



# ATF

## SOUTHWEST BORDER INITIATIVE PROJECT GUNRUNNER

*December 2007*



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# Foreword by the Director



~~Recently, I traveled to Mexico City to meet with Mexico's Attorney General Medina Mora and Secretary of Public Safety Garcia Luna to discuss enforcement strategies in combating the unprecedented firearms violence taking place along the U.S. Mexico border. This violence, which is fueled by the burgeoning drug trade and enforced through the ruthless and criminal use of firearms and explosives, has taken the lives of many citizens on both sides of our international border.~~

~~A significant number of the casualties are Mexican law enforcement officers and elected officials who put their lives on the line to protect their citizenry. The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) has come to the forefront to address this growing threat to the safety of our mutual communities. We have mobilized as an agency to combat this threat to communities on both sides of the border, by working with our domestic and international law enforcement counterparts.~~

~~We are using resources such as our firearms tracing and intelligence capabilities, and have partnered with a number of other Federal law enforcement agencies and local governments to address violence on the U.S. side of the border. Through our office in Mexico, we continue to work with Mexican law enforcement officials to identify the best tactics to address our common fight against this threat.~~

~~By presenting this strategy, we seek to communicate the level of our resolve and commitment in addressing the violence along the U.S. Mexico border, and thus we call on our law enforcement partners on both sides of the international border to join us and continue to work with us in the common goal of reducing crime related to firearms violence and bringing stability to both of our countries.~~

~~Michael J. Sullivan, Director Designate  
Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives~~



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# Southwest Border Initiative PROJECT GUNRUNNER

## Southwest Border Initiative, U.S. Department of Justice

### Background

Approximately 92 percent<sup>1</sup> of the cocaine that currently enters the United States is filtered and distributed by Mexican Drug-Trafficking Organizations (DTO) located just across the border from the United States. Mexico's top two DTOs are operating in these areas. These are the Gulf Cartel, located on the Gulf Coast side of Mexico and the Sinaloa Cartel, operating in the Central to West side of Mexico. Mexico's top drug lords are battling for highly prized smuggling routes along this international border, but particularly in Nuevo Laredo, the busiest commercial border crossing for US-bound Mexican goods, because drugs are often hidden in commercial vehicles driving north.

In an effort to maintain control of their drug routes and distribution, and to keep their competitors in check, these DTOs readily resort to violence and intimidation through the use of firearms and explosives, which are the “tools of the trade” for the criminal element.

In response to this escalating drug-related, firearms-trafficking violence—which has included the kidnapping of American citizens and the murder of Mexican officials—U.S. Attorney General Alberto Gonzales and his previous Mexican counterpart, Daniel Caveza de Vaca, announced an initiative to address this problem on October 13, 2005, in San Antonio, Texas. This initiative, which has come to be known as the Southwest Border (SWB) (Narco-Violence) Initiative, was coordinated by the U.S. Department of Justice's (DOJ) Criminal Division and Office of International Affairs. It brings the resources of the Department's various law-enforcement agencies [e.g., ATF, Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), Bureau of Prisons (BOP), and the United States Marshal Service (USMS)] together in order to devise a concerted strategy to meet the threats affecting the cities and towns on both sides of the border (see Appendix A).



*U.S. Attorney General Alberto Gonzales (left) and his Mexican Counterpart, Daniel Caveza de Vaca (right) in San Antonio, TX in October 2005*

<sup>1</sup> Remarks to Congressional Panel by DEA Intelligence Official Anthony Placido on June 14, 2005.

In February 2007, ATF Acting Director Michael J. Sullivan traveled to Mexico City to meet with U.S. Ambassador to Mexico Tony Garza in order to assess how the United States could help Mexico stem the traffic in illegal weapons across the border. Mr. Sullivan also discussed his thoughts with Mexican Attorney General Medina Mora and Secretary of Public Safety (SSP) Garcia Luna and with other cabinet-level officials, including how ATF could support the proposals made by Attorneys General Alberto Gonzales and Medina Mora during their meetings in Mexico City in January 2007 (see Appendix B).



**Mexican Secretary of Public Safety Garcia Luna (left) and ATF Director Designate Michael Sullivan (right) in Mexico City, February 2007**

Historically, in September of 2005 Mexican and U.S. authorities, including representatives from DOJ's various law-enforcement agencies and other Federal, State, and local agencies, attended a mini-Senior Law Enforcement Plenary (SLEP) session. The SLEP is composed of senior law-enforcement DOJ representatives and Mexican counterparts and is the principal coordinating body of the Attorneys General Bi-national Commission. It convenes bi-annually to develop, assess, and report on the progress being made on policy and law-enforcement issues jointly developed by the United States and Mexican governments. During that session, ATF agreed to implement a number of actions in support of this initiative. As a result, ATF developed strategic action items that involve both domestic and international components.

During the October 2005 SLEP session in Mexico City, ATF introduced its action items under this initiative (see Appendix C). These continuing action items are appropriate for incorporation into ATF's response to the SWB violence. These action items are also regular topics of discussion at bi-annual SLEP sessions.

## **ATF's Southwest Border Strategy and Strategic Outcome**

ATF's strategy regarding the Southwest Border (Narco-Violence) Initiative is summarized as follows:

*Working with its domestic and international law-enforcement partners, ATF will deny the "tools of the trade" to the firearms-trafficking organizations operating in Mexico through proactive enforcement of its jurisdictional areas in the affected border States in the domestic front, as well as through assistance and cooperative interaction with the Mexican authorities in their fight to effectively deal with these violent firearms and DTOs.*

The expected strategic outcome will be the:

*Suppression of the firearms and explosives-related violence occurring on both sides of the border through effective law-enforcement collaboration involving the investigation and interdiction of illicit trafficking and use of firearms, explosives, and ammunition.*



## Expansion of eTrace



The cornerstone of ATF's SWB Strategy, which encompasses the international and domestic strategic components as discussed below, is the tracing of firearms recovered from the criminal element by law enforcement. The value of firearms trace information and statistics in law-enforcement efforts is unquestionable. eTrace is an internet, web-based law-enforcement tool that allows for the online tracing of firearms and the production of statistical data (see Appendix D). This tool allows for the comprehensive and systematic tracing of firearms in order to develop intelligence regarding the sources of crime guns recovered in Mexico and in border areas. It also assists local offices in identifying, targeting, and investigating straw purchasers and the traffickers who employ them.

ATF committed itself to decentralizing eTrace and utilizing it in Mexico's 31 states and further recommended its implementation in the 9 U.S. Consulates within Mexico. The decentralization implementation is pending approval by the Mexican government.

Ongoing analysis of firearms trace data allows ATF to continuously evaluate changes in purchase patterns. For example, analysis of successfully traced crime guns recovered in 2005 and 2006 suggests that the Los Angeles metropolitan area of California; Phoenix and Tucson, Arizona; and Dallas, Houston, San Antonio, El Paso, Laredo, McAllen, and Brownsville in Texas are currently major source areas. Additionally, the States of Georgia, Illinois, Kansas, Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Colorado, and Florida have become significant source states in the past four years in terms of firearms successfully traced to a US Federal Firearms Licensee (FFL).

The ATF National Tracing Center Division (NTC) has analyzed the firearms' tracing information submitted by Mexico and has determined that there exists two general categories of firearms demand and that there are three general trafficking routes from the United States into Mexico. Firearms' trafficking is a supply-and-demand dynamic.

The first category of demand is for 7.62mm rifles, 5.56mm rifles, and new handguns to support criminal organizations associated with narcotics trafficking and serious violent crime. These groups are characterized by their desire for specific types of firearms, purchased as part of a multiple sale and transported from the U.S. into Mexico to specific locations and organizations within Mexico.

The second category of demand is for inexpensive handguns for persons who do not have the proper permissions to possess firearms in Mexico. This method is commonly referred to as "ant-trafficking" and the demand group is characterized by persons purchasing low-quality, used handguns one at a time which they then transport into Mexico where they are subsequently dispersed. Over an extended period of time, they slowly migrate southward throughout the country.

As indicated above, there are three major trafficking routes from the United States into Mexico. The first route, called the "Tucson Corridor," runs from Tucson, Arizona, across the border at Nogales and then proceeds south along the West Coast highway to Hermosillo, Guaymas, Culiacan, Matzatlán, and Guadalajara then on to Mexico City. Primarily firearms purchased in California and Arizona are trafficked along this corridor to supply organized crime groups operating along the West Coast of Mexico.

The second route, called the “El Paso Corridor,” runs from El Paso, Texas, across the border at Ciudad Juarez, continuing down the central highway to Chihuahua, Durango, Zacatecas, and San Luis Potosi into Mexico City. Primarily firearms from Texas and Arizona are trafficked along this corridor and may or may not be associated with organized crime.

The third route, called the “Houston Corridor,” runs from Houston, San Antonio, and Laredo, crosses the border into Nuevo Laredo, Reynosa, and Matamoros, proceeds to Monterrey, Tampico, Poza Rica, and then proceeds to Mexico City or Vera Cruz and east. Primarily firearms purchased in Texas are trafficked along this corridor to supply organized crime elements operating in eastern Mexico.

The NTC and ATF’s Mexico City Office (MCO) will work with the Mexican government to decentralize and distribute eTrace in order to provide an effective methodology for Mexican law enforcement to submit crime-gun trace requests in a timely and accurate manner.

The NTC is responsible for effectively and efficiently tracing guns recovered in Mexico and submitted via eTrace. This also implies three additional items (a) a regular feedback loop to Mexico defining trends in errors relative to the submission of the trace requests in order to make continuous improvements in the data quality; (b) a Spanish version of eTrace as a funding and development priority to improve accuracy; and (c) all new handguns, 7.62mm or 5.56mm rifles recovered anywhere in Mexico should be traced URGENT.

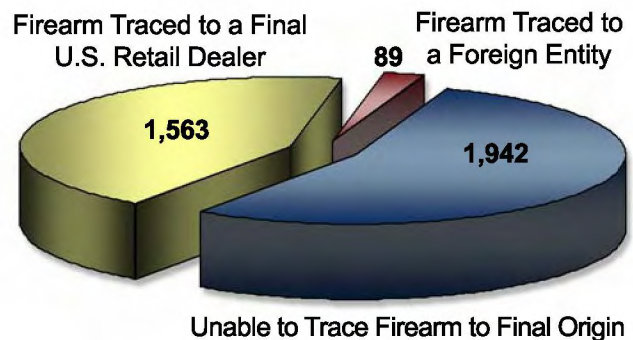
Further data mining of firearms-trace data conducted by the Violent Crimes Analysis Branch (VCAB) will be used to determine specific trends and assist in the identification of potential targets. This analysis includes crime-gun mapping that ties the location in Mexico where the crime guns are being recovered to their specific source areas in the United States. It also identifies high-volume FFLs who are the point of origin for firearms that are being recovered by law enforcement in Mexico or in border areas in connection with criminal investigations. Through periodic data mining and analysis, shifts in patterns will be ascertained in order to devise specific strategies to cut off the flow of illegal U.S.-sourced firearms to Mexico.

An emphasis will be placed upon deploying ATF’s eTrace system to law-enforcement agencies along the SWB in Texas; a Spanish version of this system is planned for deployment to the International law-enforcement community.

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## BREAKDOWN OF TRACE RESULTS WITH A RECOVERY IN MEXICO

*Calendar Years 2005-2006*



**NOTE:** Other traces may be pending or may have been stopped per the requestor.

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Violent Crime Intelligence Division  
Violent Crime Analysis Branch*

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## International Strategic Component

All of ATF's activities in Mexico should be coordinated through the ATF Attaché Office located in the U.S. Embassy Mexico City. Coordination is essential to ensuring the safety of ATF personnel on TDY to Mexico, for vetting of Mexican law enforcement and other officials that contact field divisions asking for various ATF resources, and for ensuring that the United States Ambassador and law-enforcement component are aware of ATF activities in Mexico. Failure to coordinate all ATF official activities can cause serious problems for our personnel in country and for TDY personnel requiring country clearance or other diplomatic assistance.

The action items that were promulgated through ATF's participation in the bi-annual U.S. - Mexico SLEP sessions are the primary means by which ATF will strive to contribute to the fight against the narco-violence taking place along the U.S. border with Mexico. These action items will be implemented through ATF's International Affairs Office (IAO) and the ATF MCO through the coordination of ATF's various assets and resources as follows:

- 1. The United States and Mexico will establish a point of contact (POC) for each ATF border field division. The POC will be the Division's Special Agent in Charge (SAC) or his/her designee. The POC and the Procuraduría General de la República (PGR, Mexican Attorney General's Office) representative will meet regularly to coordinate investigative and firearms-trafficking issues. Additionally, meetings between agency leadership representatives will occur every four months to address administrative and oversight issues. These meetings will include PGR officials, ATF field designees, and ATF's IAO representatives from Headquarters or Mexico City.**

ATF and other DOJ components [(e.g., DEA, USMS, and FBI) and U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) [e.g., Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE)] operating along the border will be responsible for implementing investigative strategies and for developing intelligence relating to trafficking into Mexico for dissemination as appropriate.

- 2. The United States and Mexico will form a consultative group of attorneys and law-enforcement officials from both countries to address legal issues and policies involving firearms trafficking and enforcement strategies and policies. This group will also make recommendations to both governments to consider on firearms trafficking and enforcement policy issues and operating procedures. ATF will designate its representatives for the policy consultative group.**



*On May 5, 2005, the Mazatlan City Municipal Police in Mazatlan, Sinaloa, Mexico seized these weapons as well as a LAW rocket following a tip regarding individuals who were seen in possession of weapons near a dance club. ATF traced the firearms.*

**3. The United States will investigate the availability of funding in order to provide technology and equipment to assist the government of Mexico in upgrading its firearms forensics analysis and tracing capabilities.**

ATF will conduct an assessment of the capabilities of Mexican law-enforcement components operating along Mexico’s northern border with the United States in order to develop a priority list that ranks Mexican law-enforcement offices that could benefit from ATF-provided technology.

ATF, the Department of State’s Narcotics Affairs Section (NAS), and the Government of Mexico (GOM), will develop the logistics and seek funding to implement and sustain eTrace capabilities in the identified offices in Mexico.

ATF will assess the need and potential for establishing new ATF offices in the northern areas of Mexico. These offices would serve as strategic bases of operation for combating violence and trafficking activities that occur in those areas.

**TOP U.S. SOURCE STATES OF FIREARMS TRACED IN MEXICO**

*Calendar Years 2005-2006*

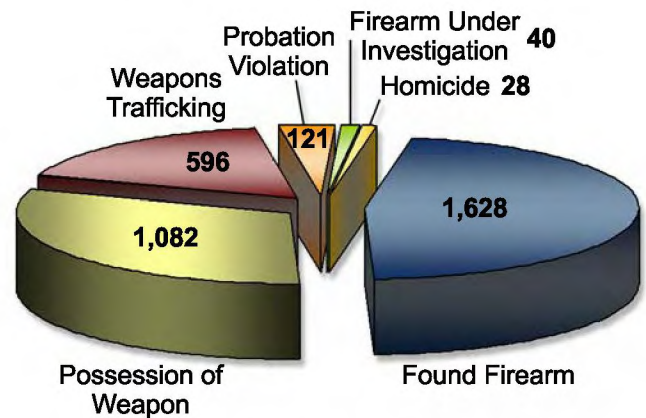


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Violent Crime Intelligence Division  
Violent Crime Analysis Branch*

4. **The United States, through ATF, has and will continue to provide training and canines to Mexican customs officials at the border to for use in detecting firearms and explosives entering Mexico from the United States.**

ATF, with the assistance of NAS Mexico City, continues to assess the need for Mexican customs officials operating at the border with the United States to be provided explosives-detecting canines. Entry points into Mexico from the United States that are likely to be prime trafficking venues will be prioritized for the potential receipt of canines. ATF, with the assistance of NAS Mexico City and the GOM, will continue to determine the needed resources and coordinate training classes and funding for the implementation of a sustainable canine-training program in Mexico.

**TOP CRIMES REPORTED ON FIREARMS TRACES WITH A RECOVERY IN MEXICO**  
*Calendar Years 2005-2006*



*Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives  
 Violent Crime Intelligence Division  
 Violent Crime Analysis Branch*

5. **The United States will explore opportunities to provide training as requested by Mexico’s Agencia Federal de Investigacion (AFI - Mexican National Police) and Unidad Especializada de Investigacion en Terrorismo, Acopio y Trafico de Armas (UEITA – Mexican Federal Prosecutor’s Office), in the following areas: (1) post-blast investigation; (2) render-safe training; and (3) firearms trafficking, tracing, and identification.**

ATF, the NAS Mexico City, and the GOM will determine the resources and funding necessary in order to provide the pertinent requested training.

