



# Department of Justice

**United States Attorney Stephen R. Wigginton  
Southern District of Illinois**

---

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 5, 2014  
[WWW.JUSTICE.GOV/USAO/ILS/](http://WWW.JUSTICE.GOV/USAO/ILS/)

CONTACT: James L. Porter  
PHONE: (618) 628-3700

**UNITED STATES ATTORNEY WIGGINTON ANNOUNCES MULTI-MILLION  
DOLLAR FRAUD RECOVERY ON BEHALF OF THE UNITED STATES**

Maersk Line, Limited, (Maersk) paid the United States of America eight million seven hundred thousand dollars (\$8,700,000.00) as the result of a civil settlement regarding Maersk's failure to fully comply with certain terms of its contract with the United States Transportation Command (USTRANSCOM), the United States Attorney for the Southern District of Illinois, Stephen R. Wigginton, announced today.

"One can clearly see that in contracts of this magnitude, even a small percentage of fraud amounts to significant loss of funds. By this and other ongoing investigations, I am putting these world-wide contractors on notice that my office will not tolerate any fraudulent, false or unwarranted billings to the United States and its client agencies." noted United States Attorney Wigginton.

DCIS Special Agent in Charge Brian Reihms said "The Defense Criminal Investigative Service is dedicated to working with investigative partners to resolve fraudulent activity impacting the Department's supply chain and ensuring the integrity of the procurement system."

Under Maersk's contract with USTRANSCOM, the Department of Defense used Maersk services to ship cargo from the United States to military outposts in Afghanistan. Maersk moved cargo by sea to an appropriate port, then by trucks over land, often travelling in remote areas where enemy combatants and criminal entities were active in delivering shipments.

With respect to the shipments at issue in this matter, USTRANSCOM discovered that some claims submitted by Maersk contained suspicious signatures. Further investigation revealed that signatures purporting to verify receipt of shipments in Afghanistan were forged. USTRANSCOM's review uncovered 277 instances in which such claims were falsely made.

"I would note that to its credit, Maersk was cooperative in the investigation. Aside from these containers, Maersk has successfully delivered thousands of shipments during the war effort. Maersk's overall conduct reflects a stronger performance and greater diligence than the relatively small amount of non-compliant warzone shipments would suggest, but, as I have noted, even a small amount of overall fraud becomes a huge waste of tax dollars, and I will not tolerate any such waste." said United States Attorney Wigginton.

John F. Sopko, Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction, stated, "This \$8.7 million settlement is a real win for the American taxpayer and highlights the critical importance that oversight plays in helping to protect U.S. funds."

This matter was investigated by the United States Army Criminal Investigation Command, Defense Criminal Investigative Service, Naval Criminal Investigative Service, Air Force Office of Special Investigations, and the Office of the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction. The case was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorneys Gerald M. Burke and David J. Pfeffer.

###