

# CITY OF BARSTOW

CALIFORNIA

POLICIES and PROCEDURES MANUAL:

Subject: FIREARM SERIAL NUMBER RESTORATION/REPORTING

## INTENT

The purpose of this policy is to develop a standard procedure and safety protocol for the recovery of obliterated serial numbers from firearms, and to submit the results of such recovery to the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms National Tracing Center. All personnel involved in the recovery and/or handling of firearms will abide by the following policy.

## PROCEDURE

All recovered firearms that have had serial numbers removed/obliterated will be sent to the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Crime Laboratory for serial number restoration.

A. Documentation—reports/field notes will document the chain of custody and the initial examination and handling of evidence from the time it is received/collected until it is released from custody. This shall include a record of how and from whom the firearm was received. Relevant information regarding the weapon and packaging must be included. Alterations made by department personnel to any portion of the firearm and/or packaging must also be included. Reports are to be prepared as near to the time of impound and/or recovery as possible.

### B. Preliminary firearms examination

1. Always keep the muzzle pointed in a safe direction. Be sure the firearm is in an UNLOADED condition. This includes removal of the ammunition source (detachable magazine, tubular magazine, and chamber contents).
2. If the firearm is corroded shut or otherwise in a condition that precludes inspection of the chamber, TREAT THE FIREARM AS IF IT WERE LOADED. Make immediate arrangements for a firearms examiner, range master, or other qualified person to render the firearm safe.
3. Accurately record the condition of the firearm when received. Note the position of various components such as the safeties, cylinders, magazines, slide, and hammer. Accurately record cylinder, chamber, and magazine contents. Package all ammunition separately.
4. Record and photograph the presence and location of trace evidence. This includes hairs, fibers, bloodstains, etc. Any trace evidence of a non-biological nature (i.e., paint chips, glass fragments,

### Reference:

Effective Date  
01/01/2000

Revision No.

Page 1 of 2

Section 344

# CITY OF BARSTOW

CALIFORNIA

POLICIES and PROCEDURES MANUAL:

Subject: FIREARM SERIAL NUMBER RESTORATION/REPORTING

fibers, etc.) should be placed in a paper bindle or other suitable packaging material. Biological evidence (blood, tissue, hair, etc.) should be placed in a separate paper bindle and stored frozen. Also consider trace evidence inside the bore. If the trace evidence such as gunshot residue or biological material is intact and not likely to be lost, preserve it for the criminalist/ballistic expert to remove.

5. If the firearm is to be processed for fingerprints, do so prior to restoring the serial numbers. First document important physical/visible aspects such as halos on the revolver cylinder face or other relevant evidence that might be damaged by fingerprinting.
- C. Criminalistics/ballistics laboratory examination—when a firearm is impounded or otherwise recovered by the Barstow Police Department, and the serial numbers on that weapon have been removed or obliterated, it shall be sent to the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Crime Laboratory for serial number restoration. The involved officer shall complete a General Request Form (pink sheet), and direct the weapon to the property officer. The property officer will in turn insure that the firearm is transported to the crime laboratory, and the chain of custody is maintained.
- D. Follow-up and weapons trace—when the firearm is returned to the property officer from the crime lab with the serial numbers restored or partially restored, the detective supervisor shall be notified. He shall in turn assign a detective to conduct any necessary follow-up (i.e., locate owner), and prepare the necessary form. The detective will complete a Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms "NTC Obliterated Serial Number Trace Request Form" (ATC 3312.1-OBL) and forward same to the National Tracing Center in Falling Waters, Virginia 25419. The trace center may also be contacted at 1-800-788-7133 or fax 1-800-578-7223. Note: a copy of the trace form is attached.
- E. Other considerations—exemplar bullets and cartridges from the firearm may also be submitted to DRUGFIRE for search of previous crimes involving this particular firearm/ammunition.

Reference:

Effective Date  
1/01/2000

Revision No.

Page 2 of 2

Section 344