



Department of Justice

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JUSTICE DEPARTMENT SUES TOWING COMPANY FOR VIOLATING THE SERVICEMEMBERS CIVIL RELIEF ACT

WASHINGTON - The Justice Department today sued Earnest A. Cooper and B.C. Enterprises, Inc. d/b/a Aristocrat Towing, for alleged violations of the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act (SCRA) by towing Navy Lieutenant Yahya Jaboori's vehicle and then selling it without a court order. The complaint also alleges that Mr. Cooper and Aristocrat Towing may have injured other servicemembers by enforcing storage liens on their vehicles without court orders.

The Servicemembers Civil Relief Act suspends or modifies certain civil obligations of individuals serving on active duty in the military. Lieutenant Jaboori has been an active duty member of the Navy since March 7, 2003, and was deployed to Iraq for 179 days, beginning on or about March 28, 2007.

"Our men and women in uniform make great personal sacrifices to protect our nation overseas, and it is our responsibility to ensure that their rights are protected here at home," said Grace Chung Becker, Acting Assistant Attorney General for the Civil Rights Division. "The Civil Rights Division is strongly committed to the vigorous enforcement of the SCRA to ensure that servicemembers can devote their energies to the defense of the nation."

The case arose after Mr. Cooper and Aristocrat Towing towed and then sold Lieutenant Jaboori's car while Lieutenant Jaboori was deployed to Iraq without first obtaining a court order. The Justice Department's investigation of Aristocrat's actions originated with a referral to the Civil Rights Division from the U.S. Navy.

This lawsuit is the first filed by the Civil Rights Division under the SCRA. The Civil Rights Division received enforcement authority under the SCRA in 2006, and has since reviewed numerous allegations of SCRA violations and resolved investigations in the following areas

without the need for litigation: the charging of excess interest under the six percent interest rate cap, the repossession of vehicles without a court order and foreclosure on home mortgage loans without court orders.

Servicemembers and their dependents who believe that their SCRA rights have been violated should contact the nearest Armed Forces Legal Assistance Program office. Please consult the military legal assistance office locator at <http://legalassistance.law.af.mil> and click on the Legal Services Locator. Additional information on the Justice Department's enforcement of the SCRA and the other laws protecting servicemembers is available at www.servicemembers.gov.

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