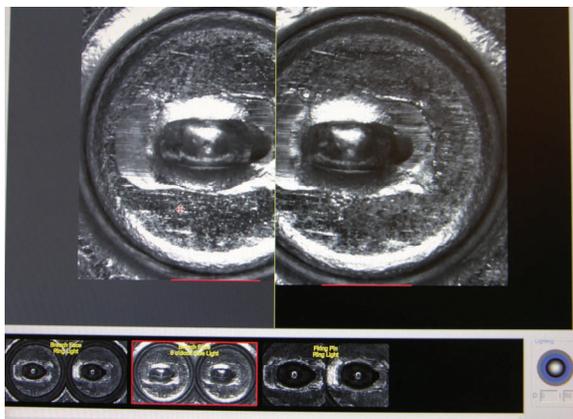


THE IBIS/NIBIN CONNECTION

IBIS/NIBIN facilitates the linking of “dead end” firearm cases and helps solve them!

Washington State has had great success in linking firearms crimes to one another using the IBIS/NIBIN database. For example, a series of seventeen different crime scenes involving six firearms, and three different agencies in two counties, was identified using information provided by IBIS/NIBIN.

With over 115,000 cartridge cases in the IBIS/NIBIN database, more than 400 confirmed hits have been made in Washington State.



Side by side images from IBIS BrassTrax

Benefits of IBIS/NIBIN to Law Enforcement

- Match previously unlinked violent firearm crimes
- Reduce the number of unsolved firearms cases
- Increase interagency communication
- Develop new leads in “dead end” cases



WHAT GOES INTO IBIS/NIBIN?

- Fired cartridge cases and shotshells found at crime scenes
- Test fires from semiautomatic pistols, rifles and shotguns

CARTRIDGE CASES FROM DERRINGERS AND REVOLVERS ARE NOT ENTERED

BULLETS ARE NOT ENTERED

FORENSIC LABORATORY SERVICES BUREAU

Integrated Ballistic Identification System (IBIS)/National Integrated Ballistic Information Network (NIBIN) Program



Washington State Patrol
Crime Laboratory

March 2012

What happens with cartridge cases submitted to the lab?

1. Evidence cartridge cases from scenes and test fires generated by agencies from confiscated firearms are submitted with a Request for Laboratory Examination (RFLE) form, assigned a laboratory case number and barcoded for tracking through the laboratory.
2. The cartridge cases are entered into the NIBIN database by a qualified operator. Digital images of specific areas of the cartridge cases are captured and stored in a database.
3. The database generates a list of cases that appear similar. The database operator determines whether the similarities are enough to warrant a comparison by a firearms examiner.
4. Cartridge cases that appear similar are examined under a comparison microscope by a firearms examiner.
5. A report is issued with the results of the examination.



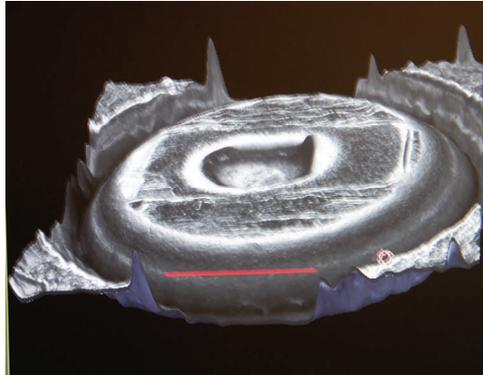
Comparison Microscope

WHAT DOES IBIS/NIBIN DO?

Crimes involving firearms occur every day. Linking one firearms crime to another that involved the same firearm without some prior knowledge was a difficult task. However, with new technology available, things are changing.

Like AFIS (Automated Fingerprint Identification System) does for fingerprints, IBIS/NIBIN stores, compares, and retrieves digital images of fired cartridge cases.

When a new cartridge case is entered into the system, it is automatically compared to all cases of similar caliber already in the database. IBIS/NIBIN can potentially link different incidents that may have been committed with the same firearm regardless of location and jurisdiction.



3D Image from IBIS BrassTrax

WHAT YOU CAN DO

1. Submit fired cartridge cases from crime scenes for entry into IBIS/NIBIN. MOST OF THE HITS GENERATED ARE FROM CRIME SCENE EVIDENCE. ALSO, WITHOUT EVIDENCE CARTRIDGE CASES, THERE IS NOTHING TO WHICH TEST FIRED CARTRIDGE CASES CAN BE COMPARED.
2. Submit test fired cartridge cases for entry into IBIS/NIBIN. Agencies can assist the laboratory by test firing any recovered firearms and submitting the test fires to the laboratory for entry. This allows firearms examiners to focus on more complex comparison casework.

WHEN A HIT OCCURS

When IBIS/NIBIN identifies cases that are similar, a request is made to the agency or agencies to re-submit the evidence for comparison by a firearms examiner.

Once the comparison is performed, a report is issued and all necessary information conveyed to the investigating officer(s).



FUN FACT

IBIS is often mentioned in TV programs which use forensic science to help solve crimes.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Contact any firearms examiner in the following WSP Crime Laboratories:

Seattle Crime Laboratory (206) 262-6020

Tacoma Crime Laboratory (253) 538-3207

Spokane Crime Laboratory (509) 625-5401

E-mail: WashingtonStateNIBINHelp@wsp.wa.gov