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IMPORTER OF DEFECTIVE ZYLON FIBER USED IN BULLET PROOF VESTS

REACHES SETTLEMENT WITH UNITED STATES

WASHINGTON - N.I. Teijin Shoji Co. Ltd., aka N.I. Teisho of Japan, and an American subsidiary, N.I. Teijin Shoji (USA) Inc., have agreed to pay the United States \$1.5 million to resolve potential claims under the False Claims Act in connection with the companies' importation and sale of defective Zylon fiber which was used as the key ballistic material in bulletproof vests, the Justice Department announced today.

The Teijin companies imported the fiber on behalf of the Zylon manufacturer, Toyobo Co. Ltd. of Japan. The United States alleged that the Teijin companies were aware that the fiber degraded quickly over time and that this degradation rendered bulletproof vests containing woven Zylon unfit for use. The government further alleged that, despite this knowledge, the Teijin companies did not inform the United States of any degradation concerns or stop selling Zylon fiber for use in ballistic applications. Rather, Teijin personnel actively participated in the marketing of the Zylon fiber and downplayed the extent of the degradation problem. Furthermore, for a period of time in 2002, Teijin purchased Zylon fabric back from the Canadian weaver to whom it had sold the fiber for weaving, and sold it directly to American body armor manufacturers, after the weaver itself refused to sell the Zylon fabric due to its fears of potential liability.

“Those who knowingly provide defective material for bulletproof vests not only cheat the taxpayers, they put the lives of law enforcement officers at risk,” said Tony West, Assistant Attorney General for the Justice Department’s Civil Division. “We will pursue any company that is aware of problems with Zylon fiber, yet continues to market and sell it anyway.”

This settlement is part of a larger investigation of the body armor industry’s use of Zylon in body armor. The United States previously has settled with eight other participants in the Zylon body armor industry for more than \$59 million. Additionally, the federal government has

lawsuits pending against Toyobo Co. and several of the vest manufacturers. As part of today’s agreement, Teijin has pledged its cooperation in the government’s on-going

investigation.

Assistant Attorney General West acknowledged the contributions of the many government agencies assisting the government's ongoing investigation of those who participated in the manufacture and sale of Zylon vests, including the Justice Department's Civil Division; the U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of Columbia; the General Services Administration, Office of the Inspector General; the U.S. Army Criminal Investigative Command; the Department of Commerce, Office of Inspector General; the Department of the Treasury's Inspector General for Tax Administration; the Defense Criminal Investigative Service; the Air Force Office of Special Investigations; the Department of Energy, Office of the Inspector General; the Defense Contracting Audit Agency; and the FBI.

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