annually. In accordance with the DHS property management manual, DHS relies on the components to establish specific policies and procedures for managing, safeguarding, and controlling their ammunition inventories. We found that all six DHS components in our review have policies and procedures for managing their ammunition inventories, including requiring that a physical inventory be conducted at least annually, which is in accordance with the DHS property management manual. For example, USSS guidance requires that field office personnel conduct annual inventories to ensure the completeness and accuracy of the ammunition inventory information within their inventory system.

Officials from five of the six components reported that they do conduct physical inventories of their ammunition at least annually. For example, FLETC officials reported that personnel conduct an annual inventory in which they are to reconcile ammunition with control records through a dual verification process to ensure accuracy by performing a physical and visual verification. One component—ICE—reported that it does not conduct a distinct physical inventory of ammunition (that is, at one point in time reconcile ammunition on hand with ammunition expected to be in inventory). However, ICE officials stated that ammunition inventories are conducted by ICE field-level officials at various times during the year for determination of needs.

---

<sup>33</sup>DHS Manual 119-03-001-01, *Personal Property Asset Management Program Manual*, (Washington, D.C.: 2013). Specifically, the manual states components are to identify sensitive personal property assets (e.g., weapons and information technology equipment with memory capability) and establish additional control and accountability methods commensurate with that sensitivity to safeguard against loss, theft, and misuse. Components are also to identify personal property assets containing material that could be dangerous to public health or safety, or hazardous to the environment if disposed of irresponsibly, and establish special control and accountability methods to ensure the material is managed properly. The manual defines ammunition as a dangerous and hazardous asset and as a sensitive asset. Sensitive assets must be formally accounted for in an accountable system of record and are also subject to an annual physical inventory and a 15 percent random sampling of the firearm inventory by an independent third party.

---

According to ICE officials, ICE has treated ammunition as a consumable asset and has not subjected it to the same inventory process as firearms.<sup>34</sup> Sensitive assets such as firearms are subject to the special requirements outlined in the DHS property management directive. ICE officials stated that although they have not conducted annual physical inventories, ammunition balances and inventory levels are continuously tracked in FACTS, and senior firearms instructors in local field offices manage and maintain their ammunition inventory in FACTS as well as on ammunition inventory control sheets that are maintained locally. ICE officials said beginning in fiscal year 2014, they plan to institute a separate and distinct physical inventory of ammunition in conjunction with the annual ICE-wide sensitive asset inventory.

---

## Agency Comments

We provided a draft of this report to DHS and DOJ for official review and comment. DHS provided written comments, which are reproduced in full in appendix IV. DHS agreed that annual ammunition purchases have declined during the past 3 years and are comparable to those of DOJ law enforcement agencies. DOJ did not provide written comments on this report. DHS and DOJ provided technical comments, which we incorporated where appropriate.

---

As agreed with your offices, unless you publicly announce the contents of this report earlier, we plan no further distribution until 30 days from the report date. At that time, we will send copies to the Secretary of Homeland Security, the Attorney General, selected congressional committees, and other interested parties. In addition, the report will be available at no charge on the GAO website at <http://www.gao.gov>.

If you or your staffs have any questions about this report, please contact me at (202) 512-9627 or [maurerd@gao.gov](mailto:maurerd@gao.gov). Contact points for our Offices of Congressional Relations and Public Affairs may be found on

---

<sup>34</sup>According to DHS, a consumable asset is an item of supply that is consumed in use (such as paint, rations, water, office supplies, cleaning and preserving materials, and fuel) or that loses its separate identity when merged into another entity (e.g., nuts and bolts, repair parts, spares, construction materials, components and assemblies, etc.). Consumables are considered to be expendable when issued and do not require formal accountability after they have been issued from the system of record. In addition, the Office of the Chief Readiness Support Officer noted that ammunition is a consumable asset that is considered to be expended once it is issued and does not require formal accountability after it has been issued from the system of record.

