21st Century Wire companion document

The Dubai Account:

Tracing Siad's Gulf Money Trail and the Leon Black Connection

OVERVIEW

By the time Daniel Siad wired money into a Dubai account in June 2017, he had already spent nearly a decade moving payments from Jeffrey Epstein through Thailand and Sweden, holding a corporate title inside a Russian oligarch's media company, and building toward a formal diplomatic posting across the Gulf. The Dubai transfer was not an isolated event. It was the third stop in a financial trail that ran in parallel with a political career and a business relationship with a recruiter, Victoria Housez, who was separately being paid by Apollo Global Management co-founder Leon Black. No document uncovered in this research shows Black paying Siad directly. What the record does show is a set of overlapping structures, Epstein's money, Kesaev's media company, and a shared Paris scouting operation, that all converged on Siad during the same years.

FIGURE 1 · THE MONEY TRAIL

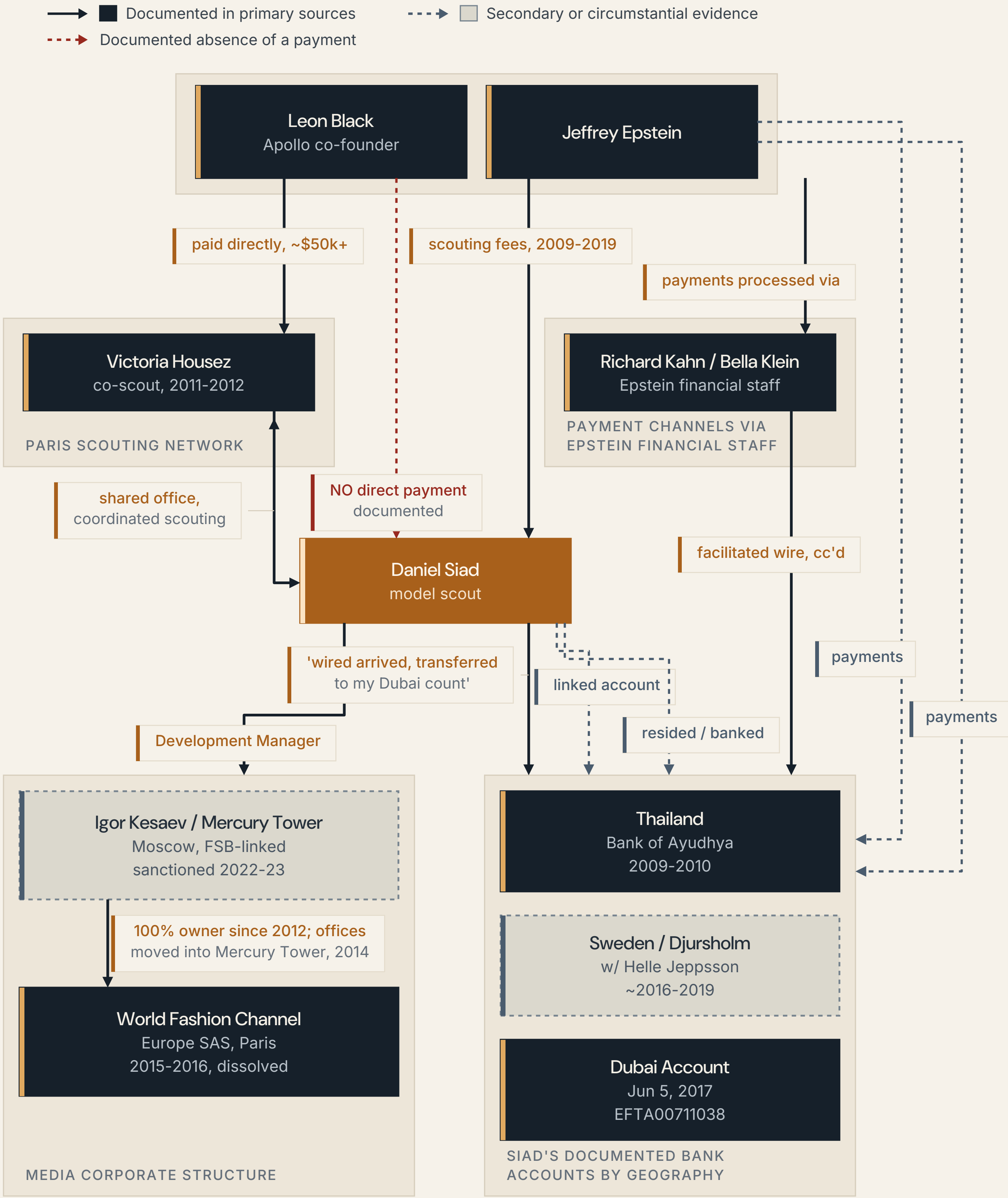

Figure 1. Confirmed and circumstantial links in Daniel Siad's Gulf money trail. Solid arrows and dark blue nodes mark relationships documented in primary sources (DOJ emails, Senate Finance Committee findings, corporate filings); dashed arrows and grey nodes mark relationships supported only by secondary or circumstantial evidence, including the explicit absence of any documented direct payment from Leon Black to Siad.

