From: Melson, Kenneth E.

Sent! Sunday, February 21, 2010 8:12:46 AM

To: Hoover, William J. Subject: RE: Seizure

Sounds like a great opportunity for us.

----Original Message----

From: Hoover, William J.

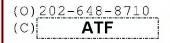
Sent: Sunday, February 21, 2010 3:17 AM

To: Melson, Kenneth E. Subject: Fw: Seizure

Ken,

Updated info on the case in AZ.

Billy William J. Hoover Assistant Director Bureau of ATF



* * *

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---- Original Message ----

From: Gillett, George T. Jr.

To: Hoover, William J.

Sent: Sat Feb 20 22:47:44 2010

Subject: Fw: Seizure

Hey Billy -

I hope you're having a good weekend.

ATF

ATF

There will be a SIR forthcoming on Monday AM.

Wanted to get this to you "back channel.". Let me know if you have questions.

George

George T. Gillett

ASAC - Phoenix Field Division

Cell: ATF

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---2 Original Message ----From: Gillett, George T. Jr.

To: Newell, William D.

Cc: ATF

Sent: Sat Feb 20 22:33:44 2010

Subject: Seizure

Update -

ΑTF

The actual number of guns seized today is 42 NOT 20. Of the 42 seized, there are some AR type rifles that were not sold by any of our known dealers.

ATF

ATF

Sir first thing Monday morning.

George T. Gillett

ASAC - Phoenix Field Division

Cell: ATF

* * *

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From: Hoover, William J.

Sent: Thursday, December 16, 2010 7:18 PM

To: Smith, Brad (ODAG) (SMO); Michalic, Mark (ODAG) (SMO)

CC: Melson, Kenneth E.

Subject: FW: Requested Documents

Attachments: December Fast and Furious BP Supplemental December 16 2010.docx; December Fast and

Furious BP for SAC (2) (2).docx

Brad and Mark,

I apologize for the format of the first documents I forwarded. These should be better.

Thank you,

Billy

William J. Hoover Deputy Director

Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms & Explosives

O) 202-648-8710

Briefing Paper

Phoenix Field Division

Phoenix Group VII (OCDETF Strike Force/Gunrunner)

ATF Investigation 785115-10-0004

Operation: Fast & Furious, OCDETF No. SW-AZP-0496

Case Background

The Phoenix Group VII Field Office is leading an investigation entitled "Operation Fast & Furious" in conjunction with Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), Internal Revenue Service (IRS) and the Phoenix Police Department (PPD). This operation was approved as an OCDETF case by the Southwest Region as SW-AZP-0496.

Since October 2009, ATF and the other partners listed above have been investigating a firearm trafficking organization that is being funded by the Sinaloa drug trafficking organization (DTO), a narcotics trafficking organization well known for violent criminal activity in Mexico. This organization is also involved in trafficking firearms to Mexico, and smuggling cocaine and marijuana into southern Arizona to be distributed throughout the United States. The OCDETF investigation of this organization is addressing violations of Federal Laws to include Firearms, Narcotics, Money Laundering, and Conspiracy Laws.

Agents believe that the Phoenix-based frearm trafficking group is actively purchasing firearms through "straw" purchasers using narcotics proceeds. From October 2009 to October 2010 agents have documented that this organization spent approximately 1.25 million dollars in cash at various Phoenix area Federal Firearms Licensees to acquire in excess of 1,900 firearms. The firearms are then being trafficked into Mexico using false compartments in various vehicles through various international Ports of Entry in Arizona and Texas.

ATF

ATF and many other investigative techniques to further the investigation. Through these investigative techniques agents have been able to identify a large number of additional coconspirators and disrupt the illegal activities of this firearms trafficking organization by seizing numerous firearms and narcotics. To date, over three hundred firearms and over fifty pounds of marijuana have been recovered by agents in addition to the numerous firearms and narcotic seizures in Mexico related to this investigation.

Over the past several weeks agents, in conjunction with the investigative partners and the United States Attorney's Office (USAO) have been preparing for the indictment of ATF individuals in this investigation.

ATF

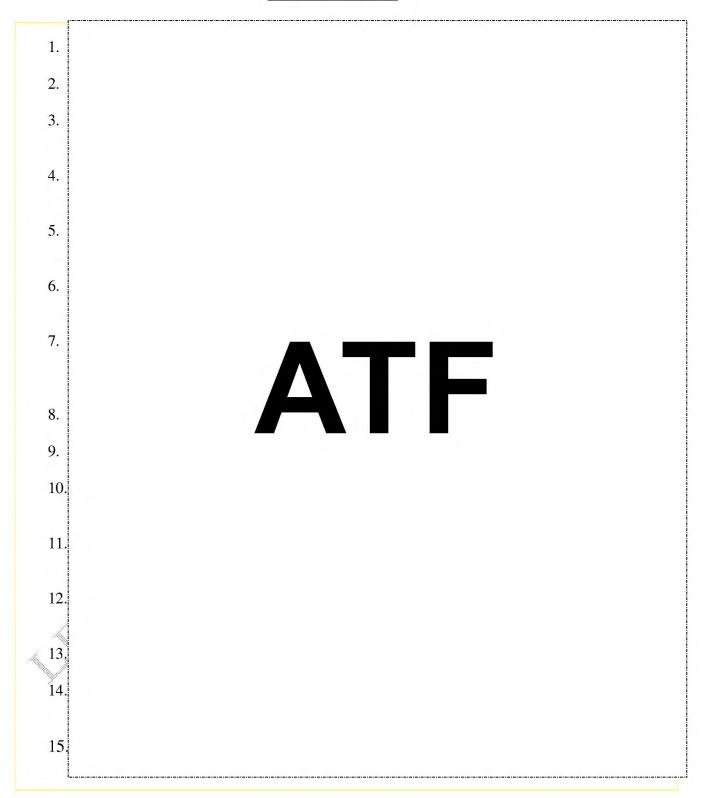
ATF

On December 3rd SAC Newell and ASAC Needles met with USA Burke, Chief of Criminal Cunningham and the lead AUSA for this case and discussed all these matters.

It should be further noted that firearms purchasing and trafficking activity by this organization has subsided significantly since early October of this year. This is due to several factors not the least of which are the many proactive measures taken by the agents assigned to Phoenix Group VII. It should also be noted that throughout the course of the investigation numerous seizures were made by other State, local and Federal law enforcement agencies at the direction of Phoenix Group VII in order to ensure the seized firearms did not reach their intended destination but also to ensure the leadership of this firearms trafficking organization was not "tipped off" to the proactive measures taken while the larger conspiracy case was being prepared for the USAO.

ATF

Proposed Charges:



4

Briefing Paper

Phoenix Field Division

Phoenix Group VII (OCDETF Strike Force/Gunrunner)

ATF Investigation 785115-10-0004

Operation: Fast & Furious, OCDETF No. SW-AZP-0496

Supplemental

On December 15/16, 2010, after the shooting death of U.S. Border Patrol Agent Brian Terry near
Rio Rico, Arizona (approx 25 miles north of Nogales) Southern Arizona law enforcement
officers/agents responded and conducted a search of the area. This search resulted in the arrest
of four individuals. One of them, ATF DOB: ATF was shot in the
exchange of gunfire ATF
of four individuals. One of them, ATF DOB: ATF was shot in the exchange of gunfire ATF
In addition and during the search of the area two RomArm/Cugir, Model GP WASR 10, 7.62x39mm AK-47 rifles, serial numbers ATF were recovered near
7.62x39mm AK-47 rifles, serial numbers ATF were recovered near
the scene of the shooting. An Urgent firearms trace requested by ATF agents on-scene
determined ATF ATF
ATF
Force. This investigation, entitled "Fast and Furious", due to the very quick manner in which a
complex firearms trafficking organization acquired several hundred firearms was initiated in
October 2009 and is being conducted in conjunction with ICE/HSI, IRS, DEA and the Phoenix
Police Department.
ATF
purchasers identified in the "Fast and Furious" investigation and recommended by ATF for
prosecution to the U.S. Attorney's Office in Phoenix, Arizona.
ATF

On December 15, 2010, ATF agents, assisted by ICE, the USMS and the Phoenix Police Department located ATF



