



# NEWS RELEASE

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

DATE: May 18, 2006

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## **OIL TANKER CHIEF ENGINEER INDICTED FOR FALSIFYING LOGS**

(Beaumont, TX) Matthew D. Orwig, United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Texas, and Assistant Attorney General Sue Ellen Wooldridge, of the U.S. Department of Justice's Environment and Natural Resources Division, announced today that the Chief Engineer of a foreign flagged oil tanker has been indicted in connection with concealing deliberate discharges of oil-contaminated bilge in the Gulf of Mexico from the *M/T Pacific Ruby*. **KUN YUN JHO** has been charged with conspiracy, making false statements and violating the Act to Prevent Pollution from Ships for his alleged role in maintaining false Oil Record Books that concealed tampering with required pollution prevention equipment.

According to the indictment, Jho, a Korean national, was employed as the Chief Engineer of the *M/T Pacific Ruby* between October 2004 and September 2005, during which time he allegedly used fresh water to trick the Oil Water Separator and Oil Content Meter, which are intended to detect and prevent the overboard discharge of oil. The tricking allegedly took place before and after the owners and operators of the ship installed the anti-tricking equipment in May 2005 that prevented the use of the fresh water system at the same time as an overboard discharge. It is alleged that a screwdriver was used to force open a valve that allowed fresh water to circumvent the anti-tricking device and flush the Oil Content Meter so that it was unable to register the actual oil content during overboard discharges.

The indictment alleges that Jho presented a false Oil Record Book to the U. S. Coast Guard during an inspection in Port Neches in September 2005. The entries in the required log indicated proper use of the pollution prevention equipment during discharges of oil-contaminated bilge waste made in the Gulf of Mexico.

Engine room operations on large oceangoing vessels, such as the *M/T Pacific Ruby*, generate large volumes of oil contaminated bilge waste. International and U.S. laws prohibit the discharge of bilge waste without having been treated by an Oil Water Separator and oil sensing equipment such as the Oil Content Meter that prevent the discharge of bilge waste containing concentrations greater than 15 parts-per-million oil. The Act to Prevent Pollution from Ships also requires that all overboard discharges be recorded in an Oil Record Book.

If convicted, Jho faces up to five years in prison on each count of the indictment. It is important to note that an indictment is merely a charge and should not be considered as evidence of either guilt or innocence.

The investigation has been conducted by the Gulf Region of the Coast Guard Investigative Service and the Coast Guard Marine Safety Officers in Port Arthur and Houston. The case is being prosecuted jointly by the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Eastern District of Texas and the Environmental Crimes Section of the U.S. Department of Justice. The investigation is continuing.

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