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Brady NICS (National Instant Criminal Background Check System)

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More than one million persons attempted to obtain firearms during the first 41 days of the new National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NICS), the Federal Bureau of Investigation said today.

NICS was created by Congress in the Brady Act to prevent handguns, rifles, and shotguns from being purchased by convicted felons, wanted persons, illegal aliens, and the mentally ill.

Of the checks conducted by the FBI, 11,584 transfers of firearms were denied by the Bureau because of disqualifying provisions of the Act. Most of the denials were to convicted felons.

A total of 1,030,606 background checks nation-wide were processed from November 30 to January 10 (a period that excludes Christmas Day).

There are 27 so-called "Point of Contact" states where federally-licensed firearms dealers contact state agencies that make background checks under a Brady Act option: 16 states conduct all of their own background checks; and 11 others check for handguns only, with the FBI making their long-gun checks. The FBI conducts all background checks on prospective gun purchasers for the remaining 26 states/territories.

The 16 "Point of Contact" states making all their own checks and the 11 states making only handgun checks processed 462,298 firearms applications during the first 41 days of the NICS program. Under the Brady Act, statistics on the total number of checks in those states are available to the FBI but not the number of applications approved or denied.

Of the FBI checks in the 26 states/territories, and the long-gun checks in 11 other states, about 75 percent resulted in immediate clearance to transfer a weapon. The remaining 25 percent required further analysis by the FBI, with 11,584 transfers denied under Brady Act provisions.

Since the NICS program began, the FBI has determined that

1,541 of the 11,584 applicants denied firearms were the subjects of outstanding arrest warrants in the 37 states/territories where the Bureau conducts all or some of the checks.

When a "hit" occurs in checking an applicant through the National Crime Information Center's computerized files of wanted persons, the FBI first verifies that the warrant is still in effect. If so, the FBI then notifies the state so the relevant law enforcement entity--for example, the state police or state fugitive task force--can then seek to apprehend the wanted person. If the check determines there is a valid federal warrant, the FBI then notifies either the relevant federal agency or one of its own field offices if it is a Bureau case.

There are no statistics yet available on the total number of wanted persons arrested as a result of seeking to purchase firearms. However, arrests on outstanding warrants of firearms applicants include these wanted persons: a man in Oklahoma for embezzlement, a woman in Texas for tampering with government records, a man in Indiana for child neglect, a man in Texas for criminal non-support, a man in Missouri for fraud, a woman in Nebraska for fraud, a man in Indiana for larceny, and a man in Mississippi for fraud.

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Office of Justice Programs

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Bureau of Justice Statistics
Bulletin

A National Estimate

June 1998, NCJ 171130

Presale Handgun Checks, 1997

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During 1997 about 2,574,000 background checks of potential handgun buyers prevented an estimated 69,000 purchases. The inquiries revealed purchasers' ineligibility to buy a handgun under State or Federal laws, particularly the Brady Handgun Violence Prevention Act (Pub. L. No. 103-159, 107 Stat. 1536 (1993)), which became effective on February 28, 1994. Sixty-two percent of those rejected had been convicted of a felony or were under felony indictment.

From March 1, 1994, through the end of 1997, handgun sellers submitted an estimated 10.4 million inquiries about potential handgun buyers of whom about 242,000 were rejected. These estimates include about 62,000 rejections of handgun purchase applications in the last 10 months of 1994, 41,000 for all of 1995, and 70,000 for all of 1996.

The Firearm Inquiry Statistics (FIST) program administered by the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) collected the data. FIST was initiated in 1994 to describe presale background checks of applicants to buy a handgun from a Federal firearm licensee. Chief law enforcement officers made the checks in accordance with the Brady Act or comparable State legislation.

Highlights

Presale handgun checks: Estimates of inquiries and rejections, 1997

	Presale checks for handguns, 1/1/97-12/31/97		
	All States	Original Brady States*	Brady States during 1997
Inquiries and rejections			
Inquiries/applications	2,574,000	1,197,000	803,000
Rejected	69,000	42,000	24,000
Rejection rate	2.7%	3.5%	3.0%
Reasons for rejection			
Felony indictment/conviction	43,000	30,000	12,000
Other	26,000	12,000	12,000

Note: All estimated counts are rounded. Percentages were calculated from unrounded data. Detail may not add to total because of rounding.

*Original Brady States are the 32 States required to follow presale review procedures set out in the Brady Act when it became effective on February 28, 1994. At the end of 1997, 23 of the 32 were still Brady States. (See table 2.)

- During 1997 about 69,000 out of an estimated 2,574,000 applications for the purchase of a handgun were rejected due to presale background checks of the potential purchasers.

- About 62% of the rejections were for a prior felony conviction or a current felony indictment. Domestic violence misdemeanor convictions accounted for over 9% of rejections; domestic violence restraining orders, 2%.

- In the 46 months from the inception of the Brady Handgun Violence Prevention Act to yearend 1997, an estimated 10,356,000 applications for handgun purchases resulted in 242,000 rejections through background checks.

- At the beginning of the Brady Act, March 1, 1994, 32 States and Puerto Rico were required to follow the procedures set forth in the act (Brady States). Currently there are 23 Brady States.

- After November 1998 —
  — presale background checks will be required for sales of all firearms, not just handguns

  — background checks will be made to the FBI's National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NICS), either directly or through the State Point of Contact (POC), unless the State operates under an approved firearm permit system.

- During 1997 the FBI received 3,930,000 inquiries to its National Crime Information Center about persons applying to carry or purchase a firearm.

Table 1. Reasons for rejection of handgun purchase applications, national estimates, 1997

Reason for rejection	All States	Original Brady States	Brady States during 1997
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Felony (indictment/ conviction/no disposition)	61.7	69.9	50.3
Fugitive	5.9	7.5	12.8
Domestic violence			
Misdemeanor convictions	9.1	9.6	14.6
Restraining order	2.1	2.2	0.4
State law prohibition	6.1	3.0	5.7
Mental illness or disability	0.9	0.1	0.2
Drug addiction	1.6	2.2	5.2
Local law prohibition	0.9	0.1	0.1
Other*	11.7	5.4	10.7

*Includes illegal aliens, juveniles, persons discharged from the armed services dishonorably, persons who have renounced their U.S. citizenship, and other unspecified persons. At the end of 1997, 23 of the 32 original Brady States were still under the Brady Act.

The estimates of applications and rejections for handgun purchases include States operating under the Brady Act (Brady States) and States with comparable statutes preventing handgun sales to prohibited persons (Brady-alternative States). The original 32 Brady States started following the Brady Act review procedures on February 28, 1994. There were 18 original Brady-alternative States. At the end of 1996, because of changed statutes, there were fewer Brady States (23) and more Brady-alternative States (27) than originally; there was no change to this status in 1997.

Rates of rejection of potential handgun purchases in 1997 can be compared for these sets of States — the original or current grouping of Brady and Brady-alternative States.

In 1997 the original Brady States processed 1,197,000 applications and rejected about 42,000, a rejection rate of 3.5%. The original Brady-alternative States processed 1,378,000 applications and rejected 27,000 — 1.9%, which differed significantly from the rate for the original Brady States. In 1996 the original Brady States processed an estimated 1,213,000 applications and rejected about 44,000, a 3.6% rejection rate (*Presale Handgun Checks, 1996*, BJS Bulletin, NCJ 165704, September 1997).

The original Brady-alternative States processed 1,380,000 applications and rejected 26,000 — 1.9%.

The current Brady States in 1997 processed 803,000 applications, of which they rejected 24,000, a rejection rate of 3.0%. The current Brady-alternative States processed 1,771,000 and rejected 45,000 — 2.5%, a rate lower than the rejection rate of current Brady States. For 1996, the current Brady States processed 816,000 applications and rejected 25,000, a 3.1% rate, and the current Brady-alternative States processed 1,778,000 applications and rejected 45,000 — 2.5%.

For all States in both 1996 and 1997, the most prevalent reason for rejection was that the applicant either was under felony indictment or had a felony conviction (67.8% in 1996 and 61.7% in 1997).

In 1997 a misdemeanor conviction for domestic violence (9.1%) or being a violator of a State law prohibition (6.1%) were the next most prevalent reasons for rejection of a handgun purchase, followed by being a fugitive from justice (5.9%). In 1996 rejection for being a fugitive was 6%, and State law prohibition was 5.5%. Misdemeanor conviction for domestic violence was not added as a prohibited category until October 1996.

Almost all States are able to check computer databases to determine past criminal convictions (table 2). Some States are able to refer to other databases to check additional characteristics that may make a person ineligible to purchase a handgun — fugitive status, court restraining orders, and mental illness.

