

Operation Fast and Furious is an ongoing criminal investigation of an firearms trafficking organization believed to be sending weapons into Mexico through a network of straw purchasers. The investigation has so far resulted in one indictment charging 20 defendants with federal firearms offenses, and the investigation is continuing.

The investigation has received scrutiny from the media, from Congress, and from Mexican authorities. One allegation is that ATF allowed guns to “walk” – that is, ATF failed to prevent guns from crossing the border into Mexico when they could have stopped them from doing so. A second allegation is that one of the guns that ATF allowed to walk was subsequently used in the murder of CBP Agent Brian Terry.

In response to the allegations, the AG has asked the Acting IG to investigate. The AG has also made it clear to law enforcement agencies and prosecutors working along the SW Border that DOJ should never knowingly permit firearms to cross the border.

We are currently responding to a series of letters from Congress as well as one subpoena from HOGRC. Because the letters and the subpoena seek information related to ongoing criminal investigations (both Fast and Furious itself and the Terry murder investigation), there is not much information we can provide.

There have been concerns voiced in Mexico that Operation Fast and Furious involved a sting operation in which ATF agents were themselves engaged in illicit arms purchases that resulted in guns being sent into Mexico or that the operation involved ATF agents engaging in undercover activities in Mexico. These concerns are unfounded. Operation Fast and Furious was not a sting operation, nor did it involve our ATF agents conducting any undercover operations in Mexico.