

Treasury Takes Sweeping Action Against Global Narcotics Traffickers

Today, the U.S. Department of the Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) is sanctioning 12 individuals and eight entities, located across seven countries, who are linked to the global illicit drug trade.

EUROPEAN DRUG TRAFFICKERS

Lithuanian nationals **Rokas Karpavicius** (Karpavicius) and **Virginijus Labutis** (Labutis) have been involved in the trafficking of cocaine and methamphetamine, money laundering, and corruption, including bribery, and pose a significant criminal threat to Lithuania and other jurisdictions.

Also included in today's action is Lithuanian national **Saulius Staskus** (Staskus), who has worked with both Labutis and Karpavicius. Staskus has helped Labutis coordinate vessels in South America to transport cocaine to Europe and Australia.

DISRUPTING EUROPEAN FINANCIAL NETWORKS

Karpavicius is the majority owner of Switzerland-based holding company **Karpis AG** and Poland-based company **Lake Forest SP Z O O** (Lake Forest), which is engaged in wholesale and retail trade. Karpavicius's partner, Lithuanian national **Jurga Karpe**, resides with Karpavicius in Spain, and is on the board of directors of Karpis AG.

Karpavicius is also the majority owner of Switzerland-based **Dragon Secure GmbH** (Dragon Secure). The company operates the "Kraden" encrypted messaging application, which has been used by drug traffickers.

AUSTRALIAN AND NEW ZEALAND ASSOCIATES

Drug traffickers earn significantly higher commissions on the transport of illicit drugs to Australia and New Zealand, where the increased profits offset the high costs of trafficking narcotics. Accordingly, Karpavicius, Labutis, and Staskus have worked with Australian and New Zealand nationals and have imported drug shipments into the two countries.

Australian national **David Jonathan Thackray** (Thackray) and New Zealand national **Ho Kai Leung** (Leung) are key associates of Karpavicius. Thackray was previously arrested and imprisoned in New Zealand for importing cocaine into the country. Leung was previously convicted in New Zealand for procuring and possessing methamphetamine and amphetamine.

Leung is also the owner of New Zealand-based entity **JT Trading Limited** and the director of New Zealand-based **TNK Trading Limited**.

COLOMBIAN COCAINE TRAFFICKERS

Treasury is also sanctioning **Allende Perilla Sandoval** (Allende), a Colombia-based narcotics trafficker. Allende coordinates directly with the Sinaloa Cartel in Mexico and is the leader of

a drug trafficking organization that controls key drug trafficking routes along the Pacific coast of Colombia and Ecuador.

Camilo Esteban Betancourt Rosero (Betancourt) has laundered illicit drug proceeds derived from cocaine shipments in U.S. dollars and other currencies for Allende's organization.

OFAC is sanctioning **Orozman Orlando Osten Blanco** (Osten Blanco), **Elkin Casarrubia Posada** (Casarrubia Posada), and **Luis Perez Castaneda** (Perez Castaneda).

As a result of today's action, all property and interests in property of the designated persons described above that are in the United States or in the possession or control of U.S. persons are blocked and must be reported to OFAC. In addition, any entities that are owned, directly or indirectly, individually or in the aggregate, 50 percent or more by one or more blocked persons are also blocked.

Dated 17th December, 2024

