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**FORMER LEESVILLE POLICE CHIEF SENTENCED
TO PRISON FOR POSSESSION OF A FIREARM
WITH OBLITERATED SERIAL NUMBER**

LAFAYETTE, La.: United States Attorney Stephanie A. Finley announced today that Bobby D. Hickman, 51, of Leesville, La., was sentenced to 46 months in prison, followed by three years supervised release for unlawful possession of a firearm with an obliterated serial number. U.S. District Judge Richard D. Haik also ordered Hickman to make restitution for a sawed-off shotgun found in his residence that had been stolen (while in factory condition) from a civilian contractor working at Fort Polk.

Documents previously filed with the court established that Hickman was terminated as Chief of the Leesville Police Department on January 28, 2011, for failure to cooperate in an internal investigation by the City of Leesville. Thereafter, on March 9, 2011, the Acting Chief of the Leesville Police Department applied for and obtained a state search warrant for Hickman's residence to look for and recover departmental equipment issued to Hickman and not returned prior to his termination. When the search warrant was executed by deputies of the Vernon Parish Sheriff's Office, Hickman retrieved a Charter Arms revolver from behind his bedroom television and stated that the firearm belonged to the City of Leesville. Hickman pointed out that the serial number had been obliterated. Federal law prohibits the possession of firearms on which the manufacturer's or importer's serial numbers have been altered or obliterated. At Hickman's guilty plea in June of 2012, he agreed to the forfeiture of three weapons, including a sawed-off shotgun.

U.S. Attorney Finley stated, "The law prohibits anyone from possessing a firearm that has an obliterated (removed) serial number. This statute requires that firearms have to possess a manufacturer's or importer's serial number. The purpose is to assist law enforcement in combating crime and to keep firearms out of the hands of those who illegally possess them. Chief Hickman knew that the possession of this weapon was illegal, but he chose to ignore the law. This sentence should send a message that no one is above the law. Our goal is to keep our communities safe. We will continue to partner with our state and local law enforcement agencies to ensure compliance with these laws."

This case was investigated by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, the Leesville Police Department, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Louisiana State Police, and the Vernon Parish Sheriff's Office. The case was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Brett L. Grayson.

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