---

the last page of this report. Key contributors to this report are listed in appendix V.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "David C. Maurer". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "D".

David C. Maurer  
Director, Homeland Security and Justice Issues

---

# Appendix I: Objectives, Scope, and Methodology

---

1. What are the trends in the Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) ammunition purchases since fiscal year 2008, what factors affect its purchase decisions, and how do DHS's purchases compare with those of the Department of Justice's (DOJ)?
2. What policies and guidance does DHS have for managing firearms and ammunition inventories?

To obtain information on DHS's acquisition practices for ammunition, we examined the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR); DHS's acquisition and procurement policies and guidance, including the Homeland Security Acquisition Regulation (HSAR); and the *Homeland Security Acquisition Manual* (HSAM). We reviewed prior GAO reports and a Congressional Research Service memorandum on DHS acquisition and procurement.<sup>1</sup> We also reviewed contracts for ammunition purchases and related pre-award documentation, including acquisition plans, market research, and cost estimates, but we did not review whether components' ammunition procurements complied with the FAR, HSAR, or HSAM. We interviewed the Director for Procurement Policy and Oversight, the Director for Oversight and Strategic Sourcing, and the acquisition and program officials from six DHS components including U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP), U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), Transportation Security Administration (TSA), U. S. Secret Service (USSS), National Protection and Programs Directorate/Federal Protective Service (FPS), and Federal Law Enforcement Training Centers (FLETC) to discuss contracting procedures and practices for procuring ammunition, including the use of the Weapons Ammunition Commodity Council and strategic sourcing to coordinate and leverage their buying power. We reviewed relevant policies and guidance, examined department and component documentation, and interviewed officials from the DHS Office of the Chief Procurement Officer and components on practices they employ and contracts they have leveraged. Specifically, we interviewed officials from DHS's strategic sourcing program office, as well as all six components, to gain an understanding of DHS's strategic sourcing processes, the availability of strategic sourcing contracting vehicles for ammunition, and the potential of establishing component-

---

<sup>1</sup>See, for example, GAO, *Homeland Security: DHS has Enhanced Procurement Oversight Efforts, but Needs to Update Guidance*, [GAO-12-947](#) (Washington, D.C.: Sept. 10, 2012), and Congressional Research Service, *Recent Department of Homeland Security Ammunition Solicitations, Contracts, and Purchases*, Memorandum prepared for distribution to more than one congressional office (Washington, D.C.: Mar. 7, 2013).

---

specific strategic sourcing goals for procuring ammunition. We also interviewed Office of the Chief Procurement Officer Oversight and Pricing Branch officials regarding their tri-annual reviews of procurement operations.

To determine any trends in DHS's ammunition purchases since fiscal year 2008, we obtained available data from DHS law enforcement components with firearm-carrying personnel regarding their ammunition purchases, costs, usage, and the size of the authorized firearm-carrying workforce for fiscal years 2008 through 2013. Specifically, we selected all DHS law enforcement components with firearm-carrying personnel—CBP, ICE, TSA, USSS, FPS—as well as FLETC. The number of TSA federal air marshals and the number of federal flight deck officers authorized by TSA to carry firearms is considered sensitive security information. Accordingly, we excluded that information from this report. We also obtained data from DHS components on their estimated ammunition inventory balances for three points in time—November 2012, April 2013, and October 2013. Because we determined that it is not possible to provide an average ammunition inventory for a year or past years, as ammunition inventory is constantly fluctuating, we selected these points in time based on data that was previously reported by DHS to Congress prior to our review as well as data available at the start and end of our review. In addition, DHS components' records may not always reflect the exact quantities of the ammunition inventory. For example, depending on how often components update their inventory data, the time lag may result in differences between quantities of ammunition actually available and those reflected on the inventory records. We also obtained data on planned ammunition purchases for fiscal year 2014.

