



# Idaho State Police

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**To:** All Idaho Law Enforcement Agencies  
**From:** Matthew Gamette, ISP Forensic Services Laboratory System Director  
**Subject:** **Return of NIBIN Work in Idaho**  
**Date:** August 14, 2019

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The ATF's National Integrated Ballistics Information Network (NIBIN) program employs the Integrated Ballistics Identification System (IBIS) to compare images of cartridge casings obtained from crime scenes and recovered firearms. As new images are entered, the system searches the existing database for possible matches to other cartridge casings from other crimes.

This system allows for the intercomparison at local, state and national levels of fired cartridge cases. When the images are searched, if a "hit" occurs indicating a potential match of two casings, a report of that potential match will be generated and sent to the associated agencies. Following receipt of this report, the agency will need to submit the actual evidence to a firearms examiner in order to confirm the match. This investigative lead helps investigators connect two crimes or connect a crime to a recovered firearm.

The Idaho State Police/Forensic Services (ISPFS) stopped performing entry into NIBIN several years ago due to the ATF terminating the program in the ISPFS Coeur d'Alene Laboratory and the Washington State Patrol (WSP) Laboratory in Cheney, Washington. WSP purchased a new terminal, offered to let ISPFS use their system, and trained ISPFS analysts to perform the analysis. ISPFS in Coeur d'Alene is now entering casework/evidentiary and exemplar submissions into NIBIN for the entire state of Idaho.

### **Recommendations for submissions:**

- 1) Submit cartridge casings from crime scenes (examples: homicides, attempted homicides, gang-type shootings, drug-related shootings, drive-by shootings, and robberies) for imaging.
- 2) Ensure that firearms meeting ATF guidelines recovered in agency cases are test fired and imaged into NIBIN (examples: illegally carried concealed weapons, found property, weapons which have had the serial number removed, weapons confiscated from felons).

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

### **Acceptable types of submissions:**

- 1) **Evidentiary submissions** (firearms submitted for firearms analysis and fired cartridge cases from crime scenes).

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- 2) **Exemplar submissions** (test fired cartridge cases from firearms recovered during normal police operations). *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 using the normal ISPFS evidence submission protocol. It should be determined if DNA or fingerprinting is needed before submitting cartridge cases for NIBIN entry. Do not submit these items in the IBIS/NIBIN testfire 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 producing the test fires for NIBIN only entry cases/items. Only cartridge cases should be submitted to ISPFS. The firearm should be test fired two times by the submitting agency. 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 two firearms, two envelopes (one for each firearm) would be submitted. Do not submit multiple test fires from multiple firearms in one envelope. Submitting agencies should mail or deliver the exemplar submissions to the Idaho State Police Coeur d'Alene laboratory. Submitted test fires are not considered evidence, and will not be retained as such 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 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.

**Please remember, entries are limited to semi-automatic pistols, pump and semi-automatic shotguns and 22 rimfire, 7.62 and 5.56 semi-automatic rifles.**

All submissions should be made to Idaho State Police Forensic Services, 615 W Wilbur, Suite B Coeur d'Alene, ID 83815. If you have any questions, please contact Anne Nord, Lab Manager, at (208) 209-8700.