PRESS RELEASE

Former and Current MBTA Employees Charged for Conspiracies to Falsify Red Line Track Inspection Reports and Collect Fraudulent Overtime Payments

Friday, July 10, 2026

For Immediate Release
U.S. Attorney's Office, District of Massachusetts

BOSTON – Six former Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) employees and one current MBTA employee were charged today in a Superseding Indictment for multiple conspiracies, including allegedly conspiring to falsify Red Line track inspection reports as well as to commit overtime fraud.

1. Brian Pfaffinger, 48, of Marshfield, was indicted for conspiracy to falsify records; conspiracy to commit wire fraud; falsification of records, aiding and abetting; and false statements, aiding and abetting;
2. Ronald Gamble, 63, of Dorchester, was indicted for conspiracy to falsify records; conspiracy to commit wire fraud; wire fraud, aiding and abetting; falsification of records, aiding and abetting; and false statements, aiding and abetting;
3. Magda Trinh, 45, of Avon, was indicted for conspiracy to falsify records; conspiracy to commit wire fraud; wire fraud, aiding and abetting;
4. Jensen Vatel, 43, of Brockton, was indicted for conspiracy to falsify records; conspiracy to commit wire fraud; wire fraud, aiding and abetting; falsification of records, aiding and abetting; and false statements, aiding and abetting;
5. Nathalie Mendes, 54, of New Bedford, was indicted for conspiracy to falsify records; conspiracy to commit wire fraud; wire fraud, aiding and abetting; falsification of records, aiding and abetting; false statements, aiding and abetting; and wire fraud;
6. Danny Barbosa, 37, of Dorchester, was indicted for conspiracy to commit wire fraud and wire fraud, aiding and abetting; and
7. Matthew Leonard, 37, of Easton, was indicted for conspiracy to commit wire fraud and wire fraud, aiding and abetting.

Pfaffinger, Gamble, Vatel and Mendes were previously indicted on May 22, 2025 and arrested on May 29, 2025. Trinh, Barbosa and Leonard were arrested this morning and appeared in federal court in Boston today.

According to the charging documents, the defendants were all former Red Line Maintenance of Way employees. Pfaffinger served as the team's supervisor and Gamble, Trinh, Vatel and Mendes were former track inspectors. As track inspectors, Gamble, Trinh, Vatel and Mendes' job duties included completing track inspections for the Red Line. To complete the inspections, track inspectors used MBTA-issued cellular phones with an application called MaxTrax to record information regarding their track inspections, including whether the inspection was completed. The application then generated a report with details concerning the inspection:

Rather than compete inspections, from Jan. 1, 2024 to Oct. 16, 2024, it is alleged that Pfaffinger, Gamble, Trinh, Vatel and Mendes either falsified track inspection reports or aided and abetted the submission of falsified inspection reports. To avoid scrutiny from senior MBTA officials about the lack of work being performed, Gamble and Trinh allegedly instructed Vatel, Mendes and other Red Line track inspectors to falsely extend the duration of their track inspections on the reports. It is further alleged that some of the track inspectors, including Vatel and Mendes, falsified the train numbers on their inspection reports by inserting train numbers they found online rather than completing train rides as required for inspections.

Additionally, during the times when some of the inspections were reported as having been conducted, it is alleged that Gamble, Trinh, Vatel and Mendes were actually present inside Cabot Yard – a MBTA location that contained a coffee and breakroom for Red Line inspection employees. Cabot Yard also contained a large garage where Gamble, Vatel, Barbosa and Leonard allegedly worked on private vehicles during work hours:

It is alleged that Pfaffinger not only knew that his subordinates worked on private vehicles during work hours, but had his subordinates perform work on his own personal vehicle as well. In one instance, in July 2024, Pfaffinger notified his subordinates that multiple tracks – supposedly being inspected by track inspectors subordinate to him – had serious defects. Only 10 days later, however, Pfaffinger allegedly requested his subordinates use their workday to perform work on his private vehicle:

Furthermore, it is alleged that from Jan. 1, 2024 to Oct. 16, 2024, Gamble frequently created overtime sheets, which he submitted directly to payroll, falsely claiming that he, Trinh, Mendes, Vatel, Barbosa and Leonard worked overtime shifts that they did not. Rather than work their overtime shifts, Gamble, Trinh, Mendes, Vatel, Barbosa and

Leonard allegedly did the following: (1) they did not show up at all for the shift; (2) they showed up hours late for their shifts; or (3) they showed up at the beginning of the shift, used the hand scan and then disappeared for hours (sometimes to sleep in their vehicles) before returning to work.

Gamble allegedly submitted overtime sheets for Leonard, Barbosa and others, even knowing that they did not complete their overtime shifts, to compensate them for working on private vehicles during MBTA hours. On at least one occasion, Trinh allegedly aided and abetted the submission of a falsified time sheet, alleging that Vatel worked an overtime shift that he did not. Gambled allegedly copied Pfaffinger on these overtime submissions to payroll and, as the supervisor, Pfaffinger allegedly approved all time sheets for his subordinates.

The charge of conspiracy to falsify records 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. The charges of falsification of records, conspiracy to commit wire fraud and wire fraud each provide for a sentence of up to 20 years in prison, up to three years of supervised release and a fine of up to $250,000. The charge of 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. The charge of aiding and abetting provides that an individual who aids and abets is punishable as a principal. Sentences are imposed by a federal district court judge based upon the U.S. Sentencing Guidelines and statutes which govern the determination of a sentence in a criminal case.

United States Attorney Leah B. Foley; Elise Chawaga, Principal Inspector General of the United States Department of Transportation, Office of Inspector General; and Anthony D'Esposito, Inspector General, U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Inspector General, made the announcement today. Valuable assistance was provided by the United States Postal Inspection Service and the Federal Bureau of Investigation. Assistant U.S. Attorney Lucy Sun of the Public Corruption & Special Prosecutions Unit is prosecuting the case.

Updated July 13, 2026