



***United States Attorney  
Southern District of New York***

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**CELL PHONE ERROR MESSAGE LEADS TO ARREST  
FOR CHILD PORNOGRAPHY**

LEV L. DASSIN, the Acting United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, and JOSEPH M. DEMAREST, JR., the Assistant Director-in-Charge of the New York Field Office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation ("FBI") announced that ROBERT SCHARFF was arrested today and presented before United States Magistrate Judge FRANK MAAS in Manhattan federal court on a Complaint alleging that SCHARFF produced, received and possessed images of child pornography on his cellular telephone memory card and thumb drive. SCHARFF was ordered detained pending a hearing scheduled for March 5, 2009. As alleged in the Complaint:

On approximately January 21, 2009, ROBERT SCHARFF dropped off a cell phone for servicing at a Sprint PCS Store in Manhattan with the indication that "the internet [wasn't] working keeps getting error message." A service technician later disassembled the cell phone and removed the battery and memory card. When it came time to reassemble the cell phone, the technician, in order to make sure he was reinserting the correct memory card and not another card from his work area, inserted the card into a computer at his workstation. After seeing images that appeared to be child pornography, law enforcement was notified. When SCHARFF returned later that day for the cellphone he was told that it had been "sent out." A search conducted at SCHARFF's apartment two days later revealed additional images of apparent child pornography.

The Complaint charges SCHARFF with one count of enticing a minor to engage in sexually explicit conduct in interstate commerce; one count of receiving child pornography transported in interstate commerce; and one count of possessing child pornography transported by interstate commerce. If

convicted, SCHARFF, 45, of Brooklyn, New York, faces a minimum sentence of 15 years' imprisonment and a maximum sentence of 30 years' imprisonment for production of child pornography; a minimum sentence of 5 years' imprisonment and a maximum sentence of 20 years' imprisonment for receiving child pornography; and a maximum of 10 years' imprisonment for possessing child pornography.

Mr. DASSIN praised the work of the FBI in connection with this investigation.

Assistant United States Attorney JESSICA ORTIZ is in charge of the prosecution.

The charges contained in the Complaint are merely allegations and the defendant is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty.

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