



DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY
BUREAU OF ALCOHOL, TOBACCO AND FIREARMS

JUN 17 2003

903050:DLB
3311/2003-143

Dear Mr.

This is in response to your letter dated December 5, 2002, asking for clarification regarding the Title 27, Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Part 478 (formerly Part 178), section 478.34 and section 478.92(a)(1).

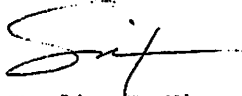
Title 27, CFR, section 478.92(a)(1) states, in part, that firearms manufactured by a licensed manufacturer or imported by a licensed importer must bear certain identification markings. The serial number must be conspicuously marked on the frame or receiver. Other required markings must be conspicuously marked on the frame, receiver, or barrel.

Title 27, CFR, section 478.34 states, "[n]o person shall knowingly transport, ship or receive in interstate or foreign commerce any firearm which has had the importer's or manufacturer's 'serial number' removed, obliterated, or altered, or possess or receive any firearm which has had the importer's or manufacturer's 'serial number' removed, obliterated, or altered and has, at any time, been shipped or transported in interstate or foreign commerce."

Therefore, it would not be unlawful for an individual to remove the importer's identification that is placed on the barrel of a firearm in order to replace a worn out barrel. It would be unlawful for anyone to alter, remove, or obliterate any serial number.

We thank you for your inquiry to our office.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "S. Nixon", with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

Sterling T. Nixon
Chief, Firearms Technology Branch