



Department of Justice

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TWO INDICTED FOR CONSPIRING TO STEAL TRADE SECRETS FROM GOODYEAR TIRE AND RUBBER COMPANY

WASHINGTON – An indictment was unsealed today charging Clark Alan Roberts, 46, and Sean Edward Howley, 38, both engineers with Wyko Tire Technology Inc., located in Greenback, Tenn., with conspiring to steal trade secrets from the Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company and scheming to defraud Goodyear of confidential and proprietary information, announced Acting Assistant Attorney General of the Criminal Division Rita M. Glavin and U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of Tennessee James R. Dedrick.

Roberts and Howley were arrested this morning by federal authorities and were arraigned before U.S. Magistrate Judge Clifford Shirley.

According to the indictment, returned on March 3, 2009, Wyko secured a contract in early 2007 with the Haohau South China Guilin Rubber Company Limited (HHSC), a Chinese tire manufacturing company located in Guilin, Peoples Republic of China, to supply tire manufacturing equipment for use in producing large “off the road” (OTR) tires.

The indictment alleges that in late May 2007, Roberts and Howley traveled to a Goodyear tire manufacturing facility located in Topeka, Kan. After allegedly making material misrepresentations to Goodyear employees concerning the purpose of their visit, the defendants used a cell phone to surreptitiously photograph proprietary OTR tire manufacturing equipment. According to the indictment, the defendants later emailed the unauthorized photographs, which contained valuable trade secret information, to employees at a Wyko subsidiary located in Dudley, England, who then used the photographs to complete a similar piece of tire manufacturing machinery for the HHSC contract.

The indictment charges one count of conspiracy to commit theft of trade secrets, seven counts of theft of trade secrets, three counts of wire fraud and one count of conspiracy to commit wire fraud. If convicted of all charges, the defendants each face a maximum of 150 years in prison and \$2.75 million in fines.

An indictment is merely a formal charge by the grand jury. Each defendant is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty in a court of law.

The case is being prosecuted by Trial Attorney Thomas S. Dougherty of the Criminal Division’s Computer Crime and Intellectual Property Section and Assistant U.S. Attorney D. Gregory

Weddle of the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Eastern District of Tennessee. The case is being investigated by the FBI's Knoxville field office.

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