

NEWS

United States Department of Justice
U.S. Attorney, District of New Jersey
401 Market Street, Fourth Floor
Camden, New Jersey 08101



Christopher J. Christie, U.S. Attorney

More Information? Contact the Assistant U.S. Attorney or other contact listed below to see if more information is available.

News on the Internet: News Releases, related documents and advisories are posted short-term at our website, along with links to our archived releases at the Department of Justice in Washington, D.C. **Go to:** <http://www.usdoj.gov/usao/nj/press/>

Assistant U.S. Attorney
MATTHEW SKAHILL
856-968-4929

pere1017.rel
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Oct. 17, 2008

Vineland Man Sentenced in Scheme to Get for Guns

(More)

Greg Reinert, PAO
Public Affairs Office

856-757-5233
973-645-2888

Breaking News (NJ) <http://www.usdoj.gov/usao/nj/press/>

CAMDEN – A Vineland man was sentenced to the statutory maximum prison sentence of 60 months today for his scheme to trade cocaine for firearms while he was under indictment by the State of New Jersey, U.S. Attorney Christopher J. Christie announced.

U.S. District Judge Renée Marie Bumb also ordered Edward Perez, 30, to serve the federal prison term consecutive to a state prison term he is serving, as a result of a burglary conviction, arising out of a home invasion. Judge Bumb also ordered Perez to pay a \$2,000 fine and to serve three years of supervised release upon the completion of his prison term.

On Feb. 7, 2008, Perez made his first appearance in federal court and was arraigned on a two-count federal Indictment before Judge Bumb. The Indictment charged one count each of conspiracy to receive firearms while under felony indictment in a court in the State of New Jersey and conspiracy to distribute cocaine.

On July 1, 2008, Perez pleaded guilty before Judge Bumb to the charge contained in Count One; Count Two was dismissed at sentencing.

The Indictment, which was returned by a grand jury on Jan. 29, 2008, describes a scheme in which Perez, Jorge Maldonado, 33, and Alfred S. Austin, 36, both of Vineland, conspired to provide three ounces of cocaine to an individual, who unbeknownst to them was cooperating with Special Agents of the ATF, in exchange for 10 firearms. During the time period covered in the Indictment, Jan. 3, 2007 to Feb. 23, 2007, Perez and Maldonado were both under felony indictment on unrelated charges in the State of New Jersey.

At his plea hearing, Perez admitted that he conspired with Maldonado and Austin to receive firearms, while under indictment. The investigation revealed that on Feb. 15, Perez and Maldonado agreed to provide a confidential source of information (“CI”) with three ounces of cocaine in exchange for 10 guns. On Feb. 23, Perez provided approximately 83 grams of cocaine to Maldonado and Austin for them to give to the CI. Later that day, Maldonado and Austin gave the cocaine to the CI and an undercover ATF agent in exchange for guns which were displayed to them. Maldonado and Austin were arrested on the spot.

Maldonado pleaded guilty before Judge Bumb on May 9, 2007, to one count each of conspiracy to distribute cocaine and receiving firearms while under indictment. Maldonado is pending sentencing. Austin pleaded guilty before Judge Bumb on July 13, 2007, to one count of conspiracy to distribute cocaine and is also pending sentencing.

In determining an actual sentence, the Judge Bumb consulted the advisory U.S. Sentencing Guidelines, which provide appropriate sentencing ranges that take into account the severity and characteristics of the offense, the defendant's criminal history, if any, and other factors. The judge, however, is not bound by those guidelines in determining a sentence.

Parole has been abolished in the federal system. Defendants who are given custodial terms must serve nearly all that time.

Christie credited Special Agents of the ATF's Camden Satellite Office, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge Mark Potter in Philadelphia, and the Vineland Police Department, under the direction of Chief Timothy Codispoti, with the investigation leading to the Indictment.

The government is represented by Assistant U.S. Attorney Matthew Skahill of the Criminal Division in Camden.

– end –

Defense Attorney: Ralph Jacobs, Esq. Haddonfield