

# Gun Smuggling and Illegal Gun Transactions



# Assault Weapons

October 29, 2026



# Traditional Firearms

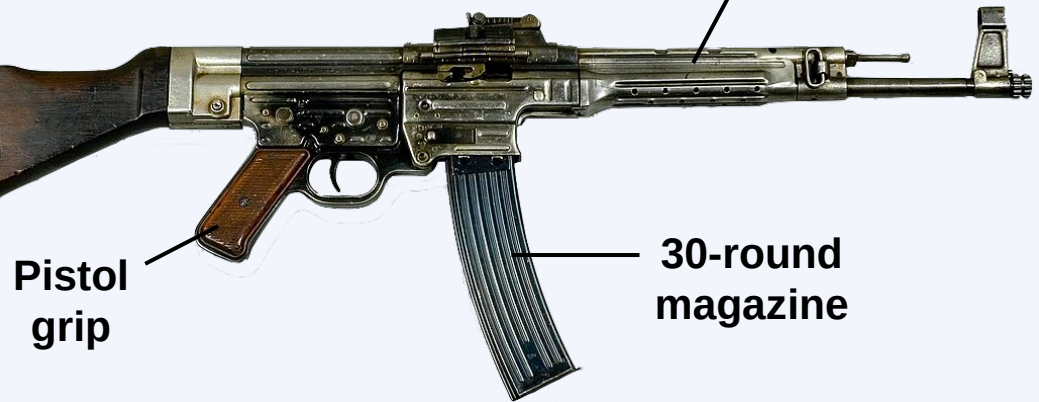


# Military Weapons

Thompson (1921)



Sturmgewehr 44 (1944)



# After World War II



**Sturmgewehr 44  
(1944)**



**AK-47 (1947)**



**FN FAL (1953)**



**HK G3 (1958)**



**AR-15 (1964)**

# Industry Marketing



Unusual for a rifle, the AR-15 has a hinged barrel that breaks open like a shotgun for easy cleaning and removal of parts. Entire gun can be field-stripped with no special tools other than the point of a cartridge and the rifle's own firing pin.

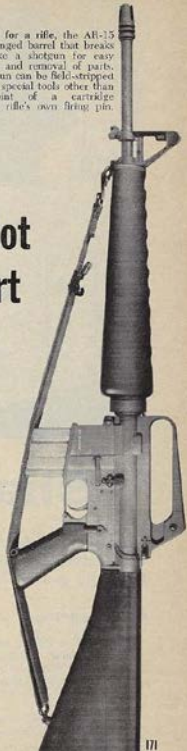
## Now You Can Buy a Hot Combat Rifle for Sport

**O**UT of the jungles of Vietnam comes a powerful, battle-proven rifle ready for sale to civilians for hunting and target use. It's the Army's rakish AR-15, famed for its success in guerrilla fighting. The sport version is an exact duplicate of the military weapon except for one alteration. Because machine guns are illegal for civilian use, the action is semiautomatic rather than fully automatic. It fires as fast as you can pull the trigger, but won't keep firing if you hold the trigger back.

Originally developed by Armalite and now sold by Colt, the jaunty AR-15 looks like a cross between a G-man's submachine gun and something out of Buck Rogers' 25th Century. It has both a pistol grip and conventional butt stock; can be fired from either the waist or shoulder. There's a handy carrying handle on top that doubles as a precision rear peep sight. A flash suppressor on the muzzle is a hangover from military needs.

Highly accurate, the AR-15 sporter fires the hot new .223 Remington cartridge, a soft-point civilian version of the famous full-jacketed 5.56mm military round. The combination of small caliber and high muzzle velocity—3,300 feet per second—gives the .223 Remington the same deadly precision found in high-velocity varmint cartridges. In tests, the gun consistently shoots three-inch or better groups at 100 yards—and that's good shooting.

Weighing only 6½ pounds, the rifle is light, compact, and easy to handle. It has a 20-inch barrel, is 39 inches overall. Most similar rifles left over seven pounds and are several inches longer. The magazine holds 20 rounds, but can be reduced to five with a spacer for certain hunting requirements. Price: \$189.50. Colt's Firearms, Hartford, Conn.—Paul Wahl.



