



## News Release

Public Affairs Division – Washington, DC



FY-13-09  
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For Immediate Release  
June 17, 2013  
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### **ATF Releases Lost and Stolen Firearms Report**

*Lost and stolen firearms pose a substantial threat to public safety and to law enforcement*

WASHINGTON – The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) announced the release of the 2012 Lost and Stolen Firearms Report. This annual report is published to increase transparency and information sharing among the law enforcement community and to promote a better understanding of the dangers of lost and stolen firearms. This report is part of President Obama's comprehensive plan to reduce gun violence.

Lost and stolen firearms pose a substantial threat to public safety and to law enforcement. Individuals that steal firearms are more likely to commit violent crimes with stolen guns, transfer stolen firearms to others who commit crimes, and create an unregulated secondary market for firearms, including a market for those who are prohibited by law from possessing a gun. Lost firearms pose a similar threat. Like stolen firearms, they are most often bought and sold in an unregulated secondary market where law enforcement is unable to trace transactions.

The report gives an overview, for calendar year 2012, of the lost and stolen gun entries in the National Crime Information Center (NCIC), and of the lost and stolen firearm reports submitted by federal firearms licensees (FFLs) to ATF. This report provides collective and state-by-state data on loss and stolen firearms.

The report shows in 2012, NCIC received reports reflecting 190,342 lost and stolen firearms nationwide. Of that total, 16,667 (9% of the total reported) were the result of thefts/losses from FFLs. Texas was the top state for total firearms reported lost and stolen in 2012, with 18,874 firearms, which was 10% of all firearms reported lost or stolen in the country. Pennsylvania was the top state for firearms reported lost or stolen from a FFL in 2012 with 1,502 firearms, which was 9% of all firearms reported lost or stolen from a FFL in that year.

Making this data available will provide valuable information to law enforcement about how to target its resources, and give states and cities the information they need to pass laws and take other effective steps to make sure that lost and stolen guns are reported.

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Several factors limit ATF's ability to determine accurately the number of firearms lost and stolen from private citizens each year. Reporting by law enforcement is voluntary, not mandatory. The statistics in this report likely reveal only a fraction of the problem. Additionally, many lost and stolen firearms go entirely unreported. Moreover, even if a firearm is reported as lost or stolen, individuals often are unable to report the serial number to law enforcement. As a result, many lost and stolen firearms enter secondary and illicit markets with their status undocumented and undetectable.

ATF continuously develops and strengthens its collaborative efforts with members of the firearms industry and consumers through education and outreach to prevent the diversion of firearms through illegal markets.

To review the 2012 Summary: Firearms Reported Lost and Stolen go to: [2012 Summary: Firearms Reported Lost and Stolen](#)

For information about ATF and its programs go to: [www.atf.gov](http://www.atf.gov).

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