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FORMER ARIZONA DEA AGENT PLEADS GUILTY TO ILLEGALLY SELLING ASSAULT RIFLES

TUCSON, Ariz. – A former DEA Supervisory Special Agent who was assigned to the Nogales Office as part of the DEA Tucson District Office pleaded guilty today in federal court in Tucson, Arizona, to illegally selling firearms without a Federal Firearms License (FFL). The case is being prosecuted by the U.S. Attorney’s Office for the District of Nevada because the U.S. Attorney’s Office for the District of Arizona is recused from the case.

Joseph Michael Gill, 42, of Tucson, pleaded guilty to one count of dealing in firearms without a license. He resigned from his position with the DEA on June 30, 2018. United States Magistrate Judge Lynnette C. Kimmins accepted the guilty plea and scheduled sentencing for November 26, 2018. The maximum penalty is five years in prison and a \$250,000 fine.

According to the affidavit for a search warrant for Gill’s residence obtained in connection with the investigation, in December 2012, Gill applied for a Federal Firearms License with the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF), but he subsequently withdrew the application. Subsequent to withdrawing that application, Gill purchased multiple firearms from licensed firearms dealers and sold them on the internet utilizing the website Gunbroker.com. Upon further investigation into Gill’s use of Gunbroker.com, ATF learned that Gill had engaged in approximately 645 transactions.

According to the plea agreement, on June 12, 2016, Gill purchased three Colt .223/5.56 caliber rifles from an online FFL located in Lexington, Kentucky. He paid a total of \$1,896. The rifles were shipped to a FFL in Sahuarita, Arizona, and Gill picked up the rifles on June 18. Then, on July 27 and 28, 2016, Gill sold two of the rifles to two different individuals who he had reason to believe intended to use or dispose of the firearms unlawfully.

The case is being investigated by the ATF and the Department of Justice Office of the Inspector General. Assistant U.S. Attorney Phillip N. Smith Jr. of the District of Nevada is prosecuting the case.

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