

**A. Purpose:**

To determine the functioning condition of a firearm and to obtain fired ammunition components for 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.

**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. For an in-depth examination, use a QR FA-17 and a QR FA-2 Firearms Worksheet. This may include cases such as Homicide, Officer-Involved Shooting, or at the analyst's discretion.
  - c. 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. The ammunition may be from the laboratory supply. Consideration should be taken in the choice of ammunition if evidence exists for comparison examinations.
  - a. Evidence ammunition may be used at the discretion of the analyst.
  - b. The use of evidence ammunition must be documented in the analyst's notes and indicated in the final report.
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.

**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.

*Approved by Director: Dr. Guy Vallaro*

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.

**E. References:**

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