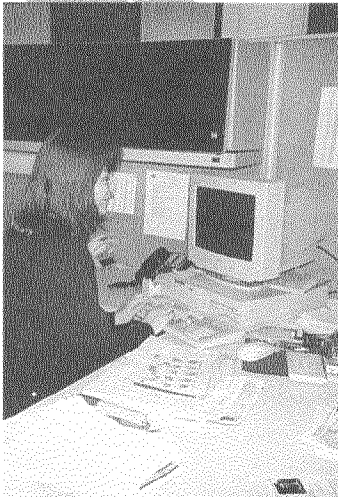
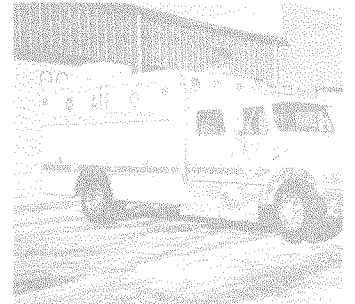
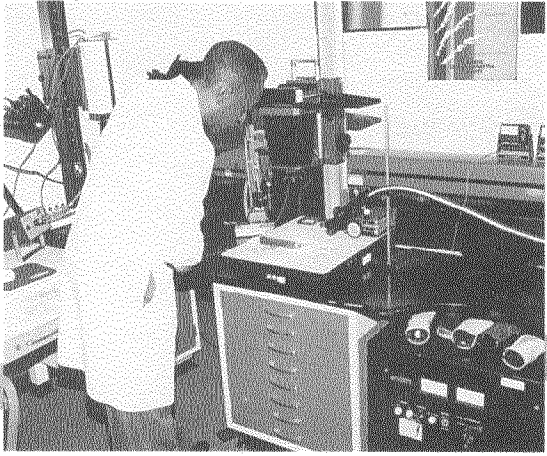
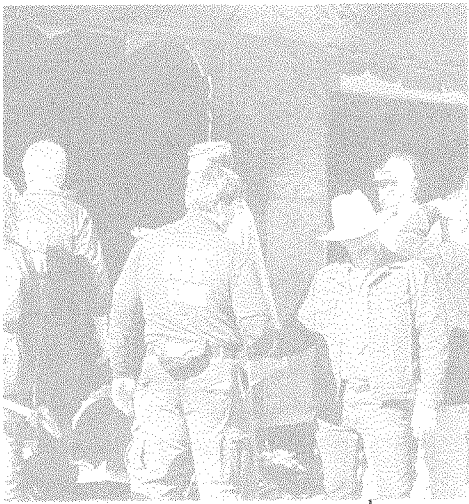


# THE BUREAU OF ALCOHOL, TOBACCO AND FIREARMS





*“Our use of new technologies produces ever-increasing efficiencies.”*

**A**TF's complex tax collecting, regulatory, and enforcement missions are interwoven. Historically, the Bureau's budget displayed criminal and regulatory enforcement activities in the four major programs of alcohol, tobacco, firearms, and explosives. However, during FY 1996, ATF reviewed the criminal and regulatory budget activities and developed a new structure that reflects the Bureau's strategic plan and is more consistent with the Bureau's mission. The new budget activities, *Reduce Violent Crime*, *Collect Revenue*, and *Protect the Public* were incorporated into the Bureau's FY 1998 budget request.

Before reviewing the following program discussion, it is important to understand that for much of FY 1996, a large portion of the ATF special agent cadre was diverted from investigative activity to other important duties, such as enhancement of security for the Summer Olympic Games and protection for the Presidential campaign.



Recognizing the prominent role of firearms, explosives, and arson in violent crimes, ATF—with primary enforcement jurisdiction for Federal firearms, explosives, and arson laws—enforces provisions of the Gun Control Act of 1968, the National Firearms Act, the Brady Law, and the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994 to combat these types of crimes. Because many Federal laws contain provisions for mandatory extended sentences, ATF strives to increase state and local awareness of available Federal prosecution under these statutes. To accomplish all of this, ATF pursues an integrated enforcement strategy through three major programs supporting the *Reduce Violent Crime* activity: Deny Criminals Access to Firearms, Safeguard the Public from Bombing and Arson, and Imprison Violent Offenders. Each of these programs supports projects detailed in the following discussion.

