

# GSA Oversight of Federal Surplus Firearms

### Summary

In May 2021, the Office of Inspector General (OIG), Office of Inspections, initiated an evaluation of the U.S. General Services Administration's (GSA) Surplus Firearms Donation Program (firearms program). Our review covered the period October 1, 2018 through April 30, 2021. The objectives for this review were to determine whether GSA's donations of federal surplus firearms complied with both federal and agency requirements, and to assess the adequacy of GSA's mechanisms for tracking federal surplus firearms donations.

GSA is responsible for the management of surplus federal personal property, including firearms. The agency has administered its firearms program since October 1999 under the authority of 40 U.S.C. § 549 "Donation of personal property through state agencies" and the regulation currently codified at 41 C.F.R § 102-40.175 "How do we handle firearms?" GSA is authorized to transfer, on behalf of a federal agency, surplus personal property to a U.S. state or territory, including surplus firearms to state and local law enforcement agencies.

GSA Order FSS P 4025.5 CHGE 4, Extended, *Donation of Surplus Personal Property* (Order), prescribes instructions and procedures for the donation of federal surplus personal property. However, the Order's requirements for the donation of items with lethal characteristics, such as firearms, lacks specificity and causes confusion. Without a clear published Order, GSA operates the firearms program through a patchwork of improvised guidance consisting of standard operating procedures, memorandums, and program form templates. Our evaluation found GSA is not complying with the Firearms Donation Program Operating Policy and Procedures, the primary guidance the agency adopted to provide direction and internal controls for the firearms program.

In addition, we found GSA has improved its data management practices since our prior report, [\*Limited Evaluation of GSA Surplus Firearm Donation Program: Inadequate Controls May Leave Firearms Vulnerable to Theft, Loss, and Unauthorized Use\*](#), June 12, 2015 (2015 report). However, we found minor issues with firearms data accuracy along with an inefficient and decentralized records management system. As a result, GSA may lack both the information and mechanisms necessary for effectively tracking the status of the donated federal surplus firearms in its program.

Our report makes five recommendations to address the issues identified during the evaluation. In response to our report, GSA management agreed with our findings and recommendations. Management comments can be found in their entirety in Appendix 2.

### REPORT

[GSA Oversight of Federal Surplus Firearms \(JE23-002\).pdf](#)