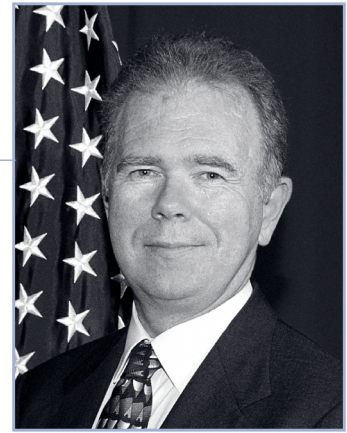


# Message from the Chief Financial Officer

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The challenges facing ATF personnel are ever present. At the very start of fiscal year 2002, the staff members of our headquarters mail processing facility personally encountered the terrifying threat of anthrax when anthrax spores were discovered in our mail facility ventilating system. Our brave and professional staff persevered in the face of this discovery and the remediation that followed.

ATF continues to make financial and performance information an important tool for managers and executives facing day-to-day challenges. Investments in a new financial system and the enterprise-wide access to information from that system are paying off. Managers retrieve and use current financial data to accomplish the important missions of the Bureau. We were one of the first organizations within the Treasury Department to meet the Secretary's goal of a 3-day close on monthly financial statements. This reinforces our Bureau ethos of careful stewardship of resources especially during times of intense demands on budget dollars.

I hope that you find this accounting of our operations and organizational performance informative and useful. For ATF, the E in our mission stands for Explosives. But I am borrowing from that characterization to focus on E-gov. This annual report is an example. Most copies of our 2002 report will be in CD-Rom format. I expect that readers will find and use the report on our web site, [www.atf.gov](http://www.atf.gov). We will be moving most of our internal support systems to the web this coming year. This report marks our final full year accounting in the Treasury Department. As we transition between Treasury and the Department of Justice, remember that it is really a story about a team of exceptionally talented professionals working to keep America safe and collecting revenue to support our government. Though our report is a telling of work accomplished, I also recognize that the integrity, ingenuity, and tenacity of our people form the cornerstone of our future success in whatever Department they will call home.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "William T. Earle". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

William T. Earle  
wtearle@atf.gov