

News Release

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Re: Major Incident – 07-122.1

Date: June 21st, 2007

Time: upon receipt

CANADA, ATF, ICE BREAK UP
INTERNATIONAL FIREARMS TRAFFICKING RING

Peel, Ontario – In October of 2006, Investigators from the Provincial Weapons Enforcement Unit and Peel Regional Police, in partnership with the United States Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF), and U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), commenced an investigation into a group of suspects who were smuggling illegal drugs and guns across the Canadian and U.S. Border.

On Wednesday, June 20th, 2007, at 6:00 a.m., investigators executed several search warrants in the Region of Peel, City of Toronto and Region of Halton. Officers from all agencies assisted including; the Provincial Weapons Enforcement Unit, Peel Regional Police, Toronto Police Service and Halton Regional Police. In addition, several search and arrest warrants were executed throughout the United States by members of ATF and ICE.

During the course of this investigation, the following items were recovered in Ontario:

26 Handguns
10 000 tablets of Ecstasy
260 Grams of Methamphetamine
515 Grams of Cocaine
4 Kilos of Marijuana

10 suspects have been charged with 134 firearms and drug related offences in connection with this investigation, along with several suspects in the United States.

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5 other suspects were previously arrested in Sudbury, Ontario, on drug related offences in relation to this investigation.

A news conference was held today at Peel Regional Police Headquarters outlining the details of this investigation.

Peel Regional Police Chief Mike Metcalf stated “Our commitment to preventing the illegal movement of guns into our community is supported by the close relationships our officers maintain with other law enforcement agencies. It is through this collaboration that successful investigations like Project Rebel help to keep our communities safe”.

O.P.P. Inspector Steve Clegg of the Provincial Weapons Enforcement Unit said “It is imperative that police services and other agencies work together to prevent firearms related crime. Project Rebel is a fine example of how effective these partnerships can be at putting a dent in the spread of illegal handguns”.

Special Agent Regina Lombardo, U.S. Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives stated, “These arrests and the continuing investigation in the United States demonstrate, yet again, what ATF and its Canadian partners can achieve when they join forces against firearms trafficking. By pooling our investigative and firearms tracing resources, we’ve broken up one cross-border firearms trafficking ring. Other traffickers should be on notice that we’ll use that same cooperation and collaboration to come after you.”

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ATF Toronto Assistant Attaché Regina Lombardo interviewed after the Peel, Ont., news conference



Seized Drugs Display



Seized Firearms Display