

# PART II:

## Case Initiation

### Case Initiation Methods

Firearm trafficking cases may be initiated by a SA after receipt of information indicates a matter warrants formal investigation and aligns with the ATF’s strategic investigative priorities. All case initiations must be approved by the SA’s supervisor. Methods of case initiation can vary widely ranging from intelligence referrals that are pro-active and focus case agents on ATF’s strategic priorities, to reactive methods where case agents respond to an FFL burglary, or other criminal action referred to ATF by a state or local law enforcement partner after a crime has taken place. The survey completed by the SAs provided 20 reasons to select from as to why cases were initiated, including an "other" category. After review, responses in the “other” category were grouped together resulting in the designation of an additional two categories. There can be more than one reason cited per case. The top ten case initiation methods are defined in Table CI-01a. For the 9,708 investigations reviewed in the study period, initiation methods were identified in nearly all (9,684) investigations. SAs identified on average 1.2 initiation types per investigation, for a total of 11,993 separate initiation methods across the case population.

*Table CI-01a: Definitions of Top Ten Case Initiation Methods*

Case Initiation Method	Description
Referral from Crime Gun Intelligence Center (CGIC)	SA received a referral of intelligence analysis and information related to firearm trafficking from one of ATF’s <b>CGICs</b> that warranted initiation of an investigation. Appears as “Field division CGIC referral (General Investigation)” in survey.
Referral from State or Local Law Enforcement	SA received a referral of information related to firearm trafficking from one of ATF’s state or local law enforcement partners that warranted initiation of an investigation. Appears as “Jointly developed with or referral from a state or local agency” in survey.
Review of eTrace/National Tracing Center (NTC) Information	SA reviewed <b>NTC</b> information through <b>eTrace</b> and developed information related to firearm trafficking that warranted initiation of an investigation. Appears as “Information developed during review of eTrace/NTC information” in survey.
Federal Firearms Licensee (FFL) Theft	SA received a report of information regarding a theft of firearms from a <b>Federal firearms licensee</b> (FFL) and/or state or local LEA that warranted initiation of an investigation.
Confidential Informant (CI)	SA received information related to firearm trafficking from a <b>CI</b> that warranted initiation of an investigation. A confidential informant is someone who is examined, registered, and controlled by an ATF special agent while they provide information on criminal violations of the law and serve as an investigative tool in criminal investigations while their identity is protected.
Referral from an FFL	SA received information related to firearm trafficking directly from an <b>FFL</b> that warranted initiation of an investigation. Appears as “FFL reported suspicious activity” in survey.
Referral from Other Federal Law Enforcement	SA received a referral of information related to firearm trafficking from one of ATF’s Federal law enforcement partners that warranted initiation of an investigation. Appears as “Jointly developed with or referral from another federal agency” in survey.

Crime Gun Intelligence Analysis (CGIA)	SA reviewed various crime gun intelligence data and developed information related to firearm trafficking that warranted initiation of an investigation. Appears as “Information developed during a review of CGIA” in survey.
Referral from ATF International Affairs Division (IAD)	SA received a referral of intelligence analysis and information related to firearm trafficking from one of ATF’s <b>IAD</b> attaché offices that warranted initiation of an investigation.
Spin-off from Other Investigation	SA received information related to firearm trafficking from an existing ATF investigation that warranted initiation of a separate investigation. Appears as “Developed as a spin-off investigation” in survey.

See Table CI-01 in Appendix CI – Case Initiation for a complete list of definitions for all 22 case initiation methods.

The top ten most frequently used case initiation methods between 2017 and 2021 account for more than 89% (10,705 of 11,993) of all case initiation methods (Table CI-02a). In nearly 23% (2,210 of 9,684) of cases, a referral from an ATF CGIC was the most frequently used of known case initiation methods. CGICs are interagency collaboration groups designed to collect, analyze, produce, and distribute intelligence related to gun crime and firearm trafficking across multiple jurisdictions. Effective CGICs promote intelligence led enforcement and investigations resulting in operational efficiencies by focusing limited resources where they can achieve the largest impact. A referral from an ATF state or local partner, was the second most frequently used case initiation method at approximately 22% (2,157) of 9,684 investigations.

**Table CI-02a: Number and Percentage of Total Cases Initiated by Top Ten Case Initiation Methods, 2017 – 2021**

Initiation Method	Number of Cases	% Total Cases
Referral from CGIC	2,210	22.8%
Referral from State or Local Law Enforcement	2,157	22.3%
Review of eTrace/NTC Information	1,705	17.6%
FFL Theft	1,296	13.4%
Confidential Informant	1,012	10.5%
Referral from an FFL	609	6.3%
Referral from Other Federal Law Enforcement	594	6.1%
CGIA	431	4.5%
Referral from ATF IAD	354	3.7%
Spin-Off From Other Investigation	337	3.5%

