

Three Saudi Nationals Charged with Violating Federal Export Laws by Smuggling Gun Parts from California to Saudi Arabia

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In a reminder that willful violations of the International Traffic in Arms Regulations (ITAR) are criminal and can carry significant sentences, on November 1, 2019, and November 6, 2019, two federal grand juries in Southern California charged three Saudi nationals with violating the Arms Export Control Act (the statute implemented by the ITAR) among other federal laws.

Two of the nationals, Alsufyani and Alzahrani, are charged with conspiracy to smuggle goods outside of the United States and knowingly exporting weapons parts without a license. Federal prosecutors allege that, while in the United States on student visas, the men purchased \$100,000 worth of rifle barrels, rifle triggers, and other related items and concealed them in their checked luggage by falsely identifying the items as shower curtain rods and car parts. A third Saudi national, Alabdulwahab, was separately charged earlier in the week with 15 counts of smuggling and 15 counts of knowingly exporting firearm parts from the United States without a license.

If convicted of all charges, Alsufyani could face a statutory maximum sentence of 65 years in federal prison, while Alzahrani could face 25 years. Alabdulwahab could face a statutory maximum sentence of 10 years in federal prison for each smuggling count and 20 years for each violation of the Arms Export Control Act.

All three defendants are believed to be in Saudi Arabia and it is unclear whether they will be extradited to the United States. The cases are being prosecuted by Reema El-Amamy and Christopher Grigg, Assistant United States Attorneys from the Terrorism and Export Crimes Section. Attorney Matthew Chang of the Justice Department's National Security Division is assisting with both cases. The FBI-led Joint Terrorism Task Force and U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement's Homeland Security Investigations investigated the cases.

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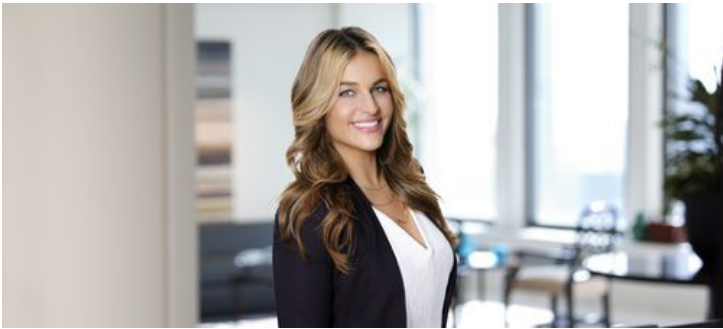
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