



Department of Investigation

Press Release

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FORMER NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF BUILDINGS INSPECTOR SENTENCED FOR TAKING BRIBES

ROSLYNN R. MAUSKOPF, United States Attorney for the Eastern District of New York, and ROSE GILL HEARN, Commissioner, New York City Department of Investigation ("DOI"), announced that United States District Judge Sterling Johnson, Jr. today sentenced former Department of Buildings Plumbing Inspector FRANK SGAMBATI for taking bribes from plumbing contractors in return for providing inspection approvals on plumbing projects in the Bronx, New York. SGAMBATI was sentenced to 8 months in prison, 3 years of supervised release, and a fine of \$5,000. SGAMBATI pleaded guilty to the charge on August 16, 2002.

SGAMBATI was one of 19 current and former Department of Buildings Inspectors arrested on June 25, 2002, for taking bribes in return for providing inspection approvals on plumbing projects throughout New York City. All 19 defendant inspectors have pleaded guilty to unlawfully obtaining money under color of official right, in violation of the Hobbs Act, 18 U.S.C. 1951. The 19 defendants included the Administrative Chief Plumbing Inspector, and the Chief Plumbing Inspectors for

Brooklyn, the Bronx, Queens, and Manhattan. The defendants included 15 of the 24 plumbing inspectors employed by the city as of June 25, 2002. SGAMBATI was the first to be sentenced; the others are awaiting sentencing.

DOB has terminated the employment of each of the inspectors who were employed by DOB on the day of the arrests.

In announcing the sentencing, United States Attorney ROSLYNN R. MAUSKOPF stated, "The Court's sentence today reflects the seriousness of the defendant's offense, which undermined the integrity of the Department of Buildings' inspection process. Government approvals are not for sale, and the unlawful use of government authority and the receipt of bribes will not be tolerated."

New York City Department of Investigation Commissioner ROSE GILL HEARN stated, "This is a just sentence and I am pleased with it. I hope it serves as a deterrent to others who engage in this conduct. These inspectors jeopardized the safety of a trusting public. The losses suffered by the City in this manner are, as the Mayor said in a letter he sent to the judge in connection with the sentencing, 'incalculable, but real.' Moreover, rectifying the wrongdoing of these inspectors will be made more difficult by a looming budget deficit."

The government's case was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorneys Richard Faughnan and Peter Katz, and Special Assistant United States Attorney Joseph Reda, Examining Attorney, New York City Department of Investigation.

The Defendant:

FRANK SGAMBATI

Title: Plumbing Inspector, Bronx

DOB: 05/13/46

Residence: Queens, NY