*Note: Categories are not mutually exclusive.*

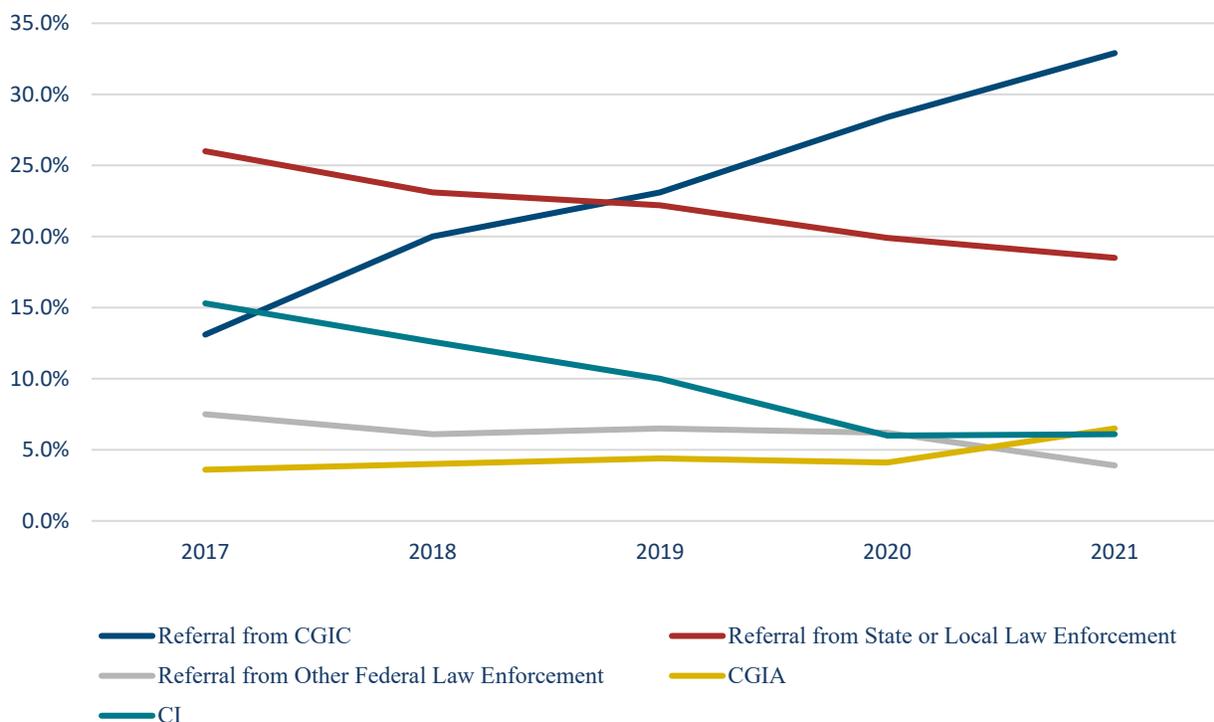
See Table CI-02 in Appendix CI – Case Initiation for all case initiation methods by number of cases and percentage of total cases.

## Changes Over Time by Case Initiation Methods

Figure CI-01 displays the top five largest year-over-year changes among the top ten case initiation methods in firearm trafficking investigations from 2017 to 2021. The largest change was an increase of nearly 20 percentage points in the use of CGIC referrals as a method of firearm trafficking investigation initiation between 2017 (13.1%) and 2021 (32.9%). This change represents a more than 151% increase in the share of firearm investigations initiated by CGIC referrals. The second largest change was an approximate nine percentage point decrease in the use of CIs as a method of case initiation between 2017

(15.3%) and 2021 (6.1%). This change represents a slightly more than 60% decrease in the share of firearm trafficking investigations initiated by CI information.

*Figure CI-01: Top Five Largest Year-Over-Year Changes Among Top Ten Case Initiation Methods*



See Table CI-03 in Appendix CI – Case Initiation for all case initiation methods and their frequency of use year-over-year from 2017 and 2021.

