

**ATF**

**From:** ATF  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 11, 2011 5:01 PM  
**To:** ATF  
**Cc:**  
**Subject:** PHX GRIT Closeout Materials  
**Attachments:** PHX GRIT Close Out - Key Messages 2010-09.docx; August 19 GRIT Performance Report - FINAL.docx; PHX GRIT Close Out - Itinerary.docx; PHX GRIT Close out - Media Advisory - 2010-09-16.docx; PHX GRIT - Div Handout Briefing - FINAL - 2010-09-17.pdf; PHX GRIT Close Out - Background 2010-09.docx; PHX GRIT - Div Handout Map 2010-09-17.pdf; PHX GRIT Close Out - Director's Remarks 2010-09-17 Final.docx; PHX GRIT Close Out - News Release 2010-09-17 FINAL.docx

**ATF**

Per your request, the PHX GRIT Closeout materials. Please scroll down through attachments to access all 9 of them.

**Special Agent** ATF  
**ATF HQ- Legislative Affairs Division**  
**(202) 64** ATF  
**ATF** Cellular  
**ATF**

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## Key Messages/Talking Points

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Public Affairs Division - Washington, DC



### GRIT Close Out / Phoenix, Arizona September 2010

#### GRIT Close Out

#### Key Messages

- With lives being lost every day, ATF and our Mexican counterparts see the urgency in cutting off the supply routes of illegal firearms traveling south into Mexico.
- The Administration has looked to ATF to find solutions to shut down the firearms trafficking organizations and reduce the related violence.
- ATF developed *Project Gunrunner* as our comprehensive strategy to deny firearms to the trafficking organizations that bring violence to Mexico and our cities.
- As ATF's footprint along the border and other discovered trafficking routes and hubs increases, we are better positioned to stop the illegal flow of firearms and protect our citizens from the related violence.
- ATF provides training to our Government of Mexico partners in the field of explosives and crisis negotiation.
- GRIT teams have added special agents, industry operations investigators, analytical, legal, technical and administrative support personnel, along with investigative equipment and other resources to Project Gunrunner in Arizona and New Mexico.
- The aim of GRIT is to disrupt and prosecute the groups and organizations responsible for trafficking firearms to Mexico.

- During GRIT, both criminal investigations and federal firearms licensee inspections contribute to ATF's efforts of tracking illegal firearms traffickers.
- Regulatory inspections educate licensed gun dealers about federal firearms laws and regulations, which ensure public safety, and help FFLs to accurately account for firearms inventories.
- The criminal intelligence work conducted during the GRIT initiative gives ATF a better understanding of the sources of, and the methods used to traffic, crime guns into Mexico.
- ATF is seeing the reach of the Mexican firearms traffickers across the United States as more and more firearms recovered in Mexico are shown to be sourced from states further inland from the border.
- As our GRIT initiative ends, the assigned personnel will return to their posts of duty to conduct firearms trafficking and violent crime investigations in their regions.

### **Relating to Recent Mayor's Against Illegal Guns and Wilson Center Reports on Firearms Trafficking into Mexico**

#### **Key Messages**

- Both documents include conclusions prepared by the respective authors – The conclusions are those of the authors and are not for ATF to dispute.
- For further information on ATF material cited in any report, please refer your questions to ATF's Public Affairs Division

#### **Background – Not For Release**

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**Relating to Border / Illegal Immigration Issues / Spillover Violence**

**Key Messages**

- ATF’s mission includes the protection of our communities from violent criminals and criminal organizations by denying the illegal use and trafficking of firearms and explosives.
- ATF’s issue is violent crime – disrupting firearms trafficking organizations and prosecuting offenders that endanger the community.

**Background**

- State of Arizona attempted to enact law allowing police to request proof of citizenship during a routine police stop.
- Department of Justice sought and received an injunction to halt the enactment of the Arizona law.

**Phoenix Gun Runner Impact Teams (GRIT)**  
**Performance Report**  
 August 19, 2010

GRIT Performance for Reporting Period August 14 – August 19, 2010			
	Reporting Period	Since Inception	
Number of Investigative Leads at the Start of GRIT (May 1, 2010)	ATF		ATF
Number of New Investigative Leads	0		ATF
<b>Total Leads</b>			
Number of Leads Investigated	0		ATF
Number of New Actual Criminal Cases Opened	0		
Number of Existing Investigations Supported by GRIT	0		
Number of Defendants Recommended for Prosecution	0		
Number of Referrals to U.S. LE Agencies	0		0
Number of Liaison Activities with the Gov. of Mexico	0		ATF
Number of Firearms/Other Evidence Seized/Recovered by ATF or Significant Seizures by Other LE Agencies Acting on ATF Information			ATF
Number of FFL Inspections Assigned	0		ATF
Number of FFL Inspections Completed			
FFL Adverse Actions Recommended:	ATF		
Number of Warning Letters/Warning Conferences			
Number of Revocations (Recommended By Division and Concurred by HQ)	0		
Number of Licenses Surrendered in Lieu of Revocation	0		
Number of Criminal Enforcement Referrals Made by IOIs to ATF LE	0		

**INDUSTRY OPERATIONS ADDITIONAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS DURING GRIT:**

- Reviewed 56,117 ATF Form 4473s for accuracy and trafficking indicators
- Initiated 161 referrals to law enforcement or state and local agencies
- Determined the accuracy of licensee records for 43,359 firearms
- Reduced the number of unaccounted for firearms from 3,292 to 333
- Uncovered 146 unreported multiple sales totaling 370 firearms

**HIGHLIGHTED INVESTIGATIONS:**

**Industry Operations**

**Phoenix**

**785125-2010-0238**

**ATF**

A firearms compliance inspection was initiated on **ATF** as part of the Southwest Border Gun Runner Initiative. The inspection disclosed several violations, including the failure to timely enter the acquisitions **ATF** firearms and the dispositions of **ATF** firearms into the acquisition & disposition record. Also, the licensee was unable to account **ATF** firearms, which had to be reported as missing inventory. As a result, a warning conference was held with one of the responsible persons. A recall inspection will be conducted by the local Industry Operations office to determine the level of compliance by the licensee.

