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Idaho State Police Forensic Services

# NIBIN QUALITY MANUAL

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## Revision History

Revision #	Description of Changes
1	Original Version
2	Updates to reflect NIBIN unit addition to the ISPFS Coeur d'Alene Laboratory. Specifications related to the differences between the CDA and Meridian site added, and existing policies updated.

# 1.0 Introduction

## 1.1 Background

In 1999, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives (ATF) established the National Integrated Ballistic Information Network (NIBIN) to provide federal, state, and local partner agencies with an automated ballistic imaging system. Integrated Ballistic Identification Systems (IBIS) technology takes digital images of cartridge cases from crime scenes or a crime gun exemplar/test fire. Within hours, IBIS compares those images against previous NIBIN entries. If a high-confidence candidate emerges, firearms examiners can compare the original physical evidence microscopically to confirm the match. This is a NIBIN “lead,” or the linking of two (or more) different investigations.

The goals of the NIBIN program are to reduce firearms violence through promoting a comprehensive evidence collection, timely entry and correlation of evidence, providing investigative support, and ongoing facilitation of feedback regarding NIBIN program. As an ATF-NIBIN partner, the Idaho State Police Forensic Services is committed to assisting the ATF in the NIBIN program.

Currently ISPFS has two NIBIN terminals that can be accessed. The Coeur d’Alene Laboratory houses a NIBIN unit (Site 567US), and is currently in the process of adding a NIBIN unit to the ISPFS Laboratory in Coeur d’Alene. The Meridian Laboratory has access to the NIBIN unit (Site 451US) located at ISP Headquarters. Prior to December 2024, ISPFS had access to Site 367 located at the Washington State Patrol Crime Laboratory located in Cheney, Washington. These units are deployed by the ATF and are the property of the ATF and U.S. Government. Specialized security clearance is required for all IBIS/NIBIN users and is issued by the ATF.

Each IBIS/NIBIN user is required to complete the ATF IBIS/NIBIN Acquisition training and pass a competency test administered by the ATF, or an approved NIBIN Acquisition Trainer (NAT) prior to participating in the NIBIN program. ISPFS may require additional training or provide guidance to users for acquisition entries for casework related samples.

## 1.2 References

- 1.2.1 ATF MROS 2.0 Standards
- 1.2.2 ATF MROS 2.0 NIBIN 2022 Guidance Document
- 1.2.3 ATF MROS 2.0 Assessment Document
- 1.2.4 FTI Training documents for BrassTrax (may also be found under Leeds Online)

- 1.2.5 ATF's "Four Critical Steps for a Successful NIBIN Program" – comprehensive collection, timeliness, investigative follow-up, and feedback.
- 1.2.6 ATF System Site Security Checklist

### 1.3 Objectives/Scope

The document describes the minimum requirements and applicable policies that the NIBIN Sites and personnel accessing and utilizing NIBIN shall follow to ensure the quality and integrity of the ballistic data shared on the Network. These requirements apply to all Sites and personnel accessing the NIBIN network.

### 1.4 Goals of the ISPFS NIBIN program

- 1.4.1 Enter all fired or test fired cartridge cases from submitting law enforcement agencies and/or departments through a NIBIN acquisition machine within a suggested maximum of twenty (20) business days of receipt, but with optimal efficiency of two (2) business days:
  - 1.4.1.1 Gold: ≤ 2 Business Days
  - 1.4.1.2 Silver: ≤ 5 Business Days
  - 1.4.1.3 Bronze: ≤ 10 Business Days
  - 1.4.1.4 Basic: ≤ 20 Business Days
- 1.4.2 Accurately enter all required information during the acquisition process on the IBIS acquisition machine (BrassTrax).
- 1.4.3 (For sites where correlations are completed internally) Correlate and conduct a secondary review of any potential NIBIN leads through an approved MatchPoint unit within two (2) business days.
- 1.4.4 Disseminate NIBIN leads within 24 hours
  - 1.4.4.1 Leads generated by the NNCTC for Site 451, or 567 will be disseminated by the NIBIN Technical Administrator within 24 hours of the notification.
- 1.4.5 Designate and maintain a NIBIN Program Administrator
  - 1.4.5.1 Each NIBIN site operated by ISPFS may have a different NIBIN Program Administrator. .

Designate and maintain a Technical NIBIN Administrator (Meridian Site Only).

## 2.0 Definitions

Included are terms common to the NIBIN program. These definitions were taken directly from the ATF's Minimum Required Operating Standards for NIBIN Sites.

