

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY**  
**Bureau of Customs and Border Protection**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 26, 2003

**McAllen Sector Agents Discover Over One-Ton of Marijuana**  
*Discovery Made in Trailer Utilized to Transport Cement*

*SARITA, Texas* — Agents of the Bureau of Customs and Border Protection (CBP) McAllen Sector made a large discovery Monday evening after a tractor-trailer entered the traffic checkpoint located on U.S. Highway 281 south of Falfurrias, Texas. The checkpoint is located approximately 13 miles south of Falfurrias and is operated by the Falfurrias Border Patrol Station.

Agents conducting traffic check duties inspected a white tractor rig pulling a gray 1998 Vantage trailer after entering the checkpoint at approximately 11:45 p.m. The type of trailer being pulled was the type utilized to transport cement. While the agent assigned to primary inspection duties questioned the driver as to his citizenship, a canine unit assigned to the checkpoint conducted a non-intrusive free air inspection of the exterior of the tractor-trailer. The canine alerted positively to the front portion of the trailer while the primary agent determined the driver's citizenship. Border Patrol canines are trained to detect the odor of concealed persons, as well as, various narcotics.

The driver, identified as , a U.S. citizen from Mission, Texas, was referred to the secondary inspection area. In secondary, the canine unit conducted a more intensive inspection of the tractor-trailer and again alerted positively to the front portion of the trailer. The driver consented to a search of the trailer and agents discovered several large bundles wrapped in black canvas. A total of 112 bundles weighing 3,038 pounds were discovered in the trailer. Closer inspection of the bundles proved to be marijuana valued at \$2,430,400.

The driver was arrested and charged with Possession of Marijuana with Intent to Distribute. The driver, marijuana, and tractor-trailer were turned over to the Corpus Christi, Texas, Office of the Drug Enforcement Administration for disposition and prosecution.

In the past two days, McAllen Sector Agents have made 17 seizures totaling 4,483 pounds of marijuana. These seizures bring the CBP McAllen Sector FY03 marijuana seizure totals to 154,238 pounds valued at \$123,402,667. The 3,038 pounds seized Monday evening pales in comparison to seizures during the month of December that included 5,479 pounds at Falfurrias and 4,372 pounds at Rio Grande City, Texas.

Fiscal Year 2003 seizures of other narcotics in the McAllen Sector total 349 ounces of heroin valued at \$908,800, 3,316 pounds of cocaine valued at \$106,117,071, and 17,427 units of other narcotics valued at \$759,586. Other narcotics include MDMA (Ecstasy) and meth-amphetamine.

Monthly figures indicate a 17 percent decrease in narcotics related cases, 121 for March 2003 compared to 145 in March 2002, and yearly figures indicate a 24 percent decrease in narcotics related cases, 786 in FY03 compared to 1,038 in FY02.

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