



# Robert Gilbeau

- Age 56 at time of sentencing
- Bribery and Fraud
- Sentenced to 18 months in May 2017
- Highest ranking U.S. Navy Officer to be sentenced in the investigation
- Commander of DCMA International
- Former USS Nimitz Procurement Officer



## CDSE

Center for Development  
of Security Excellence

# CASE STUDY

## Fraud

### WHAT HAPPENED

In May 2017, U.S. Navy Rear Admiral Robert Gilbeau was sentenced to 18 months in prison for lying to investigators to conceal his illicit 20-year relationship with Leonard Glenn Francis, a.k.a. “Fat Leonard,” the owner of Glenn Defense Marine Asia (GDMA), the foreign defense contractor at the center of a major bribery and fraud scandal.

GDMA provided ship-husbanding services such as trash and sewage removal, food, water, security, and fuel to Navy ships making port calls in the Asia/Pacific region. As stated in his plea agreement, in 2003 and 2004, Gilbeau was the supply officer on the USS Nimitz where he was responsible for procuring all goods and services necessary for operation of the ship. He later served as the head of the Tsunami Relief Crisis Action Team in Singapore, heading the Navy’s logistics response to the Southeast Asia tsunami in December 2004 and in June 2005. According to his plea agreement, he was assigned to the office of the Chief of Naval Operations as the head of aviation material support, establishing policies and requirements for budgeting and acquisitions for the Navy’s air forces. In August 2010, after he was promoted to admiral, Gilbeau assumed command of the Defense Contract Management Agency International, where he was responsible for the global administration of DOD’s most critical contracts performed outside the United States.

In connection with his plea, Gilbeau admitted that he lied when DCIS and NCIS agents asked if he received any gifts from Francis, or when he said he always paid for half of the dinner when he and Francis met about three times a year. Furthermore, when he became aware that Francis and others had been arrested in connection with fraud and bribery offenses in September 2013, he destroyed documents and deleted computer files.

On June 9, 2016, Gilbeau, 56, pleaded guilty to one count of making false statements and was sentenced before U.S. District Judge Janis L. Sammartino of the Southern District of California. Gilbeau is the highest-ranking U.S. Navy officer to be sentenced in the investigation so far.

### INDICATORS

- **Foreign Considerations:** Gilbeau had a long-term relationship with a foreign defense contractor.
- **Criminal:** Gilbeau was involved in criminal activity or fraud.
- **Judgement:** Gilbeau had past untruthfulness and lied to investigators.

## IMPACT

- Sentenced to 18 months in prison for lying to federal investigators about his illicit 20-year relationship with a foreign defense contractor.
- Relating directly to Robert Gilbeau's fraud investigation and up to the time of his arrest, 20 current and former Navy officials have been charged in the fraud and bribery. Of the 20 Navy officials, 10 have pleaded guilty, and 10 cases are pending. Five GDMA executives and the GDMA Corporation have pleaded guilty.
- U.S. National Security and U.S. Navy operations were placed at risk by the actions of this insider using his rank and trusted access in his relationship with the foreign defense contractor.

## ADDITIONAL INFO

- The fraud triangle was developed by Dr. Donald Cressey, a criminologist, and hypothesizes that if all three components – **opportunity**, **pressure**, and **rationalization** – are present, an individual is more likely to commit fraud.
- Leonard had a ship-husbanding monopoly and a major influence on U.S. Navy officials securing goods and services for the U.S. Navy.
- Gilbeau's fraud was part of the larger "Fat Leonard" scandal which involved bribery (18 USC 201) and conspiracy to commit bribery and defraud the United States (18 USC 371). It was the largest corruption scandal within the U.S. Navy in the 2000s and 2010s. As part of the overall "Fat Leonard" investigation, a total of 33 were charged with 22 pleading guilty, including Francis, four of his aides, 17 Navy officials that included 10 officers, two enlisted, two former NCIS Agents, and two civilians.
- In September 2022, Francis cut off his ankle monitor and escaped the U.S., but was apprehended 17 days later in Venezuela, preparing to board a flight to Russia.

### Questions to Consider:

- How was the scandal able to occur and grow over two decades and involve so many U.S. Navy officials?
- Had there been an effective insider threat program, would it have been able to detect or prevent insiders from carrying out these acts?
- What is the role of today's insider threat programs in deterring such activities?

### Resources for Further Exploration:

- Insider Threat Toolkit Job Aid  
(<https://www.cdse.edu/Training/Toolkits/Insider-Threat-Toolkit/> )
- eLearning Course Catalog  
(<https://www.cdse.edu/catalog/elearning/DS-IA112.html>)
- U.S. Department of Homeland Security Combatting the Insider Threat  
(<https://www.cisa.gov/uscert/sites/default/files/publications/Combating%20the%20Insider%20Threat.pdf> )

## Supporting Through Reporting!

Contact the appropriate POC to report any observed potential risk indicators:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Title: Supervisor/Security Officer/ITP

Agency/Department: \_\_\_\_\_  
Senior Official/ITP Manager