10
From: Melson, Kenneth E.
Sent: Tuesday, July 27, 2010 6:50 PM
To: Chait, Mark R.; Hoover, William J.
Cc: ATF Subjects DE: CDIT Classout Media Opportunity
Subject: RE: GRIT Closeout Media Opportunity That would work if Mexico doesn't screw it up. DP
DP
DP Ken.
From: Chait, Mark R.
Sent: Tuesday, July 27, 2010 6:06 PM
To: Melson, Kenneth E.; Hoover, William J.
Cc: ATF
Subject: FW: GRIT Closeout Media Opportunity
Ken – how would these dates work for youi realize we also have Mexico meetings on the
horizon
Mark R. Chait
Assistant Director
Field Operations
202-648-8410
From Novell William D
From: Newell, William D. Sent: Tuesday, July 27, 2010 5:37 PM
To: Chait, Mark R.
Subject: Re: GRIT Closeout Media Opportunity
lust mot with Arizona USA Donnie Rusko
Just met with Arizona USA Dennis Burke. [DP
DP
Bill Newell
Special Agent in Charge
ATF Phoenix Field Division (AZ and NM) Cell ATF
TOOL ATT

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have received this transmission in error, please notify the sender by return e-mail and destroy this message in its entirety (including all attachments).
(moduling all attachments).
From: Chait, Mark R.
To: Newell, William D.
Cc: McMahon, William G.
Sent : Mon Jul 26 21:00:34 2010
Subject: Re: GRIT Closeout Media Opportunity
Lilke the idea however the ATE awards corporate in the Cath. Date the CE CCh.
I like the idea, however the ATF awards ceremony is the 24th. Does the 25-26th work. Mark R. Chait
Assistant Director
Field Operations

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(including all attachments).	
From: Newell, William D. To: Chait, Mark R. Cc: McMahon, William G. Sent: Mon Jul 26 18:51:36 2010 Subject: RE: GRIT Closeout Media Opportunity We are planning on having our All-Hands the week of August 23-27. This years so they are due. We are still awaiting DOJ approval for the hotel by	out ATF thinks it's going to go through
since we avoided all the issues that have delayed other approvals.	DP
Tuesday morning before the press conference which we could hold arou with the USA though, he's going to want to participate and should. I'll a Bill Newell Special Agent in Charge Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) Phoenix Field Division (Arizona and New Mexico) Office - (602)776-5400	
From: Chait, Mark R. Sent: Monday, July 26, 2010 3:33 PM To: Newell, William D. Cc: McMahon, William G. Subject: GRIT Closeout Media Opportunity	
Bill – DP	
DP	

Mark R. Chait Assistant Director Field Operations 202-648-8410

11

From: Melson, Kenneth E.

Sent¹² Tuesday, January 18, 2011 9:49:53 AM

To: ATF

Subject: Re: ODAG call

Please check with ATF on the status of the demand letter.

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	- Origir	nal Messa	iqe -			
From	:	A ⁻	ΓF			
To:	Melson,	Kenneth	Ε.,			
Cc:	Hoover,	William	J.;		ATF	
Sent	: Tue Ja	an 18 09:	46:0	06 2011		
Subi	ect · RE ·	ODAG Ca	וו			

Possibilities include:

Status of the Demand Letter for MSLG.

Fast and Furious Indictment at the end of the week - takedown next Tuesday 1/25.



Acting Chief of Staff
Office of the Director
O: 202-648 ATF
C: ATF
HQ Room 5 S 100

----Original Message---From: Melson, Kenneth E.
Sent: Tuesday, January 18, 2011 9:39 AM
To:
ATF
Cc: Hoover, William J.
Subject: ODAG call

Do we have a list of topics for the call to Brad?

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From: Goldberg, Stuart (ODAG) [

Sent: Wednesday, March 09, 2011 11:04 PM

To: Melson, Kenneth E.

Subject: Re: Firearms Trafficking

Got it. Thanks.

From: Melson, Kenneth E. (ATF)

Sent: Wednesday, March 09, 2011 08:31 PM **To**: Goldberg, Stuart (ODAG); Monaco, Lisa (ODAG)

Subject: FW: Firearms Trafficking

Just for info, USATX sent out this email to all his SACs, and our SAC sent it to the SWB ATF SACs. As I said, we learned of this before the DAG's call by way of this email. Ken.

ATF

From: Hoover, William J.

Sent: Wednesday, March 09, 2011 8:18 PM

To: Melson, Kenneth E.

Subject: FW: Firearms Trafficking

As information!

Billy

William J. Hoover Deputy Director

Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms & Explosives

ATF

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From: Webb, J. Dewey

Sent: Wednesday, March 09, 2011 8:01 PM

To: Chait, Mark R.; McMahon, William G.; Hoover, William J.

Cc: Champion, Robert R.; Newell, William D.; Torres, John A.;

Subject: Fw: Firearms Trafficking

FYI,

THE US ATTORNEY IN THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT SENT OUT THE BELOW MESSAGE AFTER A DOJ CONFERENCE CALL TODAY. PLEASE SEE MY BELOW RESPONSE TO HIM AND ALL THE AGENCY HEADS ON HIS EMAIL STRING.

