



The Office of Intergovernmental and Public Liaison's Department of Justice Newsletter

Volume 2, Issue 9

November/December 2008

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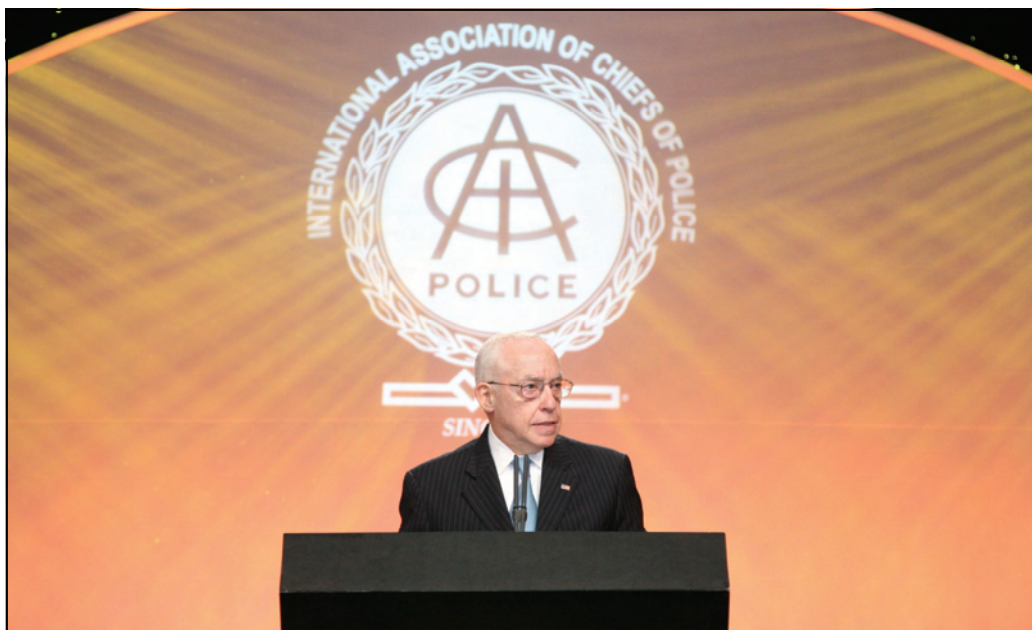
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Newsletter from the Office of Intergovernmental and Public Liaison

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Attorney General Addresses Chiefs of Police



On November 10, 2008, Attorney General Mukasey and FBI Director Mueller delivered remarks at the International Association of Chiefs of Police's 115th Annual Conference in San Diego, California.

Highlights from the Attorney General's Speech:

"Those of us in federal law enforcement could not provide the American people with the safety and security they expect without the hard work of police chiefs across the country. That's why we have emphasized so strongly on working as partners with you and your counterparts, through task forces and joint operations, through training and – when possible – through financial support."

"Each of you is more than just a local official; you are a vital part of a unified law enforcement alliance. You are the ones we will turn to for guidance, support, and advice as we look for ways to keep building on our success."

"Our communities, and our people, are better off because of the successes we've had together. All of you have been great partners to the Department and to federal law enforcement. I want to thank you once more for that partnership, for your hard work, and for your commitment."

Annual Wreathlaying Day Ceremony



Attorney General Mukasey and Concerns of Police Survivors President Jennifer Thacker, surviving spouse of Kentucky Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control Investigator Brandon Thacker, participate in the tribute.

On October 15, 2008, Attorney General Mukasey attended and delivered remarks at the 17th Annual Wreathlaying Day Ceremony at the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial in Washington, D.C.

Highlights from the Attorney General's Speech:

"The officers honored today dedicated themselves to enforcing the laws of our great nation -- to making sure those words on paper have real meaning. And this ceremony reminds us that doing that -- upholding the rule of law -- does not come cheap. It takes a heavy toll on the men and women who serve, and on the families whose love and support make that service possible. It takes its heaviest toll when one of these patriots is lost."

