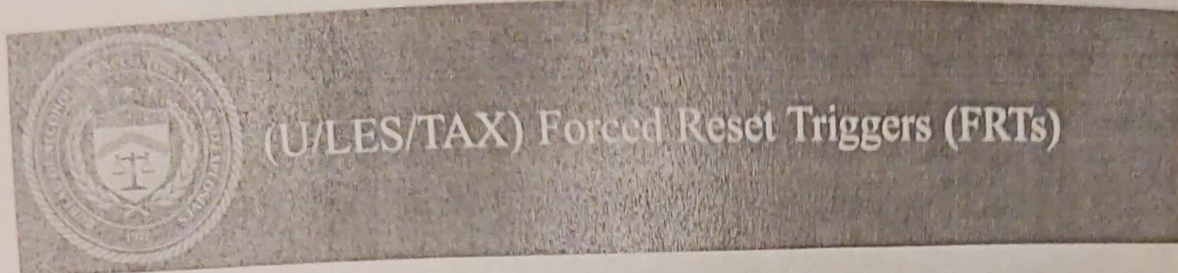


ATF Firearms and Ammunition Technology Division: Technical Bulletin 22-01



January 13, 2022

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(U//LES) This information is provided to assist ATF and other Federal law enforcement agencies tasked with identifying certain machinegun conversion devices commonly referred to as "forced reset triggers" (FRTs). Most after-market drop-in triggers are designed merely to reduce the trigger pull weight or reduce trigger travel and allow for a more rapid subsequent shot after a shooter releases the trigger. However, certain devices marketed as FRTs eliminate the need to release the trigger to fire a subsequent shot and therefore such a device is properly classified as a "machinegun" under Federal law.

(U//LES) Note that this information is not intended to replace an official Firearms Technology Criminal Branch (FTCB) report of technical examination or Firearms Technology Industry Services Branch (FTISB) evaluation for classification purposes under the Gun Control Act (GCA) or National Firearms Act (NFA).

(U) Background:

(U//LES) ATF has examined devices commonly known as FRTs and determined that certain devices marketed as FRTs are "firearms" and "machineguns" as defined in the NFA and GCA.

(U/LES) "Machinegun" is defined in 26 U.S.C. § 5845(b) and 18 U.S.C. § 921(a)(23) as—

Any weapon which shoots, is designed to shoot, or can be readily restored to shoot, automatically more than one shot, without manual reloading, by a single function of the trigger. The term shall also include the frame or receiver of any such weapon, any part designed and intended solely and exclusively, or combination of parts designed and intended, for use in converting a weapon into a machinegun, and any combination of parts from which a machinegun can be assembled if such parts are in the possession or under the control of a person. (Emphasis added.)

(U/LES) FRTs are generally marketed as replacement triggers for AR-type or other semiautomatic firearms. Unlike traditional triggers and binary triggers (sometimes also referred to as FRTs), the subject FRTs do not require shooters to pull and then subsequently release the trigger to fire a second projectile. Instead, these FRTs utilize the automatic firing cycle inherent in the trigger design to eliminate the need for the shooter to release the trigger before a second round may be fired.

(U/LES) ATF's examination found that when assembled with a semiautomatic firearm, these devices allow a firearm to shoot, automatically more than one shot, without manual reloading, with a single, continuous pull of the trigger. For this reason, ATF has concluded that such device is a "combination of parts designed and intended for use in converting a weapon into a machinegun," and are therefore properly classified as a "machinegun" as defined by the NFA and GCA.

(U/LES) As such FRTs are "machineguns", and are subject to the GCA prohibitions regarding the possession, transfer, and transport of machineguns under 18 U.S.C. § 922(o) and 922(a)(4). They are also subject to registration, transfer, taxation, and possession restrictions under the NFA. See 26 U.S.C. §§ 5841, 5861; 27 C.F.R. § 479.101. Under 26 U.S.C. § 5871, any person who violates or fails to comply with the provisions of the NFA shall be fined \$10,000 per violation and is subject to imprisonment for a term of up to ten years. Further, pursuant to 26 U.S.C. § 5872, any machinegun possessed or transferred in violation of the NFA is subject to seizure and forfeiture.

(U/LES) Identification:

(U/LES) When installed in an AR-type firearm, the trigger may not be apparent to the shooter. If the shooter is unaware that one has been installed, due to the high rate of fire created by the addition of this trigger, there is an added danger to both the shooter as well as any unintended targets.

(U/LES/TAX) Below are two examples of FRTs produced and sold as replacement triggers for AR-type firearms. These designs may be identified by the presence of an additional component

that interacts with the firearm bolt and ultimately permits the firing of subsequent shots with a single function of the trigger.

