



## The Youth Crime Gun Interdiction Initiative

# Crime Gun Trace Analysis Report: The Illegal Youth Firearms Market in

# Boston<sup>MA</sup>

Department of the Treasury  
Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms





DIRECTOR

DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY  
BUREAU OF ALCOHOL, TOBACCO AND FIREARMS  
WASHINGTON, DC 20226

Dear Youth Crime Gun Interdiction Initiative Participant:

In July 1996, law enforcement representatives from 17 communities met in Washington, DC, to start the Youth Crime Gun Interdiction Initiative. Our purpose was to develop information about gun trafficking to youth and to increase joint efforts — by ATF, police departments, district attorneys, and U.S. attorneys — to deny youth gang offenders and juveniles illegal access to firearms.

You joined in an innovative, voluntary agreement to ensure that all crime guns recovered in the cities were traced through ATF's National Tracing Center. I extend my congratulations to all of you, as you have all met or are now meeting this goal. Your achievement has allowed ATF to develop a new law enforcement tool: *community-specific crime gun trace analyses*. Using the trace data submitted from your jurisdiction, ATF is able for the first time to provide you with a snapshot of the crime gun market, by age group, in your community.

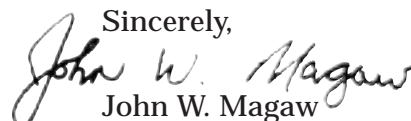
The trace analysis results send a clear message. Juveniles and youth, many of them gang offenders, are disproportionately using newer, semiautomatic handguns. These crime guns are moving rapidly from first retail sale to the street. This rapid diversion into criminal channels produces prime leads for investigation and enforcement.

Using the trace analysis from your community, we can collaborate to strengthen investigative strategies aimed at illegal gun traffickers. Based on this report, combined with information from your community, you may decide to focus enforcement resources on the sources of certain firearms; (e.g., guns with short "time-to-crime" rates, guns with obliterated serial numbers, or guns trafficked from outside or within your State).

Using crime gun trace data, enforcement agencies can identify, investigate, prosecute, and incarcerate illegal firearms traffickers. In every site, strategies based on crime gun trace analyses can be implemented using investigative information available through Project LEAD, ATF's illegal firearms trafficking information system. More traditional enforcement methods can be used to identify traffickers of older and stolen guns for which tracing by itself is less useful. ATF will soon be providing a comprehensive guidebook on methods of conducting investigations of illegal firearms traffickers for use by ATF special agents and State and local officers alike.

Firearms trafficking initiatives in various locations, including the Boston Gun Project and the Memphis U.S. Attorney's Violent Crimes Task Force, are developing collaborative strategies to reduce the illegal supply of firearms to juveniles and youth and to reduce juvenile and youth violence. I encourage you to work with your local ATF office to best utilize the information in this report.

Together we must stay the course and remain focused on our endeavor because *gun crime should not be a part of growing up.*

Sincerely,  
  
John W. Magaw

# **ATF CRIME GUN TRACE ANALYSIS REPORT**

## **Boston, Massachusetts**

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# ATF CRIME GUN TRACE ANALYSIS REPORT

## Youth Crime Gun Interdiction Initiative

### Introduction

The Youth Crime Gun Interdiction Initiative is a 17-city demonstration project aimed at reducing youth firearms violence. Officials from the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (ATF), police chiefs, local prosecutors, and U.S. attorneys are developing information about illegal trafficking of firearms to young people and new methods of reducing the illegal supply of firearms to them. The initiative was developed by ATF and its National Tracing Center, funded by the Department of the Treasury's Office of Enforcement and the National Institute of Justice, and announced by President Clinton on July 8, 1996.

### Purposes of This Report

Since July 1996, participants have tested a new method of developing and providing information about the illegal sources of firearms to youth. Federal and local enforcement officials in each jurisdiction voluntarily agreed to submit information on all recovered crime guns to ATF's National Tracing Center. ATF developed the tools to analyze the information. ATF is publishing this report of its analyses for the following purposes:

**To provide new information about illegal firearms activity by community.** These reports provide an overall view of firearms associated with illegal possession or activity in a jurisdiction. They identify the types of firearms that enforcement agencies most frequently recover, the types of crimes with which these weapons are associated, the time it takes for firearms to move from a federally licensed firearms dealer to recovery by enforcement officials, and the source States of these firearms. This is the first time ATF has developed and published standardized reports on recovered crime guns.

**To identify differences in adult, juvenile, and youth illegal firearms activity.** These reports analyze firearms recoveries by age group, with a focus on young people. The information establishes whether patterns of crime gun acquisition differ by age group. While ATF has previously collected information from enforcement agencies on firearms recovered from juveniles from across the country, this is the first time ATF has been able to provide age-based analysis by local jurisdiction. This analysis provides enforcement officials with a new and important tool for reducing illegal juvenile and youth access to firearms.

**To expand access to firearms-related enforcement information.** These reports share ATF firearms-related enforcement information with other enforcement agencies. The reports thereby provide a new, common foundation for collaboration among ATF, the offices of the U.S. attorney, and local police and prosecutors, as well as other agencies concerned with youth violence. Using this information, police departments and local prosecutors may choose to modify resources devoted to firearms trafficking interdiction, and local task forces may choose to pursue firearms trafficking cases in Federal or State courts.

**To initiate community, State, and national reporting on firearms trafficking.** These reports provide a model for standardized, annual ATF reports on firearms recoveries at the city, State, and national level. State and national reports using firearms recovery information provided by every jurisdiction allow regional and national patterns to be identified.

**To enable enforcement officials to focus their resources where they are likely to have the greatest impact on illegal trafficking to juveniles and violent youth gang members, as well as adult criminals.** Specific investigative information about the illegal sources of crime guns can be obtained by a variety of

methods, including Project LEAD, ATF's computerized illegal firearms information trafficking system, debriefing armed arrestees, and other street sources. These reports do not provide additional investigative information (such as the identities of federally licensed gun dealers or retail purchasers repeatedly associated with new crime guns). Rather, they provide analyses that can be useful in deciding how best to focus investigative resources to reduce the illegal firearms supply used in violent crime.

***Strategic targeting of illegal sources of juvenile and youth crime guns.*** Information about the percentages of a jurisdiction's crime guns recovered from juveniles, youth, and adults allows investigative priorities to be established and assessed. For instance, enforcement officials may choose to use Project LEAD to look for federally licensed gun dealers and first purchasers linked with crime gun traces associated with juveniles and youth.

***Strategic targeting of illegal sources of certain crime guns.*** Enforcement officials also can draw on the reports to develop other enforce-

ment strategies. Federal investigators already look for high volume traffickers operating across jurisdictional lines, whether interstate or intrastate, and use Project LEAD to investigate the illegal sources of guns used in violent crimes. Drawing on these reports, Federal and local officials can jointly decide to use Project LEAD and other investigative tools to target the illegal sources of various groups of crime guns: firearms with obliterated serial numbers; firearms most often used by juveniles and youth in violent crimes; illegally trafficked firearms most popular among juveniles, violent youth, and violent gangs; firearms with short "time-to-crime" rates, which are likely to have been deliberately trafficked; and firearms originating in-State or firearms originating out of State.

***Optimum, balanced local enforcement strategy.*** By combining a focus on high volume traffickers with targeted trafficking enforcement efforts using trace analyses and information about local conditions, enforcement officials can work toward the optimum strategy for reducing local illegal access to firearms, especially by juveniles and violent gang members.

