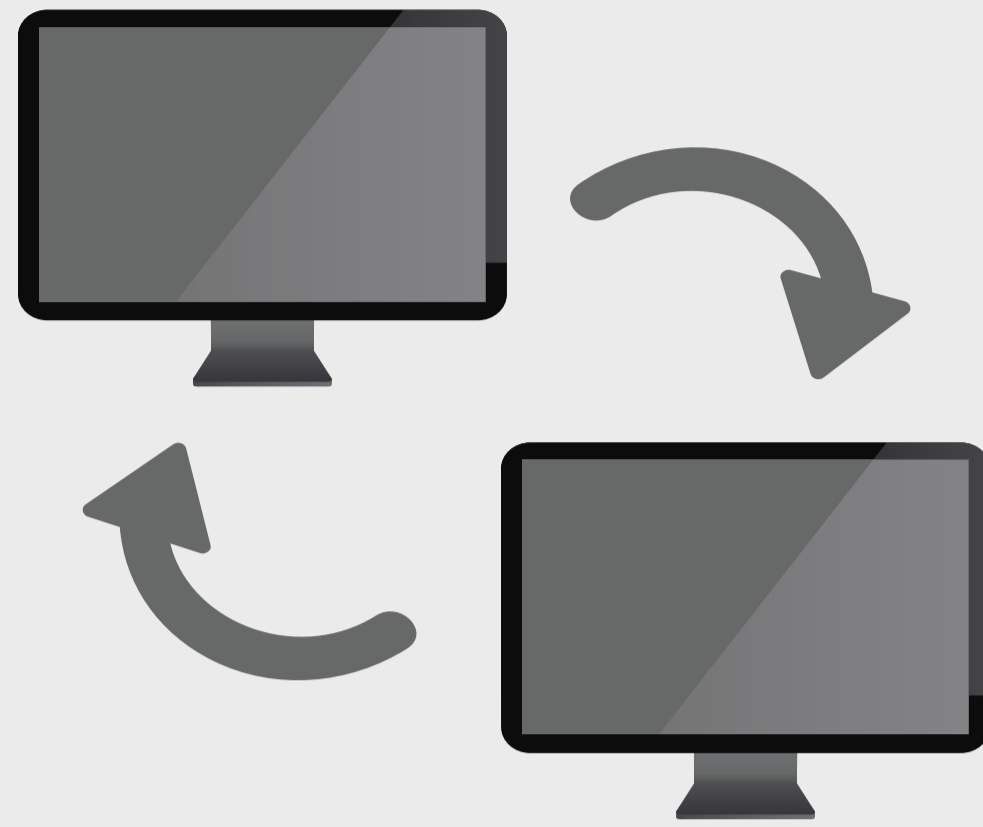


# HOW ATF TRACES FIREARMS



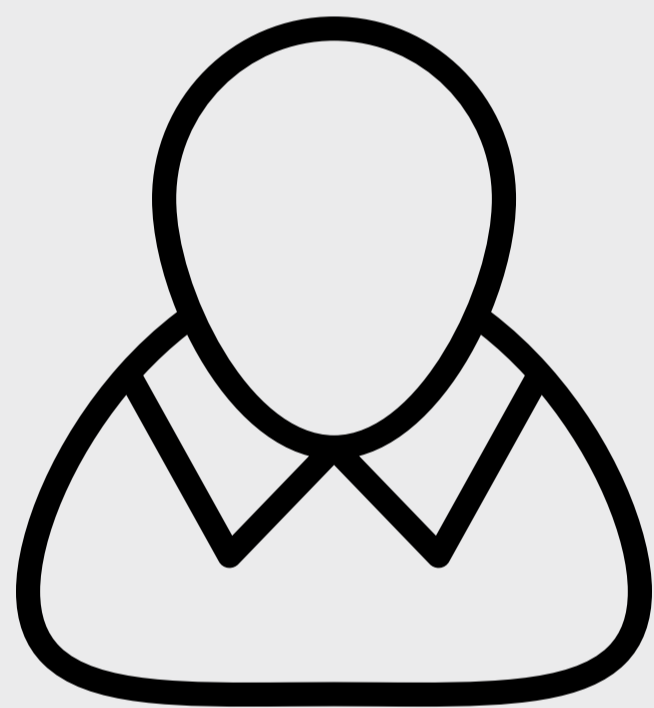
A firearm is recovered by law enforcement



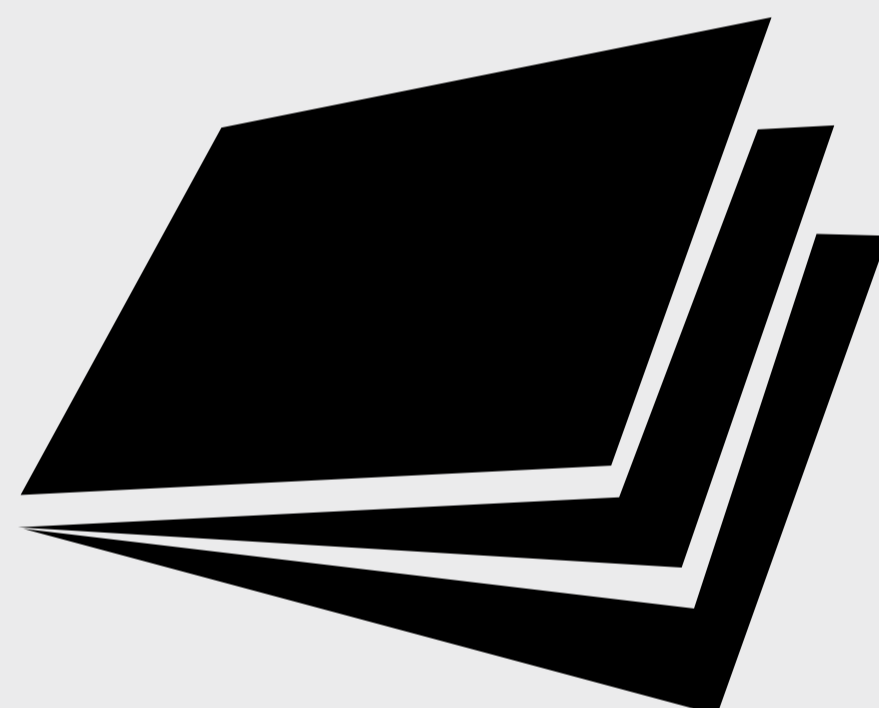
ATF receives recovery information in e-Trace



Trace reveals origin of firearm manufacturer or importer



The first purchaser is identified and the investigative process is initiated \*\*



FFL manually looks through firearm transaction records to find the first purchaser \*\*



Trace leads to the original Federal Firearms Licensee (FFL) \*

**408,000+**  
**trace requests in FY17**



[www.ATF.gov](http://www.ATF.gov)

\* Not all traces may lead to original FFL; sales sometimes lead beyond that to a subsequent FFL.  
\*\* First purchaser is not always identified, sometimes traces lead to a more recent purchaser or an unlicensed purchaser.