- 2.1 **Accreditation** - Status achieved by an agency that indicates they meet a minimum level of performance mandated by the accrediting agency.
- 2.2 **Accuracy** – The degree of conformity of a measured quantity to its actual (true) value.
- 2.3 **Acquisition** - The digital imaging of various firearm-related markings present on cartridge cases into NIBIN.
- 2.4 **Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF)** – ATF is the Federal agency administering the NIBIN network.
- 2.5 **Association of Firearm and Tool Mark Examiners (AFTE)** - AFTE is the international professional organization for practitioners of Firearm and/or Toolmark Identification and has been dedicated to the exchange of information, methods and best practices, and the furtherance of research since its creation in 1969.
- 2.6 **Assessment** – An inspection used to evaluate, confirm, or verify activity related to quality.
- 2.7 **BRASSTRAX™ HD3D** – The current acquisition station developed by Forensic Technology that captures highly detailed images of cartridge cases, to include firing pin impressions on the primer, breech face, extractor and ejector markings. Also referred to as 'Trax' and 'Acquisition Station'.
- 2.8 **Business Day** – The days of operation of the NIBIN Site, this excludes holidays, weekends, or other days of closure.
- 2.9 **Correlation** – The automated algorithmic comparison of an acquired digital image to other images in the databases using an algorithm that provides a list of ranked possible matches.
- 2.10 **Correlation Review** – The on-screen visual comparison of digital images by a trained technician/specialist to determine the potential for two cartridge cases to have been fired from the same weapon. (Does not constitute a forensic

comparison by a trained Firearms examiner)

- 2.11 **Crime Gun Intelligence Center (CGIC)** – An ATF-led interagency collaboration focused on analyzing and investigating gun crime in a local community. CGIC unites cutting-edge technology and a dedicated multiagency investigative team to identify, disrupt and prosecute serial shooters and their sources of crime guns.
- 2.12 **Employee** – A person either in the service of the applicable Federal, State or local Government, subject to the terms, conditions and rules of Federal/State/local employment and eligible for the Federal/State/local benefits of service; or formerly in the service of a Federal, State, or local Government who returns to service in the agency on a part time or temporary basis. For purposes of a vendor laboratory, an employee is a person in the service of a vendor laboratory and subject to the applicable terms, conditions and rules of employment of the vendor laboratory.
- 2.13 **Evidence** – Any item or object, collected from a crime scene or as part of a criminal investigation, that has been submitted for NIBIN Acquisition or forensic examination.
- 2.14 **Firearms Examiner** – A forensic scientist who is an expert in evidence regarding firearms and ballistics. They perform forensic comparisons and analyses, serve as expert witnesses, and prepare courtroom evidence. They may provide training to law enforcement personnel. Also referred to as a Firearms & Tool Mark Examiner.
- 2.15 **Integrated Ballistics Identification System (IBIS)** – An automated ballistics imaging and analysis system that populates a computerized database of digital ballistic images of bullets and cases from crime guns. Technology that enables the imaging and identification of large quantities of firearm evidence across a network of Sites, as well as the automated identification of likely matching bullets or cartridge cases.
- 2.16 **Leads Online** – In 2024 the Company that acquired Ultra Electronics – Forensic Technology, Incorporated. Authorized Service provider and Vendor of the equipment, training, and service of IBIS related equipment.
- 2.17 **MATCHPOINT™ Plus** – Current system developed by Ultra Electronics Forensic Technology, Incorporated now, Leads Online that stores the ballistic images and contains the algorithm program for correlation reviews. Also referred to as an “Analysis Station.”

- 2.18 **National Crime Gun Intelligence Governing Board** – The group consisting of members of ATF, police departments, and forensic laboratories that oversees implementation and function of the NIBIN program. Formerly referred to as the NIBIN Executive Board or ‘NEB’.
- 2.19 **National Integrated Ballistic Information Network (NIBIN)** – The program managed by ATF that automates the imaging of the unique identifiers of cartridge cases fired from firearms and stores the digital images into a database for comparison across a national network of participating Sites.
- 2.20 **NIBIN Authorized Trainer (NAT)** – A NIBIN technician trained and authorized by ATF to train others in the acquisition of ballistic images.
- 2.21 **NIBIN Hit** – The result of two or more firearms ballistic evidence acquisitions that have been confirmed as a match by a firearms examiner. NIBIN Hits are based on correlation review of digital images using MATCHPOINT PLUS™ and microscopic confirmation by a firearms examiner. This information/intelligence can be used for investigative purposes and is suitable for court purposes.
- 2.22 **NIBIN Lead** – An unconfirmed, potential association between two or more pieces of firearm ballistic evidence based on a correlation review of the digital images in the NIBIN database by either a firearms examiner or a trained NIBIN technician. A NIBIN Lead is ONLY intended to provide a lead for investigative purposes.
- 2.23 **NIBIN National Correlation and Training Center (NNCTC)** – The ATF facility located in Huntsville, Alabama that performs timely correlation reviews for multiple NIBIN Sites and also provides training for Qualified NIBIN Users.
- 2.24 **NIBIN Program Administrator** – An individual the NIBIN Site has designated to communicate with all parties (i.e. submitting law enforcement agencies, ATF CGICs, etc.), involved in the NIBIN process. The NIBIN Program Administrator must be a qualified NIBIN user, unless a Technical Administrator is appointed, and full-time employee of the NIBIN Site. The NIBIN Program Administrator should be responsible for implementing and directing policies and procedures of the NIBIN Site.
- 2.25 **NIBIN Site** – Location at which NIBIN acquisition and/or correlation technology is present. NIBIN Sites can be located in forensic laboratories, police departments, etc. Also referred to as ‘Site’.



