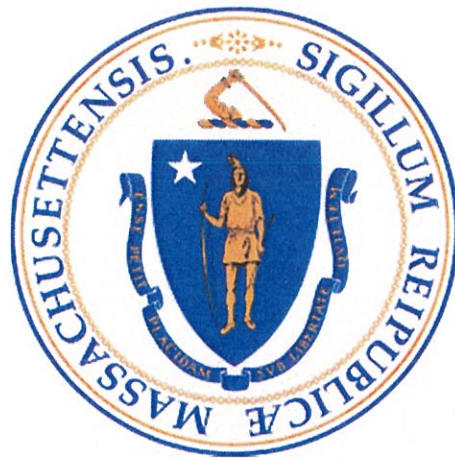


Recovery of Crime Guns in Massachusetts

2016-2017



Massachusetts Executive Office of Public Safety and Security

June 21, 2018

Charles Baker, Governor

Daniel Bennett, Secretary of Public Safety and Security

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Overview

Pursuant to line item 8000-0600 of the fiscal 2018 state budget, the Executive Office of Public Safety and Security (EOPSS) was directed to conduct an analysis of section 131Q of chapter 140 of the Massachusetts General Laws to determine: (i) the effectiveness of current reporting mechanisms for lost and stolen guns, including by identifying the number of guns traced to crime that were reported lost or stolen prior to their use in the commission of a crime; and (ii) firearm purchase and sales patterns as they relate to firearms traced to crime, including an analysis of the number of guns traced to a crime that were originally purchased from each licensed gun dealer in the Commonwealth or purchased through a secondary private seller. The statute reads as follows:

Section 131Q. A firearm, rifle or shotgun, large capacity weapon, machine gun or assault weapon used to carry out a criminal act shall be traced by the licensing authority for the city or town in which the crime took place. The licensing authority shall report statistical data, when the data is readily available as determined by the chief of police, including, but not limited to: (i) the make, model, serial number and caliber of the weapon used; (ii) the type of crime committed; (iii) whether an arrest or conviction was made; (iv) whether fingerprint evidence was found on the firearm; (v) whether ballistic evidence was retrieved from the crime scene; (vi) whether the criminal use of the firearm was related to known gang activity; (vii) whether the weapon was obtained illegally; (viii) whether the weapon was lost or stolen; and (ix) whether the person using the weapon was otherwise a prohibited person.

The data shall be reported to the commonwealth fusion center or the criminal firearms and trafficking unit within the division of investigation and intelligence in the department of state police established pursuant to section 6 of chapter 22C. The colonel of state police shall produce an annual report by December 31 of each year regarding crimes committed in the commonwealth using firearms, rifles or shotguns, large capacity weapons, machine guns or assault weapons, including all of the categories of data contained in this section, and shall submit a copy of the report to the joint committee on public safety and homeland security, the clerks of the house of representatives and the senate and, upon request, to criminology, public policy and public health researchers and other law enforcement agencies.

Methodology and Data Collection

Information on lost or stolen firearms is currently collected in several locations. According to section 129C of chapter 140, in the case of loss, theft or recovery of any firearm, rifle, shotgun or machine gun, a report shall be made forthwith to both the commissioner of the Department of Criminal Justice Information Services (DCJIS) and the licensing authority in the city or town where the owner resides. In addition to reporting the lost firearm to DCJIS, a lost or stolen firearm is often reported by the reporting agency to the National Crime Information Center (NCIC), a computerized index of criminal justice information hosted by the Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI). When a police officer recovers a firearm, one of the steps he or she will often take is to run a check of the serial number through NCIC to

determine if the firearm has been reported lost or stolen. The check will reveal if the firearm has been reported lost or stolen and in which jurisdiction the report was made. The officer would then include this information in his or her entry into the Commonwealth Fusion Center’s crime gun tracking system, which was created as a result of chapter 140 section 131Q of the Massachusetts general law. The law directs firearms licensing authorities within the Commonwealth to annually report to the Colonel of the Massachusetts State Police certain data related to crime gun seizures within their jurisdiction.

Data on crime guns that has been previously sold or registered in Massachusetts was compiled by comparing serial numbers in the crime gun database against registered firearms in the Massachusetts Gun Transaction Portal and Massachusetts Instant Record Check System (MIRCS) maintained by DCJIS. For the purpose of this analysis, it is possible a firearm that was recovered during a criminal investigation could have been registered or sold multiple times, thus creating multiple records for a single firearm.

Firearms Reported Lost or Stolen in Massachusetts

Since 2015, jurisdictions have been reporting crime gun seizures to the Commonwealth Fusion Center. As outreach and training continues, the number of contributing agencies has increased, as has the quality of the data. In 2016, 9.72% of reported crime guns were reported as lost or stolen as of the time of recovery. In 2017, this number rose to 13.65%.

