



Written by [D. Michael DeRidder](#) on September 12, 2024

## Senior Enlisted Leader Risked Navy Warship in South China Sea

U.S. Navy enlisted sailor Grisel Marrero was demoted from Command Senior Chief (E-8) to Chief Petty Officer (E-7) after a [Navy investigation revealed she conspired with other leaders to create](#) an illegal Wi-Fi network using a [Starlink High Performance connection](#) aboard the Navy warship USS *Manchester* while it was deployed in the South China Sea.

Marrero pleaded guilty to willful dereliction of duty and false official statement charges. She was found guilty at trial of obstruction of justice.

The investigation report noted the operational security risk the Starlink connection she set up on the warship created:



U.S. Navy/Public Domain  
USS Manchester

The danger such systems pose to the crew, the ship and the Navy cannot be [overstated].... The installation and usage of Starlink, without the approval of higher headquarters, poses a serious risk to mission, operational security, and information security.

A scathing Navy investigation reveals how USS Manchester's enlisted leaders endangered their ship with an unauthorized Starlink Wi-Fi setup. <https://t.co/n4BLnv0yVo>

— Navy Times (@NavyTimes) [September 3, 2024](#)

When crew members aboard the ship questioned Marrero about the Wi-Fi network named “STINKY,” she denied its existence multiple times. *Navy Times* reported:

The ship’s former executive officer, Cmdr. Matthew Yokeley, caught wind of the rumors in May and notified the commanding officer [CO], Cmdr. Colleen Moore. Moore confronted Marrero about whether the chief’s mess had an unauthorized Wi-Fi network that same month.

Another unidentified crew member approached Marrero about a Wi-Fi network aboard the ship after finding available networks on a device that started with the name “STINKY.” It’s unclear who found the “STINKY” network, due to redactions.

In both instances, Marrero denied that such a Wi-Fi network existed.

In response to questions about the Wi-Fi network, Marrero changed its name so it would appear as a



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wireless networked printer:

... She soon changed the “STINKY” Wi-Fi network name to another moniker that looked like a wireless printer — even though no such general-use wireless printers were present on the ship, the investigation found. Moore and Yokeley conducted an inspection inside the ship but did not find any evidence of an unauthorized Wi-Fi system. They did not check the exterior of the ship....

About a month later, in the middle of June, the unidentified crew member again confronted Marrero ... about the Wi-Fi network, because junior sailors suspected the password was being hidden from them. Once more, Marrero denied such a network existed.

The investigation also revealed that Marrero intercepted a note, intended for the ship’s commanding officer, that reported the network:

That same month, Marrero seized a comment placed in the CO’s [commanding officer’s] suggestion box regarding the Wi-Fi network so that it wouldn’t end up in Moore’s hands, according to the investigation. But Moore received another comment in the suggestion box about the network weeks later, in the middle of July, and again approached Marrero about the network. Again, Marrero denied its existence.

The investigating officer explained that Marrero exploited Commander Moore’s high level of trust in her, as Moore “relied extensively” on her after executive officer (XO) Commander Yokeley was relieved in May 2023:

In a time period in which the CO relied extensively on [Marrero] to recover the Command’s climate in the wake of the XO relief, CMC Marrero willfully and intentionally concealed the presence of an unauthorized system.... Following the relief of the previous XO, it is reasonable that the level of trust and confidence with CMC Marrero increased, with heavier reliance on her to pick up the slack left behind.



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