



U.S. Department of Justice

Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco,  
Firearms and Explosives

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*Martinsburg, WV 25405*

www.atf.gov

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3311/301737

Sergeant Joe Bradley  
Greenwood Police Department  
6060 S Quebec Street  
Greenwood Village, Colorado 80111

Dear Sgt. Bradley:

This is in response to your communication dated January 24, 2014, to the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF). Your e-mail was forwarded to the ATF Firearms Technology Branch (FTB), Martinsburg, West Virginia, for reply. In your note, you ask about firing an AR-15 type pistol from the shoulder; specifically, if doing so would cause the pistol to be reclassified as a Short Barreled Rifle (SBR).

For the following reasons, we have determined that firing a pistol from the shoulder would not cause the pistol to be reclassified as an SBR:

FTB classifies weapons based on their physical design characteristics. While usage/functionality of the weapon does influence the intended design, it is not the sole criterion for determining the classification of a weapon. Generally speaking, we do not classify weapons based on how an individual uses a weapon.

FTB has previously determined (see FTB # 99146) that the firing of a weapon from a particular position, such as placing the receiver extension of an AR-15 type pistol on the user's shoulder, does not change the classification of a weapon. Further, certain firearm accessories such as the SIG Stability Brace have not been classified by FTB as shoulder stocks and, therefore, using the brace improperly does not constitute a design change. Using such an accessory improperly would not change the classification of the weapon per Federal law. However, FTB cannot recommend using a weapon (or weapon accessory) in a manner not intended by the manufacturer.

We thank you for your inquiry and trust the foregoing has been responsive.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Earl Griffith', with a large flourish extending from the end of the signature.

Earl Griffith

Chief, Firearms Technology Branch

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE**  
**BUREAU OF ALCOHOL, TOBACCO, FIREARMS**  
**AND EXPLOSIVES**  
**MARTINSBURG, WV 25401-9431**

**OFFICIAL BUSINESS**  
**PENALTY FOR PRIVATE USE \$300**

**FIREARMS TECHNOLOGY BRANCH**



**SERGEANT JOE BRADLEY**  
**GREENWOOD POLICE DEPARTMENT**  
**6060 S QUEBEC STREET**  
**GREENWOOD VILLAGE, CO 80111**

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