Figure 1: Status of Crime Guns Reported to CFC			
Status of Crime Gun	2016	2017	Total
Stolen	87	223	310
Lost	6	5	11
Unknown	863	1442	2305
Total	956	1670	2626

* Data Source: MA Crime Gun Tracking Database

Massachusetts police agencies reported 1,127 total firearms as lost or stolen to NCIC in 2016 - 2017; this includes all firearms not just crime guns.

Figure 2: Lost or Stolen Firearms Reported to NCIC by MA Agencies			
Year	2016	2017	Total
Lost or Stolen Firearms	530	597	1127

*Data Source: NCIC

There were nine agencies reporting twenty or more lost or stolen firearms to NCIC:

Figure 3: Agencies Reporting 20 or More Lost or Stolen Firearms

Agency	Total 2016 -2017
MA State Police	77
Springfield	52
Worcester	41
Haverhill	27
Methuen	27
Dartmouth	25
New Bedford	25
Pittsfield	24
Taunton	20

Crime Guns in MIRCS

Matching serial numbers in the Crime Gun Tracking System against MIRCS resulted in 749 records. This should not be considered 749 individual firearms, but 749 instances in which there was a match. For example, it is possible a firearm that was recovered during an aggravated assault had been originally purchased from a dealer and then was sold or transferred multiple times. The actual number of individual crime guns that were identified in MIRCS was 514.

Figure 4: Transaction Type for Crime Guns

Transaction Type	Total
Sale	574
Personal Sale/Transfer	139
Registration	23
Loss/Theft	13
Total	749

* Data Source: DCJIS

Of the 749 matching records, 577 contained dealer information, while 145 transactions contained personal information of a known seller; these numbers closely mirror the above breakdown of transaction types. A list of all dealers with 10 or more transactions is below (For a complete list, see Appendix Table 1).

Figure 5: Dealers with 10 or More Transactions Involving Crime Guns

DEALER NAME	TOWN	TOTAL
FOUR SEASONS	WOBURN	94
COLLECTOR'S COIN GALLERY	STONEHAM	22
THE GUN PARLOR	WORCESTER	20
M & M PLIMOTH BAY OUTFITTERS, INC.	PLYMOUTH	19
BASS PRO SHOP	FOXBOROUGH	17
NORTH SHORE FIREARMS, LLC	MIDDLETON	15
GUNS INC.	WEST SPRINGFIELD	13
HUNTER'S TRADING POST, LTD.	WEYMOUTH	13
R & R GUN SALES	BELCHERTOWN	12
ZERO HOUR ARMS	SOUTH EASTON	12
DECKER ENTERPRISES INC. DBA/PETES GUN SHOP	ADAMS	11
NICK'S SPORT SHOP INC.	PALMER	11
DOWNRANGE INC	HYANNIS	10

EOPSS examined transactions associated with the dealer with the most listed transactions, Four Seasons, in more detail. Four Seasons is a gun dealer located in Woburn, Massachusetts. They sell new firearms, used firearms as well as ammunition and supplies. Of the 94 transactions, 78 individual crime guns were tied to this dealer. The buyers listed 53 different home towns and firearms were recovered in 31 different jurisdictions (For a complete list see Appendix Table 2).

Figure 6: Jurisdictions Recovering Crime Guns Bought at Four Seasons	
Recovering Jurisdiction	Total
BOSTON	22
LYNN	8
WORCESTER	4
ABINGTON	3
BILLERICA	3
LOWELL	3
SPRINGFIELD	3
STONEHAM	3
ASHBURNHAM	2
CAMBRIDGE	2
CHELSEA	2
HAVERHILL	2
LAWRENCE	2
NEWBEDFORD	2

Of the weapons recovered originating with Four Seasons, 88% were pistols or revolvers; there were also three shotguns and five rifles recovered.

