

U.S. Attorney Ed Kubo
Press Conference - PSN Hawaii
March 14, 2008

In 2002, we launched Project Safe Neighborhoods in Hawaii. At that time, with the partnerships of the agencies here, it was our belief that we could make a positive difference in the crime rate of our State.

We intended this program to target Hawaii's repeat offenders because I believed that most of our crime was being committed by criminals who were being seen too often in our communities preying on our citizens and never learning their lesson despite - despite repeated arrests by our police, and frustrated attempts by our state court judges to deal with these criminals.

Thus, because federal laws are so successful in dealing with firearm offenses, we used this statute as our main weapon of choice. This statute prohibits any felon, drug user, illegal alien, or person with a history of domestic violence from possessing any firearm or even a single round of ammunition.

In the first year in operation 2003 -2004, we prosecuted over 150 defendants in Hawaii. These defendants were responsible for approximately 3,300 prior arrests and 1,000 prior convictions among them. Virtually all of them were sent to a federal prison on the mainland.

Last year, we prosecuted approximately 62 defendants responsible for approximately 880 prior arrests and 200 prior convictions. Most of these defendants received between 5 years of prison and 30 years imprisonment.

This program works because it removes harden predators from our streets, and I truly believe saves lives and potential victims in our communities - thus making our neighborhoods

safer.

In January (2008), we prosecuted 2 individuals - Chris Santos on Kauai and Brian Yi. Between them they have over 53 prior arrests and 17 prior convictions.

Today, I announce 5 more federal prosecutions in this very successful program. These five individuals have over 160 prior arrests and almost 60 convictions between them.

***(1) **Kadon Zimmerman** has 33 prior arrests and 14 convictions. His convictions include Felony Assault and Abuse of a Family Member.

On Wednesday (3/12), a criminal complaint was been filed against Mr Zimmerman for being a felon in possession of a firearm and ammunition.

On February 25th, Maui Police Officers responded to the Harbor Lights Condominium in Kahalui on a report that the Defendant was high on ICE and had a gun. Upon arriving at the address they confronted him in an apartment.

At the time, the Defendant had a pistol in his hand which he refused to put down and was also in possession of a shotgun. Officers also learned that he had outstanding warrants out for Zimmerman's arrest.

A standoff ensued, with the Defendant refusing to give up and he even discharged the weapon once. However, after 8 hours of negotiation with Zimmerman, they persuaded him to put down his weapons and surrender to the police.

The Defendant is currently in state custody. We have now filed a detainer on him with the State authorities. All federal court appearances and scheduling is pending his first appearance.

***(2) **Gregory Ritter** has 60 prior arrests and 17 convictions. His convictions include Felony

Promotion of Dangerous Drugs, Auto Theft, and Abuse of a Family Member.

Yesterday (3/13), a Federal Grand Jury indicted Mr Ritter for being a felon in possession of a firearm and ammunition.

On March 9th, HPD Officers arrested the Defendant for Unauthorized Control of a Propelled Vehicle. At the time of the arrest, took away his backpack and a fanny pack that the Defendant was wearing.

An Officer then felt what appeared to be a gun in the backpack and a later search permitted by a search warrant revealed that the Defendant did have a 45 cal revolver, along with 25 rounds of ammunition and a packet of in the backpack. Officers also found a packet of crystal meth in the Defendant's fanny pack.

The Defendant is in federal custody, and is scheduled to have his Arraignment and Plea at 1:30 pm today in Magistrate Kevin Chang's Courtroom.

***(3) **Mario Tuua** has 3 prior arrests here and in San Francisco, California, with 2 convictions for Felony Assault with a Dangerous Weapon and Robbery.

Yesterday (3/13), Mr Tuua was indicted by a Federal Grand Jury for one count of being a felon in possession of a firearm and ammunition; one count of possession of cocaine with intent to distribute; and one count of carrying a firearm during a drug trafficking crime.

At about 10pm on March 7th, Honolulu Police saw Mr Tuua in the area of North Kukui Street and River Street and while he appeared to be conducting a drug transaction with another male. When they approached his area, he took the bag which he had and threw it into the adjacent stream.

