

NIBIN NEWSLETTER

Editor: Karen Molina

Call for Articles

We would like to have our users provide an article for the next Newsletter. This is a good way for you to bring attention to your lab or department and highlight your successes or a topic that might be of interest to others. Please contact Karen Molina at the NIBIN Branch or Nanette Rudolph at the Florida Department of Law Enforcement if you would like to provide an article. Email your suggestions or articles to: Karen.Molina@atf.gov or nanetteru-dolph@fdle.state.fl.us

Rediscovering the Firing Pin Selection Feature In the Exhibit Screen

From time to time, we would like to use the NIBIN Newsletter not only as a way to showcase the amazing work done by examiners and technicians around the country, but as a way to rediscover certain features of the system that we may all often overlook. In this edition of the newsletter, we would like to rediscover the firing pin selection feature in the exhibit screen.

Glock-Type: The Glock-type firing pin should be selected from the drop-down menu when your fired cartridge case has been fired by a Glock or a Smith & Wesson Sigma series as both firearms use an elliptical shaped firing pin.

Rectangular: A rectangular firing pin is often found on S.W.D/Cobray firearms. As a reminder, set the firing pin limit

(on your red ring) slightly inside the four corners of the impression.

Rimfire Circular: This selection should be made and only made when your rimfire firearm has a circular firing pin. When acquiring this image, the user will only take one picture under the ring light setting.

Rimfire Rectangular: Again, on rimfire firearms, this selection should be made when the firearm has a rectangular shaped firing pin. Unlike the rimfire circular, this exhibit will require the users take two images with two sidelight sources.

Square & Triangular: Currently, an example of a firearm that possesses either of these firing pin shapes could not be determined. However, FTI, Inc. indicates that since this is an international system, these particular selections may be a

necessity for another country's system. ATF representatives stated that these selections may have been put in place by software engineers who were unfamiliar with firearms. Either way, an example could not be located at the time of the article.

In the event that you are unable to ascertain what type of firing pin impression was left on the fired cartridge case, "unknown" is a viable firing pin selection. This allows the user to enter an impression and have the image compared against all other known firing pin impressions. Unknown should only be used when absolutely necessary.

Nanette Rudolph
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Configuration Management at ATF

Like many US government agencies, ATF's Information Technology staff tries to utilize industry standards and processes in IT activities and projects. One of these is the use of configuration management (CM). Organizations such as ISO, IEEE and Carnegie Mellon SEI have established the industry standards for CM. CM is the discipline, processes and tools used to record, manage and implement changes to software, hardware, documentation, and firmware during the system lifecycle.

Changes can be the result of enhancements or the need to

fix defects discovered during the use of an application or system. Changes can be simple or complex. CM is used to evaluate and control changes (and their costs) and to ensure the quality and validity of changes.

ATF has adapted CM to its business and culture. ATF uses a Change Control Board, CCB, to manage the CM process, to evaluate and approve changes for IT projects. The CCB is a committee that consists of the major ATF stakeholders or their designated representatives. The Information Services Division (ISD) Product Assurance

Branch manages the CCB. The authority of this committee may vary based on the project, but usually the decisions reached by this committee are final. For NIBIN, the CCB provides guidance regarding proposed changes.

ISD manages over 200 IT applications and systems; changes are continuous. The CCB holds weekly meetings during which the representatives present requested changes. In preparation, the representatives must provide the RFC, Request for Change, a document describing the

requested change, and any additional supporting system life cycle documentation. This helps the CCB members to evaluate the proposed change. Documentation is stored in a CM tracking system. Factors for approval are: funding is available, the system owner has requested the change, all documentation has been provided, and any security requirements and risks have been addressed.

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