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SOCIAL SECURITY'S OIG RESPONDS TO CONCERNS OVER AMMUNITION PROCUREMENT

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POSTED BY: THE OFFICE OF EXTERNAL RELATIONS



We launched the “Beyond the Numbers” blog more than two months ago [to open a conversation with you](http://oig.ssa.gov/newsroom/blog/2012/06/inspector-generals-desk-working-you-taxpayer) (<http://oig.ssa.gov/newsroom/blog/2012/06/inspector-generals-desk-working-you-taxpayer>), whether you are a Social Security beneficiary, or you know a family member or friend who receives Social Security payments.

If you think about it, the Social Security Administration’s programs touch almost all of us at some point in our lives. That’s why we have opened several social media channels to the public, as we strive to be a transparent and accountable government organization for all of our stakeholders.

With those goals in mind, we thought it would be appropriate to address recent media reports regarding the organization’s purchase of ammunition for our special agents’ duty weapons. We should first state that the OIG follows all Federal procurement rules when arranging these purchases.

As we said in a [recent post](http://oig.ssa.gov/newsroom/blog/2012/08/oigs-special-agents-enforcing-federal-laws) (<http://oig.ssa.gov/newsroom/blog/2012/08/oigs-special-agents-enforcing-federal-laws>), our office has [criminal investigators](http://oig.ssa.gov/about-oig/offices/office-investigations) (<http://oig.ssa.gov/about-oig/offices/office-investigations>), or special agents, who

are responsible for investigating violations of the laws that govern SSA's programs. Currently, about 295 special agents and supervisory special agents work in 66 offices across the United States. These investigators have full law enforcement authority, including executing search warrants and making arrests.

Our investigators are similar to your State or local police officers. They use traditional investigative techniques, and they are armed when on official duty.

Media reports expressed concerns over the type of ammunition ordered. In fact, this type of ammunition is standard issue for many law enforcement agencies. OIG's special agents use this ammunition during their mandatory quarterly firearms qualifications and other training sessions, to ensure agent and public safety. Additionally, the ammunition our agents use is the same type used at the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center.

Our special agents need to be armed and trained appropriately. They not only investigate allegations of Social Security fraud, but they also are called to respond to threats against Social Security offices, employees, and customers.

As we explained in [another post \(http://oig.ssa.gov/newsroom/blog/2012/07/violence-massachusetts-ssa-office\)](http://oig.ssa.gov/newsroom/blog/2012/07/violence-massachusetts-ssa-office), SSA is processing more applications than ever, which means more traffic in SSA offices. Employee and visitor safety is the highest priority for OIG, which, together with the Federal Protective Services and local law enforcement, has jurisdiction over SSA workplaces.

For more information, please read our Aug. 31 post, [*Some Additional Thoughts on How \(and Why\) We Do What We Do* \(http://oig.ssa.gov/newsroom/blog/2012/08/some-thoughts-how-and-why-we-do-what-we-do\)](http://oig.ssa.gov/newsroom/blog/2012/08/some-thoughts-how-and-why-we-do-what-we-do).

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