



Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives	
	
Fact Sheet	
At The Frontline Against Violent Crime	Public Affairs Division – Washington, DC
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VIOLENT CRIME IMPACT TEAMS (VCIT) INITIATIVE

Purpose

The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) is the lead federal law enforcement agency in the Violent Crime Impact Team (VCIT) initiative, which uses innovative technology, analytical investigative resources and an integrated federal, state and local law enforcement strategy to identify, disrupt, arrest and prosecute the most violent criminals in 31 U.S. cities. The VCIT concept employs ATF resources from across the United States to target specific geographic hot spots that are experiencing an escalation of violent firearms crime.

Authority

In June 2004, the U.S. Department of Justice and ATF established the VCIT initiative as a pilot program. There were two primary purposes of the VCIT initiative, as articulated by the Office of the Deputy Attorney General and ATF. The first was to reduce homicides and violent firearms crimes in cities where homicide and violent crime rates had not followed the national trend downward. The second was to test the effectiveness of the VCIT strategy in reducing, rather than displacing, the incidents of firearms-related violence in neighborhoods and communities by identifying, arresting and removing to prison the “worst-of-the-worst” violent offenders in specific targeted areas referred to as hot spots.

Mission

VCIT’s primary goal is to reduce the number of violent firearms-related crimes in targeted areas. Removing violent criminals and their firearms from the community yields lasting, positive effects that make the area safer for law-abiding citizens.

VCIT is ATF’s signature initiative to reduce the occurrence of firearms-related violent crime in small geographic areas experiencing an increase in violence. The VCIT strategy is an integrated federal, state and local law enforcement approach that employs a variety of innovative technologies, investigative techniques and analytical resources. A team’s ability to focus on a small target area and flood it with the integrated resources of federal, state and local partners is critical to the success of the program.

ATF’s industry operations resources are an important component of the VCIT program. The inspection initiative is designed to detect and prevent diversion of firearms from legal to illegal commerce. Federal firearms licensees (FFLs) located in the 31 VCIT cities are identified for inspection through intelligence-based information. Additionally, these inspections emphasize educating, encouraging and assisting the FFLs in the development of strong internal controls to prevent firearms diversion.

Currently, the 31 VCITs operate in 18 field divisions. Teams are staffed by ATF special agents, intelligence research specialists, investigative assistants, more than 100 state and local officers and other federal agents. VCIT's partnership with state and local law enforcement brings together the unique, interdependent assets and cutting-edge technology of all participating agencies.

Statistics

Fiscal Year	Cases Referred	Defendants Referred for Prosecution
2006	641	919
2007	655	1,027
2008	728	1,218
2009	660	1,105

Fiscal Year	Average Sentence of Defendants
2006	145 months
2007	178 months
2008	204 months
2009	121 months

Cities

The 31 VCIT cities are: Albuquerque, N.M.; Atlanta; Baltimore; Baton Rouge and New Orleans, La.; Birmingham, Ala.; Camden, N.J.; Columbus, Ohio; Fresno, Los Angeles and San Bernardino, Calif.; Greensboro, N.C.; Hartford, Conn.; Houston and Laredo, Texas; Jackson, Miss.; Las Vegas; Memphis and Nashville, Tenn.; Mesa and Tucson, Ariz.; Miami, Orlando and Tampa, Fla.; Milwaukee; Minneapolis; Philadelphia; Pittsburgh; Richmond, Va.; San Juan, Puerto Rico; and Tulsa, Okla.

For more information about VCIT, go to www.atf.gov (<http://www.atf.gov/>).

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