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Massey Energy Addresses Aracoma Mine Fire Report

The State of West Virginia issued a report today that indicated that the tragic mine fire at Aracoma Coal Company in January 2006 was caused by deficiencies at the mine, including missing ventilation stoppings.

Massey Energy is reviewing the State's report and has no specific comments about the report at this time. Many of the issues raised in the report are based on witness interviews that the State and MSHA elected to conduct privately, without Massey Energy's involvement. However, Massey Energy can confirm that its ongoing internal investigation indicates that there were missing stoppings and other conditions that did not meet Massey Energy standards.

The conditions appear to have occurred despite a rigorous requirement of safety examinations and inspections for underground mines. In 2005 alone, Aracoma mine personnel conducted over 1,500 safety examinations and federal and state mine inspectors conducted nearly 200 safety inspections. Such a process normally leads to the diligent discovery and correction of potential mine hazards. At Aracoma, it appears that deficiencies were not fully recognized by mine personnel or by state or federal inspectors.

Massey Energy is a recognized leader in safety innovation and performance and remains committed to working with federal and state agencies to fully understand the causes of the accident and to prevent a similar occurrence at Massey Energy or elsewhere in the future. Massey Energy remains deeply saddened by the loss of its two miners.

Massey Energy Company, headquartered in Richmond, Virginia, with operations in West Virginia, Kentucky and Virginia, is the fourth largest coal company in the United States based on produced coal revenue.

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