



U. S. Department of Justice

News Release

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WARRANT OFFICER SENTENCED IN THEFT OF
GOVERNMENT PROPERTY CASE

RALEIGH - United States Attorney Thomas G. Walker announced that in federal court today United States District Judge Terrence W. Boyle sentenced **KURT ALLEN BENNETT**, 41, of Fort Bragg, North Carolina, to 36 months imprisonment followed by 3 years of supervised release.

U.S. Attorney Walker stated, "This officer sought to achieve financial gain to the detriment of our war fighting efforts. We will aggressively prosecute those stealing from the taxpayers and putting our armed forces in conflict at risk."

A Criminal Information was filed on January 3, 2013, charging conspiracy to steal and convert property belonging to the United States Government, in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 371, and two counts of theft and conversion of government property, in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Sections 641. On June 4, 2013, he pled guilty to the charges.

According to information presented in open court, at the time of the offense, **BENNETT** was an Apache helicopter pilot in the United States Army assigned to the 1st Battalion, 3rd Aviation Regiment, at Hunter Army Air Field in Savannah, Georgia. From October 18, 2008, through October 18, 2009, **BENNETT** was deployed with his unit to Contingency Operating Base (COB) Speicher in Iraq. During his deployment, **BENNETT** stole government property, concealed the stolen items in military connexes, and then shipped the stolen goods back to the United States along with the rest of his unit's property to Fort Drum, New York.

After **BENNETT** returned to the United State from Iraq, he traveled to Fort Drum and transported the connex and its contents of stolen items with his personal vehicle back to Georgia. In total, **BENNETT** stole nearly \$1.3 million worth of government property.

"This sentencing of a US Army officer highlights the effectiveness of aggressive investigative efforts by the Defense Criminal Investigative Service (DCIS) and other law enforcement partners," stated Special Agent in Charge John F. Khin, DCIS-Southeast Field Office. "Chief Warrant Officer Kurt Bennett conspired with others to steal over \$1 million worth of military property, in self-serving crimes that undermined our war fighting efforts in Iraq. DCIS' top priority is to protect

precious resources needed for military operations, especially in these times of reduced Defense budgets.”

“Kurt Bennett dishonored his country and put the lives of his fellow soldiers at risk by stealing property intended to further our war efforts in Iraq and Afghanistan. His sentence should reassure the public the FBI and our outstanding military partners will make sure those who betray our trust are held accountable,” said John Strong, Special Agent in Charge of the FBI in North Carolina.

BENNETT’S co-conspirator was Sergeant First Class Robert Alan Walker. Walker was sentenced on September 25, 2013, and received 18 months imprisonment.

The criminal investigation of this case was conducted by United States Defense Criminal Investigative Service; the Federal Bureau of Investigation; the United States Department of Army - Criminal Investigation Command, and the Defense Logistics Agency. Assistant United States Attorney Banumathi Rangarajan is handling the prosecution on behalf of the Eastern District of North Carolina.

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