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Former U.S. Air Force Captain Pleads Guilty to Violating Conflict of Interest Laws and Making a False Statement

A former Captain in the U.S. Air Force (USAF) who served in 2010 as a U.S. military contracting officer in Afghanistan, pleaded guilty yesterday to violating restrictions on post-government employment and making a false statement to law enforcement agents, announced Assistant Attorney General Leslie R. Caldwell of the Justice Department's Criminal Division and U.S. Attorney Kevin W. Techau of the Northern District of Iowa.

Adam J.J. Pudenz, 35, of Carroll, Iowa, pleaded guilty to willfully violating federal conflict-of-interest laws stemming from his post-government employment with an Afghan company that contracted with the U.S. military and to making a false statement to federal law enforcement agents. The guilty plea was entered before U.S. Magistrate Judge Leonard T. Strand of the Northern District of Iowa. In addition to his guilty plea, Pudenz agreed in a separate civil action to surrender his Iowa residence, which he purchased with money received from his unlawful employment, to the United States.

According to his plea agreement, Pudenz served as a contracting official at Camp Eggers, near Kabul, Afghanistan, in 2010. In that capacity, Pudenz admitted that he administered at least three major U.S. government contracts, all held by the same Afghan company, for the purchase of clothing and footwear for Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF).

Pudenz admitted that prior to departing Afghanistan in December 2010, he began negotiating his future employment with the same Afghan company that held the contracts he administered, a fact that he later lied about during a subsequent law enforcement investigation. In his new position with the Afghan company, Pudenz admitted that he violated the conflict of interest laws by returning to Afghanistan and lobbying U.S. government officials on matters directly related to the same contracts he had previously administered.

This case is being investigated by the FBI, the Defense Criminal Investigative Service, the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction and U.S. Army Criminal Investigation Command (CID). The case is being prosecuted by Trial Attorney Wade Weems of the Criminal Division's Fraud Section and Assistant U.S. Attorney Richard L. Murphy of the Northern District of Iowa.