In deciding which DHS components to examine in our review, we excluded components that were not law enforcement components and had small numbers of personnel authorized to carry firearms and made small purchases of ammunition, such as the Office of the Inspector General and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). We also excluded the U.S. Coast Guard—a DHS component with firearm-carrying personnel—because the Coast Guard does not procure ammunition through DHS; rather, the U.S. Coast Guard procures its ammunition through Department of Defense contracts.

Similarly, we selected all DOJ law enforcement components with firearm-carrying personnel regarding their ammunition purchases, costs, usage, and size of the workforce authorized to carry firearms for fiscal years 2011 through 2013. The specific DOJ law enforcement components included in our review are the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and

---

Explosives (ATF), Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), and U.S. Marshals Service. The Federal Bureau of Prisons could not provide ammunition purchase data comparable to that of the other components based on its method of record keeping and data retention policy. We determined that data from the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) were not sufficiently reliable for our purposes, because DEA could only provide estimates of purchases. We, therefore, excluded both agencies from our scope. We included the selected DOJ law enforcement agencies in our review to provide perspective and context to help understand DHS's ammunition purchases and usage relative to those of other federal law enforcement agencies.<sup>2</sup>

We selected fiscal year 2008 as the starting point for our analysis because data on ammunition purchases, cost, and use were not readily available or reliable prior to fiscal year 2008, according to DHS officials. Nevertheless, obtaining data going back 5 fiscal years provides some historical perspective on DHS's ammunition purchases and use over time, and allows for comparisons with ammunition purchases for fiscal year 2013 and planned purchases for fiscal year 2014. We analyzed the data to identify any changes in the amount of ammunition purchased or used year to year, and we interviewed knowledgeable officials from the components to understand some of the reasons why changes occurred. For each fiscal year, we calculated the amount of ammunition purchased per officer authorized to carry firearms at each DHS and DOJ component in our review, using component-provided data on the amount of ammunition purchased and the number of officers. We calculated the average number of rounds purchased per agent or officer per year for fiscal years 2008 through 2013 at DHS by determining the average ammunition purchased across components in each fiscal year, excluding FLETC, and dividing that by the average number of officers at DHS for each fiscal year.<sup>3</sup> We determined that data for DOJ agencies were not readily available prior to fiscal year 2011 for all components, so we used data for fiscal years 2011 through 2013 to do the same calculation. We analyzed the amount of ammunition purchased per agent or officer

---

<sup>2</sup>We did not examine other law enforcement organizations because they were outside the scope of our study and the other organizations have their own unique mission needs.

<sup>3</sup>We excluded FLETC from this analysis because FLETC has few firearm-carrying officers for which it purchases ammunition. Ammunition purchased by FLETC is utilized by all students who train on firearms at its facilities, including DHS and other federal law enforcement personnel, as well as state, local, tribal, and international law enforcement personnel.

---

authorized to carry a firearm to account for the varying sizes of the different departments and components. We selected DOJ to provide a comparison with DHS's ammunition purchases as it has the second largest number of personnel authorized to carry firearms. However, our DOJ analysis is not to suggest that the department represents a model or standard against which DHS is assessed. Differences in the amount of ammunition per firearm-carrying personnel reflect a number of factors, including unique mission requirements and training needs.

To assess the reliability of the data we obtained from DHS components on ammunition purchases and costs, we reviewed the extent to which the components have procedures and controls for ensuring that the data are consistent and accurate, and interviewed knowledgeable officials responsible for collecting and reporting the data. In addition, for the data we obtained from DHS components on ammunition purchases and costs, we compared it with corroborating evidence to determine data consistency and reasonableness. Specifically, we obtained information on ammunition procurements using obligations data from fiscal years 2008 through 2012, and part of fiscal year 2013 from the Federal Procurement Data System (FPDS), which tracks all contracts using appropriated funds government-wide. We used the obligations data from the FPDS and compared ammunitions obligations for DHS with the sum of ammunition costs as provided to us by each of the components. We also compared estimated ammunition used with ammunition purchased under the assumption that in a given year, components would purchase ammunition to replace what was used. We calculated how much ammunition DHS components might be expected to use in a given year using data, provided by DHS, on the size of the firearm-carrying workforce, the number of staff qualified on various types of firearms, and the number of rounds of ammunition typically allotted for training and qualifications. We also reviewed selected DHS ammunition procurement contracts, which were readily available, for information on ammunition purchases, costs, and stated requirements. We found the data on ammunition purchases and costs for the DHS components to be sufficiently reliable for our purposes.

