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OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK
OAKLAND

CITY OF OAKLAND
AGENDA REPORT

2007 NOV 29 PM 4:08

TO: Office of the City Administrator
ATTN: Deborah Edgerly
FROM: Police Department
DATE: December 11, 2007

RE: An Informational Report from the Office of the Chief of Police on Efforts to Trace Guns Used in Crimes

SUMMARY

As directed by the Public Safety Committee on October 9, 2007, staff has prepared a report detailing the status of the Department's efforts to trace guns used in the commission of crimes in Oakland. This report provides statistical information on firearms traced through the Criminal Investigation Division's Weapons Detail and tracked by the National Tracing Center.

FISCAL IMPACTS

This is an informational report with no fiscal impact.

BACKGROUND

In 1999, The City of Oakland set out to determine the sources of guns recovered from juveniles involved in crimes and to identify factors that place youth at risk for gun violence. The goal was to reduce gun deaths and injuries to youth by researching and addressing the supply and demand for guns by juveniles in Oakland. "Gun Tracing" enables law enforcement to link gun sellers, purchasers and possessors across jurisdictions.

All firearms recovered in the City of Oakland are systematically tracked from manufacturer to the purchaser for the purpose of aiding law enforcement in identifying persons involved in criminal acts. The identification of said persons is an invaluable tool to investigators seeking leads in solving firearms related crimes. Investigators are able to link persons to acts of violence and or associates based on gun tracing information.

The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) reports that of the top five Bay Area retail firearm dealers with traced weapons four currently have inactive licenses. ATF can only release specific trace data (i.e. firearm dealer information) as part of a law enforcement investigation.

Item: _____
Public Safety Comte.
December 11, 2007

KEY ISSUES

The Weapons Detail continues to maintain a database of weapons recovered by police personnel and submitted with a *gun card*¹ (Table 1). Weapons Detail personnel currently handle gun tracing. Weapons used to commit crimes have the highest priority in tracing entries (i.e., those cases where the assigned investigator determines the information will be of assistance in solving or proving the crime or series of crimes).

Table 1: Weapons Statistics from the Evidence & Property Unit

Description	2005	2006	2007*
Handguns Received	704	781	691
Long guns Received	267	323	286
Total Weapons Received	971	1104	977
Handguns Released	60	161	81
Long guns Released	24	44	10
Total Weapons Released	84	205	91
Hand guns Destroyed	516	699	346
Long guns Destroyed	217	233	154
Total Weapons Destroyed	733	932	500

*January 1 – September 30, 2007

The Department continues to recover firearms by receiving:

- Firearms that are evidence in a crime;
- Firearms turned in for destruction by the owner;
- Firearms submitted for safekeeping (domestic violence cases, mental illness, etc.); and
- Found property.

Gun Tracing

Investigators make inquiries of the California Department of Justice Automated Firearms System (AFS) to determine specific information as it pertains to the firearm in question (the state system does not track shotguns and rifles, and it does not have entries for weapons prior to 1974). All firearms recovered by the Oakland Police Department are traced through the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives [ATF (E-Trace)]. The trace information is forwarded to the National Tracing Center. Table 2 below shows the number of traces requested by the Department and recorded by the National Tracing Center from January 1, 2005 through October 10, 2007.

¹ *Gun Cards* are filled out on all firearms turned into the OPD Property Section. The cards describe in detail the caliber, make, model etc.

Table 2: Crime Gun Traces by Year

Year	Number Of Traces
2005	947
2006	1054
2007	883
Total	2884

The National Tracing Center (NTC) receives information on crime guns from law enforcement agencies across the nation, which has resulted in a large backlog of *routine* requests. The backlog that takes place at the NTC causes delays and possible inconsistencies with the data that is provided back to the Department. The number of firearms “received” and “sent out” (Table 1) are those that were received from the National Tracing Center. Inconsistencies may occur when the firearm description and recovery date matched a previously submitted trace.

Table 3 illustrates the *Top Reported Crimes with Traced Firearms of 2007* from January 1, 2005 through October 10, 2007. The table compares current trends to past years.

