



The City of New York
Department of Investigation

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**DOI UNDERCOVER OPERATIONS LEAD TO BRIBERY ARRESTS OF FOUR CONTRACTORS
ASSOCIATED WITH THE SCAFFOLDING INDUSTRY**
--DOI investigation took place between October 2007 and January 2008--

ROSE GILL HEARN, Commissioner of the New York City Department of Investigation ("DOI"), announced today the arrests of four contractors who have been charged with bribing a DOI undercover investigator acting as a City Department of Buildings' ("DOB") inspector and a DOB employee working in an undercover capacity for DOI. In two of the four cases, contractors are charged with offering bribes in exchange for purchasing professional licenses even though the contractors did not have the required experience nor did they pass the DOB required tests. In the other two cases, contractors offered bribes in exchange for overlooking safety violations and for renewing a professional license. The contractors were immediately arrested and the safety violations addressed.

DOI's investigation of each of these cases began after it was contacted by DOB employees.

The arrests began in October 2007 with the last arrest taking place Monday, January 14, 2008. Those arrested were: FRANK BASILE, 31, of Yonkers, N.Y.; FAYYAZ NAWAZ, 47, of Queens; JOINAL ABDIN, 45, of Brooklyn and RANDY DICKS, 47, of Freeport, N.Y. Each was charged with Bribery in the Third Degree, a class D felony. BASILE was also charged with Obstructing Governmental Administration in the Second Degree, a class A misdemeanor. If convicted, each faces up to seven years in prison.

DOI Commissioner Rose Gill Hearn said, "City officials and City licenses are not for sale. Contractors who think they can pay off a buildings inspector to overlook building code violations or to purchase a professional license when they don't meet the legal requirements are not only circumventing the law but may also be placing the public at risk. DOI will continue to vigorously investigate this type of corruption."

According to the criminal complaints and the DOI investigation:

- BASILE was arrested on October 30, 2007 in the Bronx and charged after giving \$500 to a DOB employee working in an undercover capacity for DOI in exchange for overlooking several building code violations related to scaffolding safety issues. A stop work order was issued so the safety violations could be addressed.

- NAWAZ was arrested on December 10, 2007 in Manhattan and charged after giving an undercover DOI investigator \$5,000 and stating that he did not want his building violations related to scaffolding safety input into the system because it would impede the renewal of his Special Rigger's license, which had lapsed at the time the violations were issued. A stop work order was issued so the safety violations could be addressed.
- ABDIN was arrested and charged on January 4, 2008 in Manhattan after previously telling an undercover DOI investigator that he wanted to purchase a Master Rigger license and he offered to pay \$6,000, even though ABDIN indicated he was aware that he did not meet the legal requirements to obtain the license. ABDIN gave \$1,000 as a down payment to the undercover DOI investigator and on January 4, 2008 ABDIN gave the undercover investigator the remaining \$5,000.
- DICKS was arrested and charged on Monday, January 14, 2008 in Manhattan after previously telling an undercover DOI investigator that he wanted a Cherry Picker license, even though he did not meet the requirements, including experience and passing requisite tests. On December 21, 2007, DICKS gave the undercover investigator \$500 as partial payment. On January 14, 2008, DICKS gave an additional \$1,000 to the undercover investigator in order to obtain a Cherry Picker license. DICKS is an auxiliary police officer with the Freeport Police Department.

Commissioner Gill Hearn thanked DOB Commissioner Patricia J. Lancaster and members of her staff, especially the Scaffolding Safety Task Force and the DOB Licensing Division, for their assistance in this investigation.

Assistant District Attorney Joshua Kirshner from the Rackets Bureau in the Office of Bronx District Attorney Robert T. Johnson is prosecuting the case against BASILE.

The remaining cases are being prosecuted by Assistant District Attorney Sean Sullivan of the Rackets Bureau in the Office of New York County District Attorney Robert M. Morgenthau.

This investigation was conducted by members of the NYPD Squad assigned to DOI, under the direction of Deputy Inspector John Walsh, and included assistance by members of DOI's Office of the Inspector General for the Department of Buildings, including Confidential Investigator Sadie Lopez and Deputy Chief Investigator Crissy DeAngelo, under the direction of Associate Commissioner John B. Kantor.

Criminal complaints are merely an accusation. Defendants are presumed innocent until proven guilty.

DOI is one of the oldest law-enforcement agencies in the country. The agency investigates and refers for prosecution City employees and contractors engaged in corrupt or fraudulent activities or unethical conduct. Investigations may involve any agency, officer, elected official or employee of the City, as well as those who do business with or receive benefits from the City.

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To report someone ripping off the City, call DOI at (212) 825-5959.**