

# **Firearms/Toolmarks Discipline Technical Procedure for Expedited National Integrated Ballistics Information Network (eNIBIN)**

## **1 Purpose**

To establish the procedures for receiving items, processing a request for national database searches, and returning items for which the Firearms/Toolmarks Unit (FTU) will perform NIBIN only searches. This procedure applies to submissions for which a laboratory report is not required by the contributor for criminal prosecution.

This procedure is designed to provide expedited investigative and intelligence information to law enforcement agencies to determine if an authorized recovery of a firearm might be associated with an unresolved investigation. Additionally, this procedure provides a method for FBI Field Offices to have all FBI collected firearms are entered into NIBIN.<sup>1</sup>

## **2 Scope**

These procedures apply to FTU personnel who receive firearms, perform national database queries, complete correlation searches and return items submitted for NIBIN entry only. Typically, the NIBIN Program Manager will be the assigned examiner to eNIBIN submissions and coordinate with the field regarding submissions for NIBIN entry.

## **3 Responsibilities**

**3.1** The person initially receiving the item(s) will:

- Ensure the case is created in Forensic Advantage (FA).
- Initiate the submission and Chain-of-Custody in FA, as appropriate.
- Create an FTU Case Record in FA.

**3.2** The person inventorying and identifying the item(s) will:

- Ensure that an inventory of the submitted item(s) is conducted.
- Ensure that each item is assigned a unique item identifier.
- Ensure that the item(s) or its container(s) is properly labeled and properly sealed.
- Ensure that the integrity of the item(s) is maintained during the breakdown and identifying process.
- Ensure the contributor is notified of the receipt of the item(s).

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<sup>1</sup> FBI Corporate Policy Directive 1055D, National Integrated Ballistic Information Network, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Criminal Investigation Division, latest revision.

- 3.3** An Examiner or Technician will:
- Ensure that the necessary national database searches are conducted.
  - Delete correlation results from the NIBIN database as appropriate.
- 3.4** An Examiner will:
- Cover the requesting lead in Sentinel.
  - Review the correlation requests.
  - Upload appropriate documents and supporting records.
- 3.5** The person returning the item(s) will:
- Ensure the item(s) is properly sealed, packaged, and labeled.
  - Ensure the item(s) is returned to the contributor.

## **4 Procedures**

### **4.1 Case ID and Laboratory Number Assignment**

A Laboratory number will be assigned to each submission received. Within FA, each eNIBIN submission will be associated with a Case ID Number that is established by the contributing Field Office and will be referenced with the eNIBIN control Case ID Number. The eNIBIN control file will be used to identify a submission as an eNIBIN submission and will be used for tracking within FA. All subsequent submissions with the same Field Office Case ID will be assigned a sequential submission under the original Laboratory number in FA.

### **4.2 Prior to Submission of Item(s)**

Once FTU is made aware of a possible submission, FTU personnel will contact the contributor and inform them of the labeling requirements for the shipping container(s). Additionally, the contributor will be required to generate an Electronic Communication (EC) or Laboratory Examination Request (LER) to provide the following information regarding the submitted item(s):

- Request for NIBIN entry
- Make, model, caliber and serial number of the firearm(s)
- Search region(s)

### **4.3 Initial Receipt of Item(s)**

**4.3.1** eNIBIN containers may be identifiable as such by pre-arranged labeling of the shipping container (e.g., eNIBIN notation on the container) and will be forwarded directly to FTU upon receipt by the FBI Laboratory.

**4.3.2** FTU personnel are responsible for opening the shipping container, initiating the Chain-of-Custody in FA, and creating a Case Record.

**4.3.3** If the shipping container is opened by evidence management personnel, they will initiate the Chain-of-Custody, assign a Case Record to FTU and forward the submission to FTU.

#### **4.4 Item(s) Inventory**

**4.4.1** A Container will be opened for break down and the individual item(s) added to FA.

**4.4.2** Documentation of the packaging and condition of the items will be generated during the break down process and recorded in FA.

**4.4.2.1** This will be recorded in the comments section for each item of evidence.

**4.4.3** Once the FA Chain-of-Custody is established, the item(s) may be transferred to an FTU storage area. All subsequent transfers within FTU will be tracked in FA.

