



EL PASO INTELLIGENCE CENTER

TACTICAL BULLETINS TEAM - BULLETIN EB10-08

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Ambulance Used for Drug Smuggling Interdicted in Arkansas

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February 8, 2010

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On January 24, 2010, Arkansas State Police troopers seized 105 pounds of marijuana from an ambulance on Interstate 40 in Faulkner County, Arkansas. The ambulance, a 2001 Ford Expedition sport-utility vehicle (SUV) with California license plates, was stopped for a traffic violation on eastbound I-40 near Conway, Arkansas. The vehicle, which was painted white with orange emergency stripes on the sides, had blue EMT-style medical decals on the rear side quarter windows, red emergency lights mounted above the front bumper, and a red emergency light bar mounted on the roof. The driver and passenger of the ambulance were residents of Oroville, California, and had in their possession healthcare industry-style identification badges from a mental health facility where they had been previously employed. A consent search of the ambulance led to the discovery of the marijuana, which was concealed inside three locked boxes of alleged X-ray equipment in the rear cargo area. The subsequent investigation revealed that the driver had purchased the ambulance "used" with its paint, insignia, and emergency lights intact, and then registered it in the name of a bogus private ambulance service in Oroville. It was also determined that the subjects were en route to the Charlotte, North Carolina, area, to deliver the marijuana. (Source: *Information and photographs courtesy of the Arkansas State Police, Little Rock, AR, and the Gulf Coast HIDTA Concealment Method Bulletin, Dated 01/27/10.*)

Analyst Comment: EPIC has received several previous reports of seizures in which commercial and official-type vehicles (i.e., government, emergency, etc.) have been duplicated or "cloned" by traffickers in order to avert suspicion while transporting drugs. The drug seizure reported above is similarly significant because it shows that traffickers may also use used or surplus official-type vehicles for transporting drugs on public highways.

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used 2001 Ford Expedition Ambulance



used 2001 Ford Expedition Ambulance



invalid medical identification badge

Questions or comments in reference to this report can be directed to the EPIC Research and Analysis Section, Tactical Bulletins Unit, IA Jeff Jasek at (915) 760-2445, or Acting Unit Chief Monika Barnum at (915) 760-2747.

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