



**U.S. Department of Justice
U.S. Attorney's Office
Western District of Texas**

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February 15, 2012

GULF CARTEL OPERATIVE SENTENCED TO 27 YEARS IN FEDERAL PRISON

United States Attorney Robert Pitman announced that in Del Rio this afternoon, 34-year-old Eladio Pena of Roma, Texas, was sentenced to 27 years in federal prison for his role in a Gulf Cartel drug smuggling operation.

In addition, United States District Judge Alia Moses ordered that Pena pay a \$5,000 fine and be placed under supervised release for a period of five years after completing his prison term.

On March 15, 2011, Pena pleaded guilty to one count of conspiracy to possess cocaine with intent to distribute. By pleading guilty, Pena admitted that he played a key role in a Gulf Cartel drug trafficking operation that imported and distributed over 10,000 kilograms of cocaine into the United States and exported over 60 million dollars of drug proceeds back into Mexico between 2006 and 2008. According to court documents and testimony, the organization used boats to smuggle cocaine from Mexico across Lake Amistad and stored the drugs in a warehouse in Del Rio. The drugs were transported in secret compartment inside the flatbed trailers of 18-wheeler trucks and taken to Houston, Atlanta, Chicago, and North Carolina. Pena admitted to creating secret compartments inside the boats and the flatbed trailers and to organizing the loading of the cocaine inside flatbed trailers in Del Rio.

This investigation was conducted by the Drug Enforcement Administration together with the Texas Department of Public Safety in Del Rio. The case was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorneys Marton Gyires and Michael Galdo.

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