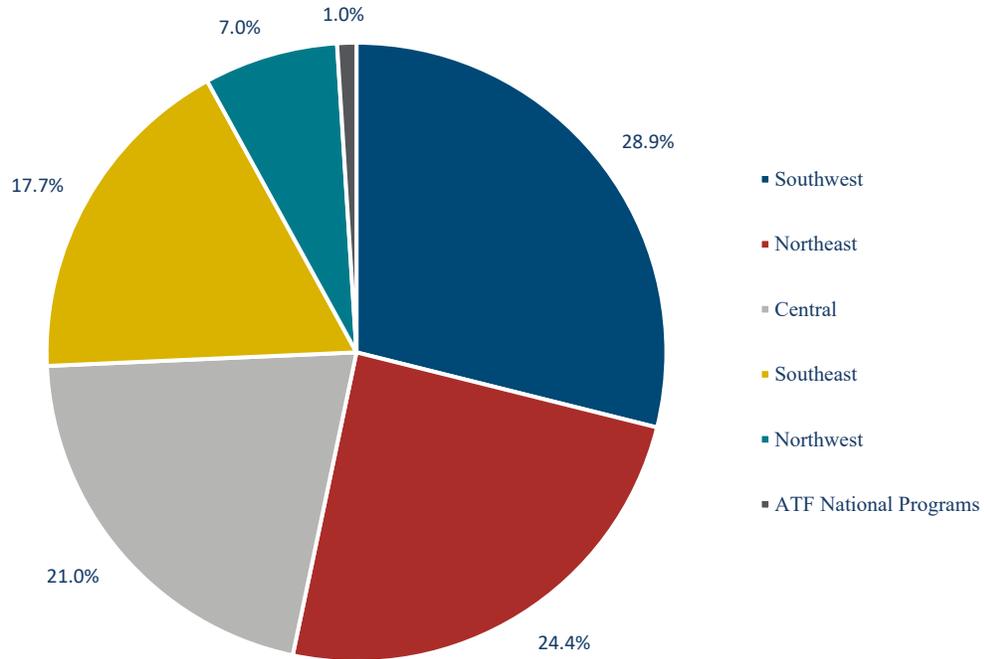
The increase in CGIC initiated cases indicates a shift to an emphasis on an intelligence-led, strategic approach to initiating investigations. ATF CGICs were first established in 2016, and by 2019 each field division had a fully staffed and operational CGIC. A similar, but less dramatic, trend is seen in cases initiated from state or local LE referrals which declined by nearly 8 percentage points from 2017 (26%) to 2021 (18.5%). The implementation of fully operational CGICs may have also influenced the share of cases initiated based on state or local LEA referrals. Information from state and local LEAs is now processed through the CGIC, where it is incorporated with other relevant crime gun intelligence (CGI) before being sent to a SA as a referral for investigation. These referrals are designated as a CGIC referral rather than a referral from state and local law enforcement.

## Geographic Patterns in Case Initiation

### *Case Initiation Patterns by Geographic Region*

Among the 9,708 trafficking cases initiated during the study period, the number of cases initiated within geographic regions varied. As shown in Figure CI-02, the largest percentage of all investigations initiated, at nearly 29%, was in the Southwest region. The Northwest region accounted for the fewest number of investigations initiated at 7% of all investigations.

**Figure CI-02: Firearm Trafficking Investigations Initiated by Region, 2017 – 2021**



Tables CI-04a through CI-04e identify the top five case initiation methods among each of the five geographic regions of the country. Within the Southwest region, referrals from the CGIC were the top initiation method, comprising nearly 38% (1,060 of 2,804) of all cases initiated. Referrals from state and local LEAs represented the most frequent initiation method in the Central region (27%, 551 of 2,029 cases), the Northeast region (29%, 677 of 2,359 cases), and the Northwest region (24%, 164 of 680 cases). Within the Southeast region, FFL thefts were the top initiation method, comprising slightly more than 25% (431 of 1,713) of all cases initiated. Notably, the Southwest region accounted for nearly 48% (1,060) of all cases (2,210) initiated from a CGIC referral and accounted for much of the increase in the use of CGIC referrals to initiate cases shown in Figure CI-01.

**Table CI-04a: Top Five Case Initiation Methods within the Southwest Region, 2017 – 2021 (N=2,804 cases)**

Case Initiation Method	Number of Cases	% of Cases by Method Within Region
Referral from CGIC	1,060	37.8%
Referral from State or Local LE	405	14.4%
Review of eTrace/NTC Information	375	13.4%
FFL Theft	288	10.3%
Referral from an FFL	245	8.7%

*Note: Categories are not mutually exclusive.*

**Table CI-04b: Top Five Case Initiation Methods within the Central Region, 2017 – 2021** (N=2,029 cases)

<b>Case Initiation Method</b>	<b>Number of Cases</b>	<b>% of Cases by Method Within Region*</b>
Referral from State or Local LE	551	27.2%
Review of eTrace/NTC Information	459	22.6%
FFL Theft	345	17.0%
Referral from CGIC	290	14.3%
Confidential Informant	166	8.2%

*Note: Categories are not mutually exclusive.*

**Table CI-04c: Top Five Case Initiation Methods within the Northeast Region, 2017 – 2021** (N=2,359 cases)

<b>Case Initiation Method</b>	<b>Number of Cases</b>	<b>% of Cases by Method Within Region*</b>
Referral from State or Local LE	677	28.7%
Referral from CGIC	629	26.7%
Review of eTrace/NTC Information	487	20.6%
Confidential Informant	367	15.6%
CGIA	126	5.3%

*Note: Categories are not mutually exclusive.*

**Table CI-04d: Top Five Case Initiation Methods within the Southeast Region, 2017 – 2021** (N=1,713 cases)

<b>Case Initiation Method</b>	<b>Number of Cases</b>	<b>% of Cases by Method Within Region*</b>
FFL Theft	431	25.2%
Referral from State or Local LE	359	21.0%
Review of eTrace/NTC Information	269	15.7%
Confidential Informant	186	10.9%
Referral from CGIC	176	10.3%

*Note: Categories are not mutually exclusive.*

**Table CI-04e: Top Five Case Initiation Methods within the Northwest Region, 2017 – 2021** (N=680 cases)

<b>Case Initiation Method</b>	<b>Number of Cases</b>	<b>% of Cases by Method Within Region*</b>
Referral from State or Local LE	164	24.1%
FFL Theft	129	19.0%
Confidential Informant	123	18.1%
Review of eTrace/NTC Information	80	11.8%
Referral from Other Federal LE	64	9.4%

*Note: Categories are not mutually exclusive.*

See Table CI-04 in Appendix CI – Case Initiation for the number of all case initiation methods by geographic region from 2017 through 2021.

