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New York City Police Officer Indicted on Narcotics Conspiracy and Official Misconduct Charges

BRIDGET G. BRENNAN, New York City's Special Narcotics Prosecutor, New York City Police Commissioner WILLIAM J. BRATTON, JAMES J. HUNT, Special Agent in Charge of the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration's (DEA) New York Division, New York State Police Superintendent Joseph D'Amico and Acting Special Agent in Charge JAMES HIGGINS of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) New York Field Division announced today the indictment and arrest of a New York City Police Officer on charges of Conspiracy in the Second Degree and Official Misconduct.

New York City Police Officer MERLIN ALSTON was arrested last night at the NYPD's 46th Precinct in the Bronx as a result of a long-term wiretap investigation by the Office of the Special Narcotics Prosecutor, the New York City Police Department's (NYPD) Internal Affairs Bureau (IAB), the New York Drug Enforcement Task Force (DETF) Group T 33 and ATF. DETF Group T 33 is comprised of agents and officers from the DEA, the NYPD and the New York State Police.

A police officer since January 2006, ALSTON was assigned to the NYPD's 46th Precinct and formerly served as a Field Intelligence Officer. He is scheduled for arraignment today in Manhattan Supreme Court before Judge Bonnie G. Wittner in Part 61, 100 Centre Street, 11th Floor.

The indictment charges that between June 2010 and October 2014, ALSTON conspired to commit Criminal Sale of a Controlled Substance in the First and Second Degrees. ALSTON also faces two counts of Official Misconduct. ALSTON allegedly participated in drug transactions, served as a driver for a drug trafficker and provided protection. He also assisted drug dealers in avoiding police detection.

As part of the conspiracy, ALSTON allegedly drove a separately charged drug trafficker to locations in the Bronx and elsewhere. Between the summer and fall of 2010, ALSTON and the drug trafficker acted in concert to deliver more than eight ounces of cocaine to an individual in the Bronx on two separate dates. On both occasions, ALSTON and the drug trafficker were together inside a vehicle in the vicinity of an auto body shop located at 1617 Stillwell Avenue. ALSTON removed cocaine from a hidden compartment in the vehicle and handed it to the drug trafficker.

Earlier this year, on March 20, 2014, ALSTON agreed to accompany the drug trafficker to a meeting with another individual. Prior to the meeting, ALSTON agreed to pick up a shotgun at the drug trafficker's home in Westchester County, asking, "Yo, you want me to come and uhm...pick that up from you or no?" Using coded language, ALSTON referred to the weapon as "The...that noise."

Shortly after receiving the shotgun, ALSTON went to the vicinity of East 176th Street and Webster Avenue in the Bronx and watched from a vehicle as the drug trafficker met with another individual. Later that day, ALSTON returned the shotgun to the drug trafficker.

The evening of April 8, 2014, ALSTON drove a vehicle with the drug trafficker as a passenger. The two discussed the price of a kilogram of cocaine. Subsequently ALSTON drove the drug trafficker to a location where the drug trafficker had said he intended to sell drugs.

Between July and September of 2014, ALSTON offered to arrange the sale of more than half an ounce of heroin from another individual to the drug trafficker. He met with the drug trafficker and others in the Bronx to discuss the sale of heroin.

Also alleged in the indictment, ALSTON warned a separately charged cocaine supplier about impending police activity on May 7, 2014. Using coded language, ALSTON told the cocaine supplier, "Alright, let them know that I'm come, that I have to go over there so to, to ghost, to be gone." ALSTON described the location of the police activity as "By the corner, right by the...by the court."

The cocaine supplier then called another individual and said, "If you have any of the guys' number, tell them to be careful because my buddy called me and told me that it seems like that [they] are going to do a raid around there or something."

INDICTED DEFENDANT

CHARGES

Merlin Alston
12/6/1982

Conspiracy 2nd – 1 ct
Official Misconduct – 2 cts

The charges and allegations are merely accusations and the defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty.