



*** For Immediate Release ***

Captain Monica Alexander
Government and Media Relations

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Lieutenant James Mjor

Email: James.Mjor@wsp.wa.gov

Phone: 360-584-4482

Twitter: @wastatepatrol

Third “Operation Human Freight” Leads to the Arrest of Suspects for Promoting Prostitution

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RSVP: rick.johnson@wsp.wa.gov

King County – Washington State Patrol (WSP), in partnership with the Federal Way Police Department, arrested nine people during “Operation Human Freight. This is the third WSP law enforcement operation of this kind this year. During the one day operation at the Federal Way rest area along I-5, undercover detectives rescued people caught up in human trafficking and prostitution, offered them resources and, advocacy assistance.

“The Washington State Patrol and many stakeholders recognize the crime issues that exist at the Federal Way rest area and are working tirelessly to discourage the criminal behavior, said WSP District 2 Commander, Captain Ron Mead. “This was one example of a collaborative approach to policing and the mutual sharing of assets and ideas to make an impact on our communities.”

During the evening of September 18th, detective’s set-up at the Federal Way rest area located along Interstate 5. The location was chosen because it is a high-traffic area, the number of complaints about criminal activity at the location, and safety concerns raised by the citizens who visit this rest area. Officers searched for both suspects promoting prostitution and victims of human trafficking. Within four hours, officers located nine women offering sex to our undercover detectives. They were arrested and brought to a local police station where they met with an advocate who emphasized their safety and their well-being.

The goal of the operation was to rescue young girls caught up in the cycle of prostitution and human trafficking. Advocates from the Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI) were on-scene to provide food, water, services, and contact information for all victims. Other non-government organizations provided the WSP with backpacks containing blankets, food, water, and resources information.

Detectives will continue their investigations into these crimes, which could result in additional arrests and criminal charges. Captain Mead stated, “We will continue our efforts in deterring the criminal behavior too frequently seen at the rest area so those using it for its intended purpose feel safe and secure”.

The operation was the third of its kind in the state. It involved a joint effort between agencies including:



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- Federal Way Police Department
- Lakewood Police Department
- Jefferson County Sheriff Office
- Clallam County Sheriff Office
- Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI)
- Homeland Security Investigations (HSI)
- Naval Criminal Investigative Services (NCIS)
- Puget Sound Auto Theft Task Force
- Thurston County Narcotics Task Force
- King County Prosecutor's Office
- Washington State Attorney General Office
- Washington State Patrol, Field Operation Bureau District 2
- Washington State Patrol, Commercial Vehicle Division

This operation was made possible because of the generosity and partnership with Truckers Against Trafficking (T.A.T.) and Trailer Services of Aberdeen.

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