



MIAMI BEACH

OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER

NO. LTC # **327-2010**

LETTER TO COMMISSION

TO: Mayor Matti Herrera Bower and Members of the City Commission

FROM: Jorge M. Gonzalez, City Manager

DATE: December 3, 2010

SUBJECT: Detective Ricardo Arias – MDCACP November 2010 Officer of the Month

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This Letter to the City Commission is to announce that Detective Ricardo Arias was selected by the Miami Dade County Association of Chiefs of Police (MDCACP) as their November 2010 Officer of the Month.

Detective Ricardo Arias was selected for this prestigious award based on his extraordinary efforts with the United States Secret Service's Miami Electron Crimes Task Force (MECTF). Detective Arias was also awarded the Secret Service's "International Case of the Year" for his work involving an arrest and follow up investigation that occurred on Miami Beach on June 1, 2010. A subject identified as Alexsei Satalov, an Estonia national, was a passenger in a 2000 silver BMW which was stopped in the 400 block of Alton Road for a traffic violation by a Patrol officer. The Patrol investigation revealed \$12,420.00 in two separate open mailing envelopes. Detective Arias was called in to assist in the investigation and interview of Satalov concerning the discovery of the U.S. currency.

During the interview, Detective Arias was able to elicit a confession from Satalov who stated that the currency belonged to an organized crime group. He was going to deposit the currency into a Wells Fargo account for a company in San Francisco. He also confessed to being in possession of gift cards that were to be re-encoded with stolen checking account information. Satalov's role in the organization was that of a "cashier". He was responsible for continuously re-encoding cards with checking account information stolen from ATM machines and emptying the checking accounts. Satalov then would deposit the cash into a specific bank account through a counter deposit. The currency would then be wired out of the country.

Detective Arias contacted MECTF for assistance with the investigation. MECTF contacted their counterparts in London and provided them the details of Detective Arias' investigation. Detective Arias and the MECTF coordinated the arrests of 4 British citizens and the seizure of their property and electronic media. These arrests constituted the entire dismantling of a criminal group operating outside the United States targeting our financial infrastructure.

Further investigation into the San Francisco bank account is currently ongoing and currently shows that over \$1,500,000 has flowed through the account for the explicit purpose of money laundering for this criminal organization. The \$12,420 initially seized in the traffic stop is currently being forfeited to the City of Miami Beach through the Civil Forfeiture process.

Detective Arias is to be commended for his incredible dedication, perseverance, and tenacity by thoroughly seeing the case through to fruition no matter where it led. It should be noted he was also recognized at the November 17 City Commission meeting for being the MBPD's October 2010 Officer of the Month. Please join me in congratulating him on this tremendous accomplishment.

JMG:CN:tr