

US Department of Justice

Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives

FIREARMS TRAFFICKING

Project Gunrunner: The Southwest Border Initiative



Recognize Indicators



Firearms traffickers are increasingly buying high-end firearms, as well as cheap, inexpensive firearms.

Recognizing specific indicators can keep you from being an unwilling participant in firearms trafficking.



There are some common firearms trafficking indicators. The following list provides a guide to identifying possible criminal activity. However, your own instinct is your best tool to identify possible illegal transactions.

KEY INDICATORS

Traffickers May:

- **Want to buy a large number of the same model firearm, or similar firearms.**
- **Choose only military style semiautomatic rifles (.223 or 7.62x39) and large frame semi-automatic pistols (.38 Super, 9mm, .45 and 5.7mm)**
- **Order more of the same firearms.**
- **Structure their purchases to avoid ATF reporting requirements.**
- **Attempt to conceal their conversations with each other.**
- **Not haggle or question the price of the firearm. Money is usually not an issue.**
- **Pay in cash (no checks) with the same denomination. They may use credit cards.**
- **Have little or no knowledge of the firearms they are purchasing.**
- **Lack the physical stature to handle the firearm being purchased.**
- **Avoid entering into conversation or be evasive in any questions posed to them.**

Protect America

Firearm trafficking is the movement of firearms from the legal to illegal marketplace. It is one of the most pressing problems in the firearms industry today. It reaches across U.S. borders, affecting other countries and U.S. citizens living abroad.



Firearms originating in the United States have been used to murder U.S. citizens and foreign officials. Many firearms trafficked out of the country are used in the drug trade, terrorism, and other illegal activities.

In response to the violence on the U.S.-Mexico border, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) is committed to denying the tools of the trade to drug trafficking organizations. To be successful, ATF and the firearms industry must work together. Firearms can be prevented from entering illegal commerce.

Field Divisions

Atlanta.....	(404) 417-2600	Miami.....	(305) 597-4800
Baltimore	(443) 965-2000	Nashville	(901) 334-5600
Boston.....	(617) 557-1200	New Orleans	(504) 841-7000
Charlotte	(704) 716-1800	New York	(718) 650-4000
Chicago	(312) 846-7200	Newark.....	(973) 413-1179
Columbus	(614) 827-8400	Philadelphia	(215) 717-4700
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