



**CYRUS R. VANCE, JR.**  
DISTRICT ATTORNEY

DISTRICT ATTORNEY – NEW YORK COUNTY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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**DA VANCE AND COMMISSIONER PETERS ANNOUNCE INDICTMENT IN  
CONSTRUCTION SITE SAFETY FRAUD CASE**

*Defendants Accused of Fraudulently Conducting Inspections, Falsifying Records, and Leaving More Than 40 Active Construction Sites Unsupervised*

Manhattan District Attorney Cyrus R. Vance, Jr., and Department of Investigation Commissioner Mark G. Peters today announced the indictment of seven individuals and two companies, AVANTI BUILDING CONSULTANTS INC. (“AVANTI”) and NYCB ENGINEERING GROUP (“NYCB”), for falsifying site safety inspections at multiple active construction sites in Manhattan. The investigation was referred to the Manhattan DA’s Office by the New York City Department of Investigation (“DOI”). The defendants are charged in an indictment in New York State Supreme Court with Grand Larceny in the Second and Third Degrees, Scheme to Defraud in the First Degree, and Criminal Possession of a Forged Instrument in the Second Degree, among other charges.<sup>1</sup>

“We are preventing harm by prosecuting wrongdoing in the construction industry,” said District Attorney Vance. “My Office takes public safety seriously, whether in regard to violent crimes or safety at construction sites. The joint action by DOI and my Office will do just that.”

DOI Commissioner Mark G. Peters said: “Forgery is a dangerous substitute for a trained safety manager on a construction site. DOI teamed with the Manhattan District Attorney and the City Department of Buildings to uncover fraud and underscore safety at construction sites.”

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<sup>1</sup> The charges contained in the indictments are merely allegations, and the defendants are presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty. All factual recitations are derived from documents filed in court, including the indictments, and statements made on the record in court.

## Avanti Building Consultants Inc.

According to the indictment, RICHARD MARINI, 60, and RICHARD SFRAGA, 49, managed a consulting company called AVANTI that purported to provide licensed site safety managers for ongoing construction projects. However, instead of assigning qualified managers to job sites, MARINI recruited individuals on Craigslist and similar websites, none of whom were properly licensed or qualified to conduct safety inspections on construction projects. MARINI hired short order cooks, window treatment specialists, hotel bellhops, hairdressers, eBay vendors, and even a musician to work as supposed “interns” for AVANTI. MARINI then instructed these individuals to go to job sites and sign the safety logs in their own names or in the names of licensed site safety managers that MARINI provided to them. Many of these licensed site safety managers were unaware that their names were being used by MARINI and AVANTI “interns”, and in multiple instances, interns even used the name of a deceased site manager. Four “interns”, BRANDON TAYLOR, 38, BESIK KELLY, 53, GEORGE TATTOS, 59, and VINCENT BRUZZESSE, 70, are charged in the indictment for their involvement in carrying out the scheme.

## NYCB Engineering Group

According to the indictment, KISHOWAR PERVEZ, 40, Vice President of NYCB ENGINEERING GROUP, offered to create comprehensive site safety plans for his clients, but, without their knowledge, subcontracted the jobs to AVANTI, which failed to provide certified inspectors for the projects. Regardless, PERVEZ is accused of billing his clients for multiple hours of inspection each day. PERVEZ is also accused of instructing NYCB employees to hire his personal friends and family members – none of whom were licensed by DOB – to go to job sites and complete the safety logs as if inspections had been carried out by a qualified safety manager. One such safety manager was fraudulently reported to have inspected as many as 14 projects per day, an impossible figure given that DOB requires third-party safety managers to spend at least two hours per day on a construction site.



*Manhattan buildings and construction sites affected by the scheme*

Assistant District Attorney Diana Florence, Senior Investigative Counsel of the Rackets Bureau, is handling the prosecution of the case, under the supervision of Assistant District Attorney Jodie Kane, Chief of the Rackets Bureau, and Executive Assistant District Attorney David M. Szuchman, Chief of the Investigation Division. Assistant District Attorney Carey Ng and Paralegal Elyssa Spitzer provided valuable assistance with the case.

