

MINNESOTA FINANCIAL CRIMES TASK FORCE



2009 LEGISLATIVE REPORT

As required by MN §299A.681 Financial Crimes Oversight Council and Task Force

BACKGROUND

In 2000, the Minnesota State Legislature established the Minnesota Financial Crimes Task Force (MNFCTF) as a statewide law enforcement agency. The MNFCTF was established in response to retailers, bankers other businesses and law enforcement in Statute Sect 299A.681. The statute provided the MNFCTF with the authority to investigate identity theft and related financial crimes both cross-jurisdictionally and state wide. In 2009 new legislation changed the nature of the Oversight Council to that of an Advisory Board comprised of eighteen (18) members to offer advice to the commissioner to ameliorate the harm caused to the public by identity theft and related financial crimes. The strategy of the MNFCTF Advisory Board includes the development of statewide protocols and procedures to investigate financial crimes and provide these ideas to the commissioner.

BUDGET

For the fiscal year ending June 30, 2008 the Minnesota State Legislature provided a budget of \$750,000 to support the operation and development of this statewide task force strategy. However, for the fiscal years ending June 30, 2010 and 2011, respectively, the funding was set at \$300,000 per year. The MNFCTF has adapted its budget to these funding issues by reducing its infrastructure expenses to the barest minimum including reductions to communications, office and overtime expenses. The 2009 FY funding was augmented by carryover funds from the Minnesota United States Attorney's Office and Federal forfeiture funds. However, carryover of these two funds to 2011 FY will be minimal and will not be sufficient to maintain MNFCTF operations at its current level without an infusion of funds from other sources.

STAFFING

In spite of the funding issues the MNFCTF was able to maintain a staff of eight investigators, two analysts and the commander's position. Four investigators work cases within the Greater Twin Cities Metropolitan Area with the Minneapolis and Edina Police Departments each providing an investigator and the Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension providing two investigators.

The MNFCTF continues to provide coverage for the investigation of financial crimes through four regions as follows: Southern Region (Wright County Sheriff's Office investigator); Central Region (Mille Lacs County Sheriff's Office investigator); Northwestern Region (Baxter Police Department investigator) and the Northern Region (Duluth Police Department investigator).

2009 CHALLENGES & ACCOMPLISHMENTS

FEDERAL LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCY PARTNERSHIPS (FLEA)

The MNFCTF is continually fostering increased task force participation with its federal partners. To that end the United States Secret Service has added another full-time agent to our staff. Three additional federal agencies; Department of Agriculture, Department of Education and Housing and Urban Development are now providing assistance to the task force. IRS Criminal Investigations Division (CID) and the United States Postal Inspection Service (USPIS) continue their long standing support for the MNFCTF providing agents, supplies and overtime reimbursements as is available.

INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

The MNFCTF Internship Program has established a partnership with the Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension Internship Program. This opens opportunities for college students statewide to participate in our internship program as well as increasing the number of participants. Students are provided “hands on” experience assisting task force investigators in the investigation and preparation of cases for criminal prosecution.

CASE DIVERSITY

During 2009 the MNFCTF continued to emphasize efforts begun in 2008 by targeting organized criminal enterprises committing identity theft related cross-jurisdictional crimes. Current investigations of these groups reveal structured organized groups involved with all areas of identity theft from mail theft to account takeovers and computer intrusion. A sampling of the types of cases worked by the task force include: identity theft, bank fraud, check forgery and counterfeit checks; credit card fraud; vulnerable adult related crimes including embezzlement and theft by swindle and Ponzi schemes.

INVESTIGATIVE PARTNERSHIPS

The MNFCTF fosters partnerships between law enforcement agencies when a criminal or organized criminal group has committed crimes across multi-jurisdictional lines and several agencies have a crime or crimes committed in their particular city or county. Our purpose is to streamline the investigative process by centralizing and sharing information and reducing duplication of effort. The MNFCTF has been successful in leading shared investigative efforts.

TASK FORCE CASE MANAGEMENT SYTEM

The MNFCTF installed a new a case management system with the assistance of the MNBCA. All officers and analysts have received training and the system is operational. The new system will enable more efficient case assignment, review and tracking. It also provides “state of the art” evidence handling.

TASK FORCE COMPUTERS AND SOFTWARE

The MNFCTF upgraded its entire computer hardware and software system providing twelve work stations for its staff.

TEOAF PARTICIPATION

In 2009 the MNFCTF with the assistance of the United States Secret Service began participating in the Treasure Executive Office for Asset Forfeiture program. This funding, supported by Federal forfeiture funds has provided over \$10,000 in Critical Needs funds to purchase items from computer software to surveillance equipment. TEOAF officer overtime funds also became available in the fourth quarter of 2009 and are continuing. Overtime funding had not been available since 2008.