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## DENY CRIMINALS ACCESS TO FIREARMS

The program Deny Criminals Access to Firearms, identifies and deters the sources of and participation in illegal firearms trafficking.

## ILLEGAL FIREARMS TRAFFICKING

ATF reduces the availability of “black market” firearms to criminals by identifying illicit sources of firearms and incarcerating illegal firearms traffickers. Overall goals include recommending illegal firearms traffickers for prosecution, preventing future firearms crimes, and reducing crime-associated costs by incarcerating illegal firearms traffickers. In FY 1996, ATF implemented a nationwide illegal firearms trafficking strategy, accomplished by:

- designating Firearms Trafficking Coordinators in every criminal enforcement field division and regulatory field district;
- providing a three-step training program for special agents and inspectors that focused on ATF’s unique assets, such as Project LEAD and the National Tracing Center; firearms trafficking investigation techniques; and training on the project and its requirements (the training process provided attendees with the skills to effectively conduct trafficking investigations, and encouraged attendees to share their new skills with colleagues); and
- deploying Project LEAD, the cornerstone of ATF’s illegal firearms trafficking program, to each criminal enforcement field division and 17 additional special program sites. This illegal firearms

ILLEGAL FIREARMS TRAFFICKING		
	FY 1996	FY 1995
Cases forwarded for prosecution	1,043	1,232
Defendants recommended for prosecution*	2,230	2,655
Future firearms-related crimes avoided	53,520	-
Crime-related costs avoided in millions	\$38.8	-
Number of trafficking inspections completed	674	643
Number of trafficking violations cited	502	362

\*34,491 firearms were trafficked by the FY 1996 defendants prior to their recommendation for prosecution

- New measures being reported in FY 1996:
  - Future firearms-related crimes avoided
  - Crime-related costs avoided in millions
  - Number of trafficking inspections
  - Number of trafficking violations cited

Statistics do not have a relationship in the same fiscal year because the time period from the investigation being initiated until sentencing may span several years.

*“The Youth Crime Gun Interdiction Initiative addresses illegal sources of guns for youths by providing additional resources and research to identify and investigate those sources.”*

trafficking information system produces crucial investigative leads by analyzing information on sales of multiple firearms and data on crime gun traces from the National Tracing Center to identify recurring patterns and trends indicative of illegal firearms trafficking.

General, and the Secretary of the Treasury. Training, computers, investigative resources, and guidance were provided to each of the 17 pilot cities. As a result, during the last quarter of FY 1996, eight Federal criminal investigations involving illegal firearms trafficking to juveniles were initiated.

**Youth Crime Gun Interdiction Initiative**

ATF developed the Youth Crime Gun Interdiction Initiative in response to increased crimes involving America’s youth. This initiative enhances the Juvenile Firearms Violence Initiative, started in 1993, and the new Illegal Firearms Trafficking Project. The Youth Crime Gun Interdiction Initiative addresses illegal sources of guns for youths by providing additional resources and research to identify and investigate those sources.

In July 1996, ATF sponsored a conference with Chiefs of Police, U.S. Attorneys, District Attorneys, and ATF Special Agents in Charge to outline the initiative, which was officially presented by the President, the Attorney

**National Tracing Center**

The ATF National Tracing Center is the only operation of its kind in the world. This facility traces firearms recovered in crimes for any Federal, state, local, or international law enforcement agency. A positive firearms trace frequently is the crucial piece of evidence linking criminals to a firearms-related crime and allowing law enforcement officials

FIREARMS TRACING		
	FY 1996	FY 1995
Requests for firearms tracing processed	116,674	79,777
Average days of response time	9.4	11.5

to make an arrest. Firearms trace information also provides investigators with leads on the origin of the crime-related firearms in their investigation. With more than 100 million records stored, the tracing center is the only repository for all Federal Firearms Licensee out-of-business records.

