



Department of Justice

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 2004
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AT
(202) 514-2007
TDD (202) 514-1888

U.S. MOVING AND STORAGE COMPANY CHARGED WITH PRICE FIXING AND CONSPIRACY TO DEFRAUD THE UNITED STATES

Superseding Charges Filed Against Belgian Moving and Storage Company

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- A California-based moving and storage company was charged today with conspiring to fix prices and to defraud the United States in connection with the transportation of military and civilian household goods, the Department of Justice announced. As part of its court papers, the Department filed superseding charges against Belgium-based Gosselin World Wide Moving N.V. for its role in the same conspiracy. The charges were originally filed by criminal complaint on October 16, 2003, and indictment on November 13, 2003.

The Pasha Group, headquartered in Corte Madera, California, and Gosselin, headquartered in Antwerp, Belgium, were charged in U.S. District Court in Alexandria, Virginia, with conspiring to increase the rates paid by the Department of Defense (DOD) for the transportation of military and civilian household goods from Germany to the United States in 2002.

"Today's charges demonstrate our ongoing commitment to protect the United States from foreign and domestic price fixers who would deny the military the ability to purchase necessary services in a free and open market," said R. Hewitt Pate, Assistant Attorney General in charge of the Antitrust Division.

In recent years, the DOD has spent more than \$100 million annually to move the household goods of its military and civilian personnel from Germany to the United States.

The charges announced today resulted from an ongoing federal antitrust investigation of anticompetitive and fraudulent conduct in the industry which provides transportation to the Department of Defense for the movement of military household goods. The investigation is being conducted by the Antitrust Division's National Criminal Enforcement Section with the assistance of the DOD Office of Inspector General Defense Criminal Investigative Service and the Army Criminal Investigation Division, and is continuing.

Gosselin N.V. and The Pasha Group are charged with price fixing in violation of 15 U.S.C. § 1, which carries a maximum fine for a corporation of \$10 million dollars. The fraud charge, a violation of 18 U.S.C. 371, carries a maximum \$500,000 fine. The maximum fine levels for each offense may be increased to twice the gain derived from the crime or twice the loss suffered by the victim of the crime, if either of those amounts is greater than the statutory maximum fine. In addition, the defendants may be ordered to pay restitution for the full amount of the victim's loss.

Anyone with information concerning price fixing, bid rigging, or fraud in the military moving and storage industry or concerning conspiratorial conduct for the purpose of reducing or eliminating competition on any government contract should call the National Criminal Enforcement Section of the Antitrust Division at (202) 307-6694 or the Mid-Atlantic Field Office of the Defense Criminal Investigative Service at (410) 529-9054.

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