



Department of Justice

United States Attorney Sally Quillian Yates
Northern District of Georgia

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

08/04/10

<http://www.justice.gov/usao/gan/>

CONTACT: John Horn

(404)581-6056

FAX (404)581-6160

CALIFORNIA PILOT AND ACCOMPLICE ARRAIGNED ON MARIJUANA DISTRIBUTION CHARGES

Pilot Flew 75 Pounds of Marijuana into Peachtree-DeKalb Airport

ATLANTA, GA - IGOR GOLDENSHTEN, 42, of Los Angeles, California and EDWARD AKSELROD, 36, of Tarzana, California, were arraigned today before United States Magistrate Judge E. Clayton Scofield, III on charges of conspiracy and possession of less than 50 kilograms of marijuana with intent to distribute.

United States Attorney Sally Quillian Yates said of the case, "Federal agents and local officers worked together to intercept this shipment of illegal drugs before it made its way onto the street. We're working especially hard to make sure our local airports do not become a transportation channel for drugs, and we want pilots around the country to keep this in mind."

"Those who think that Georgia is the place to smuggle narcotics to by aircraft or any other method are sorely mistaken," said Brock Nicholson, acting Special Agent in Charge of the ICE Homeland Security Investigations office in Atlanta. "Our agents are working in conjunction with our federal, state and local law enforcement partners to ensure that drugs are kept off our streets and out of our communities."

According to United States Attorney Yates, the charges and other information presented in court, on July 19, 2010, Special Agents of ICE Homeland Security Investigations received a tip that a small airplane had taken off from Hawthorne Municipal Airport just outside of Los Angeles, California en route to Peachtree-DeKalb Airport in Chamblee, Georgia (PDK) with a load of marijuana. At approximately 10:55 p.m., ICE agents observed the Cessna 400 aircraft land at PDK, with GOLDENSHTEN at the pilot's controls as the sole occupant. Minutes later, AKSELROD drove up to the aircraft in a rental vehicle and assisted GOLDENSHTEN in moving several bags from the airplane into the vehicle. Shortly after departing the airport, officers from the DeKalb County Police Department stopped AKSELROD'S vehicle and discovered several large bags in the vehicle containing individually packaged bags of marijuana, with a total weight of approximately 75 pounds.

GOLDENSHTEIN and AKSELROD were indicted by a federal grand jury on July 27, 2010. Each charge carries a maximum sentence of five years in prison and a fine of up to \$250,000. In determining the actual sentence, the Court will consider the United States Sentencing Guidelines, which are not binding but provide appropriate sentencing ranges for most offenders.

Members of the public are reminded that the indictment only contains charges. The defendant is presumed innocent of the charges and it will be the government's burden to prove the defendant's guilt beyond a reasonable doubt at trial.

The U.S. Attorney's Office in Atlanta recommends parents and children learn about the dangers of drugs at the following web site: www.justthinktwice.com.

This case is being investigated by Special Agents of ICE Homeland Security Investigations.

Assistant United States Attorney Michael Herskowitz is prosecuting the case.

For further information please contact Sally Q. Yates, United States Attorney, or John Horn, First Assistant United States Attorney, through Linda Isaac at (404) 581-6056. The Internet address for the HomePage for the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Northern District of Georgia is www.justice.gov/usao/ga.