

**A. Purpose:**

To determine the functioning condition of a firearm and to obtain fired ammunition components for microscopic comparison examinations and/or NIBIN entry.

**B. Responsibility:**

Forensic Science Examiners or other laboratory personnel assigned to the Firearms Unit.

**C. Safety:**

1. Eye and ear protection shall be worn. Additional PPE may be worn at the analyst's discretion.
2. Test firing must be conducted in a designated safe laboratory area.
3. Firearms may only be loaded in the designated safe laboratory areas.
4. Examiners should refer to FA SOP-02 and SOP-02A for safety guidelines.

**D. Procedure:**

1. An overall photograph of the firearm with a scale should be taken and included in the documentation.
2. Complete a physical examination of the firearm to determine its operability.
  - a. For a brief examination, use QR FA-17 Test Fire Operability Label. This may include cases such as Illegal Possession, Found Property, NIBIN Entry, etc.
  - b. When the case scenario indicates that a gun "accidentally" fired, the examiner should use a QR FA-17 and a QR FA-2 Firearms Worksheet. Two (2) copies of the QR FA-17 label should be generated.
    - i. One copy is adhered to the test fire container (a #4 coin envelope or similar)
    - ii. The second copy is adhered to a worksheet in the case jacket.
3. Select the appropriate caliber and type of ammunition. Evidence ammunition should be used first unless it is not suitable. When determining if the evidence ammunition is suitable, the examiner should make sure that there is no damage, corrosion/rusting or markings on the primer/headstamp that may suggest a reload. If the evidence ammunition is acceptable to use, it will be indicated on the QR FA-17. In the event that the evidence ammunition is not suitable, use the ammunition from the laboratory supply. Consideration should be taken in the choice of ammunition if evidence exists for comparison examinations.
  - a. The use of evidence ammunition or laboratory supply must be documented in the analyst's notes and indicated in the final report. An example of the statement to be used in the report

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is “Submission XXX revolver was test fired using ammunition submitted with evidence” or  
“Submission XXX revolver was test fired using ammunition from the laboratory stock”.

4. A minimum of two (2) tests should be fired, unless extenuating circumstances apply. Additional tests may be fired at the discretion of the analyst.
5. Render the firearm safe after test firing.
6. Recover the test fired ammunition components.
  - a. Test fires from evidence firearms are placed in the #4 coin envelope with the QR FA-17 Label.
  - b. Test fires from destruction firearms are placed in a stamped coin envelope that includes caliber, make, model, serial number, SLFU identifying number, and analyst’s name.
7. For evidence firearms, sub-itemize the test fires in JusticeTrax.
  - a. Log onto JusticeTrax
  - b. Open the appropriate case.
  - c. Click on the Evidence tab, then select the appropriate firearm submission.
  - d. Right click → Itemize Evidence
    - i. JusticeTrax will automatically assign the sub-item the correct, sequential number, such as 001-001.
    - ii. Select “Test Fires” under the “Evidence Type” dropdown menu.
    - iii. Indicate in the description box that the items are test fires, then click “Apply.”
    - iv. A barcode label will print out. Adhere the barcode to the test fire container.
8. Test fired specimens are maintained in the appropriate storage location in the Firearms Unit.
9. Upon completion of the examination, return the firearm to its original container. Containers for evidence firearms shall be sealed and initialed appropriately.
10. If using the ammunition that was submitted as evidence, the sub-item must indicate that the original count of the cartridges submitted and what was used for test fires. The following is an example of sub-itemization (*refer to item 014-003 and sub-items*):

014 Box with Glock 9mm, magazine/cartridges (Yourtown Police Department - renamed 1 Jane Doe 01/07/22)
014-001 Glock 9mm (sn XYZ) (Yourtown Police Department - renamed 1 Jane Doe 01/07/22)
014-002 Magazine (Yourtown Police Department - renamed 1 Jane Doe 01/07/22)
014-003 Cartridges (Yourtown Police Department - renamed 1 Jane Doe 01/07/22)
014-003-01 9 cartridges / 2 retained (test fires)(Yourtown Police Department - renamed 1 Jane Doe 01/07/22)
014-003-02 Test fires (Yourtown Police Department - renamed 1 Jane Doe 01/07/22)

