



Department of Justice

United States Attorney David L. Anderson
Northern District of California

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**SACRAMENTO AREA RESIDENT CHARGED WITH FLYING DRONE OVER NFL GAMES IN
VIOLATION OF NATIONAL DEFENSE AIRSPACE REGULATIONS**

Defendant Tracey Mapes Flew Drone, Dropped Flyers Over Levi's Stadium and the Oakland Coliseum During 49ers and Raiders Games

SAN JOSE – A federal criminal complaint was filed yesterday, charging Tracey Michael Mapes with violations of national defense airspace, announced United States Attorney David L. Anderson and U.S. Department of Transportation Office of the Inspector General Regional Special Agent in Charge Jeffrey Dubsick.

According to the affidavit filed in support of the complaint, Mapes, 56, of North Highlands, in Sacramento County, modified an unmanned aircraft, or drone, by adding a compartment underneath its belly to carry a payload and used that compartment to hold dozens of flyers. On November 26, 2017, Mapes flew the drone over two National Football League games and dropped the flyers on the spectators below. First Mapes piloted the drone over Levi's Stadium, where the San Francisco 49ers were hosting the Seattle Seahawks. He then piloted the drone over the Oakland-Alameda County Coliseum, where the Oakland Raiders were hosting the Denver Broncos. Tens of thousands of spectators were present for both events.

The Federal Aviation Administration, as part of the U.S. Department of Transportation, is responsible for the control and use of navigable airspace within the United States. This responsibility includes designating certain airspace as important to national security, and restricting aircraft from operating within that airspace. This "national defense airspace" includes the area above and within a three-mile radius of National Football League stadiums during NFL games.

Mapes is scheduled to make his initial appearance in federal court on June 4, 2019 at 1:30 before the assigned duty Magistrate Judge in San Jose.

A complaint merely alleges that crimes have been committed, and the defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt. If convicted, the defendant faces a sentence of up to one year, as well as a fine of \$100,000. Further, the court may order additional periods of supervised release, fines, and restitution; however, any sentence following conviction would be imposed by the court only after consideration of the U.S. Sentencing Guidelines and the federal statute governing the imposition of a sentence, 18 U.S.C. § 3553.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Scott Simeon prosecuted the case with the assistance of Tong Zhang. The prosecution is the result of an investigation by the DOT.

Further Information:

Case #: 19-mj-70752-MAG

A copy of this press release will be placed on the U.S. Attorney's Office's website at www.usdoj.gov/usao/can.

Electronic court filings and further procedural and docket information are available at <https://ecf.cand.uscourts.gov/cgi-bin/login.pl>.

Judges' calendars with schedules for upcoming court hearings can be viewed on the court's website at www.cand.uscourts.gov.

All press inquiries to the U.S. Attorney's Office should be directed to Abraham Simmons at (415) 436-7264 or by e-mail at Abraham.Simmons@usdoj.gov.