



The City of New York
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DOI ARRESTS BROOKLYN TIRE SHOP OWNER ON BRIBERY CHARGES

ROSE GILL HEARN, Commissioner of the New York City Department of Investigation (“DOI”), announced the arrest of the owner of a Brooklyn tire shop on charges of bribing an undercover DOI investigator posing as an inspector with the City Department of Consumer Affairs (“DCA”). The bribes were offered to avoid a DCA violation and fine for operating the shop with a suspended DCA license and to evade payment of over \$2,000 in outstanding fines to DCA, according to the criminal complaint. DOI’s investigation began after it was notified of bribery allegations involving the Brooklyn shop. The office of Kings County District Attorney Charles J. Hynes is prosecuting the case.

DOI Commissioner Rose Gill Hearn said, “Bribery is not the way to avoid fines. Anyone who chooses to skirt City regulations by attempting to corrupt City inspectors is risking more serious consequences, including arrest and criminal prosecution.”

JOAO SEMEDO, 56, of Brooklyn, was charged late Tuesday, March 9, 2010, with two counts of Bribery in the Third Degree, a class D felony. Upon conviction, a class D felony is punishable by up to seven years in prison.

According to the criminal complaint, on February 24, 2010, a DOI undercover investigator posing as a DCA inspector visited the defendant’s business, JVS Tire Shop, on Bedford Avenue in Brooklyn and informed the defendant that he could not sell used tires with a suspended “second hand dealer’s general license” and was required to renew the license and pay a fine. After the undercover investigator instructed the defendant to pay the DCA violation he would be receiving in the mail, SEMEDO offered the investigator money to make the violation go away and then gave the investigator \$200. On March 9, 2010, the undercover investigator returned to the tire shop, where SEMEDO offered the investigator \$1,500 to eliminate the defendant’s accumulated DCA violations and penalties that totaled more than \$2,000. SEMEDO was then arrested.

DCA inspectors routinely conduct inspections at a variety of businesses in the City’s five boroughs. DCA issues business licenses to more than 71,000 businesses in 57 different categories and enforces consumer-protection laws.

Commissioner Gill Hearn thanked Kings County District Attorney Charles J. Hynes and DCA Commissioner Jonathan Mintz and their staffs for their assistance in this investigation.

The investigation was conducted by DOI’s Office of Inspector General for DCA, specifically Investigator Marcel Dimbeng under the supervision of Deputy Inspector General Mary Kozlow and Deputy Commissioner Vincent E. Green, with assistance from DOI’s squad of detectives from the New York City Police Department.

A criminal complaint is an accusation. A defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty.

DOI is one of the oldest law-enforcement agencies in the country. The agency investigates and refers for prosecution City employees and contractors engaged in corrupt or fraudulent activities or unethical conduct. Investigations may involve any agency, officer, elected official or employee of the City, as well as those who do business with or receive benefits from the City.

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