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**FORMER POLICE CHIEF OF VIDALIA, LOUISIANA SENTENCED
FOR MAKING FALSE STATEMENTS TO FEDERAL AGENTS**

False Statements Made in Connection with Firearms Investigation

SHREVEPORT, La. - Ronnie G. "Tapper" Hendricks, the former Chief of Police of Vidalia, Louisiana, was sentenced today to six months in prison for making false statements to federal law enforcement agents in the course of an investigation into the use and disposition of certain firearms located at the Vidalia Police Department, United States Attorney Stephanie A. Finley announced. Hendricks was also fined \$3,000 and ordered to perform 1,000 hours of community service. In addition, Hendricks was sentenced to two years of supervised release upon completion of his prison term. The sentence was handed down by United States District Judge Dee Drell in Alexandria.

Hendricks pleaded guilty on November 18, 2010, to knowingly and willfully making three material false statements during an interview with FBI and ATF agents who were investigating possible violations of federal firearms laws. Hendricks denied transferring a fully automatic machine gun owned by the Vidalia Police Department to the custody of an individual or individuals at the Rifle Point Hunting Club in Ferriday, La., when in truth and in fact the defendant transferred the weapons for the use of the members and guests of the club. Hendricks falsely claimed that one of

the individuals to whom custody of the machine gun was transferred was a Reserve Police Officer of the Vidalia Police Department whom he had sworn in at an unofficial ceremony, when in truth and in fact there was no such ceremony, and the individual was not a Reserve Police Officer. Hendricks also falsely claimed that the individual had signed an oath of office form related to the alleged swearing in prior to receiving the machine gun, when in truth and in fact the individual had never signed such an oath of office form.

As part of his plea agreement with the government, Hendricks was required to resign as Chief of Police at the time of the guilty plea. This case was investigated jointly by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, and was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorneys Nicole O. Snyder and William J. Flanagan.