



Office of the Special Narcotics Prosecutor For the City of New York
Bridget G. Brennan, Special Narcotics Prosecutor

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70 Kilograms of Cocaine worth over \$10 Million Seized in Hunts Point

Bridget G. Brennan, New York City's Special Narcotics Prosecutor, Ray Donovan, Special Agent in Charge of the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration's (DEA) New York Division, New York City Police Commissioner James P. O'Neill, New York State Police Superintendent Keith M. Corlett and Bronx District Attorney Darcel D. Clark announced the alleged seizure of 70 kilograms of suspected cocaine (154 pounds) in the Hunts Point section of the Bronx and the arrest of one defendant. The narcotics were destined for distribution on New York City's streets and in the Northeast.

Defendant Miguel MARTE-VERAS is scheduled for arraignment later today in Manhattan Criminal Court on charges of Operating as a Major Trafficker and Criminal Possession of a Controlled Substance in the First and Third Degrees. The case is being prosecuted by the Office of the Special Narcotics Prosecutor (SNP).

Members of the DEA's New York Drug Enforcement Task Force Group T-41 were conducting surveillance as part of an ongoing narcotics investigation in Hunts Point on Wednesday, August 28, 2019 and Thursday, August 29, 2019 when they observed two trucks enter a commercial warehouse, 559 Longfellow Avenue, through a metal security gate. One truck was transporting a shipping container and the other was a tractor trailer with a white and blue refrigerated container.

On Thursday, August 29, 2019, members of Group T-41 subsequently observed a blue Hyundai Santa Fe enter 559 Longfellow Avenue at approximately 11:45 a.m. Agents and officers were familiar with the blue Hyundai Santa Fe from previous surveillance operations, during which the car was seen entering and exiting 559 Longfellow Avenue bearing different license plates, a common counter-surveillance tactic.

Members of Group T-41 followed the blue Hyundai Santa Fe as it left the warehouse at 12:54 p.m. and conducted a vehicle stop in the vicinity of 1552 Washington Avenue. The vehicle was driven by MARTE-VERAS. Agents and officers observed two large black suitcases inside the car and recovered 70 brick shaped packages. Each package was heat sealed in plastic consistent with the appearance of a kilogram of narcotics.

Members of DETF froze the warehouse location and obtained a search warrant with assistance from the Office of the Special Narcotics Prosecutor. At approximately 5:30 p.m. on Thursday, August 29, 2019, members of Group T-41 entered 559 Longfellow Avenue and found the white and blue refrigerated container previously observed on the tractor trailer. A search revealed rotted bags of papayas, pallets of cartons of oregano and coconuts inside the container. Port Authority K-9 “Balú” alerted to the presence of narcotics when searching the container. Further investigation located a concealed compartment in the top trailer.

The DEA estimated that the black market value of the suspected cocaine seized at nearly \$2.5 million wholesale value and over \$10 million street value. Field tests yielded positive results for cocaine. DEA laboratory analysis of the seized narcotics is pending.

Special Narcotics Prosecutor Bridget G. Brennan thanked Bronx District Attorney Darcel D. Clark and commended SNP’s Special Investigations Bureau and the New York Drug Enforcement Task Force, including members of the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration, the New York City Police Department and the New York State Police, for their work on the case. Special Prosecutor Brennan thanked Port Authority K-9 “Balú” and the NYPD’s Emergency Services Unit for their assistance.

“This investigation uncovered a commercial warehouse close to the busy Hunts Point markets that served as a front for international narcotics importation. The sheer amount of cocaine seized in one week reflects the magnitude of this drug operation,” said Special Narcotics Prosecutor Bridget G. Brennan. “Despite the thousands of trucks that pass through the area each day, our dedicated partners in the New York Drug Enforcement Task Force successfully disrupted a major narcotics supply route.”

DEA Special Agent in Charge Ray Donovan said, “In 2018, cocaine was involved in 52% of overdose deaths in New York City. Cocaine remains a major public health threat and is commonly being mixed with fentanyl. Along with an increase in cocaine seizures in recent years, we have seen bulk smuggling methods using trailers filled with cover loads of produce. This seizure is significant because we interdicted millions of dollars-worth of cocaine amidst pallets of papayas, oregano, and coconuts destined to New York City and the northeast.”

“These arrests and narcotics seizures once again demonstrate that the investigative efforts of the NYPD and our law enforcement partners are precisely-focused, patient, and relentless. As long as individuals are involved in illegal narcotics trafficking, the NYPD and our partners will stop this threat to public safety. I commend and thank the NYPD detectives involved in this investigation, the members of the New York Drug Enforcement Task Force, and the Special Narcotics Prosecutor,” said Police Commissioner James P. O’Neill.

New York State Police Superintendent Keith M. Corlett said, “Due to the hard work and cooperation between federal, state and local law enforcement, we have disrupted a major drug trafficking operation and prevented illegal narcotics from making it into our communities. We will continue this partnership and aggressively target those who bring dangerous drugs and violence into our neighborhoods.”

Defendant	Charges
Miguel Marte-Veras Bronx, NY 8/24/1987	Operating as a Major Trafficker – 1 ct CPCS 1 st – 1 ct CPCS 3 rd – 1 ct

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