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District of Arizona*

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LARGE SCALE COCAINE TRAFFICKER FOUND GUILTY OF DRUG TRAFFICKING AND MONEY LAUNDERING

PHOENIX – William Wallace Keegan, aka Richard Alan King, of Palm Harbor, Florida (and previously of San Diego, California), was found guilty on Wednesday after a 10-day jury trial in federal district court of one count of Conspiracy to Possess With Intent to Distribute Five Kilograms or More of Cocaine, four counts of Possession With Intent To Distribute Five Kilograms or More of Cocaine, and one Count of Conspiracy to Commit Money Laundering.

“The defendant did everything he could to hide his identity and to hide his drug trafficking from the law,” stated Diane J. Humetewa, U.S. Attorney for the District of Arizona. “With this conviction, he can no longer hide and a long time drug dealer is off the streets. This successful conclusion demonstrates the dogged commitment and excellent coordination of federal, state and local law enforcement agencies to see justice served no matter how long it takes.”

The evidence presented at trial showed that between November 2005 and January 2008, Keegan and co-conspirators acquired cocaine in Arizona and transported it, primarily via the United States Postal Service, to New York. Keegan had previously been trafficking marijuana from Arizona and California to New York and elsewhere when he shifted to cocaine in 2005. During the early part of the conspiracy, Keegan, who used the false identity of Richard King, traveled to Arizona and personally took possession of the cocaine from Arizona sources of supply. As the conspiracy progressed, Keegan had co-conspirators mail the cocaine to him at various hotels in Long Island, New York. Keegan was caught by law enforcement through an undercover DEA operation in Hauppauge, New York where he accepted suitcases containing 38 kilograms of sham cocaine. The conspiracy was responsible for well over 150 kilograms of cocaine with a value of more than \$2 million. The money was used in part to promote the illegal drug business, resulting in the money laundering conviction. The evidence showed that Keegan, in an effort to evade capture, had all 10 fingers surgically altered in the 1990s to obliterate his fingerprints above the first joint. A DEA forensic fingerprint analyst was able to match the lower joint fingerprints from the arrest under the name of Richard King in January 2008 with a 1977 arrest, confirming his identity as William Wallace Keegan.

“Justice was served today with the conviction of William Wallace Keegan as this verdict put an end to a nationwide drug trafficking enterprise that spanned over three decades,” said DEA Special Agent in Charge Elizabeth W. Kempshall. “This investigation and prosecution exemplifies the commitment and determination of DEA and our partners in law enforcement to ensure that criminals who peddle in these poisons and wreak havoc in our communities will be never escape from facing the consequences of their criminal activities.”

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Sentencing for Keegan is set before Judge Susan R. Bolton on September 14, 2009. Convictions for Conspiracy to Possess With Intent to Distribute Five Kilograms or More of Cocaine, and Possession With Intent To Distribute Five Kilograms or More of Cocaine, each carries a mandatory minimum sentence of 10 years, to a maximum penalty of life, in prison, up to a \$4,000,000 fine or both. A conviction for Conspiracy to Commit Money Laundering provides for a maximum sentence of 20 years in prison, up to a \$500,000 fine, or both. In determining an actual sentence, Judge Bolton will consult the U.S. Sentencing Guidelines, which provide appropriate sentencing ranges. The judge, however, is not bound by those guidelines in determining a sentence.

The investigation in this case was conducted by the Drug Enforcement Administration in Phoenix, Long Island, New York, the Arizona Department of Public Safety and the Chandler Police Department. The prosecution is being handled by James B. Morse Jr. and Brian G. Larson, Assistant U.S. Attorneys, District of Arizona, Phoenix.

CASE NUMBER: CR-08-0045-PHX-SRB
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