Specific FY 1996 National Tracing Center goals were to decrease the response time and increase the number of trace requests received through efficiency improvements involving reengineering, training, and electronic downloading. The National Tracing Center achieved all its goals for FY 1996:

- It completed a Business Process Reengineering Study to improve operations and efficiency through implementation of electronic downloading of firearms trace requests from other law enforcement agencies.
- The Center increased Federal, state and local awareness of the benefits of firearms tracing through an expanded training program deployed nationwide.
- And, it decreased the average trace response time by 2 days, despite a 46 percent increase in the number of requests for firearms traces.

## STOLEN FIREARMS

The passage of 18 U.S.C. Section 923(g)(6) requires the reporting to ATF of firearms thefts from Federal Firearms Licensees' inventories. The reports submitted to ATF detail a variety of thefts that result in Federal legal violations and include other offenses such as homicide, robbery, and assault with intent to commit murder.

The Stolen Firearms Project separates firearms thefts into two groups: thefts from interstate shipments and those from the inventory of a Federal Firearms Licensee. This project is designed to reduce the number of stolen firearms available to the criminal element by collecting and analyzing theft information and providing leads for field investigations. ATF initiated 107 investigations involving ten or more stolen firearms in FY 1995 and 158 investigations during FY 1996.

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## SAFEGUARD THE PUBLIC FROM BOMBING AND ARSON

The program Safeguard the Public from Bombing and Arson identifies and pursues the criminal misuse of explosive materials and fire.

ATF provides resources to local communities to investigate explosives incidents and arson-for-profit schemes. This program saves money for the insurance industry, and ultimately the American public, by exposing millions of dollars in fraudulent claims annually. ATF, in part, measures its success by the amount of savings to the public from proactive investigations.

## PREVENT CRIMINAL MISUSE OF EXPLOSIVES

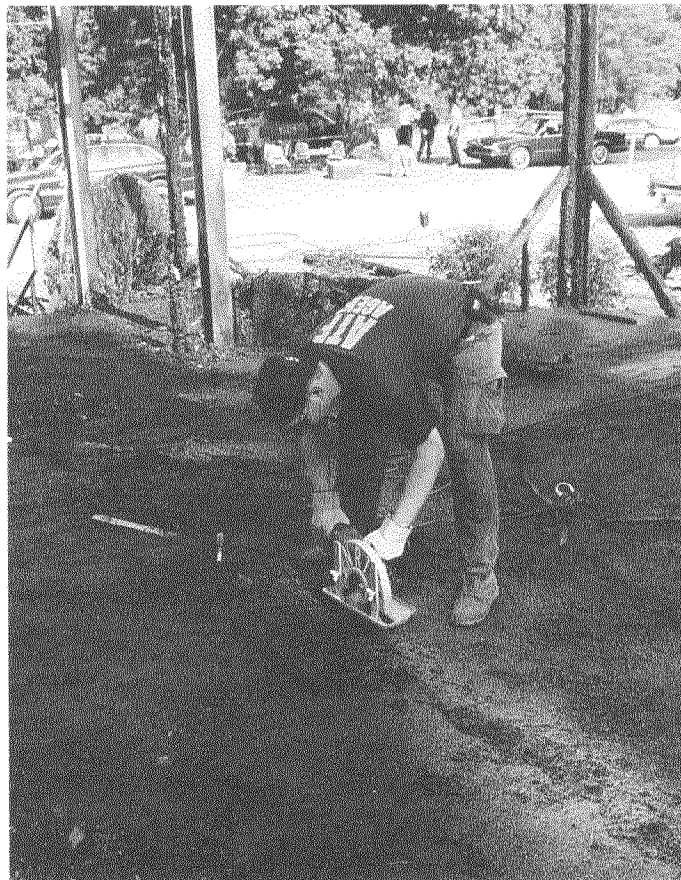
As an integral part of the Bureau's violent crime reduction strategy, ATF's arson and explosives projects focus on preventing arson and the criminal misuse of explosives, and ensuring an effective post-incident response. The Bureau maintains information on the quantities of plastic explosives possessed by individuals on or before April 24, 1996, as mandated by the Antiterrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act of 1996. In addition, ATF maintains the Explosives Incidents System, a computerized repository for historical and technical data on national explosives incidents. This system assimilates details on reported incidents helpful in determining motives. In addition, ATF is the focal point for other Federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies to initiate traces of explosives. (Annual statistical data from the Explosives Incidents System is available in ATF's *Arson and Explosives Incidents Report and Arson Case Briefs*.)

### Church Fires

ATF provides vital resources to local communities in the aftermath of arson and explosives incidents. During June 1996, in response to a dramatic increase in church arsons nationwide, ATF established a church fire major case team. The team maintained a central repository for collecting, analyzing, and disseminating information while coordinating and monitoring all aspects of each investigation. The church fire major case team became the foundation for the President's National Church Arson Task Force. ATF continues to devote special agents and supporting resources to this effort. Additionally, in FY 1996, ATF provided 138 outreach presentations to community leaders, churches, and organizations throughout the country.

To promote church arson awareness and prevention, ATF developed a *Church Threat Assessment Guide* that contains valuable information on the steps that can be taken to prevent fires at houses of worship; the steps to follow after an incident has occurred; and the toll-free numbers 1-888-ATF-FIRE and 1-888-ATF-BOMB. ATF distributed copies of the *Church Threat Assessment Guide* nationally in conjunction with the Federal Emergency Management Agency. The guide is also available to the public on the ATF web site (<http://www.atf.treas.gov>).

*"To promote church arson awareness and prevention, ATF developed a Church Threat Assessment Guide that contains valuable information on the steps that can be taken to prevent fires at houses of worship; the steps to follow after an incident has occurred; and the toll-free numbers 1-888-ATF-FIRE and 1-888-ATF-BOMB."*



**An ATF Special Agent on the church fire major case team responds to a church fire.**



ATF canine, "Charlie," sniffs for explosives at the 1996 Summer Olympics.



**Canines**

In 1989, ATF and the Connecticut State Police began a formal training program for accelerant-detecting canines to support state and local jurisdictions (accelerant-detecting canines search for liquid catalysts that can be used to speed up the spread of fire). These canines are the only accelerant-detecting canines in this country that carry a Federal certification, and must be recertified annually by ATF. Through FY 1996, a total of 56 accelerant-detecting canines were collaboratively trained and certified by ATF and the Connecticut State Police for state and local agencies. In FY 1996, ATF recertified 47 canine teams.

ATF expanded its canine efforts in 1991 through an agreement with the Department of State to train explosives-detecting canines to deploy worldwide in support of antiterrorism efforts. In FY 1996, ATF trained an additional 26 explosives-detecting canines for the Department of State. ATF's first explosives-weapons canine team became fully operational in FY 1996 and deployed for the Olympics. In conjunction with other ATF-trained foreign teams, the canine team performed 3,485 exterior searches of public areas, vehicles, loading docks, and trash/recycle containers; as well as 8,697 interior searches of lobbies, conference rooms, offices, lockers, mailrooms, and freight at the 1996 Olympic Games. ATF will add additional special agent/canine teams to San Francisco and Chicago.

ATF also entered into an agreement with the U.S. Customs Service, to use its Canine Enforcement Training Center in Front Royal, Virginia, to train both accelerant and explosives-detecting canines for foreign, Federal, state and local agencies.

CANINES		
	FY 1996	FY 1995
Accelerant-detecting canines trained for state and local law enforcement	0	12
Explosives-detecting canines trained and deployed internationally	26	23
ATF Explosives-weapons Canine Team Operational deployment	26	0
Field demonstrations	52	0

• New measures being reported in FY 1996:  
 ATF Explosives-weapons Canine Team Operational deployment  
 Field demonstrations

Statistics on operational deployment reflect the number of specific incidents or investigations responded to and not the number of actual canine searches conducted.

