



# City of San Antonio

## Agenda Memorandum

**File Number:** 17-1978

---

**Agenda Item Number:** 22.

**Agenda Date:** 4/20/2017

**In Control:** City Council A Session

---

**DEPARTMENT:** Police

**DEPARTMENT HEAD:** William P. McManus, Chief of Police

**COUNCIL DISTRICTS IMPACTED:** City wide

### **SUBJECT:**

An Ordinance authorizing the ratification of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the San Antonio Police Department (SAPD) and the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ), Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF), establishing and defining a partnership that will result in an ATF National Integrated Ballistic Information Network (NIBIN) system located at the SAPD.

### **SUMMARY:**

This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) has been entered into by the San Antonio Police Department (SAPD) and the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ), Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF), to establish and define a partnership that will result in an ATF National Integrated Ballistic Information Network (NIBIN) system installation, operation, and administration for the collection, timely analysis, and dissemination of crime gun data to enhance the efforts of law enforcement to integrate resources to reduce firearms violence, identify shooters, and refer them for prosecution.

### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

The National Integrated Ballistic Information Network (NIBIN) Program automates ballistics evaluations and provides actionable investigative leads in a timely manner. NIBIN is the only interstate automated ballistic imaging network in operation in the United States and is available to most major population centers in the United States.

Prior to the NIBIN Program, firearms examiners performed this process manually which was extremely labor intensive. To use NIBIN, firearms examiners or technicians enter cartridge casing evidence into the Integrated Ballistic Identification System. These images are correlated against the database. Law enforcement can search against evidence from their jurisdiction, neighboring ones, and others across the country. This program is one investigative tool accessed by law enforcement that allows each of us to share information and reinforce cooperation resulting in more effective in case closures.

The program uses an integrated investigative approach that works in concert with other Federal, State, tribal, and local law enforcement agencies in combating firearms-related violence using ballistic imaging technology to compare images of ballistic evidence obtained from crime scenes and firearms. The mission of the program is to reduce firearms violence through aggressive targeting, investigation, and prosecution of shooters and their sources of crime guns.

Participation in this program is expressly restricted to the sharing of ballistic imaging of firearms data associated with crimes recovered by any law enforcement agency in the United States and international law enforcement partners who have entered into agreements with ATF to share ballistic data. ATF may work with international law enforcement partners to search their networks in an effort to identify a gun in their database against a crime gun in ATF's NIBIN network.

NIBIN systems may be used only for imaging of ballistic evidence and test fires of firearms illegally possessed, used in a crime, or suspected by law enforcement officials of having been used in a crime. Ballistics information and/or evidence from firearms taken into law enforcement custody through a Gun Buy Back Program, property damage crimes involving firearms, found or abandoned firearms and domestic disturbances are permitted for entry in the NIBIN database.

The SAPD currently does not have access to a NIBIN system. This MOU would provide the SAPD with the hardware and training to begin the implementation of a NIBIN program within the Department.

**ISSUE:**

The proposed ordinance continues the City Council's policy of seeking intergovernmental financial assistance for City crime prevention and enforcement programs addressing violent crime.

**ALTERNATIVES:**

Failure to ratify the Memorandum of Understanding with the ATF would prevent the SAPD from implementing a NIBIN program within the Department as an investigative aid to address violent/gun crime.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

In accordance with the requirements set forth in the MOU the SAPD has provided a location for the equipment and has expended approximately \$7,000.00 to prepare the location for use. Additionally travel expenses will be incurred to send three (3) members of SAPD to Huntsville, Alabama for training on the system by ATF. Travel costs are estimated to be approximately \$4,500.00. All costs will be covered by the Department's current budget.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends approval and the ratification of the Memorandum of Understanding to establish a National Integrated Ballistic Information Network (NIBIN) system within the San Antonio Police Department.