

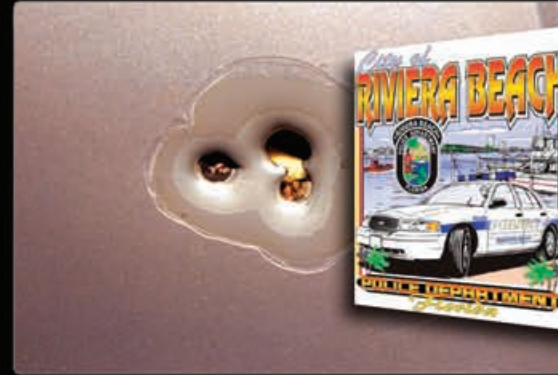
PEOPLE, PROCESSES AND TECHNOLOGY: A PALM BEACH STORY



In 2006, Palm Beach County law enforcers instituted a County-wide protocol for handling all firearms evidence recognizing that criminals are mobile and that property held by one agency may be key evidence sought after by another.



The protocol requires collecting all ballistics evidence, DNA swabbing and test firing of all seized firearms, and interfacing with the National Integrated Ballistics Information Database (NIBIN) & ATF Crime Gun Tracing Center.



In January of 2007, police in the City of Riviera Beach responded to a report of a shooting into an occupied vehicle and conducted a crime scene search.



Recovered 9 m/m cartridge case evidence was submitted to the crime lab where the Integrated Ballistics Identification System (IBIS) was used to process them through the NIBIN database, as per the protocol.



In April of 2007, a young man was arrested by the Palm Beach Sheriff's Office (PBSO) in unlawful possession of a Smith & Wesson, 9m/m pistol.



As per the protocol, the firearm was swabbed for the presence of DNA and submitted to the crime lab for test firing and for IBIS entry into the NIBIN database.



About two weeks later, Riviera Beach Police were informed that the NIBIN search had linked the 9 m/m pistol seized in April by the PBSO to the January shooting of the occupied vehicle. The shooting investigation was assigned for follow up.



In June of 2007, analysis of DNA that had been recovered from the grip and trigger area of the Smith and Wesson Pistol belonged to the young man that had been charged in that case.



As the Palm Beach protocol also enforces collaboration among the various levels of law enforcement resources, the suspect in this case was referred by the ATF for Federal prosecution as a career criminal.



This case exemplifies the fact that committed people executing institutionalized processes leveraged with the latest in forensic technology can be very effective at responding to cross-jurisdictional gun violence.