**785125-2010-0520**

**ATF**

A firearms compliance inspection was initiated on **ATF** as part of the Southwest Border Gun Runner Initiative. The inspection disclosed several violations, including the failure to timely enter the acquisitions **ATF** arms and the dispositions **ATF** firearms into the acquisition & disposition record. Also, the licensee was unable to account **ATF** firearms, which had to be reported as missing inventory. As a result, a warning conference was held with one of the responsible persons. A recall inspection will be conducted by the local Industry Operations office to determine the level of compliance by the licensee.

**785125-2010-0318**

**ATF**

A firearms compliance inspection was initiated on **ATF** **ATF** as part of the Southwest Border Gun Runner Initiative. The inspection disclosed several violations, including the failure to conduct a background check and the failure to complete an ATF Form 4473 for a firearm transfer. Also, the licensee failed to retain an

ATF Form 4473 for a transaction in which the transfer did not take place (denial) and the inspection disclosed that firearms transactions were conducted away from the licensed premises. As a result, a warning conference was held with the licensee. A recall inspection will be conducted by the local Industry Operations office to determine the level of compliance by the licensee.

785125-2010-0253

**ATF**

A firearms compliance inspection was initiated on **ATF** as part of the Southwest Border Gun Runner Initiative. The inspection disclosed several violations, including the failure to timely enter the acquisitions **ATF** firearms and the dispositions **ATF** firearms into the acquisition & disposition record. Also, the licensee failed to retain an ATF Form 4473 for the required period in which a NICS check was initiated (firearm not transferred). As a result, a warning conference was held with the licensee. A recall inspection will be conducted by the local Industry Operations office to determine the level of compliance by the licensee.

Phoenix GRIT Close Out News Conference Itinerary  
Deputy Director Kenneth E. Melson  
September 16 - 17, 2010

Thursday, September 16, 2010

05:15 PM ET Depart Washington, D.C. (DCA) via US Air Flight 43  
07:06 PM MT Arrive Phoenix Sky Harbor Airport (PHX)  
07:30 PM MT Depart for Hotel

Friday, September 17, 2010

07:45 AM MT Depart hotel for Phoenix Field Division  
08:00 AM MT Arrive Phoenix Field Division and meet with SAC Newell  
08:45 AM MT Movement to Green Room to meet with U.S. Attorney Dennis Burke,  
District of Arizona  
09:00 AM MT News Conference (Phoenix Field Division)  
09:45 AM MT End News Conference and movement to Green Room  
10:00 AM MT – One-on-one with reporters in room to be determined  
10:25 AM MT  
10:30 AM MT - Meet with Field Division Office staff  
10:35 AM MT  
10:45 AM MT Depart for Airport for flight to Washington, DC (DCA)

Speaking Order:

Deputy Director Kenneth E. Melson – Announcement of the establishment of seven national Project Gunrunner groups; ATF's national/international Gunrunner accomplishments; Phoenix GRIT accomplishments.

U.S. Attorney Dennis Burke - Accomplishments of USAO – 100 defendants charged on



firearms related charges since June 2010 (ATF and non-ATF cases). A couple cases will be highlighted

**ATF**

## Media Advisory

Public Affairs Division - Washington, DC



FY-10-23

September 16, 2010

Contact: Office of Public Affairs

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

(202) 648-8500

S/A Thomas Mangan, PIO

(602) 776-5408

### **ATF ANNOUNCES 7 NEW GUNRUNNER GROUPS AND PHOENIX GUN RUNNER IMPACT TEAMS' SUCCESSES**

PHOENIX — Deputy Director Kenneth E. Melson of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) and Dennis K. Burke, United States Attorney, District of Arizona will hold a news conference to announce the opening of seven new national ATF Gunrunner groups and the closeout and results of the Gun Runner Impact Team (GRIT) initiative, a nearly 100-day surge of ATF resources to the Phoenix Field Division in support of ATF's Southwest Border strategy, Project Gunrunner, at **9:00 a.m., Friday, Sept. 17.**

**WHO:** ATF Deputy Director Kenneth E. Melson  
United States Attorney Dennis K. Burke

**WHAT:** News Conference  
Open Media Event

**WHEN:** 9:00 a.m., Friday, Sept. 17, 2010

**WHERE:** ATF Phoenix Field Division  
201 E. Washington Street  
Suite 940  
Phoenix, Ariz. 85004

*Note: Spanish language translation / interview available*

*Note: Media attending the event will need to present valid media credentials for entrance to the news conference. It is requested that the media be in place by 8:30 a.m. Contact ATF PIO Thomas Mangan (602) 776-5408, mobile (602) 859-6317.*

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**Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives  
Gun Runner Impact Team (GRIT)  
Phoenix Field Division  
May 1 – August 6, 2010**



## Gun Runner Impact Team



- The U.S. Department of Justice's Southwest Border (SWB) Initiative is a focused and comprehensive approach to address the violence inflicted by the Mexican Drug Cartels on both sides of the U.S.-Mexico Border. ATF's part in this initiative is ***Project Gunrunner***
- Project Gunrunner's primary goal is to stem the trafficking of firearms to Mexican Drug Cartels by identifying and investigating those responsible and to combat firearms related violence affecting communities on both sides of the border
- Gun Runner Impact Teams (GRIT) were developed as a supplement of ATF resources along the SWB and from May 1 through August 6, 2010 a GRIT was deployed to ATF's Phoenix Field Division. The Phoenix GRIT consisted of 84 ATF personnel including Special Agents, Industry Operations Investigators, and Support Staff from around the country.