To assess the reliability of the data we obtained from DHS components on ammunition inventory, we reviewed the extent to which the agencies have procedures and controls for ensuring that the data are consistent and accurate, and interviewed knowledgeable officials responsible for collecting and reporting the data. To determine the approximate number of months' supply of ammunition in inventory for each component, we used fiscal year 2013 estimated ammunition usage data provided by DHS components and divided that number by 12 to get an estimate of monthly

---

ammunition usage. We then divided the components' inventory figures by the monthly ammunition usage estimate to get estimated months' worth in inventory for those three points in time. Each component has policies in place to maintain and record its own ammunition inventory, but according to officials, ammunition balances may not always be up to date and generally are estimates. For example, depending on how often components update their inventory data, the time lag may result in differences between quantities of ammunition actually available and those reflected on the inventory records. On the basis of this information, we determined the data to be sufficiently reliable to be reported rounded to the millions.

To assess the reliability of the data we obtained from DHS components on ammunition usage, we interviewed knowledgeable officials responsible for collecting and reporting the data. DHS components do not centrally track historical ammunition usage, in large part because their data management systems are not designed to track ammunition usage. However, components did provide us estimates of ammunition usage for fiscal years 2008 through 2013 based on how much ammunition they purchased in previous years, the number of firearm-carrying personnel, and related training and qualification requirements. We determined these data were sufficiently reliable to report general trends in usage when rounded to the hundred thousands.

DHS components provided us with data on the number of personnel authorized to carry firearms for fiscal year 2008 through 2013 and information about how they compiled these data. Data sources varied by component and included personnel systems, the Firearms, Armor, and Credentials Tracking System (FACTS), and data from the National Finance Center. Workforce data provided by CBP is not precise because it included a rounded number of personnel for one of CBP's sub-components. Therefore, we report CBP's data rounded to the thousands. On the basis of this information, we determined these data were sufficiently reliable to be used for background purposes and in our calculations of the average number of rounds purchased per agent or officer.

To assess the reliability of the inventory, workforce, and ammunition purchase data we obtained from DOJ, we interviewed knowledgeable officials responsible for collecting and reporting the data about the extent to which DOJ components have procedures and controls in place for ensuring that the data are consistent and accurate. We calculated the DOJ inventory months' worth estimates in the same way we did for DHS components. On the basis of this information, we determined these data

---

to be sufficiently reliable to report rounded estimates based on these data.

We interviewed officials from the six DHS components in our review to discuss the ammunition procurement process and how ammunition requirements are determined at the component level and the purpose of quality testing the ammunition, and to understand the context of why proficiency among firearm-carrying personnel is important. In addition, DHS components provided examples of purchase and delivery orders in which the components experienced a variation in lag time between placing a purchase order and receiving a shipment of ammunition, which can result from the manufacturing lead time associated with ammunition purchases. Finally, for additional context, we conducted a site visit to the ICE National Firearms Testing Lab, which performs quality control testing on ammunition and firearms, and maintains an inventory of ammunition and firearms for distribution to DHS field locations.

