



**Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives
San Bernardino Police Department**



Violent Crime Impact Team (VCIT)

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**ATF, SAN BERNARDINO POLICE DEPARTMENT HIGHLIGHT
ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF THE VIOLENT CRIME IMPACT TEAM**

SAN BERNARDINO, Calif. – Special Agent in Charge John A. Torres of the Los Angeles Field Division, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF); U.S. Attorney Thomas O’Brien and Chief of Police Michael Billdt of the San Bernardino Police Department (SBPD) are pleased to announce the success and accomplishments of the San Bernardino Violent Crime Impact Team (VCIT) after 12 months of operation.

ATF is the lead federal law enforcement agency in the VCIT initiative, which uses innovative technology, analytical investigative resources, as well as an integrated federal, state and local law enforcement strategy to identify, disrupt, arrest and prosecute the most violent criminals in 31 U.S. cities. VCIT targets specific areas that have an above average level of violent crime, particularly gun related homicides, as compared to the national average.

The San Bernardino VCIT is now a permanent satellite office of the ATF Riverside Field Office. The VCIT made more than 200 arrests and seized nearly 300 firearms over the last 12 months, and has earned a spot on the ATF “Top Gun” list the last eight months. ATF keeps statistics on the number of individuals arrested and the number of firearms seized by each VCIT group, and publishes a VCIT Workload Scorecard each month. From the Workload Scorecard, ATF creates a Top Gun list that comprises the top three highest producing VCIT groups in the number of arrests and firearms seized, both for the month and for the cumulative year.

“I am pleased to announce that the San Bernardino VCIT has once again made it on the Top Gun list this month, and has made 213 arrests and seized 268 firearms since its initiation,” said Torres. “A large number of those arrested have significant criminal backgrounds and convictions for crimes of violence. They are considered the ‘worst of the worst.’”

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“The achievements, over the last 12 months, represent a significant impact on crime,” said Torres. “ATF and its partners will continue to strive to reduce violent crime in the city and surrounding communities of San Bernardino, placing an emphasis on ending gang violence that erodes the quality of life in our neighborhoods. We will continue to identify the most active and violent offenders and use every available tool in our investigations to maximize our success.”

Billdt said, “Over the past 12 months our community has made progress in reducing firearm related robberies. These reductions represent the many hours of hard work put forth by the San Bernardino Police Department, and our law enforcement and community partners. Mayor Patrick Morris and I continue to be committed to the three components of Operation Phoenix, which are suppression, intervention and prevention. Our partnership with the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives is a welcomed and effective addition to our suppression efforts and an example of our continued collaboration with our many law enforcement and community partners.”

Working in partnership with the San Bernardino VCIT, the U.S. Attorney’s Office and the District Attorney’s Office have used the firearms statutes and mandatory minimum sentencing provided in the federal court system to obtain the longest possible criminal sentences, keeping these predators off the streets.

“VCIT is a program designed to rid neighborhoods of dangerous, armed criminals,” said U.S. Attorney Thomas P. O’Brien. “We have seen the success of the VCIT program in several areas in my district with many criminals and their firearms being taken off the street. Now, with VCIT becoming a permanent presence in San Bernardino, we hope to see even more results and safer neighborhoods.”

San Bernardino County District Attorney Michael A. Ramos commented, “While the crime problem is far from being resolved in the City of San Bernardino, it is apparent from the statistics that partnerships, such as the one with the ATF and the San Bernardino Police Department, have made a reduction in the crime rate. My office has shown an increase in the number of cases being submitted since the program began. Our hope is that the momentum will continue to grow.”

The San Bernardino VCIT’s success is based on the positive cooperative relationship with the local police and its partner agencies, which include the Drug Enforcement Administration, Immigration and Customs Enforcement, the United States Marshals Service, the United States Attorney’s Office and the District Attorney’s Office.

Information on ATF and its programs can be found at www.atf.gov. Also visit www.ci.san-bernardino.ca.us for more information on the San Bernardino Police Department.