

Airbus to Pay Unprecedented \$3.9 Billion for Multinational Bribery, FCPA Violations

Article By:

Siri Nelson

Last week, the Department of Justice (DOJ) announced the largest deferred prosecution agreement for violations of the Arms Export Control Act (AECA), International Traffic in Arms Regulations (ITAR), and Foreign Corrupt Practices Act (FCPA) in history. Airbus SE, a French aircraft company, agreed to pay over a combined \$3.9 billion to the DOJ as well as authorities in France and the UK for foreign corruption and bribery charges. The penalty is the largest of its sort and is the result of anti-fraud efforts across the three countries.

Airbus engaged in corruption for several years, offering bribes to foreign officials and misreporting to authorities to conceal the bribes. These violations of the Arms Export Control, International Traffic in Arms, and FCPA encompass activities in the United States, UK, France, and China. The crimes also include corruption in defense contracts.

According to a [DOJ Press Release](#), Airbus will pay \$527 million to the United States for the company's violations of the International Traffic in Arms and Foreign Corrupt Practices Acts. In this case, Airbus self-reported and voluntarily cooperated with law enforcement after uncovering violations in an internal audit. It is possible an internal report initiated the audit. Cooperation and remedial measures by Airbus were taken into consideration in the settlement terms of the deferred prosecution agreement and benefitted Airbus.

International whistleblowers are crucial to the detection of large-scale corruption and fraud around the world. The SEC and DOJ rely on individuals who decide to anonymously and confidentially blow the whistle on violations of the FCPA. The FCPA allows for foreign nationals to file whistleblower claims in the US and receive an award between 10 and 30 percent of the total amount recovered by the government if a successful enforcement action follows their disclosures.

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