Table 3: Top Reported Crimes with Traced Firearms

Crime	2005	2006	2007*
Carrying Concealed Weapon	95	130	154
Felon in Possession (Firearm)	123	223	115
Carrying Prohibited Weapon	52	51	77
Health-Safety	100	116	77
Marijuana-Sell	34	51	67
Cocaine-Sell	85	108	63
Possess Stolen Property	13	32	47
Firing Weapon	16	41	39
Weapon Offense	5	12	34
Aggravated Assault-Gun	32	50	30

*January 1 – October 10, 2007

Table 4 shows the manufacturer and caliber of the *Top Ten* types of guns traced by the Police Department from January 1, 2005 through October 10, 2007.

Table 4: Top Ten crime guns traced in Oakland

Manufacturer	Caliber	# of Traces
Smith & Wesson (Revolver)	38	123
Mossberg (Shotgun)	12	97
Smith & Wesson (Revolver)	357	95
Remington Arms CO. (Shotgun)	12	64
Raven Arms (Pistol)	25	61
Marlin Firearms CO. (Rifle)	22	53
Smith & Wesson (Pistol)	9	49

Item: _____
 Public Safety Comte.
 December 11, 2007

Winchester (Shotgun)	12	49
Ruger (Revolver)	357	42
Glock GMBH (Pistol)	9	41
Total		674

Table 5 shows the age of possessors of firearms traced by the Police Department from January 1, 2005 through October 10, 2007.

Table 5: Age of Possessors of Firearms Traced

Age of Possessors	2005	2006	2007*
17 and Younger	54	81	67
18 to 21	141	155	145
22 to 24	86	98	65
25 to 30	122	165	110
31 to 40	116	168	121
41 to 50	108	117	75
Over 50	92	86	104

* January 1 – October 10, 2007

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Weapons personnel are responsible for investigating gun cases, charging cases where suspects are in custody, gun destruction and a myriad of other responsibilities, which limits the time available for weapons tracing. The Department has, however, enlisted support from the ATF to assist in gun tracing by providing one agent who is assigned to assist the Police Department on a full-time basis; two additional agents serve as part-time investigators. Those agents are available when not engaged in other duties commensurate with their respective classifications such as protection details, gun straw sales investigations, and other federal investigations.

The Department's long-term goal is to trace all firearms recovered by the Department in a timely fashion. Beginning October 23, 2007 a full-time Police Services Technician II will be assigned to the Weapons Detail to augment sworn personnel in the tracing of firearms.

The Evidence & Property Unit has approximately 500 additional firearms slated for destruction. The Unit generally destroys firearms twice a year or as additional space is needed.

SUSTAINABLE OPPORTUNITIES

Economic: Sustained efforts to reduce the number of violent crimes associated with firearms in Oakland will have significant impact on the quality of life for residents. Citizens would be more likely to reside and shop in Oakland, thereby stimulating economic growth for the City.

Environmental: There are no environmental opportunities associated with this report.

Social Equity: The Department's efforts (in conjunction with the ATF) to identify the origin of firearms possessed by youth, and/or used in the commission of a crime, also helps determine

Item: _____
 Public Safety Comte.
 December 11, 2007

how they are getting into the hands of citizens and youth. This creates an opportunity to address the accessibility of firearms through commercial vendors. By bringing this information to their attention, these establishments become more accountable, as evidenced by the decline in the number of traces to these vendors over the past several years.

The Gun Tracing program utilized by the Oakland Police Department is designed to respond to firearm related crimes by identifying those firearms recovered from the streets of Oakland (and other local jurisdictions) thereby increasing public safety and public trust.

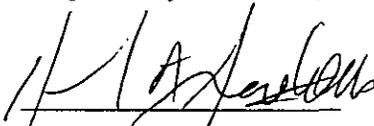
DISABILITY AND SENIOR CITIZEN ACCESS

There are no ADA or senior citizen access issues contained in this report.

RECOMMENDATION / ACTION REQUESTED OF THE COUNCIL

The Oakland Police Department will continue to work in partnership with the ATF National Tracing Center to further improve efforts to trace firearms recovered in the City of Oakland. Staff recommends acceptance of this report. This is an informational report; therefore no action is requested of the Council.

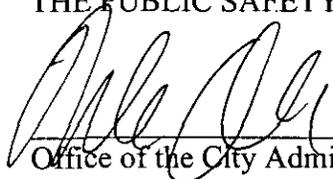
Respectfully submitted,


For Wayne G. Tucker
Chief of Police

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APPROVED AND FORWARDED TO
THE PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE:


Office of the City Administrator

Item: _____
Public Safety Comte.
December 11, 2007