

**Government Contractor Settles False Claims Act Allegations Based on Violations of the Trade Agreements Act - GSA Office of Inspector General**

**Government Contractor Settles False Claims Act Allegations Based on Violations of the Trade Agreements Act**

U.S. Attorney's Office  
Eastern District of Virginia  
June 29, 2023

ALEXANDRIA, Va. – OMNI Business Systems, Inc., located in Alexandria, has agreed to pay \$80,944.00 to settle a civil fraud case alleging that OMNI violated the Trade Agreements Act and the False Claims Act by fraudulently misrepresenting the country of origin for certain products on federal supply schedules.

The settlement arises in connection with a lawsuit filed by an OMNI competitor under the whistleblower provision of the False Claims Act: *United States ex rel. Vogel v. OMNI Business Systems, Inc., et al.* The settlement resolves allegations that OMNI violated the False Claims Act by fraudulently misrepresenting the country of origin for over a dozen toner products manufactured by HP, Inc., and offering them for sale, as Trade Agreements Act (TAA) compliant, through a General Services Administration (GSA) Multiple Award Schedule (MAS) contract and an Air Force Blanket Purchase Agreement. Despite Omni being told to remove the non-TAA compliant items, the settlement resolves allegations that the products remained available for purchase—and sales were made of the items—through GSA and the Air Force.

A whistleblower suit, or *qui tam* action under the False Claims Act, is commenced by an individual, known as a “relator,” filing a complaint under seal in the U.S. District Court, and providing a copy of the complaint and other evidence to the U.S. Attorney’s Office. The United States then has an opportunity to investigate the claims. The False Claims Act provides whistleblowers with a share of the government’s recovery. The relator here will receive a share of the False Claims Act settlement.

The resolution obtained in this matter was the result of a coordinated effort between the U.S. Attorney’s Office for the Eastern District of Virginia, the GSA Office of Inspector General, and the Air Force Office of Special Investigations.

The matter was investigated by Assistant U.S. Attorney Kristin Starr. The civil claims settled by this False Claims Act agreement are allegations only; there has been no determination of civil liability.

A copy of this press release may be found on the website of the [U.S. Attorney’s Office for the Eastern District of Virginia](#).

Source: U.S. Attorney's Office [press release](#)