**Research Initiatives**

Working in conjunction with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Defense Special Weapons Agency, ATF's Explosives Technology Branch and National Laboratory Center are researching the blast effects of large car bombs. The Dipole Might project, started in 1994, is funded by the National Security Council. Its charter is to develop a computer software system to assist investigators processing the scenes of large car bombs. In FY 1995, when two large car bombs were detonated, investigators conducted a complete post-blast analysis to study bomb characteristics including explosives signature, blast effect, debris distance, and residue retrieval.

ATF is advancing the use of computerized fire modeling to calculate the physics of a fire, and how a fire develops and spreads. A relatively new tool to the enforcement community, computer modeling has proven successful in the courtroom to verify witness testimony. ATF developed a comprehensive strategy to actively expand the use of fire research and computerized fire modeling with the criminal enforcement functions. Part of this strategy is a prospectus to construct, in partnership with an institution of higher learning, a Fire Investigation and Research Center to analyze the origins and dynamics of fire as it pertains to criminal investigations.

An Explosive Taggant Study Group is reviewing the feasibility and mechanics of using taggants in explosive materials to track criminal misuse in bombings and other incidents. (A taggant is a solid, liquid or gas substance used to either identify an explosive material after a detonation, or to detect explosive materials before a detonation.) If taggants prove feasible, they could help post-blast investigators determine the origin of explosive materials.

**EFFECTIVE POST-INCIDENT RESPONSE**

Coordinated and rapid deployment of highly trained and well-equipped individuals is critical to any arson or explosives investigation. ATF employs a team approach to investigate arson and explosives incidents, using the National Response Teams, International Response Team, Field Division Response Teams, and Arson Task Forces. These teams consist of ATF special agents, auditors, explosives enforcement officers, forensic chemists, explosives and accelerant-detecting canines, fire protection engineers, and intelligence support.

National Response Teams must employ stringent standards when processing evidence at crime scenes to avoid potential mishaps. To support this activity, ATF provides a series of schools and refresher courses for special agents emphasizing appropriate evidence preservation techniques. Major course topics include securing a

*"An Explosive Taggant Study Group is reviewing the feasibility and mechanics of using taggants in explosive materials to track criminal misuse in bombing and other incidents."*

NATIONAL RESPONSE TEAMS		
	FY 1996	FY 1995
Incidents requiring National Response Team expertise	22	21
BOMBING AND ARSON		
<b>Explosives-Related</b>		
Investigations	905	910
Cases/Defendants	196/315	244/409
Arrests	255	279
<b>Arson-Related</b>		
Investigations	2,408	1,761
Cases/Defendants	220/450	238/438
Arrests	301	287
Dollars saved in fraudulent insurance claims (in millions)	\$29.8	\$19.7
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Measures reported in FY 1995 and discontinued in FY 1996: Explosives-Related indictments and convictions Arson-Related indictments and convictions</li> <li>• New measures being reported in FY 1996: Explosives-Related investigations and cases/defendants Arson-Related investigations and cases/defendants</li> </ul>		



*“ATF’s Certified Fire Investigators are the only investigators trained by a Federal law enforcement agency to qualify as expert witnesses in fire cause determinations.”*

perimeter, collecting, packaging, and the shipping of evidence samples.

ATF’s four National Response Teams can respond within 24 hours to major bombing and fire scenes anywhere in the United States. In FY 1996, ATF’s National Response Teams provided effective post-incident response in 22 incidents. The National Response Team personnel also provided technical investigative assistance for the Olympic Centennial Village bombing and the TWA Flight 800 crash. ATF also maintains an International Response Team, formed as a result of an agreement with the Department of State. The team has been deployed to such countries as Peru, Argentina, Pakistan, El Salvador, and Macedonia. Since its inception in 1991, the International Response Team has been activated 12 times for incidents involving explosives and fires, including two incidents during FY 1996.

### ARSON RESOURCES

ATF pioneered the development of local multiagency task forces designed to pool resources and expertise in areas experiencing significant arson problems. In FY 1996, ATF led formal

arson task forces in 15 major metropolitan areas throughout the United States.

