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Men Arrested For Drugs At Liberal Airport, Sentenced

A pilot and a passenger in an airplane that landed in Liberal, Kan., in October 2009 carrying more than 114 pounds of cocaine have been sentenced to federal prison, U.S. Attorney Lanny Welch said today.

The pilot, Dean Bryan Moya, 40, Hemet, Calif., was sentenced to 60 months in federal prison. The passenger, Richard Allen Vickery, 31, Hemet, Calif., was sentenced to 72 months. Both men pleaded guilty to aiding and abetting the distribution of cocaine.

According to court documents, Moya was the pilot of a Cessna 210 aircraft that landed Oct. 22, 2009, at the Liberal Municipal Airport. Moya had picked up Vickery and the cocaine in California. He was taking the drugs to Ohio for distribution. In his plea, Vickery admitted he was on board to shepherd the cocaine to Ohio for distribution.

Homeland Security's Air Marine Operations Center tracked the aircraft flying from Northern New Mexico and notified the Liberal Police Department that Moya, the pilot, was flying even though his medical certificate had been revoked due to drug use. At the Liberal airport, a specially trained dog detected the presence of the narcotics.

Welch commended Immigration and Customs Enforcement, the Liberal Police Department, the Beaver County, Okla., Sheriff's Department, the Kansas Bureau of Investigation, the Seward County Sheriff's Department and Assistant U.S. Attorney Matt Treaster for their work on the case.

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