# GRIT Impact



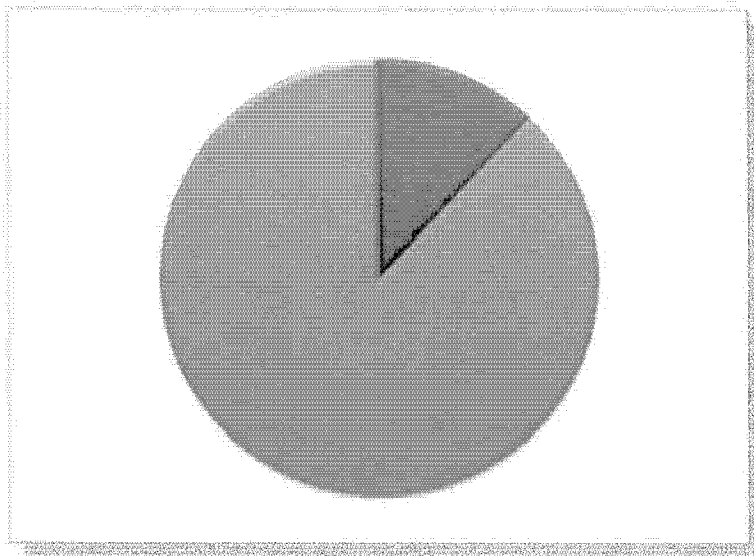
- 174 investigations were initiated by the Phoenix GRIT.
- To date 66 defendants have been referred for prosecution.
- Follow up on all investigative leads is ongoing.



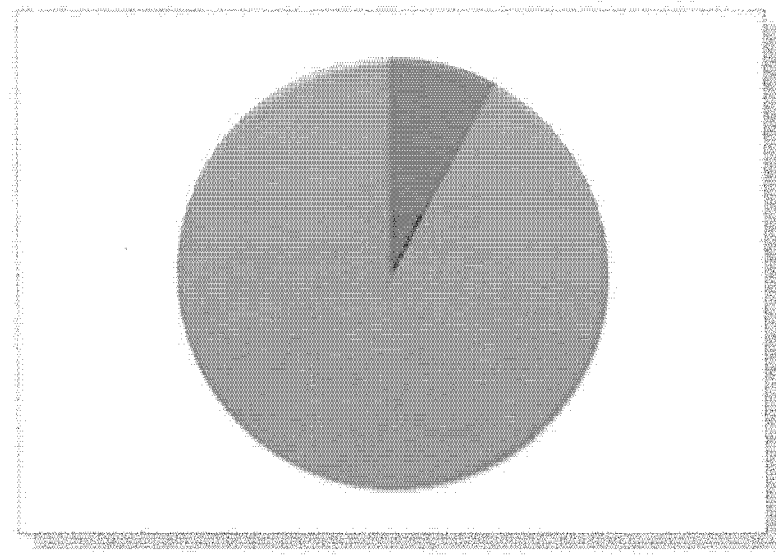
## Completed FFL Inspections (GRIT)



Warning Letters / Warning Conferences / Revocation  
110



Voluntary Surrender  
69



# Total FFL Inspections – 806

Source – Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives



# Completed FFL Inspections



When violations of the law and regulations are disclosed during an inspection, a report of violations is issued to the licensee that outlines the discrepancy and the requirements for corrective action. ATF also works to gain cooperation and compliance from federal firearms licensees (FFLs) by issuing warning letters and holding warning conferences. Despite these remedial actions, on rare occasions ATF encounters a licensee who fails to comply with the law and regulations and demonstrates a lack of commitment to improving his or her business practices. In such cases where willfulness is demonstrated, ATF's obligation to protect public safety may require revocation of the federal firearms license.

- There were 806 completed FFL inspections in the Phoenix Field Division during GRIT.
- 69 FFLs voluntarily surrendered their licenses.
- ATF took administrative action against 110 FFLs:
  - 1 Revocation was recommended
  - 109 warning letters or warning conferences were completed.

Source – Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives



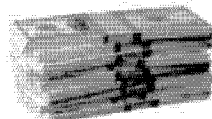
# PHOENIX GRIT SEIZURES



**1285** Firearms Seized



**71,774** Rounds of Ammunition Seized



**\$7763** in Currency Seized



**676.2** Grams of Cocaine Seized

Source – Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives





## Key Messages/Talking Points

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### GRIT Close Out / Phoenix, Arizona September 2010

