



BUREAU OF ALCOHOL, TOBACCO, FIREARMS AND EXPLOSIVES



MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING REGARDING THE eTRACE INTERNET BASED FIREARM TRACING APPLICATION

Memorandum of Understanding between the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives and the Foreign Law Enforcement Agency

Section I. Purpose and Authority

This memorandum of understanding (MOU) sets forth the conditions and understanding between the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) and the Foreign Law Enforcement Agency (hereinafter the "Participants"), with the intent to establish a partnership with regard to policy and procedures relative to the access and utilization of eTrace services that is made available to law enforcement agencies by ATF.

Section II. Background

The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) is a law enforcement agency within the United States Department of Justice, dedicated to preventing terrorism, reducing violent crime and protecting the nation. In its efforts to enhance homeland security in the United States, ATF works collaboratively and in partnership with foreign governments and law enforcement agencies in order to assist friendly nations and allies in the fight against international criminal organizations whose criminal enterprise poses a threat to the citizenry and global peace.

To combat this threat, ATF uses its unique capabilities, which includes eTrace. This system is a paperless firearm trace submission system and trace analysis computer module that is readily accessible through a connection to the World Wide Web (Internet). This internet application provides the necessary utilities for submitting, retrieving, storing and querying firearms trace related information relative to particular jurisdictions, thereby allowing for the systematic tracing of firearms that may have been recovered from crime scenes. Analysis of firearms trace data can assist in the identification of firearms trafficking patterns and geographic profiling for criminal hot spots and possible sources of illicit firearms.

Law Enforcement agencies that make a commitment to comprehensive and systematic crime gun tracing will be able to effectively use the eTrace firearms trace information platform for developing the best investigative strategies for the reduction of firearms-related crime and violence.

Section III. Scope

This MOU addresses access to and utilization of eTrace, including the designations of primary and alternate points of contact (POCs) for the Participants to this MOU. The Participants' points of contact are expected to follow the procedures set forth in this MOU. The Foreign Law Enforcement Agency's point of contact is to identify individuals within Foreign Law Enforcement Agency who require eTrace system access, periodically validate the list of users, and notify ATF's National Tracing Center (NTC) immediately in the event that it becomes necessary to revoke or suspend a user's account.

Section IV. Interagency Communications

Unless otherwise specified elsewhere in this MOU, the Foreign Law Enforcement Agency and ATF intend to have a principal point of contact within each organization coordinate all communications and matters relating to this MOU. The designated points of contact (POCs) are as follows:

ATF: Chief, National Tracing Center
Address: 244 Needy Road
Martinsburg, WV 25401
(800) 788-7133

	Designated ATF Contact	Alternate ATF Contact
Name:		
Title:		
Phone #:		

Host Government Entity: Foreign Law Enforcement Agency
Address:

	Designated Host Government Contact Name	Alternate Designated Host Government Contact Name
Name:		
Title:		
Phone #:		

Section V. Procedures

A. Foreign Law Enforcement Agency is to:

1. Appoint a primary and alternate point of contact within the agency. The above appointed individuals are to be responsible for providing and maintaining a list of all personnel within their agency that will require access to eTrace.
2. Complete "Attachment A" (Agency Approved eTrace Users) of this MOU. No individual is to be given access to eTrace without being listed on Attachment A as an agency approved user.
3. Immediately notify the ATF National Tracing Center (NTC) in the event that an individual's eTrace account needs to be suspended or revoked. Such suspension or revocation might be necessary for any number of reasons, to include (but not be limited to): employee transfer, retirement, or release from employment. Initial notification for account revocation can be made by contacting the eTrace Customer Support Group at telephone number (304) 260-1540
4. Refer any technical questions relating to the use, operation, or resolution of technical difficulties involving eTrace to the NTC's eTrace Customer Support Group at telephone number (304) 260-1540.
5. Mail the original completed and signed MOU and pertinent attachments to the ATF National Tracing Center at the following address:

Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives
National Tracing Center Division
244 Needy Road
Martinsburg, WV 25401
Attn: eTrace Customer Service Group

B. The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, National Tracing Center, is to:

1. Upon receipt of this signed MOU, initiate communication with the designated POC for the Foreign Law Enforcement Agency and provide detailed instructions on the process of requesting and receiving an eTrace user account.
2. Review all applications for eTrace access in a timely manner and facilitate the provisioning of accounts to include relative user identifiers and passwords. Once accounts are activated, a representative from the NTC is to contact each individual user and provide them with their account information.

