



Minerals Management Service

People Promoting Energy, the Environment, and the Economy

News Release

Office of Public Affairs

For Immediate Release

November 21, 2008

News Media Contact:

Dave Smith

(202) 208-3985

MMS Director Announces Personnel Actions Against Employees Involved in RIK Investigation

WASHINGTON, D.C. — The Minerals Management Service (MMS) Director, Randall Luthi, announced today that personnel actions had been taken against employees included in the recent RIK investigation by the Department of the Interior's Inspector General (IG). The actions range from a letter of warning and reprimand up to and including permanent reassignment from the RIK program, suspension without pay, demotion to a lower pay grade, and termination from Federal service. In April 2006, the then-Director of the MMS asked the IG to investigate allegations of ethical lapses that were raised by a MMS employee in the Royalty-in-Kind program.

“These actions complete a long and thorough investigation into the Royalty-in-Kind program,” said MMS Director Randall Luthi. “While the behavior of some MMS employees prior to 2007 was clearly inappropriate and warranted strong administrative action, the vast majority of our employees take great pride in the service they perform for our nation, and perform that service with a high degree of professionalism, every hour of every day, as noted by the IG.”

The actions announced today follow a two year investigation by the IG. All personnel actions were made following the guidelines and regulations that pertain to government personnel.

Additional improvements made to the RIK program include strengthened internal controls, enhanced documentation requirements, improved record-keeping, and strengthened ethics training for all employees, among other improvements. Additionally, a new RIK Program Director was named, and the organizational structure modified so the head of the RIK Program now reports directly to the Deputy Associate Director in Denver.

—MMS—

R-08-3924