

country making the delivery.⁶⁴ All this is to say that when states see it as in their best interest to circumvent an agreement or a practice, it will probably be done, whether it is small arms or ammunition. It may be easier to do it with ammunition.

Diversion and Theft

Laws and enforcement mechanisms are one thing, implementation is something else. A snapshot of some of the issues to be considered can best be illustrated by a few examples of ammunition control problems. There are undoubtedly hundreds of similar examples available.

Two thousand rounds of 9 mm ammunition legally shipped from the USA to Trinidad disappeared either at sea or in the docks in Port-of-Spain.⁶⁵ In a now classic case of government panic and collapse, ammunition stores all over Albania were looted in February and March of 1997.⁶⁶ One estimate puts the number of ammunition rounds looted at 10.5 billion.⁶⁷ Much of this will never be re-captured. An FBI agent in Alexandria Virginia allegedly stole between 100,000 and 200,000 rounds of ammunition from an FBI training academy over a number of years.⁶⁸ A report from the USA General Accounting Office (GAO) noted the theft of military small arms parts from US military stores that ended up on the black market.⁶⁹ As well, between 1990 and 1993 about 250 small arms were reported lost, missing or stolen.⁷⁰ Considering the size of the US military, including reserves and national guard, this is not a large number. It is quite conceivable that ammunition, an expendable item and thus not easy to control, is also being pilfered. One source recounted a situation that involved the establishment of a mining and mineral exploration company that was a front for the diversion of explosives through "skimming" to a certain terrorist organization. The company actually conducted mining exploration, thus it was sometime before its activities were discovered.⁷¹

The accounting of expended cartridges by returning the empty cases and counting them is one way of countering pilferage. By and large most professional militaries collect expended

⁶⁴ Private correspondence with the author

⁶⁵ For details see <http://sshs.mit.edu/int/news/guardian>.

⁶⁶ For details see among other sources <http://www.yahoo.com/headlines/special/albania/albania.97.html>

⁶⁷ Renner. 35

⁶⁸ For details see http://www.nando.net/newsroom/ntr/nation/010296/nation692_16.html

⁶⁹ See Federation of American Scientists Web Site <http://www.clark.net/fas/faspir/pir0797.htm> for additional details and other examples.

⁷⁰ E-Mail reference from GAO, 20 Jan 1998

⁷¹ Private correspondence with author.