



NEWS RELEASE

From New York State Inspector General
Catherine Leahy Scott

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: July 17, 2015
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FIVE DEFENDANTS CONVICTED OF CONSPIRING TO OBTAIN COMMERCIAL DRIVER'S LICENSES FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF MOTOR VEHICLES THROUGH FRAUD AND BRIBES

Defendant Security Guards Bribed as Part of Cheating Scheme

NEW YORK CITY - Earlier today, after a three-day trial, a federal jury in Brooklyn, New York, returned guilty verdicts against Dale Harper, Joachim Pierre Louis, Luc Desmangles, Beayah Kamara, and Tanael Daniel for their participation in a scheme to enable applicants for commercial driver's licenses (CDLs) to cheat on required tests for those licenses in exchange for money. When sentenced by United States District Judge Raymond J. Dearie, the defendants each face up to 20 years in prison.

The guilty verdicts were announced by New York State Inspector General Catherine Leahy Scott and Kelly T. Currie, Acting United States Attorney for the Eastern District of New York.

The evidence at trial demonstrated that drivers of certain commercial vehicles, such as school buses, tractor trailers, vehicles transporting hazardous waste, ambulances, and heavy transportation trucks, must possess a CDL, which is issued by the DMV, pursuant to the regulations set forth by the United States Department of Transportation. Before obtaining a CDL, all applicants must pass tests covering various subjects related to safely driving such large vehicles. The defendants Daniel, Harper, Pierre Louis, and Desmangles brought CDL applicants to the DMV office on Greenwich Street in Manhattan. After applicants entered the testing area, the defendant Kamara, who was employed as a security guard, signaled to the applicants to leave the testing area with their answer sheets. Upon leaving the testing area, those applicants were met by Daniel, Pierre Louis, and Desmangles, who took the exam to be completed by another co-conspirator, Marie Daniel, outside the DMV office.¹ The test was then returned to the applicant, who re-entered the DMV office and submitted the exam for grading. Kamara received cash bribes for his role in the scheme. The applicants were charged approximately \$1,400 to \$2,500 for the defendants' assistance with cheating on the CDL exam. The evidence further showed that the defendants enabled over 40 people to fraudulently obtain or attempt to obtain CDLs, during the period April 1, 2013 through September 25, 2013.

¹ In January 2015, Marie Daniel pled guilty for her role in this scheme.

“These individuals chose corruption and greed over the safety of the general public,” said Inspector General Leahy Scott. “These convictions send a message to those who put innocent people at risk as a result of their criminal acts ... they will be investigated and prosecuted. I will use the full force of my office to relentlessly pursue anyone who violates the public trust and resorts to criminal measures to circumvent laws intended to ensure that those who are licensed by the State of New York are properly qualified to drive on our highways.”

“Today’s verdict demonstrates our commitment to aggressively prosecute and investigate anyone who compromises public safety,” stated Acting United States Attorney Currie. “The greed of these defendants jeopardized passengers and pedestrians on our roads. Together with our law enforcement partners, we will bring to justice those who endanger the public by committing such crimes.”

Today’s convictions culminate a multi-year test-cheating scandal investigation initiated by Inspector General Leahy Scott, and which led to the arrests of more than 40 defendants, most of whom have previously pleaded guilty to various state and federal charges.

The investigation was conducted in cooperation with state, federal and New York City investigatory agencies. It uncovered a complex test-taking for cash scheme, where individuals seeking to pass the written portion of the CDL test allegedly paid ringleaders who themselves allegedly paid others to fill in the blank tests for the test takers. The investigation resulted in evidence which showed that CDL tests – which were sheets of paper containing the list of questions – were removed from the secure testing area at DMV offices located in New York City by individuals who bribed security personnel contracted by DMV. The security personnel, who were later arrested, were found to have either deliberately ignored the fact that the tests were removed or in some cases removed the tests from the testing site themselves.

Inspector General Leahy Scott’s investigative team found that test takers were willing to pay from \$1500 to \$4500 to secure the answers to the test. This scheme was made all the more easy by the DMV’s use of an outdated paper testing system.

Inspector General Leahy Scott thanked the office of Kelly T. Currie, Acting United States Attorney for the Eastern District of New York, for prosecuting these defendants, and expressed appreciation to her Office’s partners in the investigation including the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Homeland Security Investigations (HSI), the U.S. Department of Transportation-Office of Inspector General (DOT-OIG). In addition, she thanked New York County District Attorney’s Office, the New York State Attorney General’s Office; the New York City Police Department, Internal Affairs Bureau, and the New York State Department of Motor Vehicles for their cooperation and assistance in the investigation.

The Defendants Convicted Today:

DALE HARPER

Age: 49

Residence: Bronx, New York

JOACHIM PIERRE LOUIS

Age: 33

Residence: Brooklyn, New York

LUC DESMANGLES

Age: 28

Residence: Brooklyn, New York

BEAYEAH KARMARA

Age: 26

Residence: Staten Island, New York

TANAEL DANIEL

Age: 37

Residence: Brooklyn, New York