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August 16, 2010
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CAPITOL HEIGHTS MAN PLEADS GUILTY TO STEALING THE PAY OF U.S. SERVICEMEN

Also Used Others' Personal to Fraudulently Obtain Credit and Debit Cards

Greenbelt, Maryland - Andre Everton Grant, age 27, of Capitol Heights, Maryland, pleaded guilty today to fraudulently accessing a computer containing the payroll accounts of specific U.S. servicemen; using the personal information of other individuals, without their knowledge, to fraudulently obtain and use credit and debit cards; and aggravated identity theft.

The guilty plea was announced by United States Attorney for the District of Maryland Rod J. Rosenstein; Postal Inspector in Charge Daniel S. Cortez of the U.S. Postal Inspection Service - Washington Division; and Special Agent in Charge Richard Zott of the Defense Criminal Investigative Service - Central Field Office.

According to the plea agreement, beginning in July 2008 through at least May 6, 2009, Grant fraudulently gained access to the payroll accounts of specific U.S. servicemen and changed the payee information to divert over $23,500 in wage payments to accounts under his control. In addition, Grant used the name, date of birth and social security number of an individual, without that person's knowledge or authorization, to open a debit card account at Andrews Federal Credit Union. Over a one year period Grant used the fraudulent account for purchases and cash withdrawals, resulting in a loss to the credit union of $9,481.03.

On March 31, 2010, Grant was arrested and a search warrant was executed at his home on Benning Road in Capitol Heights. Agents recovered from Grant's bedroom, a United States Army personnel listing containing personal identifying information for the service members. While on pretrial release conditions that prohibited him from committing any additional offenses, Grant opened a credit card account using the name and personal information of one of the service members on the list seized from his home. On June 2, 2010 Grant used the credit card to purchase a notebook computer for $698.98, which was delivered to his home.

As a result of his schemes, Grant is responsible for $187,659 in losses to merchants and to the U.S. government for funds diverted from the payroll accounts.

Grant faces a maximum sentence of five years in prison for fraudulently accessing the payroll accounts; a maximum of 10 years in prison for using the fraudulently obtained debit and credit cards; and two years in prison, consecutive to any other sentence for aggravated identity theft. Chief U.S. District Judge Deborah K. Chasanow has scheduled sentencing for October 18, 2010 at 9:00 a.m.

United States Attorney Rod J. Rosenstein commended Special Assistant U.S. Attorney Anthony V. Teelucksingh of the Department of Justice Computer Crime and Intellectual Property Section and Assistant United States Attorney Bryan E. Foreman, who are prosecuting the case.