### **Case Initiation Patterns by Field Division**

Tables CI-05a through CI-05e identify each of the top five case initiation methods, and the top five ATF field divisions most frequently using that method within the field division<sup>1</sup>. The CGIC referral initiation method was most frequently used by the Phoenix field division, accounting for slightly more than 63% (692 of 1,095) of cases initiated in that field division. The state or local law enforcement referral initiation method was used the most by the Boston field division, accounting for slightly more than 41% (197 of

477) of cases initiated in that field division. The eTrace/NTC referral initiation method was used the most by the Chicago field division, accounting for almost 37% (251 of 681) of cases initiated in that field division. The FFL theft initiation method was used the most by the New Orleans field division, accounting for slightly more than 46% (119 of 258) of cases initiated in that field division. The CI initiation method was used the most by the Newark field division, accounting for 25% (31 of 123) of cases initiated in that field division.

**Table CI-05a: Top Five ATF Field Divisions using CGIC Referrals as Case Initiation Method, 2017 – 2021**

<b>Field Division</b>	<b>Total CGIC Referral Cases</b>	<b>Total Cases Within Field Division</b>	<b>% Total Cases Within Field Division</b>
Phoenix	692	1,095	63.2%
New York	282	612	46.1%
Philadelphia	122	437	27.9%
Los Angeles	73	319	22.9%
Houston	185	827	22.4%

*Note: Categories are not mutually exclusive.*

**Table CI-05b: Top Five ATF Field Divisions using State or Local Law Enforcement Referrals as Case Initiation Method, 2017 – 2021**

<b>Field Division</b>	<b>Total State/Local Referral Cases</b>	<b>Total Cases Within Field Division</b>	<b>% Total Cases Within Field Division</b>
Boston	197	477	41.3%
Newark	48	123	39.0%
St. Paul	59	158	37.3%
Louisville	91	256	35.5%
Detroit	67	204	32.8%
Nashville	118	360	32.8%

*Note: Categories are not mutually exclusive.*

**Table CI-05c: Top Five ATF Field Divisions using eTrace/NTC Referrals as Case Initiation Method, 2017 – 2021**

<b>Field Division</b>	<b>Total eTrace/NTC Referral Cases</b>	<b>Total Cases Within Field Division</b>	<b>% Total Cases Within Field Division</b>
Chicago	251	681	36.9%
Washington	119	350	34.0%
Atlanta	68	261	26.1%
Columbus	89	353	25.2%
Boston	115	477	24.1%

*Note: Categories are not mutually exclusive.*

**Table CI-05d: Top Five ATF Field Divisions using FFL Thefts as Case Initiation Method, 2017 – 2021**

<b>Field Division</b>	<b>Total FFL Theft Cases</b>	<b>Total Cases Within Field Division</b>	<b>% Total Cases Within Field Division</b>
New Orleans	119	258	46.1%
Charlotte	83	211	39.3%
Seattle	52	157	33.1%
St. Paul	46	158	29.1%
Detroit	59	204	28.9%

*Note: Categories are not mutually exclusive.*

**Table CI-05e: Top Five ATF Field Divisions using CIs as Case Initiation Method, 2017 – 2021**

<b>Field Division</b>	<b>Total CI Cases</b>	<b>Total Cases Within Field Division</b>	<b>% Total Cases Within Field Division</b>
Newark	31	123	25.2%
San Francisco	80	348	23.0%
Boston	100	477	21.0%
New York	113	612	18.5%
Los Angeles	56	319	17.6%

*Note: Categories are not mutually exclusive.*

See Table CI-05 in Appendix CI – Case Initiation for all case initiation methods used by ATF field divisions from 2017 through 2021.

## **Cases Initiated Through Federal Law Enforcement Referrals or Joint Investigations**

ATF has primary responsibility for enforcement of federal firearm laws. Firearm trafficking investigations at times involve overlapping federal enforcement authorities, which may result in either a referral to ATF by another federal agency or conducting joint investigations. Of the 9,684 cases with a known case initiation method, approximately 6% (594) of cases were initiated from a referral from a federal agency or involved a joint federal investigation.

Table CI-06 displays the top five federal law enforcement agencies that ATF received a referral from, or worked jointly with, on an investigation. ATF most frequently worked with Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) accounting for nearly 34% (201 of 594) of the cases in this category.