To address our second question, we examined the general requirements and policies DHS and its components had to manage and oversee firearms and ammunition, but we did not assess whether the directives, policies, and guidance were working as intended or if component personnel were adhering to them, as that was outside the scope of our review. We examined agency-wide directives and guidance, and component management policies and procedures for managing ammunition and firearms. This included reviewing the firearm policy manuals or related documentation from CBP, FLETC, FPS, ICE, TSA, and USSS to determine whether the manuals specifically addressed agency-wide firearm and ammunition inventory management requirements. We also interviewed officials from the Office of the Chief Readiness Support Officer and from DHS components, and reviewed components' written responses regarding their policies and guidance for managing firearms and ammunition. In addition, we interviewed component officials responsible for conducting management and compliance reviews of component operations, including on-site review and self-inspection program findings and recommendations, which include, but are not limited to, ammunition and firearms management and controls. We also reviewed a 2010 DHS Inspector General report on DHS firearms controls.<sup>4</sup>

---

<sup>4</sup>Department of Homeland Security Inspector General, *DHS Controls over Firearms*, OIG-10-41 (Washington, D.C.: Jan. 25, 2010).

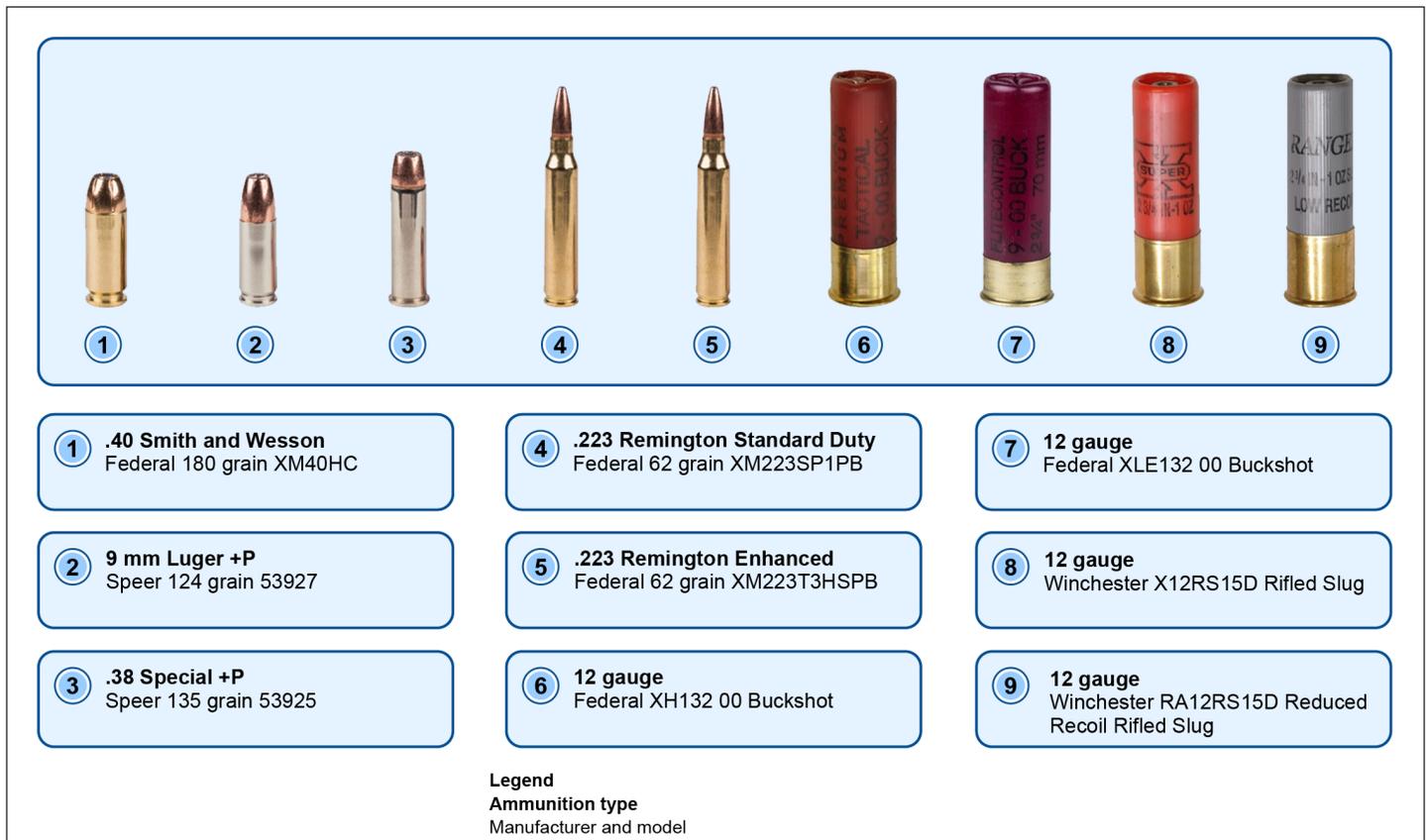
---

We conducted this performance audit from May 2013 to January 2014 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.

# Appendix II: Commonly Used Ammunition and Issued Firearms at DHS

Figure 5 shows some of the most commonly purchased types of ammunition for ICE, and figure 6 shows firearms commonly issued by DHS components.<sup>1</sup>

**Figure 5: Ammunition Commonly Purchased by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE)**



Source: GAO analysis of Department of Homeland Security data.

<sup>1</sup>Commonly used firearms and ammunition refer to the firearms issued and largest amounts of ammunition purchased by the components in our review.

