



Written by [Raven Clabough](#) on December 8, 2011

Project Gunrunner Part of Plan to Institute Gun Control

When the Project Gunrunner (also known as Gunwalker) scandal was first exposed, National Rifle Association executive vice president Wayne LaPierre (left) warned that it was a plot by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (still known as ATF) and the Obama administration to use the gunwalking scheme to impose further gun regulations on the American people and infringe upon Second Amendment rights. Now, according to documents which CBS has recently acquired, it seems that LaPierre was correct.



Project Gunrunner, which included Operation Fast and Furious, was a gun-walker scandal in which some 2,000 weapons were transferred into the hands of the Mexican-based Sinaloa drug cartel and other criminal organizations and cartels.

According to [The New American's](#) Thomas R. Eddlem:

The ATF supposedly transferred the guns to the drug gang beginning in November 2009 to set up a sting that would enable the prosecution of the gang's drug lords, but the ATF lost track of all the guns and to date there have been no high-level prosecutions of drug kingpins related to the gun transfers.

But the guns have been traced to the site of a dozen violent crimes in the United States and hundreds of violent crimes in Mexico. Among the U.S. crimes related to the "gun walking" scandal was the shooting death of U.S. Border Patrol Agent Brian Terry. The program shut down after negative publicity over Terry's death in December 2010.

LaPierre says it was the Obama administration's intent to make it appear that the guns were coming from the United States "so they could stick more gun [control] legislation on honest American gun owners of the United States." The NRA vice president told Newsmax:

We wouldn't know about this at all if [Border Patrol Agent Brian Terry] had not been killed and some of the good, honest, decent federal agents down the line had enough of the stench coming out of Washington and started to use the Whistleblower Act to go public and call the Justice Department out on this whole rotten, stinking scheme.

Otherwise thousands of guns would still be going over the border into the Mexican drug cartels and the President and the Attorney General and the Secretary of State would all be running around going, '90 percent of the guns come from America' in an attempt to seek political advantage and in an attempt to enact more gun control laws on honest American citizens and use this whole issue politically against the Second Amendment of the United States.

Examiner.com reports:

The *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, *Time* magazine, *Newsweek*, ABC News, NBC News, MSNBC, CNN, and NPR have in one accord described the operation as a "botched sting



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operation" intended to catch Mexican drug criminals. Even Fox News and CBS News, the two mainstream networks that have provided a thorough and fair analysis of Fast and Furious, have been reticent about describing the scheme as a ruse intentionally implemented for the single purpose of padding gun statistics in Mexico so that the Administration could call for gun bans and highly restrictive firearms laws.

It would not be the first time this administration would point to a crime and use it as an opportunity to further infringe upon civil liberties. When Rep. Gabrielle Giffords (D-Ariz.) was shot in the head during a shooting rampage in Arizona at the beginning of the year, Democrats in Congress responded by calling for stricter restrictions on guns. One Democrat went so far as to demand a ban on all "threatening language or symbols."

CBS News has documents which show that ATF officials discussed using Operation Fast and Furious to advocate for further gun legislation. CBS News [reports](#):

ATF officials didn't intend to publicly disclose their own role in letting Mexican cartels obtain the weapons, but emails show they discussed using the sales, including sales encouraged by ATF, to justify a new gun regulation called "Demand Letter 3". That would require some U.S. gun shops to report the sale of multiple rifles or "long guns." Demand Letter 3 was so named because it would be the third ATF program demanding gun dealers report tracing information.

Demand Letter 3 has been the subject of significant debate, as gun advocates and gun-control adherents argued over whether gun dealers should have to report sales of multiple rifles to the same person. ATF officials asserted that if dealers had to report such sales, it would help the ATF crack down on violent cartels. There were already Demand Letters in place; however, they were on a small scale. The ATF had hoped to see the program implemented over a much broader area, affecting 8,500 firearms dealers in four southwest border states — Arizona, California, New Mexico, and Texas. The argument for targeting these states was that guns from there were turning up at crime scenes in Mexico. The ATF announced plans to implement Demand Letter 3 on April 25, though the National Shooting Sports Foundation is currently suing the ATF for attempting to pass a law that failed in Congress.

Documents obtained by CBS show that on July 14, 2010 ATF Field Ops Assistant Director Mark Chait emailed ATF's Phoenix Special Agent Bill Newell, who was operating Fast and Furious, and said, "Bill — can you see if these guns were all purchased from the same (licensed gun dealer) and at one time. We are looking for anecdotal cases to support a demand later on a long gun multiple sales. Thanks."

Several months later, on January 4, the ATF hosted a press conference to announce a number of arrests in Fast and Furious, which Newell saw as "another time to address the "multiple sale on long guns issue." One day after that conference, Chait emailed Newell, "Bill — well done yesterday.... In light of our respect for Demand letter 3, this case could be a strong supporting factor if we can determine how many multiple sales of long guns occurred during the course of this case."

Unsurprisingly, gun advocates are disturbed and angered by these revelations. Larry Keane, for example, of the National Shooting Sports Foundation, called the ATF's intent to argue for Demand Letter 3 "disappointing and ironic, and deeply troubling."

The ATF evidently used gun dealers to impose a requirement to report sales of multiple rifles to the same person. Unaware of this, gun dealers complied with the requests of the ATF and participated in suspicious sales. Some of the dealers were not comfortable with the process, however, and voiced



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concerns about the entire venture.

In April 2010, one gun dealer contacted ATF Phoenix officials, writing, "We just want to make sure we are cooperating with the ATF and that we are not viewed as selling to the bad guys. We were hoping to put together something like a letter of understanding to alleviate concerns of some type of recourse against us down the road for selling these items." That dealer received a response from the ATF assuring him that he was safe from recourse and adding, "We are continually monitoring these suspects using a variety of investigative techniques [about] which I cannot go into detail."

As it turns out, however, that assertion was entirely incorrect, as one of the most serious criticisms of the entire operation was the ATF's lack of means to sufficiently monitor the guns which were being "walked."

Nevertheless, despite the assurance from the ATF, the same gun dealer sent a second letter voicing his increasing concern:

I wanted to make sure that none of the firearms that were sold per our conversation with you and various ATF agents could or would ever end up south of the border or in the hands of the bad guys. I guess I am looking for a bit of reassurance that the guns are not getting south or in the wrong hands.... I want to help ATF with its investigation but not at the risk of agents [sic] safety because I have some very close friends that are US Border Patrol agents in southern AZ as well as my concern for all the agents [sic] safety that protect our country.

A law enforcement officer, upon learning of the ATF's operation, observed, "It's like ATF created or added to the problem so they could be the solution to it and pat themselves on the back. It's a circular way of thinking."

Currently, both Senator Charles Grassley of Iowa and Rep. Darrell Issa of California are investigating the entire operation. They observed in a statement:

There's plenty of evidence showing that this administration planned to use the tragedies of Fast and Furious as rationale to further their goals of a long gun reporting requirement. But, we've learned from our investigation that reporting multiple long gun sales would do nothing to stop the flow of firearms to known straw purchasers because many Federal Firearms Dealers are already voluntarily reporting suspicious transactions. It's pretty clear that the problem isn't lack of burdensome reporting requirements.

Photo: Wayne LaPierre



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