



U.S. Department of Justice

Office of the Inspector General

October 21, 2005

The Honorable Jon Kyl  
United States Senate  
730 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Kyl:

This is in response to your letter to Mr. William C. Lang dated August 24, 2005, in which you informed him that you were forwarding correspondence that he sent to you to the Department of Justice Office of the Inspector General (OIG) for review. Mr. Lang wrote to you on June 27, 2005, regarding his concerns with the accuracy and completeness of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives' (ATF) National Firearms Registration and Transfer Record (NFRTR).

The OIG has received several requests and other correspondence alleging inaccuracies in the NFRTR. We are also aware of extensive correspondence, beginning in 1998 and continuing through the present, regarding these same or similar allegations between the concerned individuals and the ATF, United States Attorneys' Offices, and the Department of the Treasury OIG, as well as several Members of Congress. In response to the original allegations, the Treasury OIG conducted two reviews in 1998, neither of which substantiated the claims. The reviews did, however, identify weaknesses in the administration of the NFRTR and made recommendations to the ATF to correct them. Those recommendations were accepted and implemented by the ATF prior to its transfer to the Department of Justice in February 2003.

In response to prior inquiries, we asked the ATF for information on the actions it took to implement the recommendations contained in the Treasury OIG reports. On June 15, 2005, the ATF informed us that it had implemented all of the Treasury OIG's recommendations or had implemented alternatives that it had proposed to the Treasury OIG and that the Treasury OIG had found acceptable. According to the ATF, the Treasury OIG monitored the implementation of the corrective actions, as

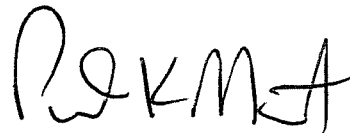
well as the ATF's use of \$500,000 appropriated by Congress to improve the accuracy and completeness of the NFRTR.

The ATF also provided additional information on two measures it had implemented as alternatives to the Treasury OIG's original recommendations. First, the ATF optically imaged and indexed all NFRTR records to create a database that it now uses to retrieve registration documents. New registrations are imaged and indexed as they are processed, and an ongoing ATF project, known as Firearms Integrated Technology, is to incorporate the firearms registration database into a standardized and integrated firearms information system. Second, the ATF expanded the dissemination of the procedures to be followed to properly register firearms in estates. The ATF included this information in various publications and posted it on its web site ([www.atf.gov](http://www.atf.gov)).

In response to correspondence we have received expressing concerns over the accuracy and completeness of the NFRTR, the OIG plans to initiate a review of the ATF's management of the NFRTR in late 2005. We plan to examine the ATF's efforts to implement the recommendations made by the Treasury OIG and review the ATF's processes for registering, transferring, and updating records on weapons contained in the NFRTR.

Please feel free to contact us if you have additional questions about the work of the OIG.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "PKM-A", written in a cursive style.

Paul K. Martin  
Deputy Inspector General

cc: William C. Lang