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Port Authority Officer and Airport Employee Who Sought to Smuggle 12 Kilos of Cocaine Through Seaborne Plead Guilty

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The Henry E. Rohlsen Airport on St. Croix. By. V.I. CONSORTIUM

ST. CROIX — United States Attorney Delia L. Smith announced today that Wayne Jeffers, 52, and Charles Rawlins, III, 39, both of St. Croix, pleaded guilty before United States Magistrate Judge Emile A. Henderson, III, to conspiracy to possess with intent to distribute a controlled cocaine and possession with intent to distribute a cocaine.

According to court documents, in the early morning hours of May 11, 2022, Jeffers, a Virgin Islands Port Authority Officer stationed at the Henry E. Rohlsen Airport in St. Croix, placed a black suitcase containing 12 bricks of cocaine inside a ladder truck that was parked on the ramp of

the airport. Later that morning, Rawlins, an airport ramp worker, removed the suitcase from the ladder truck and placed it on a baggage cart to be loaded on a Seaborne Silver aircraft destined for San Juan, PR.

The luggage containing the cocaine was later seized by Customs and Border Protection Officers. A drug analyzed conducted by the Drug Enforcement Administration's Southeast Laboratory in Miami, FL, confirmed that the seized substance was cocaine with a net weight of 12.01 kilograms.

Rawlins and Jeffers each face a mandatory minimum term of 10 years imprisonment on their conviction. A federal district court judge will determine the appropriate sentence after considering the U.S. sentencing guidelines and other statutory factors.

The Customs and Border Protection, Homeland Security Investigations and the Drug Enforcement Agency investigated, and Assistant United States Attorney Daniel H. Huston prosecuted this case.

This effort is part of an Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Force (OCDETF) operation. OCDETF identifies, disrupts, and dismantles the highest-level criminal organizations that threaten the United States using a prosecutor-led, intelligence-driven, multiagency approach. Additional information about the OCDETF Program can be found at <https://www.justice.gov/OCDETF>.