



November 2000

## The Youth Crime Gun Interdiction Initiative (YCGII)

# Crime Gun Trace Reports (1999)

## Highlights of the *National Report*

This is the third year of ATF's *Crime Gun Trace Reports*. This year, a *National Report* provides national findings based on 64,637 crime gun traces recovered and submitted in calendar year 1999. These trace requests came from 32 cities with a population of 250,000 or more participating in ATF's Youth Crime Gun Interdiction Initiative. Individual *City Reports* provide complete information on the trace results in 36 cities, including all 32 larger cities and four smaller cities. The *National* and *City Reports* are posted on the Internet at [www.atf.treas.gov](http://www.atf.treas.gov).

## Possessors of Crime Guns

- Juvenile.** About 9 percent of crime guns were recovered from juveniles (ages 17 & under).
- Youth.** About 34 percent of crime guns were recovered from youth (ages 18-24).
- Individuals *19 years of age* were the most frequent possessors of traced crime guns, followed closely by possessors ages 20 and 18.
- Adult.** About 57 percent of crime guns were recovered from adults (ages 25 & older).

## Indicators of Illegal Diversion

**Few Crime Gun Possessors Bought Their Guns Directly from Federally Licensed Gun Dealers.** Only about 11 percent of traced crime guns were recovered from possessors who had purchased those firearms from Federal firearms licensees (FFLs). About 89 percent of traced crime guns changed hands at least once before recovery by law enforcement as crime guns. Such transfers may be lawful or unlawful.

**Many Crime Guns Had Short Time-to-Crime.** Notwithstanding that most crime guns were bought from an FFL by someone other than their criminal possessor, many crime guns were recovered soon after their initial purchase. To the investigator, the short time from retail sale to crime, known as "time-to-crime," suggests illegal diversion or criminal intent associated with the retail purchase from the FFL. The median time-to-crime for crime guns traced was 5.7 years, but law enforcement recovered many crime guns much more rapidly.

- About 15 percent of crime guns were recovered *within 1 year* of their first retail purchase.
- 32 percent of crime guns were recovered *within 3 years* of their first retail purchase.

**Many Firearms Offenses Involved New Guns.** The concentration of crime guns with a relatively short time-to-crime also indicates that many firearm offenses, including violent offenses with firearms, involve new guns. This is even more so for crime guns possessed by youth.

- Almost a third of crime guns (32 percent) recovered in 1999 were purchased in 1996 or later.
- More than 40 percent of crime guns recovered from youth were purchased in 1996 or later.
- Half of all the semiautomatic pistols recovered from youth were purchased in 1996 or later.

**Predominant Role of New Guns in Crime.** There are an estimated 215 million firearms in civilian hands in the U.S. The approximately 37 million firearms that first entered the market in the U.S. during 1993-1999 make up only 17 percent of that total stock, but that new flow accounted for more than half of all the crime guns that are the subject of this report. This finding confirms investigators' experience that illegal diversion is a significant aspect of gun crime.

**Many Crime Guns Acquired in Multiple Sales.** The acquisition of handguns in multiple sales can be an important trafficking indicator. Handguns sold in multiple sales reported to the National Tracing Center accounted for 22 percent of all handguns sold and traced in 1999.

- **Multiple Sales and Obliteration.** Obliteration is a trafficking indicator. Among handguns purchased and traced in 1999, those with obliterated serial numbers were 2.3 times more likely than those without obliterated serial numbers to have been acquired in a multiple sale.

## Crime Guns

Firearms traced by law enforcement nationally are for the most part concentrated among a limited number of *types* and *calibers*, and *manufacturers* and *models*. By focusing investigative efforts on the sources of these firearms, especially those with a short time-to-crime, law enforcement can identify and arrest both illegal suppliers of firearms and their illegally armed customers.

**Handguns** comprised over three-quarters (78 percent) of all traced crime guns.

- *Four handgun types* made up 62 percent of all handguns traced:
  - 9mm semiautomatic pistols
  - .380 caliber semiautomatic pistols
  - .25 caliber semiautomatic pistols
  - .38 caliber revolvers

**Semiautomatic pistols** accounted for half (50 percent) of all traced crime guns.

- The *9mm semiautomatic pistol* was the most frequently traced type of crime gun (23 percent), and was especially frequent among youth possessors (28 percent).

