



U.S. Department of
Homeland Security

**United States
Secret Service**

PRESS RELEASE

August 12, 2014
Contact: (202) 406-5708
GPA 09-14

U.S. SECRET SERVICE INVESTIGATION DISMANTLES MUSTAFA FAMILY CRIME RING

20 Members of the Mustafa Family International Crime Ring Indicted for Trafficking Stolen Cell Phones and Tablets

(Washington, D.C.) - On August 12, 2014, United States Attorney Andrew M. Luger announced the indictment of 20 members of the Mustafa Family, a Twin Cities-based criminal organization, for trafficking stolen and fraudulently obtained mobile telephones and tablets (devices). The Mustafa Family, also known as “The Organization,” obtained the devices through criminal means, including: robbery, burglary, identity theft, and contract fraud schemes. Each of the 20 members is charged in Federal Court with Conspiracy to Engage in Interstate Transportation of Stolen Goods. As of this writing 18 members have been arrested.

“The indictment and subsequent arrests of the Mustafa Family Crime Ring are yet another example of how the Secret Service continues to successfully combat identity theft and financial fraud,” said Louis F. Stephens, Special Agent in Charge of the United States Secret Service Minneapolis Field Office. “Our success in this case and similar investigations is a result of our close work with our network of law enforcement partners. This case demonstrates there is no such thing as anonymity for those engaging in identity theft and fraudulent schemes.”

According to the indictment, beginning in 2006, the Mustafa Family used stolen identity information to obtain cellular telephones and other mobile devices for the purpose of trafficking them throughout the United States and internationally. The Mustafa Family owned and operated 13 mobile device stores in the Twin Cities metropolitan area and used the storefronts to traffic stolen inventory and funnel the illicit proceeds of their criminal activity.

According to the charges, the Mustafa Family paid runners to steal or fraudulently obtain mobile devices by shoplifting, burglary, and contract or subscription fraud. Various members of the Mustafa Family also provided stolen or fraudulent identity information to the runners, including names, dates of birth, social security numbers, credit card numbers, passport information, and

driver's license numbers of victims. These fraudulent schemes primarily took place in Minnesota, Arizona, Idaho, North Dakota, Iowa, Wisconsin, Illinois, and Utah.

The Secret Service was initially referred to this case by the St. Paul Police Department in May 2013. Throughout the investigation, the Secret Service, the St. Paul Police Department and the Minnesota Financial Crimes Task Force worked closely with a variety of federal and local law enforcement partners, including: the U.S. Attorney's Office; the University of Minnesota Police Department; the Minnesota Department of Public Safety and Bureau of Criminal Apprehension; the United States Postal Investigative Service, the Internal Revenue Service Criminal Investigations; Homeland Security Investigations; the Edina Police Department; the Minneapolis Police Department; the Plymouth Police Department; the Federal Bureau of Investigation; and the United States Marshals Service.

About the United States Secret Service

The United States Secret Service was originally founded in 1865 for the purpose of suppressing the counterfeiting of U.S. currency. Now an agency within the Department of Homeland Security, the Secret Service is widely known for its protective mission in safeguarding the nation's highest elected officials, visiting foreign dignitaries and events of national significance. Today, the Secret Service maintains a unique dual mission of protection and investigations, as one of the premier law enforcement organizations charged with investigating cyber and financial crimes.

###

EDITOR'S NOTE: For questions concerning this release, please contact the U.S. Secret Service Office of Government and Public Affairs at 202-406-5708.