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## THE COMPLETE BOOK OF ASSAULT RIFLES

1986 \$3.95  
62 10759

**Special Section**  
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**TO ALL ASSAULT RIFLES**  
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**BUYING AND SHOOTING**  
**COMBAT-PROVEN RIFLES**  
**WITH LETHAL FIREPOWER!**

**20 or 30-ROUND**  
**CAPABILITY IN BURSTS**  
**OR SINGLE SHOT WITH**  
**DEADLY ACCURACY!**

**GUN TESTS:**  
SAR 48 • Valmet Petro • M16A2  
Korea's Dee Woo K-2 • FN/FNC  
Austria's Steyr AUG • Israel's Galil  
Brazil's BM-59 • Belgium's CAL  
M-1 .30 Cal Carbine • Chinese AKS

**BEST IN A**  
**FIREFIGHT?**  
**5.56mm Vs.**  
**7.62mm Ammo**

**Combat-Proven**  
**in Vietnam:**  
**M16 and AR-15**

**One Of The World's**  
**Most Popular ARs:**  
**The FN-FAL**

**U.S. ARMY'S NEW-RIFLE DILEMMA:**  
**Does 3-Shot Burst Fire Replace Marksmanship?**





## The Gun Digest Book Of ASSAULT WEAPONS

Edited by Jack Lewis

**UZI**

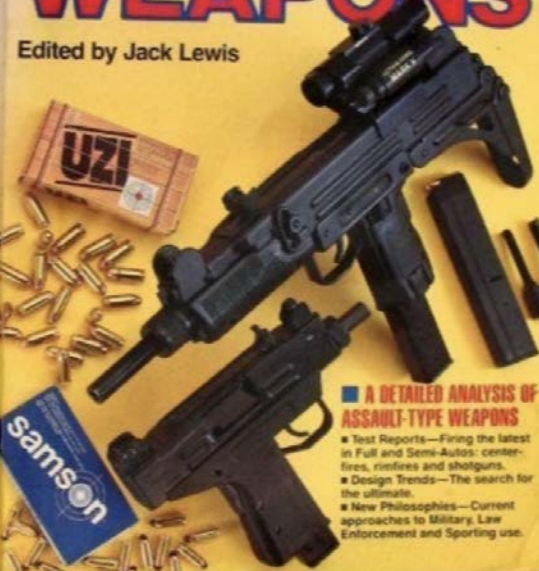
**ULTIMATE**  
**SNIPER CARTRIDGE:**  
**THE DEADLY**  
**7.62mm GLASER**

**ASSAULT RIFLE**  
**SHOOTOUT:**  
**CAR-15 Vs. MINI-14**

**A DETAILED ANALYSIS OF**  
**ASSAULT-TYPE WEAPONS**

- Test Reports—Firing the latest in Full and Semi-Autos: center-fires, rimfires and shotguns.
- Design Trends—The search for the ultimate.
- New Philosophies—Current approaches to Military, Law Enforcement and Sporting use.

**samson**



# The First Assault Weapons Bans

**1989:** After a mass shooting at an elementary school involving a Chinese AK-47, California banned several assault weapons **by name**.

Other states followed suit, but manufacturers simply renamed their guns to continue selling them.



# Defining Military -Style Features

**July 1989:** The ATF published a memo noting that, compared to “sporting” rifles, military-style rifles are generally 1) semi-automatic, 2) accept detachable magazines and 3) have other military-style features, including:

- folding or collapsible stocks
- pistol grips
- bayonet mounts
- flash suppressors

 **DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY**  
BUREAU OF ALCOHOL, TOBACCO AND FIREARMS  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20226

JUL 06 1989

MEMORANDUM TO: Director

FROM: Associate Director (Compliance Operations)

SUBJECT: Report and Recommendation on the  
Importability of Certain Semiautomatic Rifles

The working group has completed its evaluation of the semiautomatic rifles whose importation was suspended pending a determination as to whether these weapons are, as required by 18 U.S.C. § 925(d)(3), of a type "generally recognized as particularly suitable for or readily adaptable to sporting purposes".

Attached for your review and approval is the report and recommendation on the importability of these rifles.

  
Daniel Black

Attachment

Approved:  7/6/89

Disapprove: \_\_\_\_\_

Page 1

Report and Recommendation on the Importability of Certain Semiautomatic Rifles

# The Federal Assault Weapons Ban

**1994:** Congress enacted the federal assault weapons ban, prohibiting:

- Certain firearms by name
- Semi-automatic rifles, shotguns, and pistols with military-style features
- Magazines that hold over 10 rounds of ammunition.



# Firearm Trafficking, Theft, and Crime Gun Intelligence

October 29, 2026



# Agenda

1

What is gun trafficking?