#### GRIT Close Out

##### Gunrunner Impact Teams

##### Background:

- GRIT teams add special agents, industry operations investigators, analytical, legal, technical and administrative support personnel, along with investigative equipment and other resources to Project Gunrunner. This supplemental initiative was operational for almost 100 days (May 1 – August 6, 2010), and its aim was to disrupt and prosecute the groups and organizations responsible for trafficking firearms to Mexico.
- As GRIT began, the ATF Office of Strategic Intelligence and Information gathered intelligence from trace data and previous criminal enforcement operations. ATF Industry Operations began conducting numerous firearms dealer inspections. From the intelligence gathered by all ATF resources, numerous investigative leads were generated and investigated.
- Performance measures have tracked both operational and outreach milestones, to include leads generated, cases opened, estimates on the number of firearms trafficked, FFL inspections and licensees reached through industry operations outreach programs.
- GRIT utilizes both traditional and innovative violent crime-fighting and firearms trafficking techniques, its regulatory authority, along with its strategic domestic and international partnerships to combat the increasing violence along the U.S.–Mexico border, as well as throughout the country.
- The deployment of GRIT resources began May 1 and was fully staffed May 10. ATF has activated over 80 personnel stationing them in Phoenix and Tucson, Ariz., and Albuquerque, N.M.
- As a result of the Phoenix Division GRIT initiative, ATF seized almost 1,300 firearms and over 71,000 rounds of ammunition; initiated 174 new federal criminal cases; recommended 66 defendants for prosecution; conducted over 800 Federal Firearms Licensee (FFL) inspections that initiated over 160 referrals to law enforcement or to other state and local agencies for further investigation.

## **Project Gunrunner – ATF Southwest Border Initiative**

### **Background:**

- ATF's southwest border strategy is to work in conjunction with its domestic and international law enforcement partners to deny the "tools of the trade" to the firearms trafficking infrastructure of criminal organizations operating in Mexico and along the border.
- The cornerstone of ATF's Project Gunrunner is intelligence-driven firearms trafficking investigations. ATF gathers intelligence from federal firearms licensee records, ballistics and other laboratory analysis, trace data as well as the traditional methods of intelligence gathering and the sharing of information with our law enforcement partners.
- An essential component of ATF's Project Gunrunner is eTrace. eTrace provides for the electronic exchange of crime gun incident-related data in a secure Web-based environment. eTrace allows law enforcement representatives to electronically submit firearm trace requests, to monitor the progress of traces, to retrieve completed trace results and to query firearm trace related data in a real-time environment.
- Another key component for stemming the illicit flow of firearms between Mexico and U.S. Border states is ATF's inspection of federal firearms licensees (FFLs) and their licensed distributors in the affected areas. These inspections detect and prevent the diversion of firearms.
- Since 2006, through Project Gunrunner, ATF has noted a trend of highly destructive, non-commercial explosives being requested for tracing from Mexico. They include:
  - Fragmentation Hand Grenades
  - 40mm High-explosive dual purpose (HEDP) round.
  - M72A2 Light Anti-tank Weapon System (LAW) Rockets
  - Rocket Propelled Grenade (RPG) Launchers
- ATF has also seen a recent alarming trend of the recovery of improvised hand grenades. The demand for hand grenades is greater than the supply, and the cartels are reaching out to subjects who are manufacturing the grenades themselves. The improvised grenades have varied from sophisticated to crude devices.
- The cooperation among federal, state and local law enforcement agencies and the government of Mexico is the foundation for Project Gunrunner in combating cross border firearms trafficking by organized criminal groups.
- ATF's activities in Mexico are coordinated through the ATF attaché office located in Mexico City.

- ATF southwest field divisions (Dallas, Houston, Los Angeles and Phoenix) have established border liaison (ATF special agent) contacts with an assigned Procuraduría General de la República (PGR) (Mexico's Attorney General's Office) representative. The border liaisons meet regularly to coordinate firearms trafficking investigations.
- The expected strategic outcome of this law enforcement effort is the suppression of the firearm-related violence occurring on both sides of the border through effective law enforcement collaboration between Mexico and the United States.
- Mexican President Felipe Calderon and Attorney General State/Privacy have stated that the trafficking of U.S. sourced firearms is the number one crime problem affecting the security of Mexico.
- ATF could use additional resources to support the needs of our Southwest Border strategy, including the need for enhanced information technology such as Spanish eTrace and NIBIN. Crucial technical resources such as eTrace, a web-based system which enables the tracing of firearms, and IBIS, a ballistic tracing technology, have been deployed to Mexico, but on a limited basis.

### **Project Gunrunner – ATF Southwest Border Initiative**

#### **International Objectives:**

- The international strategic component is firearms tracing, in particular the expansion of the eTrace firearms tracing system in Mexico.
- Continue to support Mexico's efforts with their use of the ATF developed Spanish version of eTrace, which will improve Mexico's law enforcement successful firearms trace results and increase their ability to trace firearms and develop investigative leads in their native language.
- Continue to support Mexican law enforcement institutions, and build capacity within them, through training in:
  - Firearms and explosives identification,
  - Post-blast investigation and render safe explosives training,
  - Serial number restoration
  - Canine training.
- Undertake joint enforcement actions with vetted Mexican law enforcement personnel.
- Share timely information and intelligence on recovered firearms and traffickers.

