

April 2023



# AFSL News

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## Team Approves Brazilian Fireworks Shipment

By Jerry Wingard

In early April, Jerry and Chuck traveled to Brazil to test what we believe is the first of many shipments of AFSL-approved fireworks bound for the United States. The team at Fogos Lider worked for many months, modifying their product



design to ensure compliance with all U.S. requirements, to produce the first shipment of 500 Gram Mine and Shell cakes by Toucan Fireworks for North Central Industries. This shipment consisted of three different cakes that passed all AFSL, CPSC, and DOT requirements.

Testing was conducted at the Servico Nacional de Aprendizagem Industrial (SENAI) test site, which has concrete test pads with range poles to better evaluate the samples. Additional testing was conducted at SENAI's

world-class laboratory. The SENAI team participated in all aspects of the sampling and testing as part of their training to enable them to work closely with AFSL and BV personnel to carry out future testing in Brazil. I believe BV and SENAI will be good partners in growing AFSL's presence in Brazil. Before we left, several other factories indicated they are ready to become members of AFSL and join with Fogos Lider in making fireworks for the US market. If you have any questions about AFSL's Brazilian testing, please drop us a note.





## Lost Production Days Impact Testing Volumes

QIP testing volume ended the quarter at 1.7 million cases versus a budget of 1.9 million cases, down 48% from the same period last year. It is reported that factories lost roughly 40 production days during the quarter due to the Lunar New Year, the National People's Congress meeting, and environmental inspection activity. Environmental inspection activities continue to impact production into April.

AFSL also tested and approved an additional 1300 cases of 500 gram mine and shell devices produced by Fogos Lider of Brazil. Chuck and Jerry led the testing activities and conducted training for SENAI and BV Brazil personnel. The work of the SENAI team was very skilled and professional.

The QIP YTD case compliance rate is 95.5%. The lot compliance rate is 95.6%. About 45% of the rejected lots failed due to no effects, flaming debris too low, fuse issues (short and long burn times), and aerial effects below the established limits. Residual burn/residual temperature failures accounted for another 7% of the failed lots. A table containing a listing of the top failures for the quarter can be found on the last page of this newsletter.

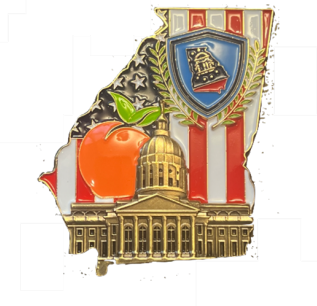
## AHJ Training Gaining Momentum

AFSL budgeted for six Fire Marshal/Fire Services Personnel Training sessions in 2023. Thus far this year, we've completed sessions in Georgia and South Carolina and have tentatively scheduled another three. We will be meeting with Fire Services personnel in New York and Virginia in May and Ohio in June.

We will also be speaking at the NASFM Symposium in late July, presenting a session on the importance of state and local enforcement of fireworks regulations in the absence of federal enforcement.

## AFSL Team Bound for Liuyang

The AFSL team has scheduled a trip to China for June. It's been several years since the AFSL team has had a physical presence in China and all are looking forward to a productive trip. Technician training, meetings with BV and AFSL China staff, factory tours, work on targeted product failures, an Industry Seminar, and meetings with our shipper members will make for a very busy two weeks.



*“Those standards we impose upon ourselves are not easy, nor cheap, to comply with; it’s expensive...it’s difficult...but it’s necessary. It is our highest priority to prevent injuries and deaths from fireworks of all kinds.” – Joel Anderson*

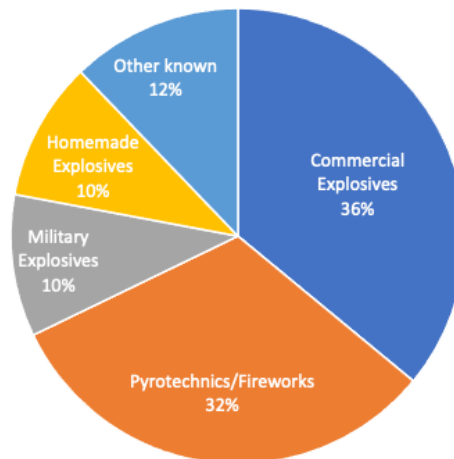


## Illegal Explosives

Did you know that if a consumer firework’s chemical makeup exceeds the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission’s explosive weight limits it is an **ILLEGAL EXPLOSIVE**. Federal law prohibits the manufacture, storage, distribution, receipt, or transport of explosive materials without a federal explosives license or permit. These illegal explosives threaten the safety of the user, first responders, law enforcement, and the public.

Early this month, a man in South Jersey was sentenced to federal prison time for possession of a destructive device and unlawful storage of explosives. He argued that his hobby was making fireworks, but he was found with a fused 5.75-inch diameter metal can, full of flash powder. His “hobby” could result in up to 10 years in a federal prison and over \$250,000 in fines. At about the same time, a man in Seattle caused an explosion in his apartment, reportedly involving fireworks, resulting in the likely loss of his hand. As you might expect, his neighbors evacuated the building when they heard and felt the explosion. ATF and the Seattle Police Department are investigating. These are just two examples of incidents involving illegal explosives, which are often incorrectly characterized as fireworks, that occur too often and give cause for politicians and other authorities to pause when considering fireworks-related legislation and ordinances.

2021 Recovery Incidents - Main Charge Material



Over 200 of the roughly 600 identified explosion incidents recorded in ATF’s Bomb Arson Tracking System (BATS) and DHS’s TRIPwire system each year are determined to be accidental versus bombings, and fireworks are reported to be associated with a significant number of these incidents. In 2021, the latest year for which data is currently

available, the main charge material, in those cases where a determination was made, was typically commercial pyrotechnics/fireworks (87 incidents) or homemade explosives (112 incidents). Pyrotechnics/fireworks and homemade explosives were also associated with over 40% of the explosive material recovery incidents logged into the ATF and DHS systems.

We all know the common illegal explosives, like the Cherry Bomb, the M-80, the Silver Salute, M-100, M250, and the M-1000, Quarter Stick. But what about the illegal explosives, disguised as consumer fireworks, that are even now being displayed and sold alongside legal consumer fireworks? You know,

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the unbranded product that is being sold at prices significantly higher than similar looking legal product, that often has missing or insufficient warnings on the label. The stuff highlighted in the “stash” videos found on the internet. The fireworks that are imported without the AFSL sticker and most likely without any of the testing required by CPSC.

If you suspect someone is distributing or selling illegal explosives, you can notify ATF by contacting the ATF tip line at 1-888-ATF-BOMB (282-2662). If the industry can demonstrate it is willing and able to regulate itself, it can argue against further government regulation.

### QIP Testing Top Failure Modes 1Q23

### Failed Lots

|  |    |
|--|----|
| No effect  | 29 |
| Aerial Effects too low   | 25 |
| Flaming Debris lower than 3 meters altitude                                    | 25 |
| Long Fuse Burn Time  | 22 |
| Continues to burn or re-ignites after function or residual temperature failure | 19 |
| No function  | 18 |
| Tip over   | 15 |
| No valid EX#/FC# on the product  | 13 |
| Short Fuse Burn Time   | 12 |
| Flight Trajectory failure  | 7  |
| Cautionary Labeling - wording failure  | 5  |
| Tilt Block Test Failed   | 4  |
| Blowout/Burnout  | 3  |
| Total Pyrotechnic Weight overload  | 2  |
| All other failure modes  | 60 |