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## Message from the Chief Financial Officer



From left to right, William T. Earle, Chief Financial Officer (CFO); Marguerite R. Moccia, Deputy CFO; and Vivian A. Baran, Financial Manager.

**W**hen we started Fiscal Year 2000 we knew there were significant challenges ahead. In some ways it was akin to a homeowner taking on a total house overhaul. Our challenge was to move from our comfortable but aging (main frame-based) core financial system to a best of breed (client server) architecture.

A full-scale implementation would have to run concurrently with the phase out of the old system. In October 1999, over 500 recently trained users peered into the live environment for the first time. The conversion team consisting of ATF employees and contractors worked around the clock for weeks, dealing with user questions and managing a test environment that was stretched to the limits.

The good news is that Fiscal Year 2000 ended with our new system in place and operating. And just as proud craftsmen would look back with pride on their refurbished home, our technicians and specialists who implemented the new system are extremely pleased with the product of their labors.

Though sophisticated systems enable us to work at higher levels of productivity and accuracy, it is really the resilience of the men and women of ATF who make great achievements seem routine.

The skilled and resolute staffs within the Bureau have made it possible for us to celebrate another exceptional accomplishment -- a sixth straight Unqualified Audit Opinion! Receiving this opinion is all the more impressive given the arduous task of converting data, training personnel and redefining our financial culture as transitioned to our new system.

This accountability report is more than a collection of facts and numbers. It is really the story of a family of very talented and dedicated men, women and a few canines who seek to make America a safer and fiscally sound nation. Their efforts are chronicled not only here but also in the newspapers, magazines, and documentaries published all across America over the past year.

I hope you enjoy our story. We are very proud of our accomplishments and humbled by the trust that is placed in us to be good stewards of the taxpayer's resources.

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