- 2.26 **NIBIN Technician** – A trained technician/specialist approved to use IBIS equipment. A NIBIN Technician may be trained for the acquisition or correlation review of digital images of firearms ballistic evidence. NIBIN Technicians trained for acquisition only must have the appropriate level of training for those duties and be able to capture and submit digital images into the system. NIBIN Technicians trained for both acquisition and correlation must have training in both areas and be able to determine potential links of two or more cartridge cases fired from the same weapon. Also referred to as an IBIS Technician.
- 2.27 **Notification** – A written or electronic communication to the submitter of firearms ballistic evidence indicating the results of an acquisition/correlation review. Notifications are not considered Laboratory Reports.
- 2.28 **Originating Agency** – The agency that recovered the firearm and/or fired cartridge case and submitted the items for NIBIN entry.
- 2.29 **Procedure** – Protocol, Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) or other equivalent – The established practice to be followed in performing a specified task or under specific circumstances.
- 2.30 **Qualified Assessor** – An individual trained by ATF to conduct NIBIN Site assessments for compliance to minimum required operating standards.
- 2.31 **Qualified NIBIN User** – A technician and/or firearms examiner trained by ATF, Forensic Technology/Leeds Online, and/or a NAT program to perform acquisition and/or correlation reviews of ballistic images on the national network.
- 2.32 **Rank Sort Function** – The function of Ultra Electronics - Forensic Technology, Incorporated, now Leeds Online software on MATCHPOINT PLUS™ that lists all potential matches of ballistic images to item under review in order of score across all images of regions of interest.
- 2.33 **Reception Date** – The date evidence for NIBIN entry is first accessible by a NIBIN Site for any forensic analysis (i.e., DNA, Latent Fingerprints, NIBIN, etc.)
- 2.34 **Secondary review** – The process that ensures the work performed meets quality standards and requires two qualified individuals to concur on the finding. For NIBIN, ATF defines secondary review as a second correlation review or examination by a trained IBIS technician and/or firearms examiner using MATCHPOINT™.

- 2.35 ***Suitable ballistic evidence*** – All fired cartridge cases recovered by law enforcement as well as test-fired cartridge cases from firearms recovered by law enforcement that were illegally possessed, used in a crime, or suspected by law enforcement officials of having been used in a crime.
- 2.36 ***Technical NIBIN Administrator*** – A Qualified NIBIN User at the NIBIN Site designated to assist the NIBIN Program Administrator with technical operations. This is required in the event the NIBIN Program Administrator does not meet the training requirements of a Qualified NIBIN User.
- 2.37 ***Test Fires*** – Cartridge cases known to be fired from a specific firearm in law enforcement custody.
- 2.38 ***Triage*** – The process of assessing cartridge cases to determine the best representative sample from a group of cartridge cases having similar firearm produced markings for NIBIN entry. This is not, nor should it be interpreted as a comparative examination to determine how many firearms may have been responsible for firing the cartridge cases.
- 2.39 ***Ultra-Electronics - Forensic Technology, Incorporated*** – Company that created the IBIS System in 1991. Also referred to as FT and FTI.

## 3.0 Organization, Management and Personnel

### 3.1 Organization

Idaho State Police Forensic Services (ISPFS) will maintain two NIBIN sites within Idaho.

- 3.1.1 NIBIN Site (Site 451US) located at the Idaho State Police Headquarters facility in Meridian, Idaho.
- 3.1.2 NIBIN site (Site 567US) located at the Idaho State Police Forensic Services Laboratory in Coeur d'Alene.
- 3.1.3 The activities relating to NIBIN acquisition and correlation shall be carried out in a way as to meet the requirements of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF), the Minimum Required Operating Requirements (MROS), the laboratories/agencies customers and applicable regulatory authorities.