MNFCTF BROCHURE

The MNFCTF designed and printed an informational brochure for distribution which describes the task force structure and membership. The document also outlines types of cases worked by the task force and case acceptance criteria. The brochure will be used to promote the MNFCTF to citizens, financial organizations and various businesses and retailers.

MNFCTF PERSONNEL TRAINING

MNFCTF staff received extensive training from the National White Collar Crime Center (NW3C) in a financial investigations practical skills course. Other MNFCTF personnel have received basic computer forensic training from the USSS. The MNFCTF actively continues to seek training opportunities for its investigators and staff.

Calendar Year 2009 Statistics

2009 Stats	Qtr 1 (1/1/09 - 3/31/09)	Qtr 2 (4/1/09 - 6/30/09)	Qtr 3 (7/1/09 - 9/30/09)	Qtr 4 (10/1/09 - 12/31/09)	2009 TOTALS
Individuals Charged	36	39	40	22	137
Counts Charged	68*	62*	60*	38*	228
Search Warrants	8	5	11	7	31
Arrests	7	10	13	16	46
Federal Indictments	0	2	1	2	5
Recovered Vehicles	1	0	0	3	4
Recovered Narcotics	0	0	0	0	0
Recovered Firearms	0	0	0	1	1
Recovered Computers	12	8	23	14	57
Auto Theft Cases	7	0	0	0	7

* Counts Charged number based on number of counts listed in complaint

Number of Counts Charged By County

Charges By County	Qtr 1 (1/1/09 - 3/31/09)	Qtr 2 (4/1/09 - 6/30/09)	Qtr 3 (7/1/09 - 9/30/09)	Qtr 4 (10/1/09 - 12/31/09)	2009 TOTALS
Anoka	1	0	11	0	12
Dakota	0	2	1	1	4
Federal Court	0	2	1	2	5
Hennepin	30	22	40	26	118
Mille Lacs	0	0	2	0	2
Ramsey	4	1	1	0	6
Sherburne	3	0	0	1	4
St. Louis	28	35	3	8	74
Washington	0	0	0	1	1
Wright	2	2	2	1	7
Total	68	64	61	40	233

TYPES OF MNFCTF CASES CHARGED

- Check Forgery
- Identity Theft
- Counterfeit Checks (Personal, Business, and Government)
- Financial Transaction Card Fraud
- Mail Theft & Mail Fraud
- Loan & Credit Application Fraud
- Issue Dishonored Checks
- Mortgage Fraud
- Motor Vehicle Theft
- Possession of Stolen Property
- Possession or Sale of Stolen or Counterfeit Checks
- Possession of Sale of Financial Transaction Cards
- Theft by Swindle
- Theft from a Motor Vehicle

MNFCTF 2010 GOALS

1. Continue to build local, state and federal staff with special emphasis on investigations involving Organized Criminal Enterprises.
2. Work with the MNBCA in developing training opportunities for state law enforcement personnel in the area of identity theft and related financial crime investigations.
3. Develop a program which will provide credit card scanners to local law enforcement with appropriate “awareness” training. Patrol officers will be trained in the identification of items commonly possessed by individuals committing identity theft and related financial crimes.
4. Conduct an organizational analysis and needs assessment of the MNFCTF.
5. Prepare legislation with the assistance of the Advisory Board legislative members to address permanent funding and potential funding streams to ensure long term viability of the MNFCTF in the statewide financial crimes investigative effort.
6. Collaborate with the Minnesota Joint Analysis Center (MNJAC) and the Department of Corrections (DOC) to place a financial analyst within MNJAC and to install an “economic crime module” to track/identify trends in financial crimes.

MINNESOTA FINANCIAL CRIMES TASK FORCE 2008 CASE **SUMMARIES**

The following are selected summaries of task force investigations. These summaries are not meant to be a complete list of the task force's investigations during 2009. Rather these are only examples as to the types of investigations and types of illegal activities being investigated by the MNFCTF.

Please note: If suspect's charges are pending, only their initials are used.

JANUARY 2009

In **January 2009**, a black male suspect was arrested in connection to over four years of check forgery and theft by swindle. The suspect was interviewed and admitted to depositing and/or writing nearly \$100,000 worth of forged checks. The suspect is believed to be connected to an additional \$100,000 - \$200,000 worth of forged checks. This investigation is on-going. (MNFCTF 08-000964)

On **January 6, 2009**, Barbara Nicole Gilliam (DOB 12/5/79) was charged with Felony Financial Transaction Card Fraud and Felony Identity Theft. In October 2008, Minnesota Public Radio hired CustomerLink to work a donation campaign. It was later learned that Gilliam, while soliciting on behalf of MN Public Radio, took credit card information and later used the information to make purchases for her own benefit. Gilliam admitted to the fraud. MN Public Radio sent out letters to parties who had contact with the suspect on the phone. (MNFCTF 08-001617)

