



NEWS RELEASE

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UNAUTHORIZED RADIO OPERATOR ARRESTED FOR JAMMING SEVERAL GOVERNMENT FREQUENCIES

A Bell, California man who was convicted five years ago of interfering with police radio transmissions was arrested this morning on federal charges of “jamming” radio frequencies being used by the United States military, the United States Coast Guard, and other law enforcement and public safety agencies.

Jack Gerritsen, 68, was arrested without incident at his residence by special agents with the Federal Bureau of Investigation, who received the support of the Federal Communications Commission. Gerritsen is scheduled to make his initial appearance this afternoon in United States District Court in Los Angeles.

The Federal Communications Commission has been investigating illegal radio transmissions linked to Gerritsen for the past four years. According to a criminal complaint filed in this case, an FCC investigation revealed that Gerritsen “often transmits his prerecorded political messages, and real-time harassment and profanity, for hours at a time, often making it impossible for licensed radio operators to use the public frequencies.”

Five years ago, Gerritsen was convicted in state court of interfering with a police radio frequency, and he was sentenced to 38 months in prison. Gerritsen was released from prison on July 28, 2003, and soon after the FCC began receiving complaints about his activity on the airwaves, according to the complaint. Because of his continued unlawful radio transmissions, the FCC issued three

“notices of apparent liability for forfeiture” for a total of \$52,000.

The FCC has received complaints concerning Gerritsen’s activities from Ham radio operators and various agencies, including the military, the Coast Guard, local police departments and the American Red Cross. The complaint specifically alleges that Gerritsen:

- interfered with, or jammed, a radio frequency being used by the Bell Gardens Police Department on November 6, 2003;
- interfered with a radio frequency being used by the Los Angeles City Fire Department Auxiliary Communications during a training exercise on July 24, 2004;
- interfered with a Coast Guard Auxiliary amateur operator, who was assisting the Coast Guard during a search and rescue operation on October 29, 2004;
- interfered with American Red Cross radio transmissions on January 14, 2005, while the agency was preparing for disaster relief operations at the Prado Dam; and
- caused the cancellation of Army Reserve homeland security training events on March 10, 2005 when he interfered with the Military Affiliate Radio System.

A criminal complaint filed Wednesday afternoon charges Gerritsen with a felony charge of malicious interference with a communications system operated by the United States and a misdemeanor count of transmitting radio signals without a license. The two charges carry a potential penalty of 11 years in federal prison.

An criminal complaint contains allegations that a defendant has committed a crime. Every defendant is presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty.

This case is the product of an investigation by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, which received substantial assistance from the Federal Communications Commission.

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