



U.S. Department of Justice

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**PRESS RELEASE
*JURY CONVICTS SIX TONGAN CRIP
GANG MEMBERS OF VIOLENT CRIMES;
THREE CONVICTED OF RICO CONSPIRACY***

SALT LAKE CITY – A jury sitting in federal court in Salt Lake City returned guilty verdicts Thursday night finding six members of the Tongan Crip Gang (TCG) in Utah guilty of acts of violence, including robberies, assaults, and use of firearms during crimes of violence, committed in support of an ongoing criminal organization operating in Utah communities.

TCG members convicted in the case include Eric Kamahele, age 24, of Cottonwood Heights; Mataika Tuai, age 22, Salt Lake City; David Kamoto, age 24, of Salt Lake City; Daniel Maumau, age 25, of Salt Lake City; Kepa Maumau, age 24, of Salt Lake City; and Sitamipa Toki, age 28, of Salt Lake City.

The jury acquitted David Walsh, age 32. Walsh will be returned to California where he is serving a prison sentence. U.S. District Judge Tena Campbell granted a judgment of acquittal last week for an eighth defendant, Charles Moa, age 32, of West Jordan, at the conclusion of the prosecution's case.

Kamahele, Tuai, Kamoto, Daniel and Kepa Maumau, and Toki were charged in an indictment returned in May 2010 alleging the gang conspired to conduct the affairs of the gang through a pattern of racketeering activity from about 2002 through the date of the indictment. Evidence presented at trial showed the defendants engaged in acts of violent crime in furtherance of common purposes, which included promoting and enhancing the prestige, reputation and position of the gang with respect to rival criminal organizations; preserving and protecting the power and territory of the gang through the

use of intimidation, threats and acts of violence; keeping victims and rivals in fear of the gang's members and associates; and enriching members and associates of the gang through criminal activity.

The jury found Kamahele, Kepa Maumau, and Tuai guilty of conspiring to conduct the affairs of the gang through a pattern of racketeering conspiracy finding that they committed five racketeering acts in support of the conspiracy. The acts included a Jan. 18, 2008, robbery of a Republic Parking booth attendant at the Hilton Hotel in Salt Lake City; an Aug. 12, 2008, robbery of a Gen X Clothing store in South Ogden; an Aug. 19, 2008, robbery of El Pollo Loco, a restaurant in Tempe, Arizona; an Aug. 19, 2008, robbery of a Jack in the Box restaurant in Tempe; and a Sept. 25, 2008, attempted robbery of a Walmart Store in Riverton.

The prosecution of the Tongan Crip Gang is the fourth time federal prosecutors and law enforcement agencies in Utah have successfully used RICO laws to target gang organizations. Previous prosecutions included members of the King Mafia Disciples, Tiny Oriental Posse, and Soldiers of the Aryan Culture.

“While previous state and federal prosecutions have held some individual members of TCG accountable for their crimes, many gang members have continued in an escalating and alarming pattern of violence,” U.S. Attorney David B. Barlow said. “It was time to make a federal case out of this serious conduct. The prosecution conducted over the last several weeks targeted the gang as a criminal organization and documented the criminal activity TCG members were perpetrating in Utah communities. While we likely haven't heard the last of TCG, we are confident these convictions will have a significant impact on this gang.”

“The FBI's objective is to make the streets of Salt Lake City safer and this verdict is an important step in that ongoing commitment to the community. With the assistance of our law enforcement partners, we proved the defendants conspired as gang members to commit violent crimes and terrorize innocent people. I am confident this case is an example of what lies ahead for gang members in Utah; stiff criminal penalties and the prospect of years in prison,” FBI Special Agent in Charge David L. Johnson said following the verdict.

“The Salt Lake County District Attorney's office is proud to be a collaborative partner in this joint prosecution. This prosecution represents the very best of how local and federal agencies can work together to address violent crime in our communities and should serve as a deterrent to any other offenders that we will share resources and efforts to investigate, prosecute and punish anyone who would offend the safety and well being of our citizens,” Salt Lake County District Attorney Sim Gill said.

“Violent gang crime is a priority for the Salt Lake County District Attorney's office and it is essential to have this federal partnership that conveys a single message that violent gang behavior will be met swiftly and will not be tolerated. I want to especially thank Carlie Christensen for her ongoing support and partnership with the Salt

Lake County District Attorney's office in our joint efforts to keep our community safe and offenders accountable and all the fine work of law enforcement and the prosecution team," Gill said.