In the 44 States that reported rejections for fugitive status, 6.7% of handgun application rejections were for such a status. In the 36 States checking for a disqualifying domestic-violence related restraining order, potential purchasers accounted for 5.5% of application rejections. Fifteen States reported rejections for applicants with mental illness; in these States mental illness accounted for 1.9% of the handgun application rejections. In States that reported rejections based on misdemeanor convictions for domestic violence, 10.9% of handgun application rejections were due to a prior misdemeanor conviction.

Nonfelony reasons	Percent of rejections in States that search records for specific nonfelony reasons
Fugitive	7%
Mental illness	2
Domestic violence	
Misdemeanor convictions	11
Restraining orders	6

Note: Percentages cannot be added because a different set of States is included in each category of reasons.

Statewide reporting of handgun applications and rejections

State governments, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (BATF) have cooperated to identify about 5,400 law enforcement agencies and their heads as chief law enforcement officers (CLEOs) nationwide. Data for 1997 were collected from 268 CLEOs out of a sample of 600. 311 CLEOs provided data in 1996. The decline is due in part to the U.S. Supreme Court decision in June 1996 that CLEOs were no longer required to make a mandatory background check (see *Background* for further details).

Among the responding CLEOs, 21 served as the only CLEO for the State and provided statewide totals (table 3). These States, which represented 50% of U.S. resident population and over half of the total applications for handgun purchases during 1997, processed 1,440,963 applications and rejected 35,382 — a rejection rate of 2.5%. Sixty percent of rejections were for a past felony conviction or felony indictment.

Reason for rejection by 21 statewide CLEOs	
Felony (indictment/ conviction/no disposition)	64%
Domestic violence	
Misdemeanor conviction	10
Restraining order	2
Fugitive	6
State law prohibition	5
Mental illness or disability	1
Drug addiction	1
Other*	11

*Includes illegal aliens, juveniles, persons discharged from the armed services dishonorably, persons who have renounced their U.S. citizenship, and other unspecified reasons.

Table 2. Background checks for handgun purchases, by State, 1997

State[a]	Brady status: Original 3/1/94	Brady status: Current 12/31/97	Number of law enforcement agencies responsible for record checks	State databases being accessed: Criminal histories	Wanted fugitives	Re-straining orders	Mental health	Domestic violence misdemeanor
Alabama	■	■	67	■	■	■		
Alaska	■	■	35	■	■	■		■
Arizona	■	■	1	■	■			
Arkansas	■	■	1	■	■	■		■
California[b]			1	■	■	■	■	■
Colorado	■		1	■	■	■		■
Connecticut[b]			1	■	■	■		■
Delaware[b]			1	■	■	■	■	■
Florida[b]			1	■	■	■	■	■
Georgia	■		1	■	■		■	■
Hawaii[b]			4	■			■	■
Idaho	■		1	■	■	■		■
Illinois[b]			1	■	■	■	■	■
Indiana			1	■				
Iowa			100	■	■	■		■
Kansas	■	■	123	■				■
Kentucky	■	■	5	■	■	■		
Louisiana	■	■	64	■	■			
Maine	■	■	128	■	■	■		
Maryland			1	■	■	■		■
Massachusetts			270	■	■	■	■	■
Michigan			595	■	■	■	■	■
Minnesota	■		568	■	■	■	■	
Mississippi	■	■	263					
Missouri			115	■	■	■		■
Montana	■	■	56	■	■			
Nebraska			95	■	■			
Nevada	■	■	1	■	■			■
New Hampshire	■		1	■	■	■		■
New Jersey[b]			505	■	■	■		■
New Mexico	■	■	113	■				■
New York			58	■	■	■	■	■
North Carolina	■		100	■	■	■		■
North Dakota	■	■	53	■	■	■		
Ohio	■	■	1	■	■	■		■
Oklahoma	■	■	440	■				
Oregon			1	■	■	■	■	
Pennsylvania	■	■	67	■	■			
Rhode Island[b]	■	■	39	■	■	■	■	■
South Carolina	■	■	1	■	■	■		■
South Dakota	■	■	66	■	■	■		
Tennessee	■		96	■	■	■		■
Texas	■	■	991	■	■	■		■
Utah	■		1	■	■	■		■
Vermont	■	■	22	■	■	■		■
Virginia[b]			1	■	■	■	■	■
Washington[b]	■		291	■	■	■	■	■
West Virginia	■	■	1	■	■	■		■
Wisconsin			1	■	■	■	■	■
Wyoming	■	■	40	■	■			
Total	32	23	5,390	49	44	36	15	34

Note: Not all States that reported having a database reported reasons for rejections.
[a]In the Brady States contacts are the chief law enforcement officers; In Brady-alternative States these contacts are identified according to criteria of each State.
[b]Background checks are required for handguns and long guns.

Background

Thirty-two States and Puerto Rico were required to follow the review proce-

Table 3. Number of applications to buy handguns received or rejected in 21 States reporting complete data, 1997

State	Number of applications: Received	Rejected	Rejection rate
Total	1,440,963	35,382	2.5%
Arizona	62,266	2,277	3.7%
Arkansas	14,556	202	1.4
California	204,409	1,839	0.9
Colorado	46,853	2,476	5.3
Delaware*	11,369	491	4.3
Florida	198,922	7,348	3.7
Georgia	83,673	7,136	8.5
Idaho	22,761	790	3.5%
Illinois*	171,865	1,943	1.1
Indiana	110,999	1,085	1.0
Maryland	31,599	275	0.9
Nevada	24,765	686	2.8
New Hampshire	12,557	232	1.8
New Jersey	25,386	214	0.8
Ohio	55,074	473	0.9%
Oregon	48,597	1,370	2.8
South Carolina	50,789	2,650	5.2
Utah	32,389	792	2.4
Virginia*	180,527	2,364	1.3
West Virginia	20,577	295	1.4
Wisconsin	31,030	444	1.4

Note: Each State had 1 CLEO that reported complete statewide data for applications and rejections for 1997. Kentucky reported 79,574 applications and 1,973 rejections, but excluded data from 4 counties.
*Counts include handguns and long guns.

Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms estimates of inquiries and rejections, March 1, 1994, to December 31, 1995

	Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms estimates — may include handguns, long guns, and carry permits[a]			
	3/1/94 to 12/31/94		1/1/95 to 12/31/95	
	All States	Original Brady States[b]	All States	Original Brady States[b]
Inquiries and rejections				
Inquiries/applications	3,679,000	1,696,000	4,009,000	1,884,000
Rejected	92,000	42,000	60,000	28,000
Rejection rate	2.5%	2.5%	1.5%	1.5%
Reasons for rejection				
Felony indictment/conviction	65,000	30,000	43,000	20,000
Other	26,000	12,000	17,000	8,000

Note: All estimated counts are rounded. Percentages were calculated from unrounded data. Detail may not add to total because of rounding.
[a]Data for 1994 and 1995 from the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms are based on inquiries to the FBI's National Crime Information Center.
[b]Original Brady States are the 32 States required to follow presale review procedures set out in the Brady Act when it became effective on February 28, 1994.

The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (BATF) calculated the number of applications for firearm purchases from March of 1994 to the end of 1995. (See *Presale Firearm Checks*, BJS Bulletin, NCJ-162787, February 1997.) The BATF estimates were calculated using the number of firearm-coded inquiries to the FBI's National Crime Information Center (NCIC). The percentage of denials used for these estimates was based on the experiences of jurisdictions that had implemented presale firearms check procedures prior to the Brady Act.

After the first 10 months of implementation of the Brady Act, the number of NCIC firearm-coded inquiries per 100,000 adult U.S. residents remained relatively consistent:

1994*	2,262
1995	2,083
1996	1,957
1997	1,984

*January and February numbers were imputed, using the average of those months, 1995-97.

On average during 1997 the FBI receives every month nearly 328,000 inquiries to the NCIC to qualify a person to purchase or carry a firearm. (See figure 1, page 5.)

The FIST data, also stable across the 4-year period, describe only applications for handgun purchases, a fraction of the larger number of potential firearm purchases. (The interim provisions of the Brady Act also cover only applications for a handgun purchase.)

Data collection for FIST began in January 1996. The estimated number of inquiries for handgun purchases during the year was 67% of the total number of firearm inquiries to the NCIC (3,842,000). To estimate the number of inquiries for handgun purchase applications before 1996, the BATF estimates were multiplied by 67%.

Estimated number of handgun inquiries (applications to purchase) and rejections, from March 1, 1994, to December 31, 1997

Estimate	3/1/94 - 12/31/94	1/1/95 - 12/31/95	1/1/96 - 12/31/96	1/1/97 - 12/31/97
Number of handgun inquiries	2,483,000	2,706,000	2,593,000	2,574,000
Number of rejections	62,000	41,000	70,000	69,000
Rejection rate	2.5%	1.5%	2.7%	2.7%

dures set forth in the Brady Act when it became effective (identified in this Bulletin as original Brady States). By the end of 1996 and through 1997, the number of States following the Brady Act review procedures rather than alternative State statutes had dropped to 23 (identified as current Brady States; see table 2 for each State's Brady status.)

