



PRESS NOTICE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**KINGSTREE MAN WHO FIRED INTO DEPUTY'S HOME
CONVICTED ON FEDERAL FIREARM AND DRUG CHARGES**

COLUMBIA, South Carolina ---- United States Attorney Walter Wilkins stated today that after a four-day trial, a federal jury in Florence convicted George Edward Mitchum, age 27, of Kingstree, South Carolina, on drug conspiracy and firearms charges. Evidence in the case established that Mitchum was a high-level drug dealer who retaliated against law enforcement after his October 11, 2008, drug arrest by firing eight high-powered rifle rounds into the home of Williamsburg County Sergeant Vincent Staggers. At 4:00 a.m. on October 14, 2008, bullets ripped through the home of the Staggers family, which bore a pink ribbon on the front door, welcoming the arrival of their two day-old baby girl. Some of the bullets lodged in the bedroom walls of Staggers' nine year-old son. Staggers, who previously served in Iraq, had just

returned from a six-month tour of duty with the National Guard. Two days prior to the shooting, Stagers served a drug trafficking warrant on Mitchum at the jail, which stemmed from an early morning arrest of Mitchum, who had cocaine in his truck and resisted arrest.

During the trial, Assistant United States Attorney Rose Mary Parham called ten law enforcement officers, 18 convicted drug dealers, and three of Mitchum's girlfriends to testify. The testimony ranged from descriptions of Mitchum's drug dealings to threats of violence and retaliation by Mitchum. One of Mitchum's girlfriends testified that Mitchum placed a gun to her head and threatened to kill her if she left him.

Parham stated, "We are pleased with the jury's verdict. This is yet another example of state and federal law enforcement working together to ensure that violent drug dealers are taken off of the streets."

Based upon the jury's verdict, Mitchum faces a mandatory minimum of sentence of 25 years imprisonment with a maximum term of life. Mitchum will be sentenced by United States District Judge Terry L. Wooten after a presentence investigation report is completed in his case.

The case agents were Special Agent Vince Flamini with the Federal Bureau of Investigation and Investigator Shannon Coker of the Williamsburg County Sheriff's Office. The case was also investigated by the South Carolina Law Enforcement Division and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives.