

Massachusetts State Trooper Indicted in Overtime Abuse Investigation

A retired Massachusetts State Police Trooper was indicted today by a federal grand jury in connection with the ongoing investigation of overtime abuse at the Massachusetts State Police (MSP).

Daren DeJong, 56, of Uxbridge, was indicted on one count of with embezzlement from an agency receiving federal funds. DeJong was previously charged by a criminal complaint and arrested on July 25, 2018.

According to court documents, DeJong, who is currently retired, was a Trooper assigned to Troop E, which is responsible for enforcing criminal law and traffic regulations along the Massachusetts Turnpike, Interstate I-90. DeJong allegedly received overtime pay for hours that he either did not actually work at all, or shifts in which he departed one to seven hours early.

The alleged conduct involves overtime pay for selective enforcement initiatives, including the Accident and Injury Reduction Effort program (AIRE) and the "X-Team" initiative. Both initiatives are intended to reduce accidents, crashes, and injuries on I-90 through an enhanced presence of MSP Troopers and targeting vehicles traveling at excessive speeds. DeJong was required to work the entire duration of the shifts – either four or eight hours – and truthfully report the date, time and sector of deployment on the citations issued during the shift. As alleged, DeJong concealed the fraud by submitting citations that were issued prior to the overtime shift, altered the citations to create the appearance that citations were issued during the overtime shift, and/or

submitted citations that were never issued and never took place.

Trooper DeJong earned \$200,416 in 2016, which included approximately \$68,394 in overtime, of which more than \$14,000 was attributable to AIRE and X-Team shifts that DeJong either left early or did not show up for.

In 2015 and 2016, MSP received annual benefits from the U.S. Department of Transportation in excess of \$10,000, which were funded pursuant to numerous federal grants.

On June 27, 2018, former Lieutenant David Wilson, 57, of Charlton; suspended Trooper Gary Herman, 45, of Chester; and former Trooper Paul Cesan, 50, of Southwick, were arrested and charged with the same crime. On July 2, 2018, former Trooper Gregory Raftery, 47, of Westwood pleaded guilty and on Aug. 17, 2018, suspended Trooper Kevin Sweeney, 40, of Braintree, was charged and agreed to plead guilty.

The charge of theft of government funds provides for a sentence of no greater than 10 years in prison, three years of supervised release, and a fine of \$250,000 or twice the gross gain or loss. Sentences are imposed by a federal district court judge based upon the U.S. Sentencing Guidelines and other statutory factors.

United States Attorney Andrew E. Lelling; Harold H. Shaw, Special Agent in Charge of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Boston Field Division; and Douglas Shoemaker, Special Agent in Charge of the U.S. Department of Transportation's Office of Inspector General made the announcement today. Assistant U.S. Attorneys Dustin Chao and Mark Grady of Lelling's Public Corruption Unit and Neil Gallagher of Lelling's Economic Crimes Unit are prosecuting the case.