

U.S. Marshals Service Announces Capture of Convicted Rapist and Deserter Jesse Bussey, One of the U.S. Army's Most Wanted Fugitives, After 30 Years on the Run

For immediate release

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Newark, NJ – The U.S. Marshals Service (USMS) is pleased to announce the capture of Jesse Bussey, a U.S. Army Most Wanted Fugitive, who had been on the run for almost 30 years. The arrest took place on Nov. 10, 2025, in Malaga, Spain, ending one of the most prolonged manhunts in USMS history.

Bussey had been wanted by the U.S. Army since Sept. 3, 1996, when he was last seen gassing up his Toyota MR-2 at a post exchange gas station in Schweinfurt, Germany, before deserting his post. Subsequently, Bussey was convicted in absentia at a court-martial proceeding for rape, two counts of indecent assault, and desertion, and sentenced to 16 years in a military prison, reduction in grade to E-1, and dishonorably discharged.

Investigators developed information that, after fleeing U.S. Army jurisdiction in Germany, Bussey joined the French Foreign Legion in late 1996 under an alias and successfully completed his service in early 2000. After his time in the French Foreign Legion and while living homeless in France, he assumed the identity of a Nigerian citizen 18 years younger than his actual age.

The manhunt for Bussey spanned the globe as USMS investigators conducted interviews with victims, relatives, and former colleagues who provided elaborate details that were compiled to formulate his pattern of life and possible whereabouts.

Throughout the investigation, USMS investigators always believed that Bussey never returned stateside and therefore focused efforts internationally in Europe and Africa. Eventually, working off information from a tipster who responded to social media coverage of the USMS request for public assistance, investigators were led to Bussey,

who was using an alias and teaching English at a school in Malaga, Spain. Further inquiries on him produced a series of highly unlikely coincidences that directed investigators to believe he could be Bussey.

Ultimately, through a series of international requests from USMS investigators, their Office of International Operations and the Spanish National Police Force, foreign law enforcement officials were able to positively confirm through various investigative techniques that the man was in fact Bussey.

“The arrest and extradition of Jesse Bussey after almost three decades demonstrates our Deputy U.S. Marshals’ unwavering commitment to bringing fugitives to justice no matter how much time has passed,” said Director of the U.S. Marshals Service, Gadyaces S. Serralta. “This capture is a victory for the victims and their families who have waited so long for justice.”

Bussey was held in Spain until his extradition to the U.S. Monday to begin serving his prison sentence at the United States Disciplinary Barracks at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, the U.S. military’s only maximum-security prison for male servicemembers convicted by court martial.

The successful capture of Bussey was the result of the dedication of USMS investigators and collaboration with the U.S. Army Criminal Investigative Division, INTERPOL, the Spanish National Police Force, the Dover, Delaware, Police Department, the New Jersey State Police, and significant assistance and tips from the public. The Justice Department’s Office of International Affairs and the Ministry of Justice of Spain provided invaluable assistance in securing the provisional arrest warrant and extradition of Bussey. This arrest marks a significant achievement in the ongoing efforts to uphold justice and public safety.

The USMS remains committed to bringing all those who evade the law to justice, no matter how long it takes.

<https://www.usmarshals.gov/news/press-release/us-marshals-service-announces-capture-of-convicted-rapist-and-deserter-jesse>