Pursuant to the Federal Gun Control Act of 1968, as codified at 18 U.S.C. § 922, the sale of firearms is prohibited if the prospective purchaser —

• is a juvenile
• is a fugitive from justice
• is under indictment for, or has been convicted of, a crime punishable by imprisonment for more than 1 year
• is an unlawful user of a controlled substance
• has been adjudicated as a mental defective or committed to a mental institution
• is an alien unlawfully in the United States
• was discharged from the armed forces under dishonorable conditions
• has renounced U.S. citizenship
• is subject to a court order restraining him or her from harassing, stalking, or threatening an intimate partner or child or
• is a person convicted of domestic violence.

The Brady Act was enacted in November 1993 and became effective in February 1994. The interim provisions of the Act require that federally licensed firearm dealers request a presale check on all potential handgun purchasers. The requests are made to CLEOs in the jurisdictions where the prospective purchasers reside.

The Federal firearms licensee must wait 5 business days before transferring the handgun to the buyer, unless earlier approval is received from the CLEO. These interim procedures will terminate no later than November 30, 1998.

The "interim provision" also permits States to follow a variety of alternative State procedures. (See *Survey of State Procedures Related to Firearm Sales, 1996*, BJS report, NCJ-163918, September 1997.) To qualify under these alternatives, State law must require that before any licensee completes the transfer of a handgun to a nonlicensee, a government official must verify that possession of a handgun by the transferee would not be a violation of law. Examples of Brady-alternative States include California ("point-of-sale check"), Virginia ("instant check"), and Missouri (permit).

After November 1998 a Federal firearms licensee will be required to obtain background checks on potential purchasers of all firearms. These inquiries will be made through the National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NICS) that the FBI will operate and maintain.

Under the permanent NICS configuration, firearm dealers can make NICS presale firearm inquiries either through the State, which will serve as a Point of Contact (POC) to the FBI, or directly to the FBI. The Brady Act also enables States to meet the requirements of the permanent system through an ATF-approved permit system. Felony and other criminal record data will be accessed by means of the Interstate Identification Index. In addition, the FBI NICS Index will provide States with access to Federal data on nonfelony prohibiting categories, such as illegal aliens. States serving as POCs will also have access to State data on nonfelony prohibiting categories.

On June 27, 1997, the U.S. Supreme Court overturned the provision requiring mandatory background checks by CLEOs in Brady States (see *Printz* [95-1478] and *Mack* [95-1503] v. *United States*). Since then, CLEOs in the Brady States continuing to do background checks do so on a voluntary basis. In Brady-alternative States (including States operating under a permit system) checks are made in accordance with State law. The impact of this decision on making a national estimate of presale handgun checks is addressed in *Methodology*.

Number of inquiries to the FBI's National Crime Information Center for potential firearm purchases or carry permits

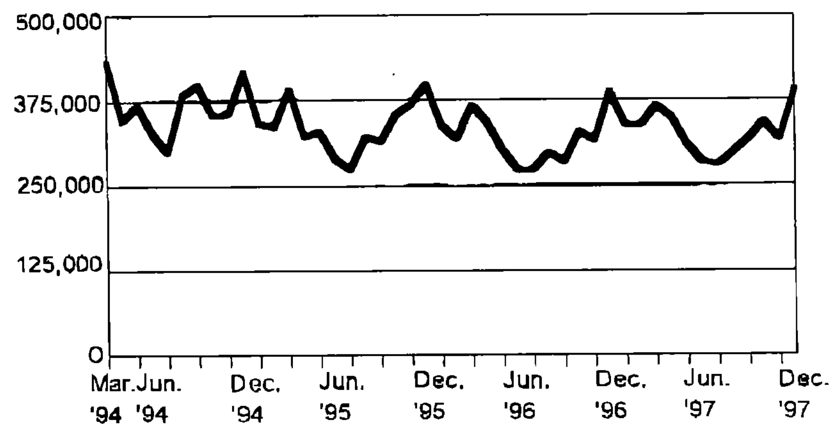

Figure 1

The National Criminal History Improvement Program (NCHIP)

To ensure immediate availability of complete and accurate State records, the Brady Act established a grant program authorized at $200 million. An additional authorization of $20 million was made available through the National Child Protection Act of 1993 (Pub. L. No. 103-209, 107 Stat. 2490 (1993)), and $6 million were authorized under the Violence Against Women Act (42 USC 13701 et seq.). The NCHIP program under which these funds are awarded is designed to assist States to develop or improve existing criminal history records systems and to establish an interface with the NICS.

Under NCHIP over $162 million was given in direct awards to the States during fiscal years 1995, 1996, and 1997. The appropriation for 1998 is $47.75 million. NCHIP funds have supported direct technical assistance to States, evaluation, and research related to improving criminal and other nonfelony records within the States.

The FIST program was established under NCHIP. Information requested from CLEOs does not include data traceable to an applicant and none of the FIST information provided from agencies to BJS contains or reveals the identity of individual applicants. The computer program that was subsequently developed and used by some agencies for both operational purposes and to collect FIST data transmits only the appropriately aggregated or categorized responses. Moreover, the computer program assists agencies to purge records after the delay times specified by law.

Methodology

The following presents the approach used to derive the 1997 estimates from a sample of chief law enforcement officers charged with determining eligibility to purchase a handgun. The data were stratified by size of the population served. Information collected included the following:

- handgun applications made to the CLEO;
- handgun applications rejected by the CLEO; and
- the reasons for rejection.

The sample for the survey was selected from a population of 5,400 CLEOs. These CLEOs ranged from State agencies which served an entire State population (category X); local CLEOs which served a population greater than 100,000 (category C); local CLEOs which served a population between 10,000 and 100,000 (category B); and local CLEOs which served a population of less than 10,000 (category A). Population size was based on 1990 Census information.

The population categories were chosen to be consistent with those commonly used by the FBI when conducting similar studies. A total of 600 CLEOs were randomly selected for inclusion in the study.

Since the start of this study two States have implemented operation of statewide CLEOs, and one State has begun reporting data for local jurisdictions. These changes have reduced the total number of CLEOs selected to 579.

The sample universe includes all 25 statewide CLEOs (category X), all 118 CLEOs who service populations in excess of 100,000 persons (category C), 189 CLEOs from category B, and 247 from category A. For each State 4% or a minimum of five CLEOs were selected in their respective A and B categories.

Overall, 268 CLEOs provided data for a response rate of 46%. Respondents included 23 statewide CLEOs, 41 local CLEOs in category C, 95 local CLEOs in category B, and 109 local CLEOs in category A. The 268 agencies that submitted data serviced 158,815,381 people or 64% of the 248,102,973 people who were identified in the 1990 Census.

Based on data provided by these CLEOs, national estimates were developed using weighting factors derived from the original stratification. When a CLEO did not provide data for all months, a simple linear extrapolation or interpolation was used to generate a 12-month total.

Information for one State required further analysis. New Jersey provided data on the number of applications and the number of rejections for the whole State, but did not provide reasons for rejections. Local CLEOs that had been sampled in New Jersey provided data on the reasons for rejection.

For purposes of applications, rejections and rejection rates, information from the statewide CLEO was used. The descriptive information about reasons for rejections used the data from both the local and State CLEOs.

Maine is one of several States that use both local CLEOs and the State police in areas not serviced by a local CLEO. In the other States, data from the State police were classified as category A data because of the rural area that is normally being served. However, Maine, because of the large portion of the State that the State police service (40%) and the wide range of population classifications they serve, State police data were classified as category X data.

Three agencies with a rejection rate over four standard deviations above the average standard rejection rate were classified as outliers and their data were not used for projection of estimates. In addition, one agency was classified as an outlier because its final rejection rate could not be determined with sufficient accuracy. The data provided by the outliers were added to the total estimated counts to get the final national totals.

To compensate for the June 1997 Supreme Court decision, the CLEOs from Brady States that had been selected for this study were surveyed to determine if they stopped performing background checks. For each size category, a percentage of the population which had stopped participating was computed. These percentages were then applied to the estimated number of rejections for that size category and subtracted from the total estimated number of rejections.

The accuracy of the estimates presented in this report depends on two types of errors: nonsampling and sampling. In this study, nonsampling error may occur from the following: nonresponse; differences in the ways CLEOs process, code, store and retrieve their information; differences in interpretation of the survey questions; and even activities which delay personnel from doing paperwork.

