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Sent: 8/16/2011 8:25:01 PM
Subject: ATF's 'Fast and Furious' firearms tracked to at least 11 violent crimes

You may have already read this, but---just in case thought I would send. Take care, M

<<http://www.latimes.com/news/politics>>

ATF's 'Fast and Furious' firearms tracked to at least 11 violent crimes

By Richard A. Serrano

August 16, 2011, 3:11 p.m.

Firearms illegally trafficked under the ATF's Fast and Furious program turned up at the scenes of at least 11 "violent crimes" in this country in addition to being involved in the death of a U.S. Border Patrol agent in southern Arizona last year, the Justice Department <<http://www.latimes.com/topic/crime-law-justice/u.s.-department-of-justice-ORGOV0000160.topic>> has acknowledged to Congress.

Although Justice did not provide any details about those crime scenes, it has been learned that the additional violent crimes occurred in cities such as Phoenix <<http://www.latimes.com/topic/us/arizona/maricopa-county/phoenix-%28maricopa-arizona%29-PLGEO100101101011231.topic>> , where Operation Fast and Furious was managed, and as far away as El Paso <<http://www.latimes.com/topic/us/texas/el-paso-county-%28texas%29/el-paso-PLGEO100101101011242.topic>> , Texas, where a total of 42 Fast and Furious weapons were seized in two separate crimes.

The new numbers, which vastly broaden the scope of the danger the program posed to U.S. citizens over a 14-month period, are contained in a letter Justice Department officials turned over last month to Senate Judiciary Committee members.

Documents: Fast and Furious paper trail <<http://documents.latimes.com/fast-and-furious/>>

In the letter, obtained Tuesday by The Times, Justice officials also reported that ATF Acting Director Kenneth Melson "likely became aware" of Fast and Furious as early as December 2009, a month after the program began, and not after January of this year, as he had said. The July 22 letter was signed by Assistant Atty. Gen. Ronald Weich and sent to Sens. Patrick Leahy <<http://www.latimes.com/topic/politics/patrick-leahy-PEPLT003828.topic>> (D-Vt.) and Sen. Charles Grassley <<http://www.latimes.com/topic/politics/government/charles-grassley-PEPLT002489.topic>> (R-Iowa), the top members of the Senate Judiciary Committee. It was in response to questions posed to the Justice Department about Atty. Gen. Eric H. Holder and Fast and Furious.

Justice officials were asked how many "violent crime" scenes turned up more Fast and Furious weapons besides the two semiautomatics found after Border Patrol Agent Brian Terry's slaying last December.

They responded that while the "ATF does not have complete information" on the whereabouts of all the lost guns, "it is our understanding that ATF is aware of 11 instances" where a Fast and Furious firearm "was recovered in connection with a crime of violence in the United States."

Justice officials did not respond. But a source close to the unfolding controversy said that as early as January 2010, just after the operation was underway, Fast and Furious weapons turned up at crime scenes in Phoenix, Nogales, Douglas and Glendale in Arizona, and in El Paso. The largest haul was 40 Fast and Furious weapons at one crime scene in El Paso.

Documents: Fast and Furious paper trail <<http://documents.latimes.com/fast-and-furious/>>

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