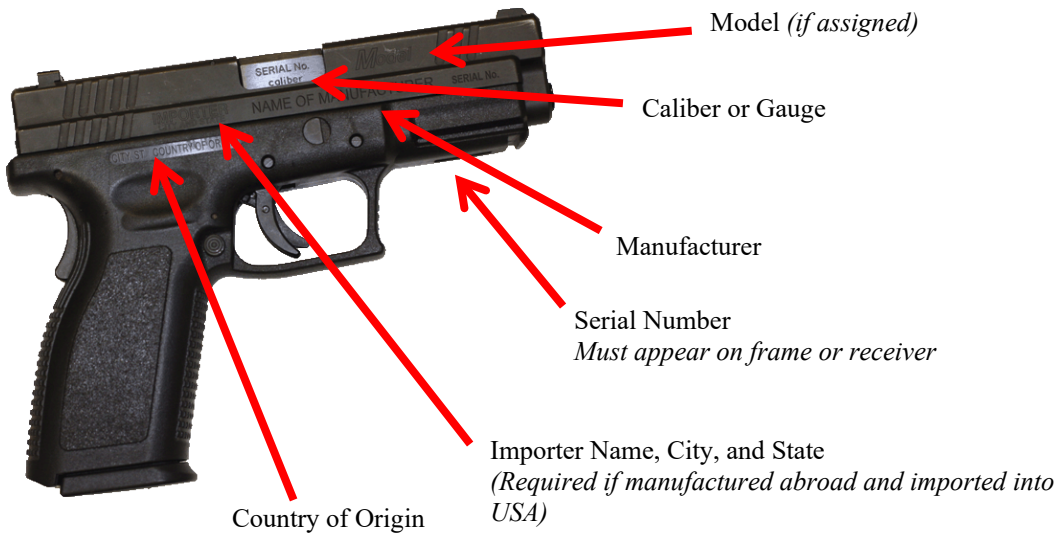
PART II:
National Tracing Center Overview

Tracing Crime Guns

The Gun Control Act of 1968 (GCA) provides the foundation for crime gun tracing in two ways. First, it requires that firearm manufacturers and importers mark each firearm they manufacture or import into the U.S. with specific information as reflected in Figure NTC-01. Second, it requires all Federal Firearms Licensees (FFLs) to maintain records regarding the acquisition and disposition (sale or transfer) of all firearms taken into inventory[1]. The marking and record-keeping requirements of the GCA are designed to ensure a firearm can be traced from its point of origin – manufacture or import – to its first sale or transfer to a non-licensed person or entity, commonly referred to as the "first retail purchaser." If, after a transfer or sale to a non-FFL, a firearm moves from private commerce back into the inventory of an FFL, the tracing process may also identify additional unlicensed purchasers beyond the first retail purchaser; these unlicensed secondary purchasers are commonly referred to as the "last known purchaser."

Figure NTC-01: Markings Needed to Trace a Crime Gun



FFL Recordkeeping Requirements

All FFLs are required to maintain an Acquisition and Disposition (A&D) record of every firearm acquired and subsequently transferred. The acquisition records must include the manufacturer, model, serial number, type, and caliber of the firearm, as well as the date it was acquired and from whom it was acquired. The disposition information must include the date the FFL physically transferred the firearm and the name and address of the individual, or name and FFL number of the licensee, to whom it was

transferred. In 1994, Congress added the requirement that firearm manufacturers and FFLs must respond to a firearm trace request from ATF within 24 hours[2].

The core mission of ATF's National Tracing Center (NTC) Division is to accurately and efficiently conduct crime gun tracing and provide investigative leads for international, federal, state, local, territorial, and tribal law enforcement agencies (LEAs). The NTC is only authorized to trace a firearm for a law enforcement agency when the firearm is involved in a bona fide criminal investigation. The firearm must have been used or suspected of being used in a crime. Crime gun tracing provides critical information to assist domestic and international law enforcement agencies in investigating and solving crimes involving firearms.

The tracing process requires the NTC to interact with local, state federal, territorial, tribal and international LEAs, and with FFLs. Between 2000 and 2021, in the process of completing more than 7.6 million crime gun traces, the NTC interacted with 13,210 licensed manufacturers and importers, 231,066 retail and wholesale firearms dealers, 21,159 LEAs throughout the U.S., and LEAs in 84 foreign countries.[3] The NTC not only collects data on crimes involving firearms, but it also provides relevant strategic and investigative information back to LEAs concerning firearm crime in their jurisdictions.

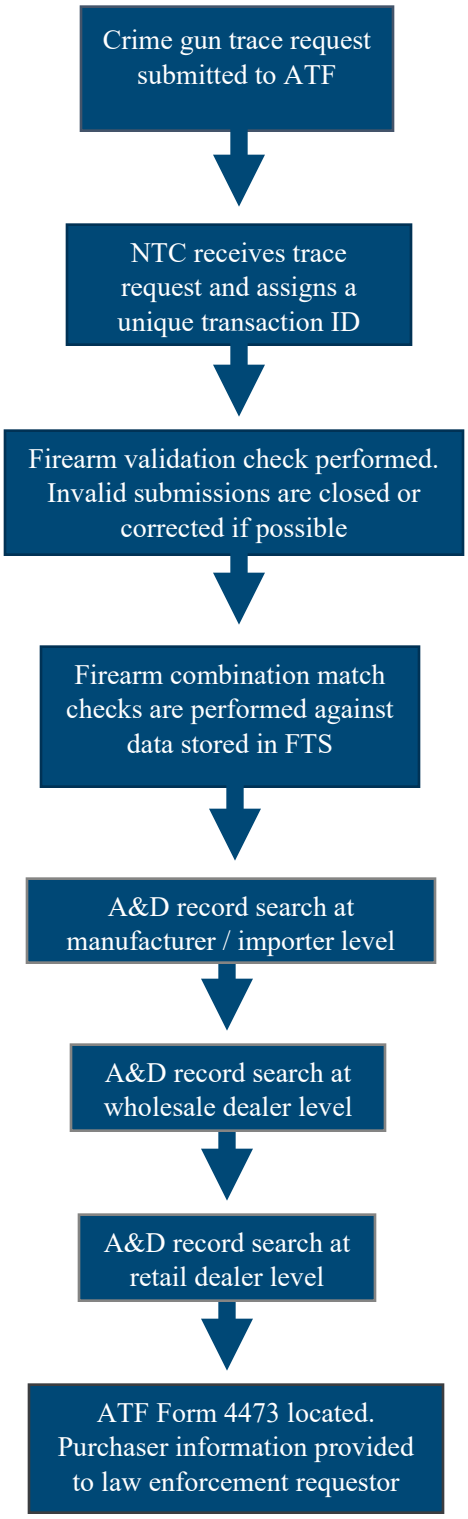
Although ATF is authorized by the GCA to access FFL records to conduct crime gun traces and criminal investigations, Congress has enacted several provisions that restrict ATF's handling of FFL records and limit ATF's use of appropriated funds to consolidate or centralize firearms records. For instance, the Firearm Owners Protection Act of 1986 restricted ATF from receiving and maintaining FFL records, except for disposition information related to a criminal investigation. Since 2003, a series of appropriation restrictions (often collectively referred to as the "Tiahrt Amendments") codified ATF's long-standing policy of limiting access of crime gun trace data solely to law enforcement. In 2012 Congress permanently restricted ATF from using funds in connection with consolidating or centralizing records, or any portion thereof, of acquisition and disposition of firearms maintained by FFLs.

The Tracing Process and Workflow

Crime gun tracing is the systematic process of tracking the movement of a firearm from either its point of U.S. manufacture or importation into the U.S., through the distribution chain (wholesalers and retailers), to identify the first retail purchaser or the last known purchaser from an FFL. If the first retail purchaser or last known purchaser is not also identified as the possessor, their identification information can provide essential leads to law enforcement in the determination of how the possessor obtained the crime gun.

The crime gun tracing process and workflow are presented in Figure NTC-02. Crime gun tracing begins when a law enforcement agency recovers a firearm in a criminal investigation and seeks to determine the origin or background of that crime gun as part of the investigative process.

Figure NTC-02: Crime Gun Tracing Process and Workflow Chart



ATF receives trace requests from LEAs worldwide. Hardcopy trace requests can be mailed or faxed to the NTC via ATF Form 3312.1. Since 2003, the preferred submission method is 'eTrace' (ATF's tracing website), which allows for electronic submission.

Information contained within a trace request is uploaded into the Firearm Tracing System (FTS). A unique transaction ID is assigned to each trace request. This allows the NTC to track the trace through the tracing process.

A firearm validation check is run against the reference tables stored in FTS. This ensures that the NTC is processing trace requests accurately and consistently. Approx. 30% of firearms are initially misidentified; however, the NTC can resolve most discrepancies at this step of the process.

A series of match checks are performed against data stored in FTS. These match checks allow the NTC to locate duplicate traces, multiple sales matches, demand program matches, secondary market matches, theft matches, & out-of-business record matches. Traces that are linked in this process can expedite the trace completion in a more timely and efficient manner.

If the prior step results in no matches, the NTC relies on FFL A&D records that are maintained by FFLs to follow the firearm through its original chain of custody from the manufacturer / importer to a wholesale dealer, to a retail dealer and finally to a purchaser.

If the FFL has an active license, the NTC must contact the FFL to request the A&D record or ATF Form 4473 information. Each FFL has 24 hours to comply with the request.

If the FFL is no longer in business and has shipped their records to the NTC, the NTC must search for the A&D record or ATF Form 4473 in the Out-of-Business Records (OBR) Repository.

Once the ATF Form 4473 is located, the NTC inserts the data into FTS and completes the trace request. The chain of custody and purchaser information is then made available to the requesting agency for criminal investigative purposes.

