



**ATF**

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## **NATIONAL INTEGRATED BALLISTIC INFORMATION NETWORK**

### **MICHIGAN STATE POLICE, FORENSIC SCIENCE DIVISION-USES NIBIN TO LINK CASES**

For the residents of major cities around the country, crime is an unfortunate aspect of daily life. This is no different for the residents of Detroit, Michigan. Unfortunately, depleting budgets for both the city of Detroit and the state of Michigan inhibit the financial support needed for helping law enforcement agencies be more efficient in their investigations. As a result, criminal cases that may have been quickly associated are being lost in the mix.

The Michigan State Police Forensic Science Division is working tirelessly to reduce the Detroit Police Department backlog. A byproduct of this effort is more cases are being linked together, giving investigators the information they need to develop leads in unsolved cases. Dedicated firearms examiners are working harder than ever, while still maintaining the quality of the lab, to quickly complete cases requiring cartridge case

identifications and NIBIN entry. Their IBIS technicians have been timely in entries and correlations. On several occasions, technicians have used NIBIN to link multiple cases together. Considering the shortage of available resources and witnesses, the reality is these cases most likely would not have been connected had it not been for the work of the technicians and NIBIN.

A year ago, a series of assaults, a robbery and a murder took place in downtown Detroit. Although each of these cases took place on the city streets of Detroit, only one eyewitness could be located and there was nothing to suggest that the same suspect(s) perpetrated these crimes. Fired cartridge cases were found at each scene and were subsequently submitted to the Michigan State Police Forensic Laboratory in Northville. In order to more efficiently complete cases, evidence

is routinely transferred to six of the seven MSP laboratories for examination. In this instance, evidence from two of the assaults were transferred to Grand Rapids and the evidence from three of the assaults, the robbery and the murder were transferred to Lansing. After entering fired cartridge cases into NIBIN, the technician in Grand Rapids noticed a potential association between a 9 mm Luger fired cartridge case and evidence that had been entered into NIBIN in Lansing.

The evidence was still in Lansing and was quickly expedited to confirm the identification by the examiners. Shortly after the hit was confirmed; the Grand Rapids technician had another possible hit on a 9mm Luger cartridge case, now linking a third assault. Meanwhile, the technician in

Lansing had a group of possible NIBIN hits involving .40 Smith & Wesson caliber fired cartridge cases. While waiting for the hits to be confirmed by examiners the technician in Lansing identified another potential association with a case that involved both 9mm Luger and .40 Smith & Wesson fired cartridge cases. This case also happened to be the only one of the group that had a suspect. Firearms examiners subsequently confirmed all the NIBIN hits. With the assistance of NIBIN, laboratory personnel were able to link seven cases together. The previously unidentified links now provided investigators with a lead in an unresolved murder. This is just one of the many instances where several cases have been linked together with the help of NIBIN.

Rebecca Renis,  
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Laboratory.

## NIBIN Acknowledgement

FSL-A IBIS Specialist Stephen Garten was acknowledged for his work in a recent paper entitled “*The National Ballistics Imaging Comparison (NBIC) Project*”, written by Martin Ols of the FSL-W and a group of others from the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST). Along with 18 other IBIS users from 13 crime laboratories throughout the country, Mr. Garten took part in the joint ATF/NIST NBIC project, which took over a year. During this project, Mr. Garten helped generate the volume of data needed for statistical analyses and to develop control limits for the correlation scores in IBIS. All of this information was compiled in an effort to promote a system for assuring the quality of IBIS usage and future accreditations for this type of firearm evidence in accordance with the ISO 17025 Standard.

## NIBIN NOTES

The 2011 NIBIN Users Directory is being updated. Please remember to look at your respective laboratory and if you need to make any updates, email Richard Chuchman at [Richard.Chuchman@atf.gov](mailto:Richard.Chuchman@atf.gov).

A link has been posted to the [www.nibin.gov](http://www.nibin.gov) web site for information on external test fires being submitted to ATF Laboratories.

<http://www.nibin.gov/press/releases/2011/041811-test-fires-and-evidence-from-agencies-outside-of-atf.pdf>

## NIBIN Updates

### NIBIN Milestones:

As of January 31, 2011 NIBIN achieved an important milestone, confirming its 40,000th hit.

Illinois State Police have made their 3000<sup>th</sup> hit as a statewide system.

Miami Police Department has confirmed its 1500<sup>th</sup> hit

Columbus Division of Police Crime Laboratory has confirmed its 1300 hit.

### NIBIN Equipment Removal

On March 4, 2011 the NIBIN program authorized the removal of the equipment from the Nassau County, New York site. This laboratory was closed in February 2011 and the New York State Police are taking over their casework.

### Retirement:

On February 25, 2011 Paul O’Brien, a Program Analyst with the NIBIN Branch retired after 40 years of government service. Thanks to Paul for all his hard work.

### Welcome aboard:

Contractor Cammeron Richie is now onboard as the NIBIN Technical Writer. In addition to writing, Cammeron will be assisting with various other tasks including security documentation, the Certification and Accreditation process, test plans and Standard Operating Procedures.

### 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](mailto:Karen.Molina@atf.gov) or [nanetteru-dolph@fdle.state.fl.us](mailto:nanetteru-dolph@fdle.state.fl.us)

**Note:** We reserve the right to edit submissions for the Newsletter. We cannot guarantee the use of all submissions.

Due to Operational Security regulations, we can not publish any photos that have a photo ID in the picture.