It is important to “Containerize” the evidence ammunition that is being returned so that the evidence return receipt will print out the sub-item and the description that will indicate the

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number of evidence ammunition that was used for producing the test fires. [ex. 014-3-01 9 cartridges / 2 retained (test fires)].

014 Box with Glock 9mm, magazine/cartridges (Yourtown Police Department - renamed 1 Jane Doe 01/07/22)

014-001 Glock 9mm (sn XYZ) (Yourtown Police Department - renamed 1 Jane Doe 01/07/22)

014-002 Magazine (Yourtown Police Department - renamed 1 Jane Doe 01/07/22)

014-003 Cartridges (Yourtown Police Department - renamed 1 Jane Doe 01/07/22)

014-003-01 9 cartridges / 2 retained (test fires) (Yourtown Police Department - renamed 1 Jane Doe 01/07/22)

014-003-02 Test fires (Yourtown Police Department - renamed 1 Jane Doe 01/07/22)

☒ Genealogy ☐ Container ☐ Storage Location ☐ View ☒ Edit

Description: 9 cartridges / 2 retained (test fires)

NCIC: [dropdown]

Submit. Agency: Yourtown Police Department - renamed 1

Badge Agc. Rep: 002 Doe, Jane

Kit: [dropdown]

Location: Lopes-Phelan, Lucinda A.

Container: 014-003 Cartridges

Inherit: 014-003 Cartridges

Evidence No: 014-003-01

Intended Disp: Yourtown Police Department - renamed 1

Other ID: [text] ☐ Hold Evid at the lab

**Note:** For cases in which two (2) or more of the same make/model firearms are submitted (e.g. officer involved shootings), or for cases in which items cannot be differentiated by class characteristics alone, the following procedure should be followed:

1. Only one firearm will be opened and processed at a time.
2. The serial number of the firearm and the lab submission number will be scribed onto the ammunition being test fired (if space permits).
3. The examiner will enter the test fire area with the following:
  - a. Firearm to be test fired.
  - b. Firearm packaging (evidence box).
  - c. The Firearm Worksheet (QR FA-2/FA-17).
  - d. The test fire container.
4. At the time of test firing, a second examiner will verify the above information. This will be documented by initialing the appropriate area on the Firearm Worksheet.

**Note 2:**

For this SOP, air guns are treated as firearms and functionality will be determined. Documentation will follow the standard documentation process, including the condition of the CO2 canister if present. The examiner will report the condition of the air gun as received and if a charged CO2 canister was used to make the weapon operable.

**Note 3:**

In the event that the weapon submitted may have been made by a firearms parts kit and does not contain any identifying markings that would have placed by a licensed manufacturer at the time of production, the examiner will enter in Justice-Trax in the manufacturer field "PMF\*". The notes should include any names or marks/numbers located on the individual components.

In the report, the following language should be used:

\*PMF: privately made firearm (PMF) which is a firearm, including a frame or receiver, assembled or otherwise produced by a person other than a licensed manufacturer, and is without a serial number or other identifying markings placed by a licensed manufacturer at the time that the firearm was produced.

**E. Reporting:**

The examiner will indicate in the report if the weapon was operable as received. In the event the weapon is not operable, the report should indicate if the weapon was made operable. The report should indicate any issues that may have been present on the weapon as submitted. If the weapon was determined to be inoperable, the examiner will indicate this in the report.

**F. References:**

1. GL 2 - Safety Manual
2. GL 4 – LIMS
3. FA SOP-02 General Firearms Safety
4. FA SOP-32 Weapons Destruction