### 3.2 Management

- 3.2.1 Forensic Services shall create, implement, and maintain a management system appropriate and in compliance with requirements set forth in the MROS Standard 2, and in conjunction with the ISPFS Laboratory Quality Procedure Manual.
- 3.2.2 The management and oversight of the ISPFS NIBIN program will be done by the NIBIN Program Administrator(s) and the Technical NIBIN Administrator.
  - 3.2.2.1 The NIBIN Program and Technical NIBIN Administrators shall be designated by the Forensic Services Laboratory Director for the Meridian NIBIN Site 451.
  - 3.2.2.2 The NIBIN Program Administrator for the Coeur d'Alene site will be the current Forensic Scientist 3, Discipline Lead for the Firearms and Toolmark Discipline, or the approved qualified designee.

### 3.3 Personnel

#### 3.3.1 Selection of Personnel

- 3.3.1.1 The NIBIN Program and ISPFS shall establish and have a system in place to document the competence requirements for each function influencing the results of NIBIN activities, including requirements for education, qualification, training, technical knowledge, skills, and experience.
- 3.3.1.2 All Law Enforcement Agencies wanting to have an employee trained for Acquisitions should submit a request to ISP Forensic Services for training an IBIS/NIBIN user. Consideration for training will be based on previous participation in the Idaho NIBIN program.

### 3.3.2 Training of New NIBIN Users

- 3.3.2.1 Training of a NIBIN user will be conducted in accordance with the ATF guidelines. Successful completion of the training and associated competency testing must be completed. Authorization for use of the NIBIN system is granted to the user by the ATF/NNCTC. Training can be completed through the ATF and NNCTC or ISPFs employs a NAT, who is available to conduct trainings, as requested.
- 3.3.2.2 Additional training by ISPFs may be required. This may include additional pre-course evaluations.
- 3.3.2.3 For NIBIN Technicians not employed with ISPFs, minimum educational requirements are defined by the Law Enforcement Agency in which they are employed or contracted by.

### 3.3.3 The NIBIN site(s) will operate and maintain the following personnel with the applicable qualifications:

#### 3.3.3.1 NIBIN Program Administrator

- 3.3.3.1.1 A full-time employee of the Site or a full-time contractor with employee privileges.
- 3.3.3.1.2 Minimum experience requirements: a qualified NIBIN user that has completed acquisition training.
  - 3.3.3.1.2.1 If the NIBIN Program Administrator is not a qualified NIBIN User, the NIBIN Site must have a designated Technical NIBIN Administrator.
- 3.3.3.1.3 The ISPFs NIBIN Program Administrator shall be:
  - 3.3.3.1.3.1 Meridian Site: The Laboratory Manager of the Meridian Forensic Services Laboratory, or other qualified designee.
  - 3.3.3.1.4 CDA Site: The current Forensic Scientist 3, Discipline Lead for the Firearms and Toolmark Discipline, or the approved qualified designee.

#### 3.3.3.2 Technical NIBIN Administrator (Applicable only to Site without a qualified NIBIN user)

- 3.3.3.2.1 A Qualified NIBIN User at the NIBIN Site, or readily available via electronic communication, designated to assist the NIBIN Program Administrator and NIBIN users with technical operations.
- 3.3.3.2.2 The ISPFs Technical NIBIN Administrator for the Meridian Site 451 shall be the current Forensic Scientist 3- Discipline Lead for the Firearms and Toolmark Discipline, or the approved qualified designee.

### **3.3.3.3 Qualified NIBIN user (Acquisitions and Correlations- where applicable)**

- 3.3.3.3.1 A qualified NIBIN user shall be an employee of ISPFs, contract employee of ISPFs or Law Enforcement Agency, or an employee of a Law Enforcement Agency
- 3.3.3.3.2 The qualified NIBIN user must complete ATF-approved acquisition training administered by ATF, FT/Leeds Online, and/or an NAT, or been granted a training waiver, to utilize a NIBIN acquisition machine and acquire ballistic images.
- 3.3.3.3.3 If performing Correlations: The qualified NIBIN user should complete ATF-approved acquisition training administered by ATF, FT/Leeds Online, and/or an NAT, or been granted a training waiver, to utilize the Correlation Instrumentation, or be a qualified Firearms Examiner.
- 3.3.3.3.4 When a user is trained or approved to complete correlations: Perform correlations on entries with a pending correlation request.
  - 3.3.3.3.4.1 (Sites not supported by the NNCTC) If a NIBIN Lead is noted, submit a request for secondary review.

### **3.3.4 Defined Duties of NIBIN User Roles**

#### **3.3.4.1 Technical NIBIN Administrator shall be responsible for the following:**

- 3.3.4.1.1 Overseeing the site (as it relates to NIBIN) and successes of the NIBIN program.
- 3.3.4.1.2 Have the authority to initiate, suspend, and resume NIBIN operations for the site or users.
- 3.3.4.1.3 Evaluate and document approval of all methods (as they relate to NIBIN) by the site and propose new or modified procedures as needed.
- 3.3.4.1.4 Review the training records for newly Qualified NIBIN Users and approve their qualifications prior to them performing acquisitions or correlations within the IBIS system, and to maintain proper documentation of training, annual recertification and proficiency testing (when applicable).
- 3.3.4.1.5 Maintain up to date training certificate and list of active NIBIN users, at minimum, in the NIBIN Acquisition room.