Appendices

Table 1: Dealers with Transactions Involving Crime Guns		
DEALER NAME	TOTAL	TOWN
FOUR SEASONS	94	WOBURN
COLLECTOR'S COIN GALLERY	22	STONEHAM
THE GUN PARLOR	20	WORCESTER
M & M PLIMOTH BAY OUTFITTERS, INC.	19	PLYMOUTH
BASS PRO SHOP	17	FOXBOROUGH
NORTH SHORE FIREARMS, LLC	15	MIDDLETON
GUNS INC.	13	WEST SPRINGFIELD
HUNTER'S TRADING POST, LTD.	13	WEYMOUTH
R & R GUN SALES	12	BELCHERTOWN
ZERO HOUR ARMS	12	SOUTH EASTON
DECKER ENTERPRISES INC. DBA/PETES GUN SHOP	11	ADAMS
NICK'S SPORT SHOP INC.	11	PALMER
DOWNRANGE INC	10	HYANNIS
NORTHEAST TRADING CO, INC.	9	NORTH ATTLEBOROUGH
BLUE NORTHERN TRADING COMPANY	8	AYER
GUNS AND GUN PARTS	8	WEST SPRINGFIELD
MASS FIREARMS SCHOOL	8	HOLLISTON
TOMBSTONE TRADING COMPANY	8	BROOKFIELD
POWDERHORN OUTFITTERS	7	HYANNIS
CABELAS WHOLESALE INC	6	BERLIN
J&S GUNS AND AMMO	6	ACUSHNET
MIDDLEBORO GUN SHOP	6	MIDDLEBORO
THE SPORTSMANS DEN	6	QUINCY
VILLAGE SPORTS	6	WESTPORT
COMMONWEALTH FIREARMS & TRAINING CENTER, LTD	5	SOMERSET
DAVE'S SPORTING GOODS	5	PITTSFIELD
DICK'S SPORTING GOODS #035	5	WEST SPRINGFIELD
GFA GREGS REPAIR SERVICE	5	NATICK
LAKEVILLE GUN SHOP	5	LAKEVILLE
OUTERLIMITS LLC	5	HOLBROOK
RON'S GUN SHOP	5	DRACUT
THE ORIGINAL BOBS SHOOTING RANGE AND GUN SHOP	5	SALISBURY
CALLAGHAN'S FIREARMS SALES	4	MARLBOROUGH
COLLECTOR'S FIREARMS AND MILITARIA	4	CHELMSFORD
GUNS AND GEAR LLC	4	AGAWAM
MAGNUM ENTERPRISES, LLC	4	ORANGE
MICRO ARC WELDING INC	4	WORCESTER
ON TARGET TRAINING INC	4	EAST BRIDGEWATER
PULLMAN ARMS INC	4	WORCESTER
SMITH & WESSON	4	SPRINGFIELD
SPARKY'S GUN SHOP	4	WEBSTER
UNDERCOVER ARMS	4	HUDSON
WEBSTER LAKE SPORTING INC.	4	WEBSTER

Table 1: Dealers with Transactions Involving Crime Guns

DEALER NAME	TOTAL	TOWN
AMERICA'S ARMED	3	MILFORD
AVID SPORTS	3	PITTSFIELD
BRON CLASSIC FIREARMS	3	STURBRIDGE
EAST MOUNTAIN WOODWORKING LLP	3	HOLYOKE
FTS GUNS	3	NEW BEDFORD
GUN ROOM OF SHREWSBURY INC	3	SHREWSBURY
IMAGING DATA CORPORATION	3	CLINTON
MARK HEAVNER	3	HOLLISTON
MINUTEMAN ARMORY	3	TEMPLETON
NEW ENGLAND BALLISTIC SERVICES INC	3	HOPEDALE
OLD MILL GUN SHOP	3	LEOMINSTER
PATRIOT ARMS OF NEW ENGLAND	3	IPSWICH
RICHIE'S SPORTING SUPPLY	3	WESTPORT
STRICKLAND & SON'S	3	BERKLEY
TITE GROUP SPORTING	3	NORTHBOROUGH
TRIPLE A GUNS, INC.	3	WEST SPRINGFIELD
AG GUNS	2	LOWELL
ARCHER ARMS	2	CARVER
BAYSTATE FIREARMS TRAINING OF PEABODY	2	PEABODY
C&F GUNS	2	MIDDLEBOROUGH
CUSTOM GUN SERVICE	2	WINCHENDON
DICK'S SPORTING GOODS #162	2	MILLBURY
FAIRGROUND TRADERS INC.	2	BROCKTON
FLINT ARMAMENT, INC	2	FALL RIVER
HITMAN FIREARMS, LLC	2	TYNGSBOROUGH
LAW ENFORCEMENT EQUIPMENT INC	2	WALTHAM
PHEASANT RIDGE INC	2	SEEKONK
QUABBIN VALLEY FIREARMS	2	MONTAGUE
RON'S SPORT SHOP	2	DARTMOUTH
SMITTY'S SPORTING GOODS	2	DALTON
THE GUNRUNNER LLC	2	MIDDLEBOROUGH
THE SHOOTERS BOX LLC	2	MALDEN
THE VILLAGE GUNSMITH	2	DARTMOUTH
VILLAGE GUN SHOP	2	NORTHBOROUGH
WARE GUN SHOP	2	WARE
A&J SPORTING GOODS	1	HOUSATONIC
AJS FIREARMS	1	ACUSHNET
AMERICAN FIREARMS SCHOOL	1	NORTH ATTLEBORO
ARCHERY PLUS	1	SPENCER
ARMOR BEARER SPORTS LLC	1	SPRINGFIELD
ATLANTIC TACTICAL	1	WESTWOOD
AUTO BURST TECH	1	EASTON
AUTO-SPORT DISTRIBUTORS	1	AGAWAM
B.G. SPORTING INC	1	WESTFIELD

