

# Major Challenges Facing ATF

At the beginning of fiscal year 2000, ATF faced a number of challenges, including the calendar year 2000 conversion (Y2K), which was of universal concern. A more immediate concern was the conversion of the accounting system from the mainframe-based Financial Management Information system (FMIS) to the client-server-based Financial Resource Desktop System (FReD). ATF was also involved in a pilot of a Treasury-wide human resource system. In addition, looming on the horizon was the prospect of obtaining approval on a new ATF Headquarters building and the ground breaking for a new National Laboratory Center (NLC).

ATF successfully met the challenge of implementing the new accounting system; had no glitches during the Y2K rollover; and encountered few problems in its participation in the human resources pilot. The objectives associated with the new ATF Headquarters building and the NLC are intact and moving forward. Ultimately, the new facilities will improve morale, and in the case of the NLC, provide a platform for new performance challenges for future ATF programs.

## New Buildings Projects

Initiatives and final congressional authorization leading to new technologically upgraded and safer facilities for the Bureau were met in fiscal year 2000. The goal is to occupy both buildings within the next four years. The completion of these two facilities for ATF will provide radically improved efficiency of mission functions. The technology infrastructure capabilities for ATF's future will be upgraded; and the Bureau will be situated toward the forefront of investigative and regulatory support, law enforcement operations, and delivery of services to industry, State and local customers, and the public.



## National Laboratory Center

The new ATF National Laboratory Center (NLC) on the Ammendale Business Park Campus in Northern Prince Georges County, Maryland, is being developed by the General Services Administration (GSA) for ATF. The NLC will provide new, modern space to conduct investigations and testing, more effective facilities technologies, and improved safety conditions meeting laboratory accreditation requirements. The NLC also has been designed to facilitate the investigation, research and data collection of fire and arson cases for ATF and the international fire science community. The development of the new NLC is crucial to the successful implementation of ATF's Strategic Plan, a portion of which addresses improved investigations in support of criminal enforcement in all ATF jurisdictional areas, including bombings and major fires.

The new NLC will house three different laboratories and continue as the administrative headquarters for the entire ATF Laboratory System. The Forensic Science Laboratory (FSL) and Alcohol and Tobacco Laboratory (ATL) will be relocated from their current location in Rockville, Maryland. The third laboratory, the Fire Research Laboratory (FRL) will provide a new research capability for the Bureau. The new NLC was designed to meet the requirements of each laboratory's unique functions and critical demand.

The FSL's mission is to support crime scene investigations for ATF and State and local law enforcement agencies relating to firearms, bombings and major fires.

The ATL conducts chemical, physical and instrumental analyses on the alcohol and tobacco products that ATF regulates. This work supports the Bureau's regulatory enforcement activities to collect the revenue due the government and to protect the public in their consumption of these products.

The FRL will concentrate on forensic research and testing to support fire investigations. It will also support partnerships and the sharing of information among other fire science organizations around the globe. The new FRL will allow ATF scientists and engineers to recreate large fire scenarios under controlled and environmentally safe conditions. Where the handful of other fire laboratories in the world focus on consumer and industry safety, the ATF fire research program and facilities are being carefully designed to conduct the unique kind of forensic testing that will provide the tools

