



**U.S. Department of Justice**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Grand Rapids, Michigan – April 6, 2007** – United States Attorney Brian K. Delaney and Cass County Prosecuting Attorney Victor Fitz announced the guilty plea of Paul Edward Craig, 49, of Calvin Township, Cass County, Michigan, pursuant to the terms of a written plea agreement. Craig appeared with his counsel this afternoon before the Honorable Ellen S. Carmody, United States Magistrate Judge, and pled guilty to two counts of a four-count indictment, which was filed on February 8, 2007. Specifically, Craig pled guilty to knowingly and unlawfully possessing two unregistered firearms: a Harrington & Richardson Topper, 88 Model, 12 gauge, single-shot weapon made from a shotgun, having an overall length of less than 26 inches and a barrel length of less than 18 inches; and a Pac West Arms Commando Model, 5.56 mm rifle, having a barrel length of less than 16 inches. Both weapons are unlawful to possess unless registered in the National Firearms Registration and Transfer Record. Craig acknowledged that he did not register either firearm.

As part of the plea agreement with the government, Craig also agreed to not contest, or to withdraw his contest of, the forfeiture to the government of \$77,330 in U.S. currency and approximately \$15,000 worth of seized firearms and other personal property; all of which were found in his residence on January 24, 2007. In his written plea agreement, Craig acknowledged

that the U.S. currency, firearms, and other items of personal property constitute “substituted assets” for proceeds he obtained through methamphetamine trafficking years ago. In consideration for his guilty plea, his promise to continue cooperating with law enforcement, and other concessions made by Craig, the government agreed to bring no further charges against Craig and, at sentencing, to move to dismiss the two remaining counts of the indictment charging Craig with possession of stolen handguns and possession of an unregistered silencer.

The charges in the indictment stem from the execution of a state search warrant at Craig’s home on January 24, 2007, during which the U.S. currency and more than sixty firearms were seized. Some of the seized firearms were stolen, including seven handguns that were stolen from the Vacation Trailer Park, a federal firearms licensee in Benzie County, Michigan in November 2000.

If the guilty plea and plea agreement are accepted by Chief United States District Judge Robert Holmes Bell, Craig faces a maximum sentence of 10 years in prison and a fine of \$250,000 on each count. No sentencing date has been scheduled. Craig was permitted to remain on bond.

United States Attorney Delaney and Prosecutor Fitz recognized the cooperation and outstanding investigative efforts of the U.S. Department of Justice’s Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms & Explosives (ATF) and Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), and the Cass County Drug Enforcement Team. The case was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Brian P. Lennon.

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