

From: [ATF] (ATF)
To: Axelrod, Matthew (ODAG)
CC: Hoover, William J.; Melson, Kenneth E. (ATF); Chait, Mark R. (ATF); McMahon, William G.; [ATF]
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Sent: 6/3/2011 1:02:34 AM
Subject: The Mexico Helicopter Incident

Matt:

Here is the preliminary information I have been able to assemble regarding the alleged shooting down of a GoM helicopter with a 50 caliber rifle linked to Fast and Furious as reported to you by the USAO in Phoenix as allegedly reported to them by [ATF]

At some point in time before May 27, 2011, La Familia Cartel members took over a small town outside of Jalisco (ph) Mexico. SSP got a tip on this and mounted a full assault on the town to take it back on May 27. In the course of the assault military helicopters were used and came under fire from the ground. What is described as "every bad guy in town" fired "a hail of 7.62 caliber rounds" at the helicopters and some struck at least one of the helicopters causing it to perform an emergency landing away from the town. The helicopter landed safely. There were no injuries to friendly forces. The helicopter was not struck by any 50 caliber rounds. It is unlikely that it will ever be determined which of the recovered guns were the ones that actually fired the projectiles that struck the helicopter.

The assault on the town continued. SSP killed 15 bad guys in the initial assault and 14 more have subsequently died. In the aftermath 70 to 80 firearms were recovered by SSP along with many bullet proof vests with ceramic plates and magazines.

On May 31, 2011 ATF personnel gained access to the recovered weapons. A partial list was sent to Phoenix this morning and compared to known purchases in Fast and Furious. At this point it is believed that at least three and possibly seven 7.62 caliber rifles have been linked to Fast and Furious. The three that are linked are tied to defendants that are currently under indictment. The 50 caliber does not link to Fast and Furious. A full list of all recovered guns is expected to be delivered to Phoenix in the morning and they will immediately compare it to Fast and Furious purchases.

There is supposed to be a meeting coming up in Phoenix at the USAO to discuss this recovery and to see if any of the facts involved in this incident could assist in [ATF]
[ATF]oup.

We will learn more tomorrow. For the moment, there does not appear to be any substance to the allegation that a 50 caliber purchased in F&F was used to shoot down a helicopter.

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