6. **Whenever possible, the United States will consider the GOM’s requests for detailed information on firearms-trafficking suspects (developed as a result of tracing information). In turn, the GOM will consider ATF’s requests for detailed information (associates, cell-phone information, and other relevant intelligence) gleaned by Mexican law-enforcement officials from persons arrested or detained in firearms investigations or trafficking schemes.**

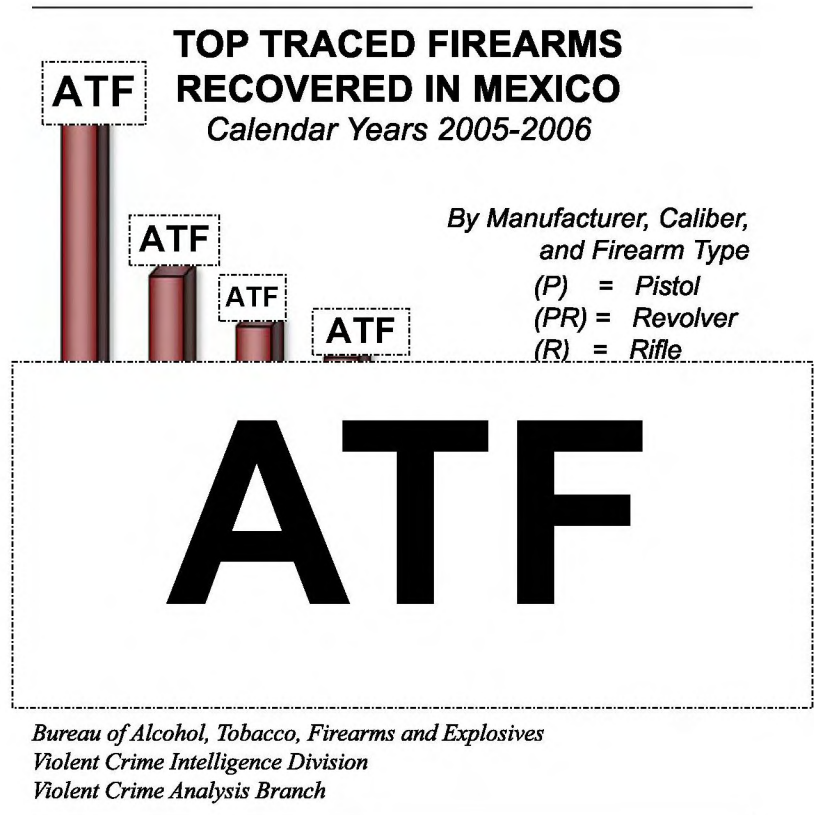
ATF will strive to promptly meet requests for relevant intelligence/information from the GOM, within any prescribed parameters, laws, and regulations that exist in the United States and/or guidelines established under this initiative. This issue will be further addressed by the consultative group of attorneys and enforcement officials from both governments that will convene as outlined earlier.

7. **The United States, through ATF, will increase its tracing of seized and otherwise recovered crime guns in Mexico through the expansion of eTrace and an emphasis on tracing by ATF's MCO.**

ATF will strive to timely conduct traces of suspected U.S.-sourced firearms recovered in Mexico that are brought to its attention. At the same time, it will work to increase the tracing capabilities of the GOM. ATF is also working with NAS Mexico City to develop a Spanish language version of eTrace.

Through the ATF Attaché Office at the United States Embassy in Mexico City, ATF personnel are also heavily involved in the following:

- The coordination of the deployment of eTrace through the Regional Security Officer, Department of State to U.S. Consulates in regions of Mexico experiencing major seizures of firearms originating in the United States.
- The coordination of an ATF explosives assessment at the U.S. Embassy Mexico City and a similar assessment of training needs by Mexican AFI, SSP, and PGR security and enforcement personnel.
- The coordination of Firearms Forensic Lab equipment and training assessments at the PGR Laboratory and SSP Laboratory.
- The coordination of intelligence sharing between ATF's Office of Strategic Intelligence and Information (OSII) personnel and vetted Mexican law-enforcement and intelligence officials.



## Domestic Strategic Component

The domestic strategic component of ATF's responsibility under DOJ's SWB Initiative is designed to focus Bureau resources on its four affected border field divisions (Dallas, Houston, Los Angeles and Phoenix) in order to combat firearms violence, violent offenders, and firearms trafficking along the U.S. and Mexico border.

This component utilizes the results of firearms trace information/statistics for the affected area(s). It also encompasses various local initiatives implemented by the SWB field divisions as discussed in various internal documents/reports such as "Interdicting Guns and Ammunition to Mexican Drug Traffickers," which was composed by the ATF Corpus Christi Field Office and "Firearms Trafficking to the United Mexican States through Arizona – Project Iron River," which was authored by the Phoenix Field Division. ATF's focus on violence and firearms trafficking along the SWB, as outlined below, will also improve U.S. homeland security in that region.

### Firearms Trafficking Investigations

While a great portion of the firearms and ammunition trafficking that fuels the violence along the SWB is concentrated in the areas covered by ATF's Dallas, Houston, Los Angeles, and Phoenix Field Divisions, firearms-trace results show that trafficking from other field divisions also accounts for a substantial portion of recovered crime guns. Additionally, firearms trafficking via the Internet and the illegal manufacture of machine guns from parts kits available via the Internet or mail are also potential problems. Therefore, all ATF Field Divisions will make firearms trafficking associated with crime guns encountered along the SWB a top priority.

Any firearms-trafficking investigation that specifically relates to this initiative will be coded in NForce with SWB for "Southwest Border Initiative" in order to measure the level of success of ATF's strategy in implementing this initiative. A project code of "SWB" will also be implemented in eTrace for this initiative.

OSII Field Intelligence Division analysts monitor firearms trace data, multiple-purchase information, out-of-state firearms recovery information, High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA) interdiction reports and other agency reports documenting firearms recoveries, to assist in identifying firearms trafficking patterns, trends, and methods.

ATF has formed an SWB Committee which will convene periodically to plan, coordinate, and evaluate the effectiveness of current border-trafficking enforcement activities, including those named above. ATF will conduct assessments in border towns to determine if there are any other areas where successful strategies may be applicable and effective.



*The Mexican Army seized one .50 caliber Barrett rifle and two Norinco 7.62x.39mm rifles on August 9, 2005. Mexican military personnel stationed at a check point in the municipality of Navolato, Sinaloa, Mexico stopped a vehicle for a routine check. Although two of the three occupants of the vehicle escaped after they fled, the third occupant was arrested immediately when the soldiers discovered the weapons inside the vehicle.*

Additionally, ATF brings the following tactics and resources to firearms-trafficking enforcement efforts:

- **ATF's NTC, the VCAB, and Regional Crime Gun Centers (RCGC):** These offices are used to pinpoint problem areas and "hot spots," through the use of analytical firearms trace data in order to identify the "worst-of-the-worst" criminals.
- **National Integrated Ballistics Information Network (NIBIN) Testing:** ATF ensures that all recovered firearms are traced and submitted for NIBIN testing. ATF will ensure that all ballistic crime-scene evidence is also entered into NIBIN.
- **Investigative Resources:** ATF has devoted additional Special Agents, Industry Operations Investigators (IOI), and Intelligence Research Specialists (IRS) to border Field Divisions. ATF is also working to increase staffing levels through additional funding.
- **Information Sharing:** ATF continues to stress the sharing of information with all levels of law enforcement (International, Federal, tribal, State, and local). Additionally, ATF assets at the El Paso Intelligence Center (EPIC) continue to serve as a clearinghouse for both law-enforcement intelligence and investigative information pertinent to the entire SWB region.

For cases in which Federal prosecution provides for enhanced sentencing, ATF and the U.S. Attorney's Office in each of the affected Field Divisions/districts will continue to target and prosecute the most violent offenders, or the "worst-of-the-worst." By identifying those specific cases in which individuals or organizations that have a history of violence have illegally obtained firearms, ammunition, and/or explosives, or are engaged in violent criminal activity that involves arson or the illegal use or possession of firearms or explosives, ATF will continue to impact the nefarious effects of violent crime. (See Appendix E for representative investigations.) In addition, along with investigating violent criminal organizations, ATF will continue to focus its efforts on investigating and prosecuting firearms traffickers and corrupt FFLs.

### **Other Investigations - Narcotics**

It is the experience of ATF and DEA agents in the border area that many DTOs who are responsible for bringing narcotics into the United States comprise a ready market for illicit firearms. Their demand for high-caliber, quality firearms is a result of the need to protect their illicit drug business and eliminate rivals. These traffickers recruit individuals to purchase firearms in the United States or purchase firearms from persons trafficking firearms to Mexico. These weapons are frequently secreted in hidden compartments or voids in the same vehicles used to traffic narcotics into the United States.

HIDTA Task Forces and Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Forces (OCDETF) regularly encounter firearms during the course of their investigations.

Under the SWB Violent Crime Impact Team program, ATF will ensure that all firearms recovered in HIDTA and OCDETF investigations are traced, and that investigations relative to the sources of these firearms are conducted, particularly where the firearms are recovered from Regional Priority Organization Targets and Consolidated Priority Organization Targets.

ATF partners with HIDTA and OCDETF on DTO investigations that reveal the existence of a firearms-trafficking infrastructure. ATF has also provided DEA with access to, and training in, eTrace in an effort to increase firearms tracing by DEA.

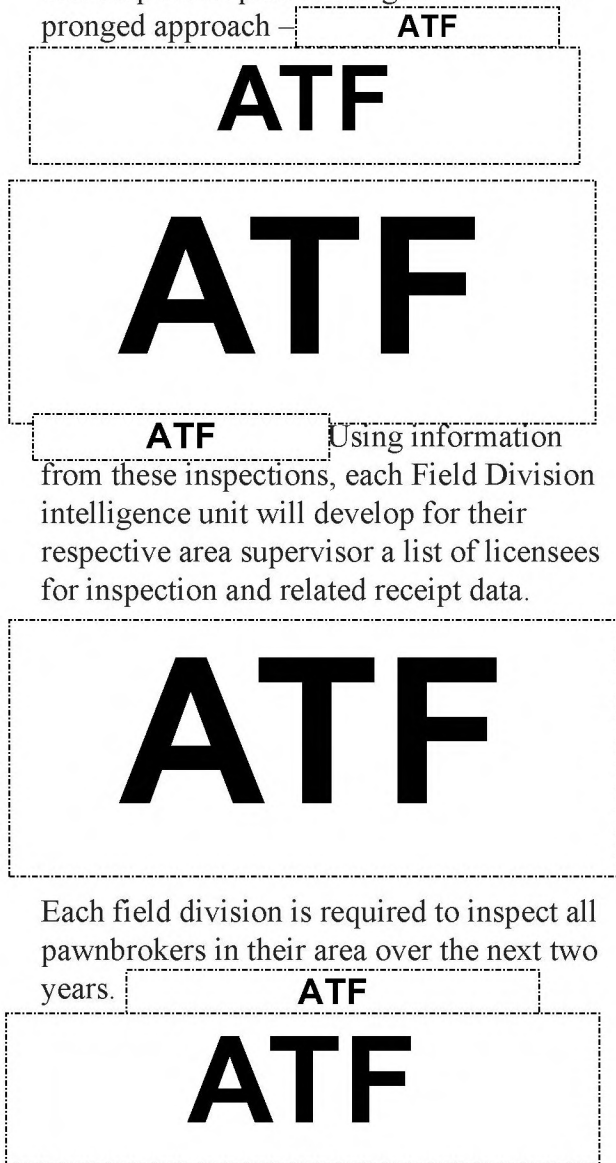


Additionally, ATF will work with the Customs and Border Patrol (CBP), DEA, and ICE, to ensure that all of the firearms they recover are traced, that an analysis of each of those traces is made to determine the source of the recovered firearm, and that investigations are initiated, when appropriate, to shut down trafficking operations that are arming DTOs along the border.

**National Industry Operations Strategy**

One key component to shutting off the illicit flow of firearms into Mexico and U.S. border states is ATF's industry inspection program of FFLs in the affected areas. A primary cause for unsuccessful firearms traces is the incomplete record keeping by FFLs.

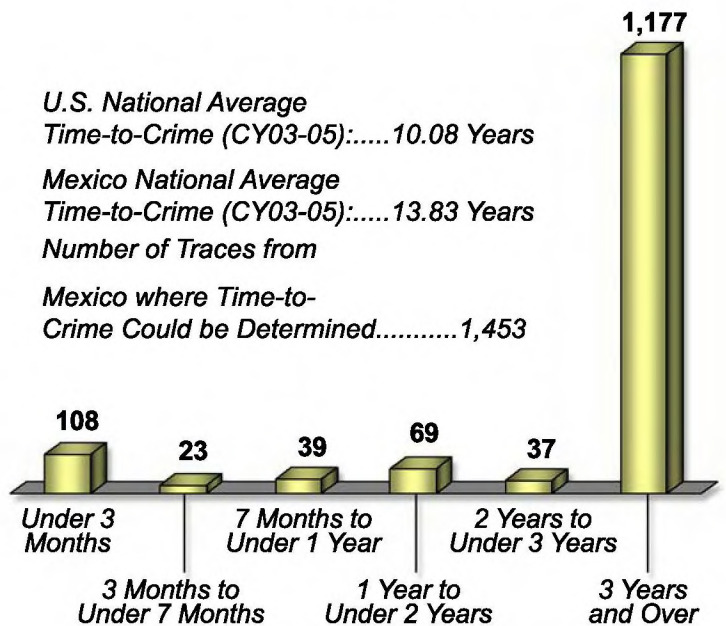
The inspection plan is designed as a three-pronged approach —



Each field division is required to inspect all pawnbrokers in their area over the next two years.

The outreach component will include a firearms-industry component as well as outreach to other Federal, State, or local law enforcement. See memorandum from AD Field Operations (FO) which references the Industry Operations' Implementation Plan in Appendix F.

**TIME-TO-CRIME RATES FOR TRACED FIREARMS RECOVERED IN MEXICO**  
Calendar Years 2005-2006



*U.S. National Average Time-to-Crime (CY03-05):.....10.08 Years*  
*Mexico National Average Time-to-Crime (CY03-05):.....13.83 Years*  
*Number of Traces from Mexico where Time-to-Crime Could be Determined.....1,453*

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Violent Crime Analysis Branch*

## **FFL Outreach and Training Activities**

ATF will pursue face-to-face contact with all FFLs in the targeted areas and will conduct planned and well-advertised seminars. “Don’t Lie for the Other Guy” promotional campaign materials, available in both English and Spanish, will be distributed. The training will cover firearms trafficking, straw purchasing, record-keeping requirements, theft prevention, tracing, multiple sales, and theft-reporting requirements. This outreach, besides enhancing voluntary compliance, has three goals:

- To improve relations with FFLs by opening dialogue and providing information to industry members, including the clarification of rules regarding straw purchasers and sales to foreign customers.
- To further enhance ATF’s tracing capabilities by improving record keeping and reporting by FFLs in the targeted area.
- To develop informational leads that may assist in targeting potential traffickers of firearms and ammunition, or other unscrupulous FFLs that may be operating in violation of Federal or State laws.

## **Border Liaison Position**

Each Field Division will assign a special agent to act as the Border Liaison in their specific area of operation. These FO personnel will be the front line of this initiative, attacking the issues on the ground level. In their areas of operation, they will be responsible for driving the collection and subsequent dissemination of actionable investigative intelligence through the Project Gunrunner structure. These individuals will be stationed in forward positions, adjacent to the border, and will be provided with the means to operate within Mexico to enhance their productivity (i.e., Diplomatic U.S. Passports, investigative and safety equipment, etc.).

## **BEST/OCDETF/ HIDTA**

In January 2006, ICE, in collaboration with DHS and CBP, created Border Enforcement Security Task Forces (BEST) (see Appendix G). The BEST teams were created to develop a comprehensive approach to identifying, disrupting, and dismantling criminal organizations posing threats to border security. ATF currently participates in, and plans to expand our participation in, many of these task forces. In January of 2007, Attorney General Gonzales announced additional resources for use in combating the drug trafficking and border violence along the SWB (See Appendix H).

An inseparable relationship exists between violent firearm-related crimes in Mexico, Mexican-based criminal organizations, and the drug trafficking conducted by these organizations to destinations throughout North America. As a result, collaboration with BEST, HIDTA, and OCDETF assets will be sought at the earliest possible time once a qualifying nexus to a known DTO is documented. ATF continually emphasizes the investigative potential of firearms seized pursuant to these investigations and ensures all firearms recovered in BEST, HIDTA, and OCDETF investigations are not only traced, but that investigations relative to the sources of these firearms are exhaustively conducted, particularly where the firearms are recovered from Regional Priority and Consolidated Priority Organization Targets.

This will be done in conjunction with OCDETF’s Operation Gatekeeper. Operation Gatekeeper is a multi-agency, multi-district attack on the individuals and organizations referred to as Gatekeepers. These entities control the flow of drugs through the SWB corridors linking Mexico and the United States. The Gatekeepers generally operate at the behest of a Mexican drug cartel and are located in and manage geographically specific entry points along the United States-Mexico border.

Border-nexus weapons' interdictions will be coordinated through CBP who will be the lead for interdictions along the United States border with Mexico. CBP will coordinate the interdiction operation with the EPIC ATF Gun Desk but will have final decision authority on actual border-nexus interdictions. At no time will there be any type of cross-border operation, whether it is north or southbound without the concurrence of CBP. CBP will provide feedback to EPIC ATF Gun Desk regarding all seizures. All SWB Project Gunrunner weapons investigations will be coordinated through the EPIC ATF Gun Desk. All enforcement groups from ATF, CPB, ICE, DEA, FBI, USMS, US Secret Service, and National Drug Intelligence Center will provide firearms and explosives-related intelligence and case status reports to the weapons desk in EPIC regarding all related investigative leads, intelligence and seizures.

## Gun Shows

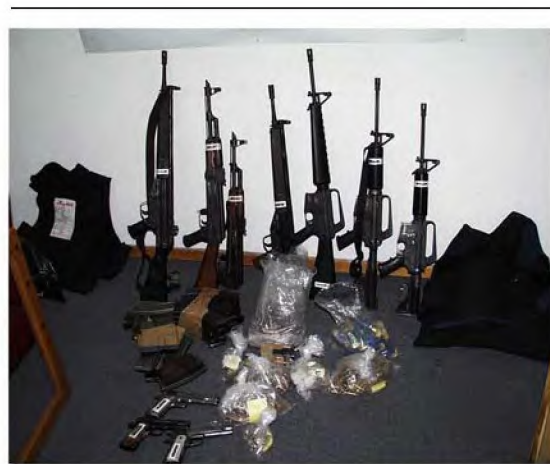
Gun shows throughout the border region pose a significant threat as a source of WOC and ammunition for Mexican-based criminal organizations. Gun shows conducted within states where current legislation does not provide for longer waiting periods than those mandated by the National Instant Check System pose an elevated risk as WOC sources, specifically within Arizona and Texas. At these venues, the difficulties in regulating the transfer of firearms and ammunition amongst private citizens require more austere measures to be conducted by field operations and intelligence personnel. Through the purchase and use

**ATF**

intelligence on non-U.S. vehicles present at these shows can be gathered and shared with the appropriate law-enforcement agency within the U.S. and/or Mexico. The availability of this technology could more than double the productivity of these efforts. This information will undoubtedly identify individuals obtaining firearms through this illicit and otherwise un-checked source of firearms destined for Mexico and will also lead to the interdiction of firearms at the ports of entry where requisite levels of suspicion for searches are statutorily reduced.

