



U.S. MARSHALS

FACT SHEET

ASSET FORFEITURE PROGRAM

The U.S. Marshals administer the Department of Justice's Asset Forfeiture Program by managing and disposing of properties seized and forfeited by federal law enforcement agencies and U.S. attorneys nationwide.

The program has become a key part of the federal government's efforts to combat major criminal activities. Currently, the Marshals manage almost \$1.7 billion worth of property.

The Asset Forfeiture Program's goals are: stripping criminals of their ill-gotten gains, improving law enforcement cooperation and enhancing law enforcement through equitable revenue sharing. The Asset Forfeiture Program is a law enforcement success story, and the Marshals play a vital role.

In 1984, Congress passed the Comprehensive Crime Control Act that gave federal prosecutors new forfeiture provisions with which to combat crime. This legislation also created the Department of Justice Asset Forfeiture Fund (AFF).

The proceeds from the sale of forfeited assets such as real property, vehicles, businesses, financial instruments, vessels, aircraft and jewelry are deposited into the AFF and subsequently used to further law enforcement initiatives. Moreover, under the Equitable Sharing Program, the proceeds from sales are often shared with the state and local law enforcement agencies that participated in the investigations leading to the forfeiture of the assets. This important

program enhances law enforcement cooperation between state/local agencies and federal agencies.

The Asset Forfeiture Program consists of the U.S. Marshals, U.S. Attorneys Offices, the FBI, the Drug Enforcement Administration, the Department of State's Diplomatic Security Service and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives.

The U.S. Marshals also participate with the U.S. Attorneys Offices and the investigative agencies in pre-seizure planning — the first critical step toward ensuring sound, well-informed forfeiture decisions. The role of the Marshals is not only to serve as custodian of seized and forfeited property, but also to provide information and assist prosecutors in making informed decisions about property targeted for forfeiture.

The Marshals manage and dispose of all assets seized for forfeiture by utilizing successful procedures employed by the private sector. The Marshals contract with qualified vendors that minimize the amount of time an asset remains in inventory and maximize the net return to the government.

The Marshals Service's National Sellers List (Item 319K) is available from the Federal Citizen Information Center, 1-888-878-3256, for one dollar.

The list can be downloaded or printed free of charge at www.usmarshals.gov/assets/nsl.html. The National Sellers List provides the same information contained in commercially marketed publications.