Mission and Organization of the NTC Division

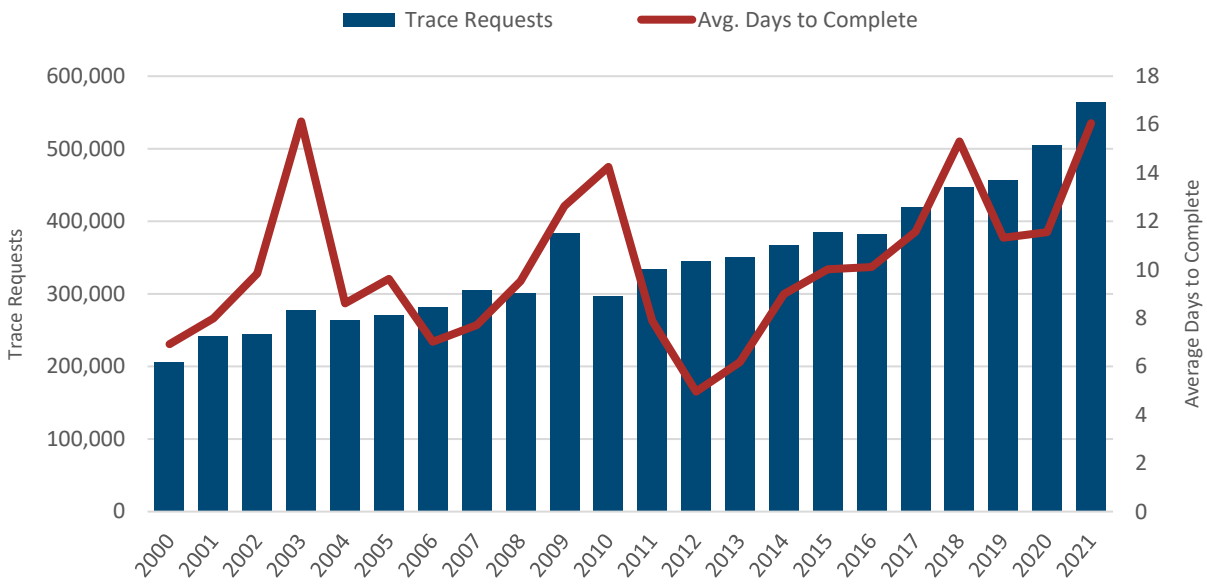
The NTC strives to expand comprehensive tracing, improve the accuracy and efficiency through technology, and improve the number and quality of investigative leads it provides to LEAs to assist in solving firearm related crimes. The NTC is available to process crime gun trace requests 24 hours a day, seven days a week. In addition to directly conducting traces, the NTC also promotes crime gun tracing and supports LEA investigations through several additional programs.

Traces Received and Processed

ATF processes crime gun trace requests for thousands of domestic and international LEAs each year. It also traces U.S.-sourced firearms recovered in foreign countries. This part of the report assesses the overall workload and performance of the NTC; the statistical data provided is based on all trace requests received between 2000 and 2021 regardless of when the crime gun was recovered.

As reflected in Figure NTC-03 and Table NTC-01 in Appendix NTC – NTC Overview, the volume of crime gun trace requests processed by the NTC has risen 174% from 2000 (206,117) to 2021 (564,229). Between 2017 (420,225) and 2021 (564,229), the number of traces processed increased by more than 34%.

Figure NTC-03: Total Trace Requests Received and Average Processing Time by Year, 2000 – 2021



Tracing Workload and Processing

Occasionally, trace requests cannot be completed due to data limitations or other factors. The four primary reasons that traces are unable to be completed are: 1) the trace was a duplicate of another request, 2) the weapon had an invalid or inadequate firearm description, 3) the firearm was manufactured prior to the GCA (1968), which established firearm marking and FFL recordkeeping requirements that allow for tracing, and 4) the trace was stopped by the law enforcement requestor. Typically, traces that are stopped

by the law enforcement requestor are due to inaccurate or incomplete firearm information provided. Of the 1,738,464 trace requests that were excluded from further processing, 366,281 requests were duplicates, 44,785 were stopped by requestor, 869,440 had invalid or inadequate firearm markings, and 457,958 were pre-GCA weapons.

For purposes of this portion of the report, a trace is considered completed, if at a minimum, the identity of the licensed manufacturer or importer is confirmed as the source of the firearm. As shown in Table NTC-02a and Table NTC-02 in Appendix NTC – NTC Overview, the percentage of completed crime gun trace requests improved from nearly 67% (137,641) in 2000 to 84% (475,627) in 2021. During the period from 2000 to 2021, 77% (5,894,667) of all traces (7,633,131) were completed. Since 2016, the trace completion rate has remained above 80%.

Three factors have contributed to the increase in trace completions. First, far fewer trace requests have included invalid or incomplete firearm description information. This improvement in the quality of data submitted is in part attributable to substantial outreach and training conducted by the NTC. Second, the number of trace requests involving pre-GCA firearms has significantly decreased, largely due to the passage of time. Third, the number of duplicate trace requests has declined.

Between 2000 and 2021, the number of trace requests unable to be completed due to invalid or incomplete firearm description information decreased from 14% (29,762) to 9% (48,164). Trace requests involving pre-GCA firearms decreased from almost 12% (23,942) to approximately 3% (18,288). Finally, duplicate traces decreased from more than 6% (12,889) to less than 4% (20,817).

Table NTC-02a: Comparison of Trace Requests Received and Processed by the NTC between 2000 and 2021

Trace Requests	2000	% Total Traces 2000	2021	% Total Traces 2021	% Change 2000-2021
Duplicate Traces	12,889	6.3%	20,817	3.7%	61.5%
Traces Stopped by Requestor	1,883	0.9%	1,333	0.2%	-29.2%
Traces with Invalid Firearm Description	29,762	14.4%	48,164	8.5%	61.8%
Pre-GCA Traces	23,942	11.6%	18,288	3.2%	-23.6%
Total Traces Unable to be Completed	**68,476**	**33.2%**	**88,602**	**15.7%**	**29.4%**
Completed Traces	**137,641**	**66.8%**	**475,627**	**84.3%**	**245.6%**
Total Traces	**206,117**	**100.0%**	**564,229**	**100.0%**	**173.7%**

See Table NTC-02 in Appendix NTC – NTC Overview for a complete listing of annual trace requests received by the NTC between 2000 and 2021.

Out of Business Records

FFLs that discontinue business are required under the GCA (18 U.S.C. §923(g)(4)) to submit their firearm transaction records to the ATF Out of Business (OOB) Records Center within 30 days (27 C.F.R. § 478.127). These OOB records are maintained by the NTC for use in deriving disposition information in response to crime gun trace requests. Upon receipt at the NTC, OOB records are repackaged as needed and affixed barcodes for effective tracking. The documents are then sorted, prepared, and converted into digital images, which are then stored in the Enterprise Content Management (ECM) Image Repository for use in the tracing process. All images that are electronically stored in the ECM repository are retrievable in accordance with law, regulation, and policy.

As reflected in Table NTC-03, the volume of OOB records (measured in total pages) received by the NTC increased from 4.6 million in 2004[4] to over 65 million in 2021. In 2017, several large-volume FFLs discontinued their business and submitted their OOB records to the NTC, which may account for the higher volume of OOB records received in that year. Beginning in 2014, NTC resources were not sufficient to keep pace with the volume of incoming OOB records, resulting in a growing backlog of these records to be processed.

Table NTC-03: Out-of-Business Records, 2004 – 2021

Year	Incoming OOB Records (Pages)	OOB Records Processed	OOB Records in Backlog[5]
2004	4,677,059	Not Available	Not Available
2005	17,225,323	Not Available	Not Available
2006	22,479,069	33,566,030	22,721,514
2007	30,025,446	35,653,216	13,501,565
2008	18,875,357	24,636,168	9,556,547
2009	28,937,977	22,422,286	11,449,026
2010	20,419,469	18,623,546	7,059,134
2011	31,972,063	17,801,722	14,516,065
2012	32,520,505	29,081,126	8,544,400
2013	34,365,907	23,737,728	13,833,455
2014	40,365,818	39,652,046	9,923,744
2015	59,003,438	39,001,496	25,717,939
2016	49,223,278	42,764,779	26,153,397
2017	80,934,065	40,222,957	53,222,433
2018	61,470,251	46,961,129	66,114,356
2019	65,375,254	65,426,271	54,364,041
2020	48,820,773	55,659,027	41,295,581
2021	65,097,502	46,020,614	47,180,154
Total	**646,691,052**	**581,230,141**	

As reflected in Table NTC-04, OOB records are a critical resource in completing traces for law enforcement. Of the 7.6 million trace requests processed by the NTC between 2000 and 2021, 53% percent were completed using OOB records.

Table NTC-04: Traces Completed Using OOB Records, 2000 – 2021

Year	Trace Requests	Traces Completed with OOB Records	% of All Traces Completed with OOB Records
2000	206,117	108,337	52.6%
2001	242,125	123,571	51.0%
2002	244,856	140,128	57.2%
2003	277,030	161,655	58.4%
2004	263,965	154,387	58.5%
2005	270,544	171,403	63.4%
2006	282,422	176,508	62.5%
2007	305,395	193,993	63.5%
2008	301,362	180,643	59.9%
2009	383,529	202,635	52.8%
2010	296,655	165,994	56.0%
2011	334,058	170,132	50.9%
2012	344,972	173,201	50.2%

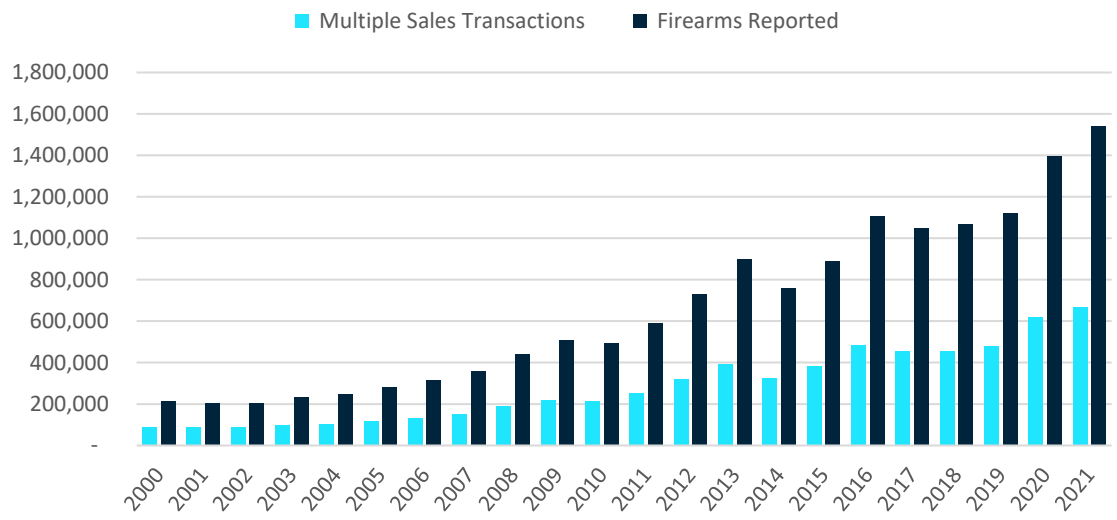
2013	350,231	197,985	56.5%
2014	367,590	186,639	50.8%
2015	384,745	188,324	48.9%
2016	382,512	181,971	47.6%
2017	420,225	198,275	47.2%
2018	447,590	216,692	48.4%
2019	457,403	230,396	50.4%
2020	505,576	268,466	53.1%
2021	564,229	250,464	44.4%
Total	**7,633,131**	**4,041,799**	**53.0%**

Multiple Handgun Sale Reporting Requirement

The GCA (18 U.S.C. §923(g)(3)(A)) requires FFLs to report to ATF the sale of two or more handguns to the same purchaser within a five-business day period. These transactions are referred to as "multiple sale transactions" and the multiple sale reports filed by FFLs are temporarily accessible through ATF's Firearms Tracing System (FTS). If a firearm is purchased as part of a multiple sale transaction and is later recovered by law enforcement and traced, the NTC can cross reference the firearm description (serial number, manufacturer, type, and caliber) of the traced crime gun against the multiple sales sub-system of the FTS and readily determine that there is a match. This allows the NTC to immediately identify the individual who purchased the firearm as well as the FFL who made the sale, thereby streamlining the traditional crime gun tracing process of contacting each FFL involved in the chain of custody.

Pursuant to ATF policy, records of purchaser names from multiple sales reports are only maintained in the FTS database for two years from the date of purchase, unless the records have been linked to a criminal investigation through a crime gun trace result. As reflected by Figure NTC-04 since 2000 the number of multiple sales transactions reported by FFLs has risen from 91,074 transactions involving 215,383 firearms to 669,111 transactions involving 1,539,921 firearms in 2021. See Table NTC-06 in Appendix NTC – NTC Overview, for the number of multiple sales transactions and associated firearms from 2000 to 2021.

Figure NTC-04: Multiple Handgun Sales Transactions and Firearms Reported, 2000 – 2021



Multiple sales of firearms have also accounted for an increasing proportion of completed crime gun trace requests, particularly since 2009. As reflected in Table NTC-05, since 2009 the proportion of traces completed with multiple sales records increased from 3% (10,895) in 2009 to more than 7% (40,473) in 2021. This has significantly increased processing efficiency for the NTC, as well as providing more timely investigative leads.

Table NTC-05: Traces Completed with Multiple Handgun Sales Data, 2000 – 2021

Year	Trace Requests	Traces Completed with Multiple Sales Data	% of All Traces Completed with Multiple Sales Data
2000	206,117	5,069	2.5%
2001	242,125	6,231	2.6%
2002	244,856	6,270	2.6%
2003	277,030	7,451	2.7%
2004	263,965	7,748	2.9%
2005	270,544	8,189	3.0%
2006	282,422	9,299	3.3%
2007	305,395	9,897	3.2%
2008	301,362	10,149	3.4%
2009	383,529	10,895	2.8%
2010	296,655	10,176	3.4%
2011	334,058	10,934	3.3%
2012	344,972	10,665	3.1%
2013	350,231	12,607	3.6%
2014	367,590	13,071	3.6%
2015	384,745	15,860	4.1%
2016	382,512	17,689	4.6%
2017	420,225	21,693	5.2%
2018	447,590	23,801	5.3%
2019	457,403	25,860	5.7%
2020	505,576	29,900	5.9%
2021	564,229	40,473	7.2%
Total	**7,633,131**	**313,927**	**4.1%**

Demand Letter Program

NTC is responsible for issuing authorized demand letters, which ensure the collection of data from FFLs that is vital to the success of the firearm tracing process. Additional details concerning the Demand Letter Program can be found in the *National Firearms Commerce and Trafficking Assessment, Volume 1 – Firearms in Commerce Report*.

Demand Letter 1 (DL1)

DL1 is issued to FFLs who fail to comply with their statutory responsibility to respond within 24 hours to firearm trace requests. The FFLs who receive DL1 are required to send ATF their A&D records for the past three years, and to continue to send the records monthly until told otherwise. The information submitted allows ATF to trace firearms if the FFL continues to be uncooperative with requests. As a result of FFL compliance with the tracing process, a DL1 has not been issued since 2002.

Demand Letter 2 (DL2)

DL2 is issued to FFLs who had 25 or more firearms traced to them the previous calendar year with a "time-to-crime" of three years or less. The affected FFLs are required to submit limited information regarding "used" firearms acquired the previous year, including the manufacturer or importer (if any), model, caliber or gauge and serial number along with the acquisition date. No names of firearm purchasers or other disposition information is submitted. The FFL is required to submit this information quarterly until informed otherwise. The used firearm information received because of DL2 enables ATF to trace any "used" firearms sold by FFLs subject to DL2 reporting. Without such information, ATF would have limited ability to link transfers of used firearms to dealers.

As reflected in Table NTC-07, between 2000 and 2021, FFLs reported the acquisition of 10,631,758 used firearms under the DL2 Program. To date, 190,598 of these used crime guns have been traced. DL2 information accounted for 2.5% of all completed firearm traces over the full 21-year period. Between 2000 and 2021 the share of traces that were completed with DL2 information generally increased. Until 2008, DL2 trace completion rates remained below 2%; however, since then the share of traces completed using DL2 data has steadily rose to a peak of 3.4% in 2016 and has since leveled off at around 3%.

Table NTC-07: Traces Completed with DL2 Information, 2000 – 2021

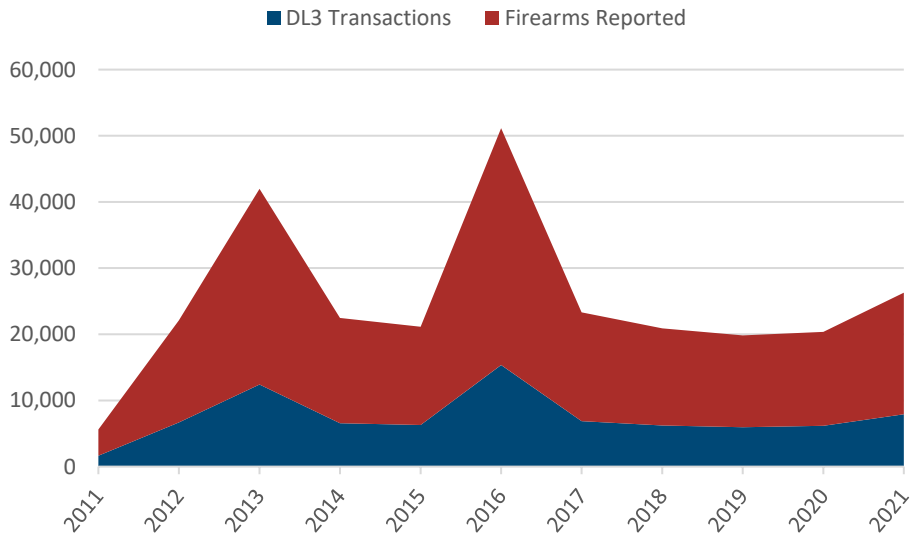
Year	Trace Requests	Traces Completed w/ DL2 Data	% of All Traces Completed w/ DL2 Data
2000	206,117	963	0.5%
2001	242,125	2,251	0.9%
2002	244,856	2,827	1.2%
2003	277,030	3,470	1.3%
2004	263,965	4,415	1.7%
2005	270,544	4,909	1.8%
2006	282,422	5,142	1.8%
2007	305,395	5,914	1.9%
2008	301,362	6,717	2.2%
2009	383,529	7,508	2.0%
2010	296,655	7,189	2.4%
2011	334,058	7,637	2.3%
2012	344,972	8,665	2.5%
2013	350,231	10,471	3.0%
2014	367,590	11,182	3.0%
2015	384,745	12,103	3.1%
2016	382,512	13,075	3.4%
2017	420,225	13,745	3.3%
2018	447,590	13,994	3.1%
2019	457,403	15,103	3.3%
2020	505,576	15,922	3.1%
2021	564,229	17,396	3.1%
Total	**7,633,131**	**190,598**	**2.5%**

Demand Letter 3 (DL3)

DL3 assists ATF in its efforts to investigate and combat the illegal movement of firearms along and across the United States' southwest border. Licensed dealers and pawnbrokers in Arizona, California,

New Mexico, and Texas are required by ATF to report all transactions in which an unlicensed person acquired, at one time or during five consecutive business days, two or more semi-automatic rifles larger than .22 caliber (including .223 caliber/5.56 mm) with the ability to accept a detachable magazine. Like the multiple handgun sales program, records of purchaser names from DL3 reports are only maintained in the FTS database for two years from the date of purchase, unless the records have been linked to a criminal investigation through a crime gun trace. As reflected in in Figure NTC-05 and Table NTC-08 in Appendix NTC – NTC Overview, between 2011 and 2021, FFLs have reported 82,063 transactions involving 193,096 firearms under the DL3 Program with spikes occurring in 2013 (12,413 DL3 transactions involving 29,556 firearms) and 2016 (15,348 DL3 transactions involving 35,801 firearms).

Figure NTC-05: Demand Letter 3 Transactions and Associated Firearms Reported, 2011 – 2021



As shown in Table NTC-09, between 2011 and 2021, DL3 information has been utilized to complete 2,213 traces.

Table NTC-09: Traces Completed with Demand Letter 3 Information, 2011 – 2021

Year	Total Traces	Traces Completed w/ DL3 Data	% of All Traces Completed w/ DL3 Data
2011	334,058	76	0.02%
2012	344,972	214	0.06%
2013	350,231	132	0.04%
2014	367,590	143	0.04%
2015	384,745	177	0.05%
2016	382,512	171	0.04%
2017	420,225	256	0.06%
2018	447,590	367	0.08%
2019	457,403	352	0.08%
2020	505,576	205	0.04%
2021	564,229	120	0.02%
Total	**4,559,131**	**2,213**	**0.05%**

FFL Resale Program

The FFL Resale Program (FRP) identifies used firearms that FFLs have acquired from unlicensed individuals to enhance the efficiency of the crime gun tracing process. When a used firearm has been acquired by FFLs after an original retail sale it can be identified through the FRP, the NTC can directly contact the specific FFL (after an original retail sale) to identify the last known purchaser. Information obtained through the FRP results in shorter time to crime rates, more timely current actionable intelligence, and stronger investigative leads (see Part III – Crime Guns Recovered and Traced within the U.S. for details on FRP traces). As reflected in Table NTC-10, since 2018, the number of traces completed through the FRP has increased from less than 3% (12,153) to nearly 6% (31,672) in 2021.

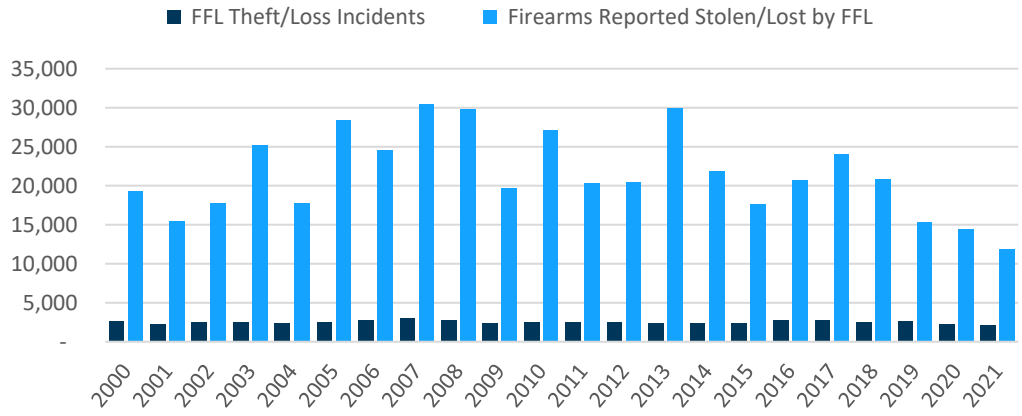
Table NTC-10: Traces Completed with FRP Information, 2018 – 2021

Year	Total Trace Requests	FRP Traces	% of All Traces Completed w/ FRP Data
2018	447,590	12,153	2.7%
2019	457,403	16,613	3.6%
2020	505,576	27,758	5.5%
2021	564,229	31,672	5.6%
Total	**1,974,798**	**88,196**	**4.5%**

Stolen Firearms Program

The Stolen Firearms Program assists law enforcement with criminal investigations by managing, analyzing, and disseminating information regarding firearms stolen or missing from the inventories of FFLs and interstate shipments. The GCA requires FFLs to report the theft or loss of firearms from their inventories or collections within 48 hours of discovery (18 U.S.C. §923(g)(6)). All firearms reported stolen or lost by FFLs are also entered into the FBI National Crime Information Center (NCIC) and a copy of each theft or loss report is forwarded to the ATF Field Division in which the theft was reported. The Stolen Firearms Program is also tasked with coordinating crime gun trace requests that are associated with firearms reported stolen or lost by FFLs to provide investigative leads. As reflected in Figure NTC-06 and Table NTC-11 in Appendix NTC – NTC Overview, FFLs have reported a total of 55,460 theft or loss incidents involving 472,820 firearms between 2000 and 2021.[6]

Figure NTC-06: FFL Theft or Loss Incidents and Firearms Reported, 2000 – 2021



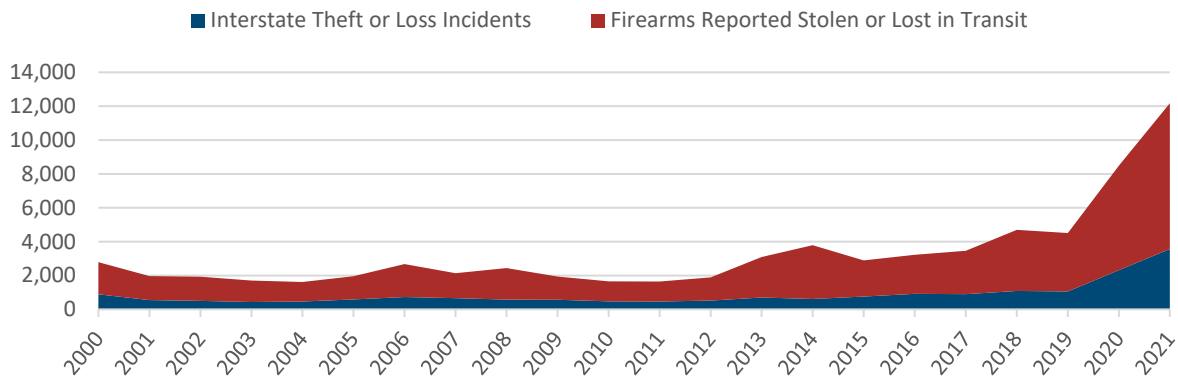
As reflected in Table NTC-12, less than 1% (43,001) of all traces have been completed using FFL theft or loss reports between 2000 and 2021.[7]

Table NTC-12: Traces Completed with FFL Theft or Loss Data, 2000 – 2021

Year	Total Trace Requests	Traces Completed w/ FFL Theft or Loss Data	% of All Traces Completed w/ FFL Theft or Loss Data
2000	206,117	1,173	0.6%
2001	242,125	1,398	0.6%
2002	244,856	1,599	0.7%
2003	277,030	1,728	0.6%
2004	263,965	1,542	0.6%
2005	270,544	1,639	0.6%
2006	282,422	1,682	0.6%
2007	305,395	1,876	0.6%
2008	301,362	1,870	0.6%
2009	383,529	1,851	0.5%
2010	296,655	1,730	0.6%
2011	334,058	2,008	0.6%
2012	344,972	2,027	0.6%
2013	350,231	1,847	0.5%
2014	367,590	1,946	0.5%
2015	384,745	1,900	0.5%
2016	382,512	2,377	0.6%
2017	420,225	2,834	0.7%
2018	447,590	3,048	0.7%
2019	457,403	2,497	0.5%
2020	505,576	2,560	0.5%
2021	564,229	1,869	0.3%
Total	**7,633,131**	**43,001**	**0.6%**

Pursuant to a regulatory change to 28 C.F.R. §478.39a in 2016, ATF required the transferor or sender FFL to report the theft or loss of a firearm in transit. Prior to this change, the regulations did not specify requirements to report interstate thefts or losses. As reflected in Figure NTC-07 and Table NTC-13 in Appendix NTC – NTC Overview, FFLs have reported a total of 19,346 interstate thefts involving 53,331 firearms between 2000 and 2021.[8]

Figure NTC-07: Interstate Theft or Loss Incidents and Firearms Reported, 2000 – 2021



As shown in Table NTC-14, less than 1% (6,210) of all traces were completed using FFL interstate theft or loss reports between 2000 and 2021. [9]

Table NTC-14: Traces Completed with FFL Interstate Theft or Loss Data, 2000 – 2021

Year	Total Trace Requests	Traces Completed w/ Interstate Theft or Loss Data	% of All Traces Completed w/ Interstate Theft or Loss Data
2000	206,117	2	0.0%
2001	242,125	9	0.0%
2002	244,856	8	0.0%
2003	277,030	186	0.1%
2004	263,965	272	0.1%
2005	270,544	245	0.1%
2006	282,422	281	0.1%
2007	305,395	268	0.1%
2008	301,362	238	0.1%
2009	383,529	309	0.1%
2010	296,655	263	0.1%
2011	334,058	338	0.1%
2012	344,972	268	0.1%
2013	350,231	365	0.1%
2014	367,590	225	0.1%
2015	384,745	359	0.1%
2016	382,512	295	0.1%
2017	420,225	316	0.1%
2018	447,590	708	0.2%
2019	457,403	351	0.1%
2020	505,576	395	0.1%
2021	564,229	509	0.1%
Total	**7,633,131**	**6,210**	**0.1%**

Firearm Recovery Notification Program

The Firearm Recovery Notification Program maintains information on firearms that have not yet been recovered by law enforcement but must be associated with an open ATF criminal investigation or have been identified through investigative information as related to criminal activity.

Obliterated Serial Number Program

The Obliterated Serial Number Program allows LEAs to identify recovered crime guns whose origins have been masked by serial number destruction or alteration. ATF uses the information to identify firearms trafficking patterns and related crimes. As reflected in Table NTC-15, between 2000 and 2021 the NTC received 204,387 trace requests of crime guns with obliterated serial numbers, of which the NTC was able to successfully trace 56,603 (28%).

Table NTC-15: Obliterated Serial Number Trace Requests, 2000-2021

Year	Total Trace Requests	Oblit. SN Trace Submissions	% of All Trace Requests	Successful Oblit. SN Traces	% Oblit. SN Successfully Traced
2000	206,117	6,739	3.3%	2,317	34.4%
2001	242,125	7,683	3.2%	2,249	29.3%
2002	244,856	9,466	3.9%	3,126	33.0%
2003	277,030	10,336	3.7%	3,372	32.6%
2004	263,965	10,870	4.1%	4,068	37.4%
2005	270,544	8,622	3.2%	2,783	32.3%
2006	282,422	8,497	3.0%	3,274	38.5%
2007	305,395	9,270	3.0%	3,318	35.8%
2008	301,362	9,132	3.0%	2,924	32.0%
2009	383,529	11,102	2.9%	2,827	25.5%
2010	296,655	8,470	2.9%	2,464	29.1%
2011	334,058	10,325	3.1%	2,351	22.8%
2012	344,972	10,749	3.1%	2,218	20.6%
2013	350,231	11,546	3.3%	2,109	18.3%
2014	367,590	11,525	3.1%	2,430	21.1%
2015	384,745	9,177	2.4%	2,386	26.0%
2016	382,512	8,220	2.1%	2,364	28.8%
2017	420,225	8,346	2.0%	2,001	24.0%
2018	447,590	8,585	1.9%	2,137	24.9%
2019	457,403	8,288	1.8%	2,041	24.6%
2020	505,576	8,077	1.6%	1,680	20.8%
2021	564,229	9,362	1.7%	2,164	23.1%
Total	**7,633,131**	**204,387**	**2.7%**	**56,603**	**27.7%**

Comprehensive Tracing Section

The Comprehensive Tracing Section is staffed by weapons identification experts who implement quality controls to ensure that all incoming firearms descriptions are valid. These experts also research any potential discrepancies to ensure that the firearm is properly identified prior to initiating the firearms tracing process. In addition, this section oversees the receipt and data entry of bulk tracing projects, assists ATF field divisions with vault reviews and inventories for the purpose of crime gun tracing, corrects unsuccessful trace errors, researches firearms classifications, and executes global data corrections as required.

Research Tracing Program

The Research Tracing Program processes crime gun trace requests that require specialized research when an active FFL cannot be contacted, located, or is otherwise unresponsive to a trace request, and when an inactive FFL has failed to submit OOB records to ATF.