Also, the process of a researcher receiving data and storing it in the computer for analysis can introduce nonsampling error. In any sample survey, the full extent of nonsampling error is never fully known. However, steps were taken to minimize the potential for error. Extensive telephone follow-ups were made to encourage responses, answer questions about misunderstood requests, and generally help CLEOs in assembling the information in a form useable by FIST. Extensive verification of the data ensured the accuracy of the numbers.

Because of the sampling design, State comparisons cannot be made. The estimates are only for the 50 States and do not include U.S. territories or the District of Columbia. Sales of all firearms are prohibited in the District of Columbia except to law enforcement officers.

Data collection procedures

The Regional Justice Information Service (REJIS), through a cooperative agreement with BJS under the Firearm Inquiry Statistics program (FIST), collected the data.

The CLEOs supplied data on either paper or diskette. Several different forms were provided to meet the varying office procedures of the CLEOs. In addition REJIS wrote and provided special software that was distributed free of charge to requesting CLEOs. This software was designed to simplify the record tabulating functions of the CLEO. It also helped to reduce the burden of keeping the statistical data since one of the capabilities of the software was to automatically collect the data needed for the study. In all cases the data that the CLEO sent to REJIS contained only statistical information and would not allow the identification of an individual.

Determining populations

For local CLEOs, a State may choose to have county officials (usually the sheriff) as the CLEO or municipal officials (police departments) or a combination of the two. To evaluate properly the application and rejection rates for purchasing handguns within a given area, the appropriate CLEO population was needed and was determined as follows:

- The stratification classification of the county was based on the size of the largest city within the county.

- If cities within a participating county CLEO were acting as their own CLEOs, their populations were subtracted from the county population.

- If a municipal CLEO was discovered to be providing services for other selected municipalities, then populations for those municipalities were added to the populations of the city having the CLEO.

- Those CLEOs selected to participate in the study but found to be relying on other jurisdictions to conduct background checks were replaced by those other jurisdictions (for example, a town being replaced by a county).

The Bureau of Justice Statistics is the statistical agency of the U.S. Department of Justice. Jan M. Chaiken, Ph.D., is Director.

BJS Bulletins present the first release of findings from permanent data collection programs such as the Firearm Inquiries Statistics program. State and local officials have cooperated in reporting the data presented.

Don Manson, BJS Program Manager, and Darrell K. Gilliard, BJS Statistician, wrote this Bulletin under the supervision of Carol Kaplan, Chief, Criminal History Improvement Programs, BJS. Gene Lauver, manager of the Firearm Inquiry Statistics program, Regional Justice Information Service (REJIS of St.Louis, MO), collected and analyzed the FIST data presented. Terry Tomazic, Ph.D., professor of research methodology at St. Louis University, provided statistical consultation. Priscilla Middleton and Tom Hester produced and edited the report. Marilyn Marbrook, assisted by Yvonne Boston and Jayne Robinson, administered final report production.

Further information on the FIST program may be obtained from:

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June 1998, NCJ-171130

This report and others from the Bureau of Justice Statistics are available through the Internet —

http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release December 5, 1998

RADIO ADDRESS BY THE PRESIDENT
TO THE NATION

THE PRESIDENT: Good morning. In 1993, I took office determined to get our country moving again -- to provide opportunity for all responsible, hard-working citizens, and to create the conditions of a genuine community in our country.

First we had to get the economy going. Yesterday we got the good news that unemployment is down to 4.4 percent, the lowest in 28 years, with 17.3 million new jobs. But America needs more than jobs to really work. Our country also has to be safer. And we've worked very hard to make our streets, our schools, our neighborhoods safer places to live, work and raise families. We've put in place a comprehensive strategy of more prevention, strong enforcement, tougher punishment. We've taken more guns and criminals off the street and put more police on the beat. Crime has dropped for six years in a row now, to a 25-year low.

This week, America launched a new effort to keep guns out of the hands of criminals and make our streets safer. For the first time ever, the Justice Department, working with the states, conducted computerized background checks on all firearm purchases. In its first four days, the new national Instant Check System reviewed more than 100,000 prospective gun sales to make sure only law-abiding citizens took home new guns. And in just four days, we stopped more than 400 felons, fugitives, stalkers and other prohibited purchasers from walking away with new guns. That's more than 100 illegal gun sales blocked each day. Who knows how many lives were saved.

But within just 24 hours after the instant checks went into effect, the National Rifle Association went to court to stop the new system. The gun lobby's goal is plain: As the NRA's executive director himself put it this week, they want to "scale back" the Brady law.

Five years ago, as the Brady Bill was nearing passage in Congress, the gun lobby spent more than a million dollars in a desperate effort to kill it. Fortunately, the good sense of Congress and the will of the American people prevailed. The gun lobby lost. But the American people won. Unfortunately, as we saw this week, they'll stop at nothing to gut the Brady law and undermine our efforts to keep more guns from falling into the wrong hands, even though we now have five years of evidence that it works.

We can't turn back. In these last five years Brady background checks have stopped nearly a quarter of a million illegal handgun sales. We can't go back to the days when dangerous criminals walked away from stores with new guns, no questions asked.

Police, prosecutors and the American people they protect have made it clear they want to strengthen, not weaken the Brady law. That's why, when the new Congress goes into session next month, one of my top priorities will be to pass legislation to require a minimum waiting period before a handgun sale becomes final. This "cooling off" period will help prevent rash acts of violence and give authorities more time to stop illegal gun purchases.

I also call on Congress to ban juveniles convicted of violent crimes from owning guns for life. There's no reason why young people convicted of violent crimes should be allowed to buy guns on their 21st birthday. And I want to thank Senator Bob Dole for his recent strong public support of this idea.

Finally, we must make sure that firearms sold at gun shows are not exempt from background checks -- that gun shows do not circumvent our gun laws. Last month, I asked Treasury Secretary Rubin and Attorney General Reno to find ways to close this loophole.

Reducing crime has been one of the American people's greatest achievements in recent years. A decade ago, no one thought we could do it. But we did. We must not retreat on this hard-won progress. Instead we must do even more to support the people and the laws that protect our children and families.

Thanks for listening.

END

Jason H. Schechter
12/04/98 07:46:30 PM

Record Type: Record

To: See the distribution list at the bottom of this message

cc:
Subject: Embargoed Radio Address Paper

EMBARGOED UNTIL 10:06 AM EST, SATURDAY, DECEMBER 5, 1998

The Brady Law: Making a Bigger Difference Every Day
December 5, 1998

In his radio address to the nation, President Clinton will highlight the Brady Law's effectiveness in keeping guns out of the hands of criminals; challenge the gun lobby to stop trying to undermine the Brady Law through lawsuits and other means; and call on Congress to strengthen the Brady Law by requiring a waiting period for gun purchases, banning violent juveniles from owning guns, and plugging the law's gun show loophole. Specifically, the President will discuss:

NICS's successful first week. This week, after nearly 5 years of working with law enforcement agencies, the Justice Department successfully launched the National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NICS), as required by the Brady Law. The NICS allows law enforcement officials access to a more inclusive set of records than was previously available, and applies not just to handguns but to <u>all</u> firearms. It also requires federally-licensed gun dealers to call a state point-of-contact or FBI representative through an 800 number, and relay a prospective gun purchaser's information. If necessary, the FBI and states then have up to 3 days to clarify a record, and approve or deny the gun sale. According to initial estimates from the Justice Department, in its first four days of operation, the NICS:

-Directly handled more than 62,000 requests for background checks -- 76 percent of which were processed within minutes;

- From these 62,000 requests, stopped gun sales to over 400 felons, fugitives, stalkers, and others prohibited by federal law from owning a firearm;

- Conducted an additional 40,000 background checks through the states, stopping even more illegal gun sales. (The number of sales stopped through state background checks is not yet available.)

Brady's strong record of success. NICS's success should come as no surprise. Since the Brady Law took effect in 1994, it has prevented an estimated 242,000 felons, fugitives, mentally unstable persons, and other prohibited purchasers from buying handguns.

Resisting the gun lobby's efforts to undermine the Brady Law. Less than 24 hours after the Brady Law's permanent provisions went into effect, the gun lobby held a press conference announcing that it was filing a lawsuit in federal court against the NICS -- and admitted that its goal was to "scale back" the Brady Law. The President will make clear his intention to fight the gun lobby's continual efforts to undermine the Brady Law.

Improving and expanding the Brady Law. The President will call on Congress to make the Brady Law even tougher and more effective by:

(1) Providing a permanent waiting period for handgun purchases. A minimum 3-day waiting period for all handgun purchases -- as well as an additional two days if more time is needed to clarify arrest records -- will allow law enforcement officers to check additional, non-computerized records and provide a cooling-off time for handgun purchases.

