

Message from the Director



ATF's mission is to protect this country and its citizens from the threat of terrorism and violent crime.

Like much of the Government, ATF's first priority is to help prevent terrorist activities here in the United States. Over the past year, we have refocused our efforts to develop investigative and inspection programs that can detect and deter terrorists' use of firearms and explosives. Linking our work with that of other law enforcement agencies through Joint Terrorism Task Forces and other cooperative undertakings has strengthened law enforcement's ability to prevent terrorist acts. At the same time, you will see that ATF employees continue to make great strides in the areas of illegal firearms-related violence prevention, alcohol and tobacco tax collection, and arson investigation.

Once again, Congress supplied the funding that made it possible to hire and place employees in the areas that would best serve the community and ATF. Through this funding, our employees were again thoroughly trained and equipped with state-of-the-art technology and tools that enable them to do the best job possible.

This was a year for many beginnings as we broke ground on our new Headquarters building. Through a concerted and rapid effort, our New York Field Division was successfully and safely relocated, as employees who lost their office on September 11, 2001, moved into new space in early 2002. Construction on our lab and fire research facility in Ammendale, Maryland, continued on schedule. We expect a move-in early in 2003.

What you will see in this report is the unwavering pride of ATF employees in a job well done. Our mission, like the laws we enforce, is specialized and our people are uniquely qualified to carry it out. We continue to serve our country faithfully, with purpose and integrity, remaining steadfast in our mission.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bradley A. Buckles". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Bradley A. Buckles