



# Department of Justice

United States Attorney Edward J. Tarver

Southern District of Georgia

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## **HINESVILLE GUN SHOP OWNER PLEADS GUILTY TO DEALING IN STOLEN MILITARY EQUIPMENT**

**SAVANNAH, GA** – JOSHUA WORKS, owner of Mission Essential, a gun shop in Hinesville, Georgia, pled guilty yesterday before United States District Court Judge William T. Moore, Jr. to dealing in stolen military equipment. The property was stolen from Fort Stewart Military Reservation.

United States Attorney Edward J. Tarver stated, "Much of the military equipment stolen in this case was manufactured specifically for use by our nation's military and in support of the mission to protect the United States. The protection of the American people continues to be the number one priority of the United States Attorney's Office. The community and the nation becomes less safe when military ammunition and other equipment falls in the hands of those who have no governmentally recognized military purpose or mission."

Evidence presented during WORKS' guilty plea revealed that between 2006 and 2008 WORKS bought approximately ten thousand dollars in stolen military equipment from soldiers and contractors on Fort Stewart. The stolen equipment included night vision goggles, gun parts and ammunition. Much of the stolen equipment was resold through WORKS' gun shop to the general public.

WORKS' prosecution is part of the Department of Defense's investigation of the sale of stolen military equipment from Fort Stewart and Hunter Army Airfield. Approximately ten members of the military assigned to Fort Stewart have been referred for Courts Martial as a result of the investigation. Three additional civilians, Thad Ullom, Timothy Lopez and John Silva, were previously convicted in federal court on felony charges relating to the purchase and sale of stolen military equipment, including night vision goggles and grenade launcher laser sights.

Mr. Tarver praised the extraordinary work of Department of Defense Special Agent Chip Curington, who investigated these cases. Mr. Tarver also thanked the Army's Criminal Investigative Division and Special Agent Lee Hoover from the ATF who assisted on the WORKS case.

Assistant United States Attorney Greg Hurchalla prosecuted the case for the United States. For additional information, please contact First Assistant United States Attorney James D. Durham at (912) 201-2547.

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