-more-

(2) Expanding Brady background checks to violent juveniles. Violent juveniles should be treated like adults for their adult crimes -- and be banned for life from buying firearms. This week, former Senator Bob Dole came out in support of this common sense legislation.

(3) Closing the gun show loophole. Under current law, firearms can be bought and sold by certain persons at gun shows without background checks. This loophole makes gun shows prime targets for criminals and gun traffickers. In response to the President's request, the Secretary of the Treasury and Attorney General will recommend ways to close this loophole and ensure that firearms sold at gun shows are not exempt from Brady background checks or other federal gun laws.

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Message Sent To: ________________________________

U.S. Department of Justice
Office of Justice Programs
National Institute of Justice

National Institute of Justice

Research in Brief

Jeremy Travis, Director

February 19

Issues and Findings

Discussed in this Brief: This study examines the impact of the assault weapons ban on gun markets and gun-related violence as contained in Title XI of the Federal Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994. Title XI prohibits the manufacture, sale, and possession of specific makes and models of military-style semiautomatic firearms and "features test" weapons with multiple military-style features (detachable magazines, flash suppressors, folding rifle stocks, and threaded barrels for attaching silencers) and outlaws most large capacity magazines (ammunition-feeding devices) capable of holding more than 10 rounds of ammunition. Weapons and magazines manufactured prior to September 13, 1994, are exempt from the ban.

Key Issues: The firearms and magazines banned by this legislation facilitate the rapid firing of high numbers of shots, thereby enhancing the ability of offenders to kill and wound more persons and to inflict multiple wounds on victims. Although the banned weapons were used only in a small percentage of gun crimes before the ban, researchers hypothesized that a decrease in their use would reduce the fatality rate of gun attacks.

The ban's impact on gun violence is unclear because the short period since the enabling legislation's

continued...

Impacts of the 1994 Assault Weapons Ban

by Jeffrey A. Roth, Ph.D., and Christopher S. Koper, Ph.D.

On January 17, 1989, Patrick Edward Purdy, armed with an AK–47, returned to his childhood elementary school in Stockton, California, and opened fire, killing 5 children and wounding 30 others. Purdy, a drifter, squeezed off more than 100 rounds in 1 minute before turning the weapon on himself.

During the 1980s, this tragedy and other similar acts of seemingly senseless violence, coupled with escalating turf and drug wars waged by urban gangs, sparked a national debate over whether legislation was needed to end, or at least restrict, the market for imported and domestic "assault weapons." Beginning in 1989, a few States enacted their own assault weapons bans, but it was not until 1994 that a Federal law was enacted.

On September 13, 1994, Title XI of the Federal Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994—known as the Crime Control Act of 1994—took effect. Subtitle A (the Public Safety and Recreational Firearms Use Protection Act) of the act banned the manufacture, transfer, and possession of certain semiautomatic firearms designated as assault weapons and "large capacity" ammunition magazines. The legislation required the Attorney General to deliver to Congress within 30 months an evaluation of the effects of the ban (with an emphasis on violent and drug-trafficking crimes). To meet this requirement, the National Institute of Justice (NIJ) funded research to evaluate the impact of Subtitle A. This Research in Brief summarizes the results of that evaluation.

A number of factors—including the fact that the banned weapons and magazines were rarely used to commit murders in this country, the limited availability of data on the weapons, other components of the Crime Control Act of 1994, and State and local initiatives implemented at the same time—posed challenges in discerning the effects of the ban. The ban appears to have had clear short-term effects on the gun market, some of which were unintended consequences: production of the banned weapons increased before the law took effect and fell afterward. This suggests that the weapons became more available generally, but they must have become less accessible to criminals because there was at least a short-term decrease in criminal use of the banned weapons.

Debated in a politically charged and often contentious environment, the Public Safety and Recreational Firearms Use Protection Act, as its title suggests, attempted to balance two competing policy

Issues and Findings

continued...

passage created methodological difficulties for researchers. The National Institute of Justice is funding a followup study by the authors that will assess the longer term impacts of the ban and the effects of the other firearms provisions of Title XI. The long-term impacts of the ban could differ substantially from the short-term impacts.

Key findings: Researchers, using a variety of national and local data sources, examined market trends—prices, production, and thefts—for the banned weapons and close substitutes before estimating potential ban effects and their consequences.

- The research shows that the ban triggered speculative price increases and ramped-up production of the banned firearms prior to the law's implementation, followed by a substantial postban drop in prices to levels of previous years.

- Criminal use of the banned guns declined at least temporarily after the law went into effect, which suggests that the legal stock of preban assault weapons was, at least for the short term, largely in the hands of collectors and dealers.

- Evidence suggests that the ban may have contributed to a reduction in the gun murder rate and murders of police officers by criminals armed with assault weapons.

- The ban has failed to reduce the average number of victims per gun murder incident or multiple gunshot wound victims.

Target audience: Congressional representatives and staff; State and local legislators; Federal, State, and local law enforcement officials; criminal justice practitioners and researchers; advocacy groups; State and local government officials.

goals. The first was to respond to several mass shooting incidents committed with military-style or other semiautomatics equipped with magazines holding large amounts of ammunition. The second consideration was to limit the impact of the ban on recreational gun use by law-abiding owners, dealers, and manufacturers. The ban specifically prohibited only nine narrow categories of pistols, rifles, and shotguns (see exhibit 1). It also banned "features test" weapons, that is, semiautomatics with multiple features (detachable magazines, flash suppressors, folding rifle stocks, and threaded barrels for attaching silencers) that appeared useful in military and criminal applications but that were deemed unnecessary in shooting sports (see exhibit 2). The law also banned revolving cylinder shotguns (large capacity shotguns) and "large capacity magazines," defined as ammunition-feeding devices designed to hold more than 10 rounds, far more than a hunter or competitive shooter might reasonably need.

These and other provisions of the ban limited its potential effects on criminal use. As shown in exhibit 1, about half the banned makes and models were rifles, which are hard to conceal for criminal use. Imports of the five foreign rifle categories on this list were banned in 1989. Further, the banned guns are used in only a small fraction of gun crimes; even before the ban, most of them rarely turned up in law enforcement agencies' requests to the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (BATF) to trace the sales histories of guns recovered in criminal investigations.

As a matter of equity, the law exempted "grandfathered" guns manufactured before the ban took effect. While it also banned "exact" or duplicate copies of the prohibited makes and models, the emphasis was on "exact." Shortening a gun's barrel by a few millimeters or "sporterizing" a rifle by removing its pistol grip and replacing it with a thumbhole in the stock, for example, w sufficient to transform a banned weapo into a legal substitute. Other substitute appeared later, and on April 5, 1998, President Clinton signed an Executive der banning the imports of 58 foreign-made substitutes.

Gun bans and gun crime

Evidence is mixed about the effectivene of previous gun bans. Federal restrictio enacted in 1934 on the ownership of ful automatic weapons (machine guns) appear to have been quite successful base on the rarity with which such guns are used in crime.[1] Washington, D.C.'s restrictive handgun licensing system, whic went into effect in 1976, produced a dro in gun fatalities that lasted for several years after its enactment.[2] Yet, State anc local bans on inexpensive handguns—Saturday night specials—have been found to be ineffective in other research.

The inconsistency of previous findings may reflect, in part, the interplay of several effects that a ban may have on gun markets. To reduce criminal use of guns and the tragic consequences of such use, a ban must make the existing stockpile o guns less accessible to criminals (exhibit 3) through, for example, raising their purchase prices.[4] However, the anticipation of higher prices may encourage gun manufacturers to boost production just before the ban takes effect, in the hope of generating large profits from the soon-to-be collectors' items. Immediately after the ban, criminals may still find it difficult to purchase banned weapons if they remain in dealers' and speculators' storage facilities. Over the long term, however, the stockpiled weapons might begin flowing into criminals' hands, either through actual thefts or through "off-the-books" sales that dealers or speculators falsely report to insurance companies and government officials as thefts.[5]

