

# ***NEWS RELEASE***

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## ***OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA San Diego, California***

***United States Attorney  
Karen P. Hewitt***

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***For Immediate Release***

### **NEWS RELEASE SUMMARY - January 18, 2008**

United States Attorney Karen P. Hewitt announced that Jose Olivas, Jr., a former Border Patrol agent, was sentenced today in federal court in San Diego by United States District Court Judge Barry Ted Moskowitz to serve 36 months in custody based on Olivas's conviction for conspiracy to transport hundreds of undocumented aliens and money laundering. Olivas entered his guilty plea on October 12, 2007.

According to Assistant U.S. Attorney Christopher Ott, who prosecuted the case, in connection with his guilty plea, Olivas admitted that he functioned as a "scout" for the smuggling organization by driving his personal vehicle a few minutes ahead of the co-conspirators' vehicles when they were transporting illegal aliens. Olivas also admitted that he would routinely call the driver of the transport vehicle to advise him of the operational status of the San Clemente Border Patrol checkpoint, in order to ensure successful transport and passage of the aliens through the checkpoint. To further the conspiracy, Olivas admitted that he showed reports and data compiled by Border Patrol to other members of the conspiracy. Olivas further admitted that in exchange for his participation in the smuggling conspiracy, he accepted cash for each of the scouting

missions. Olivas also pleaded guilty to laundering money for the smuggling organization, which conduct included personally purchasing alien transport vehicles with smuggling funds.

United States Attorney Hewitt said, “Corrupt law enforcement agents sully the fine reputation of law enforcement officials in whom the public places its trust.”

“I commend the men and women of the San Diego Sector for their dedicated service and vigilance, while securing our nation’s border. The San Diego Sector is committed to preserving the honor and integrity of the U.S. Border Patrol. In doing so, we sometimes have the unfortunate task of identifying those who have acted contrary to these traditions. Although this is one of those times, our focus remains on the mission of securing the border and protecting our nation,” said Deputy Chief Patrol Agent Richard Barlow.

United States Attorney Hewitt praised the efforts of the Department of Homeland Security, Office of the Inspector General, the Internal Revenue Service and the Immigration and Customs Enforcement for their investigation of the case.

Richard L. Skinner, Inspector General of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS), Office of Inspector General (OIG) said, “The US Border Patrol is composed of dedicated men and women who serve as America's first line of defense in securing our international borders. The conduct of Mr. Olivas is serious and disturbing and potentially compromised the security of our borders. We remain committed to working with our law enforcement partners to aggressively investigate all allegations of corruption to protect our borders and the integrity of DHS personnel, programs, and operations.”

“This investigation highlights a reality that criminal smuggling organizations are always on the lookout for any perceived weakness they can use to ensure their profits,” said Miguel Unzueta, Special Agent in Charge for ICE investigations in San Diego. “ICE agents will continue our aggressive pursuit of smuggling organizations, especially when we uncover corrupt officials working for them.”

“Individuals who choose to place their own personal financial gain above the safety of our country’s borders, will be fully prosecuted,” said Debra D. King, Special-Agent-In-Charge, IRS Criminal Investigation, Los Angeles Field Office. “IRS Special Agents are committed to aggressively working the financial component of joint federal law enforcement investigations that involve money laundering activities and corruption at our border.”

**DEFENDANT**

**Case Number: 07cr0163-BTM**

Jose Olivas, Jr.

**SUMMARY OF CHARGES**

Title 18, United States Code, Section 371 - Conspiracy to Bring in Illegal Aliens

Title 8, United States Code, Section 1324(a)(2)(B)(ii) - Bringing in Illegal Aliens for Financial Gain

Title 8, United States Code, Section 1324(a)(1)(A)(ii) - Transporting Illegal Aliens

Title 18, United States Code, Section 1956(h) - Conspiracy to Launder Money

Title 18, United States Code, Section 1956(a)(1)(B)(i) - Money Laundering

**AGENCIES**

Department of Homeland Security, Office of the Inspector General

Immigration and Customs Enforcement

Internal Revenue Service, Criminal Investigation