#### **4.5 Recording and Acknowledging Item(s)**

FTU personnel are responsible for contacting the contributor to acknowledge receipt of the item(s) in the submission and confirm no additional examinations are requested. This communication will be recorded in the Case Communication Log in FA.

#### **4.6 eNIBIN Process**

**4.6.1** Submitted items will be inspected for safety prior to test firing as described in the *FTD Technical Procedure Firearm Examinations*. Test fired samples will be collected and designated as secondary evidence. A minimum of two test fires will be produced and inspected to determine which is suitable for entry into NIBIN.

**4.6.2** Each NIBIN entry will have general case information recorded. At a minimum, the Case ID number, FA Laboratory number, Item number and a point of contact will be recorded in the case notes for each item searched in NIBIN.

**4.6.3** Items will be searched against the NIBIN regional database requested by the contributor as described in the incoming EC/LER.

#### **4.7 NIBIN Search Results**

**4.7.1** Authorized personnel will review the correlation results.

**4.7.1.1** If an association is determined from this review, the results will be evaluated by an Examiner.

**4.7.2** The dates of correlation request and review are recorded on the correlation results printout.

**4.7.3** The correlation results will be scanned into the Case Object Repository.

## **4.8 Submission Closure and Reporting**

**4.8.1** The results of the NIBIN correlation review will be recorded on the *FTD i3 Product Form* (Appendix B of the *FTD Preparing, Reviewing, and Providing Results*) and uploaded to the Case Object Repository.

**4.8.1.1** The contributor may be telephonically advised of associations in NIBIN. Documentation of this notification will be added to the Communication Log.

**4.8.2** An administrative review will be conducted on the *FTD i3 Product Form* and supporting documentation and will be recorded as a Case Record-Administrative review type. A technical review will not be conducted.

**4.8.3** The item(s) and secondary evidence will be returned to the contributor by FTU personnel using shipping labels generated from FA.

**4.8.4** Following Administrative review and shipping, the FA Case Record status will be changed to 'Complete'.

**4.8.5** All search results will be recorded in Sentinel via upload of the *FTD i3 Product Form*.

**4.8.6** A digital 1A (combined Case Record and Case 1A) for the assigned Laboratory number will be uploaded in Sentinel.

**4.8.6.1** The serial number of the EC/LER will be referenced within the uploaded records.

## **5 Methods and Limitations**

**5.1** The methods and limitations are located on the FTU SharePoint websites along with the description of the eNIBIN program.

**5.2** The *FTD i3 Product Form* represents the results of examination, opinions, and interpretations of the examiner and is supported by records retained in Sentinel.

## **6 Records**

The following records will be retained in a 1A as a result of these procedures:

- Chain-of-Custody.
- Case Communication Log.

- NIBIN records.
- Shipping invoice(s).
- Case Record report.
- FTD i3 Product Form.

## 7 References

FBI Laboratory Quality Assurance Manual, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Laboratory Division, latest revision.

FBI Laboratory Operations Manual, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Laboratory Division, latest revision.

FBI Laboratory Safety Manual, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Laboratory Division, latest revision.

FTD Quality Assurance Manual, latest revision.

FTD Procedures Manual, latest revision.

ISO/IEC 17025:2017 - Forensic Testing and Calibration Laboratories Accreditation Requirements (AR 3125), ANAB, Milwaukee, WI, 2019.

ISO/IEC 17025 - General Requirements for the Competence of Testing and Calibration Laboratories, International Organization for Standardization, Geneva, Switzerland, 2017.

Minimum Required Operating Standards Audit for National Integrated Ballistic Information Network Sites, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF), Firearms Operations Division, latest revision. <https://www.atf.gov/file/133581/download>

FBI Corporate Policy Directive 1055D, National Integrated Ballistic Information Network, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Criminal Investigation Division, latest revision.

Rev. #	Issue Date	History
1	03/02/18	Entire document was modified. Document moved from quality manual to procedure manual.
2	04/15/21	Updated document to conform with i3 Product requirements. Updated Section 4.7.1 and added 4.7.1.1 Removed NCIC and eTrace database searches. Added references.

**Approval**

Redacted - Signatures on File

Firearms/Toolmarks  
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Date: 04/15/2021

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**QA Approval**

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