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U.S. firearms sales March 2021: Very large, yet less than a year ago

(GREENVILLE, SC, USA & HALIFAX, NS, CANADA) – *Small Arms Analytics & Forecasting* (SAAF) estimates March 2021 U.S. firearms unit sales at nearly 2.2 million units, a year-over-year decrease of 15.1% from March 2020.

Detailed data by firearms type and state are available for purchase at <https://SmallArmsAnalytics.com/shop/>.

SAAF's firearms unit sales estimates are based on raw data taken from the FBI's National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NICS), adjusted for checks unlikely to be related to end-user firearms sales. For example, while the FBI's raw numbers (for March, an unprecedented 4,645,609) increased year-over-year by 25.2%, this is largely due to background checks unrelated to end-user sales. As a case in point, in March the state of Illinois conducted about 1.4 million so-called permit checks and rechecks alone whereas end-user unit sales at firearms retailers likely amounted to about 62,000. SAAF makes certain other adjustments to the data based on retailer reports and other information; nonetheless, the estimates still likely understate the true number of sales.

SAAF Chief Economist Jurgen Brauer comments that "while the March 2021 number of nearly 2.2 million firearms sold is large, in fact the second-highest March figure on record, it nonetheless is smaller than for March 2020 (2.6 million) even as new federal firearms-related legislation was introduced in Congress. However, for the first quarter of 2021 as a whole, about 5.9 million firearms were sold as opposed to 5.2 million in the first quarter of 2020. If this rate of sales were to be sustained throughout 2021, last year's record sales of 22.8 million would be broken. Handguns continue to outsell long-guns, in March by a ratio of 1.68-to-1."

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ABOUT Small Arms Analytics & Forecasting

Small Arms Analytics & Forecasting (SAAF) is a research consultancy focusing on the business & economics of the global small arms and ammunition markets. Politically unaffiliated, SAAF is an independent, evidenced-based resource for industry, advocacy, research, and policymaking alike, as well as for financial analysts and members of the media. Among other services, SAAF produces forecasts of U.S. civilian firearms unit sales, nationwide and for most states. Small Arms AnalyticsSM and Small Arms Analytics & ForecastingSM are legally protected Service Marks of Small Arms Analytics & Forecasting. (Contact sales@SmallArmsAnalytics.com for sales and other information.)