Table 1: Dealers with Transactions Involving Crime Guns

DEALER NAME	TOTAL	TOWN
BAY STATE FIREARMS	1	SALISBURY
BOB'S TACTICAL LLC	1	SALISBURY
CABELAS, INC	1	BERLIN
CARR'S SPORTING GOODS INC	1	TAUNTON
CULVERINE FIREARMS	1	FEEDING HILLS
DARK HORSE GUNSMITHING	1	GRANBY
DGS INC	1	MARSHFIELD
DICKS SPORTING GOODS #1030	1	NORTHBOROUGH
DICK'S SPORTING GOODS #186	1	LEOMINSTER
DICK'S SPORTING GOODS #245	1	TAUNTON
EPHESIAN ARMS INC	1	FALL RIVER
FAIRHAVEN FIREARMS	1	FAIRHAVEN
FAT CAT SPORTS	1	BRIDGEWATER
FIREARMS PROFESSIONALS INC	1	AGAWAM
FIRST DEFENCE FIREARMS INC.	1	UXBRIDGE
FIRST DEFENSE FIREARMS	1	UXBRIDGE
FLINT ARMAMENT INC. II	1	EAST FREETOWN
FREDRIC LOTTER	1	BOURNE
GARTMAN ARMS CO INC	1	WRENTHAM
GOOSE HUMMOCK SHOP	1	ORLEANS
GUN AND SPORT NORTH	1	LAWRENCE
GUN AND SPORT NORTH EXCHANGE LLC	1	METHUEN
GUN AND SPORT NORTH OF METHUEN	1	METHUEN
H&H ARMS	1	CLINTON
JUREK BROTHERS INC.	1	GREENFIELD
KULAS CUSTOMS LLC	1	POCASSET
LIBERTY EQUIPMENT INC	1	TEWKSBURY
M&J GUNS	1	ROCKLAND
MAGNUM SPORTING GOODS	1	DANVERS
MASS CONCEALED LLC	1	GREENVILLE
MATCH SHOT	1	GARDNER
MILL RIVER GENERAL STORE	1	NEW MARLBOROUGH
NORTHEAST ARMS LLC	1	PEABODY
NORTHERN ATLANTIC ENTERPRISES LLC	1	REHOBOTH
NORTON ARMS & AMMO	1	NORTON
ON TARGET FIREARMS OF DRACUT	1	DRACUT
OUTBACK ARMS, LLC	1	PLYMPTON
PACK AND POSTAL CENTER	1	LANCASTER
PERSONAL DEFENSE SPECIALISTS INC	1	SOUTH HADLEY
PRECISION POINT FIREARMS LLC	1	WOBURN
PRIVATE ARMS	1	DRACUT
ROACH'S SPORTING GOODS	1	CAMBRIDGE
SHAWSHEEN FIREARMS & GUNSMITHING	1	BILLERICA
SHOOTING SUPPLY	1	WESTPORT
STONEY ACRE SPORTS	1	SUTTON
THE GUNRUNNER	1	MIDDLEBOROUGH
THE NORWOOD ARMORY	1	NORWOOD
THE OUTDOOR SHOP	1	SOUTH YARMOUTH
URBAN TACTICAL SUPPLIES LLC	1	BOURNE
VERTICAL DIMENSION LLC	1	WAREHAM
WAYNE'S WEAPONRY	1	WEST BOYLSTON

Table 2: Jurisdictions Recovering Crime Guns Bought at Four Seasons

Recovering Jurisdiction	Total
BOSTON	22
LYNN	8
WORCESTER	4
ABINGTON	3
BILLERICA	3
LOWELL	3
SPRINGFIELD	3
STONEHAM	3
ASHBURNHAM	2
CAMBRIDGE	2
CHELSEA	2
HAVERHILL	2
LAWRENCE	2
NEWBEDFORD	2
AUBURN	1
BERKLEY	1
BEVERLY	1
BRIMFIELD	1
CHELMSFORD	1
CONCORD	1
DOUGLAS	1
EVERETT	1
FRAMINGHAM	1
HARVARD	1
HOPEDALE	1
MELROSE	1
NORTHANDOVER	1
NORTON	1
PEPPERELL	1
SALEM	1
TYNGSBOROUGH	1
Total	78

