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Standards manual for the Firearm Marking Information Management System and marking operations oversight*

Working paper submitted by Jamaica

Introduction

This document represents the approach taken by the Government of Jamaica to develop a Standards Manual for the Ministry of National Security (MNS) Firearms Marking Information Management System (FMIMS) and Marking Operations Oversight.

It represents the Government's latest attempt to introduce a new approach which would merge marking with recordkeeping using an electronic database. By so doing, greater emphasis is placed on making marking a proactive, prevention tool for accountability, as opposed to a reactive tool for law enforcement.

The document is being shared for the forthcoming Third Review Conference to Review Progress Made in the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, as a best practice that could be emulated by other Member States.

The Firearm Marking Information Management System

The **Firearm Marking Data Management System (FMIMS)** was devised to capture and store data in support of the Ministry of National Security Marking Programme. As a central function of the programme, a methodology was derived for the development of **Jamaican Unique Alpha Numeric Codes** for all categories of

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* The present document is being issued without formal editing.

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firearms imported[1] into Jamaica in keeping with international best practice. The Codes are then to be permanently etched/engraved on the parts of the weapons to foster traceability of all weapons which were marked, particularly in cases where weapons may be diverted into the criminal underworld. Therefore, to foster a system for the Tracing of weapons, the Ministry of National Security developed the FMIMS which is expected to serve as a central repository of information for all marked firearms.

The system is comprised of an electronic data capture component and a document-based component both which are used by personnel engaged in Marking operations to generate records for every firearm marked by the Forensic Science Laboratory (FSL) or the Firearm Licensing Authority (FLA).

The electronic aspect of the FMIMS is defined by the **_Firearm Marking Database (FMD)_** and the paper-based aspect defined by the **_Firearm Marking Data Capture Form_**. Despite existing as separate modes to capture and store information about Marked firearms, both of the aspects were devised to complement and support each other in satisfying the following overall firearm marking information management objectives:

- **_To facilitate Data Capture;_**

- **_To facilitate Querying of the database as demanded by the user;_**

- **_To centralize the Storage of information on all firearms in Jamaica;_**

- **_To generate Marking Certificates; and_**

- **_To generate Unique Marking Codes for each category of weapons_**

Despite the capture of a wide spectrum of information pertaining to weapons being marked, the Jamaican unique reference code for each category of weapon will be the primary subject of the FMIMS since that code will bear reference to the **_Jamaican Importer_** and **_Year of Importation_**. The Matrix below outlines a framework which was used to derive the Jamaican Unique Codes. The FMIMS will denote this Unique Code as the Marking Entry Code.

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[1] Jamaica does not manufacture firearms, therefore all firearms found in the country are taken as imported weapons whether they are actively the subject of Customs clearance procedures at the ports of entry, or they have already passed through Jamaican borders and "landed" within the country. Within the context of this definition, homemade weapons or craft firearms are not taken as manufactured weapons.

Framework for Marking Firearms upon Importation Into Jamaica (JM)

IMPORTERS (CODE)	Consumers/End-users (CODE)						Confiscated Weapons	MARKING AGENCY
	JCF (JCF)	JDF (JDF)	DCS (DCS)	Customs (JCA)	Security Companies (RPS)	Public (JAM)		
Confiscated Weapons								
JCF (JCF)			JMJCFDCS13	JMJCFJCA13				
ISCF (JCF)	JMJCF13							
JDF (JDF)		JMJDF13						
DCS (DCS)			JMDCS13					
Customs (JCA)				JMJCA13				
Security Companies (RPS)					JMRPS[xxx]13			
Public (JAM)						JMJAM13	JMIUKYU[LAB No.]	
Sasco (S4S)	JMS4SJCF13	JMS4SJDF13	JMS4SDCS13	JMS4SJCA13	JMS4SRPS13	JMS4SJAM13		
A&A (A1A)	JMA1AJCF13	JMA1AJDF13	JMA1ADCS13	JMA1AJCA13	JMA1ARPS13	JMA1AJAM13		
KB (K1B)	JMK1BJCF13	JMK1BJDF13	JMK1BDCS13	JMK1BJCA13	JMK1BRPS13	JMK1BJAM13		
K&W (K1W)	JMK1WJCF13	JMK1WJDF13	JMK1WDCS13	JMK1WJCA13	JMK1WRPS13	JMK1WJAM13		
Central Dealers (CDL)	JMCDLJCF13	JMCDLJDF13	JMCDLDCS13	JMCDLJCA13	JMCDLRPS13	JMCDLJAM13		
MARKING AGENCY	To be Marked by Lab				To be Marked by FLA		To be Marked by Lab	To be Marked by FLA / To be Marked by Lab

Key

State Entity	
Private Entity	
No Likely Connection	
Importation for own use	

RPS - Registered Private Security Company
IUK - Importer Unknown
YU - Year Unknown
LAB No. - Refers to Control Number derived by the Forensic Laboratory for confiscated weapons that are the subject of the Court system.

