



Groupe de recherche
et d'information
sur la paix et la sécurité
Rue Van Hoorde 33
B-1030 Bruxelles – Belgique
Tél.: 00.32.2/241.84.20
Fax : 00.32.2/245.19.33
E-mail : admi@grip.org
Website: www.grip.org

Traceability of Small Arms and Light Weapons

**Contribution to the United Nations Conference
on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light
Weapons in All Its Aspects**

Ilhan BERKOL

With the collaboration of Frédéric SCHÜTZ and Michel WÉRY

Special Issue
July 2001

Summary

Introduction

- 1) The United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects
- 2) The Report of the Group of governmental experts created by the resolution 54/54 V of the UN General Assembly, 15 December 1999, entitled “Small Arms”
 - A) Problems
 - B) Propositions :
 - I. Manufacture
 - II. Stock and surplus
 - III. Trade
 - Remarks
- 3) The Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Their Parts and Components and Ammunition, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organised Crime

Outline of the Protocol

- 4) Marking techniques

**Document presented by the
“Groupe de Recherche et d’Information sur la Paix et la Sécurité”
to the United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in
Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects**

New York
9–20 July 2001

Introduction

The United Nations Conference of July 2001 is a historic opportunity to prepare the ground for an internationally binding system ensuring small arms traceability. It is therefore essential to succeed, at least, to endorse the general principles on the subject that are proposed in the Draft Programme of Action of the President of the Preparatory Committee, Ambassador Carlos dos Santos (Section II §35 and III §11)¹.

With a view to complementing the information for the proceedings of the Conference, we analyse below the Report of the UN Group of experts on the tracing of small arms and light weapons as well as the UN Protocol on firearms that has just been adopted. Finally, a brief preview of marking techniques will be presented considering their importance in the small arms tracing process.

1) The United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects

The conference should lead, in principle, to the adoption of a reviewed version of the L4/rev.1 document. However, this will remain a Programme of Action and won't be, as a whole, legally binding. It will merely be accompanied with a political declaration.

Nevertheless, some aspects of the text may have a legally coercive character. Indeed, the European Union (EU) pledged for it, especially for small arms marking, registration and tracing, as well as for the control of arms brokers. But a lot of opposition is noticeable, notably from the United States.

Considering the lack of time to negotiate the numerous “details”, the text adopted in July is likely to contain no more than guidelines. However, it could foresee, in a given delay, the negotiation of international conventions in specific domains. Indeed, the Program of Action foresees, in its present version, “to strengthen and further develop measures of the programme, including negotiation of an international instrument to identify and trace the lines of supply of small arms and light weapons”².

If this principle is confirmed in July, a framework will be created to pursue some efforts. Besides marking, registration and tracing, the control of brokers and the destruction of stock surplus are the two other domains in which a convention could come out in term. Concerning the brokering, however, the last report of the

1. UN, Document A/CONF.192/PC/L.4/Rev.1

2. Article 1, §c of Section IV.

governmental experts³ has estimated that a convention in this domain is premature (article 83), which compromises the chance to lead to a coercive instrument.

The revised Draft Programme of Action also foresees other follow-up mechanisms to the Conference, mainly :

- a Review Conference in 2006 to evaluate this one ;
- a biannual meeting of States to tackle the national and regional implementations of the Programme of Action.

Therefore, the July Conference should not be considered as a final objective, but rather as an important step of a long process. The first three or four days of this conference will be held at the ministerial level : the Foreign Ministers of the participating States will be invited.