The Dubai Wire, In Siad's Own Words

On June 5, 2017, Siad wrote to Epstein's assistant, Bella Klein, with a short, almost offhand line: "the wired arrived so I transferred it to my Dubai count then I took the first flight to Barcelona." The email, catalogued as EFTA00711038, is Siad confirming in his own words that an Epstein-linked payment landed in a Dubai account, not the Swedish or Thai accounts already documented elsewhere in his correspondence.

Richard Kahn, Epstein's longtime financial manager, appears on the same chain as Klein, which means this was not a casual side payment passed hand to hand. It moved through the people who managed Epstein's money professionally. The timing matters too, since 2017 is also the year Siad's formal diplomatic role representing the Kabyle MAK movement across Saudi Arabia, the UAE, and Bahrain got underway, meaning his financial, corporate, and political lives in the Gulf were running on the same clock.

Three Parallel Banking Channels

The Dubai account was the last of three. The relationship began in late 2009, when Jean-Luc Brunel brokered a formal scouting deal for Siad worth EUR 3,000 a month plus a 5 percent commission on the earnings of any model he brought in, paid into a Thai account at Bank of Ayudhya in Bangkok, registered under Siad's passport name, Amar Siad, with his Swedish citizenship noted alongside it.

The second channel ran through Sweden, where Siad lived at an address in Djursholm. Expressen's own reporting, published in early February 2026 from its review of the Epstein email files, put figures on payments that had previously only been described in general terms: Epstein sent Siad roughly 100,000 Swedish kronor on two separate occasions, and in 2017 extended him a loan of about 250,000 kronor over five years. A separate 2018 instruction sits alongside that loan: the Guardian and RFI's AFP-sourced coverage both report that Epstein forwarded Siad's bank details to Kahn with the note "5 year loan for 25k dollars." Whether that $25,000 instruction and the roughly 250,000 kronor loan are the same transaction described in two currencies, or two separate loans a year apart, has not been resolved and should be checked against the underlying documents before treating them as one event. Expressen's reporting also independently confirms the original Brunel deal and quotes Siad's reply to Brunel at the time, "I will not disappoint you, you have my Berber-Jewish word," the same language already on file in the DOJ documents.

An earlier version of this reporting leaned on Nordfront, a Swedish extremist outlet that republished Expressen's numbers wrapped in hostile commentary about Siad's religious identity. That citation has been dropped here in favor of Expressen's own reporting, and Nordfront is not used as a source for any claim in this document.

EVIDENCE · BANKING CHANNELS

CHANNEL	PERIOD	EVIDENCE	CONFIDENCE
Thailand (Bank of Ayudhya)	2009-2010	Signed scouting contract, EFTA00765388 / EFTA00767847	Confirmed, primary document
Sweden (Djursholm)	2009-2019	Expressen review of the Epstein email files; public residency records	Confirmed, mainstream press review of primary emails
Dubai	2017	Siad's own email, EFTA00711038, copied to Kahn and Klein	Confirmed, primary document

A Decade That Overlapped More Than It Progressed

Read in sequence, Siad's Gulf and European activity does not look like a career that moved from one chapter to the next. It looks like several things happening at once.

TIMELINE · OVERLAPPING THREADS

PERIOD	THREAD
2009	Brunel brokers the EUR 3,000/month scouting deal; the Thai account opens
2009-2019	Sweden-based scouting and payments continue, including the two SEK transfers and the 2017-2018 loan(s)
2011-2012	Siad and Victoria Housez run a joint Paris scouting operation, while Housez is separately paid by Leon Black
2015-2016	Siad takes a Development Manager role at World Fashion Channel Europe SAS, a Kesaev-linked shell in Paris

PERIOD	THREAD
2017	The Dubai wire lands
2017-2020	Siad serves as MAK's formal diplomatic representative to Saudi Arabia, the UAE, and Bahrain

That overlap is the point. Siad's Gulf banking, his seat inside a Russian-linked media company, and his diplomatic posting were not sequential episodes in a career; they were the same years, worn at once.

Housez, Black, and the Line That Should Not Be Blurred

In 2011 and 2012, Siad and Victoria Housez ran a scouting operation together in Paris, sharing an office search, trading candidates, and timing their work around Leon Black's visits to the city. During that same period, Housez was receiving tens of thousands of dollars from Black while she scouted for Epstein. This is where the investigation has to be precise rather than suggestive: nothing in the record shows Black paying Siad. The money that reached Siad came from Epstein, through Thailand, Sweden, and Dubai. The money that reached Housez came from Black. The two men are connected through her, and through the Paris operation they built together, not through a wire transfer between them.

