



CHESTER COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE

THOMAS P. HOGAN
DISTRICT ATTORNEY

TELEPHONE: 610-344-6801
FAX: 610-344-5905

201 W. MARKET STREET, SUITE 4450
POST OFFICE BOX 2748
WEST CHESTER, PA 19380-0991

March 7, 2017

PRESS RELEASE

**“Operation Crushed Ice” Takes
Out 49 Drug Dealers in
Southern Chester County**

Chester County District Attorney Tom Hogan and the Pennsylvania State Police announced that 49 drug dealers have been indicted in a joint law enforcement investigation dubbed “Operation Crushed Ice.” The drug dealers were based in Southern Chester County, and also had operations reaching throughout the region and across the United States. The defendants trafficked methamphetamine,¹ heroin, cocaine, marijuana, and prescription drugs. Operation Crushed Ice was led by the Chester County Detectives and the Pennsylvania State Police.

District Attorney Hogan stated, “Protecting Chester County from drug dealers requires constant vigilance. Operation Crushed Ice has destroyed a significant drug trafficking organization that was operating in our back yard. This is a battle that law enforcement fights every day to protect our children, our businesses, and our homes.”

¹ The defendants’ primary drug trafficking activities dealt with methamphetamine. High-quality methamphetamine is also known as “crystal” or “ice” because of its appearance. This is the source of the name Operation Crushed Ice.

Captain Maurice Tomlinson, the Commander of the Pennsylvania State Police – Troop J, stated, “The Pennsylvania State Police remains committed to utilizing the full extent of the existing laws to rid persons from our communities who continue to participate in the underground illicit drug trade. The activities of this DTO had a far-reaching impact on many lives, young and old. Law enforcement cooperation was an integral factor in this investigation being successful. Agencies from around the country, county, and state worked cooperatively to bring Maitre’s reign in Chester County to an end.”

The allegations of the criminal complaints are as follows:²

Defendant Richard Maitre was the head of a drug trafficking organization (the “Maitre DTO”) based in Oxford, Chester County, Pennsylvania. The Maitre DTO trafficked large-scale quantities of methamphetamine, heroin, cocaine, marijuana, and prescription pills. The Maitre DTO also had connections to Montgomery County, Lancaster County, Delaware County, and Philadelphia County in Pennsylvania; the states of Delaware, Maryland, Ohio, Virginia, and Arizona; and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico.

Maitre is 27 years old. He resided at 370 Conner Road, Oxford, Chester County, Pennsylvania. The other members of the Maitre DTO who have been charged are:

Brian Amoriello, 40; Alberto Andrews, 37; Jose Beltran-Mercado, 33; Michael Brackin, 25; Kiere Brown, 25; Christopher Bryant, 29; Nicole Bui, 29; Samuel Carr, 29; Charles Chambers, 55; Julio Colon, 28; Harry Dillow, 55; Dean Fenner, 47; Christopher Forrester, 38; Gilberto Hernandez, 24; Jeremy Horne, 26; Eboni Jackson, 41; Jermaine Jackson, 45; Scott Johnson, 29; William Jones, 30; Ryan Kelly, 36; Maria Lemos, 41; Carrie Lewis, 33; Debra Lewis, 46; Brittaney Mantz, 24; Marc Massey, 36; Herbert McClain, Jr., 30; Jenna McGoldrick, 26; Steven Miller, 29; Michael Oxford, 38; David Price, 34; Joseph Racca, 28; Moiscell Robinson, 28; Robbie Robinson, 40; Austin Rodriguez, 29; Deanie Seymour, 29; Victor Smith, 37; Theodore Spencer, 56; Tonya Stewart, 39; Andrea Sydenstricker, 27; Barry Sydenstricker, 60; Jonathan Taylor, 27; Darrell Thomas, 33; Timothy Turner, 27; Louie Velez, 37; Michael Walsh, Jr., 20; Michael Walsh, Sr., 38; Stephen Westmoreland, 33; and Michael Zelek, 30.

² A criminal defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty in court.

Operation Crushed Ice began in 2015 when investigators learned Maitre was running drug operations in Southern Chester County. Maitre actually was in Chester County Prison at the time. He was using his co-conspirators to deliver drugs outside the prison, collect money, and stay in touch with other drug dealers.

When Maitre was released from Chester County Prison in 2016, he immediately began to run the DTO again, engaging in full-scale drug trafficking. Maitre had a wide web of sub-distributors and customers. However, Maitre also was sophisticated, consistently switching or “dropping” cell phones and keeping his sources of drugs a secret.

Using cooperators, the police were able to make purchases of drugs directly from Maitre and his co-conspirators. The police also discovered that Maitre used violence to run his operation. When one dealer was late to pay Maitre, Maitre arranged for that dealer to be beaten by other conspirators. Using all of this information, law enforcement then engaged in a wire-tap of Maitre’s cell phone.

The wire-tap operation revealed the full scope of Maitre’s organization. Maitre was consistently dealing drugs throughout the region, and his drug contacts stretched across the United States. Maitre brought drugs in via air travel and via cars. Maitre had a large number of sub-dealers working for him. There was a steady flow of drugs and money.

Operation Crushed Ice brought down the Maitre DTO on January 12, 2017. Co-defendant Alberto Andrews was driving Maitre’s BMW to and from Ohio to deliver seven pounds of methamphetamine to Maitre at 416 Chesterville Road, Landenberg, Chester County, Pennsylvania. Shortly after Andrews arrived, law enforcement executed simultaneous search warrants at 416 Chesterville Road and 17 other locations in the region used by the Maitre DTO.

During the raids, police seized methamphetamine, heroin, cocaine, marijuana, and prescription drugs. The police found over 40 firearms, both hand guns and long guns. Law enforcement also seized cash, over 20 vehicles, and paraphernalia associated with drug trafficking, such as scales and packaging materials. Maitre briefly escaped, but eventually was captured on January 25, 2017.

The defendants have been charged with felony drug trafficking, conspiracy, firearms violations, and related charges. Maitre’s bail was set at \$2,000,000 and he

was remanded to Chester County Prison. All of the defendants were indicted by the Chester County Grand Jury.

District Attorney Hogan added, “Drug dealers are like a virus. They constantly shift and mutate, finding new ways to avoid detection and cause harm. Law enforcement works constantly to stay one step ahead of these criminals.”

Operation Crushed Ice was led by the Chester County Detectives and the Pennsylvania State Police. The operation was assisted by the regional High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area program, the Chester County Municipal Drug Task Force, the Chester County SWAT teams, the Drug Enforcement Administration, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation. The cases will be prosecuted by the District Attorney’s Drug Unit. Anybody with information should contact the Chester County Detectives at (610) 344-6866 or the Pennsylvania State Police at (610) 268-2022.

* * * * *

Approved for release:

Thomas P. Hogan