**Figure 6: Firearms Commonly Issued by Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Components**



Source: GAO analysis of Department of Homeland Security data.

Note: The firearms illustrated are intended to be general representations and are not specifically the model types or configurations used by DHS components. DHS components may use other weapons in addition to the ones in this figure

# Appendix III: Department of Homeland Security Ammunition Contracts, as of October 1, 2013

Most of DHS's ammunition contracts, whether strategically sourced or individual contracts, are indefinite delivery, indefinite quantity (IDIQ) contracts, which are typically negotiated for a base year with additional options for purchasing ammunition up to a certain maximum number of rounds, or contract ceiling. As shown in the table below, the 29 existing DHS ammunition contracts extend over the next 4 fiscal years and have a remaining contract limit of approximately 704 million rounds (for various ammunition types) if every option for purchasing ammunition were exercised into fiscal year 2018.

Component name	Ammunition caliber	Contract award date	Contract end date	Contract ceiling in dollars	Contract ceiling in rounds	Estimated remaining number of rounds available as of October 1, 2013
Federal Law Enforcement Training Centers (FLETC)	.357, .45, .40 and 9 mm	03/28/2013	4/1/2014	\$30,000,000	104,587,924	According to FLETC officials, these contracts are Reduced Hazard Training Ammunition (RHTA) and are available for the entire federal government to order from. Orders may be placed against these contracts before 4/1/2014 and are not expected to meet the ceiling. Although they are still active, DHS intends to replace them with new contracts.
	.357, .40, 9 mm, 12 gauge, and .223	03/29/2013	4/1/2014			
	.357, .45, .40, 9 mm, 12 gauge, and .223	03/30/2013	4/1/2014			
	.40, 10mm, 9 mm, and .223	03/31/2013	4/1/2014			
	.223, 30-06, .308, 12 gauge, .357, .38, .40, .45, 7.62, and 9 mm	04/12/2013	04/11/2018	6,229,785	23,000,000	22,992,500
	.223, 30-06, .308, 12 gauge, .357, .38, .40, .45, 7.62, and 9 mm	04/12/2013	04/11/2018	4,295,419	23,000,000	20,210,000

