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Dozens of Armed IRS Agents In Tactical Gear Raid Florida Business: Report

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Dozens of armed IRS agents recently raided a Florida business, with witnesses telling a local news outlet that they were stunned by the show of force by the tax agency.

At least 25 to 30 IRS agents in tactical gear executed a search warrant at a business in Stuart, Florida, last week, [according to Fox 29](#).

“It was like a scene from a movie,” an unnamed witness told the outlet. “They had the big gear, tactical gear because they probably didn’t know what they were walking into.”

An IRS spokesperson confirmed to The Epoch Times in an emailed statement that the agents were from the IRS Criminal Investigations (IRS-CI) unit, a division whose agents investigate crimes like fraud and tax evasion.

The agents, who are authorized to carry guns as their work can be dangerous, were at the location on “official business,” the spokesperson added.

The unnamed witness told Fox 29 that it appeared that the agents

were removing evidence from the business in bags and boxes.

While details remain scant on the raid, the show of force by IRS agents was noteworthy as it recalled Republican criticism of a funding boost to the agency amid concerns that it would be used to hire more tax enforcers who would target ordinary Americans.

Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen and other Biden administration officials have insisted that the \$80 billion funding boost would not be used to increase audits on Americans making less than \$400,000 per year.

Some have questioned why IRS agents would need to carry firearms at all. Former Fox News host Tucker Carlson, for example, on Aug. 4, 2022, led a segment on his show by expressing concern that the government is “treating the IRS as a military agency” and is “stockpiling” ammunition.

‘Gun-Toters’

Dubbed “gun-toters,” the armed special agents in the IRS-CI unit are responsible for enforcing those parts of the tax code whose violations amount to crimes, former IRS Special Agent Robert Nordlander [told Accounting Today](#) in a wide-ranging interview in February.

“When crimes are committed, the IRS-CI are the ones that actually enforce” the law, Nordlander said.

There are now around 2,100 agents in the criminal investigations division, Carissa Cutrell, a public affairs officer at IRS-CI, told The Epoch Times in a recent emailed statement.

“As the only agency with the authority to investigate tax crimes, and the only agency that spends 100 percent of its time investigating

financial crimes, IRS Criminal Investigation (IRS-CI) ensures its limited resources are allocated to the most egregious financial crime cases,” she explained.

“IRS-CI’s mission includes not only investigating criminals for crimes they’ve committed but also deterring potential criminals from committing future crimes,” Cutrell added.

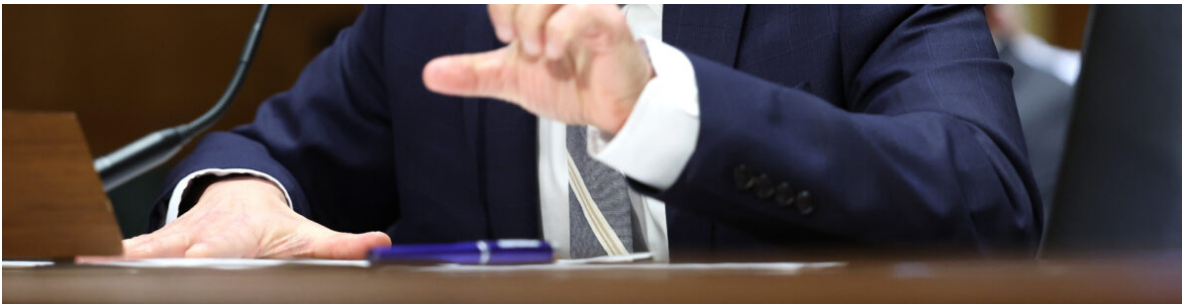
In the mid-1990s, the unit had around 3,500 special agents, and Cutrell said they lose between 150 and 175 agents each year due to retirement and attrition.

She said the unit plans to hire around 350 agents this fiscal year for a net gain of between 150 and 175.

Those numbers are roughly in line with estimates put forward by IRS Commissioner Danny Werfel during an April 27 hearing of the House Ways and Means Committee. Werfel said at the time that the IRS Criminal Investigations (IRS-CI) unit plans to hire additional staff who are authorized to carry guns.

“Our CI division or Criminal Investigation Division, they do not conduct audits,” Werfel said. “What they do is, they are investigating acute issues of fraud and tax evasion. And typically, they’re armed when they’re putting themselves in danger.”





Internal Revenue Service (IRS) commissioner nominee Daniel Werfel testifies before the Senate Finance Committee during his nomination hearing in Washington on Feb. 15, 2023. (Kevin Dietsch/Getty Images)

More Armed Tax Enforcers In All 50 States

The IRS-CI examines potential criminal activity related to tax crimes and makes recommendations for prosecution to the tax division of the Department of Justice (DOJ).

According to a [job posting](#) on USAJOBS.gov, IRS-CI is looking to fill 360 vacancies for new full-time criminal investigation special agents spread across all 50 states.

A [job posting](#) on the IRS Careers website for criminal investigation special agents says they will be authorized to carry a firearm and must be “willing and able to participate in arrests, execution of search warrants, and other dangerous assignments.”

“As a Special Agent, you will combine your accounting skills with law enforcement skills to investigate financial crimes. Special Agents are duly sworn law enforcement officers trained to ‘follow the money,’” the posting reads.

Salaries range from \$52,921 to \$94,228 per year, though IRS-CI special agent positions are unique in that they offer special pay incentives not offered with other IRS positions.

Criminal investigations special agents are eligible for a Law Enforcement Availability Pay (LEAP) adjustment, which gives a 25 percent increase over the standard Office of Personnel Management (OPM) pay scale.

“This is a special added benefit for federal law enforcement professionals and considers the fact that you may be working long and irregular hours and may be called upon to respond on a moment’s notice as needed,” IRS-CI said in a note explaining that such agents are expected to work an average of 50 hours per week.

The IRS-CI says agents might need to respond to “life-threatening situations” on the job, be willing and able to participate in “dangerous assignments” and protect themselves and others from physical attacks, and be willing to use “deadly force.”