On **January 7 2009**, Aaron Michael Stacy (11/16/84) was charged with Felony Identity Theft, Felony Theft of a Motor Vehicle and Felony 3rd Degree Burglary. Stacey stole a vehicle and later used the victim's credit cards at stores in Duluth, MN and Superior, WI. Additional charges in this case are pending. (MNFCTF 09-000037)

A consent search was conducted by the MNFCTF and Lakeville PD at the AmericInn in Lakeville, MN on **January 29, 2009**. Two people were arrested. Stolen mail, two laptop computers, several counterfeit checks, meth and a handgun were recovered. (MNFCTF 09-000077)

In **January 2009**, J.S. passed closed account checks to various businesses. J.S. began to erase account numbers on checks and pass these as well. He was arrested on another incident and admitted in an interview to passing checks. A request for charges has been sent over to the County Attorney. (MNFCTF 08-001713)

FEBRUARY 2009

On **February 3, 2009**, Virginia Marie Burcar (DOB 3/15/57) was charged with Felony Theft by Swindle and Felony Theft. Burcar stole approximately \$208,000 as the executor of the deceased victim's estate and then fled the state. This case was charged in Duluth and will also be charged federally through WI AUSA Western District Office. (MNFCTF 07-002293)

On **February 12, 2009**, Dawn Marie Beiring (DOB 2/23/66) was charged with five (5) felony counts of: Identity Theft, Financial Transaction Card Fraud, Check Forgery, Theft by Swindle and Fraud in Obtaining Credit. Beiring stole checks and credit cards from her father and daughter. She then passed forged checks and used the credit cards at various locations. Beiring also made empty envelope deposits at Wells Fargo ATMs. She continued to commit theft and forgeries against her father and then her boyfriend. Beiring was arrested to prevent further fraud. (MNFCTF 09-000072)

A search warrant was conducted on a hotel room at the LivInn Suites in Maplewood, MN, on **February 17, 2009**. Information was received from a Confidential Informant that a known check counterfeiter has set up shop and was printing checks from this location. The target was not present during the execution of the search warrant. Three laptop computers, several mass storage devices and mail were seized as a result of the search. (MNFCTF 09-000186)

On **February 23, 2009**, Amber Lynn Fritche (DOB 6/8/89) was charged with Felony Controlled Substance Crime 5th Degree Possession and Corey Terrell Barnes (DOB 11/20/74) was charged with Felony Possession of a Stolen or Counterfeit Check. Fritche was found in a hotel room that was rented with a counterfeit check. In the hotel room were numerous fake IDs, stolen MN drivers' licenses and meth. (MNFCTF 09-000223)

On **February 23, 2009**, Nina Marie Lambres (DOB 6/14/81) was charged with Felony Issuance of a Dishonored Check in Wright County District Court. Lambres wrote bad checks to Coborn's in Albertville. (MNFCTF 09-000335)

On **February 27, 2009**, Matthew Melvin Ostberg (DOB 6/20/62) was charged with three additional counts of Felony Identity Theft in continuing follow-up of Raglund case. (MNFCTF 07-001493)

MARCH 2009

From **Feb-March 2009**, M.S.E stole personal checks from her blind grandmother in the approximate amount of \$15,400. The suspect was interviewed and admitted to the theft to support a gambling habit. (MNFCTF 09-000334)

Gabriel Arthur Bliss (DOB 8/19/87) was charged with Felony Offering a Forged Check on **March 3, 2009**. Bliss cashed a stolen check at Wells Fargo Bank earlier in the day and then came back later and attempted to cash another stolen check from the same account at the same

Wells Fargo. Bliss was arrested the second time. He admitted to stealing the checkbook and cashing the checks in a post Miranda statement. (MNFCTF 09-000147)

On **March 3, 2009**, Alecia Yvette Howard Robinson (DOB 1/30/65) was charged with two (2) Felony counts: Offering a Forged Check and Possession or Sale of Stolen or Counterfeit Checks. She was arrested at the Unbank in Minneapolis. She attempted to cash two Money Gram money orders. Howard claimed she had received the money orders in the mail. (MNFCTF 09-000015)

Jerrode Daniel Johnson (DOB 1/15/84) was charged with Felony Check Forgery on **March 3, 2009**. Johnson attempted to purchase several items at Walgreens with a check from a closed account. The account numbers on the check were altered by changing the 3's to 8's. (MNFCTF 09-000063)

On **March 3, 2009**, Christine Vang Lo (DOB 9/15/68) was charged with Felony Offering a Forged Check. Lo was arrested trying to pass a forged check and had passed one the day previous to her arrest. The checks Lo was trying to pass and the group she was working with are part of a larger group being investigated by another Investigator at the Task Force. (MNFCTF 09-000254)

