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**USA: "The best kept secret in the aviation industry"?**

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Richmor Aviation, a company registered in New York, USA, describes itself as "the best kept secret in the aviation industry".

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Flight records reviewed by Amnesty International show that this was the plane (which has operated under the serial numbers N85VM and N227SV) that transported Italian citizen Abu Omar from the US military base at Ramstein in Germany to Cairo, Egypt in 2003. Abu Omar remains in secret detention, possibly in Egypt, where Amnesty International fears that he is at risk of torture and other ill-treatment. This same Gulfstream V aircraft has also made over 100 trips to the US naval base at Guantánamo Bay, where approximately 500 men remain illegally detained by the US government.

Secret transfers outside of any legal process. No access to lawyers or courts. No communication with families. No access to international monitors. Widespread reports of torture. The "rendition" of suspects in the so-called "war on terror" is illegal. Any company which is involved in these shadowy operations risks being complicit in abuses of human rights.

**Sample letter**

Dear Mr Mahlon,

Re: "Rendition" of detainees

I am writing to you to express my serious concern about your company's alleged involvement in the "rendition" of detainees by the US government, an illegal practice which involves multiple violations of human rights. Flight records reviewed by Amnesty International show that a plane owned by your company transported Abu Omar, an Italian citizen, from Germany to Egypt. Abu Omar remains in secret detention in Egypt where he is at risk of torture and other ill-treatment. The same plane has made over 100 trips to Guantánamo Bay, Cuba, where roughly 500 remain illegally detained by the US government.

I urge you to publicly release all details of the flight that transported Abu Omar to Egypt, as well as the details of all those on board and the purpose of all flights to Guantánamo Bay. I also urge you to ensure that your company is aware of the end uses of any planes it leases, and to refrain from leasing planes for "rendition" operations. I call on your company to develop a specific human rights policy modelled on the UN Norms for Business.

Yours sincerely

Mahlon Richards, President  
Richmor Aviation  
P.O. Box 243  
Hudson, NY 12534  
USA

Email: charter@richmor.com  
Fax: +1 518-828-9908  
Salutation: Dear Mr Mahlon

The Gulfstream V aircraft involved in the "rendition" of Abu Omar. This aircraft is currently available for charter at a rate of US\$5365 per hour.

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## **Planes monitored**

### **1. N 313P-N4476S**

N313P-N4476S is a Boeing 737-7ET (BBJ) aircraft (m/n 33010) for which there are 396 recorded landings or taking offs between 22 November 2002 and 8 September 2005. Flight records show that it was the plane that took Khaled el-Masri from Skopje to Afghanistan in January 2004, and Human Rights Watch has identified it as the "plane that the CIA used to move several prisoners to and from Europe, Afghanistan, and the Middle East in 2003 and 2004 – it landed in Poland and Romania on direct flights from Afghanistan on two occasions in 2003 and 2004."

**Registration:** First registered by Stevens Express Leasing Inc, and then re-registered on 1 May 2002 by Premier Executive Transport Services. Keeler & Tate Management re-registered the aircraft on 1 December 2004, as N4476S. This is the only aircraft registered under this company name.

**Landing rights:** Stevens Express Leasing Inc. and Premier Executive Transport Services were both permitted to land at US military bases worldwide. Their permits expired in 2005 and have not been renewed.

**Range and capacity:** average range of 5,510 nautical miles at 522/542 knots (non-stop Washington Dulles-Tashkent in 11 hours, for example), and can transport up to 127 passengers.

### **2. N379P-N8068V-N44982**

The Gulfstream V executive jet, variously registered as N379P, N8068V and N44982 has been the plane most often identified with known cases of rendition. AI has records of 590 landings and take offs between February 2001 and September 2005.

**Registration:** registered in February 2000 by Premier Executive Transport Services; it was re-registered as N8068V at the beginning of 2004; and again re-registered as N44982 in December 2004 by Bayard Foreign Marketing, a phantom company registered in Oregon State since August 2003. No other aircraft were registered by Bayard Foreign Marketing. The aircraft was put up for sale in late 2005, and is now the property of a company based in Miami, Florida.

**Landing rights:** Premier Executive Transport Services aircraft were permitted to land in the US bases worldwide (expiration 15 October 2005).

**Range and capacity:** average range of 5,800 nautical miles at 459/585 knots (non-stop Washington Dulles-Kabul in 12 hours, for example). The aircraft can transport up to 18 passengers, but it is usually configured for 8 passengers.

### **3. N829MG-N259SK**

A Gulfstream III (Grumman G-1159A), this plane carried Canadian national Maher Arar from the US to Jordan, where he was transferred overland to Syria. He was tortured during 13 months of detention without charge, and was released in October 2003. The plane has also made over 100 trips to Guantánamo Bay. There are 380 relevant FAA recorded landings or takeoffs between March 2001 and May 2005.

**Registration:** registered by MJG Aviation in October 2000 in Florida; the company dissolved July 2004. MJG's owner also owned Presidential Aviation, a company first registered in Florida in 1998 and dissolved November 2004. The aircraft was re-registered as 259SK in March 2004 by S&K Aviation LLC. S&K Aviation was first registered in

Florida in December 2003 and is an active company with a registered agent.

**Range and capacity:** average range of 3,715 nautical miles. The aircraft can transport up to 22 passengers, but it is usually configured for 10/12 people.

#### **4. N85VM-N227SV**

The Gulfstream IV plane that took Abu Omar to Egypt from Germany after his kidnapping in Italy. Its owners have admitted leasing the plane to the CIA, but have said it is not used exclusively by the agency. There are 488 relevant recorded landings or takeoffs between February 2001 and July 2005.

**Registration:** owned by Assembly Point Aviation Inc., registered May 1995 in New York State. The aircraft was registered as N85VM until September 2004, when it was re-registered as N227SV. Operated by Richmor Aviation, a company based at the Columbia County airport (Hudson, New York) and Scotia (New York). Richmor Aviation owns or manages a fleet of about 15 business jets.

**Landing rights:** Richmor Aviation aircraft were permitted to land at US military bases worldwide (expiration February 15, 2005).

**Range and capacity:** average range of 3,633 nautical miles at 460/582 knots; can transport up to 19 passengers, but it is usually configured for 8/14 passengers. \*\*\*\*\*