2) The Report of the Group of governmental experts created by the resolution 54/54 V of the UN General Assembly, 15 December 1999, entitled “Small Arms”

This report, that aims at helping to prevent the illicit traffic and circulation of light weapons, has been adopted as a document to the Conference 2001 during the third Preparatory Committee⁴. It is interesting from several points of view :

A) Problems :

- Primarily, for the first time, the report clearly demonstrates that the problems posed by legal transfers of small arms are due to insufficient controls exerted on the licit circuit leading to deviations toward the illicit market, that could be limited and eradicated only by improving the controls on a world scale.
- Then, it points up the irresponsible behaviour of some States, the lack of means of others and the secret that surrounds the arms trade as well as the deficiency of some sets of legislation and regulations. According to the experts, the lack of harmonisation of registers, and of norms and marking techniques, the problematic of brokers, financiers and carriers networks highlight the necessity of an international framework to combat the proliferation of small arms and light weapons.
- It underlines the fact that authorised transfers contributed to the excessive and destabilising accumulation of small arms and still continue because the real needs of States on defence issues are not properly evaluated. The report calls on the Directives on arms control and disarmament⁵ and to those related to international arms transfers⁶.
- It points up the insufficient international co-operation and co-ordination causing a lack of information on the regulation and control systems of other States, making impossible preventive and coercive measures on the illicit movements of

3. Report of the Group of governmental experts created by the resolution 54/54 V of the General Assembly, 15 December 1999, entitled “Small Arms” (document A/CONF.192/PC/33).

4. UN, Document A/CONF.192/PC/33, 12 March 2001.

5. UN, Document A/54/42, annexe III.

6. UN, Document A/46/42, annexe I, chap. III.

weapons. The gaps in States controls on the manufacture and transfers of small arms and light weapons are widely exploited by traffickers.

- According to the experts, the legal gap on intermediaries continues to darken the distinction between the licit and illicit activities. In many countries, the activities of brokers are not submitted to any regulation, and the lack of means, added to the failure to respect UN embargoes, amplify the illicit sales. Some States endowed themselves with laws on exports permitting to partly regulate the activities of the intermediaries but these regulations lack harmonisation.
- The existence of free ports, offshore, transportation by pavilions of complaisance and of financial transactions associated to the diversion of small arms pose problems to control movements of weapons at the international level.
- The report emphasises the necessity for arms manufacturers and dealers to manage their stocks efficiently and to ensure their security. Indeed, stocks are usually not controlled as they should be and can be subject to theft, corruption and lack of care.
- The most problematic traders activity concerns the sales of weapons surplus, which is directly related to the management of the legal sales in accordance with legitimate needs.
- Finally, the report shows that the illicit circuit encourages the use of ammunition and explosives. A particular attention should be carried on the fact that these products are submitted to the regulation on the transport of dangerous goods in order to improve their control.

B) Propositions :

I. Manufacture

- Setting up a system of authorisation and supervision as well as the manufacturer's registration who will have a set of obligations, particularly a notification to the authorities in case of non-compliance.
- The detailed record-keeping with systematic registration of all data by the authorities should be coupled with a unique marking, applied on an essential part of the firearm and legible even when it has been erased at the surface. On the other hand, the marking of the military ammunition lots constitutes a necessary measure.
- The mutual recognition of the original marking systems and an international co-operation between States are essential. The elaboration of an international agreement on tracing with harmonisation of marking and registration should be considered.
- The licensed production should not exceed contractual limits, in principle defined by legitimate needs. An agreement should be required before any re-exportation in order to limit the irresponsible transfers.

II. Stocks and surplus

- In order to avoid that the stocks and surpluses of weapons become an illicit trade source, the stocks should be limited to legitimate needs for security. Therefore, a regular assessment of the stocks should be carried out by governments.
- An effective means to eliminate the risk of diversion or theft is to destroy the surpluses and seized arms as well as the unmarked or insufficiently marked weapons.

III. Trade

- The trade in small arms and light weapons should be limited to the States and to the intermediaries authorised by the States. The activities of the latter should be framed by legislative and administrative arrangements.
- Governments should commit to forbid the transfer of weapons whose markings are not adequate.
- Regional registers should be created. Their utility will depend on the number of participating States, showing the necessity of an international instrument. The Group debated the idea of a register within the UN, but the idea of a world scale register would have created an opposition : it is still too early and, furthermore, communicating information can be prejudicial to national security⁷.
- The registration and certification of brokers, and the obligation to request for a license for their transactions should be ensured. One can besides consider to oblige the exporter to provide the details concerning possible brokers.
- The implementation of an extraterritorial jurisdiction covering nationals participating in illicit brokering activities in third countries would permit to extend the controls on arms brokering and related activities.
- Transportation is an activity connected to brokering. Absence of regulation leads to arms transfers towards regions in conflict. One of the best solutions would consist in controlling the transportation separately. Registration of shippers could also be required to authorise the transport of weapons.
- States can ensure the respect of the procedures of certification for civil aviation transportation and of the regulations on the transport of dangerous goods.
- The question of a legally binding international instrument that would establish the norms and principles on brokering has been approached. Considering the diversity of legislation and the lack of common criteria, the experts estimate that it is premature to reach a global agreement. Therefore, they propose to discuss the issue at the regional level.

7. See our remark hereunder.

Remarks

- To be efficient, the registration should be centralised on an international scale. Indeed, in practice, as proposed by several initiatives, an effective international co-operation with exchange of information would permit a centralisation of the data.
- It would be necessary to determine who will control, and how, the respect of licensed production agreements and who will give possible sanctions.
- The Group of experts emphasises its lack of systematic information from governmental sources but argues that it is possible to organise information exchange and establish mechanisms permitting to ensure the transparency of the production, without prejudice to the national security and commercial interests⁸. However, the report doesn't define the mechanisms nor the types of information to be exchanged. Besides, the security of populations should prevail on all other consideration, in order to decrease the human cost due to small arms and light weapons proliferation.
- An international fund could be created for the gathering and destruction of small arms and light weapons surplus⁹.
- The report emphasises the important role played by customs on the export, import and transit controls, and proposes to increase their resources in order to improve their efficiency. However, considering the high number of customs posts and customs officers, their formations and affectations, the creation of a control agency specialised in small arms and light weapons issues would be much more advisable¹⁰. Contrary to a preconceived idea, this would facilitate the task of the various authorities that intervene in arms transfers, it would also simplify the formalities and improve the efficiency of the controls. Besides, in the paragraph 63 of the report, it is proposed to put in place co-ordination centres for the implementation of the measures taken at the national level.
- Even though the importance of best practices or of a code of conduct and a register at the global level is highlighted, the report affirms that it is not realistic to consider these measures at the present time evoking the sovereignty of States and the discretion that surrounds it. This rejection without even having studied the feasibility of such an initiative is regrettable. It would be preferable first to study the effects that it would have on the sovereignty and see the opinion of the different States once it will be elaborated, before rejecting it in block in a prejudged manner. The transparency on a global scale cannot but improve national and human security.
- The obligation of disclosure of information on brokers could extend to shippers, financiers and insurers who intervene at the time of a transaction. Besides, they could be asked to control the conformity of the

8. Paragraph 46 of the Report.

9. An initiative of the UK Government exists on this purpose, see notes of the third PrepCom.

10. See "GRIP's Contribution in view of an International Tracing System of Small Arms and Light Weapons", Les Rapports du GRIP, Special Issue, January 2001.

latter and to assume the responsibility of the cargo. Similarly, an effective control of the content would be necessary at every point of transfer in order to match it up to the documents.

- The report stipulates that in Angola and in Sierra Leone, the air transport regularly permitted to violate embargoes. Controlling the points of refuelling of the planes with the plan of flights, and the pilots, as well as obtaining an authorisation beforehand could appreciably diminish the risks of diversion. Notably, the sales done in CIF (Cost, Insurance, Freight included) terms could permit the seller's accountability until the goods delivery.
- Considering the consensus shared by the State Parties to the 2001 Conference on the control of brokers, it is a pity that the experts gave out an unfavourable advise for the development of an international convention on brokering. This advise risks to refrain the process of controlling brokers.

3) The Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Their Parts and Components and Ammunition, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organised Crime

After long sessions and difficult proceedings, the Protocol has been adopted on 31 May 31 by the General Assembly of the UN. This protocol is legally binding and constitutes the first legal basis including all UN Member States. The objective of the Protocol is to combat the transnational organised crime by reinforcing co-operation between States Parties. It is directed to the civilian market and therefore excludes state-to-state transactions and those achieved for national security's sake. It is thus complementary to the New York Process carried out in an arms control and disarmament perspective (therefore the latter's scope of application includes States and military items as a whole).

Outline of the Protocol

Definitions

- Firearms definition is large and includes the military style weapons as far as they are intended to the civilian market. Similarly, all ammunition with cartridges are included as far as they are authorised in the respective State Party. In spite of the insistence of some countries, explosives have been excluded from the Protocol. Subsequently, the Special Committee would consider the development of an international instrument on explosives.
- The illicit manufacture definition (“without marking the firearms at the time of manufacture”) leads to confusion. Indeed, numerous national legislation do not impose any marking at the time of manufacture. The Protocol itself foresees the marking outside the manufacture, i.e. for either unmarked or seized arms, which is in contradiction with its definition. One risks to consider legally produced small arms and light weapons as illicit because they were not manufactured with markings compliant to the present Protocol. It would have been preferable to add a clause foreseeing the marking of weapons already in circulation.

- The illicit traffic definition is insufficient¹¹ and allows state authorities to determine what is illegal without considering any international reference. The definition given in the Report of the governmental experts of the UN¹² should have been used. Thus state-to-state transfers in contravention with the international humanitarian law would be considered as illicit.

Scope of application

The scope of application focuses on criminality and excludes state-to-state transactions and State transfers in cases where its application would undermine national security interests. A case-to-case interpretation will therefore be necessary in order to determine if the application of the Protocol would undermine the right of a State Party. For example, it is not clearly explicit if weapons delivered to a government should be marked or not.

Confiscation, seizure and disposal

Generally, weapons having an illicit origin should be destroyed. However, with an official authorisation, these weapons can be recycled on the market and used after being marked and registered in accordance with the Protocol. It would have been preferable, in any cases, to destroy weapons of an illicit origin.

Conservation of the information

Every State Party preserves during at least ten years the necessary information to recover and identify the firearms. Considering the computerisation, it is absurd to limit the length of data conservation, notably because small arms and light weapons can be used during several decades. Most manufacturers keep these data indefinitely¹³. This would give them the right not to comply to investigations. Even economically this limitation is not justified. The computerisation of the poor States could be achieved inexpensively by the rich States by the transfer of computer equipment that has been replaced by more modern material.

It would have been advisable, and this is essential, to detail the way of holding national registers, preferably centralised and containing all information on the firearms transactions.

Marking

- For the purpose of identifying and tracing firearms, States Parties should ensure at the time of manufacture a unique marking providing the name of the manufacturer, the place of manufacture and the serial number. However, due to the perseverance of the Chinese delegation, an alternative marking, using geometric symbols instead of alphanumeric codes and legible only by the manufacturer country, has been accepted. It will only be applied to the countries

¹¹ “ The import, export, acquisition, sale, delivery, movement or transfer of firearms, their parts and components and ammunition from or across the territory of one State Party to another State Party if any one of the State Parties concerned does not authorise it ”[Article 2 e)]. This definition of the illicit traffic would not include the illicit transfers within a State Party and those that would be for another State not taking part to the Protocol.

¹² UN, Document A/52/298, 5 November 1997.

¹³ For example, in Italy, the law imposes to arms manufacturers to keep the information indefinitely.

that already use only the symbols for marking. In this case, the country of origin must be identified in an universal manner.

This last process risks to pose practical problems, notably for the registration of the data based on symbols. The follow-up of the investigations will be undermined.

- On every imported firearm, a suitable marking will be applied when the arm isn't marked. If the importing country is not yet indicated, a marking will be added that will identify it and possibly the year of import. This inscription should be simple in order to not to overload the marking.
- The point 1.c) of the article 8 of the Protocol foresees the marking of the firearms from the government stocks in view of permanent civilian use. The possibility of an interdiction of the military weapon transfers to the civilian market is not considered. It would have been preferable to destroy systematically military firearm surpluses.
- Finally, States encourage the arms industry to develop measures against the erasing and falsification of marking. The implementation of the marking should be determined subsequently by technical commissions.

Licenses and authorisations

States Parties must establish or maintain an effective system of export, import and international transit licensing or authorisation for the transfer of firearms, their parts and ammunition.

This clause doesn't bring anything new to the processes already existing in most countries. However, it forces some countries that had not yet established an unequivocal process to develop one compliant with the Protocol.

The United States had proposed that "State Parties must get imperatively the written authorisation of the exporting country before allowing the re-exportation or the transfer toward another end user than the one stipulated on the original end-user certificate". This proposition, crucial for an effective control of the illicit trade since it permits the tracing of firearms in an international register, has not been retained. The uncontrolled re-exportation of small arms and light weapons is a major source of diversion to the illicit market but also fosters their accumulation and dissemination on the global scale.

Security and preventive measures

It is foreseen that States Parties take appropriated measures to secure their stocks.

The stocks management and the control of the use of firearms in conformity with the certificate of use are essential. Most diversions toward the illicit circuit occur after the first delivery. In the future and for the implementation of the Program of Action of the New York Conference, it is advisable that the stocks management and the control of the use be elaborated in a more detailed manner.

Information and co-operation

States Parties should co-operate at the international level and exchange all necessary information to trace firearms and ammunition. Upon the demand of a State, the other State Parties co-operate in order to give the necessary technical support and training to improve its capacity to prevent and combat the illicit traffic.

Brokers

Although discussions on the control of brokering took place during the different sessions of the Protocol¹⁴, no coercive provision has been adopted in the final text. Some recommendations have simply been indicated to register brokers, to require licenses for their transactions and to establish a system of authorisation of brokering.

Length

The length of the Protocol is unlimited but each State Party can denounce it within a delay of six months. It enters into force 90 days after the 40th ratification.

4) Marking techniques

Marking represents one of the fundamental elements of the tracing process of firearms. Because of the easy obliteration of the different existing inscriptions, a solution had to be considered in order to render these markings the most resistant and lasting possible.

Currently, no marking can be presented as indelible. The obliteration of any information marked with laser, by stamping or by engraving on a firearm or on any other product, remains possible by grinding, filing or simple replacement of the part. Only the chemical tracers (incorporated in the powder and the primer of the ammunition or in the metal of the firearm) can pretend to a certain indelibility¹⁵.

In order to by-pass the problem bound to the obliteration and the perfectibility of these markings, several solutions have been studied with a view to effectuate a second reliable marking on the parts difficult to be handled after the manufacture, in addition to the traditional marking by stamping (technique of the double marking)¹⁶.

Thus, several prototypes of weapons have been developed, each of them having to satisfy to a set of requirements that will be enumerated from case to case.

A) Laser marking

The laser marking technique (Light Amplification by Stimulated Emission of Radiation) permits applications as various as the cutting out, the soldering, the drilling, the engraving or the marking¹⁷. The traditional marking processes, as the stamping or the mechanical engraving, imply expenses and a wear of the equipment, and also require a sustained attention, surveillance and control. The laser process offers, conversely, a

¹⁴ For example, article 18 bis of the 8th session was : “Each person who begins brokering activities in the manufacture and transfer of firearms, should be registered in the country in which it has the nationality and in the one where the transaction occurs and where he obtained his authorisation”.

¹⁵ See : I. Berkol, “Marquage et traçage des armes légères”, Les Rapports du GRIP, N° 2000/2, June 2000.

¹⁶ See : I. Berkol, M. Wéry and F. Schütz, “GRIP’s Contribution in view of an International Tracing System of Small Arms and Light Weapons”, Les Rapports du GRIP, Special Issue, January 2001.

¹⁷ *Ibid.* See also : I. Berkol, M. Wéry and F. Schütz, “Marking, Record-keeping and Tracing of Small Arms and Light Weapons”, Les Rapports du GRIP, Special Issue, March 2001.

completely automated marking, without mechanical effort nor wear¹⁸. Laser marking also presents the advantage of marking an information on a relatively limited surface.

Before realisation, it is necessary to define the constituent elementary parts of a firearm, which will constitute the matrix bearer of the markings (especially of the serial numbers). An elementary part of a weapon usually consists in all parts whose change or abduction can prevent the good working of the firearm.

For a semiautomatic gun, no ideal solution exists for the site of the marking. The idea is therefore to prevent all obliteration while placing the marking on the part of the firearm defined as essential. All obliteration has the tendency to weaken, or even to destroy the part and therefore to make the weapon inoperable. In any case, these markings must not be positioned on parts subject to rubbings (pieces of wear), in order to avoid all undesirable obliteration.

The falsification of the laser markings is made difficult by the fact that the necessary instrumentation is not accessible to everybody.

The developed prototype corresponds to a semiautomatic SIG P226 gun, calibre 9 mm parabellum, on which four markings have been put up (Figure 1).

¹⁸ Laser Automation Gekatronics, advertising document, 2001.

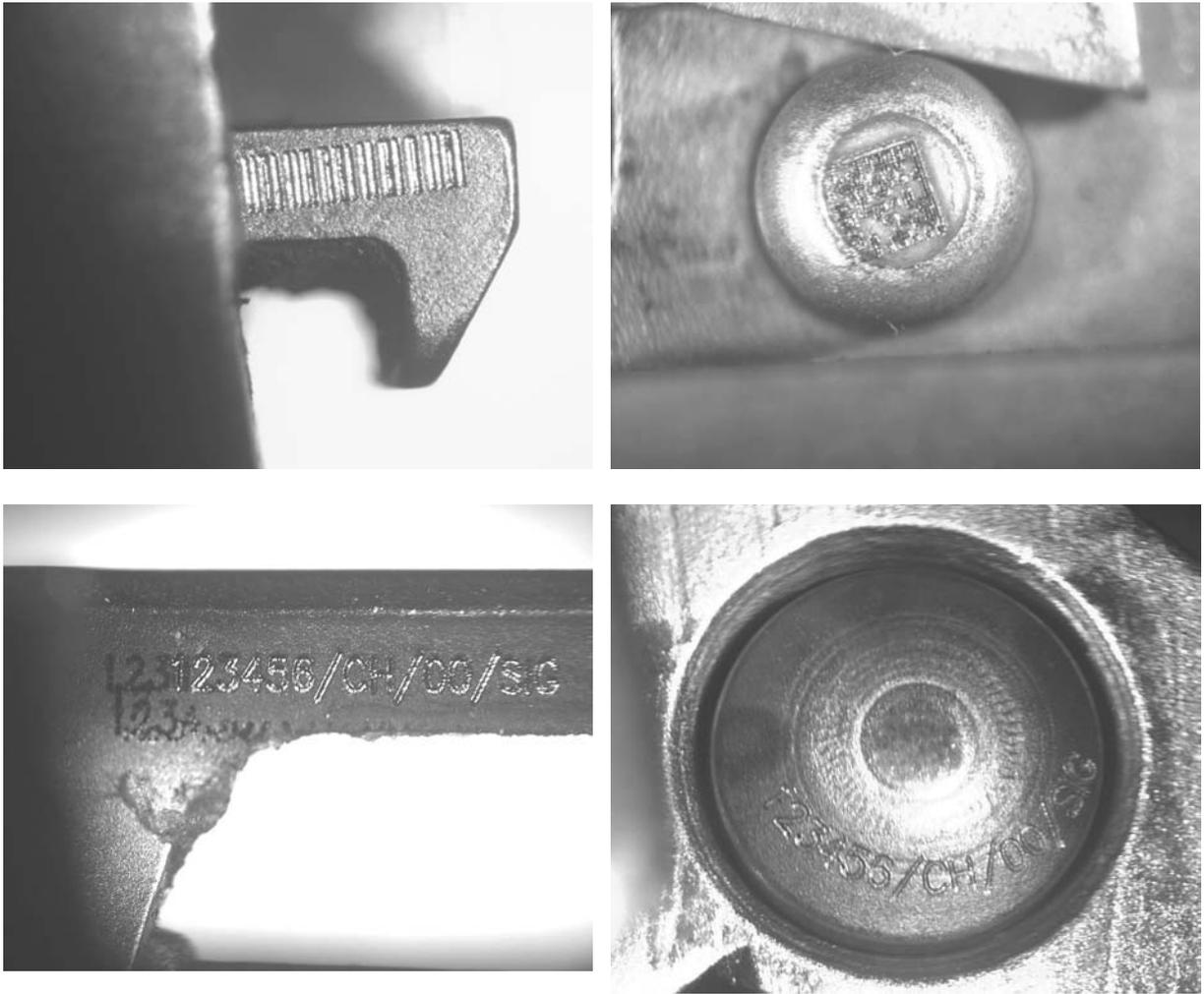


Figure 1 : Laser markings on a gun semiautomatic SIG P226.

Two alphanumeric codifications (123456/CH/00/SIG), a bar code and a datamatrix have been chosen. These markings have been put up respectively on the ejector and the striker, the extractor and on a pin. However, the ideal place for the marking should be determined according to the type of firearm, preferably before the mass production and in dialogue with the competent authorities and the manufacturer. The essential parts should be particularly concerned such as the frame, the breech or parts difficult to assemble outside the factory of origin.

An adequate reader permits to decode the information contained in the bar code and the datamatrix.

Some tests have been undertaken to evaluate the life span of these markings, so that they don't disappear after repeated use of the firearm and resist to the physical constraints generated at the time of shooting. The residues put down on the different parts of a weapon can conceal the markings.

Laser marking could be reinforced by sensitising the surface to a certain wavelength. The procedure is the following : the surface is sensitised for a certain wavelength by using a product of Photoresist® type, then information is marked with a laser. The

surface is covered thereafter with a layer of painting or galvanising product (according to the desired application) : the information is not visible anymore to the naked eye, but only under a particular lighting (i.e. infrared or ultraviolet, according to the wavelength for which the surface has been sensitised).

B) Computer chip

The use of electronics within the firearms isn't an innovative concept. Indeed, some American companies have already developed prototypes of firearms (smart guns) whose electronics permits to improve the security : the use of the weapon is only made possible by the presence of a transmitter (present, i.e., in a bracelet or a ring, carried by the user), transmitting a signal to the receptor placed in the weapon.

Concerning the marking and tracing of firearms, electronics plays an appreciably different role : the data of a firearm is stocked in the memory of a chip that is relatively smaller (less than one cm) than that of smart guns in which much more information must be stored. Thus, the serial number, the mark, the calibre, and even the personal data of the owner of a firearm can be read at any time using a suitable reader. The transactions concerning the weapon (repair, sale etc.) can also appear in this "internal register". The historic of the weapon can be, therefore, easily consulted.

The conception of the prototype requires a strict reflection framework. Firstly, the concept of the Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) should be explained.

Indeed, the chip cannot be positioned on any part of the firearm. Similarly, the parts must be interdependent of the weapon and cannot be removed or replaced easily. The frame of the weapon seems to correspond to these criteria. Besides, the chip must resist to an increase of pressure (3000 bar), temperature (2500 °K) and to the shocks generated at the time of shooting. On the other hand, the information recorded in the chip must not suffer from alteration, especially in the presence of a strong electromagnetic field.

The information contained in the computer chip are transferred by means of an electromagnetic field, the distance of reading and writing varying according to the composition of the metal.