2

Understanding Gun Trafficking Nationally and in New Mexico

3

Firearm Theft

4

Crime Gun Intelligence

# What is gun trafficking?

**Gun trafficking is movement of firearms into the illegal market for a criminal purpose or possession.**

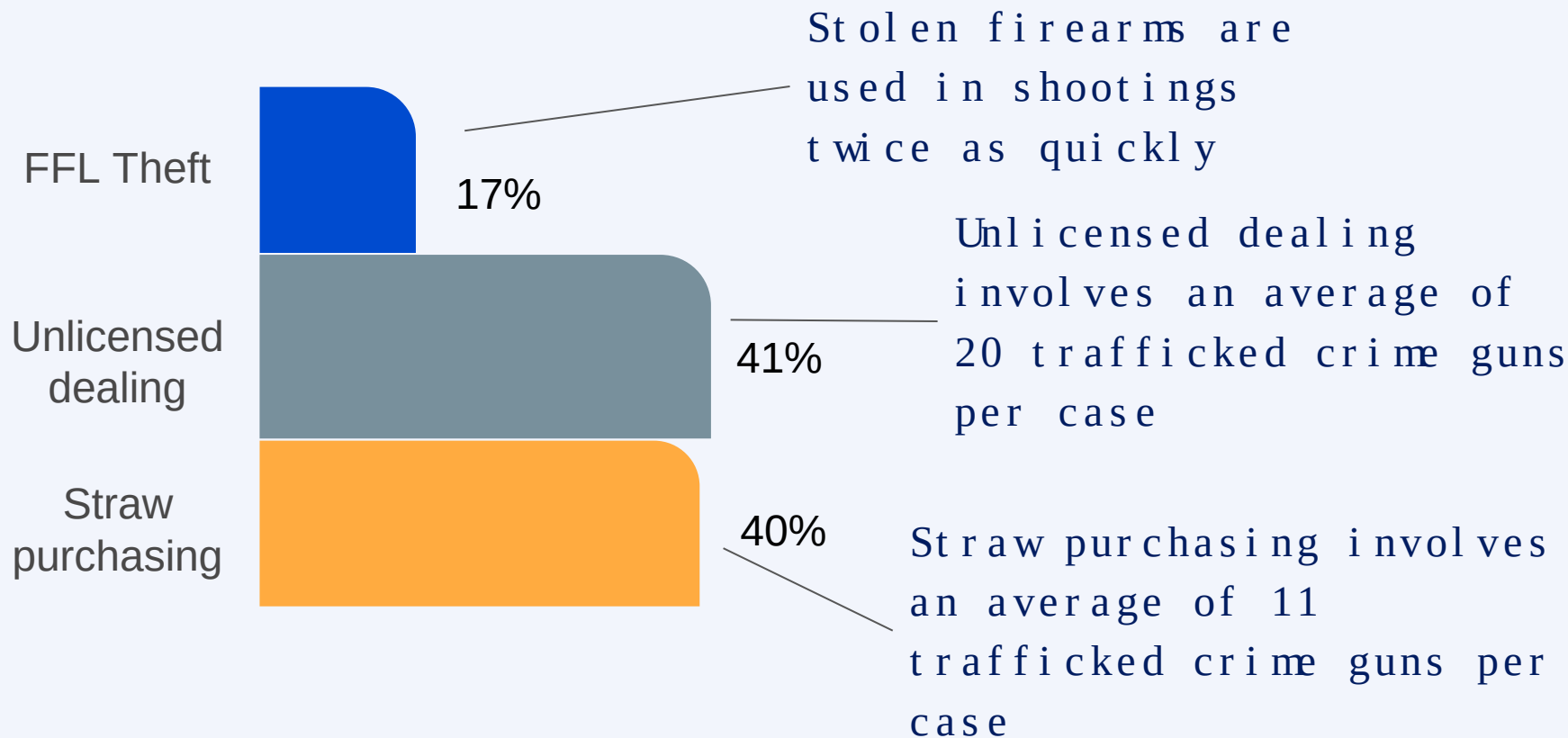
Between 2023 and 2025, more than **1.22 million crime guns** were recovered in the U.S. that originated from a sale at a licensed dealer. There is strong evidence these guns were trafficked:

- 43% of these crime guns had a “time-to-crime” less than three years.
- Between 2017 and 2021, 87% of crime guns were recovered NOT in the possession of the original purchaser.
- 96% of all crime guns originate from a purchase from an FFL