On **March 10, 2009**, Gavin Christopher Combs (DOB 3/9/78) was charged with Felony Possession or Sale of Stolen or Counterfeit Checks. This charge was the result of a search warrant executed at 3201 Girard Ave North in 2008. (MNFCTF 08-000952)

On **March 12, 2009**, a search warrant was conducted in Minneapolis, MN, for stolen property ordered via the internet using stolen credit cards and Pay Pal accounts. The items were ordered throughout the United States and Asia and shipped to the address where the search warrant was conducted. The original complaint came from the Home Shopping Network. Five computers, mail with other people's names, mass storage devices and suspected stolen items were recovered. (MNFCTF 09-000247)

On **March 17, 2009**, Bennie Joseph Ferrando (DOB 1/4/75) was charged with Felony Identity Theft. Ferrando opened a Bill Me Later account under the victim's name and successfully purchased over \$2,000 worth of merchandise online. (MNFCTF 09-000377)

In **March 2009**, a black male, later identified as Talib Abdulhaqq Shabazz (DOB 2/28/68), passed counterfeit checks purported to be from the victim's account. The suspect used fictitious names in both Superior and Duluth. The suspect was arrested attempting to pick up checks from an account he attempted to open using the counterfeit checks and fictitious names. On **March 31, 2009**, Shabazz was charged with five (5) felony counts: Attempted Possession or Transfer of Counterfeit Check, Attempted Identity Theft, Attempted Theft by Swindle, Attempted Theft by False Representation and Offering a Forged Check. (MNFCTF 09-000275)

APRIL 2009

On **April 9, 2009**, Brianna Marie Darwin (DOB 12/26/85) was charged with Felony Identity Theft in Wright County District Court. Darwin used the victim's checking account and Minnesota Driver's License to purchase merchandise in Fargo, ND. (MNFCTF 09-000465)

Kailie Marie Petschen-Rodriguez (DOB 2/14/89) was charged with Felony Issuance of a Dishonored check on **April 10, 2009**. Petschen-Rodriguez wrote 11 dishonored checks at Coborn's in Albertville. (MNFCTF 09-000611)

On **April 14, 2009**, Lawrence Edward Thomas Sr. (DOB 8/31/84) was charged with Felony Offering A Forged Check. Thomas presented a check on the victim's account at a Money Express in Minneapolis. The suspect claimed he had received the check as financial aid. The victim was contacted and they advised that they had not provided the suspect with the check. (MNFCTF 09-000283)

A search warrant was conducted on **April 16, 2009**, on the residence of suspect R.S. The suspect stole the identity of a victim and passed counterfeit checks on another victim's account. Cell phones, a laptop computer, a MN DL in the name of another, a social security card in the name of another, notes listing business tax ID numbers and social security numbers and dates of birth were recovered. The laptop computer was taken to the Hennepin County computer examiner for processing. Charges are pending with the results of the exam. (MNFCTF 09-000500)

On **April 22, 2009**, Jocque Pierre Reeves (DOB 1/4/88) was charged with Felony Offering A Forged Check. Reeves entered a US Bank in Minneapolis and attempted to cash a counterfeit check from a Wells Fargo bank account. Reeves admitted to purchasing the check on the street for \$50. (MNFCTF 09-000456)

On **April 29, 2009**, a female suspect deposited a counterfeit check valued at \$9,260.94 into an account at a local bank. The next day the female suspect was able to make a cash withdrawal of \$9,000 from the account prior to the bank realizing the fraud. The female suspect was identified and arrested. The female suspect admitted to the fraud during an interview. This case has been submitted to the Hennepin County Attorney's Office for charging. (MNFCTF 09-000570)

Christopher Melvin Richardson (DOB 8/19/78) was charged with Gross Misdemeanor Financial Transaction Card Fraud - Use Card of Another on **April 28, 2009**. Richardson attempted to purchase merchandise using the TCF Visa credit card that he has stolen from his vulnerable adult brother. (MNFCTF 09-000258)

On **April 28, 2009**, Larry Wleah Borteh (DOB 8/14/85) was charged with Felony Possession or Sale of Stolen or Counterfeit Checks and Felony Offering a Forged Check. Borteh presented a counterfeit check on the TCF bank account of Fourcrown, Inc. Borteh had an arrest warrant out for a previous forgery charge. (MNFCTF 08-001676)

Angela Tharnaa Hooks (DOB 9/24/68) was charged with Felony Check Forgery and Felony Possession or Sale of Stolen or Counterfeit Check on **April 28, 2009**. Hooks attempted to cash a check with a Minnesota ID belonging to another person. Hooks also made \$1,600 in withdrawals from the same account. (MNFCTF 09-000454)

