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NEW YORK MAN SENTENCED ON CHILD PORNOGRAPHY AND OBSTRUCTION OF JUSTICE CHARGES

WASHINGTON – Greg Burnell, 50, of Sarasota Springs, N.Y., was sentenced to 72 months in prison for possessing child pornography and obstructing the federal investigation into his crimes, Assistant Attorney General Alice S. Fisher of the Criminal Division, U.S. Attorney for the Northern District of New York Glenn T. Suddaby, and Albany, N.Y., Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) Resident Agent in Charge Patrick Coultrey announced today. Burnell, a former executive with Delmar Learning in Clifton Park, N.Y., is the latest defendant to be convicted in “Operation Emissary,” an ICE nationwide investigation targeting a Web site that offered images and movies of hardcore child pornography.

U.S. District Judge Thomas J. McAvoy, at the federal court house in Albany imposed the 72 month sentence and also ordered Burnell to pay a \$30,000 fine and serve a lifetime term of supervised release, to begin immediately following Burnell’s term of imprisonment.

In pleading guilty, Burnell admitted to accessing the child pornography Web site on multiple occasions from his Saratoga Springs home during a four-day period in November 2005 and using his lap top computer to download numerous illegal images and video. Among the many items of contraband he acquired were several images and videos depicting pre-pubescent females being subjected to sadistic or masochistic conduct. Burnell admitted that he possessed this child pornography between Nov.14, 2005, and July 28, 2006. He also admitted that he obstructed the investigation into these crimes by destroying his laptop computer on July 28, 2006, soon after he learned that ICE special agents in the Northern District of New York had begun investigating his activities and wanted to speak to him.

Operation Emissary, which began in 2006, focused on a commercial Web site offering access to videos and images of hardcore child pornography. The Web site alerted would-be subscribers that subscribing to the Web site was illegal and warned them to be discreet about their purchases. Investigators targeted individuals like Burnell who subscribed to the Web site over a period of approximately two to three months at the end of 2005 and 2006. To date, more than 290 arrests have been made as part of the resulting nationwide sweep.

The case was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Tina Sciocchetti and Trial Attorney Steven Grocki of the Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section of the Criminal Division. ICE’s Albany Field Office conducted the investigation.

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