

Department of Justice  
Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives  
Information Collection Request  
Supporting Statement  
1140-0057

A National Repository for the Collection and Inventory of Information Related to Arson  
and the Criminal Misuse of Explosives

A. Justification

1. The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) has issued a temporary rule to implement certain provisions of Public Law 104-208, the Omnibus Consolidated Appropriations Act of 1997 (the act), enacted September 30, 1996. The act amended the Federal explosives laws in Title 18, United States Code, Chapter 40, to authorize the Attorney General to establish a national repository of information involving arson, and the suspected criminal misuse of explosives. The act also requires all Federal agencies having information concerning such incidents to report the information to the Attorney General (AG). In addition, the law provides that such repository will contain information on arson and explosives incidents voluntarily reported to the Attorney General by State and local authorities.

On October 11, 2004, the AG directed the Department of Justice (DOJ) "Chief Information Officer (CIO) to consolidate all of the Department's arson and explosives incident databases into a single database." This decision was made to eliminate stove-piped arson and explosives information and intelligence databases within the Department. This decision was further imposed to bring DOJ information systems into compliance with the guiding principles for the Law Enforcement Information Sharing (LEISP) Initiative. The AG directed that these databases "shall be maintained by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF)- United States Bomb Data Center (USBDC). In order to conform to DOJ enterprise architecture, the CIO recommends consolidating the FBI's Automated Incident Reporting System (AIRS) and ATF's Bomb and Arson Tracking System (BATS) databases by integrating the AIRS data into BATS. The ATF/BATS architecture adheres to government-wide guidance and standards for information systems. The ATF USBDC maintains all National Repository databases within the Department of Justice.

2. The major use of the information will be to aid authorized investigators with intelligence concerning incident trends, the identity of suspects, and case specific similarities regarding explosive and incendiary device construction, methods of initiation, types of fuel/explosives used and

methods of operation. In addition, the system will be capable of linking thefts of explosive materials with later criminal misuse of explosives. Through partnership with other Federal, State, Local and Tribal law enforcement agencies, the system will also help identify persons who commit crimes of violence using arson and explosives. In addition to the aforementioned use, information collected will be used to provide the public at large with general statistical information concerning arson and the criminal misuse of explosives.

3. The national repository presently can support the following methods of information transmission: U.S. mail, FedEx, UPS, facsimile, email and web based reporting. 85% of the responses are reported through the web base.
4. Efforts to identify duplication have been resolved now that the 2 systems the Department's arson and explosives incident databases including the FBI's (AIRS) and ATF's (BATS) have been merged into a single database.
5. The collection of this information does not have an adverse impact on small business or other small entities.
6. If the collection of this information is not conducted or is conducted less frequently, meaningful incident based investigative information will not be available in a timely manner to investigators of arson and the criminal misuse of explosives. It would have an adverse affect on ATF's ability to assist Federal, State, Tribal and Local law enforcement and reduce violent crime involving these offenses.
7. There are no special circumstances regarding this information collection.
8. The AG formed an Explosives Review Group (ERG) to ensure effective coordination of the Department's overall efforts that pertain to explosive related matters. ATF participated in the ERG. Upon the ERG reporting its recommendations to the AG, the AG concluded that the ATF National Repository would maintain all explosive incident databases within DOJ. The ERG was comprised of representatives from ATF, FBI and the AG. A 60-day FR notice and 30-day FR notice was published in order to solicit comments from the general public. No comments were received.
9. No decision of payment or gift is associated with this collection.
10. Respondents report information related to law enforcement investigations. Due to its origin, the information is considered confidential and is protected from unauthorized disclosure or dissemination through existing security measures. Confidentiality of respondents information is protected

through exemptions provided for in Title 5 USC Section 552 and regulations found at 31 CFR part 1 Section 136.

11. No questions of a sensitive nature are asked.
12. The number of respondents associated with this information collection is 2,000. The number of responses is 2,000. It is estimated that it takes 10 minutes to complete the requested information. The annual burden associated with this collection is 333 hours.
13. ATF does not project a cost burden to the respondent for transmission of the requested information because ATF provides a toll free telephone line for the use of respondents as well as prepaid postage envelopes. The majority of responses are received through the web-based explosives and arson incident tracking database, BATS. BATS is free to authorized users.
14. The cost to the government is \$150,000.
15. There are no program changes or adjustments associated with this information collection.
16. Information pertaining to this information collection will not be published.
17. ATF does not request approval to not display the expiration date of the OMB approval for this collection.
18. There are no exceptions to the certification statement.

B. Collections of Information Employing Statistical Methods

This collection of information employs no statistical methods.