The bag was retrieved and Officers recovered a 45 cal pistol loaded with 8 rounds of

ammunition. They also recovered clear plastic bags containing what approximately 56 grams of crack cocaine, and approximately \$13,000 in cash from the bag.

Additionally, Officers recovered an additional amount of crack cocaine (almost 8 grams) and more cash in the Defendant's pocket that night.

The Defendant is in federal custody and his trial has been scheduled for May 13, 2008.

***(4) **Romerick Tabuyo** has 23 prior arrests and 10 convictions. His convictions include Felony Terroristic Threatening, Possession of Weapons, Possession of Drug Paraphernalia, Promotion of Dangerous Drugs, and Abuse of a Family Member.

Yesterday (3/13), Mr Tabuyo was indicted by a Federal Grand Jury for two counts of being a felon in possession of a firearm and ammunition.

At about 10:30 pm on March 6th, Honolulu Police observed Mr Tabuyo seated in a car which was parked at the Aiea District Park. At the time, the park was closed to the public, and there was a small rubbish fire next to the car.

While the police was asking the Defendant why he was there, they saw a rifle case on the back passenger's side of the car. Tabuyo was taken out of the car and became resistant telling the police that he was not going to go back to jail.

The Defendant then bolted from the area and was chased down. It was at that time that a stolen semi-automatic pistol was recovered from his front pocket which was loaded with 5 rounds of ammunition. Officers also found a clear packet containing substance resembling ICE.

Officers later recovered from the Defendant's car, a shotgun, along with 5 shotgun shells, and 46 rounds of ammunition for the pistol. They also recovered 6 clear packets containing what may be ICE, a number of unused clear packets, a scale commonly used for weighing drugs, and

glass pipes commonly used for smoking the ICE. Our Lab analysis of the drugs are pending at this time.

The Defendant is in federal custody and his trial has been scheduled for May 13, 2008.

***(5) **Usai Musika** has 43 prior arrests and 13 convictions. His convictions include Felony Terroristic Threatening in the First Degree, Auto Theft, Assault, and Criminal Property Damage.

On Wednesday (3/12), a criminal complaint was filed against Mr Musika charging him with a felon in possession of a firearm and ammunition.

On February 28th, Kauai police were in the Nawiliwili Park area when they were told by a witness that Mr Musika had just threatened him with a gun in the area. Upon locating the Defendant, he became defensive and hostile towards the police.

During the physical confrontation that followed, an Officer felt a handgun under Musika's jacket. This Officer was hit in the face by Musika.

After gaining control over the Defendant, police took away from Masika a 40 cal Beretta which was loaded with 5 rounds of ammunition.

The Defendant is in federal custody, and had his Initial Appearance at 10 am this morning before Magistrate Kevin Chang. He was ordered detained pending his detention hearing on next week Wednesday, March 19th, at 1:30 pm before Magistrate Chang. He is being represented by Michael Green.

All five Defendants are charged with being a felon in possession of a firearm or ammunition. The maximum penalty for this offense is 10 years in jail.

Defendant Tuua is additionally charged with possession of Cocaine with Intent to

Distribute, which carries a maximum penalty of 20 years.

He is also charged with Carrying a Firearm During a Drug Trafficking Crime, and that offense carries a mandatory 5 years to life imprisonment sentence which will be consecutive to any other sentence he will receive in his case.

These cases are assigned to Assistant U.S. Attorney Darren Ching who is a seasoned trial attorney in this area, and who prior joining this Office, was a state prosecutor doing these types of cases. In the future, he will make himself available to answer your questions concerning this case and our PSN Hawaii program.

The success of this program is because of the outstanding cooperation and partnership we have with the county police departments in this state. On behalf of ATF and our federal agencies, I would like to thank the Chiefs of the Honolulu Police Department, the Maui Police Department, the Kauai Police Department and the Hawaii County Police Department.

Without your involvement in this case, I truly believe we could not have impacted crime so significantly in these past 7 years.

Make no mistake about this, we will continue to hunt down those responsible for committing multiple crimes in our neighborhood. Living free in a productive society is dependent upon one living a law abiding life.

If you cannot follow the law, then we will remove you from our communities and we will put you away for as long as we possibly can.