



# Department of Justice

United States Attorney Sally Quillian Yates  
Northern District of Georgia

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## **FORMER POLICE OFFICER PLEADS GUILTY TO LYING TO FBI AGENT**

ROME, GA - JUSTIN MATTHEW DAWSON, 32, of Archer, Florida, a former police officer in North Georgia, pleaded guilty today in federal district court to making false statements to an FBI agent during a federal investigation.

United States Attorney Sally Quillian Yates said, "We expect officers of the law to tell the truth. This particular defendant also had an unregistered sawed-off rifle, which is the type of weapon that is not only not used in law enforcement, but is often used in criminal activity."

According to United States Attorney Yates, the charges and other information presented in court: In early 2009, DAWSON who was a police officer with the City of Acworth Police Department at the time, owned a semi-automatic rifle with a twelve inch barrel. Because the rifle with the sawed off barrel was not registered in the National Firearms Registration and Transfer Record, it was illegal for DAWSON to possess or transfer the rifle, if it was fully assembled. During the time that DAWSON owned the rifle, he regularly possessed it while it was fully assembled and he regularly fired the rifle.

On or about April 1, 2009, DAWSON sold the fully assembled rifle with the twelve inch barrel to another individual. On April 7, 2009, the person to whom DAWSON sold the rifle sold it to an FBI informant. After the transaction that individual was arrested by special agents with the FBI and GBI. The individual told the agents that he purchased the rifle fully assembled from DAWSON.

On April 13, 2009, an FBI agent and a GBI agent interviewed DAWSON. During the interview, DAWSON falsely stated that he sold the upper portion of the rifle with the twelve inch barrel to the other individual. DAWSON also falsely stated that the other individual told him that he already had a lower portion that would attach to the upper part, so he did not need to purchase the weapon fully assembled. DAWSON also falsely stated that about a week later the other individual asked him to sell him the lower portion of the rifle which DAWSON did. DAWSON falsely denied that he sold the fully assembled rifle to the other individual. DAWSON also falsely denied that he ever possessed the rifle

while it was fully assembled or that he ever fired it.

DAWSON was charged in a Criminal Information in March 30, 2010, on one count of making false statements to a federal law enforcement officer. Also on March 30, 2010, DAWSON pleaded guilty to that charge. He could receive a maximum sentence of up to five years in prison and a fine of up to \$250,000. In addition, because DAWSON has now been convicted of a felony offense, he will lose his state certification as a police officer. He has since left the Acworth Police Department.

In determining the actual sentence, the Court will consider the United States Sentencing Guidelines, which are not binding but provide appropriate sentencing ranges for most offenders.

Sentencing is scheduled for Thursday June 10, 2010, at 10:00, before United States District Judge Robert L. Vining, Jr.

This case was investigated by Special Agents with the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, the Georgia Bureau of Investigation and police officers with the Polk County Police Department.

Assistant United States Attorney William L. McKinnon, Jr. is prosecuting the case.

For further information please contact Sally Q. Yates, United States Attorney, or Charlyse L. 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 [www.justice.gov/usao/gan](http://www.justice.gov/usao/gan).