## **Project Gunrunner – ATF Southwest Border Initiative**

### **Domestic Objectives:**

- Dedicate resources from ATF’s four field divisions along the border (Los Angeles, Phoenix, Dallas and Houston) to the SWB initiative.
- Generate focused, intelligence-driven Southwest Border firearms trafficking interdiction investigations that target straw purchasers and firearms traffickers in known trafficking corridors.
- Educate the firearm industry on ATF’s role in combating firearms trafficking. Conduct firearms seminars on the detection of straw purchases and firearms trafficking.
- Provide continued and additional training in support of the Southwest Border strategy:
  - Develop and utilize training modules in Spanish and English on firearms identification and tracing techniques.
  - Deliver additional Spanish language immersion training for ATF personnel.
- ATF increased its efforts by relocating 100 personnel to the Houston Field Division for four months in 2009 as part of ATF’s new intelligence-driven effort known as Gunrunner Impact Teams or GRIT.
- ATF increased its efforts by relocating 84 personnel to the Phoenix Field Division for almost 100 days in 2010 as part of ATF’s new intelligence-driven effort known as Gunrunner Impact Teams or GRIT.
- The GRIT focuses ATF’s violent crime fighting and firearms trafficking expertise along with its regulatory authority and strategic partnerships to combat violence along the U.S. – Mexico border.
- As part of the 2009 Recovery Act funding, ATF received \$10 million for Project Gunrunner efforts aimed at disrupting arms trafficking between the United States and Mexico, to include the 2009 hiring 25 new special agents, 6 industry operations investigators, 3 intelligence research specialists and 3 investigative analysts. This funding has established three permanent field offices, dedicated to firearms trafficking investigations, in McAllen, Texas, El Centro, Calif., Las Cruces, N.M. and a satellite office in Roswell, N.M.
- In the 2010 emergency supplemental appropriation for border security, ATF received \$37.5 million for Project Gunrunner efforts. Seven Gunrunner groups will be created dedicated to the comprehensive disruption of the flow illegal firearms from source to market areas.

### **Project Gunrunner Statistical Information**

- From fiscal years 2004 through 2009, Project Gunrunner referred for prosecution 1,012 cases involving 2,096 defendants
  - Those cases include 510 firearms trafficking cases with an estimated 15,296 firearms trafficked.
  
- ATF has analyzed firearms seizures in Mexico from 2005-2009 and identified the following weapons most commonly used by drug traffickers:
  - .223 caliber rifles
  - 7.62 mm rifles
  - 9mm pistols
  - .380 caliber weapons
  - .45 caliber pistols

### **ATF Firearms Trafficking Enforcement**

#### **Background:**

- ATF has been working gun trafficking cases for more than a generation.
  
- More than 10,000 Americans every year are killed with firearms.
  
- Recent DOJ study – over 95% of gang related homicides reportedly involve the use of a firearm.
  
- ATF traced more than 354,000 firearms in CY 2009.
  
- ATF is the federal agency tasked with stemming firearms-related violent crime in America. Congress has given ATF the statutory authority to enforce firearms-related crimes and to regulate the firearms industry.
  
- The goal of ATF's illegal firearms trafficking enforcement efforts is to reduce violent crime by stemming the flow of firearms to criminals by identifying, investigating, and arresting those who illegally supply firearms to prohibited individuals, and by deterring the diversion of firearms from lawful commerce into the illegal market.

### **ATF's National Tracing Center and eTrace**

#### **Background:**

- The National Tracing Center (NTC) of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) is the country's only crime-gun tracing AND information facility. It provides critical information that helps federal, state and local law enforcement agencies solve firearms crimes, detect firearms traffickers, and track the intrastate, interstate and international movement of crime guns.

- ATF processed more than 354,000 crime-gun trace requests in fiscal year 2009, which include traces from almost 60 countries.
- eTrace is a paperless firearm trace submission system and trace analysis computer module that is readily accessible through a secure connection to the World Wide Web. This Internet application provides the necessary utilities for submitting, retrieving, storing and querying firearms trace-related information relative to particular jurisdictions, thereby allowing the systematic tracing of firearms that have been recovered from crime scenes. Analysis of firearms trace data can assist in the identification of firearms trafficking patterns and geographic profiling for criminal hot spots and possible sources of illicit firearms.
- A suspect gun is a firearm that has not been recovered by law enforcement but is suspected to be involved in criminal activity. It is flagged in the Firearms Tracing System (FTS) so that if and when it is recovered and traced by a law enforcement agency, the criminal investigations can be coordinated.
- The theft of firearms from a federal firearms licensee is a federal felony offense a crime for which ATF is tasked with investigating. All Federal firearms licensees (FFL) are required to report the theft or loss of firearms from their inventory to ATF. ATF in turn investigates these crimes, prosecutes the thieves, and ensures the return of stolen firearms.
- ATF provides a voluntary reporting process for theft of firearms from interstate carriers. ATF maintains a database specifically for interstate thefts and provides analysis and investigative support in the investigation of these crimes.
- Law enforcement agencies can submit firearms trace requests to ATF with partial serial numbers from crime guns recovered with obliterated serial numbers in order to identify the crime gun and develop investigative leads.
- ATF traces firearms for foreign law enforcement agencies to provide investigative leads, detect firearms traffickers and to determine international arms trafficking routes. More than 50 countries annually submit trace requests to the NTC.
- When an FFL discontinues business, the FFL must send their firearms transactions records to the NTC. The NTC receives an average of 1.3 million out-of-business records per month and is the only repository for these records within the United States.
- When an FFL sells two or more handguns to the same purchaser within five consecutive business days the FFL is required to submit a report of multiple sales to the NTC. The NTC receives an average of 194,700 reports of multiple sales from licensees each year. These reports, when cross referenced with firearms trace information for recovered crime guns, can be an important indicator in detecting illegal firearms trafficking.

