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**TRANSPORTATION SECURITY ADMINISTRATION AGENT ARRESTED FOR
CONSPIRACY TO TRANSPORT ILLEGAL ALIENS**

San Juan, Puerto Rico – Today, David Alexander Díaz-Torres, Transportation Security Administration (TSA) Officer, was arrested by special agents of Immigration and Customs Enforcement's (ICE) Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) in Orlando, FL, for conspiracy to transport illegal aliens within the United States, announced U.S. Attorney for the District of Puerto Rico, Rosa Emilia Rodríguez-Vélez. Díaz-Torres was charged on September 10, 2013, in a 13-count superseding indictment with five other individuals for bringing, transporting, harboring and shielding illegal aliens within the United States.

On August 7, 2013, Rafael Severino, Eduard Bueno-Beltrán, Luis Raul Sierra-Conde, Juan Severino-Basora and Esther Mary Sánchez-Cruz were indicted for participating in a scheme to bring illegal aliens to the United States. On March 24, 2012, a group of Brazilian nationals were smuggled by an unidentified female to New York through the Luis Muñoz Marín International Airport in San Juan, Puerto Rico. It is alleged that David A. Díaz-Torres assisted two co-defendants in smuggling the group of Brazilians by allowing them to pass the security checkpoint area without being questioned. The group continued to New York, Boston and Philadelphia on board commercial flights.

“It is very troubling when law enforcement authorities have to arrest a corrupt federal employee who is alleged to have undermined our nation's security, our overall safety, and the public trust and confidence we place in those chosen to protect and serve,” said Rosa Emilia Rodríguez Vélez, U.S. Attorney for the District of Puerto Rico. “The Justice Department's commitment to preventing human smuggling, bringing smugglers to justice and assisting victims has never been stronger.”

“Mr. Torres was placed in a position of trust and employees of the federal government must be held to a higher standard than the general public, said Ángel M. Meléndez, special agent in charge of HSI San Juan and U.S. Virgin Islands. “Investigative efforts by HSI alongside our

federal partners at the TSA, shows the collaborative effort within federal law enforcement to ensure that no one operates above the law”.

This case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Evelyn Canals-Lozada. The case was investigated by ICE-HSI in San Juan and Orlando, Florida, TSA Internal Affairs and DHS Office of Inspector General.

The maximum penalties for these offenses are 10 years of imprisonment. A superseding indictment is a formal accusation of criminal conduct, not evidence. Defendants are presumed innocent unless and until convicted through due process of law.

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