**Table CI-06a: Top Five Federal Law Enforcement Agency Referrals or Joint Investigations, 2017 – 2021**

<b>Federal Agency</b>	<b>Number of Cases</b>	<b>% Total Cases</b>
Homeland Security Investigations (HSI)	201	33.8%
Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA)	141	23.7%
Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI)	106	17.8%
US Customs and Border Patrol (USCBP)	55	9.3%
US Postal Inspection Service (USPIS)	33	5.6%

*Note: Categories are not mutually exclusive.*

See Table CI-06 in Appendix CI – Case Initiation for all Federal agencies and the number of referrals or joint federal investigations from 2017 and 2021.

Table CI-07 displays the number and percentage of referrals from, or worked jointly with, other federal law enforcement agencies by geographic region. The Southwest region accounts for more than 39% (233) of all cases referred from, or worked jointly with, another federal law enforcement agency.

*Table CI-07: Federal Law Enforcement Agency Referrals or Joint Investigations by Region, 2017 – 2021*

Region	Number of Cases	% Total Cases
Southwest	233	39.2%
Southeast	120	20.2%
Northeast	110	18.5%
Central	64	10.8%
Northwest	64	10.8%
ATF National Programs	3	0.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>594</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

## Summary

ATF firearm trafficking investigations are initiated in a variety of ways that have become increasingly intelligence driven. Cases initiated as a result of a CGIC referral has increased nearly 20 percentage points from 2017 (13.1%) to 2021 (32.9%). This increase represents a 151% increase in the share of cases initiated from CGIC referrals. The Southwest region accounted for nearly 48% of all cases initiated in this manner. While comparisons with the 2000 *Following the Gun* report need to be made with caution, just over 19%<sup>2</sup> of firearm trafficking investigations in that report were initiated following analysis of crime gun trace data. In contrast, this report found that almost 33% of cases were initiated based on CGIC referrals in 2021, and almost 18% were initiated based on review of eTrace/NTC information.

# APPENDIX CI – CASE INITIATION

*Table CI-01: Definitions of Case Initiation Methods*

Case Initiation Method	Description
Referral from Crime Gun Intelligence Center (CGIC)	SA received a referral of intelligence analysis and information related to firearm trafficking from one of ATF’s <u>CGICs</u> that warranted initiation of an investigation. Appears as “Field division CGIC referral (General Investigation)” in survey.
Referral from State or Local Law Enforcement	SA received a referral of information related to firearm trafficking from one of ATF’s state or local law enforcement partners that warranted initiation of an investigation. Appears as “Jointly developed with or referral from a state or local agency” in survey.
Review of eTrace/National Tracing Center (NTC) Information	SA reviewed <u>NTC</u> information through <u>eTrace</u> and developed information related to firearm trafficking that warranted initiation of an investigation. Appears as “Information developed during review of eTrace/NTC information” in survey.
Federal Firearms Licensee (FFL) Theft	SA received a report of information regarding a theft of firearms from a <u>Federal firearms licensee</u> (FFL) and/or state or local LEA that warranted initiation of an investigation.
Confidential Informant (CI)	SA received information related to firearm trafficking from a <u>CI</u> that warranted initiation of an investigation. A confidential informant is someone who is examined, registered, and controlled by an ATF special agent

	while they provide information on criminal violations of the law and serve as an investigative tool in criminal investigations while their identity is protected.
Referral from an FFL	SA received information related to firearm trafficking directly from an <b>FFL</b> that warranted initiation of an investigation. Appears as “FFL reported suspicious activity” in survey.
Referral from Other Federal Law Enforcement	SA received a referral of information related to firearm trafficking from one of ATF’s Federal law enforcement partners that warranted initiation of an investigation. Appears as “Jointly developed with or referral from another federal agency” in survey.
Crime Gun Intelligence Analysis (CGIA)	SA reviewed various crime gun intelligence data and developed information related to firearm trafficking that warranted initiation of an investigation. Appears as “Information developed during a review of CGIA” in survey.
Referral from ATF International Affairs Division (IAD)	SA received a referral of intelligence analysis and information related to firearm trafficking from one of ATF’s <b>IAD</b> attaché offices that warranted initiation of an investigation.
Spin-off from Other Investigation	SA received information related to firearm trafficking from an existing ATF investigation that warranted initiation of a separate investigation. Appears as “Developed as a spin-off investigation” in survey.
Referral from ATF Industry Operations	SA received a referral of information related to firearm trafficking from an ATF <b>Industry Operations Investigator</b> that warranted initiation of an investigation.
Tip from Concerned Citizen/Business	SA received a referral of information related to firearm trafficking directly from a concerned citizen or business that warranted initiation of an investigation.
National Integrated Ballistics Information Network (NIBIN) or NIBIN Enforcement Support System (NESS) Lead/Hit	SA received a referral of intelligence analysis and information via a <b>NIBIN/NESS</b> lead/hit related to firearm trafficking that warranted initiation of an investigation.
Referral from Other ATF Office	SA received information related to firearm trafficking from another ATF office that warranted initiation of a separate investigation. Appears as “Referral from another ATF Field Division or HQ Directorate/Division” in survey.
Cooperating Defendant	SA received a referral of information related to firearm trafficking directly from a cooperating defendant that warranted initiation of an investigation. A cooperating defendant is someone facing criminal charges who agrees to cooperate with the government and divulge all they know about criminal violations by others in exchange for a plea agreement and consideration at time of sentencing.
ATF Enforcement Operation	SA received information related to firearm trafficking during a special ATF enforcement operation designed to impact a certain geographic high crime area or type of crime that warranted initiation of a separate investigation.
Referral from US Attorney’s Office (USAO)	SA received a referral of information related to firearm trafficking directly from a <b>USAO</b> that warranted initiation of an investigation.
Referral from National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NICS)/State Point of Contact	SA received a referral of information related to firearm trafficking directly from a <b>NICS/State Point of Contact</b> that warranted initiation of an investigation. Appears as “NICS/state POC denial referral” in survey.
Open-Source Internet Review	SA reviewed open-source internet sites and generated information related to firearm trafficking that warranted initiation of an investigation. This category was derived from SA responses in the “other” category.
Observation by Special Agent	SA made observations while on surveillance that generated information related to firearm trafficking that warranted initiation of an investigation. This category was derived from SA responses in the “other” category.
Referral – Suspicious Activity Report (SAR)	SA receives a Bank Secrecy Act <b>SAR</b> referral of information related to firearm trafficking that warranted initiation of an investigation. Appears as “SAR (Suspicious Activity Report) referral or tip from other financial entity” in survey.
Other Type of Theft	SA received a report of information regarding a theft of firearms that warranted initiation of an investigation. This category was derived from SA responses in the “other” category.