- By searching the out-of-business FFL records, the NTC can assist law enforcement agencies investigating the theft of firearms to obtain firearms serial numbers. This is conducted when the owner has no record of the firearm serial number and the FFL from whom the owner purchased the firearm is now out of business

### **ATF's Unique Expertise**

#### **Background:**

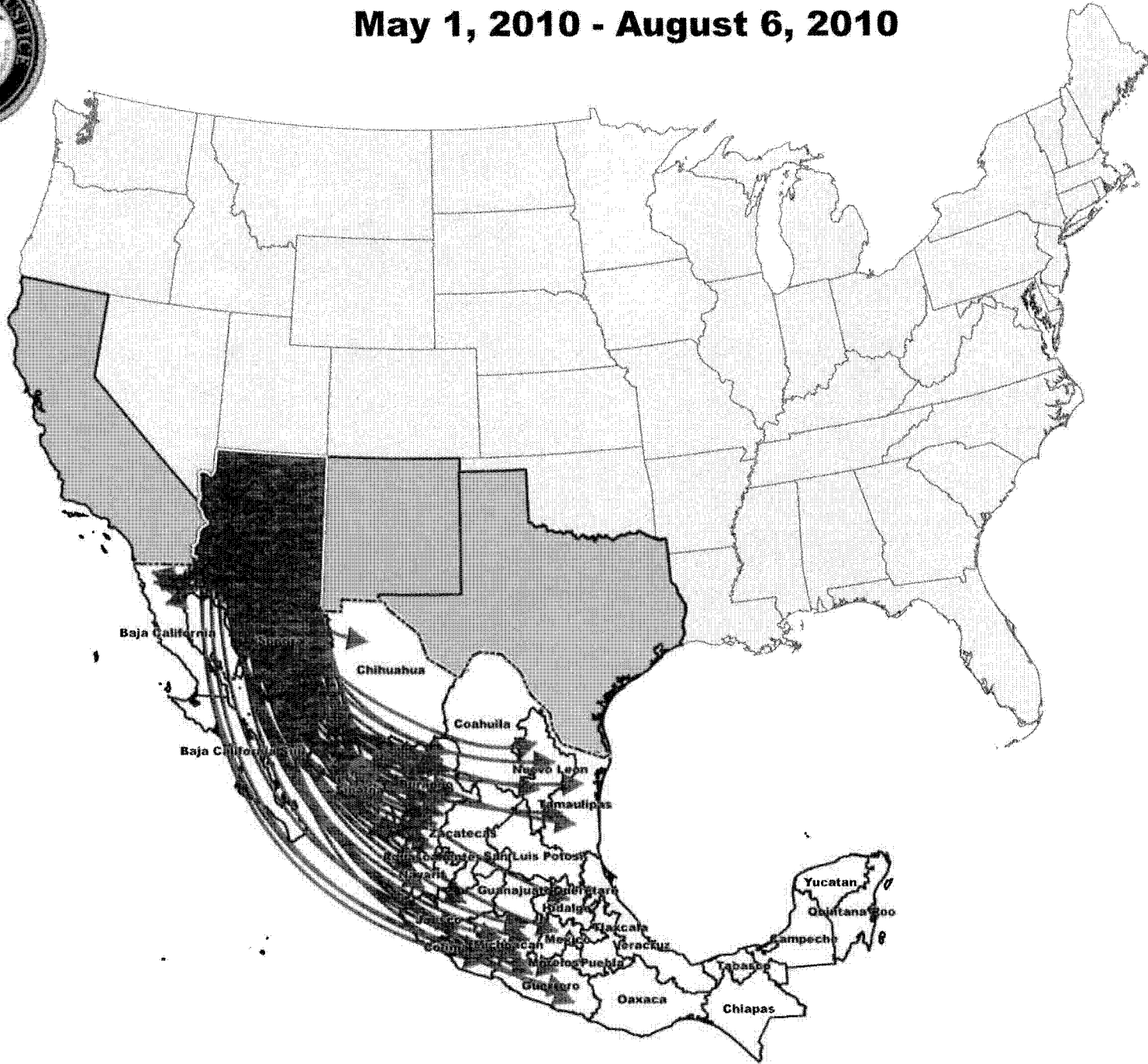
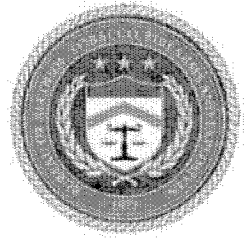
- The cornerstone of ATF's Project Gunrunner is intelligence-driven firearms trafficking investigations. ATF gathers intelligence from federal firearms licensee records, ballistics and other laboratory analysis, trace data as well as the traditional methods of intelligence gathering and the sharing of information with our law enforcement partners. From fiscal years 2004 through 2009, Project Gunrunner referred for prosecution 1,012 cases involving 2,096 defendants
- ATF's Industry Operations Investigators (IOIs) perform regulatory inspections at all federally licensed firearms and explosives licensees. The function of these inspections is to assist the licensees with respect to compliance with federal laws and regulations as well as detect any evidence of straw purchasing or other methods of diversion of firearms/explosives into illegal markets.
- The ATF's National Tracing Center (NTC) is the country's only crime-gun tracing AND information facility. It provides critical information that helps federal, state and local law enforcement agencies solve firearms crimes, detect firearms traffickers, and track the intrastate, interstate and international movement of crime guns.
- An essential component of ATF's Project Gunrunner is eTrace. eTrace provides for the electronic exchange of crime gun incident-related data in a secure Web-based environment. eTrace allows law enforcement representatives to electronically submit firearm trace requests, to monitor the progress of traces, to retrieve completed trace results and to query firearm trace related data in a real-time environment.
- ATF has worked with the Government of Mexico to make the tracing process more comprehensive, thereby ensuring the tracing of all known recovered/seized explosives.
- ATF has established a National Gun Desk at the Drug Enforcement Administration's El Paso Information Center (EPIC). The ATF gun desk serves as a central repository for weapons-related intelligence. The ATF gun desk compiles illicit weapons information and intelligence from federal, state and local law enforcement agencies as well as foreign governments such as Mexico.

