



U.S. Department of Justice

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## **NEWS RELEASE**

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### **Ten Individuals Charged In Interstate Firearms Trafficking Scheme**

United States Attorney David E. O'Meilia and Ronnie Carter, Special Agent in Charge of the Dallas Division of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF), announced today that a Federal Grand Jury in Tulsa handed down indictments against ten individuals alleging their participation in a firearms trafficking scheme stretching from Okmulgee to Tulsa to Baltimore, Maryland. The scheme involved the purchase of approximately 240 new semi-automatic handguns at Tulsa and Broken Arrow gun dealers and gun shows by prohibited persons, using an elaborate system of "straw purchasers." A "straw purchaser" is an individual with a clean criminal record that purchases a firearm for a prohibited person such as a convicted felon or habitual drug user. Furthermore, it is alleged that the guns, all semi-automatic pistols, purchased between August 2003 and February 2004, were ultimately transported to Baltimore, and sold on the street at inflated prices to prohibited persons.

Dorian Bennett Carr, Jr., age 30, and Alvin Eugene Edwards, age 23, both of Okmulgee, are each charged with Prohibited Person In Possession Of Firearms. Both have previous convictions from Baltimore. Carr's previous conviction is a firearms offense and Edwards' previous conviction is for drugs. They were both allegedly found in possession of 25 of the handguns in a vehicle enroute from Tulsa to Baltimore on February 28, 2004. They were allegedly accompanied in the vehicle by Christopher Dewayne Fields, age 19, also of Okmulgee, who is charged with Conspiracy To Sell Or Dispose Of Firearms To Felons. Fields is alleged to have contributed money to Carr for the purpose of purchasing firearms, which were to be transported to Baltimore and sold for a profit.

The following seven individuals, all residents of Okmulgee, are charged with False Statements During Firearms Purchases. They are accused of going into the local gun stores and gun shows and obtaining the guns by acting as "straw purchasers" in the scheme; Burin Robert McDaniel, age 27; Darien Love Lewis, age 33; Wilbert Lewis Ross, Jr., age 24;

Steven Lawrence Thompson, age 25; Tammy Michelle Cooks, age 34; George Leonard McCurdy, III, age 29, and Makesha Dawn McDaniel, age 22.

All of the guns in this alleged scheme were purchased from legitimate gun dealers. The indictments accuse the defendants of making the multiple gun purchases at a number of gun shops and at gun shows in the Tulsa, Broken Arrow and Oklahoma City areas.

United States Attorney David E. O’Meilia praised “the outstanding work of the local ATF office, its agents and the City of Baltimore, Maryland Police Department, who uncovered the scheme and coordinated their investigations.” O’Meilia emphasized that, “The United States Attorney’s Office will continue to vigorously prosecute federal firearms offenses and this prosecution should be a direct warning to those who knowingly provide guns to prohibited persons.”

A Grand Jury indictment is one method of charging a defendant with alleged violations of federal law which must be proven in a court of law beyond a reasonable doubt to overcome the defendant's presumption of innocence.