



Written by [Thomas R. Eddlem](#) on September 23, 2012

Federal Law Enforcement Stockpiling Arms (10,000/ICE Employee)

The U.S. Customs and Immigration Enforcement Agency (ICE) has a [federal contract out to bid](#) for 200 million rounds of automatic weapons ammunition for its agents, a figure that represents about 10,000 rounds for each of its 20,000 employees. You read that correctly, 200,000,000 rounds of .223 automatic weapons ammunition.



According to the Federal Business Opportunities website, the on-line contracting portal of the federal government, the ICE bid [would purchase](#) the following: “The estimated amount over the 5 year duration of the contract will be 165,000,000 rounds” of “.223 Remington Caliber SD” to “DHS component locations within the Continental United States (CONUS) and its territories including Alaska, Hawaii, Guam, the Northern Marianna [sic] Islands, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands.” On September 16, this [solicitation](#) was increased to 200 million rounds over five years.

This amounts to about 10,000 rounds for every one of the [20,000 ICE employees](#), including secretaries and support staff. The .223 round is the standard ammunition for the military’s automatic rifle M-4 Carbine, its predecessor, the M-16, as well as the civilian semi-automatic equivalent, the AR-15. So ICE is ordering enough ammunition for a major war, even as it mandates that [some ICE agents patrol the U.S.-Mexican border with bean-bag guns](#).

But this isn’t the only contract that ICE has for firearms ammunition. ICE also ordered in September some [25,000 rounds](#) of blank .308 rifle ammunition and “176,000 ROUNDS of .308 caliber 168 Grain hollow point,” both for the Immigration and Customs Enforcement division of DHS. The .308 round is the preferred round for police snipers. Either ICE agents are going to do some heavy-duty target practice over the next couple of years, or the agency is planning for some serious violence, or both.

And ICE isn’t the only civilian federal law enforcement agency stockpiling ammunition; it’s only the most prolific ammunition stockpiler. The DHS, i.e., the Department of Homeland Security (which oversees ICE), has a separate and [additional request](#) for an undisclosed number of boxes of SigSauer .357 hollow point rounds for the TSA. And that request has a whole range of requirements that indicate they are not going to be used for target practice. The [bid specs](#) require: “The projectile ... shall penetrate a minimum of 12.0 inches and a maximum of 18.0 inches into a ballistic gelatin block after



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passing through the heavy clothing barriers. Bullet Expansion. The projectile (representing the largest recovered mass fraction of the original bullet mass) shall expand to a minimum size of 140% of the original bullet diameter.”

DHS already spent some \$4.6 million on a classified number of .223 rounds in a [July 30 contract](#) with Federal Arms. And the DHS also [ordered riot gear in July](#) of this year. The arms and equipment orders might make one wonder: Is DHS planning for Greek-style riots in the United States?

Other examples of federal law enforcement ammunition stockpiling include:

- The U.S. Bureau of Prisons [ordered](#) 50,000 rounds of 9 millimeter semi-automatic handgun ammunition. The bid includes humorous instructions to federal contractors: “Please note: this will be delivered to a Federal Prison, and special shipping instruction will be provided to ensure that the shipment arrives at our warehouse and away from inmates.” One would hope so!
- The Bureau of Indian Affairs [ordered](#) several dozen boxes of 12-gauge shotgun shells.
- Even the National Weather Service has [ordered](#) 76,000 rounds of .40 caliber semi-automatic handgun ammunition, though it also ordered some 500 paper targets with the August 2012 bid. Presumably these rounds are for target practice. But what does the National Weather Service need guns and ammunition for?

All this is in addition to a Federal Law Enforcement Training Center (FLETC) [order](#) of more than 40,000 rounds of various calibers of police weapons awarded in August. So why do ICE and the rest of the DHS need all those rounds if they target practice at the FLETC?



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