"The successful prosecution of TCG sends a strong message that our community will not tolerate those who perpetrate, participate or encourage violence and disorder in our neighborhoods," Salt Lake City Police Chief Chris Burbank said.

West Valley Police Chief Thayle "Buzz" Nielsen said the successful prosecution of the TCG gang will make a significant dent in criminal activity in West Valley City. "The guilty verdicts reached in this case are the result of significant cooperation between several agencies including the Valley Police Alliance, state and federal law enforcement partners, and the prosecution team that put the case together. Cases as significant as this one require the cooperation of many people and that is exactly what we had in this case," Nielsen said.

In addition to the racketeering conspiracy count, the jury convicted Kamahale of all counts charged in the indictment, including one count of assault with a dangerous weapon in aid of racketeering; three counts of using or carrying a firearm during a crime of violence; and one count of robbery. Kamahale faces a minimum mandatory sentence of 32 years in prison on the firearms charges.

Tuai, convicted in the conspiracy count, was also convicted of a robbery and discharging a firearm during a crime of violence. Tuai faces a 10-year minimum mandatory sentence for the firearms conviction.

David Kamoto was convicted of one count of robbery. He was found not guilty of maiming in aid of racketeering, assault with a dangerous weapon in aid of racketeering; conspiracy to commit assault resulting in serious bodily injury in aid of racketeering; and two firearms charges.

Kepa Maumau, convicted in the RICO conspiracy count, was found guilty on all counts charged including a robbery, three counts of assault with a dangerous weapon in aid of racketeering; and three counts of using or carrying a firearm during a violent crime. He faces a 57-year mandatory minimum sentence for the firearms convictions.

Daniel Maumau was found guilty of assault with a dangerous weapon and using or carrying a firearm during a crime of violence. He was acquitted of conspiracy to commit assault resulting in serious bodily injury and a second firearms count. He faces a 10-year mandatory minimum sentence for the firearm charge.

Toki was convicted of assault with a dangerous weapon and using or carrying a firearm in connection with a crime of violence. He was acquitted of conspiracy to commit assault resulting in serious bodily injury and a second firearms count. Toki faces a 10-year mandatory minimum sentence for the firearms conviction.

The potential maximum penalty for conspiracy to conduct the affairs of an enterprise through a pattern of racketeering activity (RICO conspiracy) is up to 20 years in federal prison. The potential penalty for assault with a dangerous weapon in aid of racketeering (Violent Crimes in Aid of Racketeering – VICAR) is up to 20 years. Brandishing or discharging firearms during a crime of violence have potential penalties of life in prison. There is a seven-year mandatory minimum sentence for the first conviction of brandishing a firearm. Discharging a firearm has a mandatory minimum of 10 years. Subsequent counts of conviction carry 25-year mandatory minimum sentences. (Penalties for firearms violations run consecutive to any other sentence imposed in a case.) Robberies, charged as violations of the federal Hobbs Act, carry potential 10 year penalties. These are the maximum penalties allowed under law for the convictions. Judge Campbell will determine the ultimate sentence in each case taking into consideration federal sentencing guideline calculations and other statutory sentencing factors.

Four other defendants in the case, Siale Angilau, age 23, of Salt Lake City; Tevita Tolutau, age 22, of Salt Lake City; Viliami Loumoli, age 23, Salt Lake City; and John Tuakalau, age 23, of Magna, are scheduled to go to trial Feb. 6, 2012. Five defendants in the case have reached plea agreements with federal prosecutors. They include Vainga Kinikini, age 37, of Salt Lake City; Latutaofieikii Fakosiula, age 23, of West Jordan; Peter Tuiaki, age 23, of Salt Lake City; George Pupunu, age 23, of Salt Lake City; and Penisimani Fangupo, age 25, of Salt Lake City.

Federal charges were filed following an investigation by the FBI, the U.S. Marshals Service, the Salt Lake City Police Department, the West Valley City Police Department, the Salt Lake County Sheriff's Office, the Unified Police Department, the Salt Lake Area Metro Gang Unit, members of the Valley Police Alliance, the Utah Department of Corrections, and the Tempe, Arizona, Police Department. Several other law enforcement agencies also contributed to the investigation of overt acts included in the racketeering conspiracy count of the indictment.

The case was prosecuted by attorneys in the U.S. Attorney's Office and a Special Assistant U.S. Attorney from the Salt Lake District Attorney's Office.

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