

NEWS

United States Department of Justice
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Christopher J. Christie, U.S. Attorney

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Customs and Border Patrol Officer Indicted
On Child Pornography Charges

(More)

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NEWARK – A Customs and Border Patrol Officer with the Department of Homeland Security was indicted today on federal charges for receiving and possessing child pornography, U.S. Attorney Christopher J. Christie announced.

Vincent J. Gambale, 43, of Deptford, is charged in a two-count federal Indictment with one count of knowingly receiving at least three images of child pornography and one count of knowingly possessing at least three images of child pornography. Gambale was previously charged in a criminal complaint, signed on July 31, 2006, with possession of child pornography and was released following an initial appearance on a \$50,000 bond. The defendant will be arraigned on the Indictment in the coming weeks.

Gambale has been suspended indefinitely without pay from his position as a Customs and Border Patrol Officer, which he has held since 1999.

The Indictment is the result of an international investigation known as Operation Emissary, which was initiated by the New Jersey office of Immigration and Customs Enforcement in conjunction with the United States Attorney's Office for the District of New Jersey. The investigation focused on a commercial Internet website offering access to videos and images of hard-core child pornography. The website alerted would-be subscribers that subscribing to the website was illegal, and warned them to be discreet about their purchase. To date, more than 185 individuals have been arrested nationwide as the result of Operation Emissary, including approximately one dozen of whom have been previously convicted of sex offenses against minors. In addition, more than two dozen defendants arrested through the investigation have been identified as being involved in the molestation of children.

Count One of the Indictment, which charges knowingly receiving at least three images of child pornography, carries a maximum statutory penalty of 20 years in prison and a \$250,000 fine. Count Two charges possession of at least three images of child pornography, which carries a maximum statutory penalty of 10 years in prison and a \$250,000 fine.

Despite indictment, all defendants are presumed innocent unless proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt.

Christie credited Special Agents of the Department of Homeland Security, Immigration and Customs Enforcement, under the direction of Kyle Hutchins, in Newark, for the investigation leading to the Indictment.

The government is represented by Assistant United States Attorney Paul B. Matey of the Public Protection Unit of the U.S. Attorney's Office Criminal Division in Newark.

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Defense Attorney: Paul M. Uhlik, Esq.