International Firearms Tracing Program

The International Firearms Tracing Program processes requests from foreign LEAs, contacts foreign entities to obtain firearm disposition information; and coordinates with ATF's International Affairs Division, the U.S. Department of State, and INTERPOL on training and outreach initiatives to promote comprehensive firearm tracing and eTrace usage by foreign law enforcement partners.

Record Certification and Court Testimony

Certified copies of FFL OOB records and/or court testimony are provided upon a request from a LEA. Certifications and court testimony are provided to validate the custody of OOB records maintained at the NTC. A LEA or prosecutor may also request the NTC to provide certified copies of individual Firearms Trace Summary Reports, Reports of Multiple Sales or Other Disposition of Pistols and Revolvers, Multiple Sales or Other Disposition of Certain Rifles, and FFL Report of Theft or Loss of Firearms.

Interagency and Public Affairs Program

The Interagency and Public Affairs Program (IPA) supports federal, state, local, territorial, tribal, and foreign LEAs with outreach training on firearms tracing and related NTC services. IPA also works with media organizations by providing tours and briefings of the NTC. The program is also responsible for the development and management of NTC publications, training materials, and a variety of other visual information products pertaining to crime gun tracing and related services.

Law Enforcement Training Program

The Law Enforcement Training Program promotes comprehensive firearms tracing through outreach, training, and the expansion of eTrace among federal, state, local, territorial, tribal, and foreign LEAs.

Quality Control Program

The Quality Control Program is responsible for performing a wide range of quality control checks to ensure the accuracy and integrity of the data housed in the FTS. This includes 100% quality control checks of all urgent trace requests processed by the NTC.

Records Search Request Program

The Records Search Request Program assists federal, state, local, territorial, and tribal LEAs that require copies of FFL records in support of criminal investigations or prosecutions. These records are available in hard-copy and post-imaging are stored in ECM-Out of Business Records. Only authorized law enforcement officials and agencies conducting bona-fide criminal investigations and/or prosecutions can be provided information from the ECM.

NTC Connect Program

The NTC Connect Program is a free service available to licensed manufacturers, importers and wholesalers who maintain electronic A&D records. For tracing purposes only, NTC Connect provides a secure web-based application through which the NTC can query a serial number against an FFL's electronic firearm disposition records and retrieve the corresponding disposition data. The data remains in the custody of the FFL and is not maintained at ATF.

Participation in the program is voluntary and can reduce the FFL's labor costs by eliminating the need to have dedicated staff to respond to firearm trace requests. Additionally, NTC benefits by having immediate access to a participating FFLs disposition data on a 24/7 basis. This allows for improved response times in completing traces and subsequently providing the information to LEAs. In 2021, the NTC Connect Program was utilized more than 310,000 times in furtherance of a trace request.

eTrace Program

ATF's eTrace application is a web-based crime gun trace request submission system and interactive trace analysis module that facilitates comprehensive firearms tracing and assists ATF efforts to combat firearm trafficking. eTrace is available to accredited domestic and international LEAs to assist in the tracing of U.S.-sourced firearms. eTrace provides for the secure exchange of crime gun incident related data in a web-based environment and serves as a portal to ATF's FTS database. The system provides real-time capabilities that allow LEAs to submit electronic crime gun trace requests, monitor the progress of traces, retrieve completed trace results and query crime gun trace-related data in the FTS database.

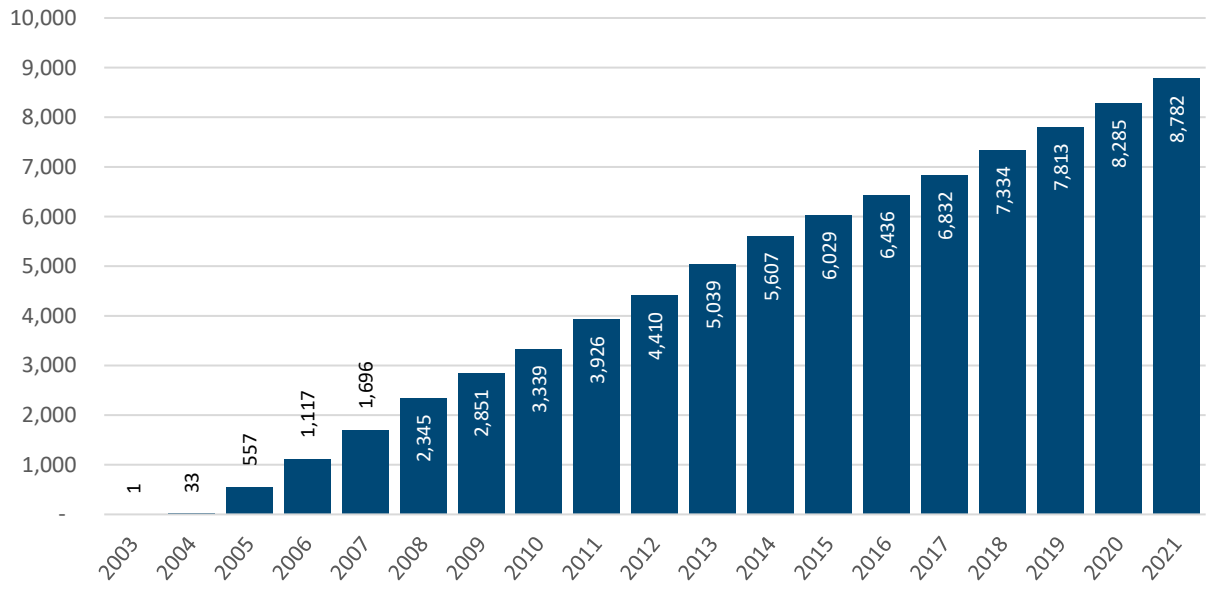
In addition, registered users can initiate a search of all traces submitted by their LEA, based on virtually any data field or combination of data fields, such as firearm serial numbers, type of crime, date of recovery or other identifiers. The eTrace system also provides participating state, local, territorial and tribal LEAs with the ability to opt-in to a collective data sharing agreement, through which they can share all of their trace data with any other agencies in their state that also opt-in. The result is a state-level collective data sharing pool through which all agencies that have opted-in can access trace data for all other participating agencies within their state.

The eTrace system allows a LEA to conduct comprehensive traces of recovered crime guns and establish an information platform for developing the best investigative strategies to reduce firearms-related crime and violence. The application is available 24/7 and is provided at no cost to authorized LEAs. Each participating LEA enters a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with ATF.

The benefits of eTrace include the ability to (1) develop investigative leads; (2) significantly reduce the turnaround time required to process a trace request; (3) improve the quality of trace-related information because of real-time data validation that helps to prevent incorrect entries; (4) monitor the status of traces; (5) view/print/download completed trace results; and (6) generate statistical reports and perform online analytical research. The eTrace system also has greatly reduced duplicative and manual data entry required by the NTC to process trace requests and has correspondingly reduced the time required by law enforcement agencies to submit a trace request. Overall, eTrace has increased the investigative value of firearm trace information and the efficiency of the tracing process.

The utility of eTrace for law enforcement is reflected by the number of LEAs participating in the program. As Figure NTC-08 shows, the number of LEAs participating in the eTrace program has increased steadily since its inception in 2003. By 2021, 8,782 LEAs throughout the U.S. and in 47 foreign countries actively used eTrace in support of their investigative work.

Figure NTC-08: Total Number of Agencies Participating in the eTrace Program, 2003 – 2021



Consistent with the steady growth of the eTrace program, the proportion of trace requests entered via eTrace (excluding NTC users[10]) has also increased. As reflected in Table NTC-16, the proportion of trace requests entered via eTrace relative to the total trace requests received by the NTC increased from 27% (71,967) in 2004 (the second year of the program) to almost 91% (512,978) in 2021.

Table NTC-16: Total Trace Requests Entered and Trace Requests Entered via eTrace, 2003 – 2021

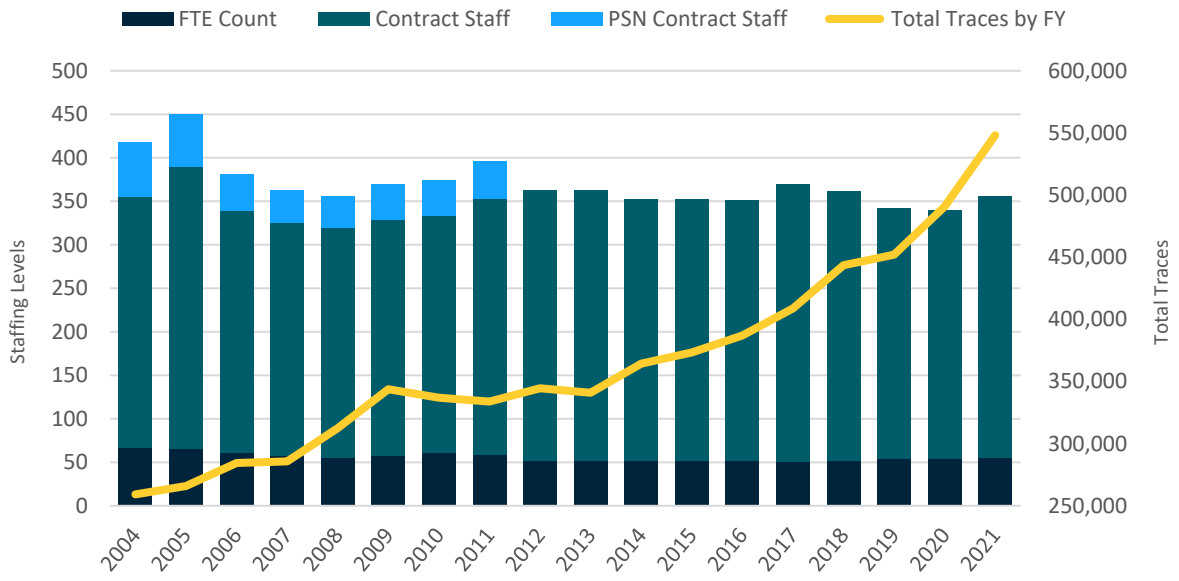
Year	Total Trace Requests	Traces Entered via eTrace, excluding NTC users	% Entered via eTrace
2003	277,030	9,592	3.5%
2004	263,965	71,967	27.3%
2005	270,544	101,993	37.7%
2006	282,422	120,667	42.7%
2007	305,395	152,752	50.0%
2008	301,362	147,940	49.1%
2009	383,529	214,959	56.0%
2010	296,655	148,900	50.2%
2011	334,058	178,212	53.3%
2012	344,972	224,394	65.0%
2013	350,231	235,137	67.1%
2014	367,590	263,496	71.7%
2015	384,745	278,348	72.3%
2016	382,512	290,931	76.1%
2017	420,225	330,906	78.7%
2018	447,590	357,590	79.9%
2019	457,403	363,932	79.6%
2020	505,576	426,666	84.4%
2021	564,229	512,978	90.9%

Access to eTrace is administered through a standard MOU process with the participating LEA. NTC personnel authorize eTrace user accounts in accordance with the eTrace MOU, ATF policy, and law. The NTC also provides hands-on training for eTrace users around the world and staffs a customer service team to provide direct assistance to all users. For eTrace participation by state, see Table NTC - 17 in Appendix NTC – NTC Overview.

