



News Release

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SEVEN CENTRAL AMERICAN COUNTRIES TO GET eTRACE *Firearm Tracing Submission System Available on the Internet*

WASHINGTON — Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) Assistant Director Carson Carroll today signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) that will provide eTrace, an electronic system used to trace illicit firearms, to seven Central American countries — Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Panama and Belize — in an ongoing effort to combat firearms trafficking. The signing took place at the second U.S.-SICA Dialogue on Security at the U.S. State Department.

The MOU establishes conditions of the partnership between ATF and those countries regarding policy and procedures relative to the access and use of eTrace services made available to law enforcement agencies.

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.

ATF processed more than 300,000 crime-gun trace requests in fiscal year 2008, which include traces from 58 countries. To date, ATF has signed a total of 2,305 MOUs with law enforcement agencies that have almost 11,000 registered users within those agencies. The countries that have eTrace capabilities include the Dominican Republic, Mexico, Jamaica, Bahamas, Canada, Germany, England, Japan and Australia.

ATF is a law enforcement agency within the U.S. Department of Justice dedicated to preventing violent crime. More information on ATF and its programs and resources is at www.atf.gov.

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