## Highway Interdiction

It is widely known that many of the vehicles designed and used to traffic controlled substances from Mexico into the U.S. are used to return money and firearms to Mexico. By utilizing Federal, State and local law enforcement situated along the identified trafficking corridors and using the LPR technology, real-time intelligence gathered from these agencies will be funneled from its source, through EPIC resources, to personnel positioned adjacent to points of entry. This will identify and interdict the transportation of firearms and ammunition into Mexico along identified corridors, which will take advantage of the reduced border-search requirements for mobile-conveyance searches.



*On August 4, 2005, citizens of Uruapan alerted the municipal police after witnessing a group of suspicious civilians traveling in a vehicle at excessive speed through town and brandishing firearms. After a short pursuit, the vehicle was stopped and surrounded. A subsequent search of the vehicle and its occupants led to the recovery of ten rifles, three pistols, and a large quantity of ammunition, as well as the detainment of several suspects.*

## **Telephone analysis**

FO personnel will provide Intelligence Component assets with any pertinent information regarding phone numbers recovered pursuant to these firearms-trafficking investigations. This information sharing will enable the Intelligence Components to reconcile this information against indigenous and outside agency intelligence engines leading to insights as to the identity of individuals involved within the U.S. and Mexico.

## **NForce/NSpect**

In an April 2007 memorandum, ATF standardized the documentation process for work completed in Project Gunrunner in NForce, including Investigative Profile, Report of Investigation, and Significant Activity Report format and trace submission. In order for these systems to be used as an intelligence source, each user must receive the necessary training to identify these distinctions and judiciously annotate them when appropriate. Currently, no code in NSpect specifically identifies inspections associated with Project Gunrunner. The only Industry Operations efforts being documented toward this initiative are those inspections profiled as Pawnbroker or Pawnbroker Recall in the SWB Divisions. A specific code needs to be created similar to designation within NForce. This can be accomplished by creating an additional selection within the Profile tab under Tier Three or Tier Four drop down menus within NSpect.

## **Language**

For personnel operating abroad to do so effectively, they must possess the ability to communicate effectively. Many of these individuals are native and/or fluent Spanish speakers. However, the cadre of these employees with these skills is limited throughout ATF, and Spanish speakers are needed elsewhere throughout the country. Language and culture training will be needed depending on individual levels of proficiency.

## **Explosives/Detection K9**

ATF will continue to assess the need for Mexican customs and law-enforcement officials operating at the border with the United States to have canines. Entry points into Mexico from the United States that are likely to be prime trafficking venues will be prioritized for the potential receipt of canines. Six students graduated from ATF's Canine Academy in April 2007. These explosives-detection canine handlers returned to Mexico with an additional six ATF-trained canines for a total of nine canines. All of these teams are disbursed throughout Mexico and are working at various points of entry. Continuing to adhere to ATF's explosive-detection standards, these nine teams are scheduled to travel to the US in September of 2007 for re-certification at ATF's Phoenix Field Division. Negotiations are underway with NAS to fund a canine-training academy in Mexico City where ATF would provide trainers to on a rotating basis so that large numbers of quality canines and handlers can be trained to combat illicit firearms, ammunition, and explosives trafficking. In furtherance of this goal, ATF has traveled to Mexico for site surveys and recommendations for establishing and maintaining such a facility.

## **Forensic Training**

To improve upon the number of viable traces for recovered firearms, Mexico's law enforcement must be able to provide complete information regarding these firearms despite attempts made to obliterate the identifying marks. ATF, in concert with NAS Mexico City, has provided Serial Number Restoration and Firearms Identification training to forensic lab personnel in Mexico City. This training was very timely

since there are now three Integrated Ballistic Identification System machines in Mexico (Mexico City, Guadalajara and Reynosa).

### **Law Enforcement Training**

A concerted effort continues to be made to focus ATF's training resources toward those involved in and/or affected by SWB firearms trafficking. Externally, ATF is continually assessing the training needs of Mexico's law-enforcement agencies to improve the quality of the trace results and other evidence recovered pursuant to their increasing violent-crime rates. It is incumbent on ATF to impress upon its domestic law-enforcement partners the importance of proper firearms identification and the value of comprehensive tracing. Additionally, ATF will conduct aggressive public and industry outreach and promotional efforts regarding the existence, elements, and repercussions of firearms trafficking to Mexico. Internally, much of the ATF workforce that will conduct investigations involved in Project Gunrunner are either native or proficient Spanish speakers; however, additional language and culture training is necessary at various skill levels. For the real-time intelligence component of this initiative to be successful, ATF will standardize data entry as it pertains to Project Gunrunner designation which will lead to consistent and complete record maintenance and the ease of information retrieval.

### **Firearms Trafficking**

ATF's Training and Professional Development Directorate (TPD) has perfected an SWB Firearms Trafficking course to enhance the attendees' knowledge and resources in combating firearms trafficking along our southern border. The course will orient the attendees with current advanced firearms-trafficking concepts, intelligence sources, schemes, patterns, and trends that are prevalent along the US-Mexico border. The objectives of the class will be to introduce appropriate methods for investigating firearms-trafficking offenses through the utilization of new and innovative techniques, as well as to expose the participants to actual case studies, projects, and operations that are relevant to SWB firearms trafficking. Additionally, the collective networking of our resources, contacts, techniques, and issues will prove to be an added benefit to those involved in combating SWB firearms trafficking. Two classes are scheduled to be delivered in August and September of 2007.

In June 2007, at the International Law Enforcement Academy San Salvador, ATF will be delivering instruction on firearms trafficking, firearms tracing, ballistics, and gangs to various law-enforcement entities from the countries of El Salvador and Mexico. This is the third such course delivered to this audience.

Further, ATF has developed a course on recognizing the characteristics of armed persons. This four-hour course, designed for State and local police officers as well as agents, provides authorities with the skills and abilities needed to recover crime guns from the street prior to their use in additional crimes of violence. The course includes detailed instructions on identifying the characteristics of persons who carry concealed firearms, the legal issues concerning stop and frisk, and articulating probable cause for searches. An emphasis will be placed upon delivering this course to law-enforcement authorities with areas of operations along the Mexican border. This training will both enhance the officers' margins of safety on the street by making them aware of when they are dealing with an armed suspect, and it will also increase the number of street-level recoveries of firearms.

With the implementation of this domestic component of ATF's strategy in DOJ's SWB Initiative, the Bureau will be able to effectively address the current narco-trafficking violence threat affecting both sides of the border.

## Intelligence Component

In order for intelligence relating to this initiative to be of value, it must be “real time” in nature. To this end, each entity within the Intelligence Component must be diligent in its exercise of information flow to and from other strategic components and other domestic and Mexican counterparts.

### OSII

OSII will be responsible for the oversight of the Intelligence Component of Project Gunrunner. Dedicated Project Gunrunner analysts will evaluate trace data, multiple-

purchase information, and crime-gun recovery information and will work closely with the NTC, FO, other Federal, State, and local enforcement and intelligence agencies, in an effort to identify firearms traffickers, suspect FFLs, trafficking trends, routes, methods, and means of trafficking.

OSII’s responsibilities will include:

- Coordinate activities as appropriate with Enforcement Programs and Services (EPS), TPD and FO.
- Ensure that all viable firearms recovered are traced within the United States.
- Identify significant gun seizures and analyze trace results and agency reports.
- Prepare trace summaries detailing any acquisition observations, use of secondary markets, stolen-gun trafficking, and initiate referrals to the field intelligence groups.
- Utilize NTC, VCAB, RCGCs, and other federal intelligence reports (i.e., HIDTA and OCDETF interdiction reports) to identify trafficking trends and indicators of illegal activities in the U.S.
- Prepare intelligence advisories and/or information papers linking recovered firearms to criminal organizations within Mexico and other observations detailing any other unique characteristics encountered, including pertinent findings, trends, and patterns. for field and management use.
- Review criminal and general-intelligence investigations and FFL inspections for commonalities such as individuals, vehicles, locations, and telephone numbers for subsequent dissemination to the field for investigation.
- Identify facilitator and purchaser telephone numbers in the U.S. and Mexico, vet through DEA for identification purposes, case de-confliction and/ or case fusion, and disseminate the information to the Intelligence Community Representatives to ATF for identification and exploitation.
- Identify multi-agency investigations involving Project Gunrunner suspects and facilitate the potential for OCDETF investigations.
- Facilitate meetings between agency leadership representatives at predetermined intervals to address administrative and oversight issues. These meetings will include PGR officials, ATF field designees, and ATF’s IAO representatives.

## **Project Gunrunner Coordinator**

ATF has designated a Project Gunrunner Coordinator, responsible for the coordination of the agency's overall SWB Initiative efforts. This individual is assigned to OSII and stationed at EPIC.

The Project Gunrunner Coordinator will:

- Coordinate criminal intelligence and industry operations intelligence endeavors with all affected field divisions, EPS, TPD, OSII and other U.S. and Mexican law-enforcement agencies.
- Develop a unified strategy in concert with the four SWB Division SACs and MCO to affect firearms and ammunition trafficking to Mexican-based criminal organizations in both the U.S. and Mexico.
- Develop and/or disseminate real-time intelligence relating to cross-border gun trafficking.
- Develop and coordinate intelligence with OSII relating to Mexican criminal organization gun seizures and domestic Mexico-bound gun and ammunition shipments.
- Develop cross-border investigations through coordination of domestic investigations.
- Assist case agents in preparing intelligence and information-sharing packages for Mexican counterparts.
- Coordinate intelligence and information-sharing packages with the MCO.
- Prepare quarterly progress reports relating to Project Gunrunner.
- Coordinate Project Gunrunner-related training, briefings, etc.

Appendix I is OSII's Draft Strategic Assessment of the SWB Initiative. It contains additional information pertaining to OSII's responsibilities.

## **EPIC – Central Information Collection Point**

EPIC will act as the clearinghouse for the information flow between ATF, other U.S. assets, and their Mexican counterparts (in cases involving Mexico in coordination with the MCO). All firearms and explosives seizure intelligence gleaned by all participating agencies and the GOM will be forwarded to the EPIC ATF Gun Desk, which is manned by ATF personnel, for trace referrals and analysis of the results. EPIC has historically focused on the drug and illegal-immigrant movement along the southwest border; however, considering the increasing occurrences of firearm violence associated with these two areas, assets within the EPIC infrastructure will be dedicated to Project Gunrunner areas of interest.

ATF has established a National Gun Desk in the EPIC. The Gun Desk within EPIC serves as a central repository for weapons-related intelligence. The Guns Desk compiles illicit weapons information and intelligence from Federal, State, and local law-enforcement agencies as well as foreign governments such as Mexico. CBP and ICE will share weapons seizure data with the EPIC ATF Gun Desk. Weapons seizure information will be appropriately de-conflicted and coordinated among participating agencies. The sharing of weapons seizure information with the EPIC ATF Gun Desk will be complemented by tactical information sharing within regional investigative task forces.

Project Gunrunner will incorporate ATF, ICE, CBP, and other participating agencies into joint initiatives based upon expanded information sharing and coordinated operations. By September 1, 2007, ICE principal field officers should have coordinated with their CBP and ATF counterparts to implement regional initiatives and intelligence sharing/de-confliction to counter outbound-weapons smuggling to Mexico.

A thorough analysis of the collected data on weapons seized at the border and in Mexico will: 1) establish sales/purchase patterns, 2) identify areas in Mexico that have a high concentration of seized firearms, and 3) identify and target persons and/or businesses that are involved in the selling/purchasing of weapons smuggled into Mexico.

ATF will work in concert with other agencies assigned to EPIC. ATF has sole regulatory authority of FFLs and Federal Explosives Licensees and the only NTC for tracing firearms as well as the US Bomb Data Center for tracing explosives. All SWB firearms investigations will be de-conflicted and intelligence will be shared through the EPIC ATF Gun Desk.

## **Violent Crime Analysis**

The principal objective of ATF's illegal firearms-trafficking enforcement actions is to deny criminals access to firearms and reduce the number of firearms-related violent crimes. Periodic analyses of successfully traced U.S.-sourced crime guns recovered in Mexico will be used to identify both trafficking trends and specific straw purchasers.

ATF will provide detailed analyses of this data in order to identify various indicators of suspected illegal activities, such as U.S. firearms dealers with a disproportionate number of firearms recovered in Mexico, two or more firearms recovered in Mexico traced back to the same individual, persons making multiple purchases of firearms with one or more of the firearms subsequently being recovered in Mexico, or multiple individuals purchasing a single type of gun on the same day from the same FFL with these firearms eventually being recovered in Mexico. These analyses, coupled with other intelligence, will be used to target firearms and ammunition traffickers who are illegally providing firearms to criminals in at least the States of Texas, Arizona, New Mexico, southern California, and Mexico.

## **Field Intelligence Groups**

The SAC of each border field division will dedicate an additional IRS to Project Gunrunner, with each division providing supervision of those IRS's dedicated to the project. A schedule of meetings and information sharing sessions will be coordinated with their Mexican counterparts as well as the other border field division POCs, the Project Gunrunner Coordinator, and applicable MCO personnel.

Field Intelligence Group (FIG) responsibilities will include:

- Act as the conduit for information requests from Mexico to EPIC or other OSII entities.
- Coordinate the appropriate response to significant violent crime-related firearm seizures by Mexican law enforcement in order to enhance and expedite the intelligence gained from these events.



- Prepare referrals summarizing the OSII analytical findings identifying the potential links to Mexico-based criminal organizations and the recovery incident.
- Develop background packages on purchasers and/or FFLs identified through trace results to include pertinent contact information and any other relevant intelligence that can be developed, including information contained in TECS, Online LEAD, and from local law-enforcement intelligence units.
- Refer to the appropriate Field Office/Group and ensure any results are correctly documented within NForce.
- Utilize PeN-LINK to store and analyze telephone data from Project Gunrunner and Violent Crime Impact Team/Project Safe Neighborhood suspects from the four border divisions for analyses by OSII.

## Performance Measures

Several areas within the Project Gunrunner lend themselves to insights as to its effectiveness. In order to monitor the productivity of the efforts committed to this initiative and to assign or re-adjust resources appropriately, the following areas have been identified:

### Trace Component

- Number of traces submitted, manual vs. eTrace. (NTC)
- Percentage of completed traces, manual vs. eTrace. (NTC)

### Intelligence Component

- Number of viable/valid referrals sent to enforcement agencies. (OSII/FIGs)
- Number (%) of response/reciprocal referrals. (OSII)

### Industry Component:

- Number of illicit sources (licensee/individual) identified. (NSpect)
- Number of inspections completed within target areas/corridors. (NSpect)

### Enforcement Component:

- Defendant/Investigative Analysis information (NForce)
- Seizure information (NForce)
- Seizure/arrest rates pursuant to Gun Show and Highway Interdiction efforts (NForce/EPIC)

### Training Component

- Number of individuals trained. (TPD)
- Number and variety of training iterations completed. (TPD)

### Overall Measures (Within Mexico and U.S. Border areas)

- Change in firearm-related violent crime. (MCO/FBI-UCR)

- Number of firearm recoveries. (NForce/MCO)
- Change in firearm and controlled substance prices. (EPIC/DEA)

## Needs Assessment

### General Needs Assessment

#### *Short Term*

- Spanish version of eTrace and associated Firearms Tracing System modifications.
- Expanded hours for contract analysts supporting border field divisions.

#### *Long Term*

- Four firearms tracing specialists stationed at the NTC to support additional SWB trace requests.

### Field Operations Needs Assessment

In order for ATF to successfully accomplish a reduction in firearms trafficking and related violent crime in the SWB region and Mexico, additional assets must be committed to this initiative. These can be categorized as short and long-term needs, respectively.

#### *Short Term*

- Diplomatic credentialing for those personnel operating within Mexico including passports.
- Obtain funding for travel/training.
- Reproduction of the eTrace website and ATF publications in Spanish.
- Public Service Announcements.
- Armored vehicles for personnel operating within Mexico. (\*Safety Issue\*)
- Satellite-tracking technology available for personnel operating internationally. (\*Safety Issue\*)
- Obtain SCI clearance for select special agents assigned to the Project Gunrunner to provide access to valuable classified information.

#### *Long Term*

ATF criminal and industry operations offices are understaffed in the border cities where the majority of DTO-related crime occurs.

- The Dallas Field Division is understaffed with agents and inspectors. The target city of El Paso is understaffed with agents and has [ATF] inspectors at the Industry Operations (IO) satellite office.
- The Houston Field Division is understaffed with agents and inspectors. The target city of McAllen is understaffed with agents and has [ATF] inspectors at the IO satellite office. The satellite office of Laredo has [ATF] agents and no inspectors. Brownsville is established but is not staffed.
- The Phoenix Field Division is understaffed with agents and inspectors. The target city of Tucson has [ATF] enforcement offices and is understaffed with agents and inspectors. The IO satellite office has three inspectors.

- Los Angeles Field Division is understaffed with agents and inspectors. The target city of San Diego has two enforcement offices which are fully staffed. The Industry Operations field office is understaffed.

Below are the additional staffing needs to achieve the ideal staffing levels to conduct the Project Gunrunner successfully:

LOCATION	OFFICE	SA	IOI	IRS	IA	PSA	ATTY	FSN
<b>HQ</b>	EPIC	<b>ATF</b>						
	VCAB							
	OSII							
	CHIEF COUNSEL							
	COORDINATOR							
<b>FIELD DIVISION</b>	CHULA VISTA*							
	EL CENTRO*							
	TUSCON I							
	SIERRA VISTA*							
	TUSCON II							
	YUMA*							
	LAREDO							
	MCALLEN							
	BROWNSVILLE*							
	LAS CRUCES							
	EL PASO							
	DEL RIO*							
	ROSWELL*							
	MIDLAND/ODESSA*							
	FUSION CENTERS*							
<b>INTERNATIONAL (TO BEGIN AS TDY)</b>	EPS – MEXICO							
	MEXICO CITY							
	MONTERREY*							
	HERMOSILLO*							
	GUADALAJARA*							
	TIJUANA*							
	MAZATLAN*							
<b>TOTAL</b>								

\*NEW OFFICES

## Conclusion

ATF's SWB Strategy, with its international and domestic components, expects to make a significant contribution to DOJ's department-wide SWB (Narco-Violence) Initiative. This focused approach will ensure that a significant impact is made on the violence affecting communities in the affected region.