A Certified Fire Investigator is critical to the success of a comprehensive post-incident response. ATF’s Certified Fire Investigators are the only investigators trained by a Federal law enforcement agency to qualify as expert witnesses in fire cause determinations. In FY 1996, there were 53 of these investigators stationed throughout the United States. Fifteen investigators completed their two-year training and were certified during FY 1996, and an additional 29 investigator candidates began training and will be certified during FY 1998.

ATF’s Certified Fire Investigators played a major role in the church arson investigations, and assisted with the fire investigation at the Department of the Treasury Building in June 1996.

### ARSON AUDITS

Because many arson crimes involve insurance fraud, these investigations often require complex financial analysis. ATF’s Office of Science and Information Technology supports the task forces by providing financial auditing services, information systems and equipment, and high-speed data communications. This includes Internet access to facilitate the research and exchange of national and international technical data and intelligence.

FIRE CAUSE AND ORIGIN				
	FY 1996		FY 1995	
Incidents	1,945		1,437	
Killed	189		173	
Injured	521		454	
Property Damage (in millions)	\$518.7		\$509.2	
Cause	#	%	#	%
Arson	920	47	753	52
Accidental	679	35	430	30
Undetermined	346	18	254	18
Total	1,945	100	1,437	100

• New measures being reported in FY 1996: Incidents, Killed, Injured, Property Damage, Cause, Arson, Accidental, and Undetermined

## IMPRISON VIOLENT OFFENDERS

The program Imprison Violent Offenders investigates, arrests, and recommends for prosecution violent criminals who violate firearms and explosives laws in their criminal activity.

### ACHILLES

To remove the most dangerous armed career criminals and armed drug trafficking organizations from the streets, the Achilles Project uses specific Federal firearms laws that provide for extended mandatory periods of incarceration. Possessing and using firearms becomes the Achilles heel of violent criminals. They are exposed to lengthy prison sentences under Federal laws, and the firearms they possess yield valuable information regarding previous criminal acts and criminal associates. Further, through firearms tracing, the illicit firearms sources for these violent criminals are investigated under ATF's Illegal Firearms Trafficking Project. Achilles Project goals are to incarcerate armed violent criminals for long periods of time to prevent future crimes of violence and avoid the future costs of those crimes to the American public.

### VIOLENT OFFENDERS

The Violent Offender Project serves as an early safety warning and notification system for law enforcement officers in the field. ATF personnel enter into the National Crime Information Center system pre-identified violent career criminals who are currently free in society. When any law enforcement official encounters one of these individuals, and runs a National Crime Information Center check on the individual, the officer will receive a

ACHILLES		
	FY 1996	FY 1995
Cases forwarded for prosecution	2,241	3,064
Defendants recommended for prosecution	3,327	4,567
Defendants sentenced	440	617
Total years of sentences	5,104	6,139
Total life sentences received by defendants	9	2
Armed career criminals currently in prison	1,889	1,730
Future crimes avoided <sup>1</sup>	302,240	573,000
Crime-related costs avoided (in billions) <sup>1</sup>	\$ .7	\$ 1.3

NOTE: Statistics do not have a relationship in the same fiscal year because the time period from the investigation being initiated until sentencing may span several years.

<sup>1</sup> Future crimes avoided and crime-related costs avoided between 1995 and 1996 are based on the 1991 ATF study "Protecting America," which examines the effectiveness of the Federal Armed Career Criminal Statute and ATF's Achilles program. Cost and benefit formulas were developed from this study and are endorsed by the academic and research community and a cross-section of nationwide state and local law enforcement.

The reduction in future crimes and crime-related costs avoided between 1995 and 1996 is attributable to a new method of measurement instituted in FY 1996. In FY 1996, this project is reporting crimes and crime-related costs avoided for only FY 1996, rather than over the course of an armed career criminal's entire 18-year sentence, which was the method used for FY 1995.

- New measures being reported in FY 1996:  
Armed career criminals currently in prison  
Total life sentences received by defendants
- Measures reported in FY 1995 and discontinued in FY 1996:  
Investigations initiated  
Defendants indicted  
Defendants convicted

VIOLENT OFFENDERS		
	FY 1996	FY 1995
Subjects encountered while in possession of a firearm	18	32

*“The Violent Offender Project serves as an early safety warning and notification system for law enforcement officers in the field.”*

safety advisory that the person is a career offender, and that ATF should be contacted if the offender is in possession of a firearm. This database currently contains 1,000 offenders.

