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**From:** Schmalter, Tracy (SMO)  
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AG press conference 3/9/11

Q: About the death of Agent Terry, there were questions today raised about Fast and Furious. Has the program been suspended? And why were Mexican -- why wasn't the Mexican government informed of it at the time?

ATTY GEN. HOLDER: Well, we are, as I -- as I guess you all know, I've asked our Inspector General's Office to look into that matter. The aim of the ATF is to try to stop the flow of guns. I think they do a good job in that regard. Questions have been raised by ATF agents about the way in which some of these operations have been conducted. I think those questions have to be taken seriously, and on that basis, I've asked the inspector general to look at it.

Q: (Off mic) -- in a general way, as someone who's overseen dozens and hundreds of investigations, as an investigative tool, have you ever heard of a situation where you would allow heavily -- you know, high-powered weapons to go over a border and then not know what happens on the other end, unlike dummy drugs or dummy bombs that you've used extensively in other cases? How does that happen?

ATTY GEN. HOLDER: Well, I think one has to understand that there's a difference between the investigations and using the examples that you have -- you supplied. The purchase of drugs is illegal, and we know that from the beginning of an investigation. The use of or transmission of a bomb is something that we know is illegal. You can purchase weapons legally. They can be transferred legally. It makes those investigations more difficult, more complex, in some ways, than other investigations.

Now whether there should be guns allowed to travel or let them run, whatever the phrase is, is something that I think we have to look at and examine. And that's one of the reasons why I've asked the inspector general to look at -- look at the facts and see exactly what happened and whether or not what happened was appropriate.

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#### **AG Answer on Letting Guns Walk**

Fighting criminal activity along the Southwest Border - including the illegal trafficking of guns to Mexico - has been a priority of this Administration and this Department of Justice. The mission of ATF and other law enforcement agencies is to stop the flow of illegal weapons and drugs across the Border, and it will continue to be. I'm aware of the questions that have been raised by ATF agents. I take those very seriously, and that's why I have asked the Inspector General to get to the bottom of what happened. Because questions have been raised and so that there is not confusion, I have also made it clear to the law enforcement agencies and prosecutors working along the Southwest Border that no one in the Department should allow guns to illegally cross the border into Mexico.