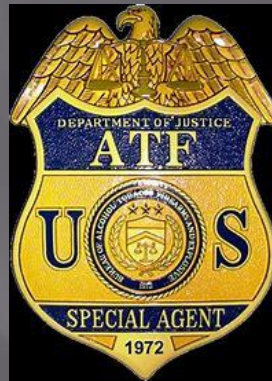


# VIOLENT FIREARM INVESTIGATIONS TEAM (VFIT)

Integrated Ballistic Identification  
System (IBIS)

National Integrated Ballistic  
Information Network (NIBIN)



# VFIT Creation

As the WSPD became more familiar with the application and investigative advantages provided by the NIBIN/IBIS system, local ATF Resident Agent in Charge (RAC), Jason Walsh, Chief Thompson and Sheriff Kimbrough devised a strategy to create an investigative team within the WSPD and FCSO to focus on the investigative leads to help identify those responsible for gun violence in our Community.

RAC Walsh was able to provide information and contacts to Chief Thompson and Sheriff Kimbrough for other Police Departments currently using the NIBIN/IBIS system. Chief Thompson and members of her command staff, as well as Sheriff Kimbrough and his staff, visited the Chattanooga Police Department .Chattanooga is similar in size to the WSPD, the population of the city and they have an active and successful NIBIN/IBIS team. As a result, Chief Thompson and Sheriff Kimbrough saw the value in this investigative tool and determined that an investigative team was needed to utilize the system properly. This is why VFIT was created.

# VFIT Team Composition

- ▣ VFIT is made up of:
  - One WSPD Supervisor, Sergeant
  - Three WSPD Officers
  - Two FCSO Deputies
  - One WSPD Crime Analyst
    - ▣ The Crime Analyst is needed to manage and analyze the massive amount of data, estimated to be hundreds of NIBIN/IBIS leads a year, and put it into a legible format for the VFIT supervisor. The current Crime Analyst was a sworn police officer for seven (7) years.
  - The WSPD Firearms and Tool Mark Examiner
    - ▣ This position will play a vital role with the team as it will provide laboratory analysis of firearms that will assist in criminal prosecution.

# VFIT Selection Criteria

- ❑ Selections for VFIT involved selecting highly motivated, veteran officers with a background in specialized investigative units. The officers need to be capable of functioning at a high level and demonstrate proficiency in handling various types of investigations.
- ❑ The VFIT Sergeant was selected due to his background in investigations at the WSPD in both the Special Investigations Division and the Criminal Investigations Division. He has served as a Task Force Officer with Homeland Security Investigations for 10 years. This experience is paramount in having knowledge on how the Federal Court System works. He has established relationships with the US Attorneys Office and local Federal Agencies.
- ❑ Due to the specialized investigative efforts, VFIT will fall under the Investigative Services Bureau (ISB) Criminal Investigations Division(CID).
- ❑ Due to the specialized investigative efforts, VFIT will fall under the Investigative Services Bureau (ISB) Criminal Investigations Division(CID).



- ❑ The NIBIN Program automates ballistic evaluations on spent shell casings and provides investigative leads in a timely manner. Compliance to ATF's minimal operational standards, will ensure timely entry correlation and dissemination of leads.
- ❑ The system photographs spent shell casings recovered from crime scenes; then correlates/connects possible leads.
- ❑ Both FSD and VFIT began entering test fired casings and evidence shell casings seized from crime scenes.
  - Evidence shell casings are spent shell casings recovered from a crime scene.
  - Test fired shell casings are spent shell casings fired in the WSPD Firearms Section from all legally obtained firearms.



**IBIS TRAX** HD3D™  
BRASSTRAX™

# WSPD Test Fire Tank







- ▣ The WSPD averages investigating calls for service where a spent evidence shell casing is recovered about 1,300 times a year. In addition, the WSPD averages around 650 to 1000 firearms seized a year.
- ▣ The WSPD has seen successes with the use of NIBIN/IBIS in firearms related cases, to include homicides. To date, VFIT has made arrests in various cases as a result of leads produced by NIBIN.

