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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**TAXICAB OPERATOR SENTENCED TO 12 MONTHS AND A DAY FOR FALSIFYING TITLES
OF SALVAGED CARS AND RE-USING THEM AS TAXIS ON CHICAGO STREETS**

CHICAGO — A Northbrook man was sentenced today to 12 months and a day in federal prison for illegally obtaining clean titles for salvaged and rebuilt vehicles and using them as taxicabs on the streets of Chicago.

As the owner of Seven Amigos Used Cars Inc., ALEXANDER IGOLNIKOV fraudulently obtained paperwork to conceal the history of the damaged cars in order to bypass City of Chicago laws that prohibit the use of salvaged and rebuilt vehicles as taxicabs. Igolnikov, who also served as vice president of Chicago Elite Cab Corp., caused the impaired vehicles to be used as taxicabs on Chicago streets after they were falsely given clean titles in Indiana and Illinois.

Igolnikov's scheme, which spanned from 2007 through April 2010, was uncovered in an investigation by federal authorities and the City of Chicago Inspector General's Office.

Igolnikov, 68, of Northbrook, pleaded guilty last year to one count of conspiracy to transport, receive and possess a counterfeit security. U.S. District Judge Edmond E. Chang imposed the sentence in federal court in Chicago.

According to Igolnikov's plea agreement, he and his associates fraudulently obtained "rebuilt" titles for damaged vehicles by submitting false paperwork— including affidavits with the forged signature of an Indiana law enforcement officer – to the Indiana Bureau of Motor Vehicles.

The vehicles were then transported to the Chicago business of Chicago Carriage Taxi Company, which was also used by Seven Amigos Used Cars. After obtaining the Indiana rebuilt title for a salvaged vehicle, Igolnikov and his associates placed a sticker over the “rebuilt” section of the Indiana certification and then used that title to obtain a clean Illinois title from the Illinois Secretary of State’s Office. Igolnikov purchased the newly certified vehicles in the names of Seven Amigos Used Cars, Chicago Elite Cab and other related corporate entities, the plea agreement states.

Igolnikov and his business associates, including Chicago Elite Cab, operated the fraudulently certified vehicles as taxicabs in Chicago – in violation of the city’s medallion laws, which prohibit any vehicle that was ever issued a “salvage” or “rebuilt” title in any state from being used as a taxicab, the plea agreement states.

The sentencing was announced by Zachary T. Fardon, United States Attorney for the Northern District of Illinois; Michael J. Anderson, Special Agent-in-Charge of the Chicago Office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation; and Joseph M. Ferguson, Inspector General for the City of Chicago.

The government is represented by Assistant United States Attorneys Margaret Schneider and Steven Dollear.

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