That said, the shape of Black's own payments to Epstein gives the Housez connection more weight than it might otherwise carry. Black paid Epstein $170 million between 2012 and 2017, nominally for tax and estate advice, but Senate Finance Committee investigator Ron Wyden, working from DOJ-unsealed emails that Apollo's own 2021 Dechert internal review never had access to, found that some of that money moved as concealed payments to women rather than professional fees. Twenty million dollars went to about a dozen women, several of whom had personal relationships with Black, and ten million was routed through a shell charity built specifically to keep the payments off the books. In one 2017 exchange, Epstein's associate Irina Chernova told him that "L Black mentioned he's going to transfer me $100,000... he said now he does it through you," and Epstein simply confirmed the number. Wyden's investigation also found that Epstein ran surveillance on women connected to Black, at one point asking former Paul Weiss chairman Brad Karp to track a woman's movements, and separately instructing a corporate intelligence firm to "use Russian contact" for further monitoring. None of this involves Siad directly, but it shows that Epstein's arrangement with Black already relied on the same tools, women as financial pass-throughs and Russian-linked contacts for leverage, that show up again in the Housez-Siad thread. Worth noting: Brad Karp of Paul Weiss, who resigned as the firm's chairman in February 2026 over his own Epstein-related emails, has no relation to Palantir's Alex Karp. The two were only ever linked by a shared surname in unrelated commentary.

The clearest thread tying the two cases together is Richard Kahn. He is the same person Wyden identified as structuring Black's concealment payments, and the same person copied on Siad's Dubai wire. That does not prove Siad's payment was hidden the same way Black's were, but it puts Siad's transaction inside the same financial-management machinery Epstein built to keep Black's money quiet.

A Media Company Inside Kesaev's Tower

Alongside the banking trail, Siad held a Development Manager title at World Fashion Channel, a company whose ownership runs back to Igor Kesaev, a Russian businessman sanctioned by the United States, the European Union, the United Kingdom, and Australia since 2022 for his ties to the FSB. Proekt's "Smoking Kills" investigation describes Kesaev and his partner, Sergei Katsiev, financing FSB extrabudgetary spending for roughly twenty years through their tobacco and alcohol distribution empire. World Fashion Channel's studio and headquarters are based in Mercury City Tower in Moscow's international business district, a fact the channel confirms on its own site; the company's formal registered legal address changed to that Mercury Tower location in 2018, according to Russian corporate registry filings, after an earlier registered address in Moscow's Sokolniki district covering the 2012-2015 period. The channel's longtime director and later majority owner, Marina Artemyeva, became World Fashion Channel's general producer in 2011 and general director in 2012, rising to an 80 percent ownership stake in 2015 before selling that stake in 2018. Multiple independent Russian investigative outlets, including reporting building on Proekt's family-wealth database, identify Artemyeva as the common-law wife of Dmitry Patrushev, son of former FSB director Nikolai Patrushev and now a senior Russian government official, a relationship that reportedly began around 2009 or 2010, shortly before Kesaev's involvement with the channel deepened. That places Siad's corporate role one professional degree from one of the most security-connected families in the Russian state apparatus.

The French side of the business, World Fashion Channel Europe SAS (SIREN 812696433), was set up in Paris in April 2015 with just 5,000 euros in capital. Its only shareholder was a Moscow company, Fashion Group SARL, represented by a director named Andrei Lebedev. Fashion Group itself was held 100 percent by Kesaev from January 5, 2015 through May 16, 2022, spanning the entire life of World Fashion Channel Europe and Siad's own tenure at the channel; Kesaev's stake later passed to a Russian individual, Viktor Yesheev, in May 2022, and then to a holding company, JSC "Pro Business," in December 2025. Neither of those later transfers changes what the registry shows for the years that matter here: for the entire period World Fashion Channel Europe existed on paper, its sole shareholder's sole shareholder was Kesaev himself. The company's first president, Lidiia Bardina, lived at the same address as the company's own registered office, a detail consistent with a nominee arrangement rather than genuine executive control. Its 2015 accounts show barely 10,600 euros in assets, no recorded revenue, and a loss, and it was voluntarily wound down in June 2016, fourteen months after it opened. Siad's name does not appear among its registered officers, which suggests his role there was informal rather than a seat on the board, an operator working alongside a thinly funded Moscow-controlled shell rather than a named executive of it. The Moscow parent company is registered to license intellectual property, which fits a structure built to license the World Fashion Channel brand into Europe rather than run a real production business out of Paris.

What Remains Open

One lead was chased down and set aside deliberately. SAFE, a Virginia-based company that builds fortified estates and superyacht security systems, surfaced early in this research through a tangential reference to a "doomsday bunker" story, but nothing connects it to Siad, Epstein, Black, Kesaev, or the Dubai wire. It does not belong in this account, and it is named here only so its absence is a decision rather than an oversight.

> A few other threads are weaker than the rest of this document and should be read that way. The relationship between the 250,000 kronor Swedish loan and the $25,000 loan instruction reported by the Guardian and RFI has not been reconciled and may describe the same transaction or two different ones. And Kahn's presence on both the Black correspondence and the Dubai wire shows proximity within the same financial operation, not proof that Siad's payment was concealed for the same reasons Black's were.