**3.3.4.2 NIBIN Program Administrator shall be responsible for the following:**

- 3.3.4.2.1 Coordinate with the Technical Administrator the training of new NIBIN users. (When applicable)
- 3.3.4.2.2 Identifying requirements of ISP and ISPFs which need completion to allow users access to the NIBIN site.
- 3.3.4.2.3 Coordinate with assessors regarding NIBIN Site assessments.
- 3.3.4.2.4 Coordinate with ISP and the Technical Administrator (if necessary) to ensure access is maintained to the NIBIN terminal, for approved users.
- 3.3.4.2.5 Meridian Site: In conjunction with the Technical NIBIN Administrator, have the authority to initiate, suspend, and resume NIBIN operations for the site or users.

**3.3.4.3 Qualified NIBIN user shall be responsible for the following:**

- 3.3.4.3.1 Accurate and timely entry of all NIBIN eligible samples, this may include agency exemplars, evidence cartridge cases and lab created test fires (where applicable)
- 3.3.4.3.2 Must successfully complete the required annual NIBIN recertification requirements set forth by the ATF and Leeds Online. Certificate of Recertification must be provided to ISPFs NIBIN Program or Technical Administrator.
- 3.3.4.3.3 If re-acquisition or update is requested by the NNCTC or user trained in correlations, the NIBIN user will update during their next visit to the NIBIN site. Updates to any previously submitted case, resubmission and synchronization will be required.
  - 3.3.4.3.3.1 All requests for reacquisition must be sent by the NIBIN Technician to the NIBIN Technical administrator, these reacquisition requests will be reviewed for determining if additional retraining is warranted.

**3.3.5 Competency/Proficiency Testing of Applicable Personnel**

- 3.3.5.1 Successful completion of a competency test administered by ATF, NNCTC or NAT is required prior to any IBIS/NIBIN user completing IBIS/NIBIN acquisitions.
- 3.3.5.2 Each NIBIN user may be requested to complete a proficiency test as designated by the Technical NIBIN Administrator.
- 3.3.5.3 Annual recertification requirements managed by the ATF will be sent directly to the NIBIN user through the Leeds Online web-based training portal.

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## 4.0 Facilities and Security

### 4.1 Facilities

#### 4.1.1 Conditions:

- 4.1.1.1 The facilities and environmental conditions shall be suitable for appropriate NIBIN activities and shall not adversely affect the validity of the acquisition process &/or results. These conditions may include but are not limited to, security, microbial contamination, dust, electromagnetic disturbances, radiation, humidity, electrical supply, temperature, sound and vibration.
- 4.1.1.2 The NIBIN terminal/computer area will be considered part of the laboratory facilities. No eating, drinking, or smoking is allowed while operating the NIBIN equipment.

#### 4.1.2 Access

- 4.1.2.1 Access to the operational area of each laboratory is controllable and limited. List of active NIBIN users for each is centrally and electronically maintained by ISP and/or ISPFS.
- 4.1.2.2 The Meridian NIBIN terminal will be accessible to approved NIBIN users, and Administrators on a 24-hour basis, using the appropriate Idaho State Police Access Prox card.
- 4.1.2.3 The Coeur d'Alene NIBIN terminal will be accessible to approved NIBIN users and Administrators during business hours, using coded door entry passcodes. If after-hours access is needed: a NIBIN user or Administrator may escort a user to access the Laboratory facility and NIBIN Unit.

#### 4.1.3 Restricted Area Authorized Personnel Roster (Coeur d'Alene site)

- 4.1.3.1 The Coeur d'Alene site will maintain a list of individuals having unrestricted access to the NIBIN room.
- 4.1.3.2 Non-NIBIN authorized users will be trained regarding the sensitivity and procedures for access/user of the NIBIN unit.

#### 4.1.4 Visitors

- 4.1.4.1 Visitors excluding those listed on the Restricted Area Authorized Personnel Roster will be escorted and/or monitored while in the NIBIN Room/Firearms Laboratory.
- 4.1.4.2 All visitors of the laboratory facility performing general maintenance or custodial work will be required to sign the visitor log for the laboratory. An additional visitor log will be completed for individuals whose sole purpose is to access the room housing the NIBIN unit only and will be monitored by a laboratory employee.

