

To: All Federal Firearms Licensees (FFL) serviced by National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NICS) Section

From: Krista Koch, Chief, NICS Liaison Unit  
FBI Criminal Justice Information Services Division's NICS Section

Date: February 17, 2014

RE: Information Pertaining to the New NICS

The NICS Section would like to provide information on the expected delivery of a new system for the NICS. This project will be implemented in three phases with the first roll-out expected for later this year, in July 2014. While this initiative will not affect you or your ability to conduct firearm background checks in any way, it does bring operational efficiencies and tools that will allow us to better serve you. I'd like to highlight a few benefits:

- NICS will be available 24 hours a day/7 days a week/365 days a year. This does not mean that NICS staff or the Call Center staff will be on hand around the clock. The NICS Section has no plans to alter staff work schedules or call center hours. But for those users accessing the NICS electronically via the NICS E-Check, the NICS will be available 24 hours a day. The vast majority of checks are processed as an immediate proceed meaning no research is required. If by chance a transaction is initiated outside of normal business hours and research is needed, the transaction will be delayed and completed when staff returns. If you are not a current NICS E-Check user, please consider enrolling today. The NICS E-Check users will have an advantage by having extended access to perform NICS checks.
- Database purge of proceeded transactions will be automated. As discussed above, the system will no longer need to be taken out of service at 1 a.m. Eastern Standard Time (EST) for nightly maintenance. The new system provides a true 24 hour purge of proceeded transactions based upon the date and time of each transaction's creation. For example, if a transaction is initiated at 10:10 p.m. EST and is a proceed, it will no longer be purged after 1 a.m. EST during nightly maintenance. The NICS will remain operational 24 hours a day and the transaction will be purged at exactly 24 hours of age, i.e., 10:10 p.m. EST the next day.
- Computer Telephony Integration (CTI). New NICS will be employing the best of the best, taking advantage of best practices, leading commercial computer applications, and modern server hardware. CTI allows FFLs or appellants to contact the NICS and independently obtain needed information. For example, you could check on the status of a transaction, or a customer could check on where their appeal requests stands, etc. The New NICS will also afford our FFLs with the opportunity to receive automated calls or e-mails with a final status as soon as it is marked in the system.
- FBI staff processing efficiencies. The New NICS will be streamlining many current processes that the NICS staff performs. This will all be happening behind the scenes and unnoticeable to you. However, we hope that as a result, you will enjoy improved service from the NICS Section through changes that allow our staff to perform their duties in a more efficient manner. For example, during the transfer process, the NICS Examiner will no longer need to obtain and enter

the NICS Transaction Number (NTN) for record review. The transaction file will automatically be transferred to their computer. Also, the system will automatically recognize when record information is missing or needed and request such from the appropriate criminal justice agency instead of relying on a staff member to assess, recognize, and request the information.

The entire implementation of the new NICS will come in three installments: July 2014, July 2015, and July 2016. As we obtain further details, we will certainly share them with you.

Questions may be directed to Kimberly J. Brown, NICS Liaison Specialist at (304) 625-7387 or via e-mail at <Kimberly.Brown@ic.fbi.gov> or Jill Montgomery, Supervisory NICS Liaison Specialist, at (304) 625-8252 or via e-mail at <Jill.Montgomery@ic.fbi.gov>.