

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE: PRESS RELEASE

Former Navy Sailor Charged with Attempted Espionage

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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NORFOLK, Va. – Robert Patrick Hoffman II, 39, of Virginia Beach, Va., has been indicted by a federal grand jury for attempting to provide classified information to individuals who he believed to be representatives of the Russian Federation.

Neil H. MacBride, U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of Virginia; Lisa Monaco, Assistant Attorney General for the Justice Department's National Security Division; Juan C. Molina, Acting Special Agent in Charge of the FBI's Norfolk Field Office; and Charles T. May, Special Agent in Charge of the Naval Criminal Investigative Service (NCIS) Norfolk Field Office, made the announcement after the indictment was unsealed.

Hoffman was charged in an indictment returned yesterday with attempted espionage, which carries the penalty of imprisonment for any term up to life, if convicted. Hoffman was arrested this morning without incident and is scheduled to make his initial appearance at 2:30 p.m. in federal court in Norfolk before U.S. Magistrate Judge Tommy Miller.

According to the indictment, Hoffman is a U.S. citizen born in Buffalo, N.Y., who served for 20 years in the U.S. Navy until his retirement on Nov. 1, 2011. While serving in the Navy, Hoffman held security clearances that granted him access to classified and national defense information relating to programs and operations in which he participated, and he repeatedly signed agreements to not disclose that sensitive information.

The indictment alleges that on Oct. 21, 2012, Hoffman attempted to deliver to the Russian Federation classified documents that revealed national security information. He is alleged to have carried out this activity with the intent to cause injury to the United States and to give an advantage to the Russian Federation. In fact, Hoffman delivered the information to the FBI, which was conducting an undercover operation, according to the indictment.

The indictment does not allege that the Russian Federation committed any offense under U.S. laws in this case.

This case was investigated by the FBI and NCIS. Assistant U.S. Attorneys Robert J. Krask and Alan M. Salsbury, and Trial Attorney Heather M. Schmidt of the Counterespionage Section of the Justice Department's National Security Division, are prosecuting the case on behalf of the United States.

Criminal indictments are only charges and not evidence of guilt. A defendant is presumed to be innocent until and unless proven guilty.

<http://www.justice.gov/usao/vae/news/2012/12/20121206hoffmannr.html>