



SIGAR | SPECIAL INSPECTOR GENERAL FOR AFGHANISTAN RECONSTRUCTION

Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction Office of Public Affairs

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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U.S. Navy Reserves Officer Indicted on Conspiracy, Bribery, Money Laundering Charges related to Alleged Visa Fraud Scheme

A federal grand jury in New Hampshire has indicted a U.S. Navy Reserves commander on criminal charges related to an alleged bribery scheme involving special visas for Afghan nationals.

Jeromy Pittmann, of Pensacola, Fla., currently residing in Naples, Italy, is charged with falsely vouching for Afghans who purportedly worked under his supervision as translators for the U.S. Army and other NATO forces in Afghanistan.

Issued on Monday, November 28, the indictment alleges that Pittmann, who currently serves as an officer in the U.S. Navy Reserves with approximately 20 years of service, including in Afghanistan, engaged in the criminal scheme from “at least” February 2018 through March 2021. The indictment alleges that Pittmann was paid bribes to write, sign, and falsely verify letters of recommendation to the U.S. State Department for Afghans seeking Special Immigrant Visas (SIVs).

“This indictment alleges crimes that disregarded the thousands of Afghan translators who helped the United States and are still trying to get out of Afghanistan,” said John F. Sopko, the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR). “His abuse of his position of trust shows no regard for qualified Afghans asking for help, or national security implications when vetting foreign nationals.”

The U.S. government limits the number of SIVs granted each year for Afghan nationals employed as translators for U.S. military personnel.

Pittmann is alleged to have signed or allowed a co-conspirator to use Pittmann’s signature on over 20 letters in which he falsely represented, among other things, that he had supervised the applicants while they worked as translators in support of the U.S. Army and NATO.

In certain letters, Pittmann attested that the applicants’ lives were in jeopardy because the Taliban considered them to be traitors; and that he did not think the applicants posed a threat to

the national security of the United States. The indictment said Pittmann did not know the applicants he vouched for and that he “had no basis for recommending them for SIVs or attesting to whether or not they posed a threat to the national security of the United States.”

The indictment also alleged that Pittmann attempted to conceal some bribe payments by creating a false, fraudulent invoice to reflect that the payments were for legitimate consulting work that he had rendered. In March 2022, when Pittmann was initially charged, the Department of Justice alleged that Pittmann had received thousands of dollars in bribes.

Pittmann is charged in the indictment with one count each of conspiracy to commit bribery and false writing; bribery; false writing; and concealment money laundering conspiracy.

The indictment follows a joint investigation, led by SIGAR, in partnership with the State Department’s Diplomatic Security Service, the Naval Criminal Investigative Service, and the Defense Criminal Investigative Service.

Trial Attorney Matt Kahn of the Justice Department’s Fraud Section is prosecuting the case.

Pittmann’s arraignment is scheduled for 2:00 PM, December 15, 2022, before U.S. Magistrate Judge Andrea K. Johnstone.

An indictment is an allegation; defendants are presumed innocent until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt in a court of law.

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