"The mission of law enforcement has been summed up in the phrase "to protect and to serve." That expression does not mention that an officer may be called on to give his or her life in the line of duty, but that possibility is understood. It's a part of the code honored by every officer and every agent, by every spouse, every parent and every child. It is a special burden they all bear to give the rest of us the luxury of safety and peace."

56th Annual Attorney General Awards Ceremony

On October 28, 2008, Attorney General Mukasey recognized 250 Department employees for their distinguished public service at the 56th Annual Attorney General Awards Ceremony. Twenty-two other individuals outside of the Department also were honored for their work. Held at Constitution Hall in Washington, D.C., this annual ceremony recognizes both Department employees and others for their dedication to carrying out the Justice Department's mission.

Attorney General Mukasey and Deputy Attorney General Filip presented the Attorney General's Award for Exceptional Service to two prosecution teams responsible for the prosecution of United States v. Padilla and United States v. Seale. The Attorney General's Award for Exceptional Service is the Department's highest award.

"The achievements of the people we honor today span the globe, and are as broad as the mission of the Department: To enforce the law and defend the interests of the United States according to the law," said Attorney General Mukasey. "We all serve that mission in different ways, but what all of these award recipients have in common is that they have reached the highest level of accomplishment in the work that they do."

For a full list of winners, please visit <http://www.usdoj.gov/opa/pr/2008/October/08-opa-954.html>.



Attorney General Mukasey salutes the flag during the presentation of colors and national anthem at the 56th Annual Attorney General Awards Ceremony at Constitution Hall in Washington, D.C.

Public Safety Officer Medal of Valor Recipients Honored



President Bush poses for a photo with the recipients of the Public Safety Officer Medal of Valor on October 22, 2008, in the Oval Office at the White House. The event was followed by a ceremony at the Justice Department.

On October 22, 2008, Attorney General Mukasey honored the nation's Public Safety Officer Medal of Valor recipients during a special ceremony at the Department of Justice. Earlier that day, President Bush presented the Medals of Valor during a White House ceremony in the Oval Office.

The Medal of Valor is the highest national award for valor by a public safety officer. It recognizes heroic action performed above and beyond the call of duty.

The Medal of Valor, authorized by the Public Safety Medal of Valor Act of 2001, is awarded by the President to public safety officers cited by the Attorney General. Public safety officers are nominated by the chiefs or directors of their employing agencies and recommended by the Medal of Valor Review Board.

For a full list of the winners, please visit: http://www.ojp.gov/medalofvalor/awardees_07.htm.

President's Identity Theft Task Force

On October 28, 2008, Attorney General Mukasey and Federal Trade Commission Chairman William E. Kovacic announced the release of a report from the President's Identity Theft Task Force on progress the federal government has made in addressing identity theft since the Task Force's Strategic Plan was released last year.

Highlights of the report include expansion of the Task Force's data security and identity theft business and consumer education campaigns; exploring means of improving consumer authentication processes to prevent the use of stolen information to commit identity theft; launching new initiatives to help identity theft victims recover; and improving law enforcement tools to investigate and prosecute identity thieves.

The Task Force report emphasizes that, due to the dynamic and rapidly changing nature of identity theft, the struggle to protect consumers' personal information will not end with the implementation of the recommendations from the Strategic Plan. Government and the private sector, working together with consumers, must remain vigilant and adaptable as new generations of identity thieves and techniques develop over the coming years. The full task force report and other information on federal efforts to combat identity theft may be found at <http://www.idtheft.gov>.

Two Men Plead Guilty to Burning Islamic Center in Tennessee

On November 3, 2008, Michael Corey Golden and Jonathan Edward Stone pled guilty in federal court in Nashville, Tennessee, for their roles in burning and vandalizing the Islamic Center of Columbia, Tennessee, on February 9, 2008. A third defendant remains under indictment for his role in the arson.

