

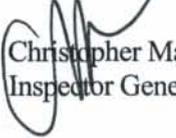
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Office of the Inspector General
Miami-Dade County

Memorandum

To: The Honorable Alex Penelas, Mayor

The Honorable Chairperson Barbara Carey-Shuler, Ed.D.
and Members, Board of County Commissioners

From:  Christopher Mazzella,
Inspector General

Date: October 28, 2004

Re: Miami International Airport – Fuel Farm

On Wednesday, October 20, 2004, the Miami-Dade Aviation Department (MDAD) received \$200,000 in restitution resulting from a joint investigation by the Miami-Dade State Attorney's Office and the Office of the Inspector General.

The investigation targeted theft and corruption in connection with Aircraft Services International Group's (ASIG) management agreement with MDAD to run the Fuel Farm facility at the Airport. The investigation revealed that ASIG employees and at least one airport official were responsible for the theft of at least 2.7 million gallons of jet fuel representing approximately \$4 million dollars. To date, twenty three (23) individuals have been arrested on a variety of charges including Racketeering and Conspiracy to Commit Racketeering relating to the fuel theft and contract fraud schemes.

Richard Caride, a manager at ASIG, agreed to cooperate. As part of his plea agreement, Caride and his wife, Lourdes Beck, sold their home purchased partially with proceeds from the fuel farm theft and made a \$200,000 restitution payment. Caride, who was second in command at ASIG, not only received proceeds from the theft of fuel, but was responsible for fraudulent contract schemes that included billing MDAD for fictitious work and parts.

Investigators estimate that the fraudulent contract schemes have resulted in a minimum of \$1.3 million dollars in falsified charges. The restitution payment is an important first step in making the County whole. The Office of the Inspector General will continue to work with the State Attorney's Office to ensure a successful prosecution and the recuperation of County funds.

cc: Mr. George Burgess, County Manager
Mr. Robert A. Ginsburg, County Attorney
Ms. Angela Gittens, Director, MDAD
Mr. Bill Johnson, Assistant County Manager

Clerk of the Board (Copy Filed)