




COLUMBIA POLICE DEPARTMENT

"Policing Excellence through Community Partnerships"

Directive Type: General Order	Effective Date: 4/3/2020	General Order Number: 05.18
Subject: <i>Crime Gun Intelligence Unit</i>		
Amends/Supersedes: <i>New</i>	Chief of Police: 	
Distribution: All Personnel	Review Date: July 1	# of Pages: 6

1.0 DIRECTIVE

The Columbia Police Department (CPD) will ensure that all members of the department continue to collect information, evidence and intelligence regarding illegal firearms use in the City of Columbia.

2.0 CRIME GUN INTEL UNIT (CGIU)

The CPD's Crime Gun Intel Unit (CGIU) will fall under the command of the CPD's Criminal Investigations Bureau. CPD will staff this unit with a supervisor, sworn personnel and non-sworn personnel.

3.0 CGIU MISSION

The Mission of the CGIU is to identify, analyze and investigate Crime Gun Intelligence, with the goal of producing actionable intelligence to assist in identifying, arresting and prosecuting offenders who unlawfully possess and/or use firearms in Columbia, SC, and identifying illegal sources for our crime guns. The CGIU will partner with other local, county, State and federal law enforcement agencies, and prosecutors, as necessary, to further its mission.

4.0 DEFINITIONS

Crime Gun Intelligence (CGI): will include, but not be limited to, information collected and/or developed from seized firearms and ballistics evidence, incident and investigative reports, field interviews, surveillance, seized firearm tracing, laboratory examinations (including IBIS/NIBIN results and trace evidence), and social media monitoring, which are related to illegal firearms use in our jurisdiction.

IBIS: The Integrated Ballistics Identification System (IBIS) is a brand of technology equipment that captures digital images of fired ammunition components, so they can be correlated (compared) in an electronic database (NIBIN) for possible matches in an effort to link firearm recoveries and/or shooting incidents.

NIBIN: The National Integrated Ballistic Identification Network (NIBIN) program is a specialized computer network, administered by the federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF), in partnership with other federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies, that uses automated ballistic imaging technology to link firearm related crimes.

NIBIN Lead: A possible linkage of two or more firearms-related crimes (shooting or firearm recovery) through the utilization of NIBIN technology. Information from a NIBIN Lead must be confirmed (i.e. NIBIN Hit) if it is to be used as probable cause for an arrest or search warrant, or as evidence in court.

NIBIN Hit: A confirmed linkage of two or more firearms-related crimes (shooting or firearm recovery) made by two (2) certified firearms examiners.

Seized Firearm: Any Firearm that is lawfully taken into the custody of the Columbia SC Police Department, that has been, or will be, checked in to the CPD's Evidence/Property Unit.

5.0 GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The Columbia Police Department (CPD), to include the CGIU, will follow the U.S. Department of Justice's established Crime Gun Intelligence Center (CGIC) Workflow Processes, which consist of seven (7) Essential Elements: Comprehensive Collection of Shell Casings and Crime Guns, NIBIN Entry/Correlation and Crime Gun Tracing, Crime Gun Intelligence Analysis, NIBIN Lead/Hit Assignment and Investigation, Law Enforcement and Prosecution Collaboration, State and/or Federal Prosecution, and CGIC Feedback to Process Participants. The CPD policy relative to these elements is as follows:

5.1 Comprehensive Collection of shell casings and crime guns

- CPD personnel will continue to seize fired cartridge/shell casings, ammunition, and firearms, pursuant to the execution of their lawful authority and existing CPD policy.
- These items will be collected, documented, preserved, and transferred to the CPD Evidence/Property Unit, in accordance with CPD policy.
- The CPD Evidence/Property Unit will identify seized firearms and fired cartridge/shell casings that are eligible for entry into IBIS/NIBIN.

5.2 NIBIN Entry/Correlation and Gun Tracing

- CPD CGIU personnel will test-fire all IBIS/NIBIN eligible seized firearms.

- If the test-fires are to be done at the dedicated/secured indoor bullet trap area, which is within the confines of the Evidence/Property Unit, they must be conducted by CPD personnel who are authorized by the Chief of Police or his designee and if CPD evidence is being test-fired, it should also be accompanied by an evidence custodian.
- CPD CGIU personnel will be responsible for controlling access to the secured indoor bullet trap area, and will also be responsible for maintaining the bullet trap.
- External law enforcement agency requests to utilize the CPD bullet trap must be approved by the Chief of Police or his designee. If the request is approved, the external agency personnel will be provided a safety briefing by an on-site CGIU member, who must be present when the test-firing occurs. The external agency personnel must abide by all CPD safety procedures, including the wearing of safety equipment.
- All persons present for the test-firing at the indoor bullet trap secure area must wear safety equipment (to include eye protection, hearing protection, gloves, and respirator masks, all of which are provided), and all must review the Memorandum entitled “Test Firing of Weapons at Snail Trap” which is posted at the entrance to this area.
 - If the test-firing of IBIS/NIBIN eligible seized firearms is to be conducted at a site other than the CPD indoor bullet trap (e.g. at the CPD Firing Range or another law enforcement agency firing range), the all applicable policies will be followed regarding the transfer and handling of evidence, as well as Firing Range rules and procedures.
 - If the CGIU determines that an IBIS/NIBIN eligible seized firearm is inoperable (unable to be test-fired), then it will be returned to the appropriate evidence custodian as “inoperable”.
- CPD CGIU will transport the test-fired cartridge casings (from the NIBIN eligible seized firearms), as well as NIBIN eligible seized fired cartridge casings (evidence collected at crime scenes), to our designated IBIS/NIBIN site for entry into IBIS/NIBIN. This will be scheduled as frequently as our designated site can accommodate.
 - The CGIU will transport/return the test-fired and seized cartridge casings from the IBIS/NIBIN site to the CPD Evidence/Property Unit after it is entered into IBIS/NIBIN.
 - This doesn’t preclude other CPD personnel from taking ballistic evidence directly to an IBIS/NIBIN site for entry, or additional processing, on an as-needed basis, consistent with current CPD policy.
- The CPD will trace all seized firearms through the ATF National Tracing Center.

