UNITED STATES ATTORNEY'S OFFICE
EASTERN DISTRICT OF VIRGINIA

ALEXANDRIA NEWPORT NEWS NORFOLK RICHMOND

UNITED STATES ATTORNEY CHUCK ROSENBERG

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

April 5, 2007

Jim Rybicki
Public Information Officer
Phone: (703) 842-4050 Fax: (703) 549-5202
E-Mail: usavae.press@usdoj.gov
Website: www.usdoj.gov/usao/vae

Further Information Contact:
Deanna Warren
Phone: (757) 441-6331

Former Navy Contractor Sentenced for Damaging Navy Computer System

(Norfolk, Virginia) – Richard Sylvestre, 43, of Boylston, Massachusetts, was sentenced yesterday to 12 months and one day in prison, followed by three years of supervised release, and ordered to pay a $10,000 fine and $25,007 in restitution, upon his conviction for damaging protected United States Navy computers. Chuck Rosenberg, United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Virginia, made the announcement after Sylvestre was sentenced by United States District Judge Rebecca Beach Smith.

Sylvestre, a former Navy contractor, previously pled guilty on September 20, 2006 to intentionally damaging a Navy computer network used in furtherance of national security. This network was located at the United States Navy European Planning and Operations Command Center (NEPOCC) in Naples, Italy, where Sylvestre worked as one of three system administrators. In this role, Sylvestre helped to oversee the daily operation of a computer system used to track and plot the locations of ships, submarines, and underwater obstructions within areas covered by the Navy's European Command.

According to court documents, in December 2005, the Navy considered contract proposals from several firms, including one owned and operated by Sylvestre, to replace one of Sylvestre's fellow NEPOCC system administrators. As part of his guilty plea, Sylvestre admitted that, when the Navy rejected his proposal and decided to award the work to another firm, he became disgruntled and eventually decided to take action to make the new system administrator "look bad." On May 19, 2006, shortly before leaving Italy to travel to the United States, Sylvestre secretly programmed a series of malicious commands on five computers in NEPOCC's network. Sylvestre designed these commands to disrupt and to damage the network while he visited the United States. On May 20 and 21, 2006, Sylvestre's commands began to execute, causing two watch floor computers and a computer database filter to go offline. Before any further damage could occur, however, another system administrator discovered the problem and prevented Sylvestre's commands from affecting the other two targeted computers. The Navy then took extensive steps to secure and to restore the NEPOCC network and its data. No military or civilian personnel were injured as a result of Sylvestre's actions.

The Naval Criminal Investigative Service investigated this case. The case was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Robert Krask, Special Assistant United States

Attorney Joseph Kosky, and Thomas Dukes from the Computer Crime and Intellectual Property Section of the Department of Justice.

# # #