Exhibit 1. ***Description of firearms banned in Title XI***

Name of firearm	Description	1993 Blue Book price status	Pre-ban Federal legal count	1993 BATF trace request	Examples of legal substitutes
Avtomat Kalashnikov (AK)	Chinese, Russian, other foreign, and domestic: 0.223 or 7.62x39mm cal., semiauto Kalashnikov rifle, 5-, 10-,* or 30-* shot mag., may be supplied with bayonet.	$550 (plus 10–15% for folding stock models)	Imports banned in 1989	87	Norinco NHM 90/91
UZI, Galil	Israeli: 9mm, 0.41, or 0.45 cal. semiauto carbine, minicarbine, or pistol. Magazine capacity of 16, 20, or 25, depending on model and type (10 or 20 on pistols).	$550–$1,050 (UZI) $875–$1,150 (Galil)	Imports banned in 1989	281 UZI; 12 Galil	
Baretta Ar–70	Italian: 0.222 or 0.223 cal., semiauto paramilitary design rifle, 5-, 8-, or 30-shot mag.	$1,050	Imports banned in 1989	1	
Colt AR–15	Domestic: Primarily 0.223 cal. paramilitary rifle or carbine, 5-shot magazine, often comes with two 5-shot detachable mags. Exact copies by DPMS, Eagle, Olympic, and others.	$825–$1,325	Legal (civilian version of military M–16)	581 Colt; 99 other manufacturers	Colt Sporter, Match H–Bar, Target; Olympic PCR Models.
FN/FAL, FN/LAR, FNC	Belgian design: 0.308 Winchester cal., semiauto rifle or 0.223 Remington combat carbine with 30-shot mag. Rifle comes with flash hider, 4-position fire selector on automatic models. Manufacturing discontinued in 1988.	$1,100–$2,500	Imports banned in 1989	9	L1A1 Sporter (FN, Century)
SWD M–10 M–11, M–11/9, M–12	Domestic: 9mm paramilitary semiauto pistol, fires from closed bolt, 32-shot mag. Also available in fully automatic variation.	$215	Legal	878	Cobray PM–11, PM12; Kimel AP–9, Mini Ap–9
Steyr AUG	Austrian: 0.223 Remington/5.56mm cal., semiauto paramilitary design rifle.	$2,500	Imports banned in 1989	4	
TEC–9 TEC*DC–9, TEC–22	Domestic: 9mm semiauto paramilitary design pistol, 10-** or 32-** shot mag.; 0.22 LR semiauto paramilitary design pistol, 30-shot mag.	$145–$295	Legal	1202 Intratec; 175 Exact copies	TEC–AB
Revolving Cylinder Shotguns	Domestic: 12 gauge, 12-shot rotary mag., paramilitary configuration, double action.	$525***	Legal	64 SWD Street Sweepers	

* The 30-shot magazine was banned by the Crime Control Act of 1994, and the 10-shot magazine was introduced as a result.

** The 32-shot magazine was banned by the Crime Control Act of 1994, and the 10-shot magazine was introduced as a result.

*** Street Sweeper.

The Youth Crime Gun Interdiction Initiative (YCGII)
27 Communities

February 1999

Highlights

Second Year of ATF Trace Reports. *The Crime Gun Trace Analysis Reports: The Illegal Youth Firearms Market in 27 Communities* (the *Trace Reports*) provides the second year of ATF reports on crime gun trace information from cities where law enforcement officials have made a commitment to tracing all recovered crime guns. The first YCGII *Trace Reports* analyzed 37,000 crime gun traces from 17 cities; this Report analyzes over 76,000 crime gun traces from 27 cities.

Survey of Gun Trafficking Investigations. ATF is also releasing the YCGII *Performance Report*, a survey of over 640 trafficking investigations nationwide involving juveniles and youth initiated since YCGII began in July 1996. The investigations involved over 27,000 reported trafficked firearms.

Firearms Trafficking as a Source of New, Used and Stolen Crime Guns. The *Trace Reports* confirm that illegal trafficking is occurring in new guns. Newer crime guns — those recovered by law enforcement officials within a relatively short period of time after first retail sale by a Federally firearms licensee (FFL) — accounted for between 25 and 36 percent of juvenile crime guns, between 32 and 49 percent of youth crime guns, and between 27 and 40 percent of adult crime guns. Since a National Tracing Center trace can establish the first retail purchaser, but not transfers subsequent to that transaction, trafficking in older firearms cannot be indicated through crime gun trace analysis. However, the *Performance Report* confirms that juveniles and youth offenders are obtaining both new and older firearms through trafficking. Over three quarters of the investigations involved trafficking in new guns, over half involved trafficking in used guns, and over a third involved trafficking in stolen firearms, both new and used.

Trace Analysis Leading to Gun Traffickers. The *Performance Report* shows that the most important factor leading to trafficking investigations involving juveniles and youth was analysis of trace and multiple sales records, which accounted for initiation of over 37 percent of the investigations. A number of Federal, State and local firearms enforcement initiatives using crime gun trace information are listed in the *Trace Reports*.

Trafficked Guns Used in Subsequent Crime. More than two-thirds of the illegal trafficking investigations reported in the *Performance Report* involved improperly transferred firearms that were known to have been subsequently involved in additional crimes. More than 23 percent of the investigations were associated with juvenile possession. Twenty-eight percent of the trafficking investigations were associated with assaults; nearly 18 percent were associated with homicides and 18 percent with robberies. More than 45 percent involved firearms associated with felons-in-possession, and more than half with other kinds of illegal possession. About 11 percent of the investigations involved National Firearms Act weapons violations, mostly sawed off shotguns or short barrel rifles and shotguns, but also machine guns, and firearms illegally converted from semiautomatic to fully automatic firearms.

Multiple Illegal Trafficking Sources. Half of the illegal trafficking investigations reported in the *Performance Report* involved firearms trafficked by straw purchasers, either an individual or a ring. A fifth of the investigations involved trafficking in firearms reported stolen from an FFL, including pawnbrokers. Unregulated private sellers, as distinct from straw purchasers or other traffickers, were involved in 14 percent of the trafficking investigations; six percent of the investigations involved FFLs as the primary traffickers; and about 10 percent of the investigations involved gun shows and similar venues where both FFLs and unregulated private vendors sell firearms. Nearly 14 percent of the trafficking investigations involved firearms stolen from a residence.

Convicted Felons as Gun Traffickers. Over a third of the traffickers involved in the illegal trafficking investigations reported in the *Performance Report* had prior felony convictions, as had just under a third of traffickers who were firearms thieves and robbers, and just under a quarter of the straw purchasers. Felons were able to buy guns by using false identification or giving false information to an FFL.

Obliteration of Serial Numbers by Gun Traffickers. For the eight cities included in the *Trace Reports* where there was a special effort made to collect complete crime gun trace data, an average of 11.4 percent of traced handguns had obliterated serial numbers. Many of these firearms were in the relatively high-powered 9mm and .380 calibers.

Role of Juveniles (ages 17 and under). Crime guns recovered from juveniles comprised over 11 percent of the trace requests analyzed in the *Trace Reports*. Juveniles were primarily involved in the illegal trafficking investigations reported in the *Performance Report* as possessors of firearms. But a quarter of the trafficking investigations also involved juveniles as thieves or robbers of firearms, and nearly a fifth of the investigations involved juveniles as gun traffickers.

Role of Youth (ages 18 to 24). Crime guns recovered from youth comprised over 32 percent of the trace requests analyzed in the *Trace Reports*; more crime guns were recovered from this seven year age group than from any other seven year age group in the juvenile and adult categories. Slightly fewer youth than juveniles were involved as thieves or robbers in the illegal trafficking investigations reported in the *Performance Report*, but youth were nearly twice as likely to be involved as traffickers and, due to age restrictions on the purchase of firearms, about ten times as likely to be involved as straw purchasers.

Semiautomatic Pistols Predominate As Crime Guns. Most or the crime guns analyzed in the *Trace Reports* were handguns (81 percent). Semiautomatic pistols dominated crime gun recoveries from juveniles (57.7 percent), youth (60.2 percent), and adults (46.6 percent) alike. Long guns, including rifles and shotguns, contributed a relatively greater proportion of the adult crime guns (24.6 percent).

Intrastate and Interstate Firearms Trafficking. The two ATF reports make it clear that both intrastate and interstate gun trafficking are important problems. Most crime guns analyzed in the *Trace Reports* were first sold at retail in the same State in which they were recovered by law enforcement. In 21 of the 27 cities, FFLs in the State in which the city is located supplied a majority of the traced crime guns. In four more of the 27 cities (Boston, Detroit, New York, St. Louis), FFLs in the State in which the city is located supplied a plurality — more crime guns than any single source State — while FFLs in the combination of all other source States supplied more than half of the traced crime guns. Jersey City was the only city in which FFLs from the State itself did not constitute the largest source of crime guns. Interstate trafficking investigations reported in the *Performance Report* were most frequent in the Northeast region, and least frequent in the Southwest. There were higher percentages of intrastate trafficking investigations relative to other regions in the Southwest, Central, and West regions of the United States.

