

Summary of Errors in the National Firearms Registration and Transfer Record Disclosed in Results of Audits or Reviews by ATF or the Treasury Department Inspector General, 1994 to 1998

Auditor or reviewer and aspect of audit or review	National Firearms Act Branch Quality Review Team		National Firearms Act Branch review cited by Tom Busey, 10-95		Audit Services Division, Department of the Treasury	Treasury Department Office of Inspector General (from <u>published</u> audit report)			Treasury Department Office of Inspector General (from <u>unpublished</u> Work Papers)			
	Entire NFRTR	Entire NFRTR	Entire NFRTR	Entire NFRTR		Form 4467	Letter	Other	Form 4467	Letter	Other	
Scope of audit or review	Entire NFRTR	Entire NFRTR	Entire NFRTR	Entire NFRTR	Entire NFRTR	Form 4467	Letter	Other	Form 4467	Letter	Other	
Year or date of estimate	“since 6/30/94”	“since 6/30/94”	1995	1996	1998	1998			1998			
Error type	“Errors”	“Significant errors”	“Errors”	“Total error rate” ¹	“Critical error rate”	“Critical-error”	“Sample discrepancies”			“Critical to the NFA mission” and “Administrative”		
Sample size or number of records examined	25,611 records		36,903 records	[Not stated]	[Not stated]	[Not stated]	141	179	202	528 records and documents; of these, 140 were Form 4467		
Number of errors	1,567	373	2,155	[Not stated]	[Not stated]	[Not stated]	6	15	16	“395 errors or omissions of which 176 were Critical to the NFA mission and the		

¹ Busey stated that the “total error rate” is the total of “common and critical errors” (page 202).

										remaining 219 were Administrative”		
Error rate	.01% ²	.01%	6%	“about 8 percent”	“probably below 3 percent”	“no more than 1.5%”	4.3%	8.4%	7.9%	18.4%	[redacted]	[redacted]
Error definition	[Not stated]	Misspelled and/or incomplete names Voided application —didn’t indicate current firearm possessor. \$200/\$5 remittance not posted. Never mailed approved form to transferee. Approved wrong firearm to transferee. Approved form never updated in	Misspelled and/or incomplete names Voided application —didn’t indicate previous owner. \$200/\$5 remittance not posted. Never mailed approved form to transferor. Approved wrong firearm to transferee. Approved form never updated in	“a common error is an error in the database entry, but it doesn’t affect a lookup”	“where the gentleman’s name is spelled wrong”	[Not stated]	Name missing or incorrect Serial number missing or incorrect Computer records not found Original records not found Miscellaneous (Form 4467 registration dates past the close of the amnesty period)	Serial number of the weapon (should be 100% correct) Name of weapon owner (last name should be 100% correct) Address of owner (should be correct, one digit off is acceptable) Date of application (date received, if applicable – Form 4467)	Also: Missing address changes Records not updated 1 st and middle names transposed Missing microfiche numbers Duplicate entries Card index number error Transfer cancellation not updated	Also: Caliber entered erroneously Model nos [sic] Approval dates incorrect Ownership documentation [illegible] is filed Duplicate entry Microfiche number incorrect		

² “Common error rate”

		NFRTR.	NFRTR.					Date of birth		
								Weapon description		
Source of study or audit information	<i>Treasury, Postal Service, and General Government Appropriations for Fiscal Year 1998.</i> 105th Congress, 1st Session. Part t: Testimony of Members of Congress and Other Interested Individuals and Organizations. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1997, pages 103-104.			“Roll Call Training 10-95 Tom Busey” in <i>Treasury, Postal Service, and General Government Appropriations for Fiscal Year 1997.</i> 104th Congress, 2nd Session. Part 5: Testimony of Members of Congress and Other Interested Individuals and Organizations. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1996, pages 184-205.	<i>U.S. v. Rith</i> , 164 F.3d 1323 (10th Cir. 1999)		<i>Audit Report on Allegations Concerning the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms’ Administration of the National Firearms Registration and Transfer Record.</i> Report No. OIG-99-018. Washington, D.C.: Office of Inspector General, Department of the Treasury, December 18, 1998, page 12.	Work Paper F-22, 1/26/98; Work Paper F-25, 2/19/98; Work Paper H-0, pages 1-2	Work Paper F-25, page 2; Work Paper H-0, pages 1-2	Work Paper F-25, page 2; Work Paper H-0, pages 1-2
URL (if on Internet)	http://www.nfaoa.org/documents/1997testimony.pdf		http://www.nfaoa.org/documents/1996testimony.pdf	http://www.titlei.com/BardwellOLD/us_v_rith.txt	http://www.nfaoa.org/documents/TreasuryOIG-99-018-1998.pdf					
Comments	These documents were selected from and are representative of a group of documents that ATF released in response to a FOIA request. ATF did not include a report or summary. These documents are apparently weekly successive tabulations of reports of errors in the NFRTR, and are intended to illustrate how ATF tabulated errors in the NFRTR during						According to page 3 of Work Paper H-1 + Attachments H1-H143, there were 6 “Critical” data fields for each category: (1) weapon serial number, “zero errors permitted”; (2) Name “No misspelling of the last name”; (3) Address “One error in the address permitted”; (4) Date received;	According to Work Paper F-37, 6/30/98, a “review and discussion of database error analysis” by Treasury Department IG auditors, held June 17, 1998, “the results obtained by the OIG audit were disappointing at best and could have serious consequences for the ATF firearms registry mission.” Although ATF personnel provided the auditors with definitions of “critical” errors, ATF personnel believed the		

	<p>its review. Note there are virtually no differences between the definitions of “Significant Errors” and “Errors,” and this suggests that ATF redefined these terms to decrease the reported “Significant Error” rate.</p>		<p>(5) Date of Birth; and (6) Weapon Description “Blank description not permitted”. Page 3 of Work Paper H-1 + Attachments H1-H143 also identifies Work Paper F-25 as a source of definitions of “Critical” data fields “interfere with the mission of the NFA Branch.”</p>	<p>term “critical” had been misapplied. The Work Paper contains a discussion of what a “critical” error meant in the audit work, from the perspective of the Treasury Department IG auditors. According to page 4 of Work Paper H-1 + Attachments H1-H143, 70 records were drawn from the computer database and 70 were drawn from the hard copy database.</p>
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