District Attorney Vance thanked Assistant Inspector General Laura Bowman, Chief Investigator James McElligott, Associate Commissioner Michael Carroll, Deputy Inspector General Ed Zinzer, Forensic Investigators Dennis Hemmingway and Erskine Fleming, all of the New York City Department of Investigation, and Inspector Joe Cobian, of the Scaffold Safety Team of the New York City Department of Buildings for their assistance with the investigation.

The DOI report is available in full [here](#).

#### Defendant Information:

AVANTI BUILDING CONSULTANTS INC. (A/K/A “RISK MANAGEMENT AGENCY, INC.”)  
New York, N.Y.

#### Charges:

- Grand Larceny in the Second Degree, a class C felony, 3 counts
- Grand Larceny in the Third Degree, a class D felony, 5 counts
- Scheme to Defraud in the First Degree, a class E felony, 1 count

VINCENT BRUZESSE, D.O.B. 4/10/1944  
Staten Island, N.Y.

#### Charges:

- Grand Larceny in the Second Degree, a class C felony, 3 counts
- Grand Larceny in the Third Degree, a class D felony, 5 counts
- Criminal Possession of a Forged Instrument in the Second Degree, a class D felony, 1 counts
- Scheme to Defraud in the First Degree, a class E felony, 1 count

BESIK KELLY, D.O.B. 11/16/1960  
Staten Island, N.Y.

#### Charges:

- Grand Larceny in the Second Degree, a class C felony, 3 counts
- Grand Larceny in the Third Degree, a class D felony, 5 counts
- Criminal Possession of a Forged Instrument in the Second Degree, a class D felony, 9 counts
- Scheme to Defraud in the First Degree, a class E felony, 1 count

NYCB ENGINEERING GROUP  
New York, N.Y.

Charges:

- Grand Larceny in the Second Degree, a class C felony, 3 counts
- Grand Larceny in the Third Degree, a class D felony, 5 counts
- Scheme to Defraud in the First Degree, a class E felony, 1 count

RICHARD MARINI, D.O.B. 11/6/1953  
Staten Island, N.Y.

Charges:

- Grand Larceny in the Second Degree, a class C felony, 3 counts
- Grand Larceny in the Third Degree, a class D felony, 5 counts
- Criminal Possession of a Forged Instrument in the Second Degree, a class D felony, 24 counts
- Scheme to Defraud in the First Degree, a class E felony, 1 count
- Tampering with Physical Evidence, a class E felony, 1 count

KISHOWAR PERVEZ, D.O.B. 1/7/1974  
Queens, N.Y.

Charges:

- Grand Larceny in the Second Degree, a class C felony, 3 counts
- Grand Larceny in the Third Degree, a class D felony, 5 counts
- Scheme to Defraud in the First Degree, a class E felony, 1 count

RICHARD SFRAGA, D.O.B. 4/28/1965  
Burlington County, New Jersey

Charges:

- Grand Larceny in the Second Degree, a class C felony, 3 counts
- Grand Larceny in the Third Degree, a class D felony, 5 counts
- Scheme to Defraud in the First Degree, a class E felony, 1 count

GEORGE TATTOS, D.O.B. 4/6/1955  
Staten Island, N.Y.

Charges:

- Grand Larceny in the Second Degree, a class C felony, 3 counts
- Grand Larceny in the Third Degree, a class D felony, 5 counts
- Criminal Possession of a Forged Instrument in the Second Degree, a class D felony, 2 counts
- Scheme to Defraud in the First Degree, a class E felony, 1 count

BRANDON TAYLOR, D.O.B. 6/12/1976  
Bucks County, P.A.

Charges:

- Grand Larceny in the Second Degree, a class C felony, 3 counts
- Grand Larceny in the Third Degree, a class D felony, 5 counts
- Criminal Possession of a Forged Instrument in the Second Degree, a class D felony, 12 counts
- Scheme to Defraud in the First Degree, a class E felony, 1 count

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