City Specific Problems Revealed by Tracing. A city's trace information can suggest particular focus for local enforcement efforts. Some examples:

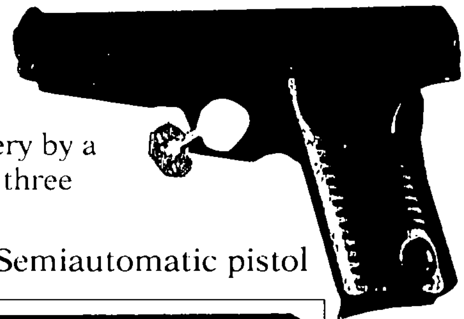
- *In-State vs. out-of-State sources.* The city with the highest percentage (81.5 percent) of traced crime guns originally purchased from in-State FFLs was Houston. The city with the lowest percentage (14 percent) of traced crime guns originally purchased from in-State FFLs was Jersey City.
- *Handguns vs. long guns.* Atlanta had a high proportion of traced crime guns that were semiautomatic pistols (71 percent), and very few that were shotguns and rifles (2.9 percent). In Minneapolis, rifles and shotguns comprised a much larger percentage of crime guns (32.3 percent), and semiautomatic pistols a relatively smaller percentage (45.7 percent).
- *Guns of choice.* Cities showed clusters of crime guns of particular investigative interest. For example, Baltimore's report showed a number of fast time-to-crime Hi-Point 9mm semiautomatic pistols recovered from youth (17 guns with time-to-crime information, of which 15 show recovery in under three years, with the fastest time-to-crime being three days). Tucson's report showed a number of fast time-to-crime Ruger 9mm semiautomatic pistols recovered from youth (28 guns with time-to-crime information, of which 20 show recovery in less than 3 years, with the fastest time-to-crime being 57 days). Many examples of this kind can be found in the *Trace Reports*.
- *Smaller and larger caliber.* In Miami, the ten most frequent kinds of crime guns recovered from youth are .38 caliber or higher. In Detroit, most of the top ten crime guns recovered from juveniles are smaller than .32 caliber.

Regional Variations in Illegal Trafficking Investigations. The relative mix of types of trafficking investigations reported in the *Performance Report* differed by region. Investigations involving *trafficking by straw purchasers or straw purchasing rings* were most prevalent in the Northeast and Central regions of the United States, and least prevalent in the Southwest and West. Investigations involving *trafficking in firearms stolen from FFLs* were most prevalent in the Southwest and least prominent in the Northeast. Investigations involving *unregulated private sellers*, as distinct from straw purchasers or other traffickers, were most prevalent in the West region, and investigations involving *FFL traffickers* were more frequent in the West and Central regions than in other regions.

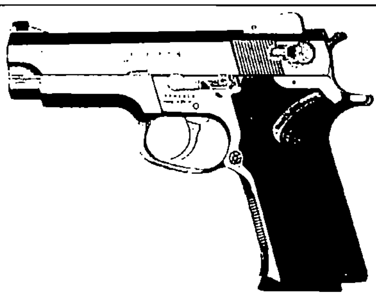
The Youth Crime Gun Interdiction Initiative
27 Communities

Fast Time-to-Crime Youth and Juvenile Crime Guns

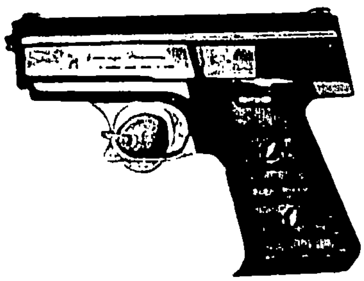
The following 10 firearms have the fastest time-to-crime of firearms that law enforcement officials recovered frequently from juveniles and youth. Fast time-to-crime means that the weapons move from initial retail sale by a Federally licensed firearms dealer (FFL) to recovery by a law enforcement official in three years or less. Time-to-crime in under three years is a trafficking indicator.



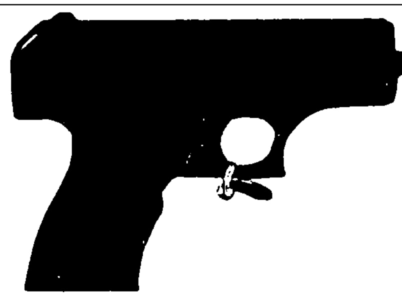
1. Lorcin 9mm Semiautomatic pistol



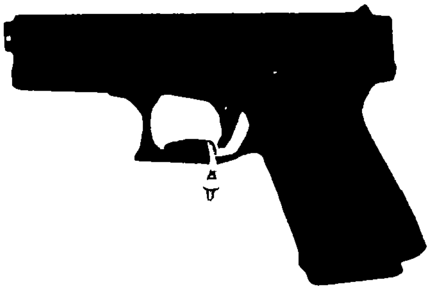
2. Smith & Wesson .40 Caliber Semiautomatic pistol



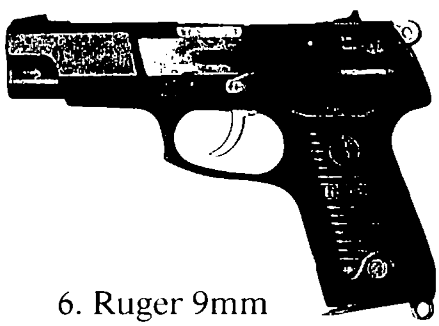
3. Bryco 9mm Semiautomatic pistol



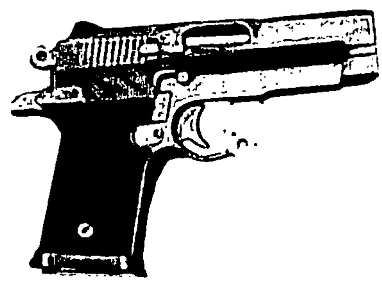
4. Hi-Point 9mm Semiautomatic pistol



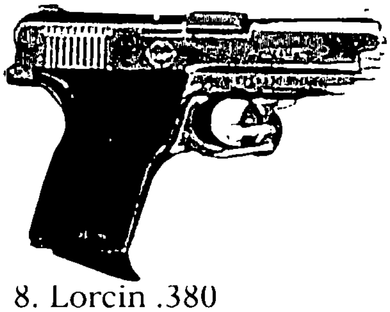
5. Glock .40 Caliber Semiautomatic pistol



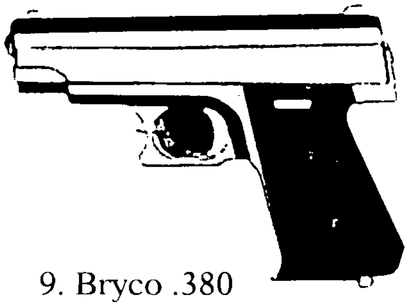
6. Ruger 9mm Semiautomatic pistol



7. Star 9mm Semiautomatic pistol



8. Lorcin .380 Semiautomatic pistol



9. Bryco .380 Semiautomatic pistol

10. Glock 9mm Semiautomatic pistol

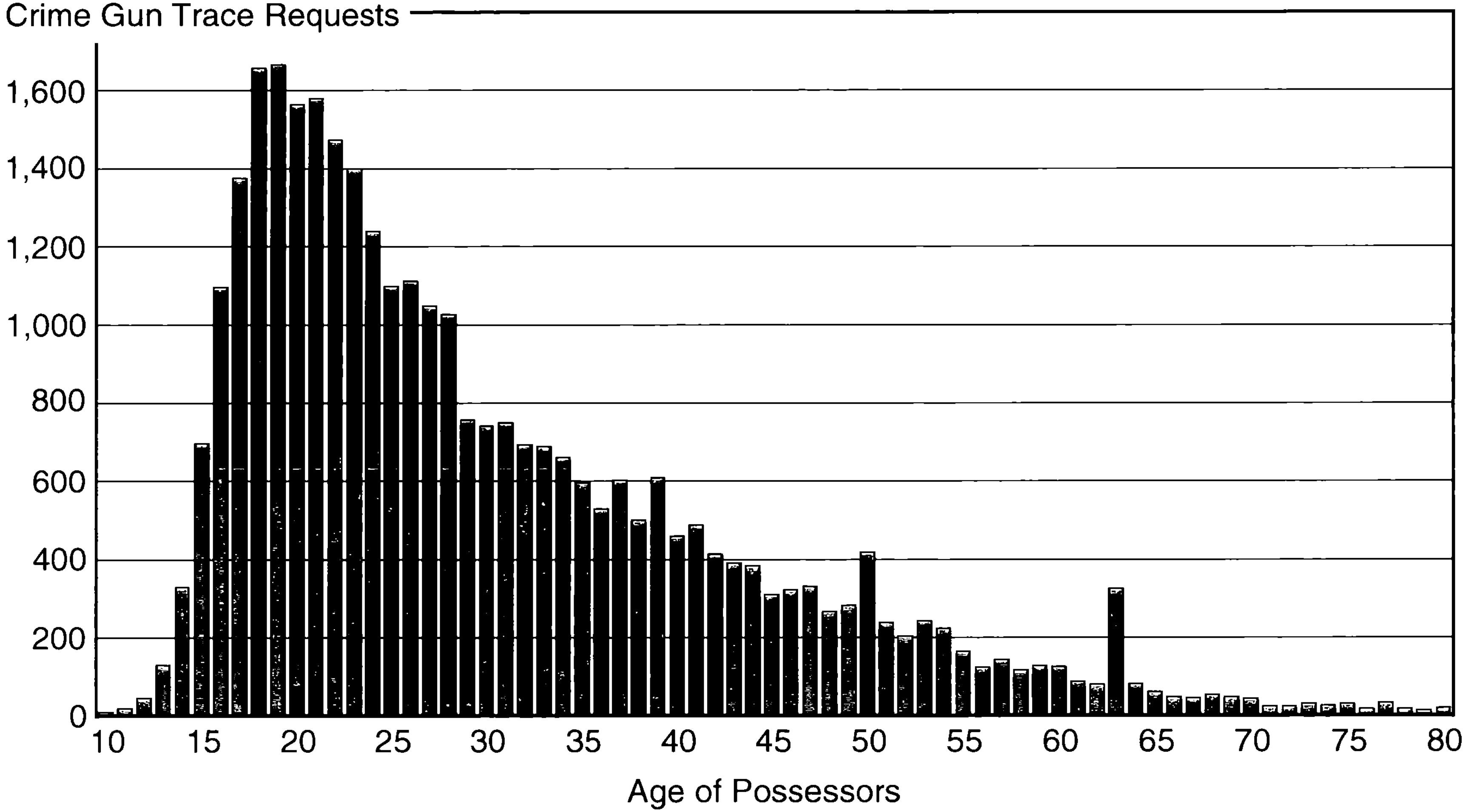
Top ten shortest time-to-crime firearms recovered, ranked in order from highest to lowest percentage in time-to-crime in under three years, for 75 or more firearms recovered, combined juvenile and youth, pooled 27 cities, based on trace requests submitted August 1, 1997 to July 31, 1998.