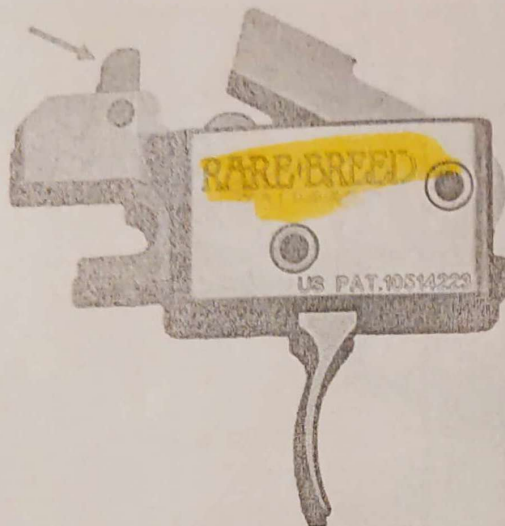


Figure 1

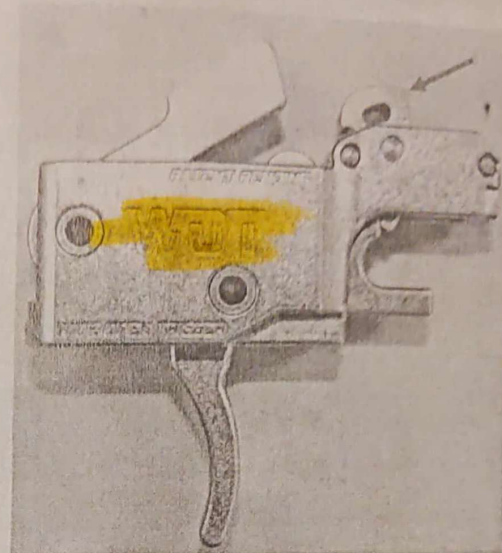


Figure 2

(U/LES/TAX) As shown in Figures 1 and 2, the components of the subject FRTs are contained within a single housing. They are designed as “drop-in” parts to replace the factory hammer, trigger and other fire control components. The internal components of FRT typically include typical fire-control components to initiate and perform the firing sequence, including a hammer and a trigger. However, subject FRTs contain additional parts that allow a weapon to shoot automatically, more than one shot, with a single function of the trigger. This includes that part that interacts with the firearm bolt—here referred to as the “locking bar.” See Figure 3, below.

(U/LES) Figure 3, below, shows the top view of an AR-15 when a subject FRT is installed.

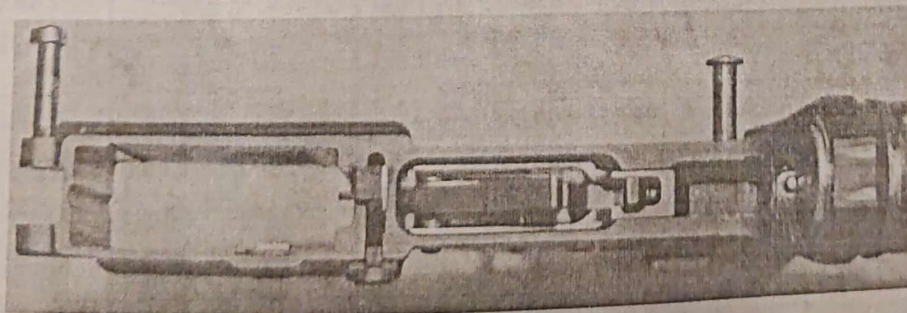


Figure 3

(U/LES/TAX) Figures 4 and 5 present the side view of an AR-type firearm with a subject FRT installed. The locking bar is the green component and is identified here by the red arrow.

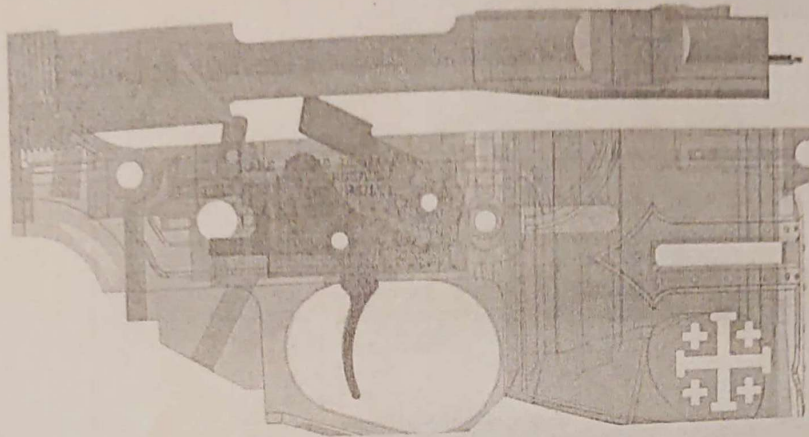


Figure 4

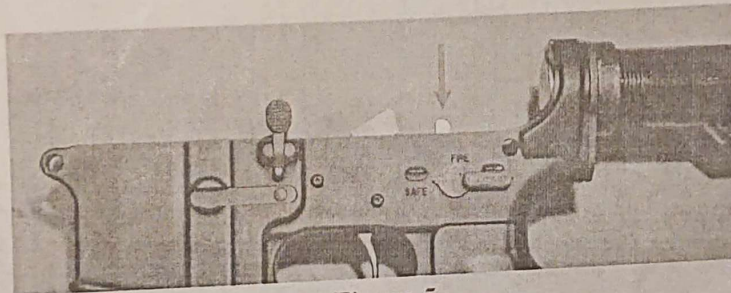


Figure 5

(U/LES) Note that the presence of such component does not definitively indicate that the drop-in trigger is a machinegun conversion device. However, the presence of such component should alert law enforcement to that possibility. Some drop-in triggers may have such a component, but may also incorporate a disconnect or similar feature to ensure that the trigger must be released before a second shot may be fired. Such devices are not likely to allow the host weapon to shoot automatically more than one shot, without manual reloading, by a single function of the trigger. Please contact the ATF Firearms and Ammunition Technology Division at the number below if you have any questions.

(U) If you would like to provide qualitative feedback on this product, please send an email to the below address with the product title as the subject line: Fire_Tech@atf.gov.

(U) The ATF Firearms and Ammunition Technology Division, in conjunction with The ATF Firearms and Explosives Law Division (FELD) prepared this technical bulletin. Please direct comments and inquiries to 1-(304)-616-4310.