



*Office of the United States Attorney
District of Arizona*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Tuesday, March 17, 2009

For Information Contact Public Affairs
SANDY RAYNOR
Telephone: (602) 514-7625
Cell: (602) 525-2681

ULTRALIGHT PILOT SENTENCED FOR MARIJUANA TRAFFICKING

TUCSON, Ariz. – Jesus Isaias Iriarte, 25, of Nogales, Sonora, Mexico, was sentenced today by U.S. District Judge Marvin E. Aspen to 33 months in federal prison for using an ultralight in an attempt to smuggle marijuana. Iriarte pleaded guilty on December 23, 2008 to Possession with Intent to Distribute Marijuana.

On October 8, 2008, the U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) Air Branch detected an unidentified aircraft flying north from the border in an area west of Nogales, Arizona. Local CBP Air Enforcement officials responded and spotted the ultralight piloted by Iriarte. Agents followed the ultralight in a helicopter to an open field in Marana, Ariz. and observed bundles strapped to the frame of the aircraft. Iriarte landed the ultralight and attempted to flee but was apprehended by law enforcement. Approximately 95 kilograms (209 pounds) of marijuana was recovered off the frame of the ultralight. Iriarte received an enhanced sentence for using an aircraft to transport the marijuana.

The investigation in this case was conducted by U.S. Customs and Border Protection Air Branch and U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement. The prosecution was handled by Ann DeMarais, Assistant U.S. Attorney, District of Arizona, Tucson.

CASE NUMBER: CR08-1368
RELEASE NUMBER: 2009-093(Iriarte)

###

For more information on the U.S. Attorney's Office, District of Arizona, visit <http://www.usdoj.gov/usao/az/>