



**GSA Northeast and Caribbean Region**

JUL 25 2011

The Honorable Michael N. Gianaris  
Senate Ranking Member  
Codes Committee  
New York State Senate  
21-77 31<sup>st</sup> Street, Suite 100  
Astoria, NY 11105

Dear Senator Gianaris:

We would like to extend our deepest apologies for our belated response to your letter dated February 14, 2011, in which you inquired about 32 Federal license plates that were received by a local constituent on February 9, 2011. We thank you for bringing this matter to our attention and we have made a thorough review and investigation into what caused this occurrence. Let us assure you that we would never knowingly do anything to jeopardize the American public. We have systems in place to protect the American public, but this alerted us to the need to identify and implement additional precautions.

As a result of this situation, GSA immediately reinforced its procedures for transporting license plates. Fleet Service Representatives (FSR) are required to hand-deliver the plates to the customer location, unless doing so is determined to be impractical (*e.g.* the customer is located in an extremely remote location). The determination to ship license plates to customer sites instead of being hand delivered must now be approved by both the Fleet Management Center Manager and by the Regional Fleet Manager. If shipment is approved, plates will be sent through GSA's contract expedited delivery carrier, signature of receipt required, and require an e-mail notification of pickup and delivery with a courtesy copy supplied to the Fleet Management Center Manager. The delivery process will be tracked online and confirmed by the recipient. If delivery is not confirmed by the second day, an inquiry will be initiated with the carrier. Any license plates that cannot be accounted for will be reported to local law enforcement authorities so that they can be entered into the National Crime Information Center. As a matter of background, license plates are purchased from Federal Prison Industries, Inc. (UNICOR) under a Memorandum of Understanding with the U.S. General Services Administration (GSA). Each year, plates are ordered for approximately 36,000 vehicles and shipped to designated Fleet Management Centers for use. Regional representatives track these orders through receipt, and shipments are reconciled within two business days. Any plates that are lost or stolen during shipment are reported to local law enforcement authorities so they can be entered into the National Crime Information Center, which is available to Federal, state, and local law enforcement. License plates that are not yet assigned to vehicles are stored securely at all times and security of these plates is audited annually.

U.S. General Services Administration  
Jacob K. Javits Federal Building  
26 Federal Plaza  
New York, NY 10278  
[www.gsa.gov](http://www.gsa.gov)

In 2007, GSA Fleet requested an audit of the license plate program to determine if internal controls were sufficient. In response to the primary findings, the Government wide Federal Motor Vehicle Registration System (FMVRS) was created. FMVRS provides a record of license plate status, location, and vehicle assignment from the date of manufacture until the time of destruction. To date, over 400,000 U.S. Government plates have been registered and tracked using this system. FMVRS provides all levels of law enforcement immediate access to Federal vehicle records through the International Public Safety Network. License plates can be tagged if their security may have been compromised, alerting law enforcement to take caution when approaching a specified vehicle.

On January 4, 2011, license plates were delivered to a Fleet Management Center in Brooklyn, NY. On January 5, 2011, the shipment was reconciled and no plates were found to be missing. The FSR at the location then shipped the license plates to their final destination at a Department of Veteran Affairs facility in Montrose, NY, but the shipment, though addressed properly, was delivered to the wrong address. Regrettably, in this particular instance, the license plates should have been hand-delivered in accordance with established procedure, and GSA has addressed the issue with the FSR in that regard. Nonetheless, immediately upon learning of the situation on February 18, 2011, an FSR picked up the plates from your office. At this point, the cause for the plates being delivered to the wrong address was referred to GSA's Office of Inspector General for investigation. The investigation revealed that this incident involved a UPS operational error and was not intentional. Prior to receiving the results of the investigation GSA had taken the necessary actions described previously to ensure the security of Federal license plates.

If you have any additional questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me. Staff inquires may be directed to Mr. Brian J. Smith, Director, Fleet Management Division. He can be reached at (212) 264-3930.

Sincerely,



Denise L. Pease  
Regional Administrator