ATF

I HAVE CC'D THE OTHER SWB SACS, IN CASE THEIR USA'S ARE SENDING OUT SIMILAR MESSAGES.

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this e-mail message and any attached file(s) in any form outside of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms & Explosives or the Department of Justice without express authorization is strictly prohibited.

From: Webb, J. Dewey

To: Moreno, Angel (USATXS); 'Robert.Rutt@dhs.gov'; 'TEHinojosa ATF; '; Powers, Richard C. (FBI); 'ESaenz' ATF 'Rodney.Clark@ci.irs.gov'; 'JERRY.ROBINETTE ATF; Nelson, Cory B. (FBI)

Sent: Wed Mar 09 19:57:46 2011 **Subject**: Re: Firearms Trafficking

ANGEL,

AS FAR AS I KNOW, WE HAVE NEVER LET ANY FIREARMS WALK TO MEXICO IN THIS DIVISION. AND WHILE WE HAVE DISCUSSED CONTROLED DELIVERIES TO MEXICO IN OUR JOINT CASES WITH ICE, WE HAVE NEVER MADE CONTROLED DELIVERIES OF FIREARMS TO MEXICO.

OUR POLICY HAS ALWAYS BEEN, WE MAKE EVERY EFFORT TO STOP ALL FIREARMS AND AMMUNITION THAT WE ENCOUNTER IN OUR INVESTIGATIONS.

THANKS,

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From: Moreno, Angel (USATXS)

To: Rutt, Robert P; Hinojosa, Thomas E (DEA-US); Powers, Richard C. (FBI); Webb, J. Dewey; Saenz, Elizabeth

(USMS); Rodney.Clark c: ; Robinette, Jerry; Nelson, Cory B. (FBI)

Sent: Wed Mar 09 19:08:36 2011 Subject: Firearms Trafficking

Lady and Gents,

I just got off a telephone conference call with Deputy Attorney General James Cole and the other SWB U. S. Attorneys. DAG Cole asked us to relay to all of our agency heads the Department's position on firearms trafficking. He pointed out that he thinks we have all been doing a wonderful job and that this is a high priority for the United States. He said that there have been many issues raised recently in the press and in Congress about gun trafficking, and he wanted to make sure there was no confusion about DOJ's position. This is not a new stance, but he wanted to eliminate any doubts.

If there are going to be any operations, including undercover investigations, these WILL NOT include the firearms crossing the border into Mexico. In addition, he asked that if we became aware of any firearms going into Mexico from other operations, that we STOP them. No guns should cross into Mexico as part of one of our operations. He thanks you for your support and hard work.

If you have any question, please let me know. Thanks,

José Angel Moreno

United States Attorney

From: Pascual, Carlos (Mexico City) PascualC@state.gov

Sent: Tuesday, January 25, 2011 6:49 PM

To: Feeley, John D (Mexico City); Larson, Brian (USAAZ); Garcia, Anthony P (Mexico City); Sundwall,

Kevin L (Mexico City); Taxman, Karine M (Mexico City)

CC: Carwile, Kevin (CRM); Featherstone, Alex (Mexico City); Williams, James H (Mexico City); Breuer,

Lanny A.; Melson, Kenneth E.

Subject: RE: Grand Juries Indict 34 Suspects in Drug and Firearms Trafficking Organization

Ken, Lanny – thanks for your leadership in pushing this forward.

Carlos – there are numerous indictments here. It would be useful to have a chart that could be handled out with the date of indictment, number indicted, number arrested, status of legal action, and charges for each case.

From: Feeley, John D (Mexico City)

Sent: Tuesday, January 25, 2011 3:18 PM

To: 'Larson, Brian (USAAZ)'; Garcia, Anthony P (Mexico City); Sundwall, Kevin L (Mexico City); Taxman, Karine M (Mexico

City)

Cc: Carwile, Kevin (CRM); Featherstone, Alex (Mexico City); Williams, James H (Mexico City); Pascual, Carlos (Mexico

Subject: RE: Grand Juries Indict 34 Suspects in Drug and Firearms Trafficking Organization

Thanks, Brian.

ATF from ATF is up there with some PGR and SSP observers. Great coordinated action. Thanks for staying in the fight.

