



# NEWS RELEASE

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Comptroller of the Currency  
Administrator of National Banks

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## **OCC Sending Bank Examiners to Assist Iraqi Bank Officials**

WASHINGTON – The Office of the Comptroller of the Currency (OCC) is sending a team of examiners to assist Iraqi officials in developing and establishing an independent and internationally recognized bank supervision department. The bank examiners will support the overall reconstruction efforts of the Coalition Provisional Authority in Iraq.

“Effective and independent bank supervision is essential to the maintenance of a sound banking system that is capable of providing the credit necessary to build a vibrant economy that meets the needs of the Iraqi people,” said Comptroller of the Currency John D. Hawke, Jr. “We at the OCC are proud to lend our expertise to the Coalition Provisional Authority and the people of Iraq in this important undertaking.”

The OCC bank examiners bring decades of bank supervision experience to the Coalition Provisional Authority. Their background includes experience supervising large banks as well as community institutions.

The team of OCC bank examiners includes: Cathryn C. FitzGerald, Steven M. Strasser and Martin S. Wiseman. They will depart for Iraq on January 15, 2004.

The Comptroller noted that the OCC had more volunteers for the mission than available slots. “It’s a measure of the dedication and commitment of the OCC staff that so many highly qualified professionals stepped forward to take on an assignment without concern for the hardships that may be involved.”

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The OCC charters, regulates and examines approximately 2,100 national banks and 52 federal branches of foreign banks in the U.S., accounting for more than 55 percent of the nation’s banking assets. Its mission is to ensure a safe and sound and competitive national banking system that supports the citizens, communities and economy of the United States.