NTC Staffing

In contrast to the increasing volume of traces processed, the overall staffing of the NTC has generally declined since 2004 (Figure NTC-09 and Table NTC-18 in Appendix NTC – NTC Overview). NTC staffing declined from 418 employees in 2004 to 356 employees in 2021. Due to the type of work and workload, the NTC is staffed by both full-time (FTE) government employees and contract personnel. During the period 2004 to 2021, an average of 56 FTE's were assigned to the NTC. In 2012, 43 NTC contractor positions were eliminated as part of a restructuring of the Department of Justice's Project Safe Neighborhoods (PSN) initiative. Staffing and budget data are only available by fiscal year rather than by calendar year and presented as such in this section.

Figure NTC-09: NTC Staffing and Workload by Fiscal Year, 2004 - 2021



In response to increasing workloads, the NTC instituted a series of new procedures and technologies that enable NTC staff to process crime gun trace requests more efficiently. Within statutory legal restrictions, these innovations and system enhancements included significant upgrades to the storage and search options of FFL OOB Records that greatly reduce the time and effort to search OOB Records for potential links to a trace request.

The implementation and periodic enhancements to eTrace drastically improved the NTC's efficiencies. Specifically, the web-based submission process supported by eTrace provided for improved accuracy of trace submission via intuitive dropdown screens and guided instructions. eTrace also improved overall trace data quality, which has contributed to an increase in the number and percentage of completed traces. Other technological innovations have also led to efficiencies. In 2009, the NTC implemented an

electronic workflow management system, the electronic Tracing Operations and Workflow Routing System (eTOWRS) that facilitated communication between different components in the tracing operation, automated processes and provided statistical data for improved auditing of the tracing processes. In 2019, the Access 2000 (A2K) application was replaced with NTC Connect.

Table NTC-19 documents gains made in tracing productivity associated with the NTC's ongoing enhancements to tracing operations and management. In 2021, the average number of firearms traced per NTC employee was approximately 150% greater (1,540 annually) than 2004 (620 annually). In addition, between 2017 and 2021 the tracing processing capacity of the NTC has shown a steady increase in average annual traces per NTC employee increasing by 40% from 1,105 in 2017 to 1,540 in 2021.

Table NTC-19: Average Number of Traces Processed per NTC Employee, 2004 – 2021

Fiscal Year	Total Traces by FY	Personnel Total by FY	Avg. # of Traces Processed Per Staff Member
2004	259,177	418	620
2005	265,870	450	591
2006	284,443	381	747
2007	285,658	363	787
2008	312,518	356	878
2009	343,745	370	929
2010	336,912	374	901
2011	333,867	396	843
2012	344,504	363	949
2013	340,912	363	939
2014	364,438	352	1,035
2015	373,349	352	1,061
2016	386,999	351	1,103
2017	408,761	370	1,105
2018	443,601	362	1,225
2019	452,046	342	1,322
2020	490,844	340	1,444
2021	548,186	356	1,540

NTC Budget

As Figure NTC-10 and Table NTC-20 reflect, the NTC budget grew from $14 million in 2000 to $32 million in 2021. Much of the budget increase occurred between 2000 and 2005. In 2005, the budget was $27 million, and it reached its peak in 2011 ($34 million) after which the budget fluctuated but nearly returned to the 2011 budget level in 2021 ($32 million).

Figure NTC-10: NTC Division Budget and Traces Processed by Fiscal Year, 2000 – 2021

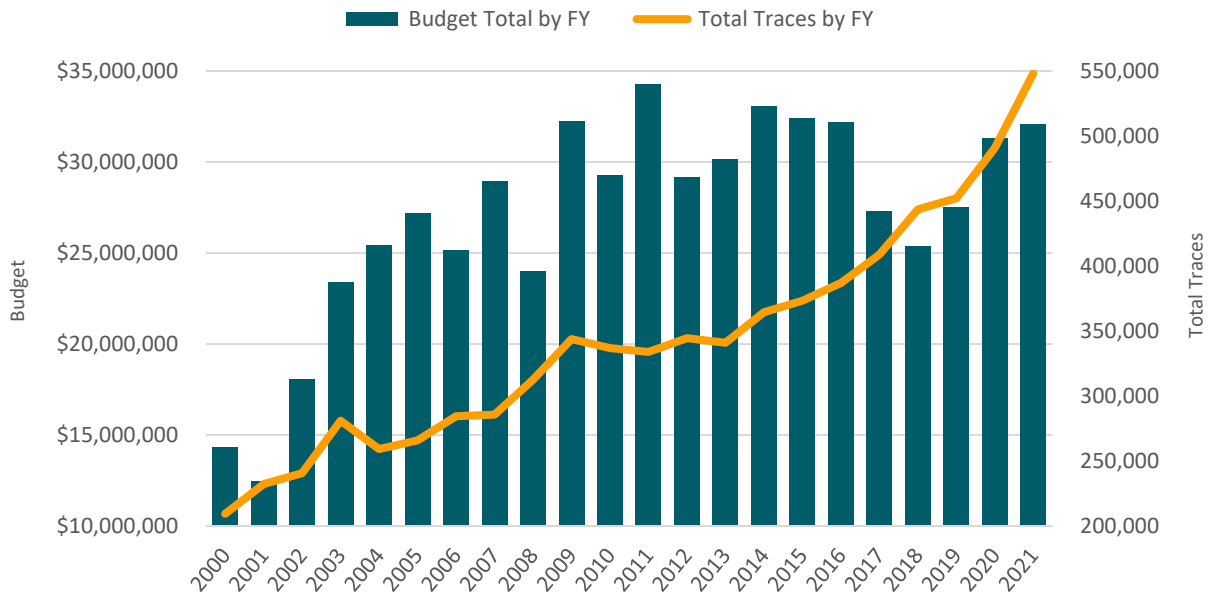


Table NTC-20: NTC Division Budget and Traces Processed by Fiscal Year, 2000 – 2021

Fiscal Year	Total Traces by FY	Budget Total by FY	Budget YoY Change	Budget YoY % Change
2000	209,368	$14,317,742		
2001	232,272	$12,427,639	$(1,890,103)	-13.2%
2002	240,651	$18,074,046	$5,646,407	45.4%
2003	280,947	$23,391,862	$5,317,816	29.4%
2004	259,177	$25,424,499	$2,032,637	8.7%
2005	265,870	$27,154,488	$1,729,989	6.8%
2006	284,443	$25,120,530	$(2,033,958)	-7.5%
2007	285,658	$28,929,966	$3,809,436	15.2%
2008	312,518	$23,972,646	$(4,957,320)	-17.1%
2009	343,745	$32,222,567	$8,249,921	34.4%
2010	336,912	$29,241,453	$(2,981,114)	-9.3%
2011	333,867	$34,240,255	$4,998,802	17.1%
2012	344,504	$29,138,011	$(5,102,244)	-14.9%
2013	340,912	$30,117,808	$979,797	3.4%
2014	364,438	$33,041,004	$2,923,196	9.7%
2015	373,349	$32,415,709	$(625,295)	-1.9%
2016	386,999	$32,156,875	$(258,834)	-0.8%
2017	408,761	$27,255,406	$(4,901,469)	-15.2%
2018	443,601	$25,353,019	$(1,902,387)	-7.0%
2019	452,046	$27,504,469	$2,151,450	8.5%
2020	490,844	$31,314,405	$3,809,936	13.9%
2021	548,186	$32,042,375	$727,970	2.3%

NTC Division Budget in Current vs. Constant Dollar Value

To ensure accurate assessment of budget allocation and expenditures across the 21-year span, budget statistics are reviewed in both current and constant dollars. Current dollars represent income or expenses in the year they were received or expended. Constant or real dollars are terms describing income after adjustment for inflation. The Census Bureau describes constant-dollar value as the "value expressed in dollars adjusted for purchasing power. Constant-dollar values represent an effort to remove the effects of price changes from statistical series reported in dollar terms. The result is a series as it would presumably exist if prices were the same throughout as they were in the base year…".[11]

To adjust for changes in the cost of living, the Census Bureau uses the Bureau of Labor Statistics' (BLS) Consumer Price Index Research Series (CPI-U-RS). However, to adjust for the cost of operating public sector enterprises, the United States Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) uses price indexes developed for adjusting government consumption expenditures and gross investment over time.[12] To calculate NTC constant dollar fiscal year budget allocations the price index for federal government, nondefense expenditure and investment was used and indexed to the fiscal year 2000.[13]

Figure NTC-11 and Table NTC-21 present NTC's annual fiscal year budget allocation in current and constant dollars from 2000 to 2021. From 2000 to 2011, NTC's annual budget allocations in constant dollars increased by 139% while the budget in constant dollars increased by only 80%. During this period, requests for firearm traces increased by 59%. From 2011 to 2021, trace requests rose 64%, however the NTC annual budget allocations decreased. Between 2011 and 2021, NTC's budget measured in current dollars decreased by 6%, while the budget measured in constant dollars decreased by 22%.