Alex/Jim: please circulate the nota to usual suspecta

John Feeley Deputy Chief of Mission Mission Mexico

From: Larson, Brian (USAAZ) [mailto:Brian.Larson@usdoj.gov]

Sent: Tuesday, January 25, 2011 11:49 AM

To: Garcia, Anthony P (Mexico City); Sundwall, Kevin L (Mexico City); Feeley, John D (Mexico City); Taxman, Karine M

(Mexico City)

Cc: Carwile, Kevin (CRM)

Subject: FW: Grand Juries Indict 34 Suspects in Drug and Firearms Trafficking Organization

Folks;

This is one of the big firearms cases we have been working for a while. It was ran out of the Strike Force to which I am assigned. The agents and AUSAs assigned have done a fantastic job. We also had Criminal Division support from Laura Gwinn. She has been working in Arizona through an agreement that Kevin Carwile worked out before he was reassigned. In all, a great team effort.

Brian G. Larson

Assistant United States Attorney

District of Arizona

18 (602) 514-7532 (Office) (602) 525-5378 (Cell) (602) 514-7532 (Fax)

From: Massey, Debra (USAAZ)

Sent: Tuesday, January 25, 2011 10:38 AM

To: USAAZ-All

Cc: Mangan, Thomas G. (ATF ; Sanchez, Ramona F. (DEA-US); james.mccormick@ci.irs.gov

'Watson Brian R'; vincent.picard@dhs.gov; trent.crump@phoenix.gov

Subject: Grand Juries Indict 34 Suspects in Drug and Firearms Trafficking Organization

Office of the United States Attorney, Dennis K. Burke

District of Arizona

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE Public Affairs

Tuesday, January 25, 2011 MANNY TARANGO

Telephone: (602) 514-7456

Cell: (602) 799-8322

Grand Juries Indict 34 Suspects in Drug and Firearms Trafficking Organization

Multi-Agency task force rounds up defendants accused of illegal gun purchases, money laundering and conspiracy

PHOENIX – Grand juries have returned multi-count indictments in five cases against 34 defendants accused of assisting Mexican Drug Trafficking Organizations with illegally trafficking firearms from the United States to Mexico.

Beginning earlier this morning, a multi-agency law enforcement task force rounded up and arrested 20 defendants named in the 53-count **ATF** indictment, which was unsealed today. More than 100 officers were involved in the operation.

The ATF indictment alleges that from approximately September 2009 to December of 2010, the defendants conspired to purchase hundreds of firearms, including AK-47s, to be illegally exported to Mexico. Defendants, none of whom are licensed firearms dealers, acted as "straw purchasers" by falsely declaring that they were buying the weapons for themselves. AK-47's are considered the "weapon of choice" for Mexican Drug Trafficking Organizations.

"Our office is committed to stopping the illegal flow of guns into Mexico," said Dennis K. Burke, U.S. Attorney for the District of Arizona. "The massive size of this operation sadly exemplifies the magnitude of the problem -- Mexican Drug Lords go shopping for war weapons in Arizona."

"These indictments are important steps in the Justice Department's effort to curb gun trafficking along

the Southwest Border," said Assistant Attorney General Lanny A. Breuer of the Criminal Division. "The Criminal Division is working hard with its partners in the U.S. Attorneys' Offices and colleagues in Mexico to find and prosecute those who seek to transport weapons illegally across our borders."

In parallel cases, another 14 people have been charged with gun-trafficking crimes in the District of Arizona under a series of grand jury indictments that have been recently handed down or unsealed. Defendants in those cases are pending trial.

"This investigation is further proof of the relentless efforts by Mexican drug cartels, especially the Sinaloa Cartel, to illegally acquire large quantities of firearms in Arizona and elsewhere in the U.S. for use in the ongoing Mexican drug war," said Bill Newell, Special Agent in Charge of the ATF Phoenix Field Division. This investigation is also further proof that the 'straw purchase' of firearms continues to be a significant problem and that those individuals that knowingly falsify ATF firearms forms in order to supply Mexican drug cartels with firearms have as much blood on their hands as the criminals that use them."

Firearms traffickers often use "straw purchasers" to buy guns from licensed dealers. It is illegal for a purchaser to falsely declare they are buying firearms for themselves when in fact they are obtaining them for someone else.

