

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL
OFFICE OF INVESTIGATIONS



OIG QUARTERLY CASE SUMMARIES

2nd Quarter, Fiscal Year 2018



JANUARY 2018

In January 2018, **a former Department contractor was sentenced** to three years' probation for the sale of Government property. OIG special agents determined that, from March 2016 through March 2017, the contractor, who worked as a special skills tactics instructor at the Diplomatic Security Interim Training Facility, unlawfully acquired ballistic vests and combat helmets valued at more than \$16,000 and sold and traded them online for other items. The former contractor had pleaded guilty to theft and sale of Government property in September 2017.

FEBRUARY 2018

In February 2018, **six individuals were charged** for their alleged participation in an elaborate international advance fee and money laundering scheme. The individuals allegedly impersonated bank executives and falsely told victims they would receive millions of dollars in investment funding as part of joint ventures with U.S. banks. To convince victims that the opportunities were legitimate, the perpetrators recruited U.S. citizens to pose as bank "representatives" at in-person meetings with victims around the world, and, if occurring abroad, utilized sham visits to the local U.S. embassy or consulate and fabricated U.S. Government documents to make the victims believe the U.S. Government was sponsoring the investment agreements. The scheme allegedly resulted in total losses of more than \$7 million for victims in more than 20 countries. A house in Richmond, TX; a 2014 Land Rover Range Rover; and approximately \$200,000 in cash have been seized. OIG and FBI special agents jointly investigated this matter.

In February 2018, a former Department employee was sentenced to one year of home confinement, 300 hours of community service, and three years of probation; the former employee was also ordered to pay \$416,020 in restitution and to forfeit \$53,000. The **defendant pleaded guilty** in November 2017 to conspiracy to commit theft of Government property and wire fraud. Both of these charges were related to the defendant's role in a scheme to misappropriate and resell for personal profit Department vehicles, with an estimated value of at least \$512,420. OIG and FBI special agents jointly investigated this case.

In February 2018, **a Romanian citizen was sentenced** to three years in prison for his role in a Government contract kickback scheme that caused a loss of more than \$3.4 million to the Department. A Federal jury convicted this defendant in November 2017. OIG special agents determined the contractor conspired to inflate the lease of real property for use on a Department contract. The contractor, in turn, facilitated kickback payments directly to other contractors, who were sentenced in 2017.

MARCH 2018

In March 2018, **a German citizen living in the United States was indicted** on a charge related to a scheme to defraud the Department of more than \$1.2 million. The case was investigated by OIG special agents. According to the indictment, the individual, as director of a company, was awarded grant funds to support and promote U.S. global internet freedom efforts based on the claim that the company was a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. According to the indictment, however, the company was not a 501(c)(3) and thus was ineligible for the grant. The indictment also indicated the individual spent much of the grant funds on personal expenses. An OIG Special Assistant U.S. Attorney and a Justice Department Assistant U.S. Attorney are prosecuting the case.



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