

CASE STUDY



How DG Office Helped the Marine Corps Streamline Ammunition Shipments Into SOUTHCOM AOR and Reduce Frustrated cargo

• INTRODUCTION

Marines Forces South MFS G-4 was responsible for facilitating transportation of ammunition into the SOUTHCOM area of responsibility (AOR) utilizing commercial assets and resources via the United States Transportation Command (USTC) Global Heavy Weight Services (GHS) contract. In this case study, we will explore how DG Office, a commercial dangerous goods software, helped the Marine Corps execute the hazmat certification process.



BACKGROUND

The Marine Corps Forces South G-4 was tasked with moving ammunition using commercial assets from Letterkenny Ammunition depot down to various partner countries in Central America and the Caribbean in support Special Marine Air Ground Task Force (SPMAGTF) training missions. The ammunition was initially trucked down from the ammunition depot in Pennsylvania to Miami International Airport (MIA) for short-term storage and prep before the next leg to the aerial port of debarkation (APOD) at each partner country.

As soon as the ammunition arrived at the MIA airport, immediate re-packaging and new documentation was created in order for the ammunition to be commercially compliant to fly on an Amerijet 747. DGM Florida provided both the re-packaging and documentation services utilizing their in-house staff and DG Office software platform at the MIA airport. All ammunition successfully cleared commercial quality control inspections/customs and made it to each APOD and cleared customs once again. After clearing final customs checks, the ammunition was trucked with escorts to the US embassy within each country and then, onto the last mile to each training site.

• DISCUSSION

The Department of Defense (DOD) has been using analog tools for decades to certify hazardous cargo moving within the Defense transportation network (DTN). This analog approach not only increases the volume of frustrated cargo at the various logistical nodes around the world but also decreases the overall efficiency of the hazardous materials supply chain. The DOD should consider looking into a commercial platform that can certify hazmat in real time with little human effort.

The MFS G-4 tested a commercial hazmat certification platform in a real-world application for ammunition shipments destined for the SOUTHCOM AOR in 2019 and 2020, with repeated success. Multiple ammunition shipments were certified using the DG Office platform and as of result, all Marine Corps ammunition cleared customs with no issues making the required delivery date (RDD) at the final destination. The switch to a technology-based hazmat certification platform could prove just as successful as it was for the Marine Corps when used across a larger DOD footprint.

• RESULTS

The MFS utilized the DG Office platform repeatedly and as of result, all of their ammunition shipments arrived to the final destination meeting the required delivery date. DG Office's ability to generate error-free paperwork and update in real-time with global regulations helped the Marine Corps stay compliant and reduce the risk of non-compliance penalties. The cost savings achieved by decreasing the volume of frustrated cargo at the APOEs/APODs made a difference by saving the Marine Corps both time and money.

• RECOMMENDATION

We strongly recommend that the DOD consider testing a small number of DG Office licenses at key logistics hubs that experience the highest number of hazardous materials (hazmat) shipments annually. The DG Office platform offers several upfront advantages that are worth mentioning:

- ✔ The platform has been battle-tested by the United States Marine Corps (USMC) and the Defense Logistics Agency (DLA).
- ✔ It is compliant with 49 CFR and AFMAN 204-24 regulations.
- ✔ The web-based platform is user-friendly and easy to navigate.
- ✔ The server is secure and based in the United States.
- ✔ The software updates in real-time to stay current with all domestic and global regulations.
- ✔ The upfront set-up and maintenance costs are low.
- ✔ Both in-person and virtual training options are available.

By adopting this technology, the DOD can take advantage of 20+ years of research and development conducted in dozens of countries worldwide. Leveraging the DG platform would enable the DOD to streamline its hazardous materials transportation, handling, and storage, while ensuring compliance with global quality and safety standards.