The operations were conducted by a multi-agency task force through the Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Force (OCDETF). The principal mission of the OCDETF program is to identify, disrupt and dismantle the most serious drug trafficking, weapons trafficking and money laundering organizations, and those primarily responsible for the nation's illegal drug supply. Agencies included in this operation include the United States Attorney's Office for the District of Arizona, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Internal Revenue Service, the Drug Enforcement Administration, the Department of Agriculture and the Phoenix Police Department.

"The Phoenix OCDETF Strike Force reflects the kind of collaborative law enforcement approach that positions us best to combat the Mexican Cartels responsible for the scourge of international drug trafficking and the associated violence, firearms trafficking, money laundering and corruption," said DEA Acting Special Agent Charge, Doug Coleman. "This multi-agency Strike Force, which helped identify and dismantle key operatives of a violent criminal organization and remove large amounts of its arsenal, is a proven law enforcement tool for tackling the challenges we face along the Southwest Border."

"Greed is the financial investigators friend. It allows us to track the financial transactions involved with illegal business operations and ferret out the individuals involved," said IRS Assistant Special Agent in Charge, Gabriel Grcham. "Through the cooperative efforts of the agencies involved with the OCDETF Strike Force and the United States Attorney's Office, agents documented the transactions of this organization. In one example the indictment indicates seven individuals allegedly spent approximately \$104,251 in cash at various Phoenix area firearms dealers to acquire 140 firearms. The organization utilized "straw purchasers" to conceal the true buyer and source of the funds used to acquire these weapons."

Additional Indictments

The ATF indictment alleges one count of Conspiracy, one count of Dealing in Firearms without a License, one count of Conspiracy to Distribute Marijuana, two counts of Possession with Intent to Distribute Marijuana, one count of Conspiracy to Possess a Firearm in Furtherance of a Drug Trafficking Offense, 35 counts of Making a False Statement in Connection with the Acquisition of Firearms, one count of Conspiracy to Commit Money Laundering and 11 counts of Money Laundering.

The Flores indictment alleges one count of conspiracy and 17 counts of making a false statement during the purchase of a firearm. This indictment includes 8 individuals that made multiple "straw purchases."

The Broome indictment alleges 1 count of conspiracy and 13 counts of making a false statement during the purchase of a firearm. This indictment includes four defendants that were involved in multiple "straw purchases" involving approximately 58 firearms.

The Aguilar indictment alleges 1 count of an individual making a false statement during the purchase of a firearm.

The Abarca indictment alleges 6 counts of making a false statement during the purchase of a firearm. The indictment alleges the defendant was involved in multiple "straw purchases" involving approximately 13 firearms of which 6 were AK 47 type weapons.

The maximum penalties for some of the most serious counts include:

- 18 United States Code, Section 924(a)(1)(A); False Statements in Connection with the Acquisition of Firearms 5yrs in prison, a \$250,00 fine and/or both; Counts 7-41 of the ATF Indictment
- 18 United States Code, Section 924(o); Conspiracy to Possess a Firearm in Furtherance of a Drug Trafficking Offense 20 yrs in prison, a \$250,000 and/or both; Count 6 of the ATF Indictment
- 18 United States Code, Section 371; Conspiracy; 5yrs in prison, a \$250,00 fine and/or both; Count 1 of the ATF Indictment (the objects of the conspiracy are alleged to be making false statements to acquire firearms in order to deal in firearms without a license and in the course of dealing without a license, transporting and shipping firearms out of the United States)

An indictment is simply the method by which a person is charged with criminal activity and raises no inference of guilt. An individual is presumed innocent until competent evidence is presented to a jury that establishes guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.

In determining an actual sentence, the United States District Judge will consult the U.S. Sentencing Guidelines, which provide appropriate sentencing ranges. The judge, however, is not bound by those guidelines in determining a sentence.

These cases are being prosecuted by the United States Attorney's Office for Arizona and by Trial Attorney Laura Gwinn of the Department of Justice's Criminal Division's Gang Unit.

CASE NUMBER: CR-11-126-PHX-JAT (Aviles et al); CR-11-013-PHX-SRB (Aguilar); CR-10-1187-PHX-ROS (Broome et al.); CR-10-1607-PHX-NVW (Abarca); CR-10-1831-PHX-FJM (Flores et al)

RELEASE NUMBER: 2011-009 (Press Conference 1-25-11)

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For more information on the U.S. Attorney's Office, District of Arizona, visit http://www.justice.gov/usao/az/

21 <<News Release Fast and Furious 1-25-2011.pdf>>

Jenna Ramey

Public Affairs Contractor

U.S. Attorney's Office

District of Arizona

602.514.7629