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**JUSTICE NEWS**

**Department of Justice**

Office of Public Affairs

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Monday, July 9, 2012

**Former Civilian Contractor Sentenced to 24 Months in Prison for Role in Scheme to Steal and Sell Military Equipment in Iraq**

A former U.S. civilian contractor was sentenced today to 24 months in prison for conspiring to steal military generators in Iraq and selling them on the black market, announced Assistant Attorney General Lanny A. Breuer of the Justice Department's Criminal Division and U.S. Attorney Thomas G. Walker for the Eastern District of North Carolina.

David John Welch, 36, of Hope Mills, N.C., was sentenced by U.S. District Judge W. Earl Britt in the Eastern District of North Carolina. Welch was also sentenced to three years of supervised release following his prison term and was ordered to pay \$160,000 in restitution to the Department of Defense. Welch pleaded guilty on April 2, 2012, to a criminal information charging him with conspiracy to steal property under the control of a government contractor.

According to court documents and information presented at his plea hearing, Welch was the operations and maintenance manager of a U.S. government contractor on Victory Base Complex in Baghdad. In this capacity, Welch had the ability to influence the distribution and movement of military equipment as well as U.S. government equipment. In addition, Welch was in charge of overseeing the movement of generators from the compound to the Defense Reutilization & Marketing Office (DRMO). In October 2011, Welch and a co-conspirator entered into a scheme to steal and later sell approximately 38 generators on the black market in Iraq to unknown co-conspirators by diverting these generators from the DRMO to an undisclosed location off-base in Iraq. After the generators were stolen from the compound, Welch's co-conspirator provided him with four stacks of \$100 bills, totaling approximately \$38,600.

This case is being prosecuted by Special Trial Attorney Mark Grider of the Criminal Division's Fraud Section, on detail from Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction (SIGIR), with assistance from Assistant U.S. Attorney Banumathi Rangarajan of the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Eastern District of North Carolina. The case is being investigated by the FBI, SIGIR and the Major Procurement Fraud Unit of the U.S. Army Criminal Investigation Command.

12-859

Criminal Division



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