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## Ex-CA sales exec sentenced to 7 years in prison

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By Anna Driver

NEW YORK (Reuters) - The former head of sales at CA Inc. <CA.N> was sentenced to seven years in prison on Tuesday for participating in a \$2.2 billion accounting scandal at the software company.

Stephen Richards, 41, pleaded guilty to conspiracy, securities fraud, perjury and obstruction of justice in April, just two weeks before his trial was scheduled to begin.

His sentence was much lighter than the 12-year prison term handed down earlier this month to former CA Chief Executive Sanjay Kumar, who pleaded guilty to the same crimes.

When imposing Richards' sentence, U.S. District Judge I. Leo Glasser in federal court in Brooklyn said the former sales executive was a late participant in the fraud and did not deserve the same sentence as Kumar.

"The conspiracy was not one of which Mr. Richards was a founding member," Glasser said.

Richards' lawyer, David Zornow, argued that a long sentence would also cause irreparable harm to Richards' five young children, who all live in Australia.

"Every year will have a profound effect lasting a lifetime on this family," Zornow told the court.

Judge Glasser took that into account and said Richards' will be "virtually isolated" from his family during his incarceration.

Glasser also told the hearing there was nothing to show that Richards benefited significantly from the fraud, which involved improperly booking software license revenue from 1999 to 2000 to the company to meet Wall Street estimates.

For all eight counts to which he pleaded guilty, Richards had faced a maximum sentence that amounted to life in prison, a sentence that Glasser described as "not reasonable" for a financial crime.

"I fully accept responsibility for the actions I have taken and regret those actions," Richards told the court.

CA, formerly known as Computer Associates International Inc., restated its results for fiscal 2001 through 2004 after Kumar and Richards left the company. The Islandia, New York-based company agreed to pay \$225 million in shareholder restitution and to cooperate with the government as part of a deferred prosecution agreement.

Richards started working for CA as a customer service representative at age 23. He rapidly rose through the ranks of the company's sales division and was named head of worldwide sales in April 2000. He resigned in April 2004.

Because Richards is a native of New Zealand and a resident alien in the United States, he is not eligible to serve in a minimum security U.S. prison. His lawyer requested that he be sentenced to Taft Correctional Institution in Taft, California, which is a privately run facility.

Richards, who remains free on bail, is due to report to prison on February 27.

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