In FY 1996, each violent offender encountered with a firearm had an average of 5.7 prior felony convictions and 30.4 years in prior prison sentences. In addition, 8 of the 18 subjects had previously received life sentences, but were released or paroled early. If convicted, these criminals receive mandatory sentencing of 15 years to life in prison, without the possibility of probation or parole.

ATF is evaluating this project to determine if modifications are needed and to identify more efficient methods to accomplish the same goal. To assist in this evaluation process, ATF requested an independent audit and review by the Department of the Treasury Office of Inspector General, which began at the end of FY 1996.

## CEASEFIRE

CEASEFIRE uses state-of-the-art ballistics technology to increase the efficiency of firearms examiners, reduce the future costs associated with the hiring of additional firearms examiners, and increase the solution rate of shooting incidents. This technology, the Integrated Ballistic Identification System, consists of “Bulletproof,” a database module which examines projectiles, and “Brasscatcher,” a database module which examines shell casings. Specific goals for FY 1996 were to deploy the CEASEFIRE technology to ten new sites and increase use of the technology. The overall FY 1996 goals of the CEASEFIRE project were accomplished.

CEASEFIRE		
	FY 1996	FY 1995
Bullets entered into the system	22,179	2,443
Ballistic matches made with projectiles	55	77
Shell casings entered into the system	26,390	1,652
Ballistic matches made with shell casings	188	151

New measures being reported in FY 1996:

- The use of Bulletproof by firearms examiners increased 807%. (Bullets entered into the system increased from 2,443 in FY 1995 to 22,179 in FY 1996.)
- The use of Brasscatcher by firearms examiners increased 1,498%. (Shell casings entered into the system increased from 1,652 in FY 1995 to 26,390 in FY 1996.)
- With the Integrated Ballistic Identification System 13.5 Firearms Examiners were able to accomplish work loads equivalent to the efforts of 7,465 Firearms Examiners not having the Integrated Ballistic Identification System.
- With the Integrated Ballistic Identification System Firearms Examiner productivity/efficiency was increased 552 times.
- CEASEFIRE was expanded to ten new sites (East Lansing Michigan; Portland, Oregon; Birmingham, Alabama; Prince George's County, Maryland; Newark, New Jersey; Des Moines, Iowa; Detroit, Michigan; Contra Costa and Sacramento, California; and Bridgeport, Michigan).

## DIVERSION OF INVESTIGATIVE RESOURCES DURING FY 1996

An initial review of the preceding program discussion and analysis for the *Reduce Violent Crime* activity suggests that, in some areas, case and defendant levels decreased in FY 1996 when compared to FY 1995. However, significant numbers of special agents were diverted from conducting investigations to other important duties in FY 1996; for special agents actually performing case work in FY 1996, the ratio for cases and defendants remained stable with FY 1995 outputs.

During FY 1996, ATF special agents performed duties in support of the following additional efforts unrelated to recurring case work:

- over 650 special agents were assigned to protection details for Presidential campaign, United Nations, and Olympics security;
- approximately 100 special agents were assigned exclusively to investigate fires at places of worship/churches; and
- special agents are continuously assigned on a rotational basis to specialized positions, including coordinators for Project LEAD, Violent Offenders, Project Outreach and GREAT, as well as Public Information Officers, Intelligence Officers, Certified Firearms Instructors, and Special Response Team members.



***Director John Magaw accompanied Department of the Treasury Secretary Robert Rubin at a press conference announcing Detroit Police Department's acquisition of the state-of-the-art Integrated Ballistic Identification System, under ATF's CEASEFIRE program. Touring the Detroit Police Department's gun vault after the announcement are (from left) Isaiah McKinnon, Chief of Police; Dennis Archer, Mayor of Detroit; Rep. John Conyers, Jr., D-Detroit; Secretary Rubin; and Director Magaw.***