**Long guns** — shotguns and rifles — accounted for one in five traced crime guns (21 percent).

- The *12 gauge shotgun* and the *.22 caliber rifle* accounted for more than half (57 percent) of all traced long guns.
- Long guns were nearly twice as likely to be recovered from adults (24 percent) as from juveniles (13 percent).

## Most Frequently Traced Crime Guns

These guns were the most frequently traced by law enforcement officials for all age groups, by manufacturer, caliber, and type. These 10 firearms accounted for 24 percent (15,211) of all trace requests (64,637), while over 1,500 different firearms and 87 calibers accounted for the remaining crime guns (49,426).

	<b>Manufacturer</b>	<b>Caliber</b>	<b>Type of Crime Gun</b>
1.	Smith & Wesson	.38	Revolver
2.	Lorcin Engineering	.380	Semiautomatic Pistol
3.	Ruger	9mm	Semiautomatic Pistol
4.	Raven Arms	.25	Semiautomatic Pistol
5.	Smith & Wesson	9mm	Semiautomatic Pistol
6.	Smith & Wesson	.357	Revolver
7.	Mossberg	12 GA	Shotgun
8.	Bryco Arms	.380	Semiautomatic Pistol
9.	Davis Industries	.380	Semiautomatic Pistol
10.	Bryco Arms	9mm	Semiautomatic Pistol

## Crime Guns with the Most Investigative Potential

Short time-to-crime guns have the most immediate investigative potential for law enforcement officials because they are likely to have changed hands less frequently. Time-to-crime varied substantially by firearm type, age of purchaser, and specific model.

**Shortest and Longest Median Time-to-Crime by Type.** Semiautomatic pistols had the shortest median time-to-crime, 4 years. Revolvers had the longest median time-to-crime, about 12 years.

**Shortest Median Time-to-Crime by Manufacturer, Caliber, and Type.** The most frequently traced crime guns (by manufacturer, caliber, and type), over half of which were recovered in 3 years or less, were all semiautomatic pistols: Bryco Arms 9mm, Bryco Arms .380 caliber, and Ruger 9mm.

- **Juveniles.** Bryco Arms 9mm and Lorcin Engineering 9mm semiautomatic pistols recovered from juveniles had a median time-to-crime of just 1.6 years.

**Shortest Median Time-to-Crime by Specific Model.** Sufficient model information was available from nine cities. The shortest median time-to-crime guns (by manufacturer, caliber, type, and specific model) were again all semiautomatic pistols: the Lorcin Engineering L9, the Ruger P95, the Hi-Point C, and the Bryco Arms 48.

- **Youth.** Among youth crime guns, the more powerful Smith & Wesson Sigma .40 caliber semiautomatic pistol had an extremely fast median time-to-crime of 0.8 years.
- **Long Guns.** Models with the shortest median time-to-crime were the Hi-Point Model 995 9mm carbine and the Maverick Model 88 12 gauge shotgun, 1.2 and 1.6 years median time-to-crime, respectively.

## Officer Safety

ATF is providing officer safety information related to crime guns for the first time this year in order to assist State and local law enforcement managers in assessing potential departmental safety measures. Trace information on crime gun models from nine cities indicates that the North China Industries SKS 7.62mm rifle, North China Industries MAK90 7.62mm rifle, and the Colt AR15 .223 caliber rifle are encountered more frequently by law enforcement officers than similar rifles. These rifles, as well as most other rifles, will pose an enhanced threat to law enforcement, in part, because of their ability to expel projectiles at velocities that are capable of penetrating the type of soft body armor typically worn by the average police officer.

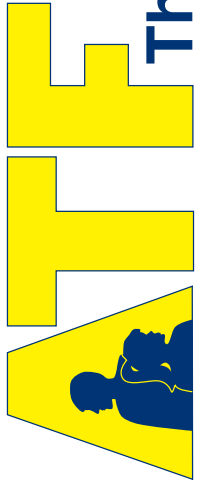
## Geographic Patterns

Crime guns form part of local, regional, and national trafficking patterns.

**In-State sources.** About 62 percent of crime guns were first purchased from FFLs in the State in which the guns were recovered by law enforcement officials. The source FFLs were within the same counties as the recovery cities for over a quarter of the crime guns (26 percent), and another 9 percent were in adjacent counties in the same State or a neighboring State.

**Regional sources.** In the following 16 cities, the crime guns were originally purchased in significant numbers at FFLs in States in the region in which the city is located: *Atlanta, GA; Baltimore, MD; New York, NY; Memphis, TN; St. Louis, MO; Chicago, IL; New Orleans, LA; Dallas, TX; Philadelphia, PA; Portland, OR; Los Angeles, CA; Tucson, AZ; Cincinnati, OH; Charlotte-Mecklenburg, NC; Detroit, MI; and Washington, DC.*

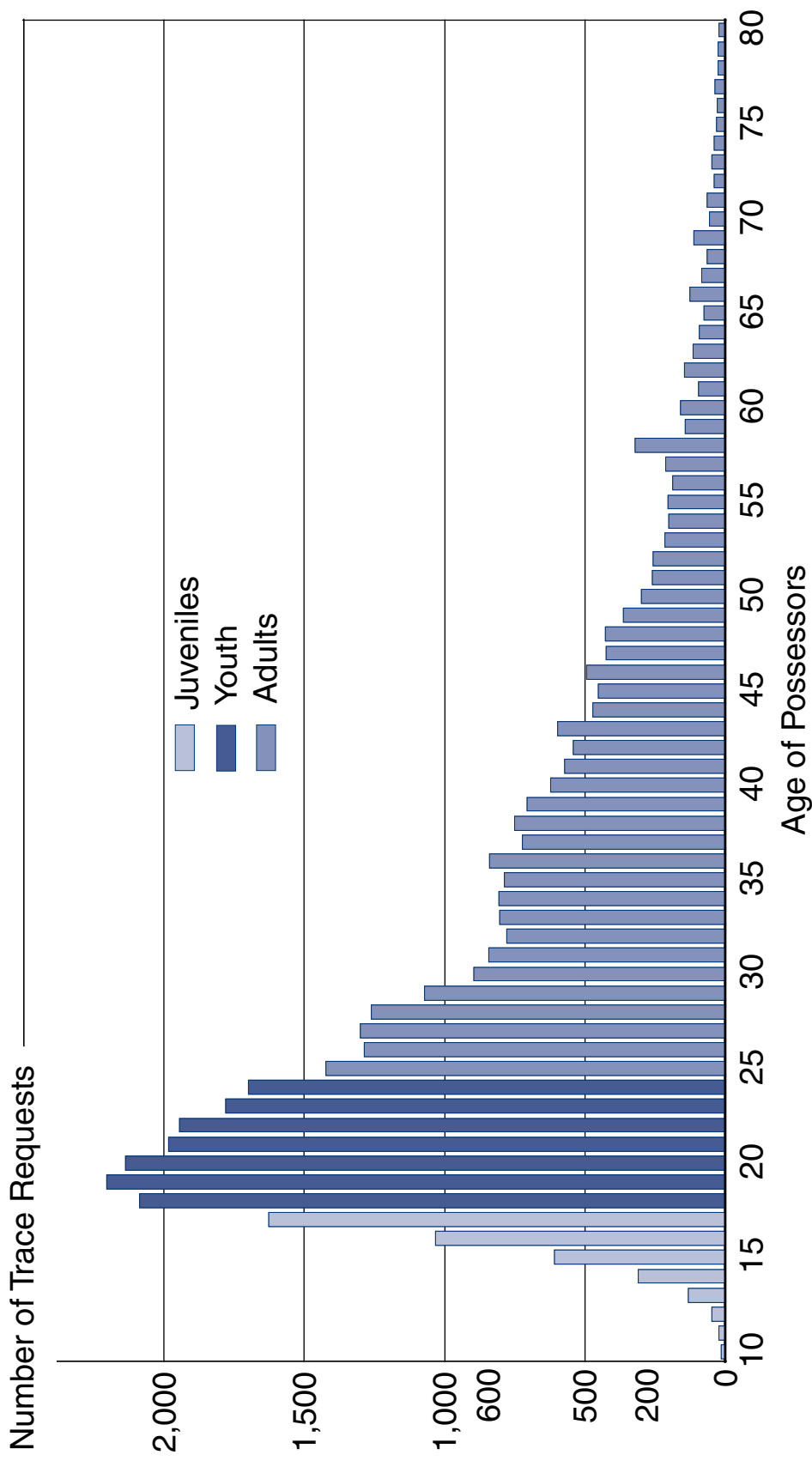
**National patterns.** Two large national patterns have emerged. The most significant interstate pattern is a south-north pattern along the East Coast, with crime guns first purchased from FFLs in the South, and recovered by law enforcement in *Washington, DC; Baltimore, MD; Philadelphia, PA; and New York, NY.* There is also a central south-north pattern, with guns first sold by FFLs in the South being recovered in *Memphis, TN; St. Louis, MO; and especially Chicago, IL.*

