



ATF News

**Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives
Seattle Field Division**

Contacts:

Julianne Marshall, ATF (206) 510-5128
Jeff Kappel, Seattle PD (206) 684-5520
John Urquhart, King County (206) 296-7528

For Immediate Release
May 25, 2006

ATF VIOLENT GANG TASK FORCE ANNOUNCES 47 ARRESTS IN SEATTLE

SEATTLE – Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) Special Agent in Charge Kelvin N. Crenshaw announced today that the ATF Violent Gang Task Force has arrested today 47 gang members and associates who operated in Seattle’s Central District on federal and state firearms and drug charges.

Crenshaw told a news conference that six defendants charged with federal firearms and drug violations were arrested without incident, four of them Wednesday, one today and one previously. A seventh defendant remains at large.

The remaining 40 defendants were arrested on state drug charges over the course of the six-month investigation, during which investigators recovered 31 firearms from a concentrated three-mile area surrounding the Central District.

“There were hundreds of transactions taking place every day,” Crenshaw said. “The main players were operating an open-air drug market in the middle of neighborhood streets, making residents feel paralyzed and too scared to leave their homes.”

“Our number one priority is saving lives,” said Seattle Police Assistant Chief Nicholas Metz. “Our goal is to have the biggest impact on neighborhood safety, not only for the present generation, but for future generations as well.”

“What makes this program successful is the cooperation between all the law enforcement agencies in this task force,” said King County Sheriff Sue Rahr. “Without this partnership, it is unlikely we would be announcing these arrests today.”

The ATF Violent Gang Task Force is a coordinated effort among ATF, Seattle Police Department, King County Sheriff’s Office, and the Washington Department of Corrections. Assisting agencies include the FBI, United States Attorney’s Office, Seattle City Attorney’s Office and the King County Prosecutor’s Office.

More information on ATF and its programs to reduce violent crime is at www.atf.gov.

###