



ATF NIBIN Program Hits of the Week

February 25 to March 18, 2003



NIBIN Branch, Firearms Programs Division, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives

Week of 3/18: Through a cooperative agreement among New Jersey law enforcement, Union County Police Department officers enter ballistic evidence into the NIBIN system located in Essex County. This arrangement has recently resulted in the discovery of a link from a seized firearm to a shooting occurring a month earlier in a different jurisdiction. In the first incident, Linden Police Department officers responded to the scene of a drive-by shooting in which one person was injured. Cartridge casings were recovered at the scene and submitted for IBIS entry at the Essex County Sheriff's Office. During a vehicle stop by the Kenilworth Police Department a month later, a subject was found to possess a .380 automatic pistol. The weapon was seized by police and submitted for testfiring and IBIS entry. Union County Police Department officers entered the evidence from each incident into NIBIN; later, an Essex County firearms examiner confirmed that the seized weapon had been used in the shooting a month earlier.

Week of 3/11: Use of NIBIN by the Illinois State Police has yielded a valuable lead in a case with little other information available. In a shooting incident in Chicago, one victim was wounded, and was taken to the hospital in stable condition. No suspects were identified, but cartridge casings and bullet fragments were recovered at the scene. Five months later, Chicago Police Department officers observed someone selling drugs in front of a house. The suspect ran into the house and was pursued by officers. When the house's resident consented to a search, narcotics and several firearms were seized, and both suspects were arrested. The seized firearms were testfired and the evidence entered into NIBIN; firearms examiners later confirmed the link between the shooting and one of the firearms recovered in the second incident. This information has given police potential suspects in the shooting.

Week of 3/4: An additional hit has resulted to assist Massachusetts law enforcement against violent crime, this one across jurisdictional lines. In last week's Hit of the Week, Boston police linked a fatal shooting at a movie theater to a suspect arrested with a firearm and drugs. IBIS correlation has now also helped examiners link the seized weapon to a third incident, a shooting at a subway station in Natick. Massachusetts State Police can now work with Boston Police Department officers in their investigations.

Week of 2/25: By assisting Boston Police Department officers to link a series of shootings not otherwise known to be related, NIBIN offers new leads to assist in clearing cases in which no additional information is available. In a narcotics enforcement action, officers seized a .40 caliber pistol and a quantity of marijuana, and arrested three suspects on State firearm and drug charges. When the seized weapon was testfired and entered into NIBIN, the system revealed potential linkages to three earlier shootings over the course of the previous eighteen months, links that then were confirmed by firearms examiners. Two victims had been killed and three more injured in the linked shootings. Because no suspects had been identified in two of the three linked shootings, this connection between the incidents provides valuable intelligence information, and investigations are continuing in the cases.