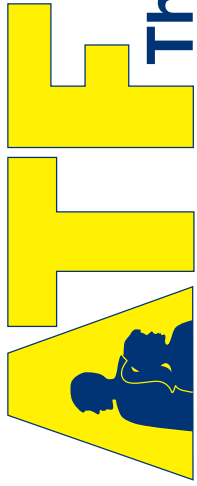


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## Age of Crime Gun Possessors

Based on trace requests submitted January 1, 1999 to December 31, 1999

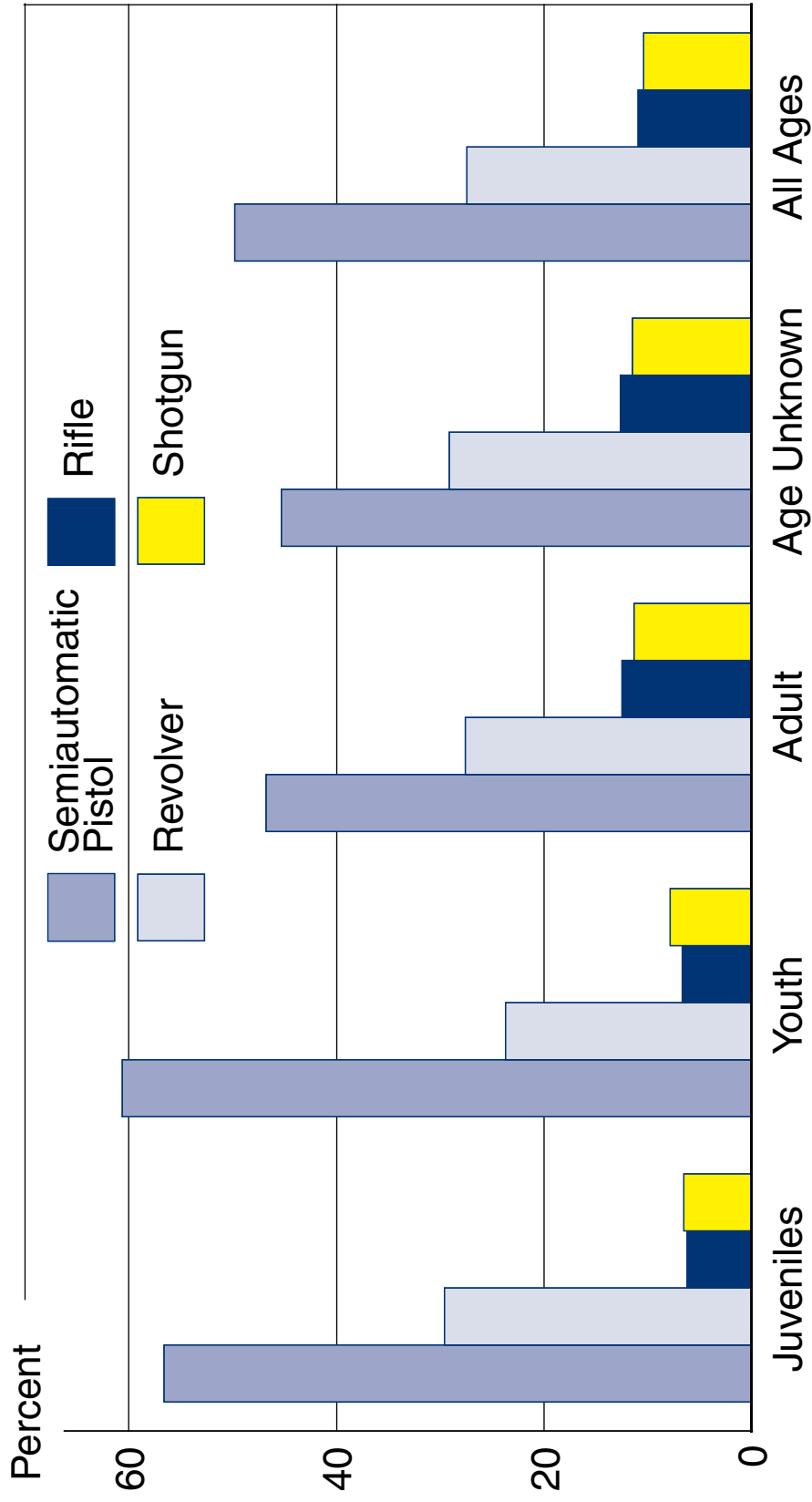




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## Major Crime Gun Types by Possessor Age Group

Based on trace requests submitted January 1, 1999 to December 31, 1999

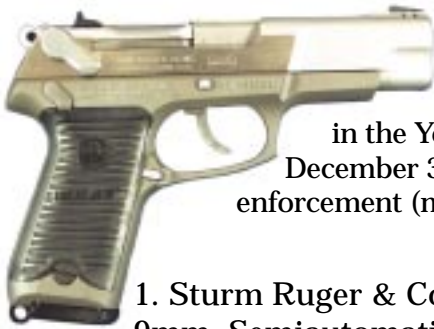




## The Youth Crime Gun Interdiction Initiative (YCGII)

# Top Ten Juvenile and Youth Crime Guns, 1999

### *“Following the Gun to Enforce Firearms Laws”*



1. Sturm Ruger & Co. Inc.  
9mm Semiautomatic Pistol

These firearms were recovered from juveniles and youth by law enforcement in significant numbers (50 or more) in 38 cities participating in the Youth Crime Gun