### 4.2 Security



- 4.2.1 The laboratory shall monitor and control access to the NIBIN terminal. This may include applicable door reports, key logs, and access credentials for issued ISP prox cards, and is available upon request.
- 4.2.1.1 Meridian Site: Prox Card log will be maintained using ISP Security forms and approved user list.
- 4.2.1.2 A key/code log will be maintained for the Coeur d'Alene site.
- 4.2.1.2.1 The NIBIN room will be locked after business hours and accessible only by the Coeur d'Alene Laboratory Manager, Firearms Examiners, NIBIN Administrators and authorized NIBIN users.
- 4.2.1.2.2 During business hours the NIBIN room may remain accessible to all Authorized Personnel listed on the roster.
- 4.2.2 Measures to control facilities shall be implemented, monitored and periodically reviewed and shall include, but are not limited to:
- 4.2.2.1 Annual renewal of ISP Security forms is required for users not employed by ISP or ISPFs.
- 4.2.2.2 Upon a NIBIN user leaving employment with ISP or external Law Enforcement Agency, the appropriate supervisor shall notify, at minimum, the NIBIN Program Administrator to deactivate the users ISP access card.
- 4.2.2.2.1 The Program or Technical NIBIN administrator will notify the ATF/Leads Online requesting user deactivation.
- 4.2.2.3 Access codes and/or Prox cards will be deactivated for when a NIBIN user leaves employment or is no longer an authorized NIBIN User.

Additional policies applicable to the Laboratory Facilities and/or NIBIN Acquisition room not specifically defined in this manual, are designated in the ISPFs Quality Procedure manual in section 6.3.4a.

## 5.0 Evidence Control and Handling

### 5.1 Methods of Submission for NIBIN Entry

5.1.1 Cartridge cases to be entered into IBIS/NIBIN will be handled in one of the following ways:

- 5.1.1.1 **Agency entered Evidence:** Fired evidence cartridge cases may be triaged and entered by agency personnel trained in IBIS/NIBIN acquisitions without being submitted to the ISPFS Laboratory. *(This currently is limited to Agencies with trained personnel. If the Agency does not have trained IBIS personnel, the fired evidence cartridge cases must be sent to ISPFS for entry or entered under a Walk-In Entry)*
- 5.1.1.2 **ISPFS Submitted EVIDENCE:** Fired cartridge cases may be submitted as evidence. When cartridge cases are submitted as evidence, they will be documented and handled per the ISPFS Quality Policy Manual and appropriate ISPFS Firearms Analytical methods.
- 5.1.1.3 **EXEMPLAR TEST FIRES ONLY:** Test fired cartridge cases created by the submitting law enforcement agency may be handled as non-evidential samples and delivered to the laboratory (e.g. by mail, in person). Exemplars are placed in a location designated by the laboratory and entered into IBIS by any authorized IBIS/NIBIN operator. These test fires will be discarded after entry and are not suitable for further analysis.
- 5.1.1.4 **WALK-IN ENTRY:** Evidence cartridge cases may be handled as walk-ins and remain in the custody of an agency representative. In this instance the agency representative must remain present during the NIBIN acquisition process.
- 5.1.1.4.1 Appointments may be scheduled with the NIBIN Program administrator to assist agencies in test firing for NIBIN entry using the ISP Bullet recovery trap. This may be completed at either ISP Site (Meridian or Coeur d'Alene).

5.2 Evidence control and handling will be performed as defined below:

5.2.1 Prior to submission of any evidential fired cartridge case, or firearm needing exemplars created for entry into NIBIN, either by ISPFS or the NIBIN user: careful determination for additional evidential analysis should be taken into consideration for the evidence items. (i.e. Latent print processing and DNA collection).

5.2.1.1 Potential for loss or contamination of trace evidence (latent or biological) can occur during the NIBIN evaluation, test firing and entry process and may not be completed after the evidence is submitted for NIBIN entry.

- 5.2.2 **ISPFS employee or Contractor:** Evidence control, and handling will be performed in accordance with ISPFS Quality Policy Manual Sections 7.1 to 7.5, and applicable analytical methods of the ISPFS Firearms section.
- 5.2.3 **External Law Enforcement Agency NIBIN user:** Evidence control, and handling will be performed in accordance with their applicable agencies policies and procedures.
- 5.2.4 **Drop-box test fire Exemplar samples** submitted to the NIBIN site are not considered evidence but are considered a work product and do not require treatment/policies related to evidence.
- 5.2.5 Walk-In entries of fired evidence cartridge cases (limited availability) must be scheduled by appointment only and an agency representative from the submitting law enforcement agency will remain present for acquisition/entry into NIBIN.
- 5.2.6 No evidence will be stored long-term in the Meridian NIBIN room. Temporary storage is allowed if the door is locked, and the user is on break only.

## 6.0 Validation

6.1 Upon installation of the BrassTrax Acquisition instrument, verification and validation of functionality was completed. Maintenance and Calibration are to be performed by FTI/Leeds Online, excluding the instrument self-checks.

