INDUSTRY CIRCULAR

DEPARTMENT OF
THE TREASURY
Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms
Washington, D. C. 20226
Number: 86-15 Date: 12/4/86

ARMOR PIERCING AMMUNITION

Federal Firearms Licensees and others concerned:

On August 28, 1986, the President signed Public Law 99-408 (100 Stat. 920) which regulates the manufacture, importation and sale of armor piercing ammunition.

The Act amends chapter 44 of title 18, United States Code to define the term armor piercing ammunition as "a projectile or projectile core which may be used in a handgun and which is constructed entirely (excluding the presence of traces of other substances) from one or a combination of tungsten alloys, steel, iron, brass, bronze, beryllium copper, or depleted uranium. Such term does not include shotgun shot required by Federal or State environmental or game regulations for hunting purposes, a frangible projectile designed for target shooting, a projectile which the Secretary finds is primarily intended to be used for sporting purposes, or any other projectile or projectile core which the Secretary finds is intended to be used for industrial purposes, including a charge used in an oil and gas well perforating device."

Provisions of Public Law 99-408 provide that:

1. No person may manufacture or import armor piercing ammunition and no manufacturer or importer may sell or deliver such ammunition except:

    a. for the use of the United States or any department or agency thereof or any State or any department, agency or political subdivision thereof;

    b. for the purposes of exportation; or

    c. for the purposes of testing or experimentation as authorized by the Director.

2. Manufacturers and importers of armor piercing ammunition must be licensed by the Bureau. Such licenses have a fee of $1,000 per year.

3. Licensed importers and licensed manufacturers must mark all armor piercing projectiles and packages containing such projectiles for distribution.

4. The Director may, after notice and opportunity for hearing, revoke the license of a licensed dealer who willfully transfers armor piercing ammunition.

The Bureau is issuing temporary regulations which will be effective on the date of publication in the Federal Register, except for the licensing provisions which will be effective December 1, 1986.

Regulatory provisions will establish recordkeeping requirements for all armor piercing ammunition dispositions and procedures for approval to receive armor piercing ammunition for testing or experimentation. Regulations will establish the marking requirements for armor piercing projectiles and packages containing such projectiles.

Regulations promulgated under the Act will allow for armor piercing ammunition received and maintained by licensed dealers as business inventory prior to August 28, 1986, to be transferred to any department or agency of the United States or any State or political subdivision thereof if a record of such ammunition is maintained in the form and manner prescribed by regulation.

As required by the Act, the Director is hereunder furnishing each licensed dealer information defining projectiles considered armor piercing. Such information is not all-inclusive for the purposes of the prohibition on manufacture, importation, or sale or delivery by a manufacturer or importer of such ammunition or 18 U.S.C. 929 relating to criminal misuse of armor piercing ammunition.

List of Armor Piercing Ammunition

The following is an initial listing of projectiles considered armor piercing.

1. KTW ammunition, all calibers. (Identified by a green coating on the projectile).

2. ARCANE ammunition, all calibers. (Identified by a pointed bronze or brass projectile).

3. THV ammunition, all calibers. (Identified by a brass or bronze projectile and having a head stamp containing the letters SFM and THV).

4. Czechoslovakian manufactured 9mm Parabellum (Luger) ammunition having an iron or steel bullet core. (Identified by a cupro nickel jacket and a head stamp containing a triangle, star and dates of 49, 50, 51 or 52. This bullet is attracted to a magnet).

5. German manufactured 9mm Parabellum (Luger) ammunition having an iron or steel bullet core. (Original packaging is marked Pistolenpatronen 08 m.E. This bullet is attracted to a magnet).

6. MSC .25ACP caliber ammunition. (Identified by a hollow point bronze bullet).

7. Black Steel Armor Piercing Ammunition as produced by National Cartridge, Atlanta, Georgia.

8. Black Steel Metal Piercing Ammunition as produced by National Cartridge, Atlanta, Georgia.

9. 7.62mm NATO AP. (Identified by black coloring on the bullet tip. This ammunition is produced in various NATO countries. The U.S. military designation is M61 AP).

10. 7.62mm NATO SLAP. (Identified by a projectile having a plastic sabot around a hard penetrator. The penetrator protrudes above the sabot and is similar in appearance to a Remington accelerator cartridge).

Inquiries regarding this circular should refer to its number and be addressed to the Associate Director (Compliance Operations) Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, P.O. Box 189, Washington, DC 20044-0189.

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Director

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