



# Idaho State Police

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**To:** All Idaho Law Enforcement Agencies  
**From:** Matthew Gamette, ISP Forensic Services Laboratory System Director  
**Subject:** **NIBIN Entries in Idaho**  
**Date:** March 07, 2022

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The Idaho State Police Forensic Services (ISPFPS) has added a new National Integrated Ballistics Information Network (NIBIN) entry terminal in Meridian Idaho, in addition to our entries being done by our CDA laboratory staff. We are encouraging agencies to submit more exemplar test fires and fired cartridge cases found at crime scenes for entry into NIBIN for linking gun crimes in Idaho.

The ATF's NIBIN program employs the Integrated Ballistics Identification System (IBIS) to compare images of cartridge cases obtained from crime scenes, to other fired cartridge cases, as well as, test fires from recovered firearms. As new images are entered, the system searches the existing database for possible links to fired cartridge cases from other crimes.

This system allows for the intercomparison/correlation at the local, state and regional levels of fired cartridge cases. When the images are searched, if a "hit" occurs indicating a potential match of two items (cartridge case to cartridge case or exemplar to fired cartridge case), a report of that potential match will be generated and sent to the associated investigators. NIBIN is considered an investigative tool, or preliminary test. Following receipt of this report, the agency will need to submit the actual evidence, including associated firearm and fired cartridge cases, to a firearms examiner, in order to confirm the match. This investigative lead helps connect two crimes or connect a crime to a recovered firearm.

**Recommendations for submissions:**

- 1) Submit fired cartridge cases found at crime scenes (examples: homicides, attempted homicides, gang-type shootings, drug-related shootings, drive-by shootings, and robberies) for imaging. *See Evidentiary Submission process on the next page.*
- 2) Ensure that all firearms meeting ATF guidelines recovered in agency cases are test fired and imaged into NIBIN (examples: Firearms recovered from the commission of a crime: illegally carried concealed weapons, found property, weapons which have had the serial number removed, weapons confiscated from felons, DUI, drug related offenses, etc). *See Exemplar Submission process on the next page.*

**\*\*ATF Guidelines: Entries are limited to semi-automatic pistols, pump and semi-automatic shotguns and 22 rimfire, 7.62 and .223/5.56 semi-automatic rifles. See attached memo for ammunition requirements.**

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**Acceptable types of submissions:**

**1) Evidentiary submissions**

- a. Recovered firearms submitted for firearms analysis
- b. Fired cartridge cases from crime scenes (with or without a recovered firearm associated)

**2) Exemplar submissions**

- a. Test fired cartridge cases from firearms recovered during normal police operations. ***NOTE:*** ***This should not include firearms that would normally be submitted to the lab for Firearms Analysis.***

**Submission Process:**

**1) EVIDENTIARY SUBMISSIONS**

Submit fired cartridge cases collected from crime scenes, or firearms and associated evidence using the normal ISPFS evidence submission protocol. DNA or fingerprinting should be completed PRIOR to submitting cartridge cases for NIBIN entry, if applicable.

Do not submit evidentiary items in the IBIS/NIBIN test fire envelopes provided by ISPFS. Ensure these items are properly packaged, sealed, and have a chain of custody. ISPFS will return all evidence items to the submitting agency. ISPFS will issue a report noting what items have or will be entered into NIBIN.

**2) EXEMPLAR SUBMISSIONS**

The submitting agency is responsible for creating the test fires for NIBIN only entry cases/items. The firearm should be test fired two times by the submitting agency and only test fired cartridge cases should be submitted to ISPFS. ISPFS provides envelopes specifically for IBIS/NIBIN test fires. The submitting agency must fill out the information requested on the envelope.

Agencies submit all test fired cartridge cases from a single firearm in one envelope. If there are multiple firearms, a separate test fire envelope should be used for submission for each firearm. Do not submit multiple test fires from multiple firearms in one NIBIN envelope. Submitting agencies should mail or deliver the exemplar submissions to either the Idaho State Police Coeur d'Alene laboratory or Meridian laboratory. Submitted test fires are not considered evidence and will not be retained by ISPFS or returned to the submitting agency. ISPFS will not issue a report or notify the agency of entry of exemplars. If the submission cannot be entered into the NIBIN system, ISPFS will notify the submitting agency.

If the submitting agency does not have any of the official IBIS/NIBIN test fire envelopes, they may be requested by contacting any of the ISPFS labs. In the interim, agencies may put them in an envelope and include a "Test Fire Submission Form" containing the following information:

- Agency name, case, and item #
- Make, model, and serial number of firearm
- Date of crime, or date firearm was recovered
- Type of event (homicide, assault w/a deadly weapon, unknown, etc.)
- Investigating officers name and email address
- Whether the firearm will be destroyed, returned to the owner, or sold to the public after it has been test fired.

If you have any questions, please contact Anne Nord, Lab Manager or Brittany Wylie, Firearms Discipline Lead, at (208) 209-8700.