



U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission

PRESS RELEASE

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Newport News Shipyard and Contractor Will Pay \$80,000 to Settle EEOC Retaliation Suit

Temp Employees Removed From Ship After Reporting Sexual Harassment by Female Supervisor Against Men, Federal Agency Charged

NORFOLK, Va. – Huntington Ingalls, Inc., the present owner of the shipyard in Newport News, Va., and its contractor Quality Coatings of Virginia, Inc. of Chesapeake, Va., will pay \$80,000 to settle a lawsuit for retaliation filed by the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), the agency announced today.

The agency had charged that the defendants violated federal law in May 2009 when they discharged Walter Strickland and Brian Glover at the request of managers for both companies after the men provided written statements concerning a female supervisor whom they alleged had been kneeing her male subordinates in the groin. Strickland and Glover worked for Quality Coatings on the cleaning crew aboard the *U.S.S. George H. W. Bush*, which was docked in Norfolk at the time. Strickland and Bush provided the written statements on the morning of May 1, 2009, and were removed from their positions aboard the ship that same day.

Creating a hostile work environment based on sex, and retaliation for complaining about it, violate Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The EEOC filed suit after first attempting to reach a pre-litigation settlement through its conciliation process.

In addition to \$80,000 in monetary damages, which will be shared by the two former employees, the consent decree resolving the case (*EEOC v. Huntington Ingalls Incorporated and Quality Coatings of Virginia, Inc.* Case No. 2:11CV490, filed in U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia, Norfolk Division) includes injunctive relief enjoining the companies from engaging in any further retaliation within the meaning of Title VII. The decree also requires the companies to alter and redistribute their anti-discrimination policies. Huntington Ingalls, in particular, will include new provisions in its policies addressing how its own managers are to handle complaints coming from employees of its contractors. Also, throughout the term of the decree, the companies must submit various reports to the EEOC aimed at ensuring the effectiveness of the companies' anti-discrimination policies.

"An employee's ability to report conduct believed to be discriminatory without fear of reprisal is fundamental to creating workplaces free of discrimination," said Lynette A. Barnes, regional attorney for EEOC's Charlotte District Office, of which the EEOC's Norfolk Local Office is a part. "An employee who reports sexually inappropriate conduct in the morning should not be singled out for termination in the afternoon."

The EEOC is responsible for enforcing federal laws prohibiting discrimination in employment. Further information about the EEOC is available on its web site at www.eeoc.gov.