



Fact Sheet



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VIOLENT CRIME IMPACT TEAMS INITIATIVE (VCIT)

Purpose

The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) is the lead federal law enforcement agency in the VCIT initiative, which uses innovative technology, analytical investigative resources and an integrated federal, state and local law enforcement strategy to identify, disrupt, arrest and prosecute the most violent criminals in 31 U.S. cities.

Modeled after Project Safe Neighborhoods' (PSN) successes, the VCIT concept redirects ATF resources from across the United States to target specific areas that are experiencing a level of violent crime higher than the national average, particularly firearm-related homicides.

Goals

VCIT's primary goal is to reduce the number of violent firearm-related crimes in targeted areas. Removing violent criminals and their firearms from the community yields lasting, positive effects that make the area safer for law-abiding citizens.

Strategy

VCIT is ATF's signature initiative to reduce the occurrence of firearms-related violent crime in small geographic areas experiencing an increase of violence. The teams identify hot spots of violent firearms crime and target, investigate and arrest the responsible criminals. The VCIT strategy is an integrated federal, state and local law enforcement approach that employs a variety of innovative technologies, investigative techniques and analytical resources. The ability of a team to focus on a small, target area and flood it with the integrated resources of other federal, state and local partners is critical to the success of the program.

ATF's industry operations resources are an important component of the VCIT program. The inspection initiative is designed to detect and prevent diversion of firearms from legal to illegal channels. Federal firearms licensees (FFL) located in the 31 VCIT cities are identified for inspection based on intelligence-based information. Additionally,

these inspections emphasize educating, encouraging, and assisting the FFLs in the development of strong internal controls to prevent firearms diversion.

Since its launch in 2004, VCIT task forces have arrested more than 14,500 gang members, drug dealers, felons in possession of firearms and other violent criminals, including more than 2,800 identified as the “worst of the worst” criminals, and recovered more than 17,800 firearms.

VCIT Composition

Currently, 31 VCITs operate nationwide in 18 field divisions. The teams are staffed by ATF special agents, intelligence research specialists, investigative assistants, over 100 state and local officers and other federal agents. VCIT’s partnership with state and local law enforcement brings together the unique, interdependent assets and cutting-edge technology of all participating agencies.

ATF Resources

In addition to field division staffing and resources, multiple divisions within ATF provide expertise to the VCITs, including the following:

- Firearms Enforcement Branch
- Violent Crime Analysis Branch
- National Tracing Center
- National Integrated Ballistics Information Network (NIBIN)
- Regional Crime Gun Centers
- National Laboratory Centers
- Firearms Technology Branch
- Explosives detection canines
- Headquarters Field Intelligence Support Branch

Cities

The 31 cities are as follows: Albuquerque, N.M.; Atlanta, Ga.; Baltimore, Md.; Baton Rouge and New Orleans, La.; Birmingham, Ala.; Camden, N.J.; Columbus, Ohio; Fresno, Los Angeles and San Bernardino, Calif.; Greensboro, N.C.; Hartford, Conn.; Houston and Laredo, Texas; Las Vegas, Nev.; Miami, Fla.; Milwaukee, Wis., Minneapolis, Minn.; Philadelphia and Pittsburgh, Pa.; Richmond, Va.; Orlando and Tampa, Fla.; Mesa and Tucson, Ariz.; Tulsa, Okla.; San Juan, Puerto Rico; Memphis and Nashville, Tenn.; and Jackson, Miss.

For more information on VCIT or other ATF programs, go to www.atf.gov.

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