**Table CI-02: Total Number and Percentage of Cases by Case Initiation Method, 2017 – 2021**

<b>Initiation Method</b>	<b>Number of Cases</b>	<b>% Total Cases</b>
Referral from Crime Gun Intelligence Center (CGIC)	2,210	22.8%
Referral from State or Local Law Enforcement	2,157	22.3%
Review of eTrace/National Tracing Center (NTC) Information	1,705	17.6%
Federal firearms licensee (FFL) Theft	1,296	13.4%
Confidential Informant (CI)	1,012	10.5%
Referral from an FFL	609	6.3%
Referral from Other Federal Law Enforcement Agency	594	6.1%
Crime Gun Intelligence Analysis (CGIA)	431	4.5%
Referral from ATF International Affairs Division	354	3.7%
Spin-Off From Other Investigation	337	3.5%
Referral from ATF Industry Operations	327	3.4%
Tip from Concerned Citizen/Business	220	2.3%
NIBIN/NESS Lead/Hit	212	2.2%
Referral from Other ATF Office	181	1.9%
Cooperating Defendant	134	1.4%
ATF Enforcement Operation	107	1.1%
Referral from US Attorney's Office (USAO)	42	0.4%
Referral from NICS/State Point of Contact	22	0.2%
Open-Source Internet Review	20	0.2%
Observation by Special Agent	11	0.1%
Referral – Suspicious Activity Report (SAR)	8	0.1%
Other Type of Theft	4	0.0%

*Note: Categories are not mutually exclusive.*

**Table CI-03: Total Number of Cases by Case Initiation Method and Frequency of Use Year-Over-Year, 2017 – 2021**

Initiation Method	2017		2018		2019		2020		2021		Total	
	Number of Cases	% Total Cases	Total Cases	% Change								
Referral from CGIC	291	13.1%	443	20.1%	424	23.1%	488	28.5%	564	32.9%	2,210	93.8%
Referral from State or Local LE	580	26.2%	510	23.1%	408	22.3%	342	19.9%	317	18.5%	2,157	-45.3%
Review of eTrace/NTC	370	16.7%	405	18.4%	325	17.7%	261	15.2%	344	20.1%	1,705	-7.0%
FFL Theft	238	10.7%	303	13.7%	268	14.6%	321	18.7%	166	9.7%	1,296	-30.3%
Confidential Informant	341	15.4%	279	12.6%	184	10.0%	103	6.0%	105	6.1%	1,012	-69.2%
Referral from an FFL	145	6.5%	138	6.3%	107	5.8%	113	6.6%	106	6.2%	609	-26.9%
Referral from Other Federal LE	166	7.5%	136	6.2%	119	6.5%	107	6.2%	66	3.9%	594	-60.2%
CGIA	80	3.6%	89	4.0%	81	4.4%	70	4.1%	111	6.5%	431	38.8%
Referral from ATF IAD	87	3.9%	66	3.0%	58	3.2%	62	3.6%	81	4.7%	354	-6.9%
Spin-Off From Other Investigation	75	3.4%	83	3.8%	66	3.6%	47	2.7%	66	3.9%	337	-12.0%
Referral from ATF IO	69	3.1%	76	3.4%	71	3.9%	57	3.3%	54	3.2%	327	-21.7%
Tip from Concerned Citizen	42	1.9%	59	2.7%	44	2.4%	43	2.5%	32	1.9%	220	-23.8%
NIBIN/NESS Lead/Hit	37	1.7%	44	2.0%	42	2.3%	35	2.0%	54	3.2%	212	45.9%
Referral from Other ATF Office	45	2.0%	51	2.3%	30	1.6%	26	1.5%	29	1.7%	181	-35.6%
Cooperating Defendant	47	2.1%	33	1.5%	23	1.3%	21	1.2%	10	0.6%	134	-78.7%
ATF Enforcement Operation	19	0.9%	16	0.7%	14	0.8%	28	1.6%	30	1.8%	107	57.9%
Referral from USAO	16	0.7%	8	0.4%	9	0.5%	1	0.1%	8	0.5%	42	-50.0%
Referral from NICS/State POC	1	0.0%	7	0.3%	5	0.3%	6	0.3%	3	0.2%	22	200.0%
Open-Source Internet Review	7	0.3%	2	0.1%	5	0.3%	1	0.1%	5	0.3%	20	-28.6%
Observation by Special Agent	3	0.1%	0	0.0%	1	0.1%	0	0.0%	7	0.4%	11	133.3%
Referral – SAR	1	0.0%	1	0.0%	2	0.1%	0	0.0%	4	0.2%	8	300.0%
Other Type of Theft	2	0.1%	0	0.0%	424	23.1%	2	0.1%	0	0.0%	4	-100.0%

