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SEVEN SENTENCED IN COCAINE TRAFFICKING PROSECUTION

DEA Dismantles Interstate Cocaine Conspiracy

MONTGOMERY, ALABAMA— Seven members of a sixteen person cocaine distribution conspiracy were sentenced today, announced U.S. Attorney Leura G. Canary. Over the last two days, Senior United States District Judge W. Harold Albritton sentenced Kenneth Jenkins, 48, Fred Jenkins, 50, Michael Jenkins, 51, Draper Carter, 29, Derrick Lamond Butler, 34, Brandon A. Watkins, 23, and Frederico Lockhart, 23, all of Montgomery, Alabama. The remaining nine defendants will be sentenced next month. All defendants were arrested in July 2008 by agents of the Drug Enforcement Administration, specifically the Gulf Coast High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA) Task Force. The defendants were named in a 52-count federal indictment charging a conspiracy to distribute “powder” cocaine and “crack” cocaine, distribution of “crack” cocaine, and use of a communication facility to facilitate distribution of cocaine. All defendants pleaded guilty to the conspiracy, except James R. Russell who was found guilty after a trial in November 2008.

According to their guilty pleas, from January 2008 until May 2008, the defendants and others participated in a conspiracy to distribute 5 kilograms or more of powder and crack cocaine in the Montgomery, Alabama, area. This conspiracy stretched from San Antonio, Texas, to Montgomery, Alabama. According to the evidence, conspirators in San Antonio imported

cocaine from Mexico and then shipped it via tractor trailer to Montgomery where it was sold on the street. For these crimes, Judge Albritton imposed sentences ranging from 135 months (11.25 years) imprisonment to 30 months imprisonment (2.5 years). The terms of imprisonment varied based upon degrees of involvement in the conspiracy.

U.S. Attorney Leura Canary stated: “Despite recent reports of increased drug activity along our borders, federal agents and prosecutors are aggressively combating drug crimes. The dismantling of this large scale drug trafficking organization proves our commitment to the war on drugs. Agents and prosecutors will remain vigilant and use every tool in their arsenal to combat the scourge of illicit drugs. I commend the Gulf Coast High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area Task Force for their expert investigation and the successful prosecution of this case.”

This case was investigated by the United States Drug Enforcement Administration - Gulf Coast High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA) Task Force. The case was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Verne H. Speirs.