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Company with Federal and State Contracts to Pay \$390K to Resolve Allegations it Had Unqualified Employee

Deirdre M. Daly, United States Attorney for the District of Connecticut, and George C. Jepsen, Attorney General for the State of Connecticut, today announced that GARG CONSULTING SERVICES, INC. ("GARG") has entered into a civil settlement agreement with the federal government and the State of Connecticut in which GARG will pay \$390,000 to resolve allegations that the Rocky Hill-based company failed to authenticate an employee's purported educational credentials and a professional certification before hiring and assigning him to work on various U.S. Department of Transportation-funded and state-funded highway projects, and on a bridge reconstruction project funded by the National Railroad Passenger Corporation ("Amtrak").

According to allegations contained in the settlement agreement, GARG provided construction management and inspection services as a contractor or subcontractor for Connecticut Department of Transportation ("CONNDOT") projects and for an Amtrak project. In 2007, an individual applied for employment with GARG and represented that he was a college graduate with a degree in civil engineering management and with Engineer-in-Training ("EIT") certification from the State of Connecticut. If appropriate employee screening had been done, GARG would have learned that the employee had not graduated from college and had never sought or obtained EIT certification.

The employee worked at GARG from May 2007 to May 2010. During this time, GARG was a contractor or subcontractor on several federal and state highway and bridge projects. The employee also worked on a GARG subcontract for engineering consulting and professional services related to Amtrak's replacement of the movable span on the Thames River Bridge. On the CONNDOT and Amtrak projects, GARG

submitted payroll invoices for work performed by the company's employees, including for work performed by the unqualified employee. The contracts and subcontracts entered into by GARG required that the company provide qualified personnel to work on the CONNDOT and Amtrak projects, and GARG submitted project proposals containing the employee's purported credentials and qualifications. In addition, both CONNDOT and Amtrak were contractually reliant on GARG to provide qualified personnel.

"It is imperative that our roads, bridges and other components of our critical infrastructure are constructed, maintained and inspected only by qualified individuals," said U.S. Attorney Daly. "This case sends a clear message that government contractors that do not properly vet all of their employees risk investigation and a heavy financial penalty."

U.S. Attorney Daly also noted that GARG cooperated with the government's investigation.

"Certifications are critically important, especially in major engineering projects where proper procedures and training help to ensure the safety of the general public," said Attorney General Jepsen. "Employers have a responsibility to make very sure that their employees are properly certified for the jobs that they are expected to perform. I'm pleased that this matter has been resolved."

"This investigation demonstrates our commitment to maintaining the integrity of federal acquisition and hiring processes, which is an oversight priority for the Office of Inspector General," said Todd Damiani, Special Agent-in-Charge of the U.S. Department of Transportation Office of Inspector General.

"Our investigation sends a strong message to all contractors about their obligation to employ qualified persons to work on critical transportation infrastructure projects," said Amtrak Inspector General Tom Howard.

As a result of the settlement, there will be no lawsuit filed against GARG regarding the conduct alleged in the settlement agreement. In entering into the settlement, GARG did not admit liability or wrongdoing, and the agreement indicates that the parties settled this matter to avoid the delay, uncertainty, inconvenience, and expense of litigation.

This investigation was conducted by the U.S. Department of Transportation's Office of Inspector General and Amtrak's Office of Inspector General. The matter was handled within the U.S. Attorney's Office by Assistant U.S. Attorney William A. Collier and Auditor Susan N. Spiegel.