Interdiction Initiative between January 1, 1999 and December 31, 1999. They moved rapidly from the retail dealer to recovery by law enforcement (median time-to-crime of 3 years or less). This combination of frequent recovery and rapid time-to-crime is an indicator of criminal intent or illegal diversion including firearms trafficking occurring subsequent to or associated with the retail purchase of the firearm.



2. Bryco Arms  
9mm Semiautomatic Pistol



3. Bryco Arms .380  
Semiautomatic Pistol



4. Lorcin Engineering  
9mm Semiautomatic  
Pistol



5. Hi-Point Firearms  
9mm Semiautomatic Pistol



6. Glock G.m.b.H. .40  
Semiautomatic Pistol



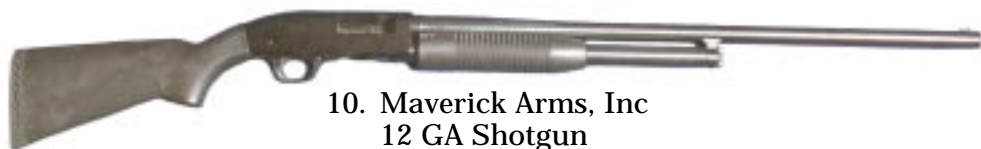
7. Smith & Wesson  
.40 Semiautomatic  
Pistol



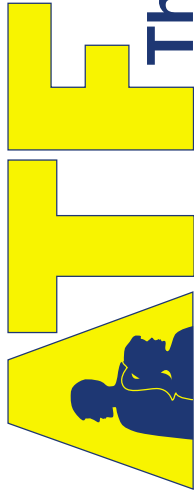
8. Sturm Ruger & Co. Inc.  
.45 Semiautomatic Pistol



