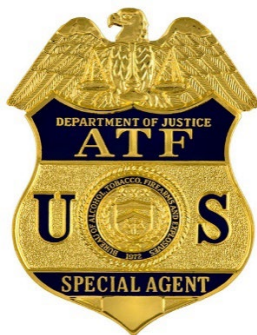


Boston FIRST

(Firearm Intelligence Review and Shooter Targeting)

Task Force



The Boston First Task Force was developed to facilitate collaboration among law enforcement and intelligence units in Suffolk County with a focus on combatting violent gun crime in Boston. Over the last three calendar years (2019-2021), Boston has seen an increase in non-fatal shootings of approximately 5.25% and an increase in single victim shooting incidents of approximately 11.50%. The Boston FIRST (Firearm Intelligence Review and Shooter Targeting) Task Force was initiated by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF), the Suffolk County District Attorney's Office, the U.S Attorney's Office for the District of Massachusetts, the Boston Police Department (BPD) and the Suffolk County Sheriff's Department.

The BPD's Firearms Analysis Unit (FAU) comprehensively enters digital images of cartridge casings for analysis using ATF's National Integrated Ballistic Information Network (NIBIN). This includes images of evidence (casings recovered from shooting incidents), as well as images of casings obtained from test-fires of recovered firearms. In 2021, the FAU entered 1,498 images of cartridge casings; 660 of which were from test-fires. These submissions resulted in 464 leads where NIBIN ballistically matched a firearm to a prior shooting or shootings, including 52 cross-jurisdictional leads (containing a correlation to a shooting incident and/or firearm recovery that occurred outside of Boston).

In 2021, Boston PD recovered over 900 firearms that resulted in 112 leads that were correlated to prior shooting incidents. In reviewing the firearm trace data for those 112 firearms as provided by ATF's National Tracing Center (NTC), 76 were successfully traced to original purchases stemming from Massachusetts (accounting for approximately 10.5%) and 18 additional states.

Members of Boston FIRST regularly meet to conduct comprehensive reviews of these shooting incidents and firearm recoveries to determine the most effective investigative strategies to employ in identifying the shooter(s) and/or source(s) for the firearms used in the incidents. It is anticipated that the Boston FIRST Task Force will review approximately 800 shooting incidents leading to 100 recovered firearms that are ballistically matched by NIBIN to prior shooting incidents which will result in approximately 400 leads for investigators to follow. The development of the Boston FIRST Task Force is the most effective method to focus investigative efforts on the most impactful crimes afflicting the city by efficiently utilizing the specialized resources of the various agencies and departments that are committed to combatting violent crime in Boston.