5.3 Crime Gun Intelligence Analysis

- The CGIU will focus primarily on five (5) core areas for crime gun intelligence, analyzing the persons, locations, property, firearms and ballistic evidence associated with each area to identify criminal patterns, relationships, suspects and witnesses. One of the main CGIU goals is to produce actionable intelligence to assist in identifying, arresting and prosecuting offenders who impact gun-related crime in Columbia, SC.
- The five (5) core areas to be monitored are as follows:
 1. Firearm related arrests and/or recoveries that occur within CPD's jurisdiction
 2. NIBIN Leads that are received from IBIS/NIBIN sites
 3. ShotSpotter Activations (gunshot detection system) and related CPD responses
 4. Firearm traces completed by the ATF
 5. Stolen Firearm Reports

5.4 NIBIN Lead/Hit Assignment and Investigation

- A NIBIN Lead is a possible linkage of two or more firearms-related crimes through the NIBIN program. NIBIN sites routinely provide these leads to designated points of contact within each of the law enforcement agencies that are linked via the lead.
- A NIBIN Lead is only a possible linkage. If the submitting law enforcement agencies want to use the NIBIN Lead as probable cause for an arrest or search warrant, or as evidence in a court proceeding, they must first request that the "lead" be "confirmed".
- A NIBIN Hit is a "confirmed" linkage of two or more firearms-related crimes, made by two (2) certified firearms examiners.
- The CPD CGIU will assist and/or facilitate CPD requests to have a NIBIN Lead reviewed for possible confirmation, with our IBIS/NIBIN sites.
 - This doesn't preclude other CPD personnel from requesting NIBIN lead examination for possible confirmation directly with the IBIS/NIBIN site, on an as-needed basis.
- When the CGIU receives NIBIN Leads, they will be triaged to determine investigative potential. This process will include researching the related CPD cases for assignment, details, location and status, and the solvability factors within each incident. If applicable, the CGIU will also initiate contact with external law enforcement agency points of contact, if the external case was linked to a CPD case.

- With the concurrence of the CGIU Coordinator or Supervisor, triaged leads will be referred/assigned according to the following protocol:
 - **Tier 1:** Actionable Lead, which is related to CPD cases that are currently assigned to CPD Investigators
 - The lead, and an explanation of the related information and intelligence, will be forwarded to the CPD Investigators (and their immediate supervisors) who were assigned the related/linked cases.
 - The CGIU will offer to assist the CPD Investigators by following up on the lead.
 - **Tier 2:** Actionable Lead, which is **NOT** currently assigned to CPD Investigators
 - The CGIU Supervisor will communicate with the appropriate CPD Unit supervisor, to determine whether the CGIU will follow up on the lead, or if another CID Unit will take the lead
 - If the CGIU will follow up on the lead, it will be assigned to a CGIU Investigator
 - **Tier 3:** Lead Not Actionable (at this time)
 - Information related to a Tier 3 lead may be transmitted to the appropriate CPD Unit for situational awareness and/or officer safety.

- If an actionable lead is assigned to the CGIU for investigative follow up, the investigation will be conducted and documented in accordance with existing CPD policy.

- If an actionable lead is adopted for potential federal prosecution (by CGIU personnel who are deputized federal Task Force Officers), then the investigations will also conform to the MOUs that CPD has with the external agencies, and the Federal Rules of Criminal Procedure.

- Tracking: The CGIU will be responsible for tracking all of the leads that it develops and refers.
 - A unique CGIU number will be created and used to track the referred leads

5.5 Law Enforcement & Prosecution Collaboration

- The CGIU will develop criteria and transmittals to refer crime gun intelligence (related to charged offenders) to prosecutors in local, state and federal court, to be used in accordance with established rules of criminal procedure.
 - CGI could potentially expand the scope of a defendant's criminal acts, by associating them, or the firearms they possess, with additional crime gun events

5.6 State/Federal Prosecution

- The CGIU will monitor the prosecution of cases associated to the “leads” it develops and refers.
 - The prosecutorial status of the leads/cases will be maintained on the CGIU tracking system.

5.7 CGIC Feedback to Process Participants

- The CGIU will maintain open communication with internal and external partners/stakeholders, that are related to the leads the CGIU develops and refers
 - A process will be developed to periodically transmit Success Stories to these stakeholders, regarding investigations that were significantly aided by crime gun intelligence.