



## ATF Keeping Permanent Records of Gun Owners

[The latest report from the FBI](#) on its background checks reveals that Barack Obama is no longer “the best gun salesman in America,” as CNN’s Aaron Smith claimed back in 2016. At that time background checks had soared from 14 million in 2009 (Obama’s first year in office) to nearly 28 million in 2016 (his last year in office).

The title “best gun salesman in America” then fell to President Donald Trump: during his four years in office (2017 to 2020) background checks averaged nearly 30 million annually.

The mantle now rests on the shoulders of the present White House resident: in Biden’s first two years, background checks averaged more than 35 million a year.

This is no doubt partly due to concerns ordinary citizens have over protecting themselves from increasing gun violence, especially in cities and states run by anti-gun Democrats who have more concern for criminals than their victims.

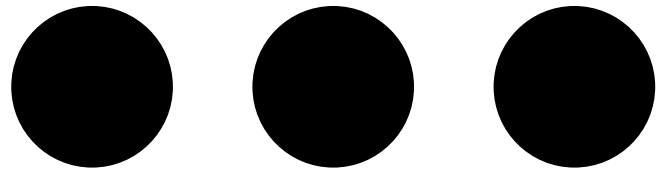
And part is due to the virtual explosion in concealed carry permits, now estimated at more than 20 million. As more and more states are allowing concealed carry, the number of citizens applying for permits is increasing exponentially.

However, there is one number from the FBI report that is particularly unsettling: Since 1998, when the National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NICS) was launched to begin infringing on law-abiding citizens’ Second Amendment rights, there have been *443 million* background checks!

How many of those background checks remain in the hands of the ATF — the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives — in spite of laws prohibiting the government from keeping any such registry or database?

It turns out that there isn’t just *one* database keeping permanent records of gun owners applying for permission to purchase a firearm. [There are five:](#)

- There is the **Multiple Sale Reports** database, a permanent registration database of all purchasers buying more than one firearm at a time. There are millions of permanent records here.
- There is the **Suspect Guns** database, a permanent record of all firearms “suspected” of being used for criminal purposes.
- There is the **Traced Guns** database, another permanent record, this one of all gun traces ordered by law enforcement across the country. There are millions of such traces in this database.



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Written by [Bob Adelman](#) on January 6, 2023

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- There is the ***Theft Guns*** database, a permanent record of firearms that are reported stolen to the ATF. This is in addition to similar database maintained by the FBI, which keeps its own registry of lost, stolen, or missing firearms.
- And then there's the Big One: the ***Out of Business Records*** database. When a gun dealer closes his business, all of his records are turned over to the ATF, including the hated Form 4473, which includes all the personal information the ATF would need to eventually find and confiscate those weapons from their rightful owners. The ATF reports that this is the largest database it has, with "several hundred million" records since the NICS was begun in 1998.

Millions of Americans think they are simply exercising their Second Amendment right by purchasing guns, while in fact they are giving their personal, private information to a government that [increasingly reveals its intentions to one day confiscate them](#).



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