BATTELLE AGREES TO PAY U.S. $330,000 FOR MISUSING DOE EQUIPMENT

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- The Department of Justice announced today that Battelle Memorial Institute has agreed to pay the United States $330,000 to settle allegations it used government-owned equipment to service commercial customers in violation of a federal contract.

The payment settles claims brought in a qui tam lawsuit by Jagdish C. Laul, a former Battelle scientist at the Department of Energy's Pacific Northwest Laboratory. Battelle, a not-for-profit Ohio corporation, operates the laboratory on behalf of DOE under an approximately $500 million annual contract.

DOE, which owns most of the property and equipment at PNL, allows Battelle to use the equipment under certain circumstances for non-government customers. The lawsuit alleged that Battelle knowingly used DOE equipment for commercial purposes without informing DOE and failed to pay DOE for the use of the equipment as required under its operating contract.


Laul brought the suit under the qui tam provisions of the False Claims Act, which allows private individuals to sue on behalf of the government and share in any recovery obtained as a result of their lawsuit. Under the settlement agreement, Laul will receive $60,800 for bringing the action.

The False Claims Act provides for the recovery of treble damages suffered by the government and penalties for each false claim submitted.

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