




Memorandum



Miami-Dade County Office of the Inspector General
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To: The Honorable Carlos A. Gimenez, Mayor, Miami-Dade County
The Honorable Esteban L. Bovo, Jr., Chairman
and Members, Board of County Commissioners, Miami-Dade County

From: Mary T. Cagle, Inspector General 

Date: June 6, 2017

Subject: IG Nabs MDAD Permittee Who Submitted False Documents – Criminal Charges Filed, Ref. IG16-16

A joint Office of the Inspector General (OIG) and State Attorney's Office (SAO) investigation concluded today with the arrest of a Miami-Dade Aviation Department (MDAD) Permittee who provided false documents to obtain his permit and an MDAD identification badge. This investigation was initiated based on a referral from MDAD's Properties Division, which oversees the permit process at Miami International Airport.

Enforcement officers from the County's Passenger Transportation Regulatory Division, a division of the Regulatory and Economic Resources Department (RER), had cited Eric Hanson (the Permittee) at least three times, each after observing him soliciting customers for his chauffeuring business. When confronted, Hanson claimed to work for several delayed baggage service companies. Enforcement officers cited Hanson for Solicitation or Carrying on Business without proper licenses. It was noted that while Hanson had a permit to conduct his delayed baggage service business on MDAD property, the permit's scope did not authorize chauffeuring services.

During the permit revocation process, it was determined that both his MDAD permit and identification badge were issued based upon fraudulent documents. As part of the permit application process, all applicants are required to identify their customers and provide copies of their contractual agreements. Hanson had submitted a contract between his business and an airline, to supposedly provide the airline with delayed baggage services. The airline stated that the contract was a fraud. The OIG further determined that Hanson has also submitted fraudulent Certificates of Insurance to MDAD.

The OIG confronted Hanson, who admitted his crimes and took full responsibility. The OIG confirmed that Hanson was never granted access to any MDAD secure area pursuant to his permit or through the access afforded by his identification badge. Further, a review of security swipes of his identification badge revealed that he had never attempted to gain access to MDAD secure area.

On today's date, the Permittee surrendered in court to face the charge of Grand Theft, for fraudulently obtaining the MDAD Permit and Identification Badge. Attached is the press release from the State Attorney's Office with additional information about today's arrest.

The OIG appreciates the referral from MDAD and the continued cooperation from both MDAD and RER staff during this investigation.

cc: Alex Ferro, Chief of Staff, Office of the Mayor
Emilio Gonzalez, Director, Miami-Dade Aviation Department
Jack Osterholt, Deputy Mayor / Director, Regulatory and Economic Resources
Cathy Jackson, Director, Audit and Management Services Department
Neil R. Singh, Interim Commission Auditor



KATHERINE FERNANDEZ RUNDLE

STATE ATTORNEY

ELEVENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT IN AND FOR MIAMI-DADE COUNTY



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Individual Charged with Attempting to Conduct Chauffeuring Services at Miami International Airport

Miami – June 6, 2017

Pursuant to a joint criminal investigation by the Miami-Dade State Attorney's Office with the Miami-Dade County Office of the Inspector General (OIG) and stemming from a complaint by the Miami-Dade Aviation Department (MDAD), Eric Hanson has been charged with Grand Theft for fraudulently obtaining a MDAD Permit and Identification Badge.

"As one of this community's economic engines, Miami International Airport must have clear and strict ongoing policies to protect the integrity of our for-hire and chauffeuring services available to our travelers," commented State Attorney Katherine Fernandez Rundle. "Individuals who try to circumvent these established policies by allegedly using fraudulent documents and fake contracts harm our legitimate contractors and may endanger our visitors and residents. There can be no excuse for such behavior."

The County's Passenger Transportation Regulatory Division had cited Eric Hanson at least three times, each after observing him approaching international passengers after they exited the Customs area. When confronted, Hanson claimed to work for several delayed baggage service companies. He was cited for Solicitation or Carrying on Business without Proper Licenses. It was noted that while Hanson had a permit to conduct business on MDAD property, the permit did not cover chauffeuring services.

After the third citation, MDAD moved to revoke his permit. During this process, it was discovered that Hanson obtained his MDAD permit and identification badge based upon fraudulent documents. The investigation revealed that he provided MDAD with a phony contract between his business and Lufthansa German Airlines to supposedly provide baggage services.

The case was referred to the OIG for follow-up investigation. After confirming the fraudulent Lufthansa contract, the OIG also determined that fraudulent Certificates of Insurance were also submitted by Hanson to MDAD. The OIG confronted Hanson, who admitted his crimes and took full responsibility. The OIG confirmed that MDAD never granted Hanson access to any secure area of MDAD pursuant to his permit/identification badge. Further, a review of security swipes of his identification badge revealed that he had never attempted to gain access to MDAD secure areas.

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FOR FURTHER
INFORMATION CONTACT:

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