

News Release



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MSHA increases budget request by \$19 million, or 6 percent, from fiscal year 2008 to fiscal year 2009

ARLINGTON, Va. – Richard E. Stickler, acting assistant secretary of labor for mine safety and health, today announced that the proposed fiscal year (FY) 2009 budget for the U.S. Department of Labor’s Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) is \$332 million with 2,361 full-time equivalent (FTE) employees, an increase of \$19 million, or 6 percent, above the FY 2008 request.

The budget proposal provides the agency with 2,361 full-time employees (FTE), including funding for 55 additional metal and nonmetal enforcement personnel, some of whom will be hired during FY 2008. The new level of FTE, along with other budgetary increases in MSHA programs, ensures that the agency can maintain the 100 Percent Plan announced in October 2007, with the goal of completing all annual mandatory safety and health inspections for the first time in the 39-year history of the agency.

“This budget proposal demonstrates a strong commitment to mine safety and would provide MSHA with vital resources it needs to help protect miners’ safety and health,” said Stickler.

Under the FY 2009 budget proposal, 71 percent, or \$236 million, would go toward the agency’s efforts to enforce federal mine safety laws, and \$36 million would be focused on training efforts. An additional \$29 million of the agency’s funding is focused on finding technological solutions to improve mine safety. The remaining \$30 million will cover the agency’s administrative and informational technology costs.

During a media briefing today outlining MSHA’s FY 2009 proposed budget, Stickler also provided an update on the agency’s efforts to implement the Mine Improvement and New Emergency Response (MINER) Act and discussed the multi-faceted approach MSHA is undertaking to complete 100 percent of its required inspections. Stickler believes that the FY 2009 request affords the agency the necessary resources to continue the aggressive enforcement of mine health and safety laws that led to a doubling of fines from \$35 million in calendar year (CY) 2006 to \$75 million in CY 2007.

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