MAY 2009

In **May 2009**, the Minnesota Financial Crimes Task Force was contacted by the Metropolitan Police Service out of London for assistance in locating a possible victim from a fraud case in the United Kingdom. Constable Dean Johnson requested assistance in locating the possible victim. Her Minnesota Driver's License was found during a search warrant done on a career fraudster's properties. The suspect was Nigerian national Anthony Gbolahan Owolabi (DOB 1/1/71) who was convicted of numerous financial crimes in the U.K. (MNFCTF 09-000536)

Between the months of **December 2008** and **May 2009**, multiple male suspects deposited counterfeit checks, drawn from a Minnesota based Indian Tribe's account, into accounts at metro area banks. The value of the counterfeit checks was in excess of \$42,000. The male suspects were then able to make cash withdrawals from the accounts prior to the banks realizing the fraud. Two suspects have been identified and one suspect has been arrested. This is an on-going investigation. (MNFCTF 09-000346, 09-000349, 09-000352, 09-000602)

An Investigator assisted Minneapolis Police Department with a search warrant at the suspect's residence on **May 26, 2009**. Suspect C.T.B. was arrested with counterfeit money. Inside the residence, more counterfeit money and a printer were found. (MNFCTF 09-000574)

On **May 27, 2009**, a consent search was conducted on a vehicle in the Minneapolis Impound lot. Stolen payroll books containing the personal information of 100 employees of a victim business of a burglary were recovered. Also recovered were several stolen IDs, counterfeit checks, jump drives, CDs and counterfeit money. (MNFCTF 09-000574)

JUNE 2009

During the months of **April** and **June 2009**, a female suspect used multiple stolen identities to commit check fraud and financial transaction card fraud. The crimes occurred throughout the states of Minnesota and Wisconsin. The identities were obtained from theft from auto victims under the direction of the female suspect. The female suspect is in custody and has admitted to the offenses. The female suspect is also attributed to a ring of identity thieves who have stolen dozens of identities and committed hundreds of thousands of dollars in fraud. The female has been charged with identity theft through the Ramsey County Attorney's Office; however, she is looking at possible charges in multiple other jurisdictions. (MNFCTF 09-000571)

While employed as a tax preparer, the suspect, D.S.B, funneled over \$19,000 of her clients money into her own checking and savings accounts. In **June 2009**, this case was submitted for Felony Theft by Swindle charges in Hennepin County District Court. (MNFACTF 08-001450)

JULY 2009

On **July 6th, 2009** Kari Lynn Goodman, (DOB 3/16/1978), was persuaded to turn herself in to the Scott County Jail for active felony check forgery warrants. Goodman admitted to stealing six more identities and passing more than \$40,000 worth of counterfeit checks in the most recent victims' names. Goodman was charged with additional, County level, felony check forgery cases and she is being held pending court for them. Goodman also received an executed sentence of 13 months for probation violations stemming from active MNFACTF cases. (MNFACTF 08-001619, 08-001765, 08-001570, 09-000571)

On **July 6, 2009**, Danny Lamar Andrews, (DOB 6/12/1961), was charged with Felony Check Forgery. Andrews attempted to use a false driver's license to withdraw money from the victim's account. A counterfeit driver's license and a piece of paper with the victim's social security number, account number, DOB and other information was found in the suspect's possession. (MNFACTF 09-000696)

On **July 6, 2009**, Darius James Saville Golden, (DOB 4/3/1987), was charged with Felony Possession or Sale of Stolen or Counterfeit Checks. Golden attempted to cash a counterfeit Money Gram money order. When arrested, Golden was found with an additional counterfeit money order. Golden stated that he had received the money orders from a person he had been emailing and texting. This person, purported to be from Nigeria, told Golden to get a bank account with the money orders and then he would send him "some millions." (MNFACTF 09-000365)

On **July 31, 2009**, Connie Marie Hanson, (DOB 9/26/1953), pled guilty to one count of making false statements in a plea arrangement with the US Attorney's Office. Hanson stole a confirmed \$1.3 million from 60+ vulnerable adults receiving Veterans and Social Security benefits. Hanson is scheduled to be sentenced to Federal Prison in October. (MNFACTF 09-000406)

AUGUST 2009

Between **February** and **August 2009**, multiple suspects conspired to defraud local area banks of nearly \$150,000. The suspects used stolen identities to make deposits of counterfeit and/or forged checks. The suspects would then withdraw the funds prior to the bank realizing the fraud. Seven suspects have been identified and two have been arrested. This investigation is on-going. (MNFACTF 09-000346, 09-000349, 09-000352 and numerous others)

In **August 2009**, one of our Investigators assisted Lonsdale PD in writing a search warrant for an Identity Theft case involving suspect K.J. and the suspect's company. This case involves the suspect's debt collection company and the suspect stealing victim's identities through credit reports and routing those checks to his business bank accounts. So far four victims have been identified in California, Arizona, Kansas and Wisconsin. The total loss exceeds \$63,000. This investigation is on-going. (MNFCTF 09-000918)

