

FOREWORD BY THE DIRECTOR

Information is power. Therefore, it is my privilege to present Volume II – *Crime Gun Intelligence and Analysis* of the National Firearms Commerce and Trafficking Assessment (NFCTA), a comprehensive report focusing on crime guns that jeopardize the safety and security of Americans. Through the release of Volume II of the NFCTA, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (“ATF”) and the Department of Justice seek to empower the American public by providing more information in one place than has ever before been compiled on America’s crime guns – that is, firearms specifically associated with criminal acts.

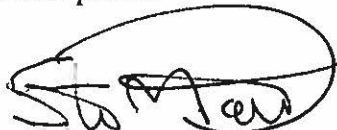
It is my sincere hope that the publication of this unprecedented collection of data will help others to study firearms violence and will further ATF’s mission of protecting American communities from violent crime. ATF intends that this Volume, and the data in it, will spur further study, discussion, and analysis by law enforcement, policy makers, prosecutors, advocates, academics, the media -- but most importantly, by the American people.

It is the responsibility of ATF, working together with our federal, state, local, territorial, and tribal law enforcement partners, to identify, investigate, and refer for prosecution those who use firearms to commit such violent offenses. Central to this mission is ATF’s use of crime gun evidence to assist our law enforcement partners in identifying violent offenders and those who illegally supply them with crime guns. This Volume of the NFCTA provides critical data, information, and analysis related to crime guns recovered and traced and ballistic imaged by this nation’s law enforcement.

Volume II highlights ATF’s extraordinary intelligence-driven law enforcement capabilities, particularly crime gun tracing and the National Integrated Ballistic Information Network (NIBIN). ATF’s National Tracing Center (NTC) conducts crime gun tracing and provides relevant investigative and strategic information back to law enforcement partners concerning firearms crimes in their jurisdiction. NIBIN is an integral component of ATF’s strategy to combat firearms violence. As with fingerprints, every firearm has unique characteristics. NIBIN is the only national network that allows for the capture and comparison of ballistic evidence to aid in solving and preventing violent crimes involving firearms.

It is our goal that the analysis in Volume II will yield important strategic intelligence for policy makers, law enforcement leaders and researchers considering new policies and programs to reduce gun violence. The unprecedented data in this volume does not answer all questions, and in-fact raises additional questions which require more study. This is by design; the objective of the NFCTA is to generate scrutiny of available data, increase discussion on how to develop more robust data, and to spur better-informed debate by those from all backgrounds and with all viewpoints. If that occurs – if this Volume leads to better informed discussion and debate rooted in facts – this effort will have been tremendously successful.

I am honored to be a part of ATF and its important mission to protect our communities from violent crime. I want to thank the men and women of ATF, including the subject matter experts who contributed to this report. Of course, this could not have been done without the assistance of our valuable academic partners and our many courageous law enforcement partners with whom we work every day in the fight to reduce violent crime and protect the American public.



Steven Dettelbach
Director