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**FOUR INDICTED IN BRIBERY AND PROCUREMENT FRAUD SCHEME
AT ABERDEEN PROVING GROUND**

Three Aberdeen Test Center Employees and Salesman Charged in Conspiracy

BALTIMORE, Maryland - A federal grand jury has indicted Douglas Atwell, age 51, of Port Deposit, Maryland, Wayne Silbersack, age 64, of Forest Hill, Maryland, Gerard Yursis, age 45, of Parkton, Maryland, and Ellis Lonabaugh, age 52, of Elkton, Maryland, for conspiracy to defraud the United States, bribery and theft of government property, announced United States Attorney for the District of Maryland Rod J. Rosenstein. The indictment was returned June 21, 2006, and unsealed today after the arrests of the defendants.

The 15-count indictment alleges that from January 2003 to November 2004 Douglas Atwell, Gerard Yursis and Ellis Lonabaugh, civilian employees of the United States Army employed at the Aberdeen Test Center, Aberdeen Proving Ground, ordered and purchased equipment at inflated prices on behalf of the United States Army from Wayne Silbersack, a commissioned salesman for Lawson Products. The indictment alleges that to induce them to make purchases from Lawson Products, Silbersack arranged for United States Army purchases to be falsely described on Lawson order forms and invoices and to be diverted to the personal use of Atwell, Yursis, Lonabaugh and Silbersack.

According to the indictment, Douglas Atwell placed orders in excess of \$400,000 on behalf of the United States Army through Lawson Products, enabling Wayne Silbersack to earn a higher commission, Lawson Products to earn higher profits through excessive mark ups, and in some instances Douglas Atwell and others to receive the equipment for their personal use. The indictment charges that Gerard Yursis permitted the budgets he controlled as a test director to be charged for equipment ostensibly purchased for the United States Army but in fact purchased so that Lawson received a higher mark up and/or the equipment was diverted to the personal use of Yursis, Atwell and Lonabaugh.

The indictment alleges that Silbersack created a Lawson Products order form and Lawson Products invoices for transmission to the United States Army which falsely described the items ordered by Atwell in order to conceal the use of United States government funds to pay for items not needed or intended for the Aberdeen Test Center. For example, an 8000 watt generator was

described as a “metric nuts washer assortment” on an invoice sent to the Army. In addition, the indictment alleges that Silbersack arranged for a number of the items purchased by the Army to be delivered to the homes of the defendants, rather than to the Aberdeen Test Center. The items received from Silbersack by the government employees included a Dell computer delivered to Atwell’s home address, a shed delivered to Atwell’s home address described on invoices as a “large hardware assortment,” golf balls falsely described as a “ball bearing assortment,” an air compressor delivered to Yursis described as “an electrical kit,” and a shed installed at Yursis home address described as “con/mat tools.” For the latter shed, the Army paid \$8,250, while Silbersack had Lawson Products pay \$4929 to Home Depot for the shed.

According to the indictment, beginning in fall 2004, the United States Army initiated an audit of the Aberdeen Test Center government purchase card program to account for the property ordered through those accounts, including property ordered by Douglas Atwell through Wayne Silbersack. To defeat the audit, Gerard Yursis and Ellis Lonabaugh delivered property which had been diverted to private use to the Aberdeen Proving Ground, Aberdeen Test Center.

The defendants face a maximum penalty of 5 years in prison and a \$250,000 fine for conspiracy to defraud the United States. The maximum penalty for bribery is 15 years in prison and a fine of \$250,000 and the maximum penalty for theft of government property is 10 years in prison and a \$250,000 fine. The defendants are scheduled for an arraignment on July 7, 2006.

An indictment is not a finding of guilt. An individual charged by indictment is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty at some later criminal proceedings.

United States Attorney Rod J. Rosenstein commended the investigative work performed by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Defense Criminal Investigative Service. Mr. Rosenstein thanked Assistant U.S. Attorney Joyce McDonald, who is prosecuting the case.