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NEWS RELEASE

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"ICEMAN," FOUNDER OF ONLINE CREDIT CARD THEFT RING, PLEADS GUILTY TO WIRE FRAUD CHARGES

United States Attorney Mary Beth Buchanan announced today, June 29, 2009, that Max Ray Butler, also known as Max Ray Vision, of San Francisco, California, has pleaded guilty in federal court in Pittsburgh to wire fraud charges.

Butler, age 36, of 73 Webster Street, San Francisco, California, pleaded guilty to two counts before Senior United States District Judge Maurice B. Cohill.

In connection with the guilty plea, Assistant United States Attorney Luke Dembosky advised the court that Butler, known widely on the Internet as "Iceman," among other aliases, conducted computer hacking and identity theft on the Internet on a massive scale. As part of the scheme, Butler hacked into financial institutions, credit card processing centers and other secure computers in order to acquire credit card account information and other personal identification information. Many of these cards were provided to an accomplice, Christopher Aragon, based in the

Los Angeles area, who used the cards and a team of associates to buy up merchandise for sale. Butler sold the rest of the card numbers outright over the Internet.

Dembosky stated that Butler and Aragon created a website known as "CardersMarket," devoted to the acquisition, use and sale of credit card account information, a process known as "carding." A primary purpose of the site was to recruit talented individuals to assist in carding activity. At its peak, CardersMarket had approximately 4,500 members worldwide.

Butler was arrested by the United States Secret Service on a criminal complaint in the case on September 5, 2007 in San Francisco. Dembosky informed the court that a search of the computer systems in Butler's apartment revealed more than 1.8 million stolen credit card account numbers. The Secret Service provided these account numbers to Visa, Mastercard, American Express and Discover, which reported that the amount of fraudulent charges on the cards in Butler's possession totaled approximately $86.4 million. Dembosky said that these losses have been borne by the thousands of banks that issued the cards.

Judge Cohill scheduled sentencing for October 20, 2009 at 1:30 pm. The law provides for a maximum sentence at each count of 30 years in prison, a fine of $1,000,000, or both. Under the Federal Sentencing Guidelines, the actual sentence imposed would be based upon the seriousness of the offense and the prior criminal history, if any, of the defendant.

The United States Secret Service led the investigation of Butler, with the assistance of the Computer Crime and Intellectual Property Section (CCIPS) of the Department of Justice; the Federal Bureau of Investigation; the Vancouver Police Department, Vancouver, Canada; the Newport Beach Police Department, Newport Beach, California; and the Orange County Sheriff's Department, Orange County, California. The United States Attorney's Office for the Northern District of California also assisted in the apprehension of Butler.

An indictment is only a charge and is not evidence of guilt. A defendant is presumed innocent and is entitled to a fair trial at which the government must prove guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.

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