



ATF News

Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives
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ATF AND SACRAMENTO LAW ENFORCEMENT PARTNERS ANNOUNCE SEIZURE OF 449 FIREARMS IN PROJECT GUNSLINGER

SACRAMENTO, Calif. – Special Agent in Charge Stephen K. Martin of the San Francisco Field Division, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF); Sheriff John McGinness of the Sacramento County Sheriff's Department, Chief Albert Najera of the Sacramento Police Department, United States Attorney McGregor Scott of the Eastern Judicial District of California and Sacramento District Attorney Jan Scully announced today the seizure of 449 firearms and arrest of 19 defendants as part of a crime gun interdiction strategy dubbed "Project Gunslinger".

ATF special agents, Sacramento County Sheriff's detectives and Sacramento Police Department investigators, initiated a crime gun interdiction strategy in October of 2006 which was designed to counter growing gun violence in the Sacramento region. The strategy, dubbed "Gunslinger," included undercover purchases of weapons, the use of confidential informants, the use of information derived from the 1-800-ATF-GUNS hotline, analysis of crime guns recovered, tracing of firearms, and the service of search warrants; all focused on identifying illicit firearms traffickers.

During the course of "Gunslinger", 449 firearms were recovered, including automatic weapons. In addition, 3 pounds of methamphetamine, 3 ½ ounces of cocaine base and 3 pounds of marijuana were seized.

"Gunslinger" was originally designated as a 7 month project. Due to the volume of firearms recovered and the successes of the strategy used, investigators and prosecutors have decided to continue working as a team. "Today's announcement is merely a status check of how 'Gunslinger' is doing. The investigation is ongoing and arrests continue," remarked Chief Najera.

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“The guns taken into our custody during this project were destined for the hands of criminals and destined for the streets of Sacramento. Project Gunslinger attacked and changed their destiny,” said Special Agent In Charge Martin.

“I believe the success of Project Gunslinger shows that the good citizens of Sacramento County are fed up with violent crime and are doing their part by reporting people with illegal guns and persons they know of who cannot lawfully possess a gun. Mid-year statistics show violent crime is down dramatically in our department’s jurisdiction. Much of the credit for the drop can be given to the collaborative efforts of law enforcement, who have worked together to target gang members and violent criminals, and to the citizens of Sacramento County who are fed up with the senseless acts of violence that people with illegal guns and people who cannot lawfully possess a gun commit,” said Sheriff McGinness.

“Programs like this are one of the most effective means we can use to prevent violent crime,” said Chief Najera. “This program was not about gun control. It was about the reduction of firearms access to those criminals that have shown a propensity to commit violent crimes,” added Najera.

For more information on ATF and additional programs designed to reduce violent crime, go to www.atf.gov.

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