## What This Report Contains

**Information about *crime guns*.** A *crime gun* is defined, for purpose of firearms tracing, as any firearm that is illegally possessed, used in a crime, or suspected by enforcement officials of being used in a crime. Report E shows the crime types most frequently associated with crime gun trace requests.

**Comprehensive crime gun trace data by community.** The report presents information about how many crime guns were submitted for tracing. Participants in the Youth Crime Gun Interdiction Initiative voluntarily agreed to trace *all* crime guns recovered in their jurisdiction. Police departments are not required by Federal law to maintain or supply crime gun recovery information and have not historically submitted all crime guns for tracing. Lack of comprehensive tracing has precluded certain kinds of crime gun analyses since there may not have been enough crime gun trace requests from particular jurisdictions to identify community-wide patterns. The voluntary tracing agreement under this initiative was intended to overcome this problem.

**Information from *National Tracing Center traces*.** The information in this report is derived from data contained in requests for crime gun traces that enforcement agencies submitted to ATF's National Tracing Center (NTC) and from the results of traces that the NTC conducts. An *NTC trace* uses records maintained and made available by the firearms industry to identify the history of a firearm's ownership. A *successful NTC trace* describes firearm ownership from the manufacturer or importer through the wholesaler to the first known retail dealer. Depending on the investigative circumstances, the NTC trace may also identify the first retail purchaser, and sometimes even subsequent purchasers. Because of the structure of Federal firearms regulation and recordkeeping requirements, however, it is generally not possible for the NTC to trace a crime gun beyond its first retail sale using firearms industry records. To further trace a crime gun's path, ATF must conduct an *investigative trace*, in which special agents investigate

the subsequent chain of possession. Investigative traces are extremely resource intensive and are generally conducted only where there is a specific investigative need.

**Analyses of *requests for crime gun traces*.** The report contains certain analyses that are based on the information contained in *requests* for crime gun traces. These analyses do not depend on the NTC successfully completing the traces. Information available for all crime guns submitted for tracing, whether or not the crime gun is successfully traced by the NTC, includes the number of recovered crime guns in a community, the type of firearm (e.g., revolver, rifle), and its manufacturer and caliber.

**Analyses of *successful NTC traces*.** The report also contains certain analyses that are based on the results of *successful NTC traces*. Information available only for crime guns successfully traced by the NTC includes the time it takes for a crime gun to move from its last known retail sale to recovery by enforcement officials, and the State in which the crime gun was sold.

**Analysis of *incomplete traces*.** The report shows the number of successful NTC traces and explains why the NTC closed the remaining traces without a successful NTC trace. This information is intended to assist in increasing the number of successful NTC traces.

**Analyses by *adult, youth, and juvenile age categories*.** The report generally presents information in four age categories: adults (25 and over); youth (ages 18 through 24); juvenile (17 and under); and all age categories combined.

**Crime gun trace information for a *10-month period*.** The patterns depicted in this report are based on crime guns for which trace requests were submitted to the NTC during the period of July 1, 1996, through April 30, 1997. The NTC provided project training in August and September 1996; project tracing then began in all sites. Early trace requests may not include as complete information as later traces.

# ATF CRIME GUN TRACE ANALYSIS REPORT

## Boston, Massachusetts

### REPORT A: Number of Crime Gun Trace Requests

This report contains the number of crime gun trace requests to the National Tracing Center from this community. It also indicates the completeness of certain trace data submitted for analysis. Lack of data may reflect unavailability or an issue that remains to be addressed by the police department and ATF.

**REPORT PERIOD:** July 1, 1996 - April 30, 1997

	Number	Percentage
Total trace requests:	1,020	100.00
For all trace requests, number with:		
Possessor identified:	481	47.16
Possessor's date of birth identified:	337	33.04
Recovery date identified:	676	66.27

# ATF CRIME GUN TRACE ANALYSIS REPORT

## Boston, Massachusetts

### REPORT B: Crime Gun Trace Requests by Age of Possessor

This report provides information concerning the age of the possessors of the crime guns for which trace requests were submitted from this community to the National Tracing Center. Not all crime guns can be associated with a possessor when a trace request is made since not all recovered firearms are found in an individual's possession. Therefore, the breakdown by age group is not expected to be based on all recovered crime guns.

**REPORT PERIOD:** July 1, 1996 - April 30, 1997

	Number	Percentage of Total
Total number of requests:	1,020	100.00
Total number of requests for which the possessor's age can be determined:	335	32.84
Adult crime gun trace requests:	157	46.87*
Youth crime gun trace requests:	131	39.10*
Juvenile crime gun trace requests:	47	14.03*

\* Based on the trace requests for which the possessor's age can be determined.

NOTE: For purposes of this report:

Adult is defined as 25 years of age and over.

Youth is defined as 18 years of age through 24 years of age.

Juvenile is defined as 17 years of age and under.



# ATF CRIME GUN TRACE ANALYSIS REPORT

## Boston, Massachusetts

### REPORT C: Crime Gun Trace Requests by Type of Firearm

This report depicts the number of crime gun trace requests from this community by firearm type. Recoveries are identified as having been from adults, youth, juveniles, and all age categories combined. This information can be useful in developing an enforcement strategy that focuses on the kinds of crime guns used by particular age groups.

**REPORT PERIOD:** July 1, 1996 - April 30, 1997

#### Adult (ages 25 and over):

Type of Firearm	Number	Percentage of Adults*
Semiautomatic Pistol	76	48.41
Revolver	38	24.20
Rifle	27	17.20
Shotgun	15	9.55
Derringer	1	0.64
Machine Gun	0	0.00
Combination**	0	0.00

#### Youth (ages 18-24):

Type of Firearm	Number	Percentage of Youth*
Semiautomatic Pistol	76	58.02
Revolver	31	23.66
Shotgun	11	8.40
Rifle	9	6.87
Derringer	4	3.05
Machine Gun	0	0.00
Combination**	0	0.00

#### Juvenile (ages 17 and under):

Type of Firearm	Number	Percentage of Juveniles*
Semiautomatic Pistol	31	65.96
Revolver	13	27.66
Shotgun	2	4.26
Rifle	1	2.13
Combination**	0	0.00
Machine Gun	0	0.00
Derringer	0	0.00

\* Based on the trace requests for which the possessor's age can be determined.

\*\* A combination firearm is a multi-barreled firearm containing two or more different caliber barrels.

# ATF CRIME GUN TRACE ANALYSIS REPORT

## Boston, Massachusetts

### REPORT C: Crime Gun Trace Requests by Type of Firearm (continued)

#### All Ages:

	Number	Percentage of Total
Semiautomatic Pistol	463	45.39
Revolver	345	33.82
Rifle	108	10.59
Shotgun	94	9.22
Derringer	10	0.98
Machine Gun	0	0.00
Combination*	0	0.00

\*A combination firearm is a multi-barreled firearm containing two or more different caliber barrels.

# ATF CRIME GUN TRACE ANALYSIS REPORT

## Boston, Massachusetts

### REPORT D: Top 10 Crime Guns Requested for Tracing by Type, Manufacturer, and Caliber

This report depicts the most frequently recovered and traced crime guns by firearm type, manufacturer, and caliber, in this community. It does not distinguish among models of firearms of the same caliber. For instance, all Smith & Wesson .38 revolvers are considered as one group. Recovered crime guns are often concentrated among a relatively few kinds of firearms.

