



Deployment— Step By Step

When ATF receives a request to participate in the NIBIN Program, the request is evaluated to ensure that it meets the necessary requirements. Once an agency has met the established criteria, ATF personnel conduct a site visit and meet with upper management from the agency. During this meeting, the responsibilities of each agency are discussed and a copy of the MOU to be executed is provided for their review and action. This MOU must be executed before ATF can deploy any IBIS equipment in a State or local laboratory.

The MOU is necessary to ensure that ATF complies with its current appropriations restrictions. Since 1979, ATF's annual appropriations have prohibited the expenditure of funds for consolidating or centralizing the acquisition and disposition of the records that FFLs are required to keep, unless the acquisition is "incident to carrying out a specific ATF responsibility and does not entail the aggregation of data on firearms transactions in a manner that would go beyond the purposes" of the Gun Control Act. Accordingly, the NIBIN Program is expressly restricted to the ballistic imaging of data associated with crime guns. Thus, ballistic systems deployed by ATF to Federal, State or local authorities cannot be used to capture or store ballistic images acquired at the point of manufacture, importation or sale, or any other data associated with such images, including information about the purchaser; the firearm type, model, caliber or gauge; the serial number; or the date of manufacture.

Recently, several states have enacted or proposed legislation that would require non-crime gun data to be entered into separately purchased IBIS units. ATF is willing to work with its NIBIN partners to discuss any issues associated with meeting the requirements of state law and ATF's restrictions set forth in the MOU. Individual partners are asked to contact the NIBIN Program office for additional information.

At the initial site survey, a "footprint" describing the technical requirements of the equipment will be provided to the agency receiving equipment. ATF's contractor will coordinate with local ATF personnel and affected agency staff the logistics for deploying the equipment and coordinate training dates. ATF's contract with FTI provides for training for users from each NIBIN partner site. Initial training sessions are conducted by FTI personnel at FTI's training center in Largo, Florida; a followup site visit from FTI trainers, to check for proper operation of the equipment, takes place after its installation. In case of eventual staff turnover at State and local agencies, training for new staff after the initial installation training will also be available.

Six months after deployment and training have been completed, the ATF NIBIN team will meet with representatives of the field division and partner agencies. This meeting will ensure that all systems are completely operational, personnel have received adequate training, systems are being used efficiently, goods and services contracted for were received, and any outstanding issues are addressed. ATF will monitor use statistics to ensure that the equipment is being used to its maximal effectiveness. If it is not, ATF reserves the right to remove equipment and redeploy it to a different agency.



Students receive hands-on training in proper operation of the NIBIN system.