9. Kel-Tec CNC Industries, Inc.  
9mm Semiautomatic Pistol

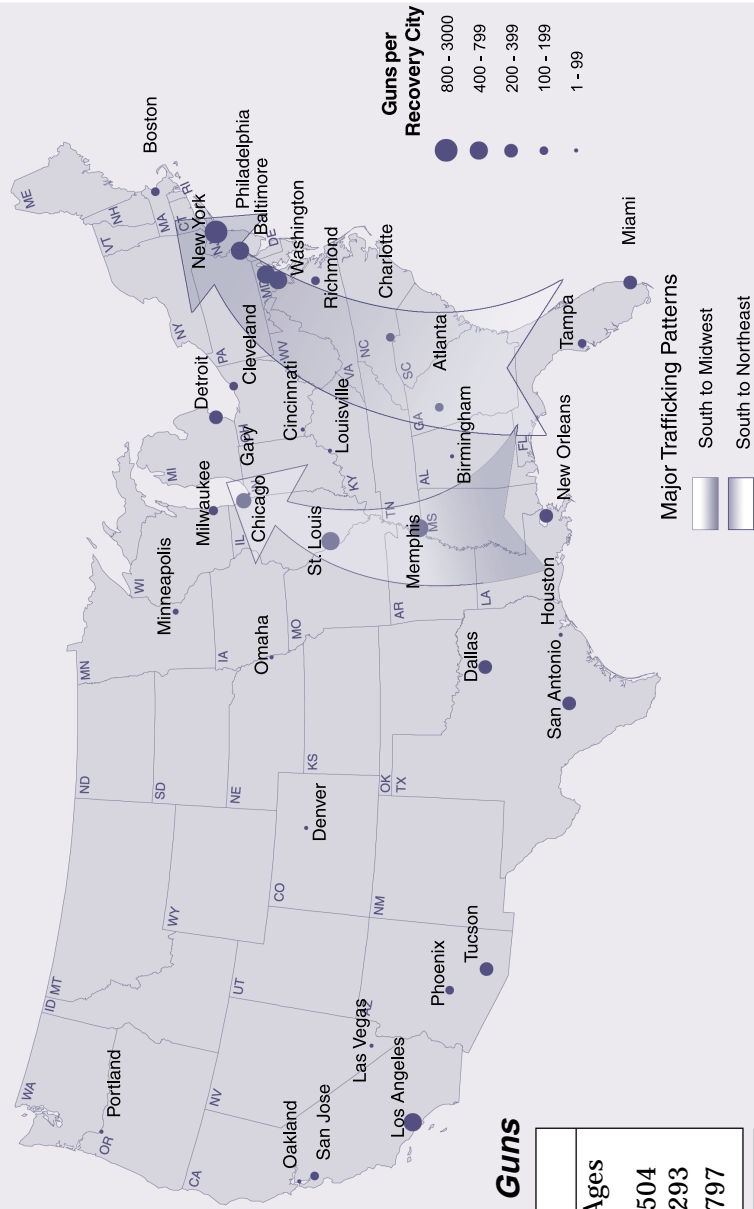


10. Maverick Arms, Inc  
12 GA Shotgun



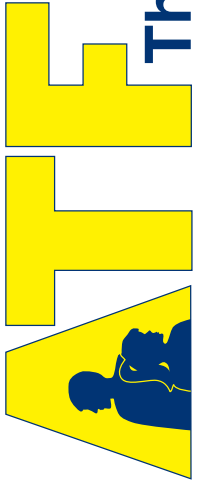
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**National Trafficking Patterns, 1999**  
 Number of Recovered Crime Guns Traced to  
 Federal Firearms Licensees in States Outside Local Region, for Each Recovery City



## Intrastate and Interstate Sources of Crime Guns

Number	Intrastate Sources			Interstate Sources		
	Juvenile (ages 17 & under)	Youth (ages 18-24)	Adult (ages 25 & over)	Juvenile (ages 17 & under)	Youth (ages 18-24)	Adult (ages 25 & over)
<b>In-State</b>	1,199	5,422	9,808	24,504	61.6	100.0
<b>Out-of-State</b>	1,056	3,646	5,013	15,293	38.4	100.0
<b>Total</b>	2,255	9,068	14,821	39,797		



# The Youth Crime Gun Interdiction Initiative

## Participating Cities

