



U. S. Department of Justice

News Release

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ONE CURRENT AND THREE FORMER U.S. ARMY SOLDIERS SENTENCED
FOR FUEL THEFT SCHEME

RALEIGH - One current and three former U.S. Army soldiers were sentenced today in federal court in Raleigh, North Carolina for their involvement in a bribery scheme in Afghanistan that resulted in the theft of fuel valued at more than \$10 million.

Assistant Attorney General Leslie R. Caldwell of the Justice Department's Criminal Division, U.S. Attorney Thomas G. Walker for the Eastern District of North Carolina, Special Agent in Charge John F. Khin of the Defense Criminal Investigative Service (DCIS) Southeast Field Office, Special Agent in Charge John A. Strong of the FBI's Charlotte Division, Director Frank Robey of the U.S. Army Criminal Investigation Command's (Army CID) Major Procurement Fraud Unit and Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR) John F. Sopko made the announcement.

Each defendant previously pleaded guilty to one count of conspiracy to commit offense against the United States and one count of bribery. U.S. District Court Judge Terrence W. Boyle

of the Eastern District of North Carolina imposed the following sentences:

- Jeffery B. Edmondson, 38, of Fayetteville, North Carolina, was the senior enlisted member of the unit who supervised all of his co-conspirators, and was sentenced to 8 years in prison.
- Christopher Ciampa, 33, of Lillington, North Carolina, was sentenced to 10 years in prison.
- Enmanual Lugo, 32, of Ocean Township, New Jersey, was sentenced to 4 years in prison.
- Geoffrey Montague, 39, of Fayetteville, North Carolina, was a senior enlisted member of the unit who reported to Edmondson, and was sentenced to 5 years in prison.

"These men were trusted to provide their fellow soldiers with the resources needed to successfully complete our mission in Afghanistan. Instead, they chose to personally profit from selling stolen fuel valued at millions of dollars. These federal sentences should reassure the public that the FBI and our law enforcement partners will not tolerate the theft of government resources intended to protect our servicemen and women overseas," said John Strong, Special Agent in Charge of the FBI in North Carolina.

"John F. Sopko, the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction stated, "The vast majority of the men and women of our armed forces possess the integrity and trust that the United States has learned to expect. There is a small

percentage that betrays that trust. Sadly, these four represent that small percentage."

"Defense Criminal Investigative Service (DCIS), with our investigative partners, continues to aggressively pursue those who deprive the Department of Defense of much needed resources, such as fuel, critical to accomplishing its global missions," said DCIS Special Agent in Charge Khin. "Corruption and theft in a combat environment, especially on such a large scale, degrade the effectiveness of the U.S. armed forces, and increases the danger to our warfighters by diverting those resources to our enemies."

"This sentencing demonstrates our firm commitment to hold accountable those who commit fraud, receive kickbacks or otherwise steal from our government, in or out of uniform," said Frank Robey, director of the U.S. Army Criminal Investigation Command's Major Procurement Fraud Unit. "Special agents from our Major Procurement Fraud Unit, along with those from other federal law enforcement agencies, are unwavering in our commitment to seek out and hold responsible all those who conduct criminal activity against the United States Army and the American taxpayer."

In 2011, Edmondson, Montague, Ciampa and Lugo were U.S. Army soldiers serving with the 3rd Special Forces Group Service Detachment deployed to Kandahar Air Field in Afghanistan.

During the deployment, the defendants were responsible for managing Transportation Movement Requests (TMRs) for fuel and other items in support of military units in Afghanistan paid for by the U.S. government.

In connection with their guilty pleas, the defendants admitted to submitting fake TMRs for thousands of gallons of fuel that were neither necessary nor used by military units. The defendants admitted that, in return for cash bribe payments; they awarded all of the TMRs to the same Afghan trucking company, which used the fake TMRs to download fuel from depots on Kandahar Air Field and then sold the fuel on the black market.

The defendants admitted that they sent some of the illicit proceeds to the U.S. via wire transfer or hidden in personal items, and transported cash back to the U.S. either on their persons or in their luggage. In addition, Edmondson and Ciampa admitted to using the funds to purchase automobiles.

According to the plea agreements, the scheme caused losses to the U.S. of over \$10 million.

The case was investigated by the DCIS, FBI, Army CID and SIGAR. The case was prosecuted by Trial Attorney Wade Weems of the Criminal Division's Fraud Section, on detail from SIGAR, and Assistant U.S. Attorney Banumathi Rangarajan of the Eastern District of North Carolina.

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