**REPORT PERIOD:** July 1, 1996 - April 30, 1997

#### Adult (ages 25 and over):

Type of Firearm	Manufacturer	Caliber	Number of Kinds of Firearms	Number of Crime Guns	Percentage of Crime Guns Requested for Tracing*
Revolver	Smith & Wesson	.38		8	5.10
Semiautomatic Pistol	Raven	.25		6	3.82
Shotgun	Mossberg	12 GA		5	3.18
Semiautomatic Pistol	Bryco	9mm		5	3.18
Semiautomatic Pistol	Glock	9mm		4	2.55
Semiautomatic Pistol	Lorcin	.380		4	2.55
Revolver	Unknown Manufacturer**	.22		4	2.55
Revolver	Ruger	.357		3	1.91
Semiautomatic Pistol	Jennings	.22		3	1.91
Shotgun	Winchester	12 GA		3	1.91
Summary for top kinds of crime guns			10	45	28.66
All other crime gun kinds			83	112	71.34

#### Youth (ages 18 through 24):

Type of Firearm	Manufacturer	Caliber	Number of Kinds of Firearms	Number of Crime Guns	Percentage of Crime Guns Requested for Tracing*
Semiautomatic Pistol	Bryco	.380		7	5.34
Shotgun	Unknown Manufacturer**	12 GA		6	4.58
Semiautomatic Pistol	Hipoint	9mm		6	4.58
Revolver	Smith & Wesson	.38		5	3.82
Semiautomatic Pistol	Ruger	9mm		4	3.05
Revolver	RG Industries	.38		4	3.05
Revolver	Colt	.38		4	3.05
Semiautomatic Pistol	Bryco	9mm		4	3.05
Semiautomatic Pistol	Raven	.25		3	2.29
Semiautomatic Pistol	Jennings	.22		3	2.29
Summary for top kinds of crime guns			10	46	35.11
All other crime gun kinds			65	85	64.89

#### Juvenile (ages 17 and under):

Type of Firearm	Manufacturer	Caliber	Number of Kinds of Firearms	Number of Crime Guns	Percentage of Crime Guns Requested for Tracing*
Semiautomatic Pistol	Bryco	9mm		3	6.38
Semiautomatic Pistol	Bryco	.380		3	6.38
Semiautomatic Pistol	Smith & Wesson	9mm		2	4.26
Semiautomatic Pistol	Phoenix Arms Company	.22		2	4.26
Revolver	Ruger	.38		2	4.26
Semiautomatic Pistol	Davis	.380		2	4.26
Semiautomatic Pistol	Lorcin	.380		2	4.26
Semiautomatic Pistol	Llama	.380		1	2.13
Revolver	Ruger	.44		1	2.13
Shotgun	Savage	12 GA		1	2.13
Summary for top kinds of crime guns			10	19	40.43
All other crime gun kinds			28	28	59.57

\* Based on the trace requests for which the possessor's age can be determined.

\*\* Requestor did not identify manufacturer

# ATF CRIME GUN TRACE ANALYSIS REPORT

## Boston, Massachusetts

### REPORT D: Top 10 Crime Guns Requested for Tracing by Type, Manufacturer, and Caliber (continued)

**All Ages:**

Type of Firearm	Manufacturer	Caliber	Number of Kinds of Firearms	Number of Crime Guns	Percentage of Crime Guns Requested for Tracing
Revolver	Smith & Wesson	.38		64	6.27
Semiautomatic Pistol	Raven	.25		28	2.75
Semiautomatic Pistol	Glock	9mm		27	2.65
Revolver	Colt	.38		24	2.35
Semiautomatic Pistol	Lorcin	.380		23	2.25
Shotgun	Mossberg	12 GA		20	1.96
Revolver	Harrington & Richardson	.32		20	1.96
Revolver	Smith & Wesson	.357		19	1.86
Semiautomatic Pistol	Bryco	9mm		17	1.67
Semiautomatic Pistol	Bryco	.380		17	1.67
Summary for top kinds of crime guns			10	259	25.39
All other crime gun kinds			278	761	74.61

# ATF CRIME GUN TRACE ANALYSIS REPORT

## Boston, Massachusetts

### REPORT E: Crime Types Most Frequently Associated with Crime Gun Trace Requests

This report depicts the crimes most frequently associated with firearms recovered and traced from this jurisdiction. This information can be useful in developing an enforcement or intervention strategy that focuses on preventing or solving those crimes involving armed youth gang members and juveniles.

**REPORT PERIOD:** July 1, 1996 - April 30, 1997

#### Adult (ages 25 and over):

Crime Type	Number	Percentage*
Firearms Offenses	117	74.52
Homicide	13	8.28
Assaults/Threats	10	6.37
Burglary/Theft/Fraud	5	3.18
Arson/Explosives/Fraud	4	2.55
Robbery	3	1.91
Vice Crimes	3	1.91
Narcotics Crimes	2	1.27

#### Youth (ages 18 through 24):

Crime Type	Number	Percentage*
Firearms Offenses	115	87.79
Assaults/Threats	7	5.34
Homicide	6	4.58
Robbery	2	1.53
Narcotics Crimes	1	0.76

#### Juvenile (ages 17 and under):

Crime Type	Number	Percentage*
Firearms Offenses	39	82.98
Robbery	4	8.51
Assaults/Threats	2	4.26
Homicide	1	2.13
Burglary/Theft/Fraud	1	2.13

\* Based on the trace requests for which the possessor's age can be determined.

NOTE: The offense categories listed above and the frequency with which they appear are generated by information provided by the firearms trace requester. The category "firearms offenses" can include any offense/crime in which a firearm was involved.

# ATF CRIME GUN TRACE ANALYSIS REPORT

## Boston, Massachusetts

### REPORT E: Crime Types Most Frequently Associated with Crime Gun Trace Requests (continued)

#### All Ages:

Crime Type	Number	Percentage
Firearms Offenses	755	74.02
Vice Crimes	128	12.55
Homicide	49	4.80
Assaults/Threats	47	4.61
Robbery	15	1.47
Narcotics Crimes	13	1.27
Burglary/Theft/Fraud	8	0.78
Arson/Explosives Crimes	4	0.39
Integrity Crimes	1	0.10

NOTE: The offense categories listed above and the frequency with which they appear are generated by information provided by the firearms trace requester. The category "firearms offenses" can include any offense/crime in which a firearm was involved.

# ATF CRIME GUN TRACE ANALYSIS REPORT

## Boston, Massachusetts

### REPORT F: Number of Crime Guns Successfully Traced by the National Tracing Center

This report shows the number and percentage of crime guns successfully traced by the National Tracing Center and the number and percentage of crime guns that were not successfully traced, with the reasons that traces were not completed. A successful NTC trace identifies the history of a firearm's ownership from the manufacturer or importer through the wholesaler to at least the first known retail dealer. Depending on the investigative circumstances, the trace also may include the first retail purchaser of the firearm and sometimes subsequent purchasers as well. A successful trace is required to determine the time it takes for crime guns to move from first retail sale to recovery by enforcement officials and the geographic source areas for crime guns.

**REPORT PERIOD:** July 1, 1996 - April 30, 1997

#### Adult (ages 25 and over):

Trace Requests:	Number	Percentage†
Successfully completed:	63	40.13
Insufficient information in trace request:*	22	14.01
Federal firearms licensee records unavailable:**	15	9.55
Firearm determined to be too old to trace:***	57	36.31

#### Youth (ages 18 through 24):

Trace Requests:	Number	Percentage†
Successfully completed:	47	35.88
Insufficient information in trace request:*	19	14.50
Federal firearms licensee records unavailable:**	15	11.45
Firearm determined to be too old to trace:***	50	38.17

#### Juvenile (ages 17 and under):

Trace Requests:	Number	Percentage†
Successfully completed:	18	38.30
Insufficient information in trace request:*	9	19.15
Federal firearms licensee records unavailable:**	7	14.89
Firearm determined to be too old to trace:***	13	27.66

#### All Ages:

Trace Requests:	Number	Percentage
Successfully completed:	315	30.88
Insufficient information in trace request:*	197	19.31
Federal firearms licensee records unavailable:**	84	8.24
Firearm determined to be too old to trace:***	424	41.57

† Based on the trace requests for which the possessor's age can be determined.

