



December 2008

Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives

# NIBIN NEWSLETTER

Editor: Karen Molina

## NIBIN HIGHLIGHTS

**Minimum Usage Standards:** In May 2008, ATF proposed increasing the minimum usage standard from 15 to 40 acquisitions a month. In June 2008, ATF asked the NIBIN Executive Board to provide their own recommendation. In August 2008, the Board recommended that the standard remain at 15 acquisitions/month. To date, ATF has not made a decision to increase the minimum usage standard."

**Representation at Conferences:** From September-November 2008, ATF agents attended and represented NIBIN at the Texas Gang Investigators Conference, Virginia Gang Investigators Conference, Mississippi Gang Investigators Conference, and the International Association of Chiefs of Police Conference.

**Regional Coordinator Assignments:** On November 9, 2008, SA Philip Awe, NIBIN Regional Coordinator – North Central Region, began a 120-day detail to ATF's Office of Field Operations as the Acting Chief of the Alcohol and Tobacco Enforcement Branch. In his absence, SA Corey Hill, NIBIN Regional Coordinator – Eastern Region will coordinate NIBIN Operations for the North Central Region. ATF is attempting to secure a 90-day detail replacement for the North Central Region.

For the North Central Region. On November 23, SA Jay Dobyns, NIBIN Regional Coordinator– Western Region, will be out of the office through December 23. In his absence, SA David Krieghbaum, NIBIN Regional Coordinator– South Central Region, will coordinate NIBIN Operations for the Western Region.

**Document Revisions:** ATF is revising the NIBIN Executive Board Memorandum of Understanding, the NIBIN Partner Memorandum of Understanding, and Request for New ATF-Purchased Equipment Deployment, the Request for ATF Site Support, the NIBIN Partner Site List, and the NIBIN Users Directory. ATF will provide these documents to the Board for their review and recommendations once the revisions are complete. ATF will post the final versions on the NIBIN website in the secure user area.

**NIBIN Board:** In November 2008, NIBIN Executive Board members Carson Carroll, ATF, and Bill Casey, Boston Police Department, represented NIBIN at the IACP Conference and the IACP Firearms Committee in San Diego, CA. Later in the month they toured the offices of IBIS equipment manufacturer and service provider, ATF contractor Forensic Technology, Inc. (FT), Montreal, Canada, and provided an overview presentation of how FT supports NIBIN.

**Grant Funding:** On November 13, 2008, the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, National Institute of

Justice, posted an announcement on their website seeking "research and development" proposals for an innovative and cost-effective approach to capturing and comparing ballistic images, for potential use to improve NIBIN. The review and approval process takes about 9 months. Total funding for this solicitation and the number of awards made will depend on the availability of funds, the quality of applications, and other pertinent factors. Individual funding rarely exceeds \$500,000 annually. The total period of an award, including one that receives additional funding, ordinarily will not exceed 3 years. The deadline to submit proposals is December 29, 2008.

**NIBIN Entry of Firearms Taken Into ATF Custody:** The written policy for ATF field offices is still in the pending stage. At present, there are many State/Local NIBIN Partners that already accept ATF NIBIN submissions for acquisition/correlation/microscopic services, e.g. NYPD, LAPD, Philadelphia PD, and Miami-Dade PD. Once the policy is approved, NIBIN Partners (that don't already accept ATF firearms) will receive requests from ATF Field Offices for NIBIN support. It is hoped that NIBIN Partners will be supportive of efforts to solve more violent crimes in their jurisdictions. The ATF field office and the Partner will work together to develop the best protocol, i.e. who will conduct test-firing, how evidence/test-fires will be packaged, when it may be submitted, etc. It is difficult to estimate the number of

ATF Firearms suitable for NIBIN entry to be entered per Partner.

**Partner Equipment Removals:** If equipment is removed/decommissioned, ATF will attempt to secure continued participation in the program from the affected Partner via another existing Partner (Partner will complete acquisitions/correlations on behalf of the Partner who had their equipment removed or allow that Partner to share their equipment). In addition, FT offers their FastTRAX service to complete acquisitions/correlations review for NIBIN Partners for a fee. Amidst budgetary constraints, ATF does not have any funding support to provide to Partners for this service. Also, the written policy allowing NIBIN Partners who no longer have access to the equipment to submit their NIBIN work directly to an ATF Forensic Science Laboratory is still in the pending stage.

**Site Support for Partner Acquisition/Correlation Backlogs:** Amidst budgetary constraints and ATF Forensic Science Laboratory staffing shortages, ATF is limited in their ability to provide this site support. The written policy allowing the ATF Laboratories to consider requests for "remote" acquisition/correlations support, i.e. the Partner ships any acquisition backlog to the ATF Lab, or the ATF Lab completes the Partner's correlations review from the ATF Lab, is still in the pending stage.