# Appendix A



# Department of Justice

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
THURSDAY, OCTOBER 13, 2005  
[WWW.USDOJ.GOV](http://WWW.USDOJ.GOV)

AG  
(202) 514-2008  
(202) 514-2008

## FACT SHEET

### **ATTORNEY GENERAL OF MEXICO DANIEL CABEZA DE VACA ANNOUNCE INITIATIVES TO COMBAT NARCOTICS-RELATED VIOLENCE ON THE BORDER**

The U.S. and Mexican Attorneys General along with officials from the Offices of the Attorneys General of the State of Texas and the State of Tamaulipas in Mexico met in San Antonio today to discuss mutual concerns and to review a series of law enforcement initiatives to strengthen our coordinated attack on the narco-violence plaguing the communities on both sides of the border.

Today's high-level meeting followed a meeting in Houston on September 13, 2005 of more than 100 federal law enforcement and criminal justice representatives of the United States and Mexico and their state counterparts from Texas and Tamaulipas to focus their attention, experience, and skills on developing initiatives and additional efforts to confront the increased violence attributed to narcotics trafficking in the border area. The meeting resulted in concrete recommendations for action and provided an opportunity for all to meet personally with counterparts across jurisdictions and across the border who are working against the troubling increase in narco-violence in the Southwest Border region.

The recommended and agreed-upon bilateral initiatives, some of which Attorney General Alberto R. Gonzales and Attorney General of Mexico Daniel Cabeza de Vaca highlighted at a joint press conference in San Antonio, Texas, today are as follows:

#### **TACTICAL LAW ENFORCEMENT EFFORTS**

- The U.S. and Mexican federal and state criminal justice authorities have committed to coordinate law enforcement efforts, using all available legal authorities, to counter and quell the extreme narco-violence in the border area and to disrupt the flow of illicit proceeds that fuel that violence.

#### **Information and Intelligence Sharing**

- The United States and Mexico will improve the coordination and timeliness of law enforcement information sharing between and among the appropriate U.S.-Mexican *federal and state* authorities and agencies on both sides of the border relating to narco-violence forces, forensics, prison security, victim/witness security, cross-border currency flows, and firearms trafficking.
- As an example, the United States and Mexico will establish points of contact and a regular course of meetings to improve and expedite information sharing opportunities that will specifically enhance both sides' knowledge and capabilities to combat cross-border firearms trafficking.

- The United States and Mexico will place *special emphasis* on the coordinated and prompt exchange of information about relevant events that occur on our respective sides of the border that may impact the other country so that both may effectively determine and initiate any necessary country-specific or coordinated law enforcement response.

### **Training and Technical Assistance**

- The United States will provide Mexico with training and technical assistance in an array of criminal investigative areas, to include:

*Port of Entry Security:* the United States will offer training for Mexican custom officials (vetted units) on the utilization of truck portal x-ray machines (previously provided by the USG) at strategically located ports of entry within Mexico

*Forensics:* the FBI will detail for the Government of Mexico (GOM) how they might best submit evidence to the United States for advanced forensic examination and analysis, explore opportunities to transfer U.S. lab equipment to the GOM (and provide necessary training on the equipment) to assist Mexican forensic personnel in advancing their forensics capability, share forensics protocols to ensure full compatibility with international evidentiary databases (*e.g.*, DNA databases), and consider mechanisms to permit the rapid exchange of forensic results; and

*Prison Security:* the U.S. Bureau of Prisons will provide information to the federal prison facilities in Mexico on electronic devices and equipment used in the U.S. federal prisons to deter and detect the introduction of contraband into the prison system.

- In addition, recognizing the devastating impact of this continued violence on those in the communities on both sides of the border and on our separate and coordinated efforts to bring to justice those that perpetuate this violence, the United States and Mexico will work together to ensure prompt responses to threats against officials, victims, and witnesses by the violent criminal organizations operating in the border areas in order to ensure their safety and availability. To that end, the United States will share its experiences as well as offer training and technical assistance to Mexico on Victim/Witness Security Programs, a Crime Victim Fund, and a coordinated U.S. - Mexican Rewards Program.
- The United States will also explore opportunities to provide and expand training and technical assistance and equipment to enhance Mexico's capabilities in post-blast investigations, crime scene preservation, security-conscious investigative practices, and firearms and explosives detection at the border (including the use of weapons detection canines).

### **Additional Bilateral Cooperative Measures**

- Finally, State officials will continue their law enforcement cooperation, support, and discussions on the effective and coordinated use of task forces in both countries. The federal components of both the U.S. and Mexican governments will continue to meet on a regular basis in the U.S.-Mexican Senior Law Enforcement Plenary in an ongoing effort to coordinate initiatives and overcome obstacles to progress in all phases of the work against international criminal organizations.
- The United States and Mexico will explore opportunities for bilateral conferences of judicial branch members.

# Appendix B



U.S. Department of Justice

Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco,  
Firearms and Explosives

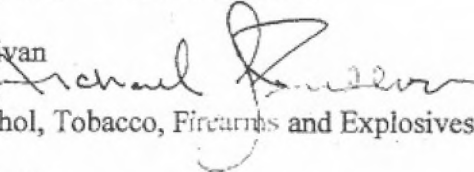
*Office of the Director*

MAR 6 2007

Washington, DC 20226

## MEMORANDUM FOR THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

THROUGH THE DEPUTY ATTORNEY GENERAL

FROM: Michael J. Sullivan  
Acting Director   
Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives

SUBJECT: Visit to Mexico City

At your request, I visited Mexico City from February 13-15, 2007, to meet with senior law enforcement officials and Ambassador Garza to discuss ways ATF can work cooperatively with our Mexican counterparts on the issue of gun trafficking. The meetings were substantive, informative, and productive. This memo provides a brief overview of the meetings and outlines the efforts ATF intends to pursue over the next several months to reduce the flow of illegal guns from the United States to Mexico.

### MEETINGS WITH SENIOR MEXICAN LAW ENFORCEMENT

On the morning of February 14, 2007, ATF met with Secretary of Public Safety Genaro Garcia Luna and his senior officers at SSP headquarters. In the afternoon, we met with Attorney General Eduardo Medina Mora and several of his senior advisors. In both meetings, we discussed the new Administration's efforts to consolidate and modernize their federal law enforcement agencies, and ways to better cooperate on gun trafficking matters.

According to Garcia Luna, he is working to modernize and merge Mexico's federal police agencies: AFI, PFP, Customs and Immigration. The new agency will be called the CFP (Cuerpo Federal Policiaco).

Garcia Luna noted that Mexico is tremendously concerned about increasing numbers of more powerful firearms, ammunition, and other items trafficked from the United States into Mexico. According to Luna, Mexico has recovered 40mm grenades, M-203 grenade launchers, AR-15's, M-16's, and AK-type weapons at crime scenes and from associates of narco-traffickers throughout the country. According to the GOM, most individuals arrested in Mexico in possession of these weapons state that the firearms and explosives were obtained in the United States.

Attorney General Medina Mora discussed many of the same cases and seizures as Garcia Luna, and presented ATF with a paper outlining Mexico's concerns along with a series of proposals to solve the gun trafficking problem. We have attached a translated version of that paper for your review.

ATF provided an overview of our current activities and assistance in Mexico, and we had an open and frank discussion about United States firearms laws, limitations on information collection, enhanced sharing of firearms trace data, and the obstacles to cooperation we observed with the previous administration. In particular, we discussed the fact that the number of gun trace requests from Mexico has declined substantially in recent years and that this information is valuable to ATF in identifying Federal firearms licensees (FFL) responsible for gun trafficking into Mexico, potential straw purchasers, as well as gun trafficking organizations and routes. Both Medina Mora and Garcia Luna acknowledged that they are working to solve bureaucratic problems (largely involving the Mexican military's involvement in firearms seizures) associated with trace requests, and that they anticipated that the number of trace requests would increase under the new Administration.

We closed both meetings by outlining a series of steps ATF will take to further cooperation and strengthen our partnership to better reduce firearms trafficking in Mexico. Those steps are detailed in the latter half of this memo.

To summarize, Mexico's primary requests were as follows:

- Increase the timing and quality of information sharing, including firearms trace data, evidence of trafficking organizations and routes, and information on Mexican nationals who purchase firearms in the United States;

Assist Mexico in upgrading its technological capacity to better prevent, detect, and deter firearms and explosives trafficking; and

Establish a permanent liaison program to exchange information in real time.

#### ATF COMMITMENT TO REDUCE FIREARMS TRAFFICKING IN MEXICO

ATF remains firmly committed to assisting Mexico in reducing firearms trafficking from the United States. To that end, ATF offered the following assistance to Medina Mora and Garcia Luna in this area:

- ATF will immediately detail two additional Special Agents to Monterrey, Mexico to provide firearms training (basic firearms examinations and use of eTrace) and assist with on-going firearms trafficking investigations.



- ATF will implement eTrace in all 31 states in Mexico to decentralize firearms tracing requests. The system will allow each state to obtain trace data from firearms recovered within their geographic jurisdiction and provide all trace data to the Attorney General's office. ATF also intends to implement eTrace at the nine U.S. Consulates in Mexico for use by U.S. law enforcement personnel pursuant to a developing Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Department of State.
- ATF will send a team of experts to Mexico City to assess Mexico's K-9 training facility, and is working with the State Department's Narcotics Affairs Section to secure \$1.2 million to upgrade the facility and provide enhanced explosives and firearms detection training. ATF also will send forensics personnel from our national laboratory (OST) to meet with Mexican PGR laboratory personnel to assess their capacity and recommend procedures and technology to improve their forensics capabilities, including firearms serial number restoration.
- ATF southwest border special-agents-in-charge are meeting this week in Dallas to discuss ways to better cooperate and share information with Mexican federal law enforcement officials in on-going firearms trafficking cases, and to centralize ATF's enforcement efforts along the border. ATF-designated border liaisons will contact their Mexican counterparts as designated by the Mexican Attorney General to discuss cooperative efforts.
- ATF will designate at least two regional counsels to be available to meet with attorneys from the Attorney General's Office to share information on each country's firearms laws, and to seek innovative solutions on information sharing that respect each country's sovereignty and need to comply with our respective Constitutions and statutes.

### CONCLUSION

ATF stands committed to assisting the Department and the Government of Mexico in efforts to reduce firearms trafficking and gun violence in Mexico. Please let me know if you or your staff would like further information about any of the matters contained in this memorandum.

Attachment

**ARMS TRAFFICKING FROM THE  
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO MEXICO**

**PROBLEM:**

**ATF**

**ATF**

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# Appendix C

## United States - Mexico Binational Commission (BNC) Working Group on Law Enforcement and Counter-Narcotics Matters

### Background

The Law Enforcement and Counter-Narcotics Working Group has been meeting since the inception of the Binational Commission (BNC). The Group, chaired by the Attorneys General, includes senior representatives of all major law enforcement entities in Mexico and the United States who meet each year in the BNC setting to discuss and resolve policy issues, and to promote continued and improved bilateral cooperation in fighting crime and ensuring the security of the citizens, communities, and institutions of both countries.

Without question, this bilateral cooperation has taken on increased importance in the light of each country's persistent efforts to fight against terrorism financed through narco-trafficking and other illegal means. The BNC Group also receives the report and monitors the ongoing practical efforts of the Senior Law Enforcement Plenary (SLEP), which serves as the primary coordinating mechanism for our bilateral law enforcement cooperation. At each SLEP session, especially at the session held in Washington, D.C., April 7/8, 2005, SLEP's sub-working groups showed much greater progress in their bilateral efforts, and a higher level of mutual confidence. The level of cooperation demonstrated sets a higher standard for the future with respect to effective and cooperative law enforcement efforts.

### ATF Training to Mexican Government (April - September 2005)

#### April 26-29, 2005:

ATF, through its Mexico City Office (MCO), provided Basic Firearms and Explosives Identification training to 205 local, State, and Federal officials from the State of Morelos. The opening and closing ceremonies included high-level Morelos government officials, and State and Federal agents. The training was very well received and will be used as a model for future academy training.

#### May 19, 2005:

ATF sponsored training for 10 Attorneys General of the Republic (PGR), Federal Public Ministry (prosecutor) agents in Mexico City, Mexico. Two PGR laboratory technicians also attended the training. The training was on Basic Firearms and Explosives Identification and the instructors consisted of personnel from ATF's Explosives Technology Branch (ETB), Crime Gun Analysis Branch (CGAB), and Firearms Technology Branch (FTB). Towards the end of the training session, Agencia Federal de Investigacion/Federal Agency of Investigation (AFI) agents brought in several recently seized firearms and requested ATF assistance in properly identifying them.

#### June 29, 2005:

ATF coordinated for ATF/El Paso, Texas, to present two, 4-hour sessions of Basic Explosives Identification training to a total of 200 Mexican law enforcement officers, including the Mexican Attorney General's Office, Federal Secretariat of Public Safety, Highway and Airport Police, Mexican Customs, Special Operations, Mexican Military, and the National Central Intelligence and Security Agency. This provided ATF MCO an opportunity to meet and establish information sharing contacts with Mexican Federal, State, and local law enforcement officials.

**Pending ATF Training to Mexican Government**

1. ATF has completed final preparations at the PGR forensics laboratory for the 2nd Annual Ballistics Seminar scheduled for October 24-28, 2005. An ATF toolmark examiner recently conducted an assessment of the PGR forensics lab in September 2005, and determined that the PGR lab met the requirements to proceed with the training seminar. ATF forensics personnel will serve as instructors to 30 PGR laboratory technicians.
2. The Federal Investigative Agency (AFI) requested several explosives-related training courses. AFI is interested in International Post-Blast Investigation, Render Safe, and training on the Handling and Transporting of Pyrotechnics. They have also requested training in canine operations.



# Appendix D



**BUREAU OF ALCOHOL, TOBACCO, FIREARMS AND EXPLOSIVES**  
**NATIONAL TRACING CENTER DIVISION**



**LAW ENFORCEMENT INTRODUCTION TO THE**  
**eTRACE INTERNET BASED FIREARM TRACING APPLICATION**

Chief LE Official: \_\_\_\_\_

Agency Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Initial Contact Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Agency Address: \_\_\_\_\_

ATF Field Division Point of Contact: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

## Introduction to eTrace

The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) would like to extend its on-going commitment to the law enforcement community by providing participating agencies with a paperless firearm trace submission system that is readily accessible through a connection to the worldwide web (Internet). This system, known as eTrace, provides the necessary utilities for submitting; retrieving, storing and querying all firearms trace related information relative to your agency. The newly developed eTrace application not only provides your agency with the ability to electronically submit firearm trace requests, but also to monitor progress of traces and efficiently retrieve completed trace results in a real-time environment. Additionally, eTrace provides an invaluable new feature that will provide your agency immediate access to a user friendly and searchable online database comprised of all trace requests submitted by your agency. This tool will provide your agency with the ability to perform detailed search functions and customized analysis relative to your jurisdiction.

In recent years, ATF has made a concerted effort to leverage existing information technology to better assist law enforcement agencies in the investigation of illicit firearms trafficking as well as the interdiction of firearm sources to juveniles, youth offenders and other prohibited persons. The eTrace application is the newest tool available to the law enforcement community in a growing investigative arsenal. This correspondence is intended to provide an executive level overview of the eTrace application, to include: availability, functionality, benefits, and the steps required to gain access.

## What is firearm tracing?

Firearm tracing is the systematic process of tracking a recovered crime guns chain of custody from it's source (manufacturer/importer) through the chain of distribution (wholesaler/retailer) to the individual who was the first retail purchaser of the firearm, or to a point where all other possibilities of identifying the original purchaser have been thoroughly exhausted. The ATF National Tracing Center processes approximately 250,000 firearm trace requests for both foreign and domestic law enforcement agencies annually. Comprehensive firearms tracing by jurisdiction or community, involves the tracing of all recovered crime guns within a particular geographic area (e.g., city, county, metropolitan area, or State). Information

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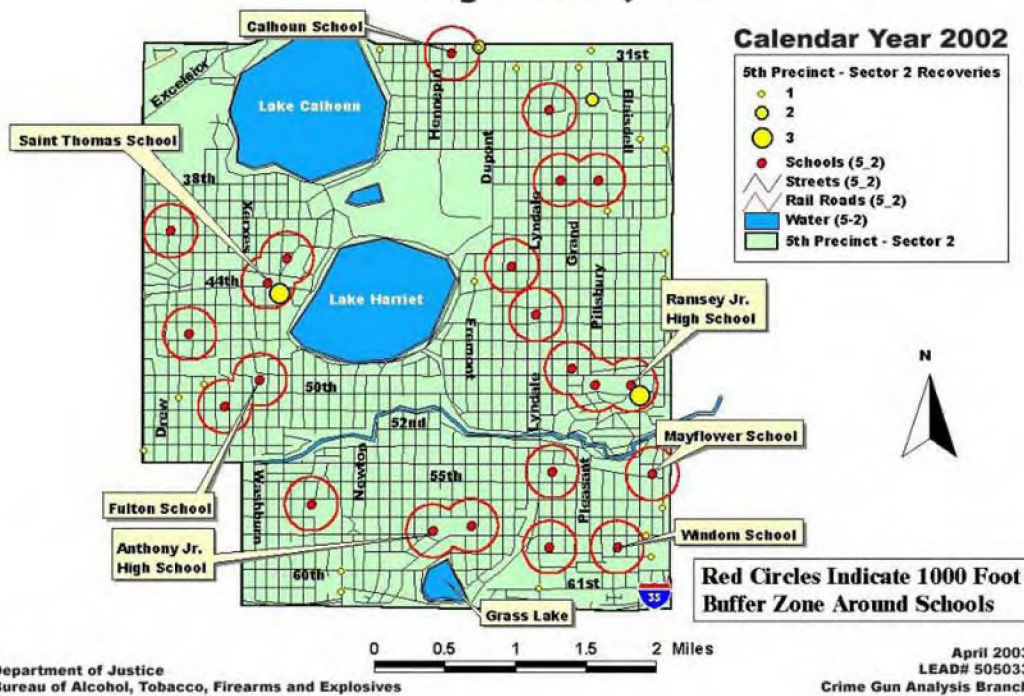
1

obtained through the tracing process is utilized to solve and/or enhance individual cases and to maximize investigative lead development through eTrace. For example, the analysis of trace related data might reveal that a particular individual has repeatedly purchased firearms that were later recovered from crimes within your community.

