



Department of Justice

United States Attorney Thomas P. O'Brien
Central District of California

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 3, 2008
www.usdoj.gov/usao/cac

CONTACT: Thom Mrozek
PHONE: (213) 894-6947
thom.mrozek@usdoj.gov

BORDER OFFICER INDICTED FOR ALLOWING ILLEGAL ALIENS AND MARIJUANA TO BE SMUGGLED INTO UNITED STATES

SAN DIEGO – A Customs and Border Protection Officer for the Department of Homeland Security was indicted today on federal charges of being part of a conspiracy that smuggled illegal aliens and marijuana into the United States.

Luis Francisco Alarid, 31, of San Diego, was named in a six-count indictment that charges him with one count of conspiring to smuggle more than 100 kilograms of marijuana into the United States, one count of conspiring to bring illegal aliens into the United States, three counts of bringing illegal aliens into the United States for financial gain and one count of bribery. The indictment also seeks the forfeiture of approximately \$200,000 in bribe payments that Alarid allegedly received, as well as several electronic items purchased with funds related to the scheme.

Alarid is scheduled to be arraigned on the indictment this afternoon in United States District Court.

The indictment and a criminal complaint filed last month allege that over the past several months Alarid admitted into the United States a series of vehicles that contained illegal aliens or loads of marijuana. Alarid allegedly allowed the vehicles into the United States while he was working as a border officer at the Otay Mesa Port of Entry. One vehicle that contained 18 illegal aliens and more than 170 pounds of marijuana was allegedly driven by Alarid's uncle in March. One individual said she was charged a \$5,000 fee to be smuggled into the United States, according to the criminal complaint.

Agents from the Border Corruption Task Force arrested Alarid on May 16 after he allegedly attempted to admit vehicles containing illegal aliens into the United States.

On May 27, after filing the criminal complaint, the United States Attorney's Office in San Diego requested to be recused from the Alarid prosecution. The recusal request was approved by the Department of Justice in Washington. The United States Attorney's Office in Los Angeles was then assigned to handle the case.

An indictment contains allegations that a defendant has committed a crime. Every defendant is presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty.

If convicted of the six counts in the indictment, Alarid faces a statutory maximum penalty of 90 years in federal prison. The charge of conspiracy to smuggle more than 100 kilograms of marijuana carries a mandatory minimum penalty of five years in prison, and the alien smuggling counts each carry a mandatory minimum sentence of three years.

This case against Alarid was investigated by the Border Corruption Task Force, which includes the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Customs and Border Protection-Internal Affairs, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement's Office of Professional Responsibility, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement's Office of Investigations, the Department of Homeland Security's Office of Inspector General and IRS-Criminal Investigation. During this investigation, the Border Corruption Task Force received substantial assistance from the Drug Enforcement Administration, the Chula Vista Police Department, the San Diego Police Department and the United States Border Patrol.

CONTACT: Assistant United States Attorney Gregory W. Staples
(714)338-3535

Release No. 08-076