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### 'Dirty docker' license targeted

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The Waterfront Commission of New York Harbor is looking to revoke the longshoreman's license of Ralph Esposito, one of four "dirty dockers" who entered guilty pleas last week in connection an alleged "money for work" scheme on the Hudson County piers.

Esposito, 52, of Lincroft, a former Bayonne ILA Local 1588 shop steward at Global Terminal, pleaded guilty to the third-degree crime of commercial bribery, admitting that he pocketed kickbacks from longshoremen between 1995 and 2002 in return for preferential treatment.

Waterfront Commission Executive Director Thomas DeMaria said yesterday the commission had tried to negotiate with Esposito to get him to surrender his license but that Esposito's attorney refused.

"We're going to do whatever is necessary to revoke his license because of his accepting money for (favored) jobs on the pier," DeMaria said.

Esposito, who has been registered to work on the docks since 1979, would be entitled to an administrative hearing at the commission, once the commission moves to take away his work permit, DeMaria said.

"We're going to move swiftly for revocation," DeMaria said.

If his permit is revoked, Esposito could apply for its restoration after a year.

Other waterfront figures who admitted wrongdoing on the piers last week were: Nicholas Furina, 73, of Warren, the former hiring agent for P&O Ports of North America, of Jersey City, whom the government called a Genovese crime family soldier and the "boss" of the shakedown scheme; Furina's son-in-law, Nicholas Romano, 50, of Warren; and Aniello "Sonny" Bello, 69, of Bayonne.

All face sentencing July 14 before state Superior Court Judge Kevin Callahan.

DeMaria said the guilty pleas will send a message out to the piers "that crime doesn't pay."

Meanwhile, members of Local 1588 have been permitted to vote for two new shop stewards, with another election is planned soon. Elections for executive posts in the union may be coming this summer, one federal official said.