*Note: Categories are not mutually exclusive.*

*Table CI-04: Total Number of Cases by Case Initiation Methods and Geographic Region, 2017 – 2021*

Case Initiation Method	ATF						Total Cases
	National Programs	Central	Northeast	Northwest	Southeast	Southwest	
ATF Enforcement Operation	1	15	29	1	11	50	107
ATF Industry Operations	0	83	44	34	66	100	327
CGIA	0	134	126	45	52	74	431
Confidential Informant	2	166	367	123	186	168	1,012
Cooperating Defendant	0	29	35	7	19	44	134
eTrace/NTC	35	459	487	80	269	375	1,705
FFL Reported	0	87	104	43	130	245	609
FFL Theft	0	345	103	129	431	288	1,296
Joint/Referral - Federal	3	64	110	64	120	233	594
Joint/Referral - State/Local	1	551	677	164	359	405	2,157
NIBIN/NESS Lead/Hit	0	110	68	5	14	15	212
Observation by SA	0	6	1	0	1	3	11
Open-Source Internet Review	1	6	5	3	1	4	20
Other Theft	0	2	2	0	0	0	4
Referral - ATF FD/HQ	5	41	28	25	54	28	181
Referral - CGIC	4	290	629	51	176	1,060	2,210
Referral - IAD	51	18	11	8	97	169	354
Referral - NICS/State POC	0	2	8	2	6	4	22
Referral - SAR	0	3	1	1	1	2	8
Referral - USAO	0	7	12	9	7	7	42
Spin-off Investigation	1	63	100	26	55	92	337
Tip from a Concerned Citizen/Business	4	48	39	28	48	53	220