# How Trafficking Fuels Violent Crime

- 88% of end-recipients of trafficked crime guns are prohibited from purchasing firearms legally
- Nearly 15% of ATF trafficking investigations involve at least one shooting
- Shootings are associated with 24% of trafficking cases involving straw purchasers and 16% of cases involving unlicensed dealers
- Violent Crime: 28% of trafficking investigations were linked to drug offenses, including drug trafficking, 19% were linked to agg assaults, 11% were linked to homicides, and 9% were linked to attempted homicides

# Top Trafficking Methods



# Trafficking in New Mexico

- **NM has many crime guns and many gun crimes**, for its population size.
  - NM ranked 11th in the country for most crime guns recovered per 100,000 people.
  - NM also has the 5th highest rate of firearm homicides and the 6th highest rate of injuries from firearm assaults.
- **Most of New Mexico's crime guns come from FFLs operating in NM.**
  - Between 2023 and 2025, 13,507 crime guns were recovered in the state. **78% of crime guns were sold by in-state FFLs.**
- **There's a strong likelihood that many of the crime guns recovered in New Mexico were trafficked.**
  - 41% of crime guns had a Time-To-Crime of less than three years.
  - 89% were recovered in the possession of someone other than the purchaser

# Trafficking Example

## Unlicensed Dealing

- An individual purchased 79 firearms, from a single gun store over a 3.5 year period.
  - Between Sept 2021 and March 2023: 54 firearms, 17 of which were lower receivers, were purchased.
  - Between January 2024 and December 2024 23 firearms were purchased, including 8 identical lower receivers and 7 Glock pistols.

**During at least a portion of this time, the trafficker was an employee of a licensed gun store.**



Note: image generated by Gemini Workspace AI

# Trafficking Example

- **The trafficker was illegally manufacturing and selling firearms without a license...and in some instances was conducting these illegal sales from a licensed gun store:**
  - January 23, 2024: th trafficker directs an ATF UC Agent to meet him at the licensed gun store to complete the purchase of an AK-style assault rifle he manufactured. The firearm does NOT contain required markings AND no required paperwork or background check is conducted.
  - February 13, 2024: the trafficker directs the ATF UC Agent to meet him at at the licensed gun store to complete the purchase of a Rifle Dynamics AK-style assault rifle. The firearm does NOT contain required markings, and is sold “off-book”.



Note: image generated by Gemini Workspace AI

# Trafficking Example

**By March 2025, 11 firearms were recovered in crimes:**

- Average TTC: 553 days (1.5 years)
  - 5 recovered with a TTC less than 1 year (61 and 67 days)
- 7 recovered in Albuquerque
- 7 assault rifles
- 2 unregistered NFA weapons

**Crimes included drug trafficking, homicide, unlicensed dealing, firearm trafficking to Mexico.**

# Trafficking Example

- On April 10, 2025, a search warrant was served on the trafficker's residence. According to the search warrant, 11 unmarked and unregistered silencers, 4 suspected machineguns, and 56 machinegun conversion devices were recovered. **Additionally, "Bulldog Customer Tags" were also found.**
- The trafficker pled guilty on January 30, 2026 to trafficking, possession of a machinegun, and possession of unregistered firearms.
- The gun store that sold 79 firearms and allowed trafficking activity from their premise remains open.

losives

## Receipt for Property

|                                                  |                                                 |
|--------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|
| Case/Inspection Title                            | Office                                          |
|                                                  | AT                                              |
| el C+NE<br>no NM                                 | Recipient: (name, title, address)<br>ATF        |
|                                                  | Basis for Transfer or Seizure<br>Search Warrant |
| Description of Property<br>Bulldog customer tags |                                                 |

Note: image generated by Gemini Workspace AI

# Firearms Stolen from Gun Stores

ATF requires FFLs to report all thefts (burglary, robbery, larceny) within 48 hours of discovery.

- **Between 2023 and 2025, NM FFLs reported 23 thefts involving 122 firearms.**

ATF requires FFLs to report all missing firearms within 48 hours of discovery.

- **Between 2023 and 2025, NM FFLs completed 33 inventory loss reports for 153 firearms.**

**Firearms stolen from FFLs are used in shootings twice as quickly as non-stolen firearms.**

*There are no federal laws or regulations that mandate security measures for FFLs.*

# Firearms Stolen from Homes and Cars

There is no federal law requiring private citizens to report stolen firearms. When they do report it, the firearm information is entered into the FBI NCIC system. According to NCIC data from 2019 to 2023:

- **An average of 2,187 firearms were reported stolen annually in New Mexico.**
  - NM ranked 11th in the U.S. for most private party firearm thefts annually.