- ATF has the sole national repository for arson and explosives related data with the U.S. Bomb Data Center (USBDC).
- ATF gathers intelligence data and shares information through the U.S. Bomb Data Center, which is comprised of the largest collection of explosives and fire incident-based information in the world – more than 200,000 arson and explosives incidents reports obtained from federal, state, and local fire service/law enforcement agencies.
- ATF's Explosives Enforcement Officers (EEO) identify explosives material and perform render safe and disposal procedures. ATF currently has explosive enforcement personnel in Mexico to assist with the identification and trace of recovered explosives material.





# Arizona Gunrunner Impact Team (GRIT) May 1, 2010 - August 6, 2010



**ATF**

## Director's Remarks

Public Affairs Division - Washington, DC



Remarks of Deputy Director Melson  
at the  
GRIT Close Out Press Conference  
Phoenix, Arizona  
Friday, September 17, 2010

- Good Morning, I am very pleased to be here today to discuss with you the results of our second Gun Runner Impact Team initiative and announce the formation of

seven (7) new Project  
Gunrunner firearms  
trafficking groups.

- Nothing is more important to ATF and to those who reside along the Southwest Border than stemming violence that has plagued this region during the past several years.

- As a result of drug trafficking organizations and their thirst for money and power, lives are being lost to violent crime every day on both sides of the U.S.-Mexico border. ATF, along with our Mexican counterparts, embraces the urgent need to cut off the

supply routes of illegal firearms traveling south into Mexico.

- The Administration has looked to ATF to find solutions to shut down the firearms trafficking organizations and reduce the related violence. ATF has unique expertise in

investigating gun  
trafficking, and  
unparalleled ability to  
develop intelligence and  
leads concerning the illegal  
commerce in firearms and  
explosives.

- ATF developed *Project Gunrunner* in 2005 as our comprehensive strategy to

deny firearms to the drug trafficking organizations that bring violence to Mexico and our cities.

- With congressional and ATF funding we have been able to establish Gunrunner groups. Gun trafficking to Mexico and other countries is a nation-

wide problem, one which ATF is attacking strategically as well as tactically.

- As a result of the 2010 emergency supplemental appropriation for border security, ATF received \$37.5 million. With this funding, **I am announcing**



**today** the formation of  
seven (7) additional  
Gunrunner groups  
dedicated to the  
comprehensive and  
strategic disruption of  
firearms trafficking into  
Mexico. These groups will  
be placed along traditional  
and newly-discovered

# firearms trafficking routes and hubs:

- Sierra Vista, Ariz.
- Brownsville, Texas
- Dallas
- Las Vegas
- Oklahoma City
- Atlanta
- Miami

- With this increased footprint, ATF will be in a better position to stop the illegal flow of firearms from a national perspective and protect our citizens from the related violence.
- Some of the supplemental funding will also provide

upgrades to our National Tracing Center – the focus of ATF’s eTrace activity.

- The eTrace system, which is central to ATF’s gun trafficking campaign, provides for the electronic exchange of information of crime gun incident-related data in a secure web-based environment.

- The electronic tracing of seized illegal firearms by ATF and the entire law enforcement community provide **valuable** leads to disrupt trafficking patterns and jail those responsible for violent crimes here in Arizona and around the country.

- In 2009, ATF developed Spanish eTrace, a Spanish language version deployed to Mexico and other Central American countries to expedite the tracing request process and retrieval of trace results that prove crucial to solving trafficking cases.

- In 2009 a Gun Runner Impact Team (GRIT) - a surge of ATF personnel for a finite time period - was deployed to south Texas with great success.
- Today, we also announce the results of ATF's second, high impact GRIT initiative, focused in Arizona and New Mexico. The GRITs are the tactical portion of our

comprehensive strategy to attack gun trafficking.

- For 97 days, more than 80 ATF personnel were stationed in Phoenix, Tucson and Albuquerque from May 1st to August 6th. They used a combination of traditional and innovative violent crime-fighting techniques,



coupled with ATF  
regulatory authority to  
identify firearms  
traffickers.

- As a result of these techniques, ATF seized almost 1,300 firearms and over 71,000 rounds of ammunition; initiated 174 new federal criminal cases;

and referred 66 defendants,  
thus far, for prosecution.

And we expect that  
number to rise.

- During this time, ATF  
Industry Operations  
Investigators (IOIs)  
completed over 800  
Federal Firearms Licensee  
(FFL) inspections that

initiated over 160 referrals to law enforcement or to other state and local agencies for further investigation.

- Through review of FFL records and inventories, ATF reduced the number of unaccounted for firearms from over 3,000

to just over 300. This is important because unaccounted for inventories diminish the effectiveness of eTrace.

- This operation underscores the importance of FFL records being maintained properly. These inspections **DO** detect and

prevent the diversion of firearms to illegal sources.

- I also want to recognize the gun dealers and the firearms industry for their cooperation with ATF in areas of inspections, intelligence, and community service announcements warning of

the seriousness of being a straw purchaser. Our common goal of deterring crime and keeping guns out of criminal's hands makes the partnership between ATF, the dealers, and the firearms industry an important component of making sure that every law abiding citizen can

exercise their right to purchase and possess firearms.

- During our GRIT in the Phoenix Division, ATF agents collaborated extensively with local and state law enforcement and many task force officers directly contributed to the

initiative. More than a dozen law enforcement agencies assisted ATF with tactical support, enforcement activities, suspect interviews, and referrals. For all those involved, please accept our thanks.



- I want to thank ATF's Phoenix Field Division and all the ATF men and women from across the country who participated in Phoenix GRIT. Special Agent in Charge Bill Newell and his team provided the leadership required to keep America safe from illegal firearms

and drug trafficking organizations.

