



# Department of Justice

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## **JURY FINDS NEWARK MAN GUILTY** **IN EAST COAST GUN TRAFFICKING OPERATION**

### *Scheme Exported Guns from Atlanta to New Jersey*

Atlanta, GA—CLOVIS REEVES, 34, of Newark, New Jersey, was found guilty today by a federal jury on charges of conspiracy to illegally purchase firearms, aiding and abetting the falsification of firearms records, and being a felon in possession of firearms. The trial began Monday and lasted four days.

United States Attorney David E. Nahmias said of today's verdict, "The evidence in this case proved that the defendants conspired to illegally buy guns in Georgia and put them on the streets, where they might be used in violent crimes. In this case the guns went to New Jersey, but violence and death are found everywhere that illegal gun trafficking occurs. Now those responsible will go to federal prison."

"Few crimes are more egregious than placing guns in the hands of convicted felons, drug dealers and gang members and the callous act of doing so for a simple profit is particularly disturbing," said Jeff Pearce, Acting Special Agent in Charge of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives' Atlanta Field Division. "The criminals in this case were responsible for delivering the 'tools of the trade' to predators on the streets of New Jersey. Removing arms traffickers from our society is and always will be a major focus in ATF's efforts to combat violent crime. This case is another textbook example of the strengths of interagency cooperation and hard work on the part of the agents and officers involved."

REEVES was indicted along with seven co-conspirators on August 29, 2007. RICHARD WASHINGTON, 29, of Lawrenceville, Georgia; ANTONIO SUTTON, 28, of Stone Mountain, Georgia; KWAME WALKER, 31, of Lawrenceville, Georgia; TAISHA KENYETTA CLAYTON, 30, of Lawrenceville, Georgia; SAKINAH TOMS, 23, of Atlanta, Georgia; CRAIG JEROME BIRDSONG, 27, of Lawrenceville, Georgia; and LATOVIA DANYELL CUNNINGHAM, 23, of Norcross, Georgia previously pleaded guilty to multiple counts relating to the gun buying scheme, often through so-called "straw purchases." They all testified at REEVES' trial.

57 weapons were illegally purchased at the direction of REEVES. Thirteen of those firearms, to date, have been recovered from crime scenes in New Jersey. At least one of those weapons has been linked to a homicide in New Jersey. Fourteen officers from New Jersey law enforcement departments also testified at the trial.

According to Nahmias and evidence at trial: From on or about February 18, 2005, through on or about October 21, 2005, the defendants conspired to give false information to be entered into the records required by law to be kept by federal firearms dealers. The object of the conspiracy was to purchase firearms in the State of Georgia for convicted felons, specifically REEVES and WASHINGTON, thereby concealing the true identity of the actual purchasers, and to resell the firearms for a profit. Six of the defendants, SUTTON, CLAYTON, WALKER, TOMS, BIRDSONG, and CUNNINGHAM were Georgia residents and were recruited by REEVES to serve as “straw purchasers,” that is, to purchase firearms and to state that they were the actual purchaser, when in fact REEVES was the actual purchaser and intended recipient of the firearms.

WASHINGTON and WALKER transported some of the firearms to REEVES in New Jersey, where the guns were then sold on the street to others.

Sentencing for REEVES is set for July 24, 2008, at 4 p.m. before United States District Judge Clarence Cooper.

This case is being investigated by Special Agents of ATF’s Atlanta and Newark Field Divisions as well as detectives of the Newark Police Department.

Assistant United States Attorneys Zahra S. Karinshak and Katherine M. Hoffer are prosecuting the case.

For further information please contact David E. Nahmias (pronounced NAH-me-us), United States Attorney, or Charysse Alexander, Executive Assistant United States Attorney, through Patrick Crosby, Public Affairs Officer, U.S. Attorney's Office, at (404) 581-6016. The Internet address for the HomePage for the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Northern District of Georgia is <http://www.usdoj.gov/usao/gan/>.