\* The NTC received incorrect information or insufficient information to complete a firearm trace request, such as the proper nomenclature of a firearm or the firearm's importer.

\*\* Manufacturer, wholesaler, or retailer records were incomplete, destroyed, missing, not properly maintained, illegible, or seized by law enforcement or regulatory entities.

\*\*\* Firearms predated the enactment of the 1968 Gun Control Act or traces were closed under NTC guidelines relating to age determination in special projects.

# ATF CRIME GUN TRACE ANALYSIS REPORT

## Boston, Massachusetts

### REPORT G: Time-to-Crime Rates on Top 10 Crime Guns Requested for Tracing by Type, Manufacturer, and Caliber

This report depicts “time-to-crime” rates for those crime guns most frequently requested for tracing as depicted in Report E. Time-to-crime is the period of time between the first retail sale of a firearm by a Federal firearms licensee and the time the firearm is recovered by enforcement officials or requested for tracing. A short time-to-crime rate can be an indicator of illegal trafficking. In the tables below, the proportion of traceable firearms showing a time-to-crime rate of less than and more than three years is shown; experienced trafficking investigators view a time-to-crime rate of less than three years as an especially useful trafficking indicator. Time-to-crime information can be useful in developing an enforcement strategy that identifies and investigates the specific sources of these firearms.

**REPORT PERIOD:** July 1, 1996 - April 30, 1997

#### Adult (ages 25 and over):

Type of Firearm	Manufacturer	Caliber	Number *	Number Successfully Traced	Less than 3 Years Time-to-Crime		More than 3 Years Time-to-Crime		Fastest Time-to-Crime (days)
					Number	Percent	Number	Percent	
Revolver	Smith & Wesson	.38	8	0	0	—	0	—	—
Semiautomatic Pistol	Raven	.25	6	1	0	0.00	1	100.00	3,762
Shotgun	Mossberg	12 GA	5	2	1	50.00	1	50.00	11
Semiautomatic Pistol	Bryco	9mm	5	2	2	100.00	0	0.00	403
Semiautomatic Pistol	Glock	9mm	4	2	1	50.00	1	50.00	775
Semiautomatic Pistol	Lorcin	.380	4	2	1	50.00	1	50.00	803
Revolver	Unknown Manufacturer**	.22	4	0	0	—	0	—	—
Revolver	Ruger	.357	3	1	0	0.00	1	100.00	1,791
Semiautomatic Pistol	Jennings	.22	3	0	0	—	0	—	—
Shotgun	Winchester	12 GA	3	1	1	100.00	0	0.00	687

#### Youth (ages 18 through 24):

Type of Firearm	Manufacturer	Caliber	Number *	Number Successfully Traced	Less than 3 Years Time-to-Crime		More than 3 Years Time-to-Crime		Fastest Time-to-Crime (days)
					Number	Percent	Number	Percent	
Semiautomatic Pistol	Bryco	.380	7	4	2	50.00	2	50.00	110
Shotgun	Unknown Manufacturer**	12 GA	6	0	0	—	0	—	—
Semiautomatic Pistol	Hipoint	9mm	6	4	3	75.00	1	25.00	376
Revolver	Smith & Wesson	.38	5	0	0	—	0	—	—
Semiautomatic Pistol	Ruger	9mm	4	2	1	50.00	1	50.00	52
Revolver	RG Industries	.38	4	0	0	—	0	—	—
Revolver	Colt	.38	4	0	0	—	0	—	—
Semiautomatic Pistol	Bryco	9mm	4	2	2	100.00	0	0.00	324
Semiautomatic Pistol	Raven	.25	3	1	0	0.00	1	100.00	6,250
Semiautomatic Pistol	Jennings	.22	3	0	0	—	0	—	—

#### Juvenile (ages 17 and under):

Type of Firearm	Manufacturer	Caliber	Number *	Number Successfully Traced	Less than 3 Years Time-to-Crime		More than 3 Years Time-to-Crime		Fastest Time-to-Crime (days)
					Number	Percent	Number	Percent	
Semiautomatic Pistol	Bryco	9mm	3	3	3	100.00	0	0.00	146
Semiautomatic Pistol	Bryco	.380	3	2	0	0.00	2	100.00	1,154
Semiautomatic Pistol	Smith & Wesson	9mm	2	0	0	—	0	—	—
Semiautomatic Pistol	Phoenix Arms Company	.22	2	2	2	100.00	0	0.00	471
Revolver	Ruger	.38	2	0	0	—	0	—	—
Semiautomatic Pistol	Davis	.380	2	1	0	0.00	1	100.00	1,434
Semiautomatic Pistol	Lorcin	.380	2	1	1	100.00	0	0.00	59
Semiautomatic Pistol	Llama	.380	1	0	0	—	0	—	—
Revolver	Ruger	.44	1	0	0	—	0	—	—
Shotgun	Savage	12 GA	1	0	0	—	0	—	—

\* Trace requests for which the possessor's age can be determined.

\*\* Requestor did not identify manufacturer.



# ATF CRIME GUN TRACE ANALYSIS REPORT

## Boston, Massachusetts

### REPORT G: Time-to-Crime Rates on Top 10 Crime Guns Requested for Tracing by Type, Manufacturer, and Caliber (continued)

**All Ages:**

Type of Firearm	Manufacturer	Caliber	Number	Number Successfully Traced	Less than 3 Years Time-to-Crime		More than 3 Years Time-to-Crime		Fastest Time-to-Crime (days)
					Number	Percent	Number	Percent	
Revolver	Smith & Wesson	.38	64	6	0	0.00	6	100.00	1,815
Semiautomatic Pistol	Raven	.25	28	10	1	10.00	9	90.00	40
Semiautomatic Pistol	Glock	9mm	27	19	6	31.58	13	68.42	98
Revolver	Colt	.38	24	2	0	0.00	2	100.00	4,226
Semiautomatic Pistol	Lorcin	.380	23	13	8	61.54	5	38.46	56
Shotgun	Mossberg	12 GA	20	6	5	83.33	1	16.67	11
Revolver	Harrington & Richardson	.32	20	0	0	—	0	—	—
Revolver	Smith & Wesson	.357	19	7	4	57.14	3	42.86	126
Semiautomatic Pistol	Bryco	9mm	17	11	11	100.00	0	0.00	146
Semiautomatic Pistol	Bryco	.380	17	10	2	20.00	8	80.00	110

# ATF CRIME GUN TRACE ANALYSIS REPORT

## Boston, Massachusetts

### REPORT H: Most Frequent Source States for Successfully Traced Crime Guns

This report depicts the most frequent source States for successfully traced crime guns in this city. This information can be useful in developing an enforcement strategy that identifies and investigates the specific illegal sources of crime guns from those areas.