*Note: Categories are not mutually exclusive.*

**Table CI-05: Total Number of Cases by Case Initiation Method and ATF Field Division, 2017 – 2021**

	ATF Enforcement Operation	ATF Industry Operations	CGIA	Confidential Informant	Cooperating Defendant	eTrace/NTC	FFL Reported	FFL Theft	Joint/Referral Federal	Joint/Referral State/Local	NIBIN/NESS Lead/Hit	Observation by SA	Open-Source Internet Review	Other Theft	Referral ATF FD/HQ	Referral CGIC	Referral IAD	Referral-NICS/State POC	Referral SAR	Referral USAO	Spin-off Investigation	Tip from a Concerned Citizen/Business	Total Cases
Atlanta	1	15	4	10	5	68	43	69	14	44	1	1	0	0	12	19	11	1	0	3	8	2	261
Baltimore	18	12	17	48	2	71	23	24	7	99	4	0	0	6	70	2	0	1	0	15	8	8	360
Boston	2	5	19	100	8	115	28	8	41	197	16	1	3	0	5	58	3	3	0	2	23	11	477
Charlotte	3	4	4	27	2	27	10	83	5	49	0	0	0	0	10	14	3	1	0	2	9	3	211
Chicago	7	13	56	86	13	251	22	40	13	156	77	1	1	0	6	106	3	0	2	2	15	6	681
Columbus	5	25	43	18	4	89	9	55	15	63	8	5	1	0	16	68	8	1	0	0	15	7	353
Dallas	14	23	19	23	11	68	51	92	54	162	2	1	1	0	5	110	19	2	0	1	17	13	563
Denver	0	6	3	19	2	9	9	48	17	54	1	0	2	0	6	7	4	0	0	0	7	8	175
Detroit	1	6	1	13	2	19	9	59	8	67	0	0	1	0	4	22	2	0	1	0	7	4	204
Houston	33	48	23	52	23	117	68	127	89	101	6	1	0	0	12	185	105	1	0	3	42	13	827
ATF-IAD	1	0	0	2	0	35	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	2	3	51	0	0	0	1	2	90
Kansas City	2	13	16	23	5	52	21	108	12	115	14	0	3	2	9	36	3	1	0	3	15	12	377
Los Angeles	1	5	6	56	8	69	20	14	39	82	4	1	1	0	7	73	15	1	1	1	13	9	319
Louisville	0	19	12	14	3	26	12	37	8	91	7	0	0	0	4	36	2	0	0	2	8	16	256
Miami	3	14	11	21	0	65	29	7	45	50	2	0	0	0	5	37	52	2	1	0	6	10	304
Nashville	0	9	13	60	3	44	18	97	25	118	3	0	0	0	8	23	4	1	0	1	12	11	360
ATF-NID	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
New Orleans	0	10	2	13	1	24	13	119	8	31	1	0	0	0	6	45	5	1	0	1	6	10	258
New York	2	4	41	113	18	67	5	10	31	157	26	0	0	0	1	282	1	2	0	3	19	5	612
Newark	2	2	19	31	0	24	1	1	7	48	8	0	0	0	2	27	1	0	0	1	5	5	123
ATF-OID	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	3	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	7
Philadelphia	0	12	19	44	1	91	29	26	14	104	7	0	0	0	3	122	2	2	0	3	18	8	437
Phoenix	2	24	26	37	2	121	106	55	51	60	3	0	2	0	4	692	30	0	1	2	20	18	1,095
San Francisco	1	11	40	80	5	62	29	29	29	81	2	0	1	0	12	37	3	2	0	4	14	11	348
Seattle	0	17	2	24	0	9	5	52	18	29	2	0	0	0	7	7	1	0	1	5	5	9	157
St. Paul	0	7	6	12	2	22	14	46	8	59	4	0	0	0	2	22	0	0	0	0	3	3	158
Tampa	4	14	18	55	8	41	17	56	23	67	7	0	1	0	13	38	22	0	0	0	14	12	319
Washington	5	9	11	31	6	119	18	34	10	72	7	0	2	2	11	70	2	1	0	3	20	2	350
<b>Total</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>327</b>	<b>431</b>	<b>1,012</b>	<b>134</b>	<b>1,705</b>	<b>609</b>	<b>1,296</b>	<b>594</b>	<b>2,157</b>	<b>212</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>181</b>	<b>2,210</b>	<b>354</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>337</b>	<b>220</b>	<b>9,684</b>

Note: Categories are not mutually exclusive.

**Table CI-06: Total Number and Percentage of Cases Involving Referrals or Joint Federal Investigations by Federal Agency, 2017 – 2021**

<b>Federal Agency</b>	<b>Number of Cases</b>	<b>% Total Cases</b>
Homeland Security Investigations (HSI)	201	33.8%
Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA)	141	23.7%
Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI)	106	17.8%
US Customs and Border Patrol (USCBP)	55	9.3%
US Postal Inspection Service (USPIS)	33	5.6%
Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE)	29	4.9%
United States Marshalls Service (USMS)	19	3.2%
Department of Homeland Security, Office of Inspector General (DHS OIG)	11	1.9%
United States Postal Service, Office of Inspector General (USPS OIG)	9	1.5%
United States Courts, Probation and Pretrial Services (USC PPS)	8	1.3%
United States Secret Service (USSS)	8	1.3%
United States Park Police (USPP)	4	0.7%
Department of Corrections, Office of Inspector General (DOC OIG)	3	0.5%
Transportation Security Administration (TSA)	3	0.5%
US Army, Criminal Investigation Division (USA-CID)	2	0.3%
Defense Criminal Investigation Service, Office of Inspector General (DCIS-OIG)	2	0.3%
Diplomatic Security Service (DSS)	2	0.3%
Naval Criminal Investigation Service (NCIS)	2	0.3%
Air Force, Office of Special Investigations (OSI)	2	0.3%
Veteran Affairs, Office of Inspector General (VA OIG)	2	0.3%
Bureau of Prisons (BOP)	1	0.2%
Central Intelligence Agency (CIA)	1	0.2%
Department of Interior, Office of Inspector General (DOI OIG)	1	0.2%
Federal Protective Service (FPS)	1	0.2%
Internal Revenue Service, Criminal Investigation Division (IRS CID)	1	0.2%
National Guard (NG)	1	0.2%
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA)	1	0.2%
US Air Force Special Investigations (USAFSI)	1	0.2%
US Department of Agriculture, Office of Inspector General (USDA OIG)	1	0.2%

*Note: Categories are not mutually exclusive.*

# ENDNOTES

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<sup>1</sup> This analysis excluded the Divisions comprising the Headquarters region.

<sup>2</sup> Table 1 – Initiation of ATF Firearms Trafficking Investigations (page 9), Department of the U.S. Treasury, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, & Firearms, Following the Gun: Enforcing Federal Laws Against Firearms Traffickers, June 2000.