



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Thursday, April 16, 2009

For Information Contact Public Affairs
SANDY RAYNOR
Telephone: (602) 514-7625
Cell: (602) 525-2681

CASA GRANDE AIRPLANE MECHANIC INDICTED FOR FALSIFYING INSPECTION

PHOENIX - A Casa Grande, Ariz., airplane mechanic was indicted by a federal grand jury on April 14th for falsely claiming to possess a required Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) certificate. Wesley Glen Forsyth, 43, has been charged with five felony offenses, all stemming from an inspection he claimed to have performed on a private aircraft in July 2008.

The indictment was returned by a grand jury in Phoenix and alleges that Forsyth worked at a repair and maintenance facility in Casa Grande known as "The Plane Man." The indictment further alleges that Forsyth twice certified that he had completed a 100-hour inspection of a privately-owned Alon Aircoup aircraft and found it to be in an airworthy condition. Forsyth is alleged to have signed the certification and to have provided his airframe and power plant ratings number, which is a certification awarded, and required, by the FAA.

Another allegation in the indictment is that Forsyth provided a certification number that had not been issued to him, but that had been issued to another person in 1968. The indictment says that Forsyth actually held no certification whatsoever and failed to pass three tests he took in order to obtain one. According to the indictment, on August 1, 2008, after little more than one hour of flight time after the purported inspection, the aircraft's engine quit and the pilot crash landed. The airplane's owner and pilot was unhurt, but the plane was declared to be a total loss. Subsequent inspection caused FAA aircraft safety inspectors to believe that the fuel pump had not been properly inspected.

Forsyth has been charged with three counts of Making False Statements to a Government Agency and two counts of Fraud Involving Airplane Parts. A conviction for each of these offenses is punishable by up to five years in federal prison and a fine of up to \$250,000. An indictment is the method by which a person is charged with criminal activity and raises no inference of guilt. An individual is presumed innocent until a jury determines that a defendant's guilt has been proven beyond a reasonable doubt.

The investigation was conducted by agents of the United States Department of Transportation, Office of the Inspector General. The prosecution is being handled by Frank T. Galati, Assistant U.S. Attorney, District of Arizona, Phoenix.

CASE NUMBER: CR 09-0406 PHX-MHM
RELEASE NUMBER: 2009-132(Forsyth)

###