Component name	Ammunition caliber	Contract award date	Contract end date	Contract ceiling in dollars	Contract ceiling in rounds	Estimated remaining number of rounds available as of October 1, 2013
	.223, 30-06, .308, 12 gauge, .357, .38, .40, .45, 7.62, and 9 mm	04/12/2013	04/11/2018	\$6,359,270	23,000,000	19,874,000
	.45, .22, 3030, 12 gauge, .357, and 7.62	04/15/2013	12/11/2013	29,520	99,800	0
	.40	06/11/2013	11/12/2013	500,000	2,000,000	0
	.40 and .223	08/29/2013	12/13/2013	373,825	1,650,000	0
	.40	09/04/2013	11/04/2013	42,024	200,000	0
	12 gauge	09/03/2013	12/15/2013	2,765	5,000	0
	.45	09/16/2013	01/16/2014	35,555	100,000	0
	.38	09/16/2013	01/16/2014	7,950	30,000	0
Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) <sup>a</sup>	9 mm	9/29/2011	9/28/2016	3,493,331	14,750,000	6,149,000
	.38	9/29/2011	9/28/2016	3,334,518	8,800,000	8,093,000
	.40	1/10/2012	1/9/2017	109,490,400	450,000,000	408,461,000
	.223	7/12/2012	7/11/2017	10,000,000	10,000,000	9,872,200
	.223	1/1/2013	12/31/2017	92,983,440	172,000,000	171,011,800
Transportation Security Administration (TSA)	.357	9/26/2013	9/25/2014	744,095	3,454,000	0
U.S. Secret Service (USSS)	Specific ammunition types are considered law enforcement sensitive and are therefore not included in this report	6/23/2010	5/29/2015	10,902,329	43,350,000	29,749,000
		6/28/2010	5/31/2015	501,690	1,250,000	305,000
		8/16/2010	5/29/2015	682,900	1,600,000	1,560,000
		6/1/2010	5/29/2015	242,327	3,750,000	690,250

Component name	Ammunition caliber	Contract award date	Contract end date	Contract ceiling in dollars	Contract ceiling in rounds	Estimated remaining number of rounds available as of October 1, 2013
		8/15/2010	5/29/2015	\$876,000	800,000	217,500
		6/23/2010	5/29/2015	1,606,000	3,000,000	3,000,000
		7/14/2010	5/29/2015	1,606,000	3,000,000	1,885,000
		9/30/2013	9/29/2018	750,000	400,000	320,000
		8/24/2013	12/31/2013	267,500	963,000	0
<b>Total</b>				<b>\$ 285,356,645</b>	<b>894,789,724</b>	<b>704,390,250</b>

Source: GAO analysis of Department of Homeland Security contract data.

Notes: Totals may not add up because of rounding.

DHS's strategic sourcing contract vehicles include contracts or agreements that have been established for use by two or more components to leverage their buying power and secure competitive prices resulting in cost savings through collective procurement actions (e.g., buying in bulk quantities at lower prices). Strategically sourced contracts are shaded.

<sup>a</sup>Other components purchase on ICE contracts, including U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) and Federal Protective Service (FPS).

# Appendix IV: Comments from the Department of Homeland Security

U.S. Department of Homeland Security  
Washington, DC 20528



**Homeland  
Security**

January 6, 2014

David C. Maurer  
Director, Homeland Security and Justice Issues  
U.S. Government Accountability Office  
441 G Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20548

Re: Draft Report GAO-14-119, "DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY:  
Ammunition Purchases Have Declined Since 2009"

Dear Mr. Maurer:

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on this draft report. The U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) appreciates the U.S. Government Accountability Office's (GAO's) work in planning and conducting its review and issuing this report.

DHS is pleased that GAO has independently validated the Department's procurement and use of ammunition. During the past year, the Department has addressed many misperceptions about the scope of procurement and actual facts on how ammunition was both procured and used.

DHS employs more law enforcement agents and officers than any other department in the Federal Government and has personnel stationed in every state and in more than 75 countries around the globe. With approximately 70,000 law enforcement personnel across multiple agencies and more than 40,000 uniformed members of the military in the United States Coast Guard, ammunition is used to support law enforcement operations as well as for routine qualifications and training.

