

NEWS

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 11, 2007

Atlantic City Man Convicted on Crack Cocaine
Distribution Charges

(More)

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CAMDEN – An Atlantic City man was convicted by a federal jury today for his participation in a conspiracy to distribute crack cocaine, U.S. Attorney Christopher J. Christie announced.

After one hour of deliberations, which began today, the jury convicted Edwin Patillo, 44, of all four counts contained in a Second Superseding Indictment, which was returned by a grand jury on Jan. 9, 2007. Patillo was convicted of one count each of conspiracy to distribute and possess with intent to distribute 5 grams or more of crack cocaine and distribution and possession with intent to distribute 5 grams or more of crack cocaine. Patillo was also convicted of two counts of distribution and possessing with intent to distribute a quantity of crack cocaine. U.S. District Judge Robert B. Kugler, who presided over the 5-day trial, continued the defendants' detention without bail pending sentencing, which is scheduled for Aug. 15.

The case was tried by Assistant U.S. Attorneys Allen Harberg, Jr., and Jacqueline Carle.

In convicting the defendant, the jury found that from July 2003 until January 2004 Patillo conspired with others to distribute crack cocaine in Atlantic County. The jury viewed evidence and heard testimony that on at least three occasions in 2003, July 24, July 30 and Sept. 25, Patillo sold crack cocaine to co-conspirators and undercover law enforcement officers in Atlantic City.

Count One, charging conspiracy to distribute and possess with intent to distribute 5 grams or more of crack cocaine, carries a maximum statutory sentence of 40 years in prison and a fine of up to \$2 million. Count Two which charges distribution and possession with intent to distribute 5 grams or more of crack cocaine carries a maximum penalty of 40 years in prison and a fine of up to \$2 million. Counts Three and Four, charging distribution and possess with intent to distribute a quantity of crack cocaine, each carry a maximum penalty of 5 years in prison and a fine of up to \$250,000.

In determining an actual sentence, Judge Kugler will consult the advisory U.S. Sentencing Guidelines, which provide appropriate sentencing ranges that take into account the severity and characteristics of the offense, the defendant's criminal history, if any, and other factors. The judge, however, is not bound by those guidelines in determining a sentence.

Parole has been abolished in the federal system. Defendants who are given custodial terms must serve nearly all that time.

Christie credited Special Agents of the DEA Atlantic City Resident Agency, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge Gerard P. McAleer, in Newark, and Police Officers with the Atlantic City Police Department, under the direction of Chief John J. Mooney, for investigation of the case.

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Defense Attorney: Harold B. Shapiro, Esq., Vineland