



ATF News

**Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives
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SAN JUAN ADDED TO ATF-LED INITIATIVE AIMED AT REDUCING VIOLENT CRIME

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico – Julie Torres, Special Agent in Charge of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, Miami Field Division, along with U.S. Attorney Rosa Emilia Rodriguez and Police of Puerto Rico (POPR) Superintendent Pedro Toledo announced today that the San Juan metropolitan area will be one of 29 U.S. cities with a Violent Crime Impact Team (VCIT) working to reduce gun violence and other violent crime.

VCITs consist of federal agents and support personnel working with state and local law enforcement, to bring together the unique, interdependent assets and cutting edge technology of all participating agencies. The Federal Bureau of Investigation, Drug Enforcement Administration, U.S. Marshals Service, federal and state prosecutors, federal, state and local law enforcement officers and federal and state probation and parole officers may participate in addition to ATF.

"ATF, along with our partners in law enforcement, vow to reduce the proliferation of gun violence, drug trafficking and the profit gained from such illegal activities by pooling our manpower and resources to remove these criminals from our society" commented Julie Torres, Special Agent in Charge of ATF's Miami's Field Division.

U.S. Attorney Rodriguez stated, "This initiative will provide us with additional resources to reinforce the ongoing joint efforts undertaken by the strike forces in our fight against violent crime. We are committed to making Puerto Rico a safer place to live, and will continue to seek the necessary resources to wage this fight until we are satisfied that peace has returned to our communities."

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VCIT takes a six-point approach to reducing violent crime:

- Use technology and human intelligence to identify geographic areas within 29 cities with violent firearms crime.
- Identify the “worst of the worst” violent offenders, the criminal organizations that support them and armed career criminals.
- Use criminal investigations and investigative tools and resources to disrupt and dismantle criminal activity being perpetrated by the identified individuals and organizations.
- Arrest and prosecute the individuals and their associates in the federal or state jurisdiction that lends itself to the maximum penalty.
- Work with community leaders to cultivate solid and sustained commitment between the community’s residents and law enforcement.
- Evaluate results on a regular basis to assess VCIT progress toward achieving the initiative’s goals.

Since the initiative’s launch in June 2004 through the end of fiscal 2006, VCITs have recovered more than 11,100 firearms and arrested more 9,800 gang members, drug dealers, felons in possession of firearms and other criminals on local, state or federal charges. The arrested include more than 1,650 “worst of the worst” offenders.

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

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