# Investigations

Since VFIT began investigating the most recent shooting incidents, members have made arrests in the following investigations:

- Club Nova , 515 N. Cherry Street, April 7, 2019
- Blum Park, 2401 Ivy Avenue, April 13, 2019
- Peace Court, May 9, 2019 (one arrest for the double shooting, two additional gun charges related to the Blum Park shooting for firearms related charges. )
- Hutton Street, May 9, 2019, (obtained warrants for arrest on two shooting cases, one at 1433 Hutton Street and one on Cameron Avenue on June 1, 2019.)

# VFIT Prosecution

- ▣ VFIT members investigate leads as they are assigned and work closely with the Forsyth County District Attorney's Office and the United States Attorney's Office to prosecute the offenders arrested in the cases.
- ▣ In the early discussions of VFIT creation, United States Attorney for the Middle District of North Carolina, Matt Martin, and Forsyth County District Attorney, Jim O'Neill, were consulted and their staffs will be heavily involved in VFIT cases.

# VFIT

- ▣ VFIT is capable of investigating cases throughout our community involving the use of firearms. VFIT is Federally sworn with ATF and have the ability to prosecute cases in Forsyth County and in the Middle District of North Carolina.
- ▣ VFIT is visibly seen in the community while following up on firearm related offenses. They are responding to active crime scenes where firearms are used.
- ▣ VFIT investigates cases related to Felon in Possession, Discharging a Firearms, Shooting into an Occupied Dwellings/Vehicles, Shootings, Narcotics investigations and Homicides.

# VFIT Partners

- ▣ The ATF has made the investigation of violent firearms related crimes a priority in our community.
- ▣ The ATF plays a large role with the WSPD and FCSO in investigating and prosecuting the offenders VFIT identifies and charges.
- ▣ ATF has pledged the resources of numerous federal agents and the Task Force Officers from WSPD and FCSO.

# NIBIN National Correlation Center

- ❑ The NIBIN National Correlation and Training Center (NNCTC) is the facility designed to be the hub nationwide to utilize technology in terms of the crime scene and recovery of shell casings and firearms. Spent shell casings have unique marks and are examined in an effort to connect shootings and identify weapons used in crimes. As of February 2019, the Correlation Center has conducted 128,000 correlation reviews resulting in the generation of more than 33,000 investigative leads to law enforcement partners.
- ❑ With the support and efforts of ATF RAC Walsh and the backing of USA Matt Martin, WSPD became part of Correlation Center in Huntsville, AL on May 15, 2019.
- ❑ The Correlation Center will allow the WSPD to enter our evidence shell casings and test fire shell casings into NIBIN, they will then review all results and send leads back to us within two days. This will dramatically increase the number of investigative leads produced by NIBIN.
- ❑ Entry into the Correlation Center is a very difficult process and the creation of VFIT is the primary reason the WSPD was pushed ahead of other agencies nationwide for entry.

# NIBIN National Correlation Center

- ▣ Partnering with the Correlation Center allows VFIT members to focus on criminal investigative leads in efforts to bring those responsible for violent crime to justice.
- ▣ With the increased number of trained personnel from VFIT, WSPD are able to enter shell casings from crime scenes and test fired firearms within two days and have results to follow up on.
- ▣ Additionally, VFIT is capable of producing leads with NIBIN within hours of a crime when needed.

# Goals

- ▣ The primary goals of VFIT are:
  - Enter spent shell casings from all crimes where a firearm is used.
  - Enter shell casings from all crime gun seizures.
  - Identify violent offenders who utilize a firearm in commission of a crime.
  - Work with our local and Federal partners to successfully prosecute the identified offenders.
  - Be proactive in the communities most affected by gun violence.
  - Ultimately, instill a feeling of safety in our community from gun violence.



Questions?