Two modes are available : *read* and *read/write*. The mode *read* permits to read only the information. In this case, no further information can be added during the life span of the firearm. In the mode *read/write*, information can be read and/or modified. Thus, this mode permits to stock all data related to the different stages of the life cycle of a weapon.

C) Chemical tracers

Chemical tracers are, in Switzerland, already used to mark explosives. These tracers are incorporated into the explosive itself. By analogy, the powder and the primer of a cartridge could also be marked chemically. Several chemical tracers have been proposed in the literature (Figure 2).

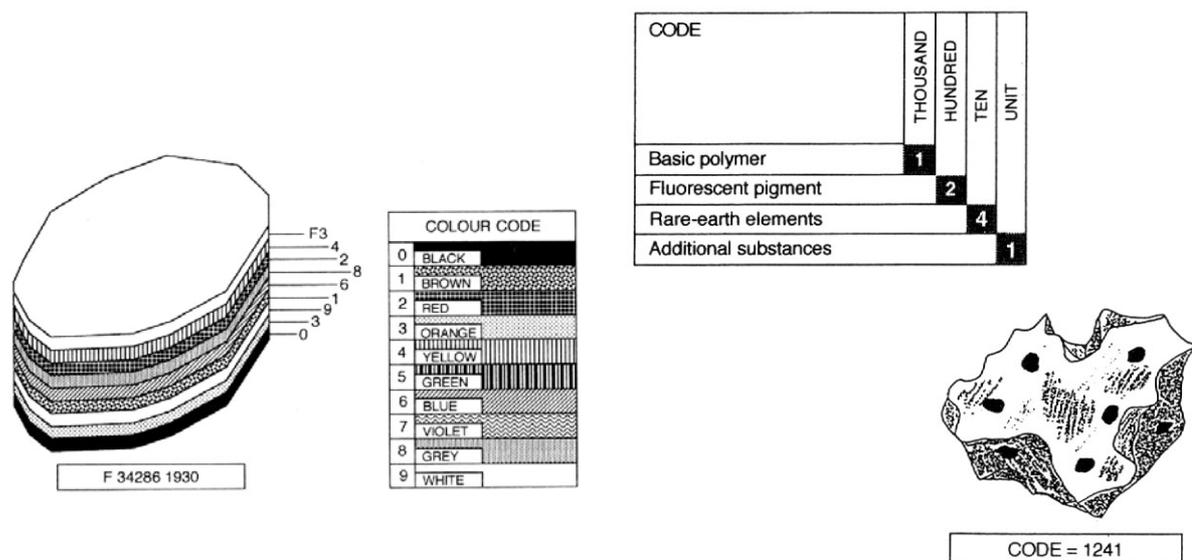


Figure 2 : Schematic representations of the chemical tracers of Swiss Blasting and 3M Company [Yinon and Zitrin, 1993].

These tracers are composed of a set of colour layers, to which a ferromagnetic and/or fluorescent layer is (are) added for detection and removal. The observed colour sequence is converted into a unique and individual numeric code for every manufacturer.

The incorporation of these particles at the time of manufacture of the weapon should permit its identification. No other information can be added afterwards.

Just like the detection of fluorescent fibres on Swiss bank notes, it is possible to put in evidence these particles and to read the code in order to know a part of the historic of a weapon.

All these prototypes exploit the principle of a hidden serial number (the “identifier”). The debate remains open whether this information must be located or not in a place visible by all. The presence of a serial number or all other legible information on the firearm would permit a fast control of the data. Nevertheless, the legible data must be doubled with a hidden marking so as to guarantee the presence of at least a serial number or another marking allowing the identification and the individualisation of the firearm.

5) Towards a convention on the traceability of small arms and light weapons

GRIP is working for more than two years on the marking and tracing of small arms and light weapons. An international instrument on the traceability is now being developed in order to include it on the issues of the implementation of the Programme of action of the 2001 UN Conference. We hope to finish our work on the model convention for the traceability for the next annual conference of IANSA, which will be held on 5-6 October 2001 in Brussels.