

Betrayal from Within: FAA Contractor Busted Spying for Iran

A former Federal Aviation Administration contractor has pleaded guilty to federal charges after admitting he spied for the Iranian government while employed in the U.S.

Abouzar Rahmati, a naturalized U.S. citizen residing in Great Falls, Virginia, conspired with Iranian intelligence officials to collect and deliver sensitive information on American infrastructure, including airport surveillance systems and the solar energy sector.

Rahmati's activities date back to at least December 2017, during which time he maintained secret communications with Iranian operatives.

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By securing a role with an FAA contractor, Rahmati gained access to restricted information critical to national security. This included data on the National Aerospace System, Airport Surveillance Radar systems and proprietary FAA radio frequency data.

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Court documents reveal Rahmati downloaded more than 175 gigabytes of data. He stored the classified information on removable media devices and personally transported them to Iran in April 2022. There, he handed the materials to Iranian government officials, violating federal law by acting as an unregistered agent for a foreign government.

In addition to compromising aviation systems, Rahmati also

provided Tehran with intelligence on the U.S. solar energy sector. These disclosures represent a severe breach of national trust and raise alarms about foreign infiltration of U.S. technological infrastructure.

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Rahmati is scheduled for sentencing on Aug. 26, 2025, and faces a maximum sentence of 10 years for acting as an unregistered foreign agent and up to five years for conspiracy.

The Department of Justice continues to investigate the scope of Rahmati's espionage activities and potential accomplices. His case underscores the ongoing threat posed by hostile foreign powers seeking to exploit vulnerabilities in the U.S. government and critical industries.

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