



Department of Justice

U.S. Attorney's Office
Southern District of Texas

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FORMER POLICE OFFICER SENTENCED ON GUN CHARGES

(BROWNSVILLE, Texas) - A former Palm Valley police officer convicted of dealing firearms without a federal firearms license has been sentenced to prison, acting United States Attorney Tim Johnson announced today.

Ramon Martinez, 37, appeared before United States District Judge Hilda G. Tagle this afternoon. The court handed down a 29-month term of imprisonment and ordered Martinez to serve a two-year-term of supervised release upon completion of his prison term. For a four-month period beginning in February 2007, while he was employed as a police officer with the Palm Valley Police Department, Martinez purchased multiple firearms from licensed dealers and private citizens and sold them for profit. Martinez was not licensed to sell firearms. The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) began an investigation of the former officer after weapons recovered in Mexico were traced back to the Martinez. Indicted in August 2008, Martinez pleaded guilty to the federal firearms felony offense in October 2008.

As a result of the ATF investigation, Armando Duenez, a former Rio Hondo Police Department officer, was also charged as a co-defendant for dealing firearms without a license. Duenez was arrested during the summer of 2008 but failed to appear for arraignment. He remains a fugitive. A warrant has issued for the arrest of Duenez. Anyone having information regarding the whereabouts of Duenez is urged to contact the ATF at (956) 687-5207.

This case was investigated by the ATF with the substantial assistance of the

Immigration and Custom Enforcement. The case is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Bill Hagen.

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