

A. Purpose:

1. To set forth a procedure for the testing firing of firearms before they are destroyed by the DPS Weapons Destruction Unit. Before they can be destroyed, handguns submitted to the Weapons Destruction Unit have to be test fired by the Firearm and Toolmark Section.

B. Responsibility:

1. It is the responsibility of the examiner assigned to this task to retrieve the handguns from the DPS WDU. These firearms must be test fired, and if the caliber is suitable, entered into the NIBIN database.

C. Safety:

1. Personal protective devices, such as hearing and eye protection, will be used during test firing.
2. Additional personal protective devices will be worn when examining and test firing firearms that have potentially come into contact with bio-hazardous materials.

D. Procedure:

1. The firearms received from the DPS WDU will be checked by the examiner against the document presented by the WDU to ensure that all the firearms are present in the container.
2. The firearms will then be checked to determine if any of them have previously been test fired in the laboratory during normal casework. Those firearms will not be further tested. Usually a red band placed around the trigger guard of the handgun will indicate that it has previously been test fired in the laboratory during normal casework.
3. The remaining firearms that have not previously test fired during normal casework, will be screened to determine if they are safe to handle and test fire.
4. Firearms which are not determined to be safe will not be test fired.
5. Handguns determined to be in a safe and operable condition will be test fired twice using laboratory ammunition.
6. The two tested fired bullets and cartridge cases will be placed in a coin style envelope with the following pertinent information on the face of the envelope: caliber, type, make, model, serial number, DES # (WDU identifying number) and examiner.

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7. If the test fires are from a suitable caliber for NIBIN / IBIS database entry, a cartridge case, bullet, or both, will be put into the database for correlation.
8. No further case notes or report writing is necessary for the handling of WDU test fires, unless a linkage is made in the NIBIN database where the test fires have been compared and verified as producing evidence in another investigation.
9. In the above situation the test fires will become evidence, and the test fires will be handled like a normal case.
10. The test fires will be maintained in the sealed envelope and stored by caliber and year of testing with the Firearm and Toolmark Section of the Laboratory.
11. The firearms tested will be returned to the DPS WDU by the examiner assigned this duty in the container in which they were received.
12. A copy of the attached handguns submitted to the lab will be kept on file with the Firearm and Toolmark section of the laboratory.

E. Equipment:

1. Water bullet recovery trap
2. Snail bullet recovery trap
3. NIBIN / IBIS remote data acquisition station

F. References:

1. Test firing procedures
2. Laboratory safety manual

G. Appropriate Appendices:

1. Appendix 1 -- Worksheets