



***United States Attorney  
Southern District of New York***

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**UNITED STATES MILITARY OFFICER SENTENCED TO OVER  
17 YEARS IN PRISON FOR IMPORTING ECSTASY ON  
UNITED STATES AIR FORCE AIRCRAFT**

MICHAEL J. GARCIA, the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, announced that Master Sergeant JOHN FONG of the United States Air National Guard was sentenced today to 210 months in prison on federal narcotics charges stemming from his importation of Ecstasy on board a U.S. Air Force plane. The sentence was imposed by United States District Judge JOHN G. KOELTL.

FONG, 38, and his co-defendant FRANKLIN RODRIGUEZ, a former Captain in the United States Air National Guard, both pleaded guilty on May 19, 2006, to one count of conspiring to import into the United States, and one count of conspiring to possess and distribute Ecstasy. The charges were the result of an international investigation of the importation of Ecstasy on military aircraft and the distribution of the drug in the United States. As set forth in the Indictment:

On April 12, 2005, RODRIGUEZ and FONG flew from Germany to Stewart Air National Guard Base in Newburgh, New York, aboard a United States Air Force C-5A "Galaxy" cargo aircraft on which they had hidden more than 200,000 Ecstasy pills. RODRIGUEZ also stored Ecstasy pills and approximately \$725,000 in cash in his apartment in the Bronx, New York, and RODRIGUEZ and FONG stored approximately 60,000 pills in an automobile in Tampa, Florida.

Judge KOELTL sentenced RODRIGUEZ to 17 ½ years' imprisonment on October 13, 2006.

Mr. GARCIA praised the efforts of the Drug Enforcement Administration and the members of the New York Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Strike Force, who led the investigation along with this Office. Mr. GARCIA also thanked the military personnel

at Stewart Air National Guard Base, the United States Air Force, Office of Special Investigations, and the United States Department of Defense, Defense Criminal Investigative Service, for their assistance.

Assistant United States Attorney DANIEL L. STEIN is in charge of the prosecution.

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