Law Enforcement agencies that make a commitment to comprehensive firearms tracing through ATF will be provided with an information platform for developing the best local investigative strategies for their community in the reduction of firearm related crime and violence. The term "comprehensive firearms tracing" refers both to the quantity and quality of firearm traces submitted. For an agency to succeed in producing meaningful analysis of its firearm tracing information, the relative data must be as complete and accurate as possible. Therefore, true comprehensive firearms tracing occurs when an agency traces all of its recovered crime guns and provides all available information detailing the circumstances of each recovery. The relevant information refers to not just the proper identification of the firearm, but also includes specific details regarding the firearms' possessor, associates, location of recovery, and associated crime.

\*Below is a sample of a typical map that can be generated as a result of your comprehensive firearm tracing effort:

## Crime Gun Recovery Locations Anytown, USA



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## What functionality is available via eTrace and what benefits will it provide to your agency?

eTrace is an Internet based firearm trace submission system and trace analysis module available to the entire law enforcement community. The focus of the e-Trace application is to enhance current trace protocols to efficiently function in a web-based environment and provide for the secure exchange of firearm trace related information between the user community and the ATF, National Tracing Center. The eTrace application allows participating law enforcement agencies to both submit firearm traces to the National Tracing Center and to electronically receive firearm trace results in a real-time environment.

eTrace also affords law enforcement agencies direct access to a historical database of firearm trace related data comprised of all requests initiated by a particular agency. More importantly, eTrace provides the ability to perform analysis of your agencies trace related data through a broad search utility. A search for traces can be initiated on virtually any data field captured or combination thereof, to include: individual names, recovery location address, type of crime, date of recovery, etc. eTrace also provides users with the ability to generate analytical reports regarding the number of traces submitted over time, the top firearms traced, time-to-crime rates, age of possessors and more. To access and utilize the e-Trace application, the only infrastructure an agency needs is a personal computer and access to the World Wide Web, thus empowering even the smallest of agencies to comprehensively trace their firearms and perform on-line data analysis.

Benefits of utilizing eTrace to facilitate the firearms tracing process include the following:

1. The ability to identify investigative lead information relative to your trace request,
2. A significant decrease in the turnaround time required to process a trace request,
3. An increase in the overall number of crime guns traced by providing a user friendly interface for entering trace data,
4. Improved data quality of trace related information by providing real time data validation,
5. The ability to monitor the status of traces,
6. The ability to view/print/download completed trace results (All print functions are formatted for standard 8 ½ x 11" paper),
7. The ability of the users to perform on-line analytical research relative to your jurisdiction.

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## What functions are available through the eTrace application?

High-level functionality available through the eTrace application includes the following capabilities:

- Enter, validate and submit comprehensive firearm trace request data
- View a summary listing of recently submitted traces
- View the status of a trace (In Progress, Completed, Delayed)
- View, Print, and Download detailed trace request and trace result information
- Perform a "Quick-Search" or a detailed multi-layer search for traces
- Submit Urgent Trace Requests for processing
- Update a trace (user may only update a trace for which they were the original submitter)
- Re-Open a trace based upon the provision of previously missing or invalid data
- Online Help & Frequently Asked Questions bulletin board
- Access to the Firearms Identification Guide (FIG)
- Generate analytical reports (i.e.- number of traces, top firearms traced, time-to-crime rates, age of possessors, etc...)

Additional information relative to each of the above listed functions is detailed in the eTrace Users Manual and within the online help utility found on the eTrace website.

## How can a Law Enforcement agency gain access to eTrace?

The eTrace application was developed and is administered by the ATF National Tracing Center Division. However, access to eTrace is being coordinated through the various ATF Field Divisions located throughout the United States. Receipt of this information packet is the first step towards obtaining system access. To gain access to eTrace, the chief of police (or equivalent) must complete and return the attached Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). This MOU will establish an interagency agreement governing the access and utilization of eTrace. In addition, the MOU will designate a primary and alternate point of contact within your agency. The appointed individual(s) will be responsible for providing and maintaining a list of personnel within your department that require access to eTrace.

The MOU will provide a section in which the designated POC must identify all personnel within your organization that you would like to be granted an eTrace account. This list must include the employees' name, title, unit and phone number. The designated POC will also be responsible for contacting the National Tracing Center in the event that an individual's access needs to be suspended or cancelled for any number of reasons, to include: employee transfer, retirement, or release from employment. Please keep in mind that once an account has been issued, failure to access the application for a period of 90 days or more will result in the account being locked out. Therefore, your agency should be somewhat judicious in choosing the individuals whom you would like to grant access to eTrace.

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After the attached MOU has been completed and signed by both the local ATF Field Division representative and the chief or your law enforcement agency the original copy should be mailed to the ATF National Tracing Center at the following address:

Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms & Explosives  
National Tracing Center Division  
Law Enforcement Support Branch  
244 Needy Road  
Martinsburg, WV 25401  
Attn: eTrace Customer Service Group

Upon receipt, a representative from the National Tracing Center will initiate a phone call to the designated point of contact within your organization and provide detailed instructions on the process of requesting and receiving an eTrace user account (user id. and password). Once the user account is created, each user will be individually contacted and provided with their user account information. At that point, the users will be able to access the eTrace application through an Internet connection and immediately begin to take advantage of this real-time firearm trace submission and trace data analysis system.

(A sample of the eTrace "My Trace Requests" screen is included on the next page)

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**ATF Online**  
Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives  
U.S. Department of Justice

**eTrace**

- Home: My Trace Requests
- Create a Trace Request
- Search for Trace Requests
- Generate Statistical Reports
- My Profile & Preferences
- Contact Us
- Log Off

Welcome, JANE SMITH, to the ATF Electronic Tracing System. With this tool, you can view status of traces you've submitted previously via eTrace or you can create and submit new traces.

- eTrace Tour
- Firearms Identification Guide (pdf)
- Batch Upload
- User Guide (pdf)
- Frequently Asked Questions
- Change Password

My Trace Requests

Create a Trace Request

Trace Requests submitted by TRCATF via eTrace within the last 30 days:  
(Use "Search for Trace Requests" for over 30 days or requests by other users in your agency)

# ATF

Quick Search by:

(Quick Search only returns trace requests submitted by TRCATF. Use "Search for Trace Requests" to find traces submitted by other users.)

Status Descriptor:

- Trace was completed successfully.
- Trace was completed unsuccessfully but may be reopened if corrected or additional information is supplied

If you have difficulty accessing any information in the site due to a disability, please contact us via email ([webmaster@atf.gov](mailto:webmaster@atf.gov)) and we will do our best to make the information available to you.

This site is best viewed at 800x600 screen resolution or higher using Internet Explorer 5.0 or higher and the Flash Player® plug-in.

**ATTENTION:** Users may experience compatibility problems when attempting to view PDF files using Internet Explorer browser version 5 and above and Adobe Acrobat Reader 4.0. If problems occur, consider the following options: Right-click on PDF link and save to local drive; Use an earlier version of Adobe Acrobat Reader; Use an earlier version of Internet Explorer; use Netscape Navigator browser; or convert PDF to text using [ATF's PDF Conversion Engine](#).

[Get Acrobat Reader](#) [GET FLASH](#)

You have entered an Official United States Government System, which may be used only for authorized purposes. The government may monitor and audit usage of this system, and all persons are hereby notified that use of this system constitutes consent to such monitoring and auditing. Unauthorized attempts to upload information and/or change information on these web sites are strictly prohibited and are subject to prosecution under the Computer Fraud and Abuse Act of 1986 and Title 18 U.S.C. Sec 1001 and 1030.

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# Appendix E

## Recent Adjudicated International Firearms Trafficking Investigations Involving Mexico

### **CASE/INSPECTION TITLE: CABRERA, Juan V.**

**SYNOPSIS OF INVESTIGATION:** On December 6, 2004, Juan CABRERA, a Mexican national and U.S. resident Alien, purchased 70 cases of small arms ammunition from several McAllen area gun stores. CABRERA possessed an out of state identification and the rental truck he was driving was followed by ATF agents to a warehouse in Mercedes, TX where he unloaded the rental truck and left. On December 7, 2004, ATF agents obtained consent to search from CABRERA as he returned to the warehouse. The agents discovered 78, 500 rounds (70 cases) of ammunition and forty-seven (47) boxes of plastic vacuum seal bags. An empty tractor-trailer with Mexican license plates was also located in the warehouse. CABRERA told the agents that he and two other Mexican investors paid \$15,000.00 for the ammunition and planned to sell it to a buyer in Mexico he could not fully identify. Juan CABRERA was later arrested by DEA as part of an OCDETF investigation.

### **CASE/INSPECTION TITLE: Montéz, Edgar Efrén**

**SYNOPSIS OF INVESTIGATION:** In April 2005, an 8-man conspiracy to purchase 44 firearms including pistols, AR15 rifles, firearms parts, and ballistic vests was thwarted by ATF resulting in the recovery of 9 firearms, 9 ballistic vests, and \$5,800 in cash. The scheme involved separate 2 to 3 man teams that would purchase firearms at various gun stores located in 3 Rio Grande Valley cities. Several vehicles were used in the conspiracy. Edgar Efrén Montéz, the principal suspect, headed the conspiracy paying each man \$200.00 for every false ATF firearm transaction record they completed. ATF recovered six 9mm Beretta pistols, two Colt .38 super pistols, one AR-15 rifle, nine ballistic vests, \$5804.00 in cash, and numerous receipts for firearms and firearm parts. The conspirators include a Mexican National and U.S. citizens that either reside in Mexico or have strong ties to Mexico. In addition, Juan Mike Morales, a Texas Department of Criminal Justice correctional officer was arrested by ATF in relation to the straw purchasing scheme. To date, ATF has confiscated 19 firearms and 9 ballistic vests that were destined for Mexico.

### **CASE/INSPECTION TITLE: ARAIZA, David, et al**

**SYNOPSIS OF INVESTIGATION:** A 10-man conspiracy to purchase 55 firearms including a of Barrett .50 caliber semi-automatic rifle, a Browning Model 1919 belt-fed semiautomatic trench gun, several Colt AR-15 variants and other various assault rifles was interrupted by ATF in Brownsville, Texas in April 2005 after a 5-month investigation. The conspiracy involved the recruitment by the principal suspect, David Araiza of 8 straw purchasers from the Brownsville, Corpus Christi, and Houston, Texas

who accepted cash to falsify numerous ATF 4473 forms to acquire the firearms. All the firearms were trafficked to Mexico. Araiza fled to Mexico to avoid prosecution. One of the conspirators, Juan Cardenas Perez is an active-duty U.S. Marshal's Courthouse Security Officer. Two Beretta model 92 pistols purchased by the Perez were recovered in México by the Federal Agency of Investigation (AFI) at shooting scene that resulted in the death of a Mexico federal agent as the AFI attempted to apprehend several Gulf Cartel narcotics traffickers in Matamoros, Mexico.

**CASE/INPECTION TITLE: Ivan Rangel**

**SYNOPSIS OF INVESTIGATION:** Jorge Luis GARCIA, an active duty police officer for the City of Alamo, Texas admittedly straw purchased an Olympic Arms, Model PCR5, .223 caliber semi-automatic rifle for a Mexican national identified as David or Ivan Rangel, age 18 to 20, of Matamoros, Mexico.

The officer met Rangel through an ex-girlfriend. Rangel gave the officer cash and instructions as to which rifle to purchase from a Brownsville gun dealer. On May 25, 2005 the Federal Agency of Investigation (AFI) attempted to arrest several gulf Cartel narcotics traffickers in Matamoros that resulted in a gun battle and the death of an AFI agent. Thirteen firearms, several grenades, and ammunition were recovered along with the 4 arrests made.

**CASE/INSPECTION TITLE: Angel's Cottage Guns and Ammo**

**SYNOPSIS OF INVESTIGATION:** An ATF inspection of a Federal firearms licensee (FFL) in New Mexico determined that more than 300 handguns were recently shipped by the FFL to Mexico. The FFL had no records for the firearms. A consent search resulted in a seizure of 89 firearms, more \$123,000 in cash, and a 2004 Hummer. The FFL admitted to trafficking large numbers of firearms with obliterated serial numbers. The FFL cooperated with agents, who were present when the buyer of the firearms from Mexico returned to the U.S. After the FFL completed the transaction, agents arrested the buyer. He was identified as a Federal Police officer from Mexico who has been trafficking firearms with obliterated serial numbers back to Mexico for years. Records revealed that since 1995 the FFL had illegally transferred 10,000 firearms to Mexico.



# Appendix F

## Division Industry Operations Guidelines

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MEMORANDUM TO: All Special Agents in Charge  
All Directors, Industry Operations

ATTN: Assistant Director  
(Enforcement Programs and Services)

FROM: Assistant Director  
(Field Operations)


SUBJECT: Southwest Border Initiative – Industry Operations Strategy

On October 13, 2005, in response to escalating narco-trafficking violence along the southwest border – which has included the kidnapping of American citizens and the murder of Mexican officials – Mexican and American authorities announced what has come to be known as the Southwest Border Initiative (SWBI). This initiative focuses the resources of the Department of Justice’s various agencies in an effort to meet the threats affecting the cities and towns on both sides of the border.

ATF’s Southwest Border Initiative strategy is to deny the “tools of the trade” to the firearms trafficking organizations operating in border areas through proactive enforcement of firearms laws primarily in the affected border field divisions. ATF has introduced a number of programs, such as Project Gunrunner, Operation Iron Triangle, and a VCIT in Laredo, Texas to better coordinate intelligence and information and more effectively detect and disrupt firearms trafficking schemes and violent crime along the border.

Critical tactics of this firearms trafficking reduction strategy include a focused firearms inspection program and regular collaboration between special agents and industry operations investigators with respect to referrals and outreach efforts. The industry operations portion of the SWBI includes three components – forward traces, secondary market inspections, and outreach to the industry and other law enforcement agencies.

Specific information and procedures regarding these components are discussed in the attached FY 2007 Southwest Border action plan.

If you have any questions, please contact Program Manager  email or at (202) 927-0020.

William Hoover

## ***FY 2007 Southwest Border Initiative***

### **Strategy**

The primary goal of the DOJ's SWBI is to reduce firearms violence and firearms trafficking along the U.S./Mexico border. ATF is utilizing resources of its four affected border field divisions (Dallas, Houston, Los Angeles, and Phoenix) to fulfill its responsibility under this initiative. Industry Operations contributes toward this goal through compliance inspections and outreach activities.

### **Industry Operations Objectives**

- Improve relations with firearms industry members, enhance voluntary compliance, and promote licensees' assistance in preventing diversion by conducting training and outreach activities with Federal firearms licensees (FFLs) in the targeted areas.
- Initiate Forward Trace inspections utilizing data on major wholesalers and retailers of identified weapons of choice (WOC).
- Conduct compliance inspections on major retailers of new WOC in the four field divisions and identify suspected traffickers or straw purchasers.
- Identify FFLs who may be actively participating in trafficking schemes.
- Conduct compliance inspections of pawnbrokers and identify suspected traffickers or straw purchasers.
- Perfect referral data by utilizing the "fact sheet" attached to this document.

### **Action Plan**

The inspection plan is designed as a three pronged approach – a forward trace component, a secondary market component, and outreach to the industry and other law enforcement agencies.

#### Forward Trace

In the forward trace component, we will use ATF

**ATF**

Concurrently with the distribution of this initiative to the field, a forward trace inspection request has been sent from HQ to the divisions where the manufacturers and/or primary importers of these firearms are located. Each SWBI field division may also identify additional WOC specific to their division (see attached list of additional new weapons of choice for examples). Field divisions that identify additional WOC should forward to the division where the manufacturer and/or primary importers are located a Referral of Information requesting a forward trace inspection.

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August 1,

2007.

Through analysis of the information received from wholesaler inspections, each field division intelligence unit will develop for their respective area supervisor a list of licensees for inspection and related receipt data.

The successful completion of this component will:

- Identify corrupt FFLs
- Identify firearms traffickers
- Improve compliance rates of FFLs

## Secondary Market

The value of firearms trace information and statistics in law enforcement is unquestionable. Firearms tracing produces substantial intelligence on the sources of crime guns recovered in Mexico and border areas, and assists ATF in identifying, targeting, and investigating straw purchasers and the traffickers who employ them. Unfortunately, for calendar years 2003 – 2005, ATF traces of firearms recovered in Mexico were unable to be successfully completed. Additionally, the Violent Crime Analysis Branch (VCAB) has determined that the average time to crime (the time from the retail sale to the date of recovery) for firearms recovered in Mexico is 13 years.

There is evidence to suggest that the time from the point a firearm illegitimately enters Mexico until the time it is used in criminal activity is relatively short. VCAB has concluded that many firearms illegally entering Mexico have been on the secondary market (previously purchased at retail and subsequently sold in individual transactions) in the United States for a number of years. Further, it is likely that many of these firearms are acquired and sold by pawnbrokers in the U.S. at some point prior to being smuggled into Mexico. Therefore, the second component of the SWBI, Secondary Market Inspections, will attempt to address these unsuccessful traces and traces with an artificially long time-to-crime, and to gather valuable information on the most recent retail purchases.

