



NEW BERN POLICE DEPARTMENT
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City of New Bern

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New Bern, North Carolina

Three Centuries of North Carolina Heritage

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PRESS RELEASE
For Immediate Release

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NEW BERN WOMAN SENTENCED IN FEDERAL COURT

A woman involved in a large drug trafficking operation was sentenced to 63 months in federal prison Thursday. **Sophia Koketa ELLISON, 04/07/1983**, of New Bern, was sentenced for her role in distributing large quantities of crack cocaine in the New Bern area.

She was originally arrested in October 2008 and charged with Conspiracy to Distribute 50 or more grams of crack cocaine, Possession with Intent to Distribute 5 or more grams of crack cocaine and False Declaration before a Grand Jury.

ELLISON's conviction comes as a result of "Operation Fresh Start," an initiative by the New Bern Police Department and federal authorities that aggressively targeted mid to upper-level drug dealers and their support networks.

Several other offenders have already been convicted and sentenced as a part of "Operation Fresh Start." The long-term operation has resulted in sentences against Martrey Newby, **ELLISON's** boyfriend, who was sentenced to 35 years in prison, Theron Thompson, 26 years and Benjamin Johnson, 23 years.

The New Bern Police Department is committed to Community Policing. Citizens are encouraged to become a "**Partner in Policing**," by reporting suspected illegal activity to the New Bern Police Department's **TIPS** line at **(252) 636-5034** or the Craven County Crime Stoppers line at 633-5141.

For additional information, please contact Beth Stevenson, Public Information Officer at the New Bern Police Department at (252) 672-4211.

Frank Palombo, Chief of Police

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