



DEPARTMENT OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

News Release

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All Defendants Found Guilty in Airport Fraud Case

HONOLULU – Contractors Michael Furukawa and Wesley Uemura, and former officials with the Honolulu International Airport, Dennis Hirokawa and Richard Okada, were found guilty on all counts after the conclusion of a six week trial in the court room of Federal Judge David Ezra. Furukawa was found guilty of conspiracy to commit mail fraud and 18 individual counts of mail fraud. Uemura was found guilty of conspiracy to commit mail fraud and 14 counts of mail fraud. Hirokawa was found guilty of conspiracy to commit mail fraud and 16 counts of mail fraud. Okada was found guilty of a single count of conspiracy to commit mail fraud. The charges arose out of a bid-rigging scheme that spanned five years in which Hirokawa, who was the former head of the Airport Maintenance Section, funneled repair work that needed to be done at the Airport to Furukawa and Uemura, who overbilled the Airport for their work. Hirokawa and Okada, who was the former Administrator for the Airport Visitor Information Program and Furukawa's cousin, would then receive kickbacks and what were described as "political donations" from Furukawa and Uemura. Defendants face up to 20 years imprisonment on each mail fraud count and up to five years on each conspiracy count.

Senior Deputy Attorney General Lawrence Goya, who was designated as special federal prosecutor for the trial said, "I am gratified to have been part of the prosecution team that was able to achieve the results we saw today. The verdict sends the message that we had hoped, that public corruption within State government will not be tolerated and will be dealt with sternly when found." Attorney General Mark J. Bennett: "Public corruption is unacceptable at any level. We will prosecute it wherever we find it. We hope that we may be able to do similar joint prosecutions, like this one, where appropriate."

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