



Department of Justice

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EXTRADITED BRIT PLEADS GUILTY TO MONEY LAUNDERING CHARGE

Tampa, Florida - United States Attorney A. Brian Albritton today announced that Michael D. Reid (age 44), a citizen and national of Canada and Great Britain, who was extradited to the United States from Colombia, pleaded guilty to conspiring to commit money laundering. Reid faces a maximum term of 20 years' imprisonment and a \$500,000 fine.

According to court records, Reid, along with other co-conspirators, obtained proprietary bank account information and personal identifiers belonging to foreign bank account holders who do business with United States banks.

Reid and his co-conspirators utilized fraudulent documents, including foreign passports and other foreign identification cards, to open accounts at various United States financial institutions. They also used the fraudulent documents to open accounts at Commercial Mail Receiving Agencies (CMRAs), including a CMRA in Apollo Beach, Florida. Reid and co-conspirators then contacted Customer Service Call Centers, impersonating bank account holders, and requested that account statements and credit cards drawing on the accounts be sent to the CMRA addresses, where they are forwarded to foreign addresses that the conspirators controlled.

Reid and his co-conspirators used the credit cards and checks to obtain goods and services from various merchants and businesses outside the U.S. They also

transferred funds from the compromised bank accounts to fraudulently established accounts at financial institutions and brokerage houses they controlled. Funds from those accounts were transferred to banks and other address located outside the U.S. via wire transfer and mailed checks.

The Apollo Beach CMRA was utilized as a mailing location for a fraudulently opened brokerage account in the name of Francisco Gonzalez with Penson Financial Services. The account was funded with fraudulent wire transfers of approximately \$54,250.00. Money was then withdrawn from the account via wire transfers and checks that were mailed outside the United States.

Reid and his co-conspirators attempted to obtain fraudulently more than \$2.5 million in United States currency from the compromised bank accounts and caused the loss of more than one million dollars.

This case was investigated by the United States Postal Inspection Service (USPIS), Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), and agents of the Colombian Department of Administrative Security (DAS). It is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Donald L. Hansen.