During the plea hearing, Golden, 23, and Stone, 19, admitted that they assembled Molotov cocktail incendiary devices, broke into the Islamic Center, ignited the devices and used them to completely destroy the mosque. The two further admitted that they committed the arson because of the religious character of the property.

"Violence based on religious intolerance is offensive to our nation's fundamental values," said Grace Chung Becker, Acting Assistant Attorney General for the Civil Rights Division. "The Justice Department is committed to vigorously prosecuting federal laws prohibiting violent interference with religious exercise and other bias-based crimes."

Grants Announced by DOJ

On September 30, 2008, Attorney General Mukasey announced nearly \$240 million in grant awards that support communities and law enforcement in preventing crime.

On October 1, 2008, the Office of Justice Programs (OJP) announced that more than \$125 million will be going to state and local government agencies across the country through the President's DNA Initiative this year. The goal of the Initiative is to ensure that DNA technology is used to its fullest potential to solve crimes, protect the innocent, and identify missing persons. The DNA Initiative has provided over \$422 million to state and local government agencies across the country since its launch.

On October 2, 2008, OJP announced nearly \$4.3 million in grant assistance for states, territories and units of local and tribal governments for use in creating and/or enhancing sex offender registry and notification programs. These grants will help state, local and tribal governments implement provisions of the Adam Walsh Act.

On October 3, 2008, the Office of Community Oriented Policing announced nearly \$10 million in grants to support partnerships between state or local government agencies and their district U.S. Attorney's Office that focus on reducing child endangerment. The funds were awarded to 23 state and local agencies under the Child Sexual Predator Program and will help officials locate, arrest and prosecute child sexual predators and enforce state sex offender registration laws.

On October 29, 2008, U.S. Associate Attorney General Kevin J. O'Connor announced more than \$50 million in additional grant funds to help tribal communities, bringing the total to nearly \$100 million awarded to tribal communities in 2008. These awards include funds for tribal courts assistance, alcohol and substance abuse prevention, juvenile and mental health programs, victim assistance, and developing responses to violent crimes against Indian women.

ATF Breaks Ground on National Explosives Training Center

On November 6, 2008, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) marked the beginning of construction on its new National Center for Explosives Training and Research facility during a groundbreaking ceremony at the Redstone Arsenal in Huntsville, Alabama.

The ceremony was officiated by Deputy Attorney General Filip, ATF Acting Director Michael J. Sullivan, and U.S. Senator Richard Shelby (R-Ala.); along with invited guests, dignitaries and others witnessed the start of building this important facility.

"The Department of Justice is extremely proud of ATF's expertise in the area of explosives. Through this facility, the Bureau will not only add to that expertise, but it will also share its knowledge with law enforcement partners throughout the country and the world. The research and instruction that will take place here are absolutely vital to protecting the American people, as well as America's allies," said Deputy Attorney General Filip.



The facility, scheduled to be completed in 2010, will consist of three explosive ranges, eight classrooms, a laboratory, a conference facility, and office space for ATF personnel and federal, state, local and international law enforcement and explosives partners.

Justice Department Transition Activities

The Department of Justice's transition activities fully support the Executive Order on Presidential Transition signed by President Bush on October 9, 2008. The Executive Order creates a Presidential Transition Coordinating Council, of which the Attorney General is a member. Attorney General Mukasey designated Brian Benczkowski, Chief of Staff, and Lee Lofthus, Assistant Attorney General for Administration, to lead the Department's transition activities. The Department's transition activities began in May.

For additional details on these activities, please visit <http://www.usdoj.gov/opa/pr/2008/November/08-opa-986.html>.

"Now that the elections are behind us, we begin a time of transition. During this time, it is important that all of us continue giving our best efforts to the American people and bringing the dedication and commitment to our jobs that we have brought to them from day one. It is also important that all of us do whatever we can to ensure a smooth transition to the next Administration." – Attorney General Mukasey, Memo to Component Heads and U.S. Attorneys, November 5, 2008.