On **August 11, 2009**, Gabriel Hadera Francois (DOB 10/29/1962) was charged with 8 counts of Felony Issuance of a Dishonored Check. Francois recruited Hispanic workers to complete various tasks in multiple dwelling remodels, but failed to pay them for work completed. Francois would persuade them that he would eventually pay them so they would continue working. Francois issued multiple worthless checks to the employees and vendors. (MNFCTF 08-000978)

SEPTEMBER 2009

On **September 2, 2009**, Investigators of the Minnesota Financial Crimes Task Force executed multiple search warrants with the United States Secret Service and the assistance of nearly 90 metro area local, state and federal investigators. These search warrants related to a large scale International identity theft, account takeover, credit card fraud and check theft/fraud ring. This case targeted 8 addresses with search warrants and 13 known suspects, 10 of which had arrest warrants. This investigation is on-going. (MNFCTF 09-000784)

In **September** of **2009**, Suspect S.R.M. stole outgoing mail while working at a mail sorting center. The mail sorting facility processed mail for local banks which included checks and savings bonds. This investigation is being worked with the USPIS and local charges are pending. (MNFCTF 09-001096)

Between the months of **June and September 2009**, multiple Asian female suspects conspired to defraud local area banks of more than \$100,000. The suspects used worthless credit card convenience checks to inflate their bank account balances, and then withdrew the funds prior to the banks realizing the fraud. Four suspects have been identified and one has been arrested. This investigation is on-going. (MNFCTF 09-000975, 09-000994, 09-000995, 09-000996, 09-001101)

OCTOBER 2009

Between the dates of **January 2007** and **October 2009**, a suspect defrauded a national cellular phone carrier of approximately \$237,000. The suspect worked at the company as an account manager. The suspect was able to illegally discount cellular phones, order them for business names of the accounts he managed and ship the phones to himself. The suspect then sold the phones through Ebay. Records obtained from Ebay showed that the suspect had sold nearly 600 cellular phones. The suspect was interviewed and he confessed to the criminal

activity. This case is being presented to the United States Attorney's Office for charging. (MNFCTF 09-001211)

On **October 7, 2009**, Tony Donrico Black, (DOB 6/12/1975), was charged with Felony Offering a Forged Check. Black attempted to cash a stolen check at Wells Fargo in Minneapolis. The check Black attempted to cash had been stolen. (MNFCTF 09-000916)

In **October of 2009**, a California based company reported that a suspect had purchased multiple stereo components from their business using worthless checks. The suspect was located and admitted to the criminal activity. While investigators were at the suspect's residence, they located two vehicles stolen by the suspect. These vehicles included a Chevrolet Tahoe and a Maserati. The suspect was arrested and charged with Possession of Stolen Property. The check portion of this case is still under investigation. (MNFCTF 09-003001)

On **October 14, 2009**, Raymond Anthony Martin, (DOB 1/25/1973), was charged with Felony Offering a Forged Check. Martin attempted to cash a counterfeit check at River Liquor in Minneapolis. Martin presented his ID and when the owner confirmed the check was bad he fled. A license plate number was obtained by the owner. A consent search was done on the vehicle and a house located in Robbinsdale. (MNFCTF 09-001055)

On **October 14, 2009**, Raymond Anthony Martin, (DOB 1/25/1973), was charged with Felony Possession or Sale of Stolen or Counterfeit Checks and Felony Theft by Swindle. Martin opened up two checking accounts using the ID of Y.H.E. The accounts were opened using counterfeit checks. Martin and Y.H.E. then attempted to withdraw money from the accounts. Y.H.E. was arrested. (MNFCTF 09-000680)

On **October 26, 2009**, Christopher Chet Anderson, (DOB 1/19/1978), was charged with Felony Offering a Forged Check and Felony Possession or Sale of Stolen or Counterfeit Checks. Anderson had placed an ad on Craigslist to rent a room in his house. He received a reply from a person from Idaho but received MoneyGram money orders from a person in California. Anderson thought something might have been wrong before he attempted to cash them. The money orders were counterfeit. (MNFCTF 09-1060)

A search warrant was conducted in the 11000 block of Hampshire Court East in Champlin on **October 27, 2009**. Information was obtained through monitoring Raymond Martin's phone conversations from the Hennepin County Jail. Martin was instructing his girlfriend, B.M.B, on how to print counterfeit checks. He also instructed her who to contact to assist her in printing and cashing the checks. B.M.B. told Martin that the computer was set up in her bedroom and was ready to go. The search warrant resulted in 4 computers being recovered. At least 30 business accounts were recovered from B.M.B's bedroom. Some of the business accounts were photo copies of the original checks when they were cashed. (MNFCTF 09-001232)