In May 2006, ATF implemented the Pawnbroker Initiative. Each field division is required to inspect all pawnbrokers in their area over the next two years. The inspections conducted under the Pawnbroker Initiative in the four SWBI divisions will also constitute the secondary market inspections under the SWBI. These inspections will also be conducted using the guidelines of a full compliance inspection, incorporating trafficking-detection strategies from the disposition emphasis inspection program.

We expect that analysis of used WOC sold by pawnbrokers will “pick up the trail” of some of those firearms recently recovered in the United States and Mexico.

Therefore, while conducting pawnbroker inspections, IOIs will record all used WOC currently in the FFL's inventory, as well as those sold or otherwise disposed of during the period of the inspection (usually one year)(see attached list of secondary market WOC). This information will be forwarded to the division intelligence group. The Intelligence Group will have one intelligence UI to cover these guns. The information will then be forwarded with the UI number to the NTC Law Enforcement Support Branch, Suspect Gun Program for inclusion in the Firearms Tracing System.

Further, the Intelligence offices will maintain all WOC firearms in a spreadsheet to be run in On-Line Lead every six months. In this way, an ever-broadening list of used WOC recently sold by pawnbrokers will be checked against all firearms traces. For example, a WOC first sold at retail in 1983 and recovered in Mexico in 2007 would have a time to crime of 24 years. However, if the recovered WOC was recorded by an IOI during an inspection and subsequently queried against On-Line Lead, it may be determined that the used WOC was sold again in 2006. This information would reduce the time-to-crime to 1 year, and ATF would have a significant lead as to how the firearm was trafficked into Mexico. When a firearm description gleaned from an inspection matches On-Line Lead information on a recently recovered and traced firearm, the information will be forwarded to Program Manager **ATF** National Tracing Center, Industry Records Branch.

The successful completion of this component will:

- Improve the traceability of WOC recovered in Mexico and the United States.
- Identify potential firearms traffickers.
- Improve the compliance rate of FFLs.

Any potential traffickers identified during the execution of these two components will be referred to ATF CE. In order to maximize the possibility that the suspect will be investigated, IOIs should present as complete a referral package as possible. The IOI should request that the intelligence group run all applicable queries to identify trafficking patterns. These include, but are not limited to Auto Track, to identify a suspect's vehicles, TECS SQ13, to determine if the suspect or his vehicles have crossed the border and TECS SQ11 to identify any cash transfers and determine if there are any current or closed investigations involving the suspect.

#### Outreach Activities

This component has two facets: Outreach to the firearms industry and outreach to other Federal, State, or local law enforcement.

Any SWBI outreach activity must include contact with other Federal, State, or local law enforcement agencies. IOIs will work with ATF Criminal Enforcement to make contact with agencies such as DEA and ICE, and state or local agencies such as Texas Workforce Commission to inform them of our role in combating firearms trafficking. Ideally, this will result in an open dialog and sharing of intelligence information that will benefit our initiative as well.

Outreach to the industry will also be conducted. Utilizing intelligence information, DIOs will coordinate with the area offices in pursuing face-to-face contact with selected FFLs in the targeted areas to educate them about straw purchases and firearms trafficking and answer any of their questions. The IOIs making the contacts will encourage the FFLs to deter criminal activity by reporting suspicious persons/dispositions to ATF.

The successful completion of this component will result in:

- Enhanced voluntary compliance by FFLs
- An open dialog with FFLs that will result in the forwarding of information to ATF regarding suspicious transactions
- Dissemination of information and clarifying of rules to industry members
- Enhanced tracing ability due to improved record keeping and reporting by FFLs in the targeted area
- An open dialog with other law enforcement agencies that will result in the sharing of intelligence information

#### Assignment Coding

All inspections, including those conducted on manufacturers, importers, and wholesalers, will be conducted utilizing the guidelines of a full compliance inspection. Only inspections conducted from this point forward will be coded and counted as SWBI inspections. Inspections already conducted should not be recoded. If a recently-inspected FFL is targeted as a retailer of WOC, you should conduct an inspection at your first opportunity one year after the beginning date of their latest inspection.

Two new Tier III picks, “Southwest Border Full” and “Southwest Border Recall Full” have been created in N-Spect for this program. The following coding should be utilized for the compliance inspections: Tier I, Firearms; Tier II, License Type; Tier III, Southwest Border Full. Any recall inspections conducted this fiscal year, from this point forward, on a licensee also identified for inspection under the SWBI should be coded as Tier I, Firearms; Tier II, License Type; Tier III, Southwest Border Recall Full. SWBI coding will take precedence over other firearms compliance inspection coding such as Full New Follow Up, Pawnbroker Full, Pawnbroker Full Recall, DE VCIT, DE Non VCIT and Recall.

Seminars and other outreach activities should be coded as Tier I, General, Tier II, Firearms, Tier III, Outreach Industry. Because this Tier III code does not differentiate these assignments from other industry outreach, we ask that you please include a notation in the special instructions field in N-Spect that this assignment is in support of the Southwest Border Initiative so it can be more readily identified. The above coding process will ensure that inspection completions can be queried or otherwise efficiently tabulated, and that completions will be attributed to applicable programs.

## Performance Measures

- Number of seminars conducted
- Number of FFLs visited by ATF inspectors
  - Number inspected
  - Number visited through Outreach
- Number of referrals to ATF CE regarding potential traffickers that result in a criminal investigation.
- Number of corrupt FFL's identified
- Number of traces successfully completed as a result of the semi-annual query of WOC in On-Line Lead
- Enhanced compliance of licenses (measured by reduction in violations disclosed during recall inspections in those divisions)

## *FY 2007 Southwest Border Initiative*

### Weapons of Choice

#### Primary New Weapons of Choice

**ATF**

#### Additional New Weapons of Choice

**ATF**

#### Secondary Market Inspection Weapons of Choice

**ATF**

**ATF**

\* All models including **ATF** etc.

# Appendix G



## Department of Justice

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
FRIDAY, JANUARY 6, 2006  
[WWW.USDOJ.GOV](http://WWW.USDOJ.GOV)

(202) 514-2007  
TDD (202) 514-1888

### **DOJ TO PARTNER IN TASK FORCES TO COMBAT CROSS-BORDER CRIME AT THE SOUTHWEST BORDER**

Washington - Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Secretary Michael Chertoff announced today the creation of new Border Enforcement and Security Task Forces, as part of the Department's Secure Border Initiative aimed at increasing control over our borders. These task forces will be nationally-integrated teams with federal, state, and local representation specifically directed at cross-border criminal activity.

"These new task forces will take a comprehensive approach to dismantling criminal organizations that exploit our border," said Secretary Chertoff. "The task forces will be charged with sharing information, developing priority targets, and carrying out coordinated law enforcement operations that will enhance border security."

"We are very pleased to join DHS in this initiative," said Attorney General Gonzales. "The complexities surrounding the security of our borders require innovative partnerships and strategic thinking. The intelligence-driven enforcement teams announced today exemplify the type of collaboration needed to be successful in securing our borders."

The Border Enforcement and Security Task Forces build on the Department's experiences fighting violent cross-border crime in Laredo, Texas during Operation Black Jack. Operation Black Jack has been a focused effort to coordinate Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Customs and Border Protection, Drug Enforcement Administration, Federal Bureau of Investigations, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, U.S. Marshals Service, and other state and local law enforcement agencies, with significant support from the United States Attorney's Office and the District Attorney's Office. Operation Black Jack has already resulted in the arrest of 26 individuals, and the seizure of more than \$1 million in U.S. currency, 19 assault rifles, 300 pounds of marijuana, and 330 pounds of cocaine.

Operation Black Jack has benefited from information assembled by multiple agencies to go after organized cross-border criminal activity. Like Operation Black Jack, additional task forces will be co-located, intelligence-driven enforcement operations, placed in areas where significant border security vulnerabilities exist, and where measurable results can be achieved.

Border Enforcement and Security Task Forces will focus on every element of the enforcement process, from interdiction to prosecution and removal, with the goal of eliminating the top leadership and supporting infrastructure that sustains these cross-border organizations. They will leverage federal, state, tribal, local, and intelligence entities to focus resources on identifying and combating emerging or existing threats.

The next Border Enforcement and Security Task Force will be stood up in Arizona, after DHS conducts a threat assessment of that area. DHS will conduct similar assessments as it establishes additional task forces and will constantly measure results in order to refine and focus our enforcement actions.

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06-007



# Appendix H



# Department of Justice

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## **ATTORNEY GENERAL ALBERTO R. GONZALES ANNOUNCES ADDITIONAL FUNDING TO COMBAT DRUG TRAFFICKING AND BORDER VIOLENCE ALONG THE SOUTHWEST BORDER**

WASHINGTON –Attorney General Alberto R. Gonzales today visited the U.S. border in Laredo, Texas and announced \$300,000 in additional funding to boost efforts to combat drug trafficking in Laredo and McAllen, Texas. The grant will help fund a joint task force of federal and state law enforcement agencies to target high-level drug trafficking organizations along the U.S./Mexico border.

The joint task force—called a Strike Force—allows law enforcement agents from the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), the Department of Homeland Security’s Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF), the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), and the Texas Department of Public Safety to work side-by-side in the same location, quickly responding to leads and establishing links between investigations.

The Strike Force is supported by the Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Force (OCDETF), a federal drug enforcement program that focuses attention and resources on the disruption and dismantling of major drug trafficking organizations. OCDETF provides a framework for federal, state and local law enforcement agencies to work together to target well-established and complex organizations that direct, finance or engage in illegal narcotics trafficking and related crimes.

“Many border communities in Texas have unfortunately experienced first hand the terrible consequences caused by violent crime and drug trafficking,” said Attorney General Gonzales. “But law enforcement is fighting back and I am pleased to announce new funding for our Strike Force team in Laredo and McAllen. This team will provide greater coordination between state and federal law enforcement agencies as we work together to combat crime and stop the flow of drugs across the U.S.-Mexico border.”

The OCDETF Strike Force in Laredo and McAllen is an extension of the Houston OCDETF Strike Force established in October 2005. Law enforcement agents participating in the Houston OCDETF Strike Force pursue major investigations in a coordinated, aggressive fashion. Since its creation, the Houston OCDETF Strike Force has identified Mexican organizational leaders, Columbian narcotics suppliers, international and domestic drug transporters, and domestic distribution cells. It has prevented the shipment of over 30 tons of cocaine from crossing the U.S. border and confiscated more than \$32 million from major drug trafficking organizations.

The OCDETF Strike Force compliments the efforts of the Laredo Violent Crime Impact Team (VCIT), established in 2005. The VCIT program is an ATF-led joint law enforcement effort launched in cities with high volumes of firearms crimes and is designed to identify, arrest and prosecute the most dangerous violent criminals. The Laredo VCIT is composed of law enforcement agents from the ATF, DEA, FBI, ICE, Customs and Border Protection and the U.S. Marshals Service.

In 2006, the Laredo VCIT was credited with recovering 224 firearms and arresting 69 of Laredo's most dangerous felons and fugitives, including Jose A. Garza-Robles and Hector Herrera-Sifuentes, both permanent resident aliens from Mexico. Both are accused of kidnapping an American citizen and holding him hostage in Mexico until his family paid Garza-Robles a \$57,500 ransom. Garza-Robles and Herrera-Sifuentes were charged in a 3 count indictment with conspiring to kidnap and kidnapping a United States citizen. Each of the two counts carries a punishment of one year to life imprisonment upon conviction. Garza-Robles was also charged with a third count of receiving ransom money which carries a maximum punishment of 10 years imprisonment. Each of the three counts also carries a maximum fine of \$250,000 upon conviction.

The Laredo VCIT also arrested Jesus Alberto De Leon. On September 25, 2006, court documents allege that De Leon, a twice-convicted felon, and unknown co-conspirators attempted to kidnap an individual in the parking lot of a Target store in Laredo. The victim escaped and entered the store, but De Leon pursued the victim into the department store, armed with a 12-gauge shotgun. He was arrested as he attempted to flee from law enforcement officers. He has been indicted for conspiracy to kidnap, attempted kidnapping, use of a firearm in the course and commission of a crime of violence, and felon in possession of a firearm. He faces a sentence of up to life imprisonment.

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07-005

# Appendix I

## OSII Southwest Border Strategic Assessment, March 2007 (DRAFT)

March 15, 2007

### Southwest Border Strategy Strategic Assessment Briefing Paper

#### INTRODUCTION

In October 2005, U.S. Attorney General Alberto Gonzales and his Mexican counterpart, Daniel Caveza de Vaca, announced an initiative to combat the unprecedented violence occurring at the United States-Mexico border. Later that month, former Director Carl Truscott pledged ATF's support to **U.S. Ambassador to Mexico Antonio O. Garza, Jr.**, to stem the illegal weapons trafficking from the U.S. to Mexico. In April 2006, ATF personnel from EPS, FO, and OSII participated in the ATF Southwest Border (SWB) Initiative Conference in El Paso, Texas. At this meeting, it was agreed that a primary strategy for reducing gun-related violence would be to focus on significant firearms seizures in Mexico that were related to the major drug-trafficking organizations (DTO) and then analyze the sources in the U.S. to provide actionable intelligence to investigators.

In February 2006, ATF produced a draft publication entitled "The Southwest Border Initiative: ATF's Southwest Border Strategy," that delineated the means by which ATF would contribute to this multi-agency endeavor. Working in concert with the four field division intelligence groups and the SWB Coordinator, OSII conducts in-depth post-seizure analyses to determine trends, patterns, and suspects linked to U.S. points of origin for the seized weapons (Project Gunrunner). The Houston, Dallas, Phoenix, and Los Angeles Field Divisions are primarily affected but many guns resolve to other source-State field divisions, as well. This assessment serves to not only report OSII's contributions and continuing strategies but also to provide an update on the overall contribution ATF has made to the initiative.

During the week of February 13, 2007, Acting ATF Director Michael Sullivan traveled to Mexico to meet with senior law-enforcement officials and Ambassador Garza. He discussed the ways in which ATF could contribute to their efforts to combat firearms trafficking originating in the U.S. The Mexican authorities provided valuable information that will assist ATF in furthering SWB investigative activities in our joint efforts to reduce violence on both sides of the border and is referenced in this paper when appropriate.

#### BACKGROUND

Mexican drug cartels have flourished and grown steadily in terms of size and violence over the past several years along the U.S.-Mexico border. Approximately 92 percent of the cocaine that enters the U.S. is distributed by these groups. Two of these are located just over the Mexican border near El Paso and Brownsville, Texas, respectively. The cartels fiercely protect their cocaine and human-smuggling routes and willingly resort to violence against competitors utilizing firearms and explosives. Incredibly,

they do not hesitate to turn their weapons on law enforcement officers on both sides of the border. The Arizona border is the most dangerous for officers. DTO members shoot at Customs and Border Protection (CBP) officers on average of 6-10 times per month. They have approached law-enforcement officers' families and homes and threatened to kill them, if the cartel's activities continued to be curtailed.

Violence stemming from DTOs has existed for decades in many parts of Mexico. What is new are the facts that cartel violence is now spilling over onto the U.S. side of the border, the composition of the DTO membership has become more violent, and their choices of weapons have become more dangerous. In addition to powerful handguns and assault rifles, these organizations use rocket-propelled grenade launchers and fragmentary grenades to conduct attacks. The National Gang Intelligence Center informs OSII that local and prison gangs along the border are working in concert with the DTOs to distribute cocaine in the area. Drugs have deteriorated the quality of life in the U.S. and threaten life, property, and personal security. Violence in our inner cities is driven by the narcotics trade.

Analyses of recent seizures in Mexico clearly show that the DTOs acquire firearms in the U.S. with ease and impunity, from FFLs and secondary markets. The dismantling of Mexican DTOs begins with the denial of U.S. firearms and ammunition. ATF is in a unique position to make a large contribution to this effort by virtue of our enforcement mission and expertise in the firearms-trafficking arena.

Post-seizure analyses of significant firearms seizures relating to the Mexican DTOs were initiated in April 2006, under Project Gunrunner. OSII began to systematically assess, analyze, and refer findings to the field for investigative action. OSII has been working with an acting Project Gunrunner coordinator, who began monitoring DTO gun seizures before the start of the Mexican drug war three years ago.

## **OTHER AGENCIES' EFFORTS**

CBP and Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) often fail to manage gun-seizure information outside of strict inventory accounting. Firearms charges are frequently dismissed in exchange for pleas to narcotics and human-smuggling charges. As a rule, the Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) turns over the weapons seized to ATF, as do the High-Intensity Drug-Trafficking Area groups (HIDTA) and Organized Crime Drug-Enforcement Task Force offices (OCDETF) that are run by a DEA office. DEA does not maintain independent data or analyses on gun seizures. As a matter of fact, DEA requests firearms statistics from ATF's firearms coordinator in the Houston Field Division regarding Mexican DTO gun seizures. The El Paso Intelligence Center (EPIC) will mirror what DEA does when querying DEA cases—they'll refer back to ATF. The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) has no specific programs to address cross-border criminal activities. Investigations are offense based and include public corruption, civil rights, human smuggling, gangs, and organized crime. They participate in local, State, and Federal task forces involving immigration and drug offenses, including the EPIC-sponsored Southwest Border Gatekeepers Program. The unique character of the Sonoran/Arizona border creates an important tier of "Gatekeeper" organizations along this border, with corridors through Yuma, Lukeville, Nogales, Naco, and Douglas.

These "Gatekeepers" are smuggling organizations that control specific entry points along the U.S.-Mexico border through a sophisticated infrastructure and transportation system.

## JOINT EFFORTS

ATF's OCDETF Coordinator in the area provided information on the cities with an OCDETF office in the Southwest Border area: El Paso, Laredo, McAllen, Brownsville, Tucson, and San Diego. He stated that he makes referrals to the field divisions for consideration for assignment to an agent. The combined authorized FTEs of the aforementioned OCDETF offices are 65. They are staffed with an additional 30 detailees. Additional funding has been requested to permanently establish the 30 FTEs.

