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Former Contracting Official Sentenced to 30 Months for Bribery in Relation to U.S. Government Contracts in Iraq

A former U.S. Department of Defense contracting official was sentenced today to 30 months in prison for his role in a bribery scheme involving U.S. government contracts in Iraq.

Assistant Attorney General Leslie R. Caldwell of the Justice Department's Criminal Division, U.S. Attorney Dana J. Boente of the Eastern District of Virginia, Director Frank Robey of the U.S. Army Criminal Investigation Command's (CID) Major Procurement Fraud Unit, Special Agent in Charge Robert E. Craig Jr. of the Defense Criminal Investigative Service (DCIS) Mid-Atlantic Field Office, Special Agent in Charge Darrell Gilliard of the Naval Criminal Investigative Service (NCIS) Washington, D.C., Field Office and the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR) John F. Sopko made the announcement.

James Edward Addas, 55, of Stafford, Virginia, previously pleaded guilty to charges of bribery and tax evasion. Senior U.S. District Judge Claude M. Hilton of the Eastern District of Virginia handed down Addas' sentence today.

According to admissions made in the plea agreement, in August 2004, Addas was a contracting official at the Iraq/Afghanistan Joint Contracting Command in the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad when the owner and CEO of a contracting company based in Jordan offered to pay him a total of \$1 million in return for assistance in obtaining U.S. government contracts for major electrical construction projects and related services in Iraq. The contractor made an initial cash payment of \$50,000 in a paper sack, which was handed to Addas inside the "Green Zone" of the U.S. Embassy compound. With Addas' assistance, the contractor's companies subsequently received at least 15 contracts, with a total value of more than \$28 million awarded to the companies. In addition to the initial payment, the contractor later sent funds to Addas via wire transfers that totaled more than \$455,000 and paid for other items valued at more than \$70,000. Addas did not declare any of this income on his filed federal tax returns.

Special Agents of CID, DCIS, NCIS, SIGAR and the Internal Revenue Service investigated the case. Trial Attorney Wade Weems of the Criminal Division's Fraud Section and Assistant U.S. Attorney Uzo Asonye of the Eastern District of Virginia prosecuted the case.