

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

January 20, 2016

The Honorable Loretta E. Lynch
Attorney General
U.S. Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20530

Dear Madam Attorney General:

On January 8, 2016, Mexican authorities announced that Joaquín “El Chapo” Guzmán Loera was captured after a gunfight in Los Mochis, Sinaloa, Mexico.¹ Today, a news account reported that a .50-caliber rifle recovered from the house where Guzman was hiding was connected to the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives’ Operation Fast and Furious.²

The Department’s most recent update regarding the status of all firearms associated with the operation came by letter on March 20, 2015.³ That letter confirmed the connection between Operation Fast and Furious and a firearm recovered in Mexico on November 23, 2012 following a gunfight which resulted in the death of several individuals, including one woman described as a “former beauty queen.”⁴ It also confirmed the connection between Operation Fast and Furious and a firearm recovered on January 29, 2013 after a gunfight which resulted in the death of Luis Rosales-Astorga, Director of Public Safety for the Municipality of Hostotipaquillo, Jalisco, Mexico.⁵

In order to provide the Committees with current information, please respond to the following questions as soon as possible, but not later than 5:00 p.m. on February 1, 2016:

1. Was a .50-caliber rifle recovered on January 8, 2016? If so, please provide the serial number, purchaser data, and any information about whether it was related to the Fast and Furious firearms trafficking program.
2. If so, was the rifle connected with any other crimes in Mexico or the U.S.?
3. Were any other firearms associated with Operation Fast and Furious recovered at the scene?

¹ Azam Ahmed, *El Chapo, Escaped Mexican Drug Lord, Is Recaptured in Gun Battle*, N.Y. TIMES, Jan. 8, 2016.

² William La Jeunesse, *‘Fast & Furious’ rifle capable of taking down helicopter found in ‘El Chapo’ cache*, FOXNEWS.COM, Jan. 20, 2016, available at <http://www.foxnews.com/politics/2016/01/20/rifle-capable-taking-down-helicopter-found-at-el-chapo-hideout-purchased-through-fast-and-furious-program.html>.

³ Letter from Hon. Peter J. Kadzik, Asst. Attorney Gen., U.S. Dep’t of Justice (Mar. 20, 2015).

⁴ Randy Kreider, *Bad Company: Mexican Beauty Queen Killed During Drug Fight*, ABC NEWS, Nov. 27, 2012, available at <http://abcnews.go.com/Blotter/cartel-military-firefight-kills-mexican-beauty-queen/story?id=17820408>.

⁵ Richard Serrano, *Police chief killed with rifle lost in ATF gun-tracking program*, L.A. TIMES, Jul. 5, 2013.

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4. As of the date of this letter, what is the total number of weapons associated with Operation Fast and Furious that have been recovered in the U.S. and successfully traced?
5. As of the date of this letter, what is the total number of weapons associated with Operation Fast and Furious that have been recovered in Mexico and successfully traced?
6. Of the U.S recoveries, how many were recovered in relation to an incident of a violent nature? Please describe in detail the date and circumstances of each recovery that has not previously been described in the Department's responses to our letters.
7. Of the Mexican recoveries, how many were recovered in relation to an incident of a violent nature? Please describe in detail the date and circumstances of each recovery that has not previously been described in the Department's responses to our letters.

Should you have any questions regarding this request, please contact Tristan Leavitt of the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform staff at (202) 225-5074 or Katherine Nikas of the Senate Committee on the Judiciary staff at (202) 224-5225. Thank you for your prompt attention to this important matter.



Jason Chaffetz
Chairman
House Committee on Oversight and
Government Reform

Sincerely,



Charles E. Grassley
Chairman
Senate Committee on the Judiciary

Enclosures

cc: The Honorable Elijah E. Cummings, Ranking Member
U.S. House of Representatives, Committee on Oversight and Government Reform

The Honorable Patrick Leahy, Chairman
U.S. Senate, Committee on the Judiciary

The Honorable Michael E. Horowitz, Inspector General
U.S. Department of Justice

Mr. Thomas Brandon, Deputy Director
Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives