

policies and procedures, as necessary, regarding compliance with the Equal Pay Act and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act; implement training to all employees regarding equal-pay practices, sex discrimination and retaliation; develop a centralized tracking system for policy dissemination and discrimination, unequal pay, or retaliation complaints; and submit annual reports to the EEOC, verifying compliance with the decree.

The court will maintain jurisdiction over the case during the term of the two-year consent decree.

**EDITOR'S NOTE** This report is based on information that was provided by plaintiff's counsel. Defense counsel did not respond to the reporter's phone calls.

—Priya Idiculla

## EMPLOYMENT

Whistleblower — Retaliation — Wrongful Termination

### Suit: Engineer fired for reporting access to classified information

**VERDICT** \$1,505,561

**CASE** David Lillie v. ManTech Int'l. Corp., a Delaware Corporation, and Does 1-20, No. 2:17-cv-02538

**COURT** United States District Court, Central District, Los Angeles

**JUDGE** Christina A. Snyder

**DATE** 2/28/2019

**PLAINTIFF**  
**ATTORNEY(S)** Jan T. Aune, The Law Office of Jan T. Aune, Arcadia, CA

**DEFENSE**  
**ATTORNEY(S)** Alison N. Davis, Littler Mendelson P.C., Washington, DC  
Jina Lee, Littler Mendelson P.C., Los Angeles, CA

**FACTS & ALLEGATIONS** On Feb. 6, 2015, plaintiff David Lillie, 64, an engineer, was terminated from his position at ManTech International Corp., in Montrose.

ManTech was a third-party contractor on a robotic lander designed to study the deep interior of the planet Mars, as part of the Mars InSight Mission. ManTech contracted with the National Aeronautics and Space Administration to use funds from the NASA Jet Propulsion Laboratory and the California Institute of Technology Reliability Engineering Support Services contract to pay for Lillie's services. Lillie provided engineering support in fulfillment of the NASA Jet Propulsion Laboratory and

Caltech Reliability Engineering Support Services contract. While Lillie was helping design the spacecraft's power supply, he received classified/proprietary documents, of which contractors, such as ManTech, were prohibited from gaining access. Lillie reported to ManTech that he had received unauthorized access to classified/proprietary information during his work on the project. Shortly thereafter, Lillie was placed on indefinite furlough and then terminated.

Lillie sued ManTech Int'l. Corp, alleging that ManTech's actions constituted whistleblower retaliation and wrongful termination.

Lillie claimed ManTech obtained the classified/proprietary documents, failed to inform him that they were not allowed to view the information, and then attempted to cover it up by having him remove information about the documents from his reports. He also claimed that ManTech fired him in retaliation for reporting that he had received unauthorized access to classified/proprietary information during his work on the project.

Defense counsel contended that ManTech furloughed and/or terminated Lillie's employment because the Jet Propulsion Laboratory terminated its contract with ManTech.

#### **INJURIES/DAMAGES** *emotional distress*

Lillie worked as a senior engineer at ManTech from 2007 until his termination. He sought recovery for his past and future loss of pay, and past and future emotional distress.

**RESULT** The jury found in favor of Lillie on all his claims. It also determined that Lillie's damages totaled \$1,505,561.

**DAVID LILLIE** \$521,983 past lost earnings  
\$339,828 future lost earnings  
\$321,875 past emotional distress damages  
\$321,875 future emotional distress damages  
\$1,505,561

**DEMAND** None  
**OFFER** \$500,000

**TRIAL DETAILS** Trial Length: 4 days  
Trial Deliberations: 3 days  
Jury Vote: 8-0

**EDITOR'S NOTE** This report is based on information that was provided by plaintiff's counsel. Additional information was gleaned from court documents. Defense counsel did not respond to the reporter's phone calls.

—Priya Idiculla