

Execs Convicted Of Bribing Mexican Officials

Greg Risling, Associated Press

LOS ANGELES (AP) — A California company and two of its executives were convicted Tuesday of conspiracy charges for bribing government officials at Mexico's state-owned utility in exchange for obtaining lucrative contracts.

A federal jury found Keith Lindsey, president of Lindsey Manufacturing Co., and Steve Lee guilty of several counts, including conspiracy to violate the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act.

Lindsey, 66, and Lee, 62, could each face more than 30 years in prison at sentencing.

In addition, defendant Angela Aguilar was convicted of conspiracy to launder money. She and her husband Enrique Aguilar Noriega were suspected of acting as intermediaries between the Azusa-based company and Mexican officials.

Aguilar Noriega is currently a fugitive.

Prosecutors said Lindsey Manufacturing paid more than \$5 million to a business run by the Aguilar family, and the money was used to buy Mexican official Nestor Moreno a yacht called the Dream Seeker for \$1.8 million and a Ferrari for nearly \$300,000.

Moreno resigned last year as director of operations for Mexico's national electric utility, the Federal Electricity Commission. The attorney general's office in Mexico has opened an investigation and confiscated the yacht.

Moreno has denied all the allegations against him.

Prosecutors contended Lindsey and Lee, the company's vice president and chief financial officer, were aware that commissions paid to Enrique Aguilar between 2002 and 2009 would go to pay bribes to Mexican officials in exchange for the utility awarding contracts to Lindsey Manufacturing.

The company designs and manufactures emergency restoration systems for power transmission lines.

The Aguilar family also was accused of sending about \$600,000 to relatives of another Mexican official.

Defense attorney Jan Handzlik said he has filed a motion to dismiss the charges, alleging prosecutorial misconduct. He also intends to seek a new trial.

In the motion filed Monday, defense attorneys argued that an FBI agent repeatedly made false representations during her grand jury testimony about the investigation,

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and prosecutors knew about it but failed to alert the defense until the trial had started.

The defense alleges FBI Special Agent Susan Guernsey told the grand jury Lindsey Manufacturing didn't conduct much business with the Mexican utility before the Aguilers were hired, when in fact records showed there was a relationship between the two entities dating back to 1991.

Guernsey also is accused of testifying that Lee told the FBI he didn't want to know how the Aguilers were using the commissions. Lee, however, never made the statement, the motion said.

Thom Mrozek, a spokesman for the U.S. attorney's office, said prosecutors didn't have an immediate comment about the misconduct allegations.

One of the lead prosecutors in the case is Assistant U.S. Attorney Doug Miller, who is helping oversee an investigation into cyclist Lance Armstrong involving the possible use of performance-enhancing drugs.

U.S. authorities have asked for evidence from French officials about the seven-time Tour de France winner. The information could be presented later to a grand jury that has convened in Los Angeles.

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