3. Upon receipt of a request for account revocation, immediately deactivate the pertinent user account.

4. Provide the Foreign Law Enforcement Agency's and ATF's designated POC with an annual (or upon request) listing of agency approved eTrace users for review and auditing purposes.

Section VI. Conditions

Both ATF and the Foreign Law Enforcement Agency acknowledge their understanding that the eTrace application is intended "FOR OFFICIAL LAW ENFORCEMENT USE ONLY" and may not be used for any purpose other than a law enforcement investigation or prosecution.

The Participants acknowledge that the eTrace application may only be accessed and utilized from an official duty station and/or alternate task force location. An exception may apply under isolated and stringent circumstances, when eTrace can be accessed from an alternate location, specifically in furtherance of law enforcement activities.

The Participants acknowledge that premature disclosure of certain firearms trace information can reasonably be expected to interfere with pending or prospective law enforcement proceedings. This law enforcement sensitive information includes data that can link a traced firearm to: the location of a crime; the Federal firearms licensee; retail purchaser or possessor of a traced firearm; or to firearms trafficking patterns involving a traced firearm. Therefore, Foreign Law Enforcement Agency may not disclose law enforcement sensitive firearms trace information generated pursuant to this MOU to a third party without the consent of ATF. Prior to the release of any sensitive firearms trace information to a third party, a Participant proposing such release is to notify the other Participant.

The Foreign Law Enforcement Agency intends to notify the ATF international affairs office prior to the initiation of any independent international firearms trafficking investigation arising or developed from firearms tracing data obtained via eTrace. This critical step allows for the further collaboration of valuable investigative information and assists in ensuring the effectiveness and overall safety of investigating officers.

The Participants acknowledge that a "crime gun" is defined as "any firearm that is illegally possessed, used in a crime, taken into police custody, or suspected by law enforcement officials of having been used in a crime or act of terrorism".

The Participants acknowledge that the ATF National Tracing Center is the central recipient and repository of all information entered into the eTrace application relative to crime gun recoveries. The Foreign Law Enforcement Agency is to make every effort to provide complete and accurate firearm trace-related information to include: recovery location, possessor information and associated individuals.

Section VII. Conclusion

It is the intent of the Participants that this MOU promote coordination, cooperation and the mutual conduct of enforcement and research activities relative to the eTrace application, which they expect to result in the successful prosecution of illegal firearm crimes as well as the development of an accurate picture of the illegal firearms market and the inception of new strategies to effectively interrupt this market and impact the rate of firearm related violence.

This MOU is effective upon the date of the last signature by the authorized representatives of the Participants and is intended to remain effective until discontinued in writing by either Participant. Discontinuation by either Participant is intended to result in the revocation of all eTrace accounts provided under this MOU. This MOU may be modified by the Participants in writing.

In witness whereof, the Participants have signed this MOU.

Signature Date
(Chief Law Enforcement Official)

Signature Date
(ATF - Special Agent in Charge or designee)

Name

Name

Title

Title

Agency/Department

ATF Field Division



BUREAU OF ALCOHOL, TOBACCO, FIREARMS AND EXPLOSIVES



**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING - ATTACHMENT: A
AUTHORIZED USERS OF ETRACE**

**Participating Law Enforcement
Agency Name:**

Agency Address:

	Designated Law Enforcement Agency Primary POC	Designated Law Enforcement Agency Alternate POC
Name:		
Title:		
Phone #:		
Email Address:		
Signature:		
Date:		

AUTHORIZED eTRACE USERS

NAME	TITLE	Email ADDRESS	PHONE #