- ATF's commitment to reducing violent crime and stemming the flow of firearms across the southwest border is shared with our law enforcement partners in Mexico.

- Since 2009, ATF has tripled its personnel in Mexico, to include opening five additional offices in U.S. consulates.
  
- We are there to support the GOM with intelligence, eTrace, training and our forensic science expertise.

It is an unfortunate fact that the tools of the trade used by cartels in Mexico are expanding to the more frequent use of improvised explosive devices and vehicle borne improvised explosive devices. ATF has a highly developed and sophisticated expertise in explosives

identification and post blast investigations.

- In the last couple years, ATF, along with Government of Mexico personnel, formed the Combined Explosives Investigation Team whereby a joint response to explosives scenes and

recoveries in Mexico is conducted in order to identify the explosive material, collect evidence and conduct a post blast investigation, when necessary.

- ATF continues to provide Government of Mexico personnel training in the

explosives detection canine  
field, crisis negotiation and  
post blast investigation.

- I want to commend the  
Government of Mexico,  
President Calderon, AG  
Chavez Chavez and our  
law enforcement  
counterparts across the  
border for their bravery

and thank them for their help and strong desire to end this violence that is affecting both our countries.

- ATF appreciates the hard work and cooperation of our federal law enforcement partners:  
DEA, FBI, ICE, CBP and



of course, the assistance of  
U.S. Attorney Dennis  
Burke and his office....

**ATF**

**News Release**

Public Affairs Division - Washington, DC



FY-10-22

Contact: Public Affairs Division  
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For Immediate Release

Sept. 17, 2010

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

## **ATF ANNOUNCES 7 NEW GUNRUNNER GROUPS AND PHOENIX GUN RUNNER IMPACT TEAMS' SUCCESSES**

PHOENIX – Deputy Director Kenneth E. Melson of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) today announced the formation of seven new Project Gunrunner firearms trafficking groups during a news conference in which he and Dennis K. Burke, United States Attorney, District of Arizona, announced the results of ATF's Gun Runner Impact Team (GRIT) initiative, a nearly 100-day deployment of ATF resources to the Phoenix Field Division to disrupt illegal firearms trafficking by Mexican drug trafficking organizations.

As a result of the 2010 emergency supplemental appropriation for border security, ATF received \$37.5 million for Project Gunrunner, ATF's comprehensive firearms trafficking strategy to disrupt the illegal flow of firearms into Mexico. With this funding, ATF will establish and place firearms trafficking groups along traditional and newly-discovered firearms trafficking routes and hubs in Atlanta; Dallas; Brownsville, Texas; Las Vegas; Miami; Oklahoma City; and Sierra Vista, Ariz.

"Lives are being lost to violent crime every day on both sides of the U.S. and Mexico border," said Melson. "Through Project Gunrunner and its GRIT initiative, ATF is shutting down the supply routes of firearms traffickers along the border and further inland."

The GRIT initiative brought more than 80 experienced ATF personnel from around the country to Arizona and New Mexico. GRIT special agents initiated 174 firearms trafficking-related criminal investigations and seized approximately 1,300 illegally-trafficked firearms and 71,000 rounds of ammunition, along with drugs and currency. ATF's industry operations investigators conducted more than 800 federal firearms licensee compliance inspections.

"We are fighting on a crucial front here today to reduce violence in our own communities, and to disrupt and dismantle the southbound supply of weapons to the cartels," said Burke. "We will not be a gun locker for the cartels, who have made murder and mayhem their modus operandi. We will not tolerate violent criminals and others who illegally possess, purchase or sell firearms."

Burke announced that 96 defendants have been arrested, charged, convicted or sentenced since June 2010 on gun-related charges. The majority of defendants include violent felons, drug traffickers who use weapons, and those trafficking firearms to

Mexico. Cases involved more than 370 guns – many of them AK-47 style rifles and other “weapons of choice” of drug cartels – and hundreds of thousands of rounds of ammunition smuggled into or destined for Mexico. Some of the guns seized in the investigation, including a .50 caliber weapon, were recovered at crime scenes in Mexico.

Recent examples of firearms prosecutions in the District of Arizona:

*U.S. v. Arizmendiz et al.*

In July and August, two leaders of a firearms trafficking conspiracy that supplied at least 112 firearms – mostly AK-47 style – to the Sinaloa Cartel, were sentenced. Alejandro Medrano, 23, and Hernan Ramos, 22, both of Mesa, Ariz., were sentenced to 46 and 50 months in prison, respectively, for leading a conspiracy involving 10 defendants who straw purchased firearms from gun dealers in Phoenix and Tucson, Ariz., in order to supply them to a member of the Sinaloa Cartel known as “Rambo.”

*U.S. v. Gaeda et al.*

On June 3, following an ATF investigation involving more than 250,000 rounds of ammunition, ATF agents arrested Emmanuel Casquez, Elías Vasquez, and Charice Gaeda for unlawfully exporting ammunition to Mexico. Agents had learned the three were purchasing vast quantities of ammunition and searched a vehicle headed for the border port at Nogales and recovered 9,500 rounds of ammunition; a search of a residence ensued and an additional 27,000 rounds of ammunition were recovered.

*U.S. v. Ibarra et al.*

In July, a 20-count indictment announced charging 10 straw purchasers, recruited by then 17-year-old Francisco Ibarra, to buy at least 25 firearms. ATF believes the firearms were trafficked into Mexico.

For more information on ATF and Project Gunrunner, please go to the ATF website, [www.atf.gov](http://www.atf.gov).

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