NOVEMBER 2009

On **November 19, 2009**, Ronnie Lee Phillips, (DOB 2/1/1963), was charged with Felony Offering a Forged Check. Phillips was attempting to open a bank account at US Bank with a counterfeit check. Phillips stated that he received the check for helping a person he knows as "Al Capone" clean the streets and sidewalks of his neighborhood. During the course of the investigation it was learned that Phillips had opened another checking account at Wells Fargo a month earlier using a counterfeit check. (MNFCTF 09-001084)

On **November 27, 2009**, a search warrant was conducted in the 1100 block of Irving Ave N in Minneapolis. This search warrant was conducted on the home of a former US Bank and current Wells Fargo bank employee. B.N. G. had been giving out confidential bank information to criminals. Multiple computers were found during the search warrant along with two full bank files from US Bank. These files included original bank signature cards. (MNFCTF 09-001405)

DECEMBER 2009

On **December 12, 2009**, Charles Amankwah-Akuffo, (8/28/1980), was charged with Felony Identity Theft, Felony Theft by Swindle over \$5,000 and F-Forgery. Amankwah-Akuffo did a bank account takeover of a person living in the state of Georgia. Amankwah-Akuffo used a counterfeit California Drivers License to purchase 2 Lexus cars and 1 Mercedes car at a dealership. Two of the vehicles were recovered, one with the suspect driving. He was arrested and was found to have the counterfeit DL in his possession. (MNFCTF 09-003002)

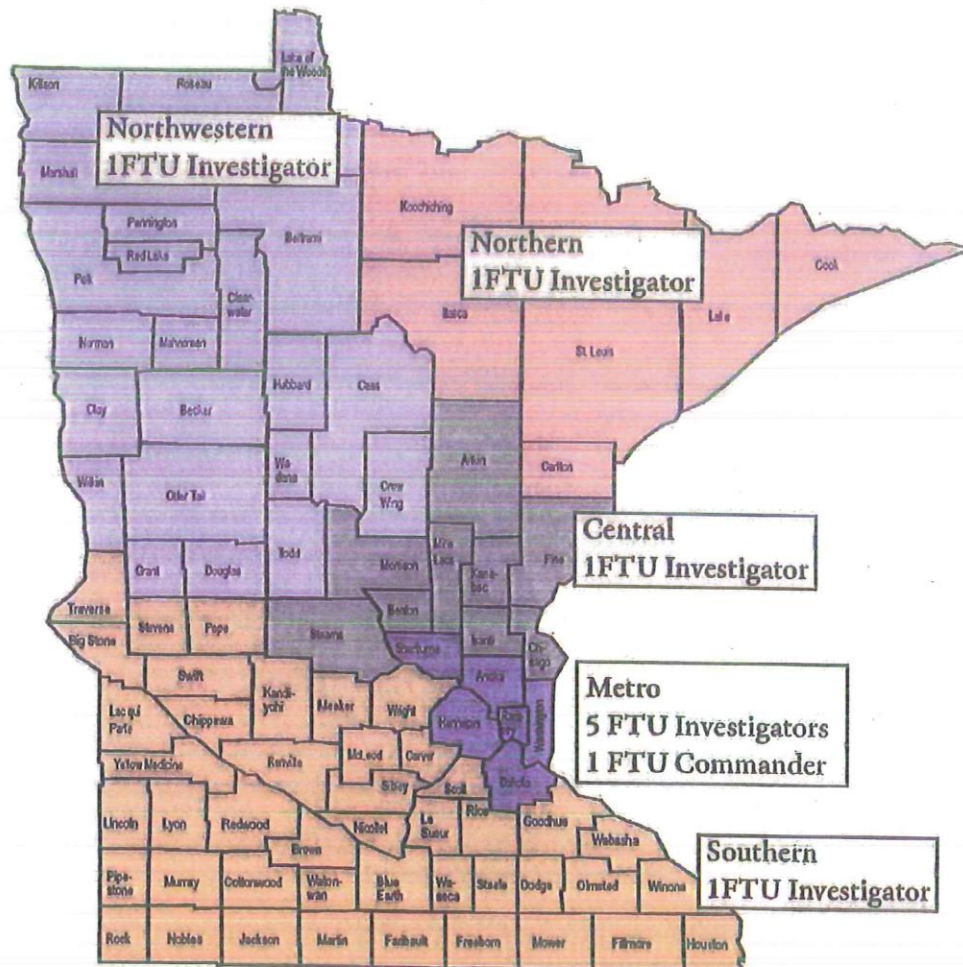
On **December 18, 2009**, five black male suspects used stolen credit cards information to re-encode numerous credit cards. The credit cards were then used to make high dollar purchases at shopping malls around the Twin Cities area. The suspects were able to purchase items totaling more than \$20,000 before three of them were arrested. Three search warrants were executed on the suspects' hotel rooms. Some of the illegally purchased merchandise was recovered. Two of the suspects have been charged and possible charges are forthcoming for the remaining three suspects. (MNFCTF 09-003005)

A search warrant was executed on **December 22, 2009** in the 8600 block of Edinbrook Crossing in Brooklyn Park. This warrant was the result of further investigation regarding **MNFCTF 09-003002**. The apartment belonged to O.E.J. O.E.J. accompanied Charles Amankwah-Akuffo to Wells Fargo bank to arrange for a wire transfer from the victim's account to purchase vehicles. It was learned that O.E.J. had appropriated the identity of a victim out of the state of California. This victim's information was then used by O.E.J. to open a bank account and later cash a check. O.E.J. was arrested during the search warrant and was charged on **December 24, 2009**, with Felony Theft by Swindle over \$35,000 and Felony Identity Theft. One computer and many paper items that could possibly be related to Identity Theft were recovered. (MNFCTF 09-003002)

2009 Minnesota Financial Crimes Task Force

Department of Public Safety, Office of Justice Programs

Task Force Regions and Number of Investigators Assigned



MN FINANCIAL CRIMES ADVISORY BOARD MEMBERS

January, 2010

1. Michael Campion, Dept. of Public Safety, 651-215-1527, Michael.Campion@state.mn.us
Alternate, Dave Bjerga, 651-793-1110, David.Bjerga@state.mn.us
2. Jeffrey Bilcik, Assistant Attorney General, Attorney General's Office, 651-297-5909,
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3. Jeff Long, Chief of Police, Edina, MN, 952-826-0467, jlong@ci.edina.mn.us
4. Gary Miller, Wright County Sheriff, 763-682-7619, gary.miller@co.wright.mn.us
5. Brent Lindgren, Mille Lacs County Sheriff, 320-983-8250, brent.lindgren@co.mille-lacs.mn.us
6. Joseph Dixon, United States Attorney's Office, 612-664-5608, joe.dixon@usdoj.gov
7. Emery Adoradio, Hennepin County Attorney's Office, 612-348-7947,
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8. Keith Hayden, US Postal Inspection Service, 651-290-4604, WKHayden@uspis.gov
9. Vickie Colliander, Bremer Bank, 651-734-4767, vlcolliander@bremer.com
10. Jim Howe, AARP, 651-426-0157, Jhowe6790@usfamily.net
11. Patrick Henry, MN Financial Crimes Task Force, 763-502-7756,
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12. Robert Ellingson, Board of Public Defense, 612-349-2569, Robert.ellingson@state.mn.us
13. Senator Mary Olson, 651-296-5502, sen.mary.olson@senate.mn
14. Representative John Lesch, 651-297-8137, rep.john.lesch@house.mn
15. Amelia Huffman, Captain, Minneapolis Police Department, 612-673-3411,
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16. Julio LaRosa, IRS, Criminal Investigation Division, 651-312-8022,
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17. Jim Exsted, Chief of Police, Baxter, MN, jim.exsted@ci.baxter.mn.us
18. John Kirkwood, United States Secret Service, 612-348-1800,
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MINNESOTA FINANCIAL CRIMES TASK FORCE

BUDGET PERIOD ENDING 6/30/2011

FUNDING/FORFEITURE: FY ending 6/30/2010

LEGISLATIVE FUNDING		300,000
FEDERAL FORFEITURE		
FUNDS (carry over)		159,019
BCA Funding		40,000

TOTAL FUNDING		499,019
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TF EXPENDITURES:

QWEST		4,800
FLOYD SECURITY		700
METRO COPIER		2,600
SPRINT/NEXTEL		1,200
MINIKAHDA STORAGE		1,100
TOTAL		10,400

GRANTS/PERSONNEL

COMMANDER		80,000
BAXTER PD		50,000
DULUTH PD		50,000
EDINA PD		50,000
MILLE LACS CTY		50,000
MINNEAPOLIS PD		50,000
WRIGHT CTY		50,000
ANALYSTS		73,000

TOTAL EXPENDITURES		463,400
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CARRYFORWARD TO FY 2011		35,619
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FUNDING/FORFEITURE: ending 6/30/2011

LEGISLATIVE FUNDING		300,000
CARRY FORWARD		35,619

TOTAL FUNDING		335,619
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TF EXPENDITURES:

QWEST		4,800
FLOYD SECURITY		700
METRO COPIERS		2,600
SPRINT/NEXTEL		1,200
MINIKAHDA STORAGE		1,100
TOTAL		10,400

GRANTS/PERSONNEL

COMMANDER		80,000
BAXTER PD		50,000
DULUTH PD		50,000
EDINA PD		50,000
MILLE LACS CTY		50,000
MINNEAPOLIS PD		50,000
WRIGHT CTY		50,000
ANALYSTS		73,000

TOTAL EXPENDITURES		463,400
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PROJECTED DEFICIT		(\$127,781)
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