**REPORT PERIOD:** July 1, 1996 - April 30, 1997

#### Adult (ages 25 and over):

Source State	Number	Percentage*
Massachusetts	30	37.04
Maine	8	9.88
Florida	5	6.17
Texas	5	6.17
Georgia	5	6.17
New Hampshire	5	6.17
South Carolina	4	4.94
Virginia	3	3.70
Connecticut	3	3.70
Alabama	2	2.47
Total for top 10 source States	70	86.42
Total for all other source States	11	13.58

#### Youth (ages 18-24):

Source State	Number	Percentage*
Massachusetts	19	27.14
Georgia	7	10.00
Florida	6	8.57
Maine	4	5.71
North Carolina	4	5.71
New Hampshire	4	5.71
Virginia	4	5.71
Ohio	4	5.71
Texas	3	4.29
Pennsylvania	2	2.86
Total for top 10 source States	57	81.43
Total for all other source States	13	18.57

#### Juvenile (ages 17 and under):

Source State	Number	Percentage*
Massachusetts	4	15.38
Florida	4	15.38
Texas	3	11.54
Maine	2	7.69
North Carolina	2	7.69
New Hampshire	2	7.69
Pennsylvania	2	7.69
Mississippi	1	3.85
Ohio	1	3.85
Alabama	1	3.85
Total for top 10 source States	22	84.62
Total for all other source States	4	15.38

\*Based on the trace requests for which the possessor's age and the source State can be determined.

# ATF CRIME GUN TRACE ANALYSIS REPORT

## Boston, Massachusetts

### REPORT H: Most Frequent Source States for Successfully Traced Crime Guns (continued)

#### All Ages:

Source State	Number	Percentage*
Massachusetts	136	30.22
Florida	38	8.44
Texas	26	5.78
Maine	25	5.56
Georgia	25	5.56
North Carolina	18	4.00
Ohio	18	4.00
Virginia	17	3.78
New Hampshire	17	3.78
Pennsylvania	12	2.67
Total for top 10 source States	332	73.78
Total for all other source States	118	26.22

\*Based on the trace requests for which the source State can be determined.

# General Findings From the Participating Communities

This section presents general findings based on experience in all 17 participating communities. These 17 communities may not comprise a valid sample for purposes of national analysis. However, this is the largest collection of community-based information yet available on recovered crime guns.

## List of Participating Communities

The communities participating in this initiative, and on which the findings are based, are:

Atlanta, Georgia  
Baltimore, Maryland  
Birmingham, Alabama  
Boston, Massachusetts  
Bridgeport, Connecticut  
Cleveland, Ohio  
Inglewood, California  
Jersey City, New Jersey  
Memphis, Tennessee  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin  
New York, New York  
Richmond, Virginia  
St. Louis, Missouri  
Salinas, California  
San Antonio, Texas  
Seattle, Washington  
Washington, DC

This section is divided into two parts: (1) comprehensive community-based crime gun tracing and (2) local illegal firearms markets. These findings are intended to give enforcement officials in each community a wider perspective on its use of crime gun tracing and on its violent firearms crime and trafficking problems, particularly as they involve juveniles and youth.

## General Findings: Comprehensive, Community-Based Crime Gun Tracing

The 17 participating sites jointly tested the feasibility and utility of an enforcement policy of submitting all recovered crime guns in a community to the National Tracing Center (NTC) for tracing. Based on this experience, ATF reaches the following conclusions:

**Comprehensive, community-based crime gun tracing is achievable.** Trace requests from the 17 sites during the 10-month period nearly doubled over the same period the previous year, from approximately 20,000 trace requests to more than 37,000 trace requests. Tracing volume in all of the sites increased. Police departments in all of the sites had official policies requiring tracing of all recovered crime guns for all or part of the project period. Eight of the communities reported that they had a general tracing policy before the initiative began. One site, Jersey City, was part of a state-wide agreement by enforcement officials and prosecutors to trace all crime guns. One State, Virginia, mandates tracing of all firearms recovered by State and local enforcement agencies. Sixteen of the seventeen participating police departments continue to have a written or stated policy of tracing all recovered firearms.

**Technical improvements in local and State tracing capability increase crime gun tracing levels, efficiency, and accuracy.** Working with local and State enforcement officials, ATF has tested three methods of facilitating comprehensive crime gun tracing. The methods vary according to the jurisdiction's volume of recovered firearms, recordkeeping procedures, and level of computerization. Costs of such technical assistance are low and the benefits high, both for the police departments and ATF. Because of technical improvements, for instance, New York City's requests for traces jumped to close to 13,000 crime guns during the 10-month project period, from fewer than 4,000 crime guns during the same time period the previous year. San Antonio's tracing rate increased 500 percent, to close to 2,000 crime gun traces during the project period from fewer than 400 traces during the same period the previous year.

**Comprehensive crime gun tracing achieves its primary purpose: to increase the number of investigative leads to illegal traffickers derived from NTC tracing.** The *primary* purposes of NTC crime gun tracing are to assist in solving individual gun crimes and to increase the amount of investigative information about illegal gun trafficking available to enforcement agencies. Crime gun trace information is added to the NTC's Project LEAD. This information system aggregates crime gun trace information from enforcement agencies throughout the Nation, and identifies links among those traces. For instance, Project LEAD could link a crime gun that enforcement officials in Inglewood, California, submit for tracing with a crime gun that enforcement officials in Jersey City, New Jersey, submit for tracing by showing that both were sold by the same Federal firearms licensee or purchased by the same individual. By nearly doubling the volume of trace requests from the 17 communities, ATF and local and State enforcement agencies have significantly increased the amount of trace information in Project LEAD and the number of investigative leads available to enforcement agencies throughout the country.

**As demonstrated by these reports, comprehensive crime gun tracing can also be used to assist enforcement agencies by identifying major crime gun patterns in a community.** By simply submitting trace requests on all recovered firearms, enforcement officials can check for patterns and trends on crime guns in their community. When the NTC can successfully trace these crime guns, additional strategic and investigative information is available.

**Refinement of tracing guidelines and practices will result in greater consistency in trace analysis reporting.** While participants have followed or are following comprehensive tracing policies, tracing procedures vary. For instance, practices may differ for tracing firearms that have obliterated serial numbers, are recovered by school authorities, are found without identified possessors or are known to be stolen, or are antique. In addition, there are variations in how the exact location of where the firearm was recovered is reported. For this reason, a few crime guns recovered in nearby jurisdictions may have been included in reports from some of the 17 sites. Finally, during this special initiative, enforcement agencies may have submitted all available firearms rather than only firearms recovered after the initiative began. Trace levels can be expected to stabilize if technical improvements are made and as the NTC refines tracing guidelines.

**Faster NTC trace completion time benefits enforcement agencies.** The faster a crime gun trace can be completed, the sooner the trace information can be entered into the Project LEAD illegal trafficking information system and the sooner it can be used by enforcement officials in investigations of illegal traffickers. The NTC presently completes trace requests in an average of 9 days. Crime gun-related investigations would benefit from faster completion times. Two factors affect completion time: NTC resources and the speed with which Federal firearms licensees make records available. The firearms industry has recently pledged to assist the NTC in speeding up crime gun tracing by making more records accessible electronically.

**Increasing the number and percentage of successful NTC traces benefits enforcement agencies.** The NTC successfully completed approximately 37 percent of the traces requested during this project. Reasons for lack of successful NTC tracing include lack of needed information about the firearm in trace requests (23 percent), lack of Federal firearms licensee records (7 percent), and legal and resource limitations on tracing older firearms (33 percent). Not all trace analyses depend on successfully completing trace requests. However, the benefits of crime gun tracing for enforcement agencies are maximized if traces are successfully completed. Many of the reasons preventing successful NTC tracing can and should be addressed.

**Training in crime gun tracing benefits enforcement agencies.** Working together, police departments and ATF fulfilled their goal of tracing all recovered crime guns, with a minimum of training. However, some sites were more successful than others in submitting the full amount of crime gun-related data that can be used in Project LEAD and in trace analyses. In particular, a few sites provided insufficient possessor date of birth information to provide reliable analysis by age category. Most importantly, 23 percent of the trace requests overall were submitted with insufficient firearms information to successfully complete the traces. This reflects several factors, including that some police departments' internal firearms-related procedures are more conducive than others to comprehensive crime gun tracing. Training in crime gun tracing and a collaborative effort between the NTC and State and local enforcement agencies are needed to improve the level of information provided in trace requests.

## General Findings: Local Illegal Firearms Markets

This section summarizes enforcement findings and conclusions based on crime gun trace information from the 17 participating communities. The category “adult” includes ages 25 and over, “youth” includes ages 18 to 24, and “juvenile” includes ages 17 and under.\*

**Adult crime guns predominate.** Most crime guns are recovered from adults. While youth firearms crime remains a special priority because of high rates of youth violence, adult firearms crime still predominates. In the largest city among the participants, New York, where almost 13,000 crime guns were submitted for tracing, juveniles under age 18 account for 11 percent of the crime guns, youth ages 18 to 24 account for 34 percent, and adults age 25 and over account for 55 percent. Only in Bridgeport does the adult crime gun category not constitute a plurality.

**Juvenile crime guns are a significant percentage of the total.** One out of ten crime guns is recovered from a juvenile. Juvenile crime gun trace requests accounted for at least 10 percent of the total traces requested, with three exceptions, Cleveland (6 percent), Milwaukee (8 percent), and Richmond (9 percent). The percentage of juvenile crime guns submitted for tracing was over 20 percent in two cities: Seattle and Memphis.

**Juvenile and youth crime guns comprise almost half of the total.** Juvenile and youth crime guns combined account for 45 percent of the crime guns requested for tracing, while adult crime guns account for 55 percent of the total.

**Handguns predominate.** Eight out of ten crime guns traced are handguns. Handguns include semiautomatic pistols, revolvers, and derringers. In all sites, handguns are the largest category of firearms recovered by enforcement agencies. The percentage of crime guns accounted for by handguns recovered from all age groups ranged from 63 percent in Salinas, to 98 percent in Atlanta.

**A disproportionate number of juvenile and youth crime guns are handguns.** Juvenile and youth crime guns are more likely than adult crime guns to be handguns. Eight out of ten

juvenile and youth crime guns traced are handguns, whereas seven out of 10 adult crime guns are handguns. Of the crime guns recovered from *juveniles*, the percentage that are handguns ranges from 73 percent in Salinas to more than 90 percent in five cities: Cleveland, New York City, Seattle, Richmond, and Boston. Of the crime guns recovered from *youth*, the percentage that are handguns ranges from 67 percent in San Antonio to more than 90 percent in three cities: Washington, DC, Memphis, and New York City. Of the crime guns recovered from *adults*, the lowest percentage of handguns is in Seattle and Memphis, 56 percent. Handguns account for between 80 and 90 percent of the adult crime guns in four cities.

**Semiautomatic handguns predominate.** Semiautomatic handguns are more common crime guns than revolvers. Semiautomatic handguns range from a high of 67 percent of crime guns in Atlanta, to a low of 39 percent in St. Louis. Revolvers supplied no more than 41 percent of crime guns in any site. Half of all the crime guns recovered are semiautomatics.

**A disproportionate number of juvenile and youth crime guns are semiautomatic handguns.** In each site, juveniles and youth are more likely to be associated with semiautomatic handguns than are adults. Semiautomatic handguns accounted for a high of 66 percent of the *juvenile* crime guns in Boston, to a low of 47 percent of the juvenile crime guns in Baltimore and Birmingham. Semiautomatic handguns accounted for a high of 71 percent of the *youth* crime guns in Memphis, to a low of 46 percent of the youth crime guns in Salinas. Semiautomatic handguns accounted for a high of 54 percent of the *adult* crime guns in New York City and Washington, D.C. to a low of 35 percent of the adult crime guns in Birmingham and Milwaukee. Overall, 47 percent of the adult crime guns are semiautomatics. Semiautomatics constitute 61 percent of the youth crime guns and 58 percent of the juvenile crime guns.

\* Not all sites were considered for each of the findings below. Where the number of cases was insufficient for the particular finding, the site was excluded. A technical note with further explanation is available from ATF.

**In each site crime guns are concentrated among a relatively few kinds of firearms by manufacturer and caliber.** The top 10 types of crime guns, by manufacturer and caliber, represent a disproportionately large share of the total number of recovered firearms. The greatest concentration is in Inglewood, where the top 10 types of crime guns by manufacturer and caliber account for 48 percent of the total; 58 types of crime guns by manufacturer and caliber account for the remaining 52 percent. Even in Milwaukee, where the concentration is the least, the top 10 types of crime guns by manufacturer and caliber still account for 21 percent of the total; 567 types of crime guns by manufacturer and caliber account for the remaining 79 percent. Overall, the top 10 types of firearms by manufacturer and caliber account for more than 9,000 crime guns, or 24 percent, while 1,207 kinds of firearms by manufacturer and caliber account for the over 28,000 crime guns remaining, or 76 percent.

**Crime gun concentration by kind of firearm, by manufacturer and caliber, is relatively greater among juveniles and youth than among adults.** The highest concentration among *juvenile* crime guns is in Birmingham where the top 10 types of firearms by manufacturer and caliber account for 52 percent of recovered juvenile firearms. The highest concentration among *youth* crime guns is in Memphis where the top 10 kinds of firearms by manufacturer and caliber account for 46 percent of recovered youth firearms. By comparison, the highest concentration among *adult* crime guns is in Bridgeport, where the top 10 types of firearms by manufacturer and caliber account for 36 percent of the recovered adult firearms.

**In general, the State in which the community is located is the largest single source of its successfully traced crime guns.** In 12 of the 17 sites, the State itself supplies a *majority* of the successfully traced crime guns. This majority ranged from a high of 77 percent in San Antonio to a low of 54 percent in Seattle. In three of the 17 sites, the State itself supplies more crime guns than any other single source State, while the combination of all other States

supplies more than half of the successfully traced crime guns. This plurality ranges from a high of 47 percent in St. Louis to a low of 13 percent in New York City. There are two exceptions: for Jersey City, the top two source States are Virginia and Florida, each supplying 14 percent of the successfully traced crime guns, while New Jersey supplies 10 percent. No crime guns were traced to first retail sales in Washington, DC.

**Many recovered firearms are rapidly diverted from first retail sales at federally licensed gun dealers to a black market that supplies juveniles and youth.** This is shown by the proportion of guns recovered by law enforcement officials that are new, that is, bought less than three years before recovery by enforcement officials. New guns in young hands signal direct diversion — by illegal firearms trafficking, including straw purchases, theft from federally licensed gun dealers, or a combination of all of these. Enforcement officials can often identify the illegal sources of new firearms by following up on trace information. By contrast, older crime guns are more likely to have passed through numerous hands before entering illegal commerce, requiring other methods, such as debriefing criminal offenders, to identify their illegal sources. Based on crime guns recovered and submitted for tracing during the initiative, ATF estimates that new crime guns comprise between 22 percent and 43 percent of the firearms recovered from *juveniles*, between 30 percent and 54 percent of the firearms recovered from *youth*, and between 25 percent and 46 percent of the firearms recovered from *adults*.\* This finding leads to our conclusion that an effort to identify, prosecute, and incarcerate illegal firearms traffickers can reduce the illegal firearms supply that supports criminal activity by young people.

