



# Department of Justice

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## **MASSACHUSETTS MAN INDICTED AS PART OF NATIONWIDE INVESTIGATION OF INTERNET CHILD PORNOGRAPHY TRADE**

WASHINGTON – A West Townsend, Mass., man has been indicted by a federal grand jury on charges of receipt and possession of child pornography, Assistant Attorney General Alice S. Fisher of the Criminal Division, U.S. Attorney Michael J. Sullivan for the District of Massachusetts, and Special Agent in Charge Bruce M. Foucart of the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement's (ICE) Office of Investigations in Boston.

Robert Ballou, 45, is charged with two counts of receipt of child pornography and one count of possession of child pornography. The indictment was returned on October 10, 2007, and unsealed today upon Ballou's arrest.

Today's arrest stems from a nationwide ICE investigation known as Operation Emissary, which focused on a commercial Web site offering access to videos and images of hardcore pornography. The Web site alerted would-be subscribers that subscribing to the Web site was illegal and warned them to be discreet about their purchases. Investigators targeted individuals who subscribed to the Web site over a period of approximately two to three months at the end of 2005 and 2006. As part of the resulting nationwide sweep, more than 208 arrests have been made since June 2007.

Ballou faces a mandatory minimum of five years and a maximum of 20 years in prison for receipt of child pornography. The maximum for possession of child pornography is 10 years in prison.

This case is being brought as part of Project Safe Childhood, created in February 2006 as a nationwide initiative designed to protect children from online exploitation and abuse. Led by the U.S. Attorneys' Offices, Project Safe Childhood marshals federal, state and local resources to better locate, apprehend, and prosecute individuals who exploit children via the Internet, as well as to identify and rescue victims. For more information about Project Safe Childhood, please visit: [www.projectsafechildhood.gov](http://www.projectsafechildhood.gov).

This case was investigated by ICE's New England Field Office and is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Dana Gershengorn of the District of Massachusetts and Trial Attorneys Darcy Katzin and Bonnie Kane of the Criminal Division's Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section.

The details contained in the indictment are allegations. The defendant is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt in a court of law.

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