



Office of the Inspector General Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Inspector General's Investigation Leads to Guilty Pleas in MBTA No-Show Case, January 2010

Three former Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority employees pled guilty in December 2009 to larceny and other charges that stemmed from a no-show jobs case initiated by the Inspector General and prosecuted by the Attorney General.

The two-year investigation targeted the MBTA's Design and Construction Department, where all three men were paid to supervise outside contractors. The men were expected to be on-site daily to oversee construction progress and ensure that project specifications were met. The investigation discovered that the men falsely submitted timesheets claiming they were working in their MBTA positions when, in fact, they were elsewhere.

Investigators found that Christopher Peatridge, a 64-year-old Saugus resident, was repeatedly paid by the MBTA based on time sheets that showed him working on-site as an MBTA construction inspector when, in fact, he was working for his own private security business. Peatridge's security business records show that from July to November 2004, he was out-of-state for weeks at a time, staying in luxury hotels, and earning tens of thousands of dollars through his security company at the same time he was collecting his MBTA salary and benefits based on false time sheets.

Between April and June 2005, surveillance showed Peatridge again getting paid a full day's wage for considerably less than a full day's work. On these days, which were supposed to start at 7:00 a.m., Peatridge would typically arrive for work after lunch and stay only a brief time.

Peatridge pled guilty to two counts of Presentation of False Claims and two counts of Larceny over \$250. He was sentenced to two-and-a-half years in the House of Correction, one year to serve with the balance suspended for two years, two years concurrent probation and a \$10,000 fine.

Surveillance also found that Michael O'Toole, a 49-year-old resident engineer from Milton, and Francis Flaherty, a 52-year-old construction inspector from South Boston were working far fewer hours than they claimed on their timesheets.

Investigators watched O'Toole repeatedly between April 2004 and June 2005 and discovered that he rarely worked for more than a few hours a day and on some days never appeared at his job site. Repeated surveillance of Flaherty between June and September 2006 found he worked considerably less than the eight hours a day he claimed on his timesheets.

O'Toole and Flaherty each pled guilty to a single count of Presentation of False Claims and Larceny over \$250. They were each sentenced to two years in the House of-Corrections, suspended for one year, two years concurrent probation and 200 hours of community service.

Officials at the MBTA cooperated with the Inspector General and the Attorney General throughout the investigation.