**Crime guns with *obliterated serial numbers* are likely to have been illegally trafficked.** Local tracing practices with respect to firearms with obliterated serial numbers varied too much during this initiative to provide consistent community-based analyses of crime guns with obliterated serial numbers. Therefore, reports on crime guns with obliterated serial numbers are not

\* A technical note explaining how these ranges were calculated is available from ATF upon request.



provided for the participating sites. However, preliminary research by the NTC in selected communities indicates that between 9 percent and 20 percent of recovered firearms have their serial numbers obliterated. NTC analysis indicates that *a very high percentage of firearms with obliterated serial numbers were originally purchased as part of a multiple sale and then illegally trafficked*. Restoration of obliterated serial numbers is often possible by either ATF or police department laboratories. Restoration of these serial numbers and tracing of the firearm should be given high priority.

**Preventing trafficking in new firearms to youths and juveniles.** Crime gun tracing is identifying many investigative opportunities for enforcement officials. The fact that many young people are using relatively new firearms, purchased from Federal firearms licensees that are maintaining records, provides significant opportunities for

enforcement agencies to identify illegal traffickers. Project LEAD and trace analyses can facilitate the investigation, arrest, and prosecution of illegal suppliers of these crime guns.

**Preventing trafficking of older firearms.** Preventing the trafficking of older firearms requires a different approach. Older firearms enter the illegal market through several routes: they are sold by federally licensed gun dealers as used firearms, they are sold as used firearms on the legal secondary market (i.e., private sales exempt from federal regulation), they are stolen and resold through gun traffickers, or they are stolen personally by the crime gun possessor. Finding the source of older guns requires, in addition to crime gun tracing, debriefing of arrestees associated with crime guns and investigation into the chain of transfers of the crime gun beyond the first retail purchaser.

## Future Crime Gun Trace Analysis Techniques

The ATF National Tracing Center is continuing to develop new techniques to analyze crime gun traces. These will further increase the ability of enforcement agencies to investigate and prosecute illegal traffickers. Future developments will include the following:

**Reporting on crime guns with obliterated serial numbers that cannot be restored.** The NTC has established a data base for crime guns for which serial numbers have been obliterated and cannot be restored. Collection of this information is critical to the NTC's efforts to report on crime gun trafficking.

**Improvements in Project LEAD.** Project LEAD, ATF's illegal firearms trafficking information system, is being improved to add indicators that will suggest new types of leads to trafficking investigators. In addition, special agents will be able to access Project LEAD in real time.

**Reports on multiple purchases of crime guns by a single purchaser.** When a Federal firearms licensee sells two or more handguns in five business days to a single purchaser, the licensee must notify ATF of these sales in writing. ATF provides a multiple sales form to simplify this notification. Information supplied by Federal firearms licensees on multiple sales forms is integrated into Project LEAD for use in

illegal firearms trafficking investigations. In the future, information on crime gun traces associated with multiple purchases can be included in crime gun trace analysis reports.

**Reports on crime guns that possessors report to be stolen.** The submission of trace requests for firearms known by enforcement officials to have been stolen was inconsistent among participating sites. NTC procedures will be altered to permit accurate reporting of this information. Currently, less than 1 percent of all crime guns submitted for tracing to the NTC are reported to have been stolen.

**Use of a ballistics identification system to help identify firearms traffickers.** ATF has pioneered ballistics technology that allows enforcement agencies to link recovered bullets and cartridge cases with recovered crime guns. To facilitate identification of traffickers and other criminals, the ballistics data base and the NTC crime gun data base can be linked, and ballistics-related information can be captured in crime gun trace analyses.

# The Youth Crime Gun Interdiction Initiative and Related Local Initiatives

The Youth Crime Gun Interdiction Initiative builds on leadership and innovations in a number of jurisdictions where enforcement agencies have been focusing on reducing illegal access to firearms. Three important examples follow:

**Project LISA: New Jersey's statewide crime gun tracing system.** Locally developed crime gun information systems, such as Project LISA in New Jersey, have served as local models for Project LEAD, ATF's national crime gun information system. Information on all recovered crime guns statewide is entered into the LISA system, enabling enforcement officials to identify juvenile and adult offenders. U.S. Attorney Faith Hochberg organized this statewide system through a memorandum of understanding among all enforcement officials in the State.

**The Boston Gun Project/Ceasefire.** The Boston Gun Project/Ceasefire is a joint Federal and local effort to reduce youth firearms violence in Boston under the leadership of Commissioner Paul Evans, U.S. Attorney Don Stern, and ATF Special Agent in Charge Jeff Roehm. David Kennedy, a senior researcher at Harvard's John F. Kennedy School of Government, developed the project under a grant from the National Institute of Justice. Participants also include the Department of Probation, youth outreach workers, the Department of Parole, the Department of Youth Services, and school police. The strategy combines: (1) a local, State, and Federal effort to crack down on the illegal gun supply and (2) a local, State, and Federal strategy to deter violence by youth gangs.

*The Boston Gun Project: crime gun supply reduction.* This project developed comprehensive tracing and trace analysis and instituted the debriefing of arrestees especially gang members arrested for weapons, drug, and violent offenses, for information leading to local gun traffickers. ATF agents, police, and prosecutors are using traditional criminal investigative techniques to identify and prosecute specific traffickers.

Participants are also developing an enforcement strategy based on trace analysis to disrupt Boston's illegal youth gun market. This focuses on guns recovered less than two years from first retail sale, guns with two or more crime gun traces, guns recovered from members of violent gangs, and guns identified as particularly popular with gang members. ATF and police are restoring obliterated serial numbers, tracing those firearms, and focusing on FFLs and gun purchasers associated with those weapons.

*The Boston Gun Project: deterring violent gang crime.* Participants in the Gun Project researched the Boston youth homicide problem and determined it to be largely gang related. Participating officials agreed to deliver and act on a new enforcement message to these gangs: *violence will not be tolerated in Boston; it will be met with a strong and coordinated interagency response.* Officials delivered this message through formal meetings with gang members, individual police and probation contacts with gang members, meeting with all inmates of secure juvenile facilities in the city, and gang outreach workers. Where violence occurs, it is met with a coordinated interagency response, using all possible enforcement tools, from probation supervision to Federal investigation and prosecution.

**Memphis U.S. Attorney's Anti-Violent Crime Task Force.** This task force is a joint Federal and local effort to reduce youth firearms violence in Memphis, spearheaded by U.S. Attorney Veronica Coleman. The group developed comprehensive crime gun tracing and trace analysis and instituted the debriefing of all arrestees, especially gang members and juveniles arrested with firearms or for violent offenses. This task force is currently working with ATF to expand local capacity to restore obliterated serial numbers on crime guns.

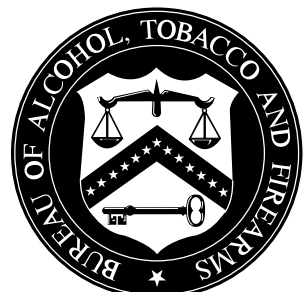
# Youth Crime Gun Interdiction Initiative

## July 1997

### ATF Trace Analysis Reports: Technical Material

The two enclosed Technical Notes are referenced in the Youth Crime Gun Interdiction Initiative ATF Trace Analysis Reports (General Findings: Local Illegal Firearms Markets) as being available upon request from ATF. One technical note explains why certain data sets are not used in all of the analyses. The other technical note explains how ATF determined time-to-crime findings.