ATF Crime Gun Analysis Branch

The Youth Crime Gun Interdiction Initiative
27 Communities

Age of Crime Gun Possessors

Based on trace requests submitted August 1, 1997 to July 31, 1998



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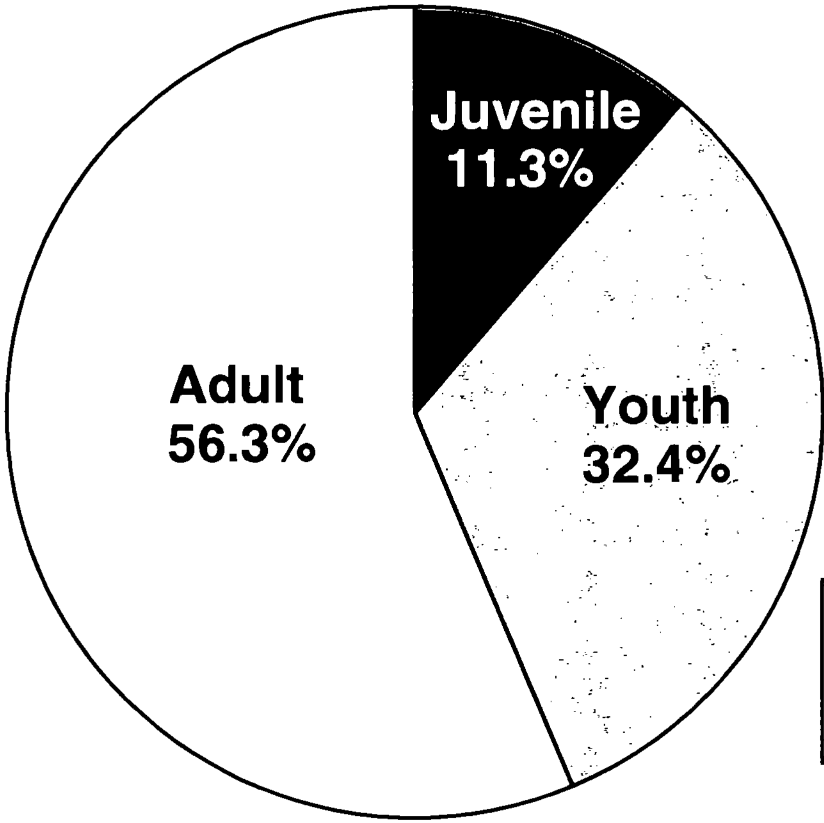
Age of Crime Gun Possessors by Age Group

Based on trace requests submitted August 1, 1997 to July 31, 1998



Juvenile: ages 17 and under
Youth: ages 18 to 24
Adult: ages 25 and over

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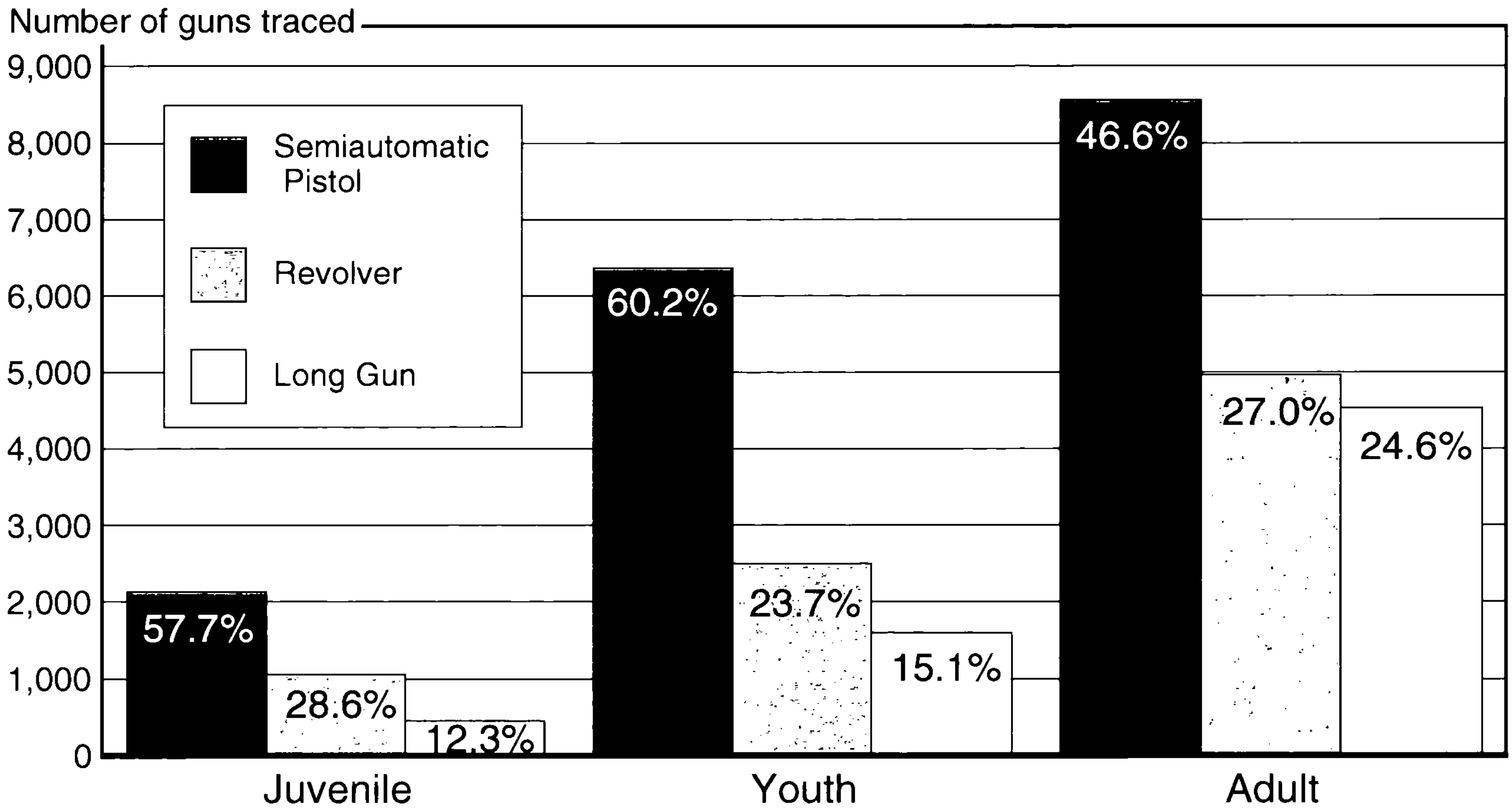
Major Crime Gun Types by Possessor Age Group

Based on trace requests submitted August 1, 1997 to July 31, 1998



This graph does not include Derringers, Combination Guns, and Unknown Gun Types.

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