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EMPLOYEE OF NASA BATTERY CONTRACTOR PLEADS GUILTY

Kevin J. O'Connor, United States Attorney for the District of Connecticut, announced that SUSAN BELLIVEAU, age 46, of 210 N. Canterbury Road, Canterbury, Connecticut, waived indictment and pleaded guilty today before Senior United States District Judge Alfred V. Covello in Hartford to one count of falsifying test data for battery cells her employer had manufactured for NASA.

According to documents filed with the Court and statements made in court, BELLIVEAU, a laboratory supervisor of a company that manufactures batteries and battery cells for, among other customers, NASA, was responsible for overseeing the testing of cells to be used in batteries that power Extravehicular Mobility Units, commonly called space suits, used by astronauts during space flight. The battery cells, which had been manufactured with a new component, were being tested to determine, among other properties, the cells' "wet life," which is the period of time that the cells will function correctly after being activated and then repeatedly being charged and discharged.

When the cell being tested for wet life failed prematurely, BELLIVEAU created false documents that made it appear the cell functioned as it should have. That conduct violated a NASA regulation directing that, for use in human space flight, materials, manufacturing and workmanship of the highest quality are essential for astronaut safety.

When NASA learned of the premature failure of the cell and of what BELLIVEAU had done, it took corrective action, and no injuries have resulted from her conduct.

Judge Covello has scheduled sentencing for December 19, 2006, at which time BELLIVEAU faces a maximum term of imprisonment of one year and a fine of up to \$100,000.

This case was investigated by the NASA Office of the Inspector General and the Defense Criminal Investigative Service. The case is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Calvin B. Kurimai.

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