Department of Treasury  
Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco & Firearms



## Technical Note *i*: Exclusions From Data Sets On Which Findings Are Based\*

### ***Exclusions From Age Based Comparisons:***

Certain Trace Analysis Reports of selected communities are not considered in age-related findings, due to characteristics of these sites' data sets. Specifically, the existence of very small counts in some of the subgroups, i.e. below 40 cases, restricted the use of these data sets in age-based analyses. Where any subgroup count was found to be below 40 cases, comparisons among age groups were considered inappropriate. For example, in the site of Inglewood there is only one juvenile crime gun trace request. Inclusion of this site in age-based analyses might have biased such findings as whether handguns predominate among juvenile crime guns.

The following is a list of sites not included in age-based analyses underlying the general findings:

- 1) Atlanta, Georgia: Insufficient number of cases in one or more age categories. There are only 21 crime gun trace requests in the juvenile category. This information can be found in Report B of the Atlanta report.
- 2) Inglewood, California: Insufficient number of cases in one or more age categories. There is only one crime gun trace request in the juvenile category, and 24 crime gun trace requests in the youth category. This information can be found in Report B of the Inglewood report.
- 3) Jersey City, New Jersey: Insufficient number of cases in one or more age categories. There are only 35 crime gun trace requests in the adult category. This information can be found in Report B of the Jersey City report.
- 4) St. Louis, Missouri: Insufficient number of cases in one or more age categories. There is only one crime gun trace request in the juvenile category, four crime gun trace requests in the youth category, and 22 in the adult category. This information can be found in Report B of the St. Louis report.

These sites are included in findings not based on age category, including those relating to handguns, semi-automatic handguns, firearm concentration by type, manufacturer, and caliber, and top source states.

### ***Exclusions From Firearm Type-Based Comparisons:***

Out of the over 37,000 guns analyzed, 21 firearms spread across six communities (Baltimore, Birmingham, Milwaukee, New York, Salinas, and San Antonio) were not identified by type of firearm (semiautomatic, revolver, etc.). In each community report's Table B, which examines the distribution of crime gun trace requests by age of possessor, the number of guns noted includes all cases for which there is information on the date of birth of the possessor. Among the 21 firearms unidentified by type, 13 are associated with date of birth information. These 13 firearms are included in Table B of the relevant reports. In each community report's Table C, which examines the distribution of crime gun trace requests by type of gun, firearms unidentified by type are *not* shown in the tables, however, they are counted in the denominator in calculating the percentages of the identified types of firearms by age group and for all ages.

For example, Birmingham Report B states that there are 46 juvenile crime gun trace requests, while Birmingham Report C identifies a gun type for only 45 juvenile crime guns. The one gun unidentified by type among the juvenile crime guns in Birmingham, which represents 2.17 percent of the total number of guns submitted for tracing that were recovered from juveniles, is not shown in Table C. Percentages for firearm type distribution among juveniles are calculated using *all* the juvenile crime gun trace requests noted in Table B, including the one weapon not identified by type.

\*page 7: 17 Communities Report; p. 20: Individual Community Reports

Comparisons among the 17 communities that refer to analyses by type of firearm are based *only* on the trace requests for which there are *both* date of birth information and firearm type information. For this reason, the percentages referred to in the General Findings: Local Illegal Firearms Markets that are associated with firearm type in a particular community may differ slightly from percentages that would be obtained using the data found in the relevant community report Table C. Two instances of this difference are apparent in the text found on the first page of General Findings: Local Illegal Firearms Markets.\* As noted there, the correct percentage of juvenile crime guns that are handguns in Salinas, California is 73 percent; and the correct percentage of juvenile crime guns that are semiautomatic handguns in Birmingham, Alabama is 47 percent.

\*page 7: 17 Communities Report; p. 20: Individual Community Reports

## Technical Note *ii*: Time-to-Crime Analysis\*

To estimate the percentage of crime guns rapidly diverted from retail sale at federally licensed firearms dealers, ATF used the following method:

ATF arrived at a high end estimate by comparing the number of crime guns with a time-to-crime of less than three years with the number of crime guns with a time-to-crime of more than three years among the 37 percent of the crime guns submitted for tracing that resulted in *successful NTC traces*. This measure is shown by age category in the High End Estimate table (see below). Of all crime guns that resulted in successful NTC traces, 48.8 percent had a time-to-crime of less than 3 years. This 48.8 percent is an actual finding of less than three year time-to-crime for the *37 percent* of crime gun trace requests that resulted in successful NTC traces. It is also a high end estimate of the percentage of the *total* number of crime guns submitted for NTC tracing with time-to-crime of less than three years.

ATF closed the remaining 63 percent of the crime gun trace requests without achieving a successful NTC trace for one of three reasons: (1) insufficient firearms-related information, 23 percent of total requests; (2) Federal firearms licensee records unavailable, 7 percent; or (3) firearm determined to be too old to trace, 33 percent. (Community-specific information about successful and closed traces can be found in Table F of each community report.)

To estimate the time-to-crime rates of the traces that did not result in successful NTC traces, ATF evaluated each of the three categories of closed traces. For the firearms traces that were closed due to insufficient firearms-related information on the trace form (23 percent), and those lacking Federal firearms licensee records (7 percent), ATF assumed that *half* of both these groups of traces had less than three years time-to-crime, and *half* had more than three years time-to-crime.

With respect to the 33 percent of the firearms traces that were closed under NTC guidelines relating to age determination in special projects, ATF assumed that they would not have the same time-to-crime rates as firearms that resulted in successful NTC traces. Rather, ATF assumed that the *entire* 33 percent of the firearms for which traces were closed because they were determined to be too old to trace had *more than 3 years time-to-crime*.

Combining the estimates of time-to-crime among all three categories of closed NTC traces, ATF concluded that the low end estimate of the percentage of all firearms submitted for tracing with less than 3 years time-to-crime is 26.6 percent. This measure is shown by age category in the Low End Estimate tables (see below).

\*page 8: 17 Communities Report; p. 21: Individual Community Reports

## Technical Note *ii*: Tables

### Time-To-Crime: High End Estimates of the Percentage of Successfully Traced Crime Guns Rapidly Diverted From First Retail Sale at Federally Licensed Firearms Dealers

Time-to-Crime	Adult		Youth		Juvenile		Row totals	
	%	[guns]	%	[guns]	%	[guns]	%	[guns]
Less than three years	46.3%	[1604]	54.3%	[1257]	43.3%	[349]	48.8%	[3210]
More than three years	53.7%	[1859]	45.7%	[1058]	56.7%	[457]	51.2%	[3374]
Column totals	100%	3463	100%	2315	100%	806	100%	6584

Number of Missing Observations: 31005

### Time-To-Crime: Low End Estimates of the Percentage of Successfully Traced Crime Guns Rapidly Diverted From First Retail Sale at Federally Licensed Firearms Dealers

Time-to-Crime	Adult		Youth		Juvenile		Row totals	
	%	[guns]	%	[guns]	%	[guns]	%	[guns]
Less than three years	25.2%	[1604]	30.5%	[1257]	21.9%	[349]	26.6%	[3210]
More than three years	74.8%	[4760]	69.5%	[2861]	78.1%	[1246]	73.4%	[8876]
Column totals	100%	[6364]	100%	[4118]	100%	[1595]	100%	[12077]

### Time-to-Crime: Low End Estimate of the Percentage of Successfully Traced Juvenile and Youth Crime Guns Rapidly Diverted From First Retail Sale at Federally Licensed Firearms Dealers

Time-to-Crime	Juvenile and Youth % [guns]
Less than three years	28.1% [1606]
More than three years	71.9% [4007]
Column totals	100% [5713]

For additional copies of this report, contact ATF's  
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