



PRESS NOTICE



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SCDC Partners with the U.S. Attorney's Office and ATF for "Real-Time Reentry"

Columbia, S.C. ----- The South Carolina Department of Corrections (SCDC) is partnering with the South Carolina United States Attorney's Office and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives (ATF) to keep guns out of the hands of former offenders.

The project, called "*Real-Time Reentry*", is two- fold. With respect to law enforcement, the project focuses on violent offenders and gang members who, after their release, re-offend with firearms while still under SCDC's Intensive Supervision Services. The program ensures their swift apprehension and referral to federal authorities.

On the prevention side, however, the program offers proactive intervention. Assistant United States Attorneys (AUSAs) from the U.S. Attorney's office and law enforcement officials visit with Youthful Offenders in prison to educate them about the opportunities and resources they have to lead rehabilitated and productive lives. The dialogue, however, also sensitively emphasizes the significant consequences these individuals might face should they re-offend with a gun while under supervision, post-release. The message is simple but serious - if caught with a firearm or ammunition, you will be taken into custody immediately and your case referred to ATF and the U.S. Attorney's office in "real time" for federal review and prosecution in federal court, where firearms-related sentences for repeat-offenders are much more substantial.

Real-Time Reentry kicked off, December 7, 2015, when AUSAs and law enforcement officials met with 46 Youthful Offenders at the Trenton SCDC facility. Going forward, the Real Time Reentry team will return once a month to educate and encourage those individuals preparing for re-entry into their communities.

"Real Time Reentry is a multiagency partnership meant to address youthful offenders that are at risk for exposure to state and federal charges. This initiative is focused on available services and creating relationships to assist Youthful Offenders, under our supervision, stay on the straight and narrow" said Bryan Stirling, Director of the South Carolina Department of Corrections.

"Real Time Reentry" is the latest iteration of the U.S. Attorney's Office Project Cease Fire, a program that in recent years has come to partner local, state, and federal law enforcement with the community. The collective efforts of this partnership continue to foster cooperation in the common goal to make South Carolina safer through reducing gun violence, arrests, and incarceration.

United States Attorney Bill Nettles reflected, "We look forward to partnering with SCDC to provide the Youthful Offender population the necessary help in making the future decision not to possess guns. We believe that prevention is more effective and more cost-efficient than incarceration. However, in the event that our efforts to help these individuals make better decisions are not heeded, we will not hesitate to utilize tools available to us under the criminal code."

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