



## 2014 Attorney General S.E.C.U.R.E. Legislative Report

The SECURE team continues to achieve the mandate of the legislature by ensuring the safety of Utah's communities, focusing our investigation on human trafficking, document mills, and criminal enterprises involving the trafficking of narcotics and firearms - and sending a message through successful prosecution resulting in both punishment to the criminal and deterrence to the criminal community as a whole.

### **FY 2014:**

- 294 SECURE cases generated by investigators
- 55 cases initiated/assigned to SECURE prosecutor

SECURE Strike Force opened 294 investigations in FY 2014, a 68% increase over the previous year (174 cases)  
SECURE Strike Force made 103 arrests, 65% increase over the previous year (62)

### Break down of investigations/arrests:

- 69 Warrants
- 62 Fraud/forgery/counterfeiting
- 71 Drug crimes including SPICE cases
- 37 Sex offenses /human trafficking
- 3 Weapons
- 22 Search warrants
- 34 Misc. cases, citizen assist, police assist, etc.

### **Based on the calendar year the following are comparison numbers between 2013 and 2014:**

Cases opened 1/1/2014 - 8/31/2014, 212, 50% increase over the same time period in 2013 (141 cases)  
Arrests made 1/1/2013 - 8/31/2013, 72, 35% increase over the same time period in 2012 (53 arrests)

### Break down of investigation/arrests:

- 44 Warrants
- 27 Fraud/forgery/counterfeiting
- 53 Drug crimes including SPICE cases
- 36 Sex offenses/human trafficking
- 2 Weapon
- 15 Search warrants
- 36 Misc. cases, citizen assist, police assist, etc.

## 2013/2014 Notable Investigations & Prosecutions:

- ❖ State v. Victor Manuel Rax, Case No. 141901640 (3<sup>rd</sup> District Court); Defendant Rax was trafficking young boys by convincing them to sell marijuana, cocaine, and meth in elementary, junior high, and high schools locally. The suspect sexually assaulted the boys and used their undocumented status to control and coerce them while they sold his drugs. After a two month investigation that required all SECURE Investigators on board, over 62 charges were filed against the Defendant including Aggravated Human Trafficking, Sodomy On A Child, Forcible Sodomy, Object Rape, Forcible Sexual Abuse, Aggravated Sexual Abuse of a Child, Child Endangerment, and Possession of A Controlled Substance involving 40 victims, the majority of victims were young boys age 9-15. Defendant committed suicide prior to prosecution being completed. See Attachment 1, Second Amended Information.
- ❖ State v. Thomas Hackler, Case No. 141500023 (5<sup>th</sup> District Court); Successful prosecution of Sexual Exploitation of a Minor and Communications Fraud charges, resulting from an 11 month Multi-State investigation done in cooperation with the Summit County Attorney's Office, involving young boys being solicited by the defendant to have sex and send sexually explicit photographs of themselves to the Defendant. Defendant is currently serving 2-30 year sentence in the Utah State Prison. See Attachment 2, Information.
- ❖ State v. Adolfo Contreras-Perez, Case No. 141906827 (3<sup>rd</sup> District Court); Defendant Contreras-Perez was selling heroin, meth, cocaine and marijuana in Salt Lake County. SECURE executed a search warrant and located all of the noted drugs that were pre-packaged and ready for distribution. SECURE seized over a pound of heroin plus approximately another pound in cocaine and meth and \$3,018. Contreras-Perez was successfully prosecuted on felony drug distribution charges, and subsequently sentenced and deported by ERO.
- ❖ State v. Antonio Gonzales-Marqueno, Case No. 141905349 and State v. Jesus Antonio Gonzalez-Mendez, Case No. 141905347 (3<sup>rd</sup> District Court); SECURE Agents had an on-going investigation over the course of several years regarding the manufacture and distribution of fraudulent government documents. SECURE was finally able to gain enough probable cause to obtain a search warrant for the individual's residence. Defendants Gonzales-Marqueno and Gonzalez-Mendez were successfully prosecuted on several counts of Possession of Forged Writing and subsequently sentenced and deported by ERO.
- ❖ State v. Harold Zaveleta-Batella, Case No. 131911887 (3<sup>rd</sup> District Court); Following an investigation wherein SECURE agents executed a search warrant and seized over 1/2 pound of meth, 1/2 pound of marijuana, packaging material, and over \$4,000 in cash, and also discovered specialized glass ware and other precursors for manufacturing meth, Defendant Zaveleta-Batella was successfully prosecuted for Possession of Controlled Substance with Intent to Distribute, a 2<sup>nd</sup> Degree Felony and deported by ERO.
- ❖ State v. Li Yahzen, Case No. 121906129 (3<sup>rd</sup> District Court); successful prosecution completed regarding the final defendant who was part of a multiple defendant case involving a sophisticated fraudulent financial card criminal enterprise involving over two states and spanning from St. George to

Centerville, Utah; believed to be related to a large criminal document mill in California and is the second of two rings prosecuted.

- ❖ State v. Deborah Lira, Case No. 131911238 and State v. Soraya E. Olague, Case No. 131911239 (3rd District Court); Successful prosecution regarding charges of Exploitation of Prostitution following a Seven month investigation involving a brothel in the Millcreek area. Was initially reported as a child involved in prostitution, investigation revealed adult females between the age of 18-22.
- ❖ State v. Ramos-Gamez, Case No. 141904363 (3rd District Court); Successful prosecution after several months investigation involving a drug distribution operation of methamphetamine and heroin. Defendants subsequently plead guilty to Distribution of Controlled Substance, a 2nd Degree Felony and was sentenced and deported by ICE.
- ❖ Multiple other cases involving victims within the immigrant community and cases involving undocumented aliens committing crimes of identity theft, document fraud, controlled substance distribution offenses, firearms, trafficking, state RICO, both directly through SECURE generated investigations, or agency assist due to the specialized nature and expertise of the SECURE Strike Force.

SECURE currently has several on-going investigations where human trafficking is highly suspected and they involve multiple counties along the Wasatch Front. These cases are time consuming and labor intensive.

SECURE continues to work closely with ERO and just recently signed an agreement with Unified Police Department and Ogden City Police Department for a full time task force member while adding a second member to the task force from the Department of Public Safety. SECURE has and will continue to reach out to other agencies for potential involvement in the task force.

### **2014 Legislative Highlights:**

SECURE cases led to assistance in the process of amending statutory language and/or enacting statute for the improvement of eradicating criminal activity in Utah, including recent Safe Harbor Provisions and Civil Remedies for victims of Human Trafficking.

SECURE also continues focusing both investigation and prosecution to seek out any and all proceeds for the purpose of forfeiture, either directly through criminal prosecution or by means of civil forfeiture.