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WARREN COUNTY, VIRGINIA, MAN PLEADS GUILTY TO CHARGES RELATED TO CHILD PORNOGRAPHY PRODUCTION RING

WASHINGTON – Michael Anderson, 34, of Front Royal, Va., pleaded guilty today in Roanoke, Va., to numerous offenses concerning his involvement in a multi-state crime ring whose members produced, distributed and received child pornography over the Internet, Acting Assistant Attorney General Matthew Friedrich of the Criminal Division and Acting U.S. Attorney Julia C. Dudley for the Western District of Virginia announced.

Anderson's trial was scheduled to begin on June 16, 2008. He was charged in a multiple-count indictment on March 26, 2008, for conspiring with unnamed members of the crime ring between 2005 and 2007 to use instant messaging, video messaging, text messaging and video chat software to communicate and share sexual interests in children.

Anderson has now pleaded guilty to one count of conspiracy to produce child pornography. He admitted that, as part of the conspiracy, he and the other ring members produced child pornography showing themselves engaged in illegal sexual activity with minors. He further admitted that he and his co-conspirators would then transmit real-time images of their crimes to one another using webcam broadcasts.

In addition to pleading guilty to the conspiracy charge, Anderson also pleaded guilty to one count of producing child pornography, one count of receiving child pornography, one count of aiding and abetting the transportation of child pornography, and one count of aiding and abetting the receipt of child pornography. He also pleaded guilty to a count which sought the forfeiture of property used in these crimes.

Anderson faces a possible life sentence under federal law. A sentencing date has not been set.

The case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Nancy Healey and Trial Attorney James Silver of the Criminal Division's Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section (CEOS). The investigation is being conducted by the FBI, the Warren County Sheriff's Office, and CEOS's High Tech Investigative Unit.

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