## ATF STATISTICS

OSII's research into the tracing center database revealed that **ATF** firearms had been traced to the U.S. upon their recovery in Mexico, from the beginning of FY-02 to date. Of this total, **ATF** had been traced to an FFL. The remainder could not be traced due to lack of information at the manufacturer, distributor, or importer level; or due to the fact that the weapons were obtained from secondary sources, such as pawn shops and gun shows. Trend analysis of trace submissions from Mexican authorities indicates greatly varying differences from fiscal year to fiscal year. The immediate explanation is that as the Mexican government reallocates their military resources to address changing crime areas, some weapons do not become subject to trace submissions. Mexican authorities are refining a procedure to ensure that these weapons are traced in the future.

Of significance is the fact that although the trace submissions vary widely—FY-03 up 38 percent, FY-04 down 62 percent, FY-05 up 25 percent, and FY-06 down 65 percent—the traces unfailingly resolve to the same source States proportionately. Below is a chart depicting all successful traces for FY-02 through FY-06. All numbers highlighted represent at least 1 percent of successful traces resolving to that State for the corresponding fiscal year. (Based on the total number of **ATF** completed results, 1 percent was determined to be the more significant of the 1 percent and 5 percent standard applied by statisticians). The States of Arizona, California, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, New Mexico, Nevada, Ohio, Oklahoma, Texas, and Washington are consistently identified as the major source States. Interestingly, North Carolina and Pennsylvania reached the level of significance in FY-06.

**STATE**

**FY 02    FY 03    FY 04    FY 05    FY 06**

- ALASKA
- ALABAMA
- ARKANSAS
- ARIZONA
- CALIFORNIA
- COLORADO
- CONNECTICUT
- DELAWARE
- FLORIDA
- GEORGIA
- GUAM
- HAWAII
- IOWA
- IDAHO
- ILLINOIS
- INDIANA
- KANSAS
- KENTUCKY
- LOUISIANA
- MASSACHUSETTS
- MARYLAND
- MAINE
- MICHIGAN
- MINNESOTA
- MISSOURI
- MISSISSIPPI
- MONTANA
- NORTH CAROLINA
- NORTH DAKOTA
- NEBRASKA
- NEW HAMPSHIRE
- NEW JERSEY
- NEW MEXICO
- NEVADA
- NEW YORK
- OHIO
- OKLAHOMA
- OREGON
- PENNSYLVANIA
- PUERTO RICO
- RHODE ISLAND
- SOUTH CAROLINA
- SOUTH DAKOTA
- TENNESSEE

**ATF**

TEXAS  
UTAH  
VIRGINIA  
VERMONT  
WASHINGTON  
WISCONSIN  
WEST VIRGINIA  
WYOMING



Utilizing in-depth analyses prepared by the Violent Crime Analysis Branch for FY-04 and FY-05, we know that 85 percent and 63 percent of the weapons traced were connected to firearms trafficking respectively. In FY-04, the weapons of choice

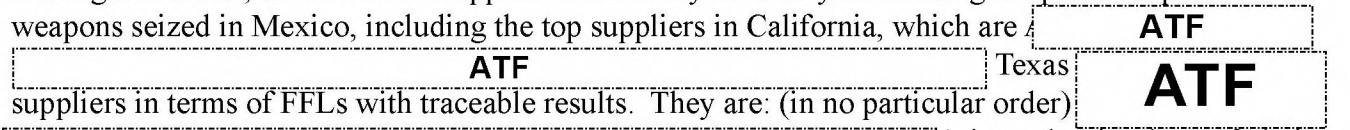


ATF These are overall trace-submission results, not to be confused with the analyses of weapons seized and analyzed as part of Project Gunrunner, which focuses on seizures from DTOs as opposed to country-wide seizure statistics.

As an aside, shotguns and .22 caliber rifles are typically used by farmers to protect cultivation areas and for personal use in hunting small game. These are not the weapons that ATF needs to focus on. Obviously, attention will be concentrated upon those pistols and assault-type weapons used by the DTOs.

For the five-year period prior to October 2006, the weapons of preference and DTO acquisition methodology remained consistent in Mexico. Since that time, there has been an increase in the number of assault rifle seizures that were acquired directly from licensed gun dealers, as opposed to handgun seizures from secondary markets such as pawn shops and gun shows.

A careful analysis of the aforementioned NTC trace data for suspect FFLs was conducted. In terms of the targeted States, the same FFLs appear in the data year after year as being the points of purchase for weapons seized in Mexico, including the top suppliers in California, which are



suppliers in terms of FFLs with traceable results. They are: (in no particular order) ATF Arizona has its share of obvious violators in ATF It bears mentioning that the Mexican authorities' by-name mentioned ATF in their information paper submitted to our Acting Director in February 2007.

Under Project Gunrunner, OSII forwarded 14 referrals of information relative to suspected gun traffickers to the field since May 2006. Of these, four were directly related to ongoing investigations and one resulted in the initiation of a new investigation. Agents have indicated that are actively working on two of the remaining referrals. VCAB has provided the field divisions with 12 referrals since FY-04; of them: one has been adjudicated, one is pending AUSA action, one was related to an ongoing case, three were closed with no potential, and six have had no investigative activity.

According to Mexican authorities, not only are more powerful firearms being trafficked into Mexico, but explosives and military-type artillery are being routinely seized. They have identified anti-rocket launchers of 84mm and 66mm calibers, 40mm grenade launcher grenades, and fragmentary grenades that have originated from the U.S. This is borne out by our USBDC chart below. The USBDC examined the AEXIS database for all explosives trace requests from Mexico where the manufacturer of the product was located in the U.S. The query resulted in **ATF** separate incidents. One resulted in an ATF investigation. In this case, a practice rocket—an 83mm, MK7-0, SMAW—was recovered in Nogales, Mexico, during a search of a residence by Mexican law-enforcement authorities. The item traced back to **ATF**. However, no information exists on the FEL or on the possessor. As depicted in the chart below, the majority of these items are destructive devices or launchers.

Tracing Id	Invsign Num	Request Date	Requesting Agency Name	Other Requesting Agency Name	Recovered Country	Product Name	Manufacturer Name	City	State Code	Country Code	Shipped Date Year
<b>ATF</b>											

**ATF INVESTIGATIONS/ARRESTS**

The Field Intelligence Groups from the affected field divisions were telephonically contacted by OSII FIST members to ascertain what efforts were being employed by their field divisions relative to SWB, what results had they achieved, and what recommendations they could proffer for expanding the initiative. The group supervisors referred OSII to their assessments from October 2005, and indicated that they had no updated information or recommendations. Therefore, OSII relied on ATF databases and outside agency information to assimilate and analyze existing data, and used that to base this assessment and the resulting analyses and recommendations upon.

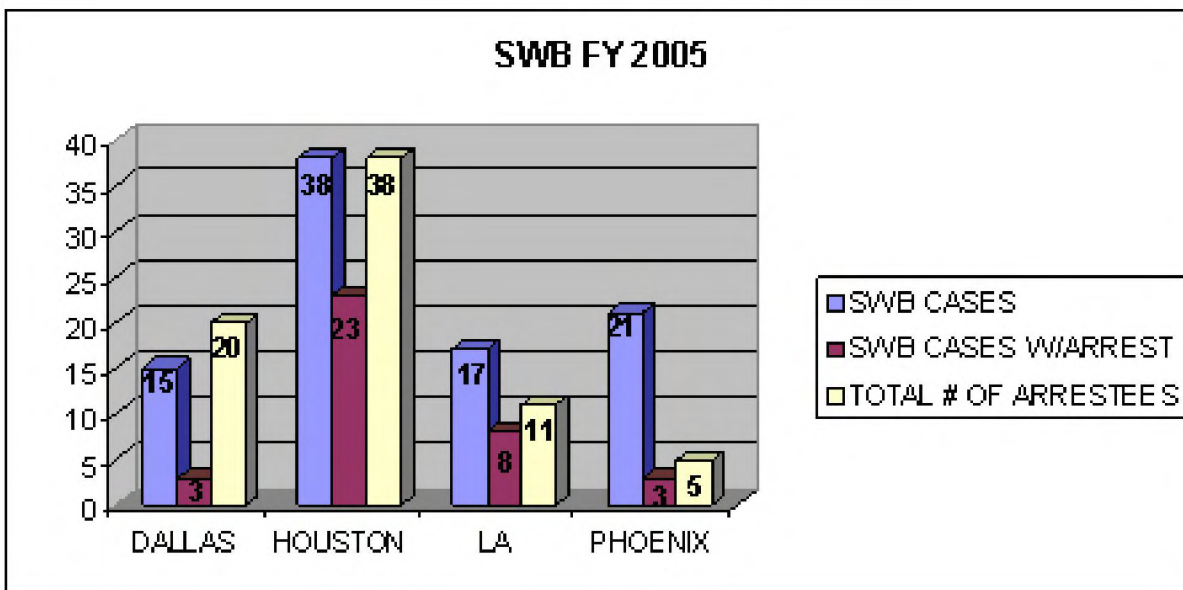


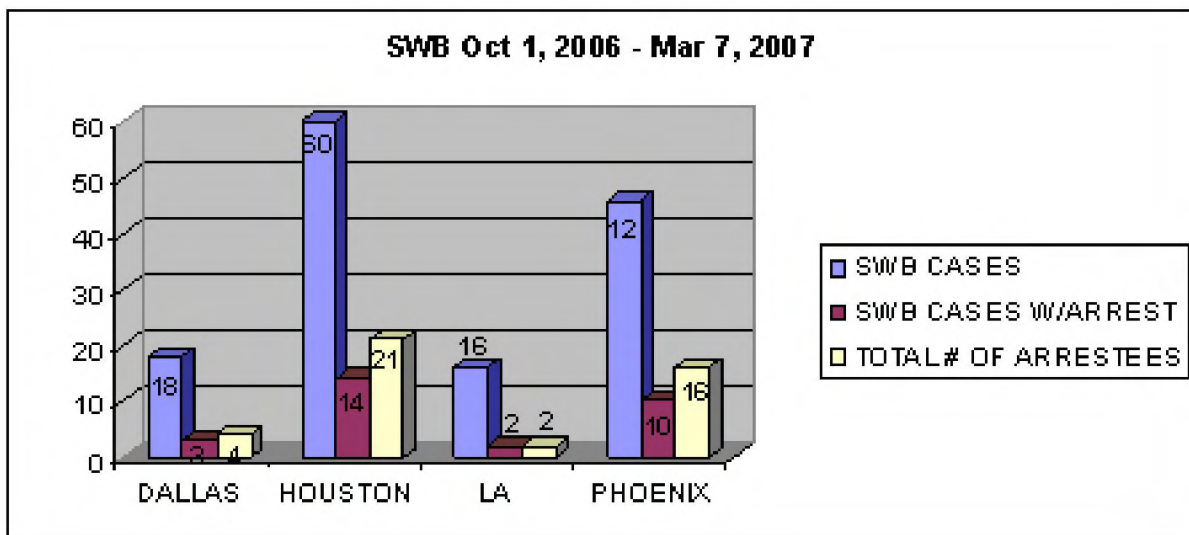
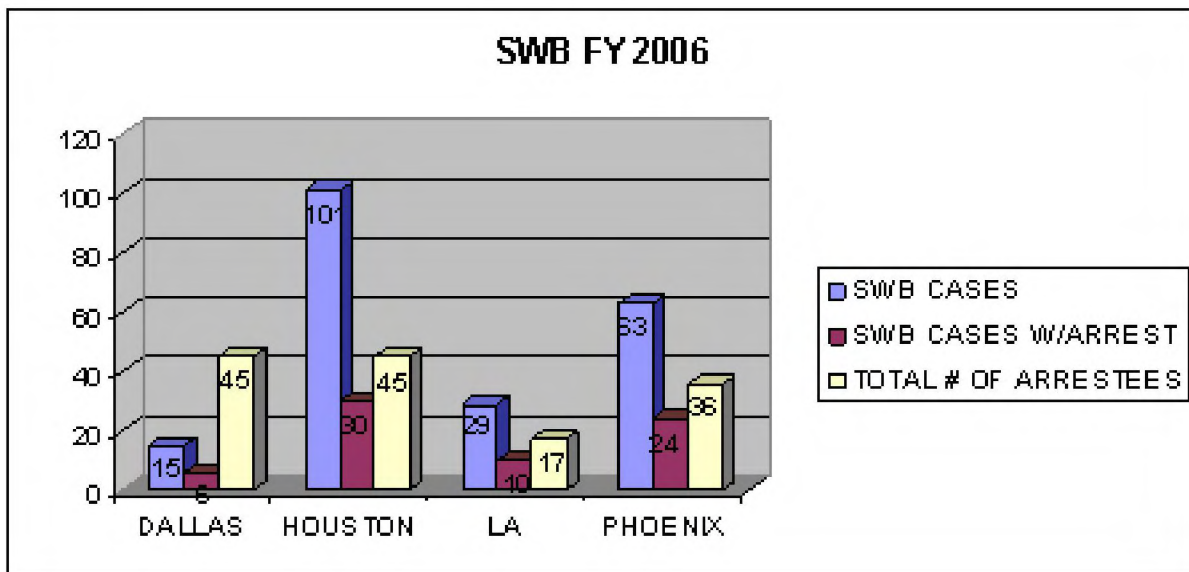
In April 2006, OSII instituted an N-FORCE code to identify the SWB-related cases. The field divisions were requested to immediately start utilizing the code and to research prior case files and affix the SWB code where applicable. It should be noted that a standardized criteria outlining the parameters for a SWB case has not been established. Without this criterion, the process of identifying a SWB case is open to interpretation. A strong potential exists for a vast amount of disparity in actually counting cases and arrests truly associated with the SWB. The charts provided below depict the investigations and arrests coded as SWB for FY-05, FY-06, and the first five months of FY-07.

If we assume the coding is accurate, we can ascertain the following:

1. All of the border field divisions had a significant increase in SWB investigations and arrests from FY-05 to FY-06.
2. In the first five months of this fiscal year, the Dallas Field Division has already exceeded their FY-06 number of SWB cases opened by 120 percent. The Houston Field Division has achieved 59 percent of their FY-06 total. The Los Angeles Field Division stands at 55 percent over last fiscal year and the Phoenix Field Division is at 73 percent. It would be inappropriate and misleading to measure the arrests further, as investigative efforts in a large amount of cases remains ongoing. They are contained herein to illustrate that ATF is contributing to the initiative by effecting related arrests.

As reported in N-FORCE





## STATISTICS

According to DEA, one of our partners in this initiative, there were more than 2,500 drug-related murders throughout Mexico in 2006; up significantly from the 1,543 drug-related murders for 2005. OSII obtained and analyzed the FBI's Uniform Crime Report (UCR) statistics for FY-02 through FY-05. FY-06 statistics have not yet been made available. The major categories of crimes that can be associated with the weapons and drug trades were included in the chart below for the States of Arizona, California, and Texas. Only information collected against major metropolitan areas was included. Unfortunately, although requested, the FBI could not drill down in their data to provide city-by-city information. Nonetheless, the figures are disturbing and would undoubtedly decline with the application of industrious law-enforcement efforts and successes along the SWB.

The State of Arizona remains relatively level across the board in all of the crime categories analyzed for the four fiscal years examined. California's and Texas' violent crimes, robberies, and aggravated assaults have declined slightly over this period, however, murder rates rose. It is important to bear in mind that the Mexican government declared a drug war against the DTOs three years ago and has aimed substantial additional resources against them. OSII is aware of no other initiatives, other than that one and our SWB Strategy, that would explain this reduction in major crimes in the targeted area. Conversely, the fact that murder rates are up verifies the escalated violence levels associated with the DTOs in the recent past.

<b>ARIZONA</b>	<b>FY 02</b>	<b>FY 03</b>	<b>FY 04</b>	<b>FY 05</b>
VIOLENT CRIME	27,729	26,208	26,444	27,940
MURDER	367	416	392	419
ROBBERY	7,876	7,460	7,556	8,393
AGGRAVATED ASSAULT	17,966	16,587	16,718	17,252

#### **CALIFORNIA**

VIOLENT CRIME	204,139	202,433	194,890	186,982
MURDER	2,352	2,369	2,363	2,475
ROBBERY	64,453	63,482	61,488	63,325
AGGRAVATED ASSAULT	127,525	126,887	121,694	112,095

#### **TEXAS**

VIOLENT CRIME	116,090	112,910	112,576	111,867
MURDER	1,165	1,287	1,253	1,280
ROBBERY	36,679	36,085	34,935	34,889
AGGRAVATED ASSAULT	70,705	68,364	68,802	68,080

## **2006 SOUTHWEST BORDER INITIATIVE PUBLISHED PROTOCOLS**

### **OSII's Responsibilities in Project Gunrunner:**

1. Identify significant gun seizures and analyze trace reports and agency reports.
2. Ensure that all recovered firearms are traced.
3. Prepare trace summaries detailing any acquisition observations, use of secondary markets, stolen gun trafficking, and initiate referrals to the field intelligence groups.
4. Utilize NTC, VCAB, and Regional Crime Gun Centers to identify trafficking trends and indicators of illegal activities in the U.S.
5. Prepare intelligence advisories linking recovered firearms to DTOs and other observations detailing any other unique characteristics encountered.
6. Prepare information papers regarding findings, trends, and patterns, etc. for field and management use.
7. Review criminal and general-intelligence investigations, as well as, FFL inspections for commonalities such as individuals, vehicles, locations, and telephone numbers for subsequent dissemination to the field for investigation.
8. Coordinate activities as appropriate with EPS, TPD, and FO (criminal and industry operations).
9. Identify facilitator and purchaser telephone numbers in the U.S. and Mexico, vet through DEA for identification purposes, case de-confliction, and/or case fusion; and disseminate to the Intelligence Community Representatives to ATF for identification and exploitation.
10. Identify multi-agency investigations involving Project Gunrunner suspects and facilitate the potential for OCDETF investigations.

