



U.S. Department of Justice

United States Attorney

Eastern District of Pennsylvania

*615 Chestnut Street
Suite 1250
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19106-4476
(215) 861-8200*

April 7, 2011

FORMER BAGGAGE HANDLERS SENTENCED FOR DRUG SMUGGLING ATTEMPTS

PHILADELPHIA - Crayton Reynolds, 40, of Philadelphia, was sentenced today to 60 months in prison for his role in a drug conspiracy in which he and a co-defendant were attempting to import drugs aboard a commercial U.S. Airways flight from Jamaica, announced United States Attorney Zane David Memeger and Immigration and Customs Enforcement Special Agent-in-Charge John P. Kelleghan. Reynolds and co-conspirator Phillip Mark Sharpe, 40, also of Upper Darby, PA, had worked together as baggage handlers for U.S. Airways. On August 6, 2009, though Sharpe was no longer employed by the airline, the two were attempting to retrieve a bag, presumably stashed aboard the airplane and containing five kilograms of cocaine. The bag, in fact, contained only “sham” cocaine and no real drugs.

Reynolds pleaded guilty to conspiracy to distribute five kilograms or more of cocaine; attempted possession with intent to distribute five kilograms of more of cocaine; and attempted importation of five kilograms or more of cocaine in connection with the August 2009 attempt. Additionally, Reynolds pleaded guilty to a second attempted importation of approximately 450 grams of cocaine on October 31, 2008 in which the cocaine was secreted inside Coca Cola beverage cans that were sent from Jamaica as a “test” load. The cocaine in the 2008 incident was intercepted by federal agents in Philadelphia after the flight landed.

“Having breached a position of trust with U.S. Airways, the defendant will now have five years to think about his unwise decision,” said Memeger. “Our commercial airlines are not meant to be used for illicit drug trafficking and those who engage in such activity will be prosecuted and punished accordingly.”

“In coordination with our federal, state and local law enforcement partners, we were able to successfully dismantle an organization that exploited commercial aircraft to smuggle narcotics into the United States via Philadelphia International Airport,” said Kelleghan. “HSI has and will continue to utilize its broad authorities to target those individuals that pose direct threats to our communities.”

In addition to the prison term, U.S. District Judge Gene E.K. Pratter ordered Reynolds to pay a fine in the amount of \$1,000.

Sharpe was sentenced on December 29, 2010 to 96 months in prison for his role in the conspiracy, as well as for possessing a small amount of cocaine base and a firearm at the time of his arrest.

In a separate but related case, Oneil Roper, 38, of Philadelphia, was sentenced on January 24, 2011, to 37 months in prison for attempted drug smuggling aboard international flights from Jamaica. In that case, also investigated by Immigration and Customs Enforcement Homeland Security Investigations, Roper was sentenced by U.S. District Court Judge Mitchell S. Goldberg for his role in attempting to import approximately one kilogram of cocaine from Jamaica aboard a U.S. Airways commercial flight from Jamaica on July 1, 2007. The cocaine, which was secreted underneath passenger seats in the aircraft, was removed by federal agents before Roper could retrieve it. Like Reynolds, Roper was employed at the time by U.S. Airways as a baggage handler.

**UNITED STATES ATTORNEY'S OFFICE
EASTERN DISTRICT, PENNSYLVANIA
Suite 1250, 615 Chestnut Street
Philadelphia, PA 19106**

**Contact: PATTY HARTMAN
Media Contact
215-861-8525**