When firearms are stolen from private citizens they are almost always recovered in the same state.

- **3,081 stolen firearms were recovered in NM; 91% of these were stolen in NM.**

# Crime Gun Intelligence

All available data and information utilized to detect, identify, and investigate gun crime, including:

- Trace Data
- NIBIN Leads
- Multiple Sales Reports
- Local Record Management System (RMS) case reports

**CGI is leveraged to promote efficient and effective investigation of firearm-related crime. By utilizing CGI, law enforcement is able to link seemingly unrelated shooting incidents, identify firearm trafficking trends and perpetrators, and ultimately produce crucial investigative leads. CGI provides precision in combating violent crime.**

# Crime Gun Intelligence: Tracing

- Tracing allows law enforcement to identify the first retail purchaser of a gun recovered at a crime scene, which provides a key investigative lead for law enforcement.
- Tracing is a systematic process of tracking the movement of a firearm from the original manufacturer/importer through the distribution chain, to retail FFL, and first known purchaser.
- Tracing is conducted through a free web based application known as [eTrace](#).
- Critical to opt into Collective Data Sharing (CDS)



# Crime Gun Intelligence: NIBIN



**Through NIBIN, These Shootings Are Linked to the Same Firearm.**

# Crime Gun Intelligence: NIBIN

- Identifies and analyzes the unique markings that a firearm imprints on a casing when fired.
- Two types of evidence can be entered into NIBIN:
  - **Fired Cartridge Casings (FCC) recovered from a shooting scene**
  - **Recovered Crime guns test fired and entered into NIBIN.**
- Analysis and comparison of all entered ballistic evidence can be completed by state/local law enforcement, if they have the equipment, or by ATF.
- A lead can be between casings recovered at multiple crime scenes or between casings recovered at a crime scene and a crime gun.
- NIBIN data is maintained on an **ATF web based application, NESS**. This system is free to all LEAs.



# Tracing vs NIBIN

## Tracing Identifies:

- WHO: The FFL that sold the crime gun, the purchaser who bought it, and the end possessor who used it.
- WHAT: The crime the firearm was used in.
- WHEN: TTC
- WHERE: The location the crime gun was recovered.

## NIBIN Identifies:

- Whether the firearm has been used in a shooting.
- TTFS
- Violence associated with the crime gun - how many shootings it is linked to.
- Any connections between otherwise unrelated shootings/cases
- Investigative Leads

NIBIN:

Number of  
Shootings

**Proactive Policing: Identify, Investigate, and  
Stop the trigger-puller**

| # of Shootings | % of Leads w/<br>Recovered Gun | % of Leads w/out<br>Recovered gun |
|----------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1              | 65.4%                          | 2.6%                              |
| 2              | 19.3%                          | 61.6%                             |
| 3              | 7.8%                           | 19.6%                             |
| 4              | 3.5%                           | 8%                                |
| 5              | 1.8%                           | 3.7%                              |
| More than 5    | 2.2%                           | 4.5%                              |

**97% of trigger pullers will shoot again**



# NIBIN:

## Recovered Pistols

### TTFS vs TTC

**TTFS: The time between the last known purchase to the first known shooting.**

Between 2019 and 2023, 828,514 pistols were recovered, traced to a purchaser, and test fired. 113,359 (14%) were linked to at least one shooting.

**Median TTFS=1.9 years, Median TTC: 2.6 years.**

**Less Than 1 Year:**

- TTFS: 35%
- TTC: 27%

**Less than 3 Years:**

- TTFS: 61%
- TTC: 54%

**Between 2021 and 2025, NM LEAs recovered and test fired 12,378 firearms and nearly 21% were connected to a shooting.**



# Crime Gun Intelligence: Use Data to Identify Traffickers and Suppliers

- Law enforcement agencies should trace every crime gun, opt into trace data sharing, and enter all eligible recovered crime guns and fired cartridge casings into NIBIN.
  - Some states have enacted laws to require use of eTrace & NIBIN (but legislation is not required).
- Law enforcement should analyze this data to determine which gun dealers are responsible for selling high numbers of crime guns recovered in their community.
  - Focus on the percentage of crime gun trace requests to each dealer, average TTC for trace requests, etc.
- This data and analysis allows state and local leaders to identify which dealers to focus on for accountability measures.



# Questions ?