

Update on Corruption at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait

Written by Nick Sanders
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You know, in the history of services provided by Apogee Consulting, Inc.'s Principal Consultant, we have briefed Department of Justice attorneys on damages suffered by the Government. We've worked with Army CID and Navy NCIS investigators. We've worked with many different attorneys, hired to advise and/or defend contractors accused of wrongdoing. We've performed forensic accounting investigations and internal audits. We've reviewed the expense reports of executives where the Board of Directors was concerned about improper reimbursements. We've seen a Contracting Officer's Technical Representative (COTR) stripped of his pension, 18 months before retirement, because of wrongdoing so perfidious that it can't be discussed to this day.

We thought we'd seen it all. And then we came across reports of the cornucopia of contracting corruption at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait.

We first wrote about Camp Arifjan [here](#). At that point, fourteen contracting folks were suspected of bribery and corruption. We subsequently updated that story at the bottom of this [catch-up article](#), where we noted sentencing of one malefactor. We updated the story again [over here](#), and noted that the fourteen had become sixteen.

And now it's time to update the story once again. At this point, the count is now 19. Nineteen individuals who have "pleaded guilty or been convicted at trial" in the "ongoing investigation of corrupt contracting at Camp Arifjan."

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How do we know? The Department of Justice [told us](#). It told us in the announcement that a former Army major had been sentenced to 18 months in prison “for his participation in bribery scheme related to his activities as a contracting official” at Camp Arifjan. Former Major James Momon, Jr. pleaded guilty to two counts of bribery and one count of conspiracy. The DOJ reported that Momon had accepted approximately \$5.8 million in bribes, “including \$1.6 million in cash and luxury items.” (No word on what the other \$4.2 million consisted of, if it was nether cash nor luxury items.)

Momon is the second U.S. Army Major who violated his officer’s oath, by breaking the trust and faith placed in him by the country. According to the DOJ press release—

... Momon took over contracting duties at Camp Arifjan from former U.S. Army Major John C. Cockerham, who served as a contracting official in Kuwait in 2004 and 2005. Cockerham, who solicited and received bribes from DoD contractors in exchange for contracts and BPAs for bottled water and other goods and services, pleaded guilty for his role in the conspiracy in February 2008 and was sentenced to serve 210 months in prison and ordered to pay \$9 million in restitution.

As we write this article, the press is in a feeding frenzy regarding wrongdoing that may have led to the resignation of a highly respected retired General, and may well implicate another who is currently serving in Southwest Asia. We have to ask, where is the similar outrage regarding the commanding officer(s) of Camp Arifjan, who seem to have let their contracting staff run amuck? Where is the accountability for those in command?

We understand the allure of a story of hidden infidelity by a respected public figure. But we have to ask, did the corrupt actions of those officers at Camp Arifjan damage national security even more? If so, where is the media feeding frenzy?