DHS agrees with GAO's conclusions that annual ammunition purchases have declined during the past 3 years and are comparable to those of Department of Justice law enforcement agencies. In fact, since 2008 the number of rounds purchased annually at DHS has remained relatively steady, with DHS and its Components only purchasing ammunition from established contracts on an as-needed basis. DHS also appreciates GAO's recognition of the significant cost savings associated with the Department's Strategic Sourcing Program, which leverages the purchasing power of DHS to procure ammunition.

---

---

The Department also notes that the report does not contain any recommendations. Again, thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on this draft report. Technical comments were previously provided under separate cover. Please feel free to contact me should you have any questions. We look forward to working with you in the future.

Sincerely,



Jim H. Crumpacker  
Director  
Departmental GAO-OIG Liaison Office

---

# Appendix V: GAO Contact and Staff Acknowledgments

---

## GAO Contact

David C. Maurer, (202) 512-9627 or [maurerd@gao.gov](mailto:maurerd@gao.gov)

---

## Staff Acknowledgments

In addition to the contact named above, Adam Hoffman (Assistant Director) and Daniel Blinderman, Billy Commons, Lorraine Ettaro, Emily Gunn, Eric Hauswirth, Susan Hsu, Susanna Kuebler, Gary Malavenda, Linda Miller, and Anthony Pordes made significant contributions to this report.

---

---

## GAO's Mission

The Government Accountability Office, the audit, evaluation, and investigative arm of Congress, exists to support Congress in meeting its constitutional responsibilities and to help improve the performance and accountability of the federal government for the American people. GAO examines the use of public funds; evaluates federal programs and policies; and provides analyses, recommendations, and other assistance to help Congress make informed oversight, policy, and funding decisions. GAO's commitment to good government is reflected in its core values of accountability, integrity, and reliability.

---

## Obtaining Copies of GAO Reports and Testimony

The fastest and easiest way to obtain copies of GAO documents at no cost is through GAO's website (<http://www.gao.gov>). Each weekday afternoon, GAO posts on its website newly released reports, testimony, and correspondence. To have GAO e-mail you a list of newly posted products, go to <http://www.gao.gov> and select "E-mail Updates."

---

## Order by Phone

The price of each GAO publication reflects GAO's actual cost of production and distribution and depends on the number of pages in the publication and whether the publication is printed in color or black and white. Pricing and ordering information is posted on GAO's website, <http://www.gao.gov/ordering.htm>.

Place orders by calling (202) 512-6000, toll free (866) 801-7077, or TDD (202) 512-2537.

Orders may be paid for using American Express, Discover Card, MasterCard, Visa, check, or money order. Call for additional information.

---

## Connect with GAO

Connect with GAO on [Facebook](#), [Flickr](#), [Twitter](#), and [YouTube](#). Subscribe to our [RSS Feeds](#) or [E-mail Updates](#). Listen to our [Podcasts](#). Visit GAO on the web at [www.gao.gov](http://www.gao.gov).

---

## To Report Fraud, Waste, and Abuse in Federal Programs

Contact:

Website: <http://www.gao.gov/fraudnet/fraudnet.htm>

E-mail: [fraudnet@gao.gov](mailto:fraudnet@gao.gov)

Automated answering system: (800) 424-5454 or (202) 512-7470

---

## Congressional Relations

Katherine Siggerud, Managing Director, [siggerudk@gao.gov](mailto:siggerudk@gao.gov), (202) 512-4400, U.S. Government Accountability Office, 441 G Street NW, Room 7125, Washington, DC 20548

---

## Public Affairs

Chuck Young, Managing Director, [youngc1@gao.gov](mailto:youngc1@gao.gov), (202) 512-4800 U.S. Government Accountability Office, 441 G Street NW, Room 7149 Washington, DC 20548

