

PRESS RELEASE

Five Charged with Falsifying MBTA Track Inspection Records

Thursday, May 29, 2025

For Immediate Release

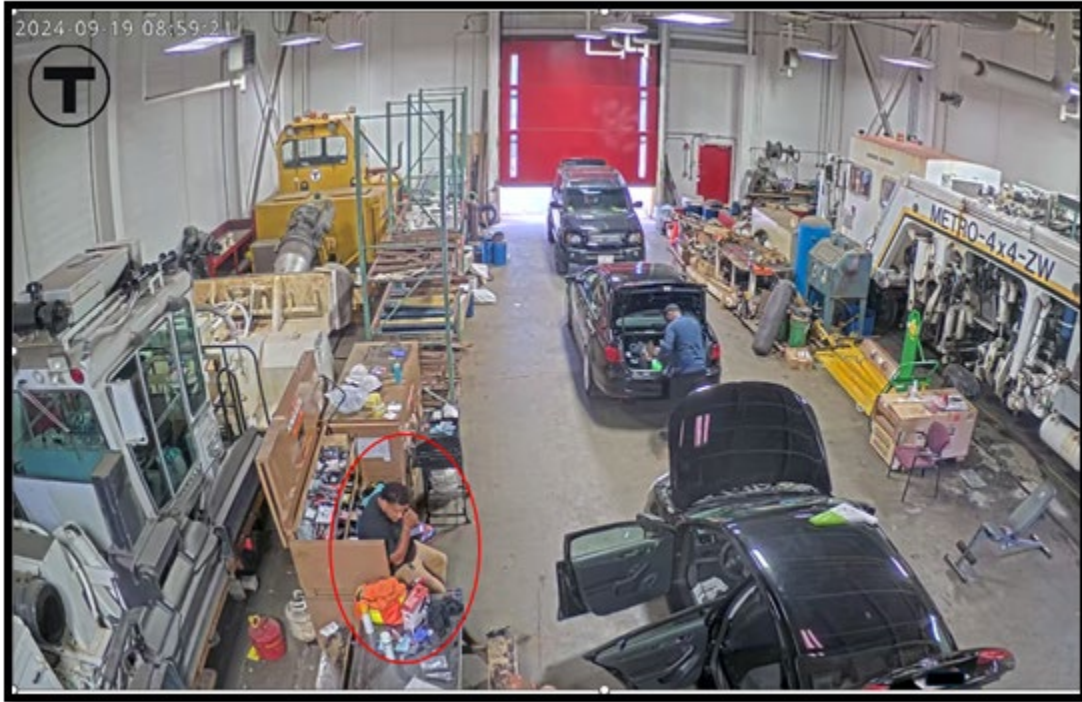
U.S. Attorney's Office, District of Massachusetts

BOSTON – Four former Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (“MBTA”) employees and one current MBTA employee were charged today with allegedly falsifying Red Line track inspection reports.

Brain Pfaffinger, 47, of Marshfield; Ronald Gamble, 62, of Dorchester; Jensen Vatel, 42, of Brockton; Nathalie Mendes, 53, of New Bedford; and Andy Vicente, 36, of Bridgewater have been indicted for falsification of records, aiding and abetting; and false statements, aiding and abetting. Pfaffinger, Gamble, Vatel, Mendes and Vicente were arrested this morning and will appear in federal court in Boston later today.

According to the charging documents, Gamble, Vatel, Mendes and Vicente were former MBTA track inspectors. Rather than complete inspections, during the period between Sept. 3, 2024, to Oct. 15, 2024, Gamble, Vatel, Mendes and Vicente allegedly falsified track inspection reports, which stated that they completed track inspections for Red Line tracks when they did not perform the inspections. Instead, it is alleged that at the time of the inspections, Gamble, Vatel, Mendes and Vicente were inside Cabot Yard, an MBTA location that contained a coffee and breakroom for Red Line inspection employees. Cabot Yard also contained a large garage (“Cabot Garage”) where Gamble, Vatel and Vicente allegedly worked on private vehicles during work hours.

On Sept. 19, 2024, during the time that Vicente allegedly performed a track inspection, video surveillance depicted Vicente (circled in red below) sitting inside of Cabot Garage holding his cellular phone.

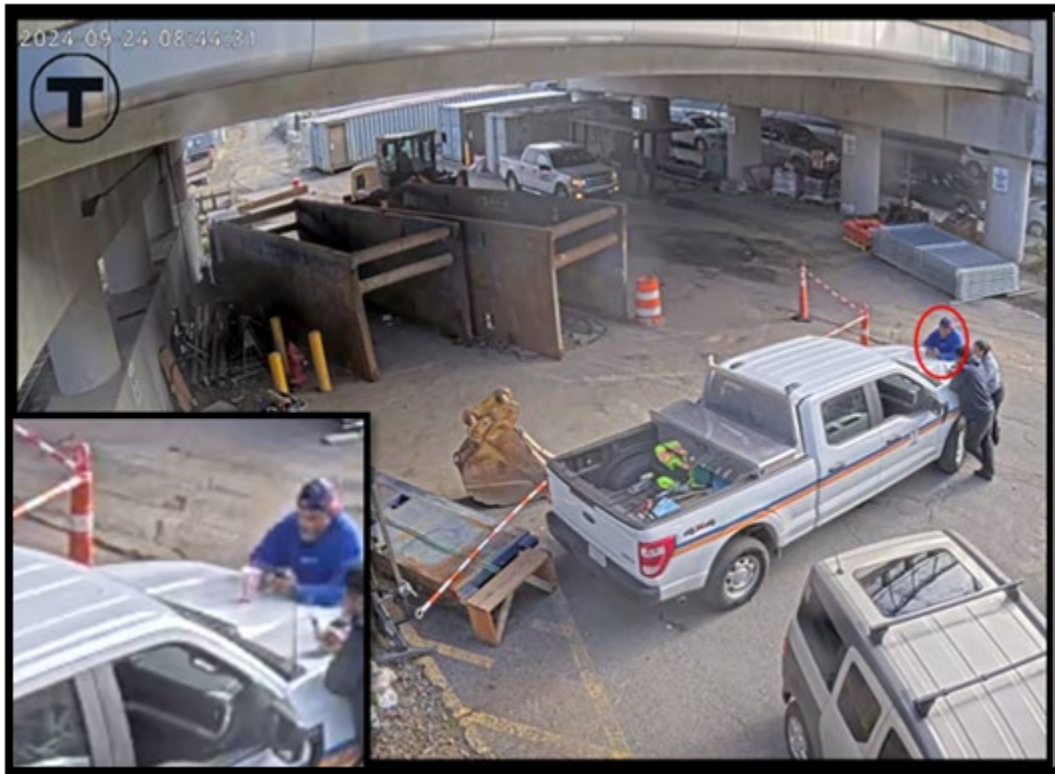


On Sept. 23, 2024, during the time that Mendes allegedly performed a track inspection, video surveillance depicted Mendes (circled in red below) sitting inside her vehicle. Mendes allegedly did not leave her vehicle until well after her inspection ended.

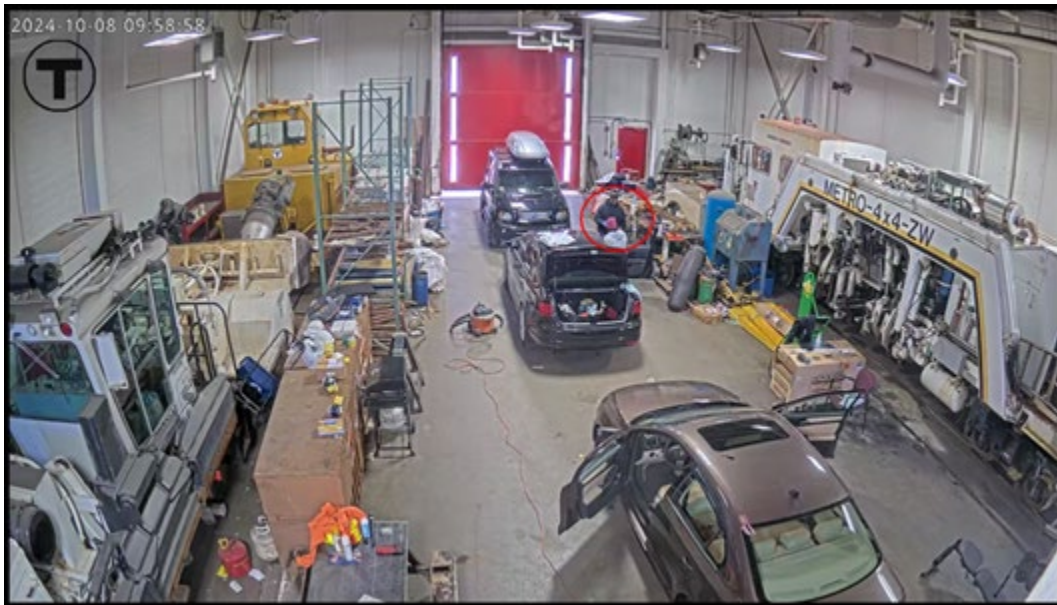


On Sept. 24, 2024, during the time that Vatel allegedly performed a track inspection,

video surveillance depicted Vatel (circled in red below) chatting with other MBTA employees in the parking lot outside of Cabot Garage.



On Oct. 8, 2024, during the time that Gamble allegedly performed a track inspection, video surveillance depicted Gamble (circled in red below) performing detail work on a private vehicle inside of Cabot Garage.



Pfaffinger, the former supervisor for Gamble, Vatel, Mendes and Vicente, allegedly not only knew that his subordinates worked on private vehicles during work hours, but had his subordinates work on his own vehicle.

On Oct. 14, 2024, Gamble created an inspection report alleging he conducted an inspection; however, according to surveillance video, Gamble was inside of Cabot Garage with Pfaffinger. Despite knowing that the inspection report was false, and that Gamble was at Cabot Garage on Oct. 14, 2024, the following day, Pfaffinger allegedly created supporting documentation for Gamble's Oct. 14, 2024, inspection, which he knew to be false.

The charges of falsification of records and aiding and abetting the falsification of records provides a sentence of up to 20 years in prison to be followed by up to three years of supervised release and a fine of up to \$250,000. The charges of false statements and aiding and abetting false statements provides a sentence of up to five years in prison, up to three years of supervised release and a fine of up to \$250,000. Sentences are imposed by a federal district court judge based upon the U.S. Sentencing Guidelines and other statutory factors.

United States Attorney Leah B. Foley; Elise Chawaga, Principal Inspector General of the United States Department of Transportation, Office of Inspector General; and Jonathan Mellone, Special Agent in Charge of the Northeast Region of the Department of Labor, Office of Inspector General made the announcement today. Valuable assistance was provided by the United States Postal Inspection Service. Assistant U.S. Attorney Lucy Sun

of the Public Corruption Unit is prosecuting the case.

Updated May 29, 2025

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PUBLIC CORRUPTION

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