

Forward by the Director of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco & Firearms

This is the second year that the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (ATF) has published a report on the results of crime gun traces conducted by ATF's National Tracing Center at the request of Federal, State and local law enforcement officials participating in the Youth Crime Gun Interdiction Initiative (YCGII). Publication of this Report serves three of ATF's critical missions: vigorous investigation of illegal transfers of firearms; assisting State and local law enforcement agencies in enforcing their firearm laws; and informing the public.

The principle that good information is needed to make optimal decisions is universal in our contemporary world. This certainly holds true for Federal law enforcement. By developing innovative analytical techniques, using information technology, and establishing academic partnerships, ATF is continually improving available information about how juveniles, youth offenders, and other prohibited persons obtain firearms illegally. Through the YCGII Report's publication of uniform statistics about crime guns, ATF is providing Federal, State and local law enforcement officials with a common set of facts about illegal firearms trafficking in their communities that enforcement officials can use as a foundation for joint and well targeted enforcement operations.

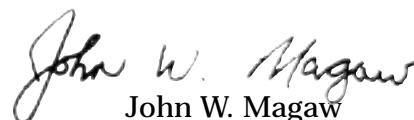
The first YCGII Report initiated the practice of age-differentiated reporting about recovered and traced firearms, providing a model for annual ATF reporting. Uniform, annual reporting of crime gun information for the city, State, and national levels is a multi-year endeavor. This year's Report includes the following improvements:

- Statistical information for an additional 10 cities
- Clarifications in most of the tables
- A new table on crime gun trace requests for firearms with obliterated serial numbers
- A description of the types of illegal transfers of firearms used by prohibited persons
- A section providing information for State and local law enforcement executives

ATF plans to further strengthen firearms enforcement by providing:

- Project LEAD on-line to all ATF offices for use by local joint firearms task forces
- Information about illegal traffickers to juveniles and youth and their trafficking patterns
- Reports on the frequency of crime gun purchases in multiple sales
- State and national level crime gun trace information
- Information on illegal transfers of used and stolen firearms
- Expansion of comprehensive crime gun tracing support to additional cities.

Vigorous enforcement of the laws against the illegal transfer of firearms will reduce armed and violent crime. ATF appreciates the growing collaboration with State and local law enforcement agencies to take advantage of the new enforcement opportunities provided by comprehensive crime gun tracing. Our children deserve our best efforts to stop illegal gun transfers and firearms traffickers.


John W. Magaw