



NEWS RELEASE

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**INS-led Initiative Targets
Unauthorized Workers at SFO
*Federal Agencies Cooperate on Joint
Investigation to Promote Airport Security***

SAN FRANCISCO, Calif. – In its ongoing effort to promote heightened security at the nation's ports and borders, Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) special agents have apprehended 10 persons employed by businesses serving San Francisco International Airport and issued notices to appear before a judge to another five employees. All of the employees had their badges granting access to the tarmac revoked. At Mineta San Jose International Airport, special agents took four airport employees into custody and processed two others for voluntary return to Mexico. Ten of those apprehended at the two airports were aliens unauthorized to work in the United States. The rest were permanent resident aliens whose felony convictions could result in their deportation. Those taken into custody included workers responsible for a range of services from food delivery to janitors. The arrests were made on March 20 to 22.

The apprehensions stem from Operation Tarmac, an INS initiative focusing on airports throughout the United States. In both cities, INS officers received substantial support in Operation Tarmac from the airports, as well from the Transportation Security Administration, and Offices of the Inspectors General for the Social Security Administration and the US Department of Transportation.

"The federal government is committed to doing everything possible to ensure the safety of the traveling public," said INS San Francisco District Director Charles DeMore. "We are taking a proactive approach to prevent acts threatening public safety and national security and we are working cooperatively and collaboratively with other agencies in this effort."

As part of Operation Tarmac, INS officers reviewed the employment

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records of 90 companies currently providing services at San Francisco International Airport, 48 in San Jose. Under federal law, employers who knowingly hire unauthorized workers face substantial fines, and in aggravated cases, possible criminal prosecution. In conjunction with the initiative, the INS is offering employers specific training on the regulations regarding the hiring of authorized workers.

Operation Tarmac was initiated by INS in the wake of the September 11th attacks. The goal of the operation is to ensure that all persons with access to security sensitive areas of airports are properly documented and authorized to work under immigration laws. This operation is the most recent in a series of such investigations that have occurred at airports across the country, including the airports in Salt Lake City, Seattle, Las Vegas, Sacramento and Portland, Oregon.

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