



Department of Justice

**United States Attorney Robert E. O'Neill
Middle District of Florida**

Tampa

Orlando

Jacksonville

Fort Myers

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**JACKSONVILLE MAN INDICTED FOR INTERFERING
WITH MILITARY AIR NAVIGATION**

Jacksonville, FL - United States Attorney Robert E. O'Neill today announced the indictment of Henry J. Gros, a 55-year-old resident of Jacksonville, FL, charging Gros with interfering with air navigation. The maximum penalties Gros faces if convicted are five years' imprisonment and a fine of \$250,000.

According to the indictment, Gros interfered with U.S. military air navigation during late April and early May 2008. At his arraignment on September 12, 2008, prosecutors alleged that Gros disrupted nighttime carrier landing practice near Whitehouse Field, which is located northwest of the Naval Air Station in Jacksonville. Gros is accused of shining a 15,000,000 candlepower spotlight at Navy aircraft just as the aircraft approached to land, obscuring both the ground signals and the plane's cockpit signals, thereby causing the pilots to become incapable of landing the aircraft and creating a serious safety hazard.

An indictment is merely a formal charge that a defendant has committed a violation of the federal criminal laws, and every defendant is presumed innocent until, and unless, proven guilty.

The case was investigated by the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office and the Naval Criminal Investigative Service and will be prosecuted by Special Assistant United States Attorney Ron DeSantis.