Figure NTC-11: Current vs. Constant NTC Budget by Fiscal Year, 2000 – 2021

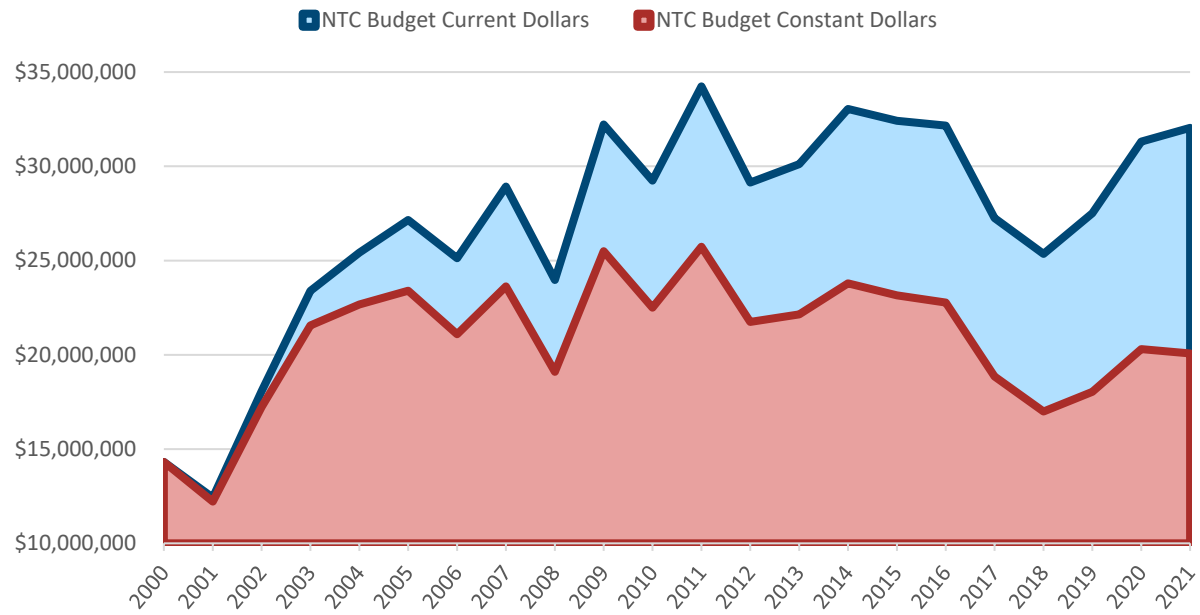


Table NTC-21: Current vs. Constant NTC Budget, 2000 – 2021

Fiscal Year	NTC Budget Current Dollars	NTC Budget Constant Dollars	Constant Depreciation Difference	Constant % Deprecation
2000	$14,317,742	$14,317,742	$0	
2001	$12,427,639	$12,209,840	$217,799	1.8%
2002	$18,074,046	$17,229,827	$844,219	4.7%
2003	$23,391,862	$21,562,612	$1,829,250	7.8%
2004	$25,424,499	$22,668,145	$2,756,354	10.8%
2005	$27,154,488	$23,400,541	$3,753,947	13.8%
2006	$25,120,530	$21,094,257	$4,026,273	16.0%
2007	$28,929,966	$23,633,001	$5,296,965	18.3%
2008	$23,972,646	$19,100,910	$4,871,736	20.3%
2009	$32,222,567	$25,494,328	$6,728,239	20.9%
2010	$29,241,453	$22,504,979	$6,736,474	23.0%
2011	$34,240,255	$25,732,957	$8,507,298	24.8%
2012	$29,138,011	$21,741,618	$7,396,393	25.4%
2013	$30,117,808	$22,144,522	$7,973,286	26.5%
2014	$33,041,004	$23,792,354	$9,248,650	28.0%
2015	$32,415,709	$23,153,280	$9,262,429	28.6%
2016	$32,156,875	$22,771,352	$9,385,523	29.2%
2017	$27,255,406	$18,847,560	$8,407,846	30.8%
2018	$25,353,019	$16,992,956	$8,360,063	33.0%
2019	$27,504,469	$18,038,000	$9,466,469	34.4%
2020	$31,314,405	$20,298,812	$11,015,593	35.2%
2021	$32,042,375	$20,073,496	$11,968,879	37.4%

Average Cost per Trace

As reflected in Table NTC-22, since 2011 the average cost of processing a trace request has dropped significantly. Since fiscal year 2011 the average cost of processing a firearm trace in current dollars has decreased 43% from almost $103 (2011) to over $58 (2021), and the average cost in constant dollars decreased by 53% from slightly more than $77 (2011) to less than $37 (2021). Increasing tracing productivity, especially since 2011, is attributable to the ongoing implementation of business process and technology innovations the NTC introduced over this period.

Table NTC-22: Average Annual Cost to Process a Trace in Current and Constant Dollars, 2000 – 2021

Fiscal Year	Current Dollars	Constant Dollars
2000	$68.39	$68.39
2001	$53.50	$52.57
2002	$75.10	$71.60
2003	$83.26	$76.75
2004	$98.10	$87.46
2005	$102.13	$88.01
2006	$88.31	$74.16
2007	$101.27	$82.73
2008	$76.71	$61.12
2009	$93.74	$74.17
2010	$86.79	$66.80
2011	$102.56	$77.08
2012	$84.58	$63.11

2013	$88.34	$64.96
2014	$90.66	$65.29
2015	$86.82	$62.02
2016	$83.09	$58.84
2017	$66.68	$46.11
2018	$57.15	$38.31
2019	$60.84	$39.90
2020	$63.80	$41.35
2021	$58.45	$36.62

Summary

The NTC is the sole crime gun tracing facility in the U.S.; it provides tracing and other services to all LEAs in the U.S. and to participating agencies in 84 foreign nations. Managing the tracing process requires the NTC to interact with tens of thousands of LEAs and firearm industry businesses. While completing crime gun traces in the period 2000 to 2021, the NTC interacted with 13,210 different firearms manufacturers and importers, 231,066 separate retail and wholesale firearms dealers, 21,159 individual LEAs throughout the U.S.

Since 2000, the NTC has greatly expanded the programs and services it provides to law enforcement, the firearms industry, and the public. Specifically, the NTC has implemented systems to support the processing of FFL theft, interstate theft, multiple sale and firearm recovery notifications. The NTC has leveraged technology by introducing tools to facilitate the more efficient information exchange between ATF and licensed manufacturers, importers, and wholesalers in the form of NTC Connect, and by expanding LEA access to eTrace. The NTC has also engaged in ongoing outreach to LEAs, highlighting the value of comprehensive firearm tracing as an effective strategy to identify and interdict illicit gun trafficking and apprehend violent criminals.

The NTC's programs and education efforts have helped to significantly increase the volume of crime gun trace requests initiated by LEAs. During the period 2000 to 2021, the number of crime gun trace requests increased by 174% (from 206,117 to 564,229). Over this same period, however, the NTC's staffing levels remained almost flat, and the NTC budget in both current and inflation adjusted dollars declined.

The NTC has made corresponding improvements in the data quality and accuracy of submitted and processed trace requests. Between 2000 and 2021 the percentage of completed traces increased from nearly 67% in 2000 to 84% of all trace requests in 2021.

Overall, the NTC has increased the operational capacity of the firearm tracing process as well as the overall quality and investigative value of tracing related information. Despite these internal efforts to improve proficiency, the continued increase in demand for NTC services has negatively impacted ATF's ability to respond to the time-sensitive and often-critical needs of law enforcement in a timely manner (see Figure NTC-03). These delays are largely attributable to static staffing levels, and outdated technology systems, which have become insufficient to support ongoing increases in the volume of trace requests and other critical NTC program areas.

APPENDIX NTC – NTC OVERVIEW

Table NTC-01: Total Trace Requests Received with Average and Median Processing Time by Year, 2000 – 2021

Year	Trace Requests	Avg. Days to Complete	Median Days to Complete	YoY Change	YoY % Change
2000	206,117	6.9	3.9		
2001	242,125	8.0	4.0	36,008	17.5%
2002	244,856	9.8	5.7	2,731	1.1%
2003	277,030	16.1	6.5	32,174	13.1%
2004	263,965	8.6	6.2	(13,065)	-4.7%
2005	270,544	9.6	6.3	6,579	2.5%
2006	282,422	7.0	5.4	11,878	4.4%
2007	305,395	7.7	5.8	22,973	8.1%
2008	301,362	9.5	6.9	(4,033)	-1.3%
2009	383,529	12.6	7.9	82,167	27.3%
2010	296,655	14.3	7.9	(86,874)	-22.7%
2011	334,058	7.9	4.4	37,403	12.6%
2012	344,972	5.0	2.8	10,914	3.3%
2013	350,231	6.2	3.3	5,259	1.5%
2014	367,590	9.0	3.7	17,359	5.0%
2015	384,745	10.0	4.4	17,155	4.7%
2016	382,512	10.1	4.2	(2,233)	-0.6%
2017	420,225	11.6	5.9	37,713	9.9%
2018	447,590	15.3	8.2	27,365	6.5%
2019	457,403	11.3	7.0	9,813	2.2%
2020	505,576	11.6	7.4	48,173	10.5%
2021	564,229	16.1	10.1	58,653	11.6%
Total Change (2000-2021)		9.2	6.2	358,112	173.4%

Table NTC-02: Total Trace Requests Received and Processed by the NTC with Percentage of Total Traces, 2000 – 2021

Year	Trace Requests	Duplicate Traces	% Duplicate Traces	Stopped by Requestor	% Stopped by Requestor	Invalid Firearm Description	% Invalid Firearm Description	Pre-GCA	% Pre-GCA	Trace Requests Unable to Completed	% Trace Requests Unable to Completed	Trace Requests Completed	% Trace Requests Completed
2000	**206,117**	12,889	6.3%	1,883	0.9%	29,762	14.4%	23,942	11.62%	68,476	33.2%	**137,641**	66.8%
2001	**242,125**	21,256	8.8%	2,033	0.8%	37,720	15.6%	28,945	11.95%	89,954	37.2%	**152,171**	62.8%
2002	**244,856**	17,093	7.0%	1,488	0.6%	32,795	13.4%	26,187	10.69%	77,563	31.7%	**167,293**	68.3%
2003	**277,030**	21,509	7.8%	1,329	0.5%	31,316	11.3%	24,639	8.89%	78,793	28.4%	**198,237**	71.6%
2004	**263,965**	13,455	5.1%	901	0.3%	33,838	12.8%	16,082	6.09%	64,276	24.4%	**199,689**	75.6%
2005	**270,544**	9,257	3.4%	1,574	0.6%	32,059	11.8%	15,885	5.87%	58,775	21.7%	**211,769**	78.3%
2006	**282,422**	9,443	3.3%	1,315	0.5%	33,692	11.9%	16,529	5.85%	60,979	21.6%	**221,443**	78.4%
2007	**305,395**	10,215	3.3%	3,760	1.2%	30,078	9.8%	22,336	7.31%	66,389	21.7%	**239,006**	78.3%
2008	**301,362**	12,706	4.2%	974	0.3%	35,912	11.9%	18,693	6.20%	68,285	22.7%	**233,077**	77.3%
2009	**383,529**	29,112	7.6%	2,979	0.8%	58,993	15.4%	26,291	6.86%	117,375	30.6%	**266,154**	69.4%
2010	**296,655**	10,953	3.7%	1,640	0.6%	34,025	11.5%	21,385	7.21%	68,003	22.9%	**228,652**	77.1%
2011	**334,058**	14,872	4.5%	5,547	1.7%	42,742	12.8%	21,350	6.39%	84,511	25.3%	**249,547**	74.7%
2012	**344,972**	12,558	3.6%	1,767	0.5%	49,094	14.2%	23,853	6.91%	87,272	25.3%	**257,700**	74.7%
2013	**350,231**	13,952	4.0%	1,690	0.5%	39,547	11.3%	23,332	6.66%	78,521	22.4%	**271,710**	77.6%
2014	**367,590**	16,249	4.4%	698	0.2%	46,344	12.6%	21,900	5.96%	85,191	23.2%	**282,399**	76.8%
2015	**384,745**	20,104	5.2%	5,269	1.4%	42,403	11.0%	20,091	5.22%	87,867	22.8%	**296,878**	77.2%
2016	**382,512**	18,332	4.8%	958	0.3%	37,196	9.7%	16,469	4.31%	72,955	19.1%	**309,557**	80.9%
2017	**420,225**	19,342	4.6%	2,177	0.5%	38,587	9.2%	16,181	3.85%	76,287	18.2%	**343,938**	81.8%
2018	**447,590**	21,905	4.9%	1,478	0.3%	42,915	9.6%	16,341	3.65%	82,639	18.5%	**364,951**	81.5%
2019	**457,403**	19,353	4.2%	1,408	0.3%	44,924	9.8%	19,719	4.31%	85,404	18.7%	**371,999**	81.3%
2020	**505,576**	20,909	4.1%	2,584	0.5%	47,334	9.4%	19,520	3.86%	90,347	17.9%	**415,229**	82.1%
2021	**564,229**	20,817	3.7%	1,333	0.2%	48,164	8.5%	18,288	3.24%	88,602	15.7%	**475,627**	84.3%
Total	**7,633,131**	**366,281**	**4.8%**	**44,785**	**0.6%**	**869,440**	**11.4%**	**457,958**	**6.00%**	**1,738,464**	**22.8%**	**5,894,667**	**77.2%**

Table NTC-06: Multiple Handgun Sales Transactions and Firearms Reported, 2000 – 2021

Year	Multiple Sales Transactions	Firearms Reported
2000	91,074	215,383
2001	87,580	205,605
2002	87,630	206,219
2003	99,013	233,026
2004	105,651	247,294
2005	119,526	284,086
2006	134,752	316,135
2007	151,109	359,100
2008	189,241	440,743
2009	220,230	511,124
2010	212,983	491,973
2011	253,414	589,458
2012	319,350	731,632
2013	391,848	900,832
2014	326,660	761,725
2015	385,065	890,100
2016	483,970	1,106,120
2017	455,928	1,050,047
2018	458,396	1,067,752
2019	480,674	1,122,202
2020	619,201	1,398,650
2021	669,111	1,539,921
Total	**6,342,406**	**13,129,206**

Table NTC-08: Demand Letter 3 Transactions and Associated Firearms Reported, 2011 – 2021

Year	DL3 Transactions	Firearms Reported
2011	1,648	3,962
2012	6,668	15,447
2013	12,413	29,556
2014	6,565	15,913
2015	6,301	14,840
2016	15,348	35,801
2017	6,869	16,438
2018	6,205	14,692
2019	5,959	13,879
2020	6,174	14,193
2021	7,913	18,375
Total	**82,063**	**193,096**

Table NTC-11. FFL Theft or Loss Incidents and Firearms Reported, 2000 – 2021

Year	FFL Theft or Loss Incidents	Firearms Reported Stolen or Lost by FFL
2000	2,633	19,265
2001	2,264	15,432
2002	2,539	17,744
2003	2,507	25,171
2004	2,397	17,701
2005	2,474	28,432
2006	2,817	24,542
2007	2,964	30,454
2008	2,703	29,850
2009	2,430	19,639
2010	2,554	27,098
2011	2,537	20,343
2012	2,487	20,497
2013	2,425	30,001
2014	2,349	21,846
2015	2,328	17,674
2016	2,770	20,745
2017	2,817	24,078
2018	2,514	20,778
2019	2,567	15,274
2020	2,235	14,359
2021	2,149	11,897
Total	**55,460**	**472,820**

Table NTC-13: Interstate Theft or Loss Incidents and Firearms Reported, 2000 – 2021

Year	Interstate Theft or Loss Incidents	Firearms Reported Stolen or Lost in Transit
2000	894	1,895
2001	552	1,413
2002	505	1,423
2003	435	1,267
2004	460	1,158
2005	590	1,365
2006	732	1,941
2007	667	1,468
2008	581	1,859
2009	567	1,374
2010	469	1,184
2011	464	1,184
2012	517	1,373
2013	697	2,395
2014	620	3,170
2015	757	2,139
2016	918	2,304
2017	895	2,569
2018	1,088	3,613
2019	1,058	3,456
2020	2,316	6,168
2021	3,564	8,613
Total	**19,346**	**53,331**

Table NTC-17: Law Enforcement Agency eTrace Participation by State, as of 2021

State	Total Law Enforcement Agencies	eTrace Participating Agencies	Non-eTrace Participating Agencies	% of Agencies Participating
AK	50	21	79	21.00%
AL	417	226	191	54.20%
AR	367	85	282	23.20%
AZ	140	95	45	67.90%
CA	509	313	196	61.50%
CO	246	157	89	63.80%
CT	143	70	73	49.00%
DE	50	25	75	25.00%
FL	387	299	88	77.30%
GA	628	395	233	62.90%
HI	7	5	2	71.40%
IA	392	130	262	33.20%
ID	117	69	48	59.00%
IL	877	545	332	62.10%
IN	482	202	280	41.90%
KS	371	139	232	37.50%
KY	389	114	275	29.30%
LA	348	167	181	48.00%
MA	357	145	212	40.60%
MD	142	75	67	52.80%
ME	146	58	234	19.90%
MI	571	177	394	31.00%
MN	448	195	253	43.50%
MO	576	201	375	34.90%
MS	342	178	164	52.10%
MT	119	35	84	29.40%
NC	504	369	135	73.20%
ND	114	39	75	34.20%
NE	225	53	172	23.60%
NH	208	44	164	21.20%
NJ	550	421	129	76.60%
NM	146	69	223	23.60%
NV	76	31	45	40.80%
NY	514	115	399	22.40%
OH	831	492	339	59.20%
OK	481	137	344	28.50%
OR	174	120	54	69.00%
PA	1,117	648	469	58.00%
RI	48	22	26	45.80%
SC	272	161	111	59.20%
SD	155	29	126	18.70%
TN	375	183	192	48.80%
TX	1,913	743	1,170	38.80%
UT	136	81	55	59.60%
VA	340	273	67	80.30%
VT	69	27	42	39.10%
WA	260	162	98	62.30%
WI	529	230	299	43.50%
WV	233	85	148	36.50%
WY	90	24	66	26.70%
Total	**17,981**	**8,679**	**9,694**	**47.20%**

Table NTC-18: NTC Staffing and Workload by Fiscal Year, 2004 – 2021

Fiscal Year	Total Traces by FY	FTE Count	Contract Staff	PSN Contract Staff
2004	259,177	67	288	63
2005	265,870	65	324	61
2006	284,443	61	278	42
2007	285,658	58	267	38
2008	312,518	55	265	36
2009	343,745	57	272	41
2010	336,912	61	272	41
2011	333,867	59	294	43
2012	344,504	52	311	0
2013	340,912	52	311	0
2014	364,438	51	301	0
2015	373,349	51	301	0
2016	386,999	51	300	0
2017	408,761	51	319	0
2018	443,601	52	310	0
2019	452,046	54	288	0
2020	490,844	54	286	0
2021	548,186	55	301	0

ENDNOTES

[1]See Part IX-Industry Overview in the *National Firearms Commerce and Trafficking Assessment; Firearms in Commerce Report* for additional information.
[2] Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994, Pub. L. 103-322, Title XI, §110306, 108 STAT. 2013 (1994)
[3] Totals were extracted from the Firearms Tracing System (FTS) database and the Federal Licensing (FLS) database on September 14, 2022
[4] The annual volume of OOB records is only available since 2004.
[5] The Out-of-Business Records (Pages) in Backlog are estimated counts based on a ratio of the average number of pages per box of records received. The ratio utilized to calculate this volume has changed over the years based on internal process changes.
[6] These counts reflect all FFL Theft/Loss reports that were submitted to ATF, to include firearms that were subsequently found in the FFLs inventory, or otherwise deemed not to have been lost or stolen.
[7] It is important to note that this table only reflects the annual number of total trace requests completed using FFL Theft data. Not all firearms reported as stolen or lost from FFLs are recovered by law enforcement and traced. For instance, some firearms reported as lost are later found by FFLs or their employees in their inventories. These recovered lost firearms are not traced.
[8] These counts reflect all Interstate Theft/Loss reports that were submitted to ATF, to include firearms that were found in the possession of the rightful owner or carrier, found by another other than the carrier and were not used in a crime, or were otherwise deemed not lost or stolen.
[9] It should be noted, the eTrace application was implemented in October 2003, which conducted an automated match check between trace requests and all transaction types, including stolen firearms.
[10] Traces entered by NTC users are those that are sent to the NTC in hard-copy (or electronic) format and entered by NTC staff.
[11] https://www.census.gov/topics/income-poverty/income/guidance/current-vs-constant-dollars.html#:~:text=Current%20dollars%20is%20a%20term,income%20after%20adjustment%20for%20inflation (retrieved September 19, 2022).
[12] The methodology for calculating government sector price indices is available in chapter 4 of BEA's NIPA Handbook: Concepts and Methods of the U.S. National Income and Product Accounts (see, https://www.bea.gov/resources/methodologies/nipa-handbook).
[13] Price index data from Table 3.9.4, line 25 in Section 3 of Government Current Receipts and Expenditures which is a subset price index of BEA's' National Income and Product Accounts program (https://apps.bea.gov/iTable/iTable.cfm?reqid=19&step=2&isuri=1&1921=survey#).