



Department of Justice

United States Attorney Bill Nettles
District of South Carolina

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**MANAGER OF SOUTH CAROLINA-BASED FIRM INDICTED
IN CONNECTION WITH ILLEGAL EXPORTS TO IRAN**

COLUMBIA, S.C. – Markos Baghdasarian, the manager of Delfin Group USA LLC, was indicted yesterday by a federal grand jury in the District of South Carolina on charges of conspiracy to violate the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (IEEPA), violating the IEEPA and making false statements, stemming from his alleged illegal exports to Iran without the required U.S. government licenses.

The indictment was announced by William N. Nettles, U.S. Attorney for the District of South Carolina; Lisa O. Monaco, Assistant Attorney General for National Security; John Morton, Director of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE); and David W. Mills, Assistant Secretary for Export Enforcement, Bureau of Industry and Security, U.S. Department of Commerce.

Baghdasarian is scheduled to be arraigned on the charges in the indictment at 10:00 am on June 26, 2012, in federal court in Charleston, S.C. If convicted, he faces a potential sentence of 20 years in prison for conspiring to violate IEEPA, 20 years in prison for violating IEEPA and five years in prison for false statements. Baghdasarian was arrested on May 19, 2012, in Atlanta on a criminal complaint issued in the District of South Carolina.

According to the indictment, Baghdasarian served as the manager of Delfin Group USA, located in Charleston, S.C., which supplies automotive, marine and aviation lubricants to domestic and international markets. From as early as June 13, 2010, until Oct. 12, 2011, Baghdasarian is alleged to have engaged in prohibited transactions with customers in Iran. U.S. persons and companies are prohibited from engaging in commercial transactions involving Iran unless authorized by the U.S. Department of Treasury.

As further detailed in the indictment, Baghdasarian and others received orders from customers in Iran for Delfin USA products. Baghdasarian then registered “paper” companies in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and produced fictitious labels for Delfin USA products in order to obscure the company identity from export enforcement officials. In addition, He allegedly concealed from the U.S. government that materials were being sold to customers in Iran by falsely stating that the UAE was the final end destination of goods intended for Iran. Finally,

according to the indictment, Baghdasarian caused Delfin USA products to be sold to customers in Iran without obtaining a license from the Treasury Department.

This case was the product of an extensive investigation by ICE's Homeland Security Investigations and the Department of Commerce, Office of Export Enforcement.

The case is being prosecuted by Trial Attorney Ryan Fayhee of the Counterespionage Section in the Justice Department's National Security Division and Assistant U.S. Attorneys Alston Badger and Elizabeth Cannon of the U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of South Carolina, Charleston Division.

Charges set forth in the indictment are merely accusations and do not constitute proof of guilt. Every defendant is presumed to be innocent unless and until proven guilty.

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