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*Central Intelligence Agency
Inspector General*

REPORT OF INVESTIGATION

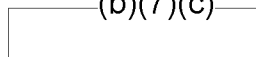


(U) UNACCREDITED DEGREE: TELECOMMUNICATIONS INFORMATION SYSTEMS OFFICER (2008-9001-IG)

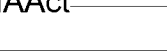
28 February 2012

*David B. Buckley
Inspector General*

(b)(3) CIAAct
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(b)(7)(c)



*Assistant Inspector General
for Investigations*

(b)(3) CIAAct
(b)(6)  *Special Agent*
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(b)(3) NatSecAct

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*Office of Inspector General
Investigations Staff*

REPORT OF INVESTIGATION

**(U) UNACCREDITED DEGREE: TELECOMMUNICATIONS
INFORMATION SYSTEMS OFFICER
(2008-9001-IG)**

28 February 2012

Section 1 – Subject:

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Section 2 – Predication:

(C) Based on a 2008 United States Secret Service investigation that identified an Agency contractor as possessing a degree from an known fraudulent higher education organization (a.k.a. a diploma mill). The Office of Inspector General (OIG) initiated a proactive investigation on 5 August 2008, into Agency staff claiming degrees from non-accredited institutions. OIG matched a list of unaccredited institutions against Agency Biography (BIO) information to identify any individuals who had provided degree evidence to Human Resources. A source with knowledge informed OIG that [redacted] received a bachelor's degree from [redacted] is an unaccredited institution and is not affiliated with the accredited [redacted]

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Do Not Copy**Section 3 – Potential Violations:**

1. (U) Title 18 U.S.C. § 1001 (*Fraud and False Statements, Statements or entries generally*) provides in pertinent part:

Except as otherwise provided in this section, whoever, in any matter within the jurisdiction of the executive, legislative, or judicial branch of the Government of the United States, knowingly and willfully-

- (1) falsifies, conceals, or covers up by any trick, scheme, or device a material fact;
- (2) makes any materially false, fictitious, or fraudulent statement or representation; or
- (3) makes or uses any false writing or document knowing the same to contain any materially false, fictitious, or fraudulent statement or entry; shall be fined under this title or imprisoned not more than 5 years, or both. . . .

2. (U) Title 18 U.S.C. § 287 (False, fictitious or fraudulent claims) provides in pertinent part:

Whoever makes or presents to any person or officer in the civil, military or naval services of the United States, or to any department or agency thereof, any claim upon or against the United States, or any department or agency thereof, knowing such claim to be false, fictitious, or fraudulent, shall be imprisoned not more than five years and shall be subject to a fine in the amount provided in this title.

3. (U//~~FOUO~~) Agency Regulation (AR) 18-1, CIA University - General, dated 21 April 2004, provides in pertinent part:

(1)(d) ACADEMIC TRAINING

(1) Each Deputy Director, Chief, Mission Support Office, or Head of Independent Office (DD, C/MSO, or HIO) or designee may select and assign employees to academic degree training and may pay or reimburse the costs of academic degree training from appropriated or other available funds if such training meets the following three criteria: . . .

(c) Is accredited and is provided by a college or university that is accredited by a nationally recognized accrediting body, as identified by the Department of Education. Accreditation of the granting institution is required for a degree to be eligible for payment or reimbursement.

(2) In exercising this authority each DD, C/MSO, or HIO or designee shall:

Take into consideration the need to:

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(b) Ensure that the training is not for the sole purpose of providing an employee an opportunity to obtain an academic degree or qualify for appointment to a particular position for which the academic degree is a basic requirement.

(c) To the greatest extent practicable, facilitate the use of online degree training.

(3) The guidance in sections d(1) and d(2) above pertain to full academic degrees, and in all such cases, accreditation of the granting institution is required for that degree to be eligible for payment or reimbursement. However, Operating Officials, HIOs, and the Deputy Director of the National Reconnaissance Office (DD/NRO) may fund individual training courses provided by colleges, universities, and private vendors, including non-accredited institutions. Care must be taken to ensure that, through careful supervisory approval and vigilant HR office oversight, any such training must be clearly job related, and that the provider actually delivers the quality and quantity of training purchased.

Section 4 - Investigative Results:

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(C) During a 5 March 2009 interview, [redacted] stated to OIG that the Agency provided reimbursement for three of the 10 courses he needed to obtain a diploma from [redacted] [redacted] stated that he paid for various other costs to include an enrollment fee. [redacted] further stated that he learned about [redacted] from [redacted] a co-worker and fellow telecommunications information systems officer. [redacted] stated that he did not research [redacted] accreditation prior to entering the program.

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(C) [redacted] stated that he received money from the Department Of Justice (DOJ) approximately two years after receiving the degree from [redacted] which he retained since he had paid most of the costs for the program. [redacted] stated that he did not think the [redacted] degree was fraudulent until he received the letter [redacted] from DOJ [redacted]

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(e) [redacted] stated that he did not submit the [redacted] diploma to the Agency to be filed with his records. [redacted] stated that, after he received the letter from DOJ, he was embarrassed and did not recall subsequently mentioning the degree.

[redacted] stated that his career field did not require a bachelor's degree. (b)(1)

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(e) [redacted] stated that he told his direct supervisor, [redacted]

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[redacted] that he had earned a degree from [redacted]

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(e) Records checks showed [redacted] received reimbursement for only two classes (\$530 and \$580) in 1995.

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(b)(3) NatSecAct (e) On a Supplemental Personal History Statement Form 444E, which was

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filed on 28 December 1995, [redacted] listed his degree from [redacted]

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(e) The letter provided by DOJ to former [redacted] students, sent in [redacted] [redacted] stated in part:

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[Large redacted block]

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Section 5 – Conclusions:

(e) OIG referred [redacted] to the U.S. Attorney's Office, Eastern District of Virginia (EDVA) on 12 March 2009 for possible violation of Titles 18 U.S.C. § 1001 (*Fraud and False Statements, Statements or entries generally*) and/or 18 U.S.C. § 287 (*False, fictitious, or fraudulent claims*). EDVA declined prosecution on 14 April 2009 for lack of prosecutive merit in favor of administrative action.

(e) [redacted] received reimbursement from the Agency for \$1,110 for two courses from [redacted], and then received additional funds from the fraud settlement with DOJ. Based on an opinion provided by OIG Counsel, [redacted] is not responsible for repaying the refunded money to the Agency.

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¹ (U) The attached letter is the template sent to all individuals reimbursed by the Department of Justice. Individual letters were not retained.

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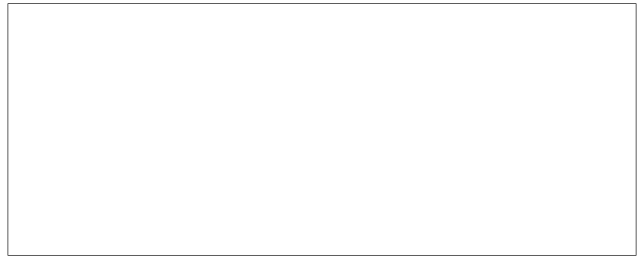
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(S) Based on OIG's investigative findings, OIG believes there is no basis to indicate [redacted] violated Titles 18 U.S.C. § 1001 or 18 U.S.C. § 287. The investigation did not establish that [redacted] presented his degree to the Agency following the settlement. In addition, the investigation did not establish that [redacted] was aware that [redacted] was a fraudulent organization or that it was one whose enrollment costs were ineligible for government reimbursement at the time he sought partial reimbursement from the Agency. OIG is recommending no further action and that the case be closed.

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