### **FIG Responsibilities:**

1. After receiving Advisory (trace results) from OSII, check purchasers identified in the trace results in TECS and in On-Line Lead.
2. Develop background packages on purchasers identified in the trace results to include driver's license photo, current address, and any other relevant intelligence that could be developed through local police intelligence units.
3. Prepare referral summarizing the OSII analytical findings that identifies the link to the DTO and the recovery incident.

4. Refer to the appropriate Field Office/Group.
5. Ensure that results are entered into N-FORCE.

**Field Office Responsibilities:**

1. Attempt to identify the traffickers through interviews of the first purchaser identified through trace and identify subsequent purchasers.
2. Open an investigation if warranted. If not, document results of the interview in N-FORCE, which will allow for review by OSII for strategic analysis.
3. If trafficking cell is active, obtain telephone toll records of straw purchasers and conduct telephone-toll analysis to identify recruiter/facilitator/financier and provide OSII with identified numbers for overall strategic/national analysis.
4. Report results in N-FORCE.

**Southwest Border Coordinator Responsibilities:**

1. This person will have overall responsibility for coordinating criminal and industry operation endeavors with all affected field divisions, EPS, TPD, OSII, and other U.S. and Mexican law-enforcement agencies.
2. With the SWB SACs, develop a unified strategy to affect firearms and ammunition- trafficking to Mexican DTOs in both the U.S. and Mexico.
3. Develop real-time intelligence relating to cross-border gun trafficking.
4. Develop and coordinate intelligence with OSII relating to Mexican DTO gun seizures and domestic Mexico-bound gun and ammunition shipments.
5. Develop cross-border investigations through coordination of domestic investigations.
6. Assist case agents in preparing intelligence and information-sharing packages for Mexican counterparts.
7. Coordinate intelligence and information sharing packages with the Mexico Country Office.
8. Prepare quarterly progress reports relating to Operation Gunrunner.
9. Conduct/coordinate Project Gunrunner-related training, briefings, etc.

## VCIT/PSN Responsibilities:

1. Identify traffickers supplying firearms to violent offenders in the U.S.
2. Link the traffickers and violent offenders to firearms-trafficking activities between the U.S. and Mexico.
3. Disrupt the flow of firearms to the DTOs and other criminal organizations that operate between the two countries.

## FINDINGS:

1. It has been observed that more U.S.-sourced assault rifles have been recovered in Mexico in the last year, compared to the previous year. DTOs favor:



2. Recently, more recovered guns have been purchased directly from U.S. FFLs, as compared to secondary markets, which have traditionally been the source of weapons seized in Mexico.
3. More firearms recovered in Mexico are being purchased from FFLs in States other than those on the border.
4. ATF criminal and industry operations offices are understaffed in the border cities where the majority of DTO-related crime occurs.
  - The Dallas Field Division is understaffed with agents and inspectors. The target town of El Paso is understaffed with special agents and has ATF inspectors at the IO satellite office.
  - The Houston Field Division is understaffed with agents and inspectors. The target city of McAllen is understaffed with agents and has ATF inspectors at the satellite office. The satellite office of Laredo has ATF agents and ATF inspectors. Brownsville is established but is not staffed.

- Los Angeles Field Division is understaffed with agents and inspectors. Their enforcement field offices are fully staffed in San Diego but the industry operations field office is understaffed.
- The Phoenix Field Division is understaffed with agents and inspectors. The Tucson I and II enforcement offices are also understaffed with both agents and inspectors. The IO satellite office has **ATF** inspectors.

5. The incidence of seizures of explosives and artillery by Mexican authorities is on the rise but they are not traced with regularity.
6. According to FBI UCR statistics, violent crime in the target areas has been reduced with the exception of murder rates, which have risen for FY-02, FY-03, FY-04, and FY-05.

### **CHALLENGES:**

1. ATF Field Intelligence Groups need to coordinate inter and intra-division intelligence activities much like operational activities.
2. ATF, at all levels, is not working in concert with other participating Federal agencies and task forces with the exception of OCDETF.
3. The same dealers are listed year after year as being the points of origin for weapons recovered in Mexico.
3. ATF is unaware of the number of long guns being purchased by individuals because we typically only learn of an individual's purchase of more than one long gun when it is recovered in the U.S. and/or Mexico. This is not proactive monitoring of long-gun trafficking but reactive due to a potential criminal act.
4. Participating Federal agencies and task forces place little-to-no importance on capturing data on seized weapons; they usually do not trace them.
5. Due to the fact that the Mexican government has deployed 10,000 military members in the drug war, firearms trace submissions are significantly lower than in previous years. The military authorities fail to trace seized weapons. On the other hand, Project Gunrunner seizures have increased due to the concentration of the additional resources on DTO activities.
6. Although Mexican authorities report a marked increase in seizures of explosives and military artillery, as well as launchers; they fail to trace them and to report them to ATF to determine their U.S. points of origin.

7. ATF OSII created a code in N-FORCE after the creation of the SWB. The field was instructed to retroactively code their applicable investigations. The parameters have not been defined for the field and it is very likely that the field is applying the code inappropriately, both in terms of not coding appropriate cases and in over utilizing the code. An accurate assessment of ATF investigations and arrests cannot be made due to the unreliability of the data.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

1. Formalize and fully implement ATF's Southwest Border Initiative, released in draft form in March 2006, which is attached to this report. (FO, OSII, EPS)
2. Facilitate real-time intelligence sharing with U.S. and Mexican law-enforcement partners during ATF enforcement efforts at gun shows and other enforcement operations. (FO, EPS)
3. Encourage and educate DEA, CPB, ICE, HIDTA, and OCDETF as to the importance of firearms interdiction and investigation as an over-arching solution to the SWB Initiative. These agencies treat firearms issues as a superfluous detail having little relevance to their overall mission. ATF needs to pursue the important job of conducting liaison with our Federal counterparts where we are co-located, to capitalize on firearms and explosive seizures as they occur. Additionally, liaison with counterparts on all ATF levels needs to occur on a regular basis. Further, ATF needs to formulate initiatives with U.S. Attorney's Offices, and other Federal law enforcement agencies, in order to share information and to ensure that we are bringing the full forces of our collective authorities and missions to bear against the DTOs and the firearms traffickers on this side of the border. ATF should collaborate with the U.S. Attorney's Offices to conduct monthly SWB intelligence-sharing meetings with the Federal agencies. (FO)
4. Bring affected enforcement and industry operations staffing levels up to ATF staffing models, and increase staffing at the satellite offices. (FO)
5. Develop and implement a standardized intelligence debriefing questionnaire, to ensure uniform collection of data (attached) and implement the post-seizure analysis reporting protocols. (FO, OSII)
6. Select a permanent, autonomous SBW coordinator. The person selected must speak Spanish fluently; have detailed knowledge of Mexican DTOs; be experienced in international firearms-trafficking investigations; have knowledge of the political, judicial, and law-enforcement systems in Mexico; and be able to develop and present detailed briefings related to Mexican gun seizures and Mexican government operations. ATF should consider placing the SWB Coordinator at EPIC, enabling real-time interaction with other involved Federal agencies and with firmly established infrastructure and firearm information inputs from all agency partners. (FO)
7. Expand e-Trace to every border city in the U.S. and Mexico. (ATF has agreed to deploy e-Trace to all 31 Mexican states.) Also, most importantly, create a Spanish version of e-Trace. (EPS, OST)



8. Develop controls for periodic re-assessments to allow for adjustments of enforcement strategies as the criminals adjust their modes of operation. (FO)
9. Assign additional IRSs and IAs to OSII in order to create a team that would support the SWB by reviewing all criminal and general intelligence investigations in N-FORCE and N-SPECT for commonalities across cases. Assign special agents whose sole function would be to support Project Gunrunner
 

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<b>ATF</b>	Other U.S. Consulates would benefit from our presence. For example, in Guadalajara most firearms seizures could be associated with a specific DTO, if we had assigned personnel. Assign additional agents, IOIs, IRSs, and IAs to SWB Field Divisions to support the SWB by providing direct analytic support to criminal investigations. Assign special agents to each SWB State's Fusion Center/De-confliction Center or HIDTA to share information and de-conflict investigations. (FO, OSII, EPS, OM)
10. Utilize PeN-LINK to store and analyze telephone data from Project Gunrunner and VCIT/PSN suspects from the four border divisions for analyses by OSII. (FO, OSII)
11. Obtain SCI clearance for select special agents assigned to the SWB to provide access to valuable classified intelligence (could be accessed at EPIC, field divisions, military facilities). (OSII, OPRSO)
12. Establish OSII teams similar to the National Response Teams to support the field divisions during major operational activities. The teams should be comprised of IRSs and IAs to provide on-site, real-time research into the possessors, the FFLs, and the original purchasers to provide on-the-spot actionable intelligence to Investigators, whether at a seizure site or at a gun show. (FO, OSII)
13. In February 2007, the Agencia Federal de Investigacion dismantled a highly advanced DTO communications intercept facility seizing antennas, scanners (VHF, UHF, WFM, FM, and AM), intercept equipment, and broad-band antenna (VHF and UHF). ATF agents working along the SWB area need to be reminded to use their secure-radio functions and to not use their cellular phones. (FO, OST)
14. Use ATF Explosives-Detecting Canines at the border to assist law enforcement searches of southbound vehicles. (FO, TPD)
15.
 

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16. Enact legislation requiring the use a multiple-sales form for long guns. (PGA)

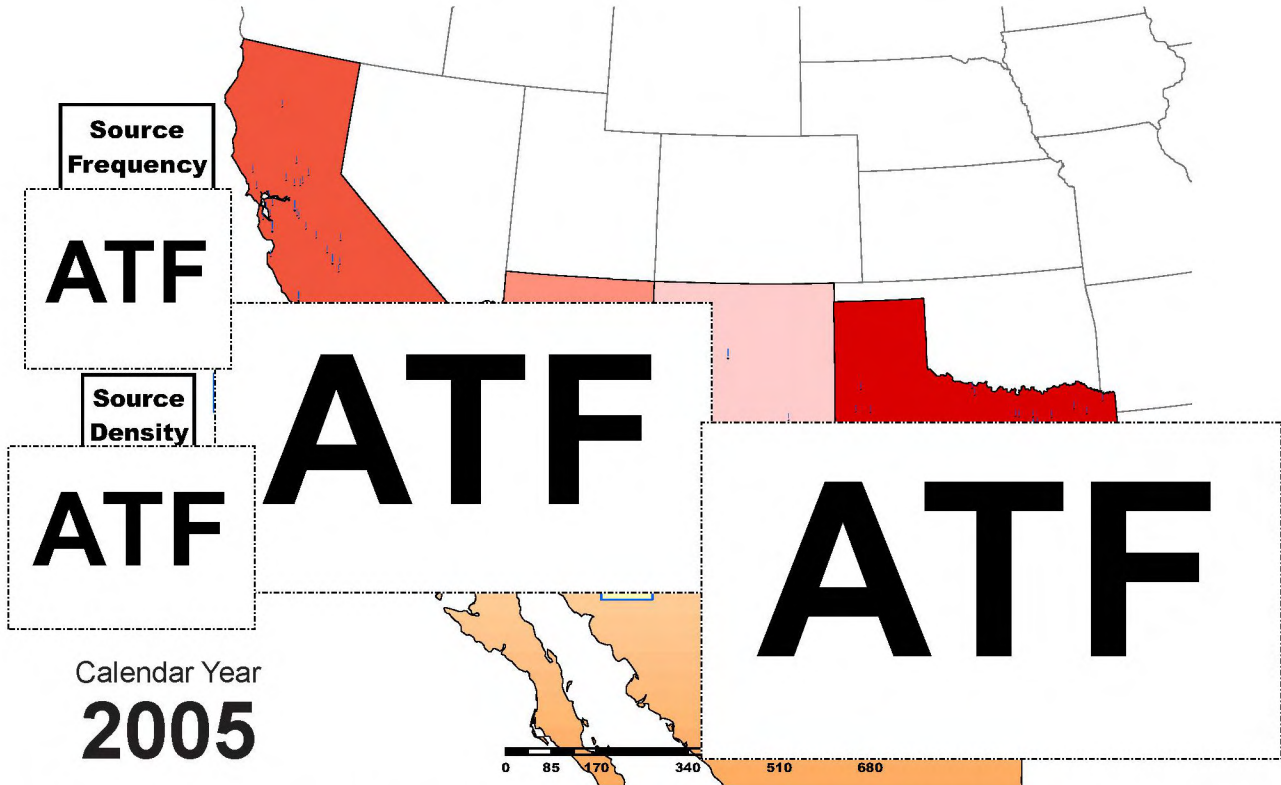
17. Expand our initiative by examining all firearms traces and source states for FFL commonalities and/or purchaser commonalities. (FO, EPS, OSII)
18. The parameters of the SWB N-FORCE code need to be defined and applied retroactively to ATF cases actually involved in the project. (FO)
19. The FIGs need to become fully engaged in the SWB and be in a position to provide statistical data and recommendations upon request. (FO)
20. Inspections of border-county FFLs need to be conducted as expeditiously as possible. Teams for these inspections should consist of investigators and special agents. (FO)
21. Encourage Mexican authorities to report seizures of explosives and artillery to ATF for tracing and analysis purposes. (EPS)

## **CONCLUSION:**

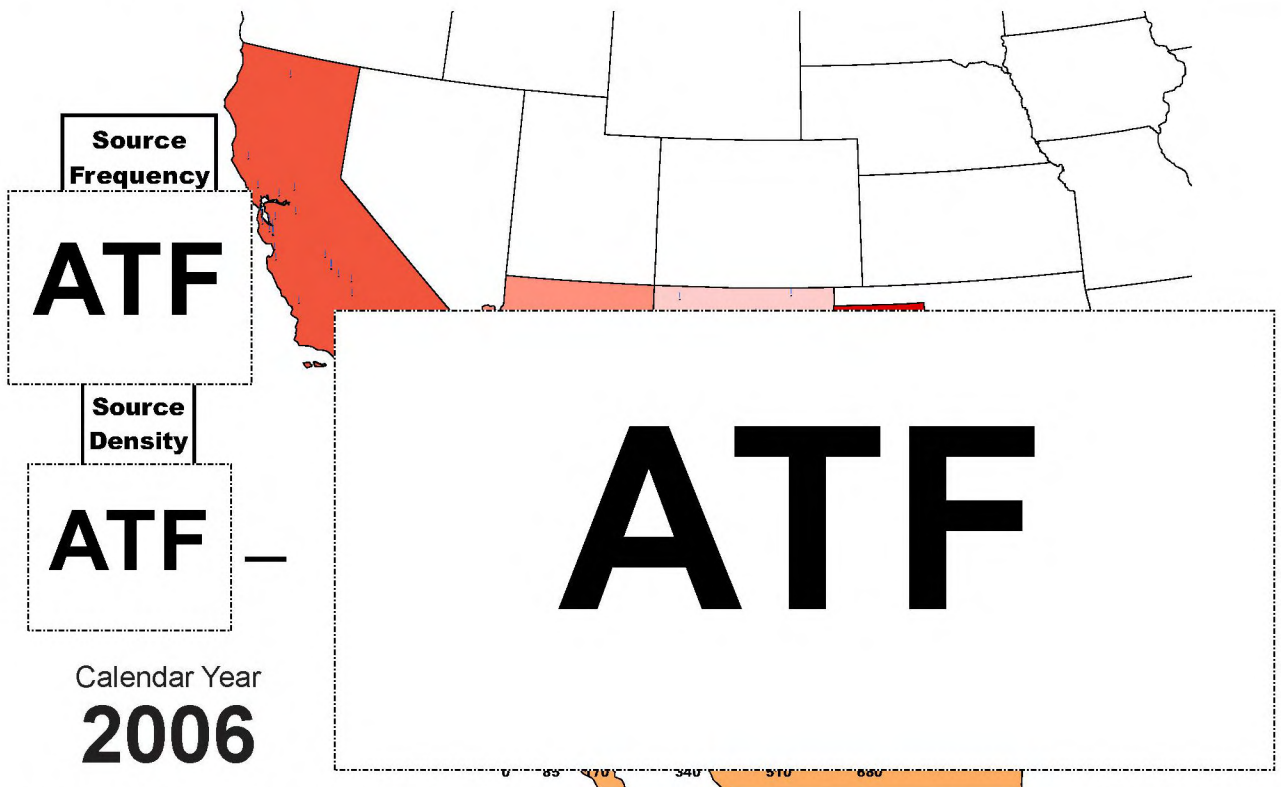
If the aforementioned recommendations are adopted, a vast reduction in violence on both sides of the border would occur in very short order. We have already contributed to the reduction of violent crimes along the Southwest Border by identifying and arresting over 250 persons suspected of firearms violations, in just two and a half years. We have identified the FFLs most often linked to weapons seized in Mexico. We accomplished this with nominal resources and despite the lack of clear lines of communication with Mexican authorities and their limited technology. The exchange of real-time intelligence and trace data would ensure quick identification and apprehension of gun traffickers in both countries. More thorough inspections and/or investigations of FFLs may deprive the DTOs of illegally obtained firearms and result in the reduction of violence. When the DTOs are deprived of their means of protection and enforcement, it will directly impinge on their ability to apply their drug trade, and will reduce the amount of cocaine coming into the US. ATF will make significant inroads into dismantling the DTOs, while fulfilling its primary missions of reducing violent crime and protecting the public.

# Appendix J

## U.S. Source Metropolitan Areas for Firearms Recovered in Mexico



Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, Violent Crime Intelligence Division, Violent Crime Analysis Branch



Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, Violent Crime Intelligence Division, Violent Crime Analysis Branch



# Appendix K

## Apparent Firearms Trafficking Routes from the U.S. into Mexico

ATF



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*Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, Office of Enforcement Programs and Services, National Tracing Center Division Trace Study Analysis of Mexico for Fiscal Years 2004-2006*





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*June 2007*