## MORE NIBIN NEWS

IBIS Data Acquisition Training: Since ATF stopped funding Partner travel expenses, ATF regularly receives requests for on-site training, especially for multiple students. Amidst budgetary constraints, ATF does not have the travel funds to support the student travel to Largo or the additional ATF class coordinator travel for on-site training. In addition, ATF maintains the position that the one-to-one system to student ratio is critical for certifying user competency.

IBIS Data Correlation Review Training: Since ATF stopped funding this course, ATF regularly receives requests on when ATF will begin refunding it. Amidst budgetary constraints, ATF does not have funding to support it. ATF encourages NIBIN Partners' firearms examiners to provide on-site training to their NIBIN technicians in this area. FT does continue to offer the course to Partners for a fee.

ATF's Request for Information Seeking to Revise and Modernize NIBIN

Technology: On March 1, 2008, ATF posted a Request for Information (RFI) on [www.fedbizops.com](http://www.fedbizops.com) seeking to modernize and improve ATF's existing ballistic imaging technology. The RFI emphasized that any new ballistic technology option should offer the following: backward

compatibility for the existing historical data on the network, web-based software development, service-oriented architecture, plug and play imaging equipment that would be interoperable with any Government-furnished computer, and intellectual property rights for ATF. On March 31, 2008, the RFI closed. To date, ATF continues to review the responses to this RFI.

ATF Regional Acquisition Services: In November 2008, ATF finalized installation of Regional Acquisition Services at their forensic science laboratories in Washington, DC (Regions 4-7 & 10), Atlanta (Regions 3 & 9), and San Francisco (Regions 1, 2 & 8). At present, these systems are used to support ATF field offices that do not have access to a NIBIN Partner. Both Atlanta and San Francisco maintain two systems each and two IBIS Specialists each, while Washington, DC maintains three systems, one firearms examiner, one IBIS Specialist and one contractor.

NIBIN 2.2 Upgrade: With the exception of one system, the v.2.2

upgrade is complete network-wide. The epo servers will be upgraded to 2.2 after January 1, 2009. The server upgrade will be transparent to the users. The 2.2 upgrade provides BrassTRAX users the capability to print and improves the multiviewer. Some of the Partners have provided positive feedback to Forensic Technology concerning the improvements to the system and the ease with which they were able to utilize the CD-based training.

DART Software Upgrade: Forensic Technology has added several new DART report enhancements: Custom report templates for reporting "confirmed" and "unconfirmed" hits, productivity report tracking hours/minutes, and remove "DEMO" exhibits from the 'exhibits by caliber' report. A target date of January 2009 has been set for Forensic Technology to upgrade all systems with DART software version 1.2.

Mike O'Neil  
Acting Chief  
NIBIN Branch

## NYPD - First Agency in North America to Reach "2000" Hits

On 4/10/08 a search warrant was executed at a 2<sup>nd</sup> floor apartment, in the 83 Pct. in Brooklyn. Six individuals were arrested and two firearms were recovered, .38 cal. Harrington & Richardson revolver and a Hi-Point 9mm Semi-automatic Pistol. Both firearms were delivered to the Laboratory and tested for operability by one of the detectives. The digital image of the test fires produced was then entered into the NIBIN database.

The detective then conducted a correlation to see if these firearms were linked to an unrelated crime. The detective determined that the cartridge casing image from the Hi-Point 9mm was a match to an Attempted Assault on a male from 1/30/07 in the 28 Pct. in Manhat-

tan. In this incident the victim stated that an unknown male had entered his apartment building lobby. After the victim told the male to leave because he did not live there, the perpetrator then fired 6 shots at the victim and fled the scene.

On 5/28/08, a detective then conducted a microscopic comparison of the test fires from the Hi-Point to the evidence recovered at the scene of the 1/30/07 shooting and confirmed that they were a positive identification.

On 8/12/08, Stacy Stern, Forensic Technology Inc. and SA Corey Hill, ATF, presented the Police Crime Laboratory with a "2000" hit plaque and a certificate of achievement.



Picture left to right: Det. John Kraljic, Det. Joseph Cummings, Deputy Commissioner Phil Pulaski, Det. Rodney Rodriguez, Det. Brian Murphy, Det. Keith Megan, Assistant Commissioner Dr. Peter Pizzola, Deputy Director Dr. Scott O'Neill, Lt Salvatore Bertocci and Inspector William Aubry

Salvatore W. Bertocci  
Lieutenant  
New York City Police Department