6.1.1 No additional validation will be required for operation of the BrassTrax equipment.

### 6.2 Data Validation

6.2.1 Prior to data being entered into the BrassTrax and NIBIN system, a User must complete the approved training and authorization for use granted by the ATF and NNCTC. During this training, proper data entry and criteria for proper cartridge case acquisition will be covered.

6.2.2 Once a user has successfully completed the training and competency testing required by the ATF, data entry will be monitored by the ISPFs Technical NIBIN Administrator &/or Program Administrator, in addition to the monitoring completed by the NIBIN National Correlation and Training Center (NNCTC)

## 7.0 Analytical Methods, Policies and Forms

7.1 Analytical Methods are maintained separate from this document.

7.1.1 Applicable acquisition methods will comply with the ATF/ Leeds Online protocols for standard acquisition by NIBIN users, as well as applicable law enforcement methods including but not limited to, ISPFS Firearms and Toolmarks Analytical Method 9, ISPFS NIBIN Technician Acquisition Method for External Users and applicable law enforcement agency manuals regarding NIBIN procedures specific to required documentation.

7.1.1.1 Any policies by the NIBIN user's respective agency, will not conflict with the standard protocols set forth for image capturing, but may include agency specifics on format for entry of Agency case and Item numbers.

7.1.1.2 ISPFS will maintain a copy of current methods/policies defined by an external agency relating to NIBIN.

7.2 Forms

7.2.1 Applicable items: firearms and/or fired cartridge cases submitted as evidence to the Firearms Section of ISPFS will be appropriately documented in the ISPFS ILIMS System. Case maintenance printouts will be retained in the appropriate ISPFS case record.

7.2.2 Agencies outside of ISPFS with trained NIBIN Users may use additional forms for documentation of items entered into NIBIN, as deemed necessary by their respective agencies.

7.2.3 Exemplar packets submitted using the drop-box do not require completion of additional documentation and/or forms.

7.2.4 Case Maintenance printouts from the NIBIN acquisition instrument will be printed based on the submitting agencies request.

7.2.5 Items processed by ISP Forensic Service's Latent Print or Biology unit may be evaluated and entered into NIBIN, when eligible. Notification of entry will be placed on the Latent Print or Biology Screening analysis report, and documentation completed per ISPFS NIBIN only protocols. A NIBIN report will be generated indicating that the evidence cartridge case was entered into NIBIN.

## 8.0 Equipment Calibration and Maintenance

### 8.1 BrassTrax Acquisition Unit and Access to NIBIN

8.1.1 All equipment directly related to BrassTrax is owned by ATF and serviced by Forensic Technologies – Ultra Electronics/Leeds Online.

8.1.2 No adjustment or addition to any part of the system is permitted to be performed by NIBIN Users.

8.1.3 The IBIS BrassTrax Acquisition Unit performs automatic self-diagnostic tests.

8.1.3.1 If one of these tests reports an error, a calibration may be performed. Any time there is a problem that the user is unable or not authorized to resolve, Forensic Technologies – Ultra Electronics/Leeds Online is to be called.

8.1.4 No one may enter or retrieve data from the NIBIN system until they have been trained by Forensic Technologies – Ultra Electronics/Leeds Online, the ATF or NAT and approved by ATF/NNCTC Training division.

8.1.5 All persons using the IBIS/NIBIN system must have an NNCTC generated password and security clearance granted by the ATF.

## 9.0 Chemicals and Supplies

### 9.1 Chemicals and supplies

9.1.1 Grade of chemicals used is not critical and no specific requirements are applicable.

9.1.2 Chemicals and needed supplies shall be requested through the NIBIN Program Administrator.

9.1.2.1 Purchasing of chemicals and supplies will be completed by the NIBIN Program Administrator or approved designated individual.

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## 10.0 Documentation and Report Writing

### 10.1 ISPFS Evidence Documentation and Report Writing Requirements

#### 10.1.1 Items submitted to the ISP Forensic Services Firearms unit

10.1.1.1 Proper handling of evidence and appropriate documentation will be completed per the Firearms section requirements, applicable to any of the evidence submitted for analysis and/or NIBIN Entry.

#### 10.1.2 Items submitted to the ISP Forensic Services Latent Print or Biology unit, without Firearms request.

10.1.2.1 Fired cartridge case items submitted to the ISPFs Latent Print or Biology unit may be entered into NIBIN, if the item meets the eligibility requirement for NIBIN entry.

10.1.2.2 Documentation will be noted that the item will be entered into NIBIN by the Latent print or Biology section, and applicable evidence handling procedures will be followed by the NIBIN technician for entry upon completion of requested analysis.

10.1.2.2.1 Documentation in the NIBIN entry section of the Firearms matrix will be completed, case maintenance report attached. A report will be generated for the NIBIN entry to serve as notification of entry.

