



Office of Inspector General

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

PRESS RELEASE

December 22, 2011

Press Office: 202-712-4320

www.usaid.gov

Australian Man Sentenced to Prison for Steering \$15 Million in U.S.-Funded Contracts in Afghanistan

Washington, DC – On December 16, 2011, an ex-agent of a contractor working with the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) was sentenced to 22 months in prison for seeking \$190,000 in payments as a reward for steering U.S.-funded contracts in Afghanistan.

The sentencing, in the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia, was announced by U.S. Attorney Ronald C. Machen Jr.; Assistant Attorney General Lanny A. Breuer of the Criminal Division; USAID Acting Inspector General Michael G. Carroll; Acting Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR) Steven J. Trent; and James W. McJunkin, Assistant Director in Charge of the FBI's Washington Field Office.

Neil P. Campbell, 62, of Queensland, Australia, pleaded guilty in October 2011 to one count of accepting an illegal payment as an agent for the International Organization on Migration (IOM), which was receiving USAID funding. Campbell was originally charged on Aug. 19, 2010. He was arrested in New Delhi, India, in October 2010, and extradited to the United States in February 2011. The defendant will get credit toward his sentence for the time he already served.

Campbell agreed in his plea to forfeit \$10,000, which represents the illegal payment he received. Upon completion of his prison term, Campbell will be placed on two years of supervised release.

Campbell admitted that in July 2010, while in Afghanistan, he solicited a one-time cash payment of \$190,000 from a subcontractor in Afghanistan as a reward for funneling more than \$15 million in reconstruction projects to that subcontractor to build a hospital and a provincial teaching college. In August 2010, Campbell met an undercover USAID investigator posing as the subcontractor's representative and accepted a \$10,000 cash payment. Campbell counted the money and requested that the remaining funds come to him in one payment. In October 2010, Campbell traveled to New Delhi, India, where he believed he would be receiving the remaining \$180,000. He was arrested at the New Delhi International Airport by agents of the Indian Central Bureau of Investigation.

“Today’s sentencing serves as an example that anyone who abuses their position by engaging in illegal activities while working on projects funded by USAID will be aggressively investigated and held accountable for their actions,” said Acting Inspector General Michael G. Carroll.

The case was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Matthew C. Solomon of the District of Columbia and Trial Attorney Ryan S. Faulconer of the Criminal Division's Fraud Section. Substantial assistance was provided by former Assistant U.S. Attorney Vasu B. Muthyala, the Department of Justice Criminal Division's Office of International Affairs, the FBI Legal Attaché and the Judicial Attaché Office in Kabul. The case was investigated by the USAID Office of Inspector General, the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction, the FBI's Washington Field Office, and members of the International Contract Corruption Task Force (ICCTF).

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