Explanation of Coding System

Country Code (eg. **JM**), Importer Code* (eg. **S4S**), End-user Code (eg. **JCF**), Last Two Digits of Year of Import (eg. **13**)

* *Importer Code will be Gazetted to show full accreditation of dealer*

For **RPS**s a code will be entered for the specific company using a three character format (denoted as **[xxx]** in the matrix above). A possible 132,600 combinations are possible for a 26 letter and 9 digit combination.

Information System Management Features

In keeping with the Ministry's requirement, Marking data capture is facilitated by requiring entry of data within the following fields whether done electronically or manually:

1. *Entry Control Number*

2. *Weapon Profile*

3. *Consignee/Importer Information*

4. *Consigner/Exporter Information*

5. *Custodian Information*

6. *Shipping Information*

7. *Weapon Information*

8. *Marking Entry Code*

9. *Verification*

NOTE 1: With respect to current and future importation of firearms, the standard obtains that all nine (9) fields of the FMIMS are to be populated with information, whether data is being manually or electronically entered.

Available/current records for weapons which were imported in the past could likely present "data gaps" resulting in the absence of some information.

In managing mandatory entry of all fields for new and current imports, consideration has therefore been rendered for gaps in older records. As a result, the FMIMS considers the following:

For Firearm Marking Database

Firearm Information directly entered into the FMD. Figure 1 is a screen capture of the MNS FMD which illustrates the user interface screen that also provides the required Tabs and Windows for entry within the respective fields.

Figure 1
Screen capture of FMD

Further, the following fields (table 2) were configured to be **"Mandatory Entry Fields"** within the Firearm Marking Database:

Table 2
Mandatory entry fields

Data entry field	System configuration for mandatory entry
Entry Control Number	To be system generated
Weapon Profile	To be system generated
Consignee/Importer Information	Mandatory entry & guided by system parameters
Custodian Information	Mandatory entry & guided by system parameters
Weapon Information	Mandatory entry & guided by system parameters
Marking Entry Code	To be system generated
Verification	To be authenticated by users' signature and official stamp/seal on actual form

NOTE 2: Information relevant to each Field designated as Mandatory Entry Fields is required for Current Imports, New Imports as well as for weapons which were imported in the past.

NOTE 3: A Marking Certificate can only be generated from this procedure when the "print out" of the completed form from the FMD has been verified and authenticated by authorized signature and official seal.

For Manual Data Entry Using Data Capture Forms

All nine (9) fields outlined above are also included on the Firearm Marking Data Capture Form for manual capture of firearm marking data. The data entry rules outlined in figure 2 were developed to consider the Mandatory Entry requirements outlined in table 2.

Figure 2
Manual Data Entry Form

NOTE 4: FMIMS considers restricting the inclusion of the FSL's file management number (FL No.) as a part of the marking unique code for the marking of Confiscated weapons only.

NOTE 5: Information relevant to each Field designated as Mandatory Entry Fields is required for Current Imports, New Imports as well as for weapons which were imported in the past.

NOTE 6: A Marking Certificate can only be generated from this procedure when the "manually completed data capture form" has been verified and authenticated by authorized signature and official seal.

Auxiliary Functions to Support the FMIMS

The FMD is equipped with an "Export" feature which is configured as a part of the database for the creation of reports and ultimately, to print Firearm Marking Certificates. Such functionality is defined by an ability to export relevant information,

whether in a format for printing (e.g. PDF) or in a "Raw Data" format (e.g. Spreadsheet) for uploading to either of the Entities' electronic databases.

The system is also equipped with the ability to incorporate photographs of Marked weapons for further verification that the firearm was Marked. As a result, Marking Officers are expected to use the specified cameras, card readers and memory cards to facilitate capture and storage of images for all weapons Marked.

NOTE 7: The File Name for images uploaded to the Database or on the designated Marking workstation must include the serial number for the firearm which was marked.

Use of Error Entry Code with Appropriate Mark on Gun

Considered precaution has been devised to address the potential of encountering errors during the marking process. Such a concern is to be addressed by the Error at Entry FMIMS system tool.

Such a solution dictates that the electronic database is equipped with an error window to facilitate a notation that an "Error Was Made at Entry". In such circumstances the printed format would equally reveal the "Error at Entry" Information as well as an accompanying printout with the correct information.

NOTE 8: The weapon with the erroneous information should be "peened" with an asterisk [*] to symbolize that an "Error Was Made At Entry".

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