10.1.2.2.2 The assignment will be reviewed by an individual approved to do administrative reviews for the ISPFs Firearms Section.

### 10.2 Outside Agencies Documentation requirements

10.2.1 Refer to the NIBIN User's Agency Policies and Procedures on documentation and report writing relating to items entered into the NIBIN system.



## 11.0 Reviews

### 11.1 ISPFS review requirements

11.1.1 Items submitted to the ISP Forensic Services Firearms unit, without Firearms request.

11.1.1.1 Review of documentation and/or case reports generated will be performed by an approved reviewer.

11.1.2 Items submitted to the ISP Forensic Services Latent Print or Biology unit.

11.1.2.1 Review of documentation and/or case reports generated will be performed by an approved reviewer.

### 11.2 Outside Agencies Documentation requirements

11.2.1 Refer to the applicable Law Enforcement Agency/NIBIN User's Agency Policies and Procedures relating to review requirements for items entered into the NIBIN system.

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## 12.0 Proficiency Testing

12.1 **Applicable to site 451 only:** NIBIN users completing Acquisitions may be required to complete a proficiency test administered by ISPFS annually. *(Effective beginning in 2025.)*

### 12.1.1 Proficiency testing objectives:

- 12.1.1.1 Verify that acquisition methods are valid.
- 12.1.1.2 Ensure that quality work is being performed.
- 12.1.1.3 Identify areas where additional training would be beneficial.
- 12.1.1.4 Demonstrate the competence of the analytical system.

### 12.1.2 Accuracy of results:

#### 12.1.2.1 Qualitative Proficiency Test Evaluation

- Results are correct if they meet any of the following criteria:
  - Results agree with the target values and/or intended responses.
  - The answer is correct within the limits of qualifying statements in the conclusion.
  - The results are consistent with a consensus of the other NIBIN site users.
  - If there is not a consensus of the participants, then results may or may not be evaluated by the Technical NIBIN Administrator for nonconformities depending on the circumstances.

### 12.1.3 Remedial Training

12.1.3.1 If proficiency test results evaluated using the PT functionality built into the BrassTrax Acquisition software are less than 75% a user may be required to complete remedial training, as deemed necessary after evaluation of the test results by the Technical NIBIN Administrator.

### 12.1.4 Suspension of Access

12.1.4.1 If a user fails to complete the required ATF Annual recertification course or assigned proficiency test, access to the NIBIN terminal may be suspended by ISPFS or the ATF/NNCTC.

12.1.4.2 ISPFS may perform additional retraining sessions, as frequently as needed, to ensure NIBIN users are accurately entering into the IBIS/NBIN System. If retraining is not deemed to be effective, at the discretion of the NIBIN Program and Technical NIBIN Administrators, a user's access may be suspended, and additional competency testing will be completed prior to regaining access.

12.1.4.3 If a user leaves employment with a law enforcement agency, NIBIN access will be revoked, and ISP issued prox card or key-code access will be disabled for physical access.

## 13.0 Corrective Actions

- 13.1 Any corrective actions relating to MROS findings or NIBIN site administration will follow the general guidelines of the ISPFS Laboratory Quality Procedure Manual, section 8.7.

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## 14.0 Audits and Assessments

### 14.1 Assessments performed by ATF or designee

14.1.1 ISPFS's NIBIN program will participate in all required Assessments for the NIBIN Program

14.1.1.1 The NIBIN Site Administrator and Technical NIBIN Administrator will provide all requested documentation, records for entry and training records during the applicable assessment.

### 14.2 Annual ISPFS Internal Audits

14.2.1 The technical NIBIN administrator will review entries completed at site 451, for accuracy of data entered.

14.2.1.1 This review may be performed using the NNCTC correlation reports sent to ISPFS, the documentation on the Huddle portal, or review of the case information available on the BrassTrax or MatchPoint system portals.

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## 15.0 Safety

### 15.1 Test Firing

15.1.1 Test firing may be performed at the ISP Meridian Facility for NIBIN entries.

15.1.2 Test firing performed at the Coeur d'Alene facility will be performed in accordance with the Firearms Section method for test firing.

15.1.3 All applicable law enforcement agency policies and procedures for safe handling of firearms should be followed by the applicable personnel responsible when test firing for NIBIN entry.

### 15.2 Evidence Handling and NIBIN entry/acquisition

15.2.1 Universal precautions should be followed for any evidential items submitted for NIBIN entry.

15.2.1.1 Applicable personal protective equipment should be used when entering evidential fired cartridge cases.

15.2.2 Items that may appear to have biological contamination should be evaluated by the agency for collection of possible evidence prior to entry.

## 16.0 Outsourcing

16.1 Not applicable, ISPPFS is not currently outsourcing NIBIN related entries.

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