

## **Ashland Federal Corrections Officer Pleads Guilty to Smuggling Tobacco Products for Inmates**

*Defendant made nearly \$25,000 from scheme.*

**COVINGTON, KY — October 24, 2008** — A senior federal corrections officer at FCI Ashland pleaded guilty today to an Extortion scheme that involved smuggling contraband tobacco products to inmates.

David Thompson, 43, of Raceland, Ky. admitted that from October 30, 2006 through February 8, 2008 he received \$19,200 in exchange for providing inmates with cigarettes, chewing tobacco and loose leaf rolling tobacco.

Once the inmate received the tobacco he then passed it along to another inmate who sold the tobacco at "black market" prices on the prison compound. Thompson instructed the inmate to sell the cigarettes for \$500 a carton. Thompson compensated the inmates involved in the scheme with tobacco. A different inmate also received tobacco products and owed Thompson \$5,000. The friends and relatives of the inmates compensated Thompson through cash payments shipped to Thompson's residence that were addressed to a false name.

Thompson has worked at FCI Ashland as a corrections officer since July of 1990 and received annual training regarding the Bureau of Prisons Employee Standards of conduct for the past 17 years.

James A. Zerhusen, U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of Kentucky, Ron Verst of the United States Postal Inspections Service, and Glenn A. Fine, Inspector General for the Department of Justice jointly made the announcement today after the plea.

The investigation was conducted by the Office of the Inspector General for the Department of Justice and the United States Postal Service (Cincinnati). Assistant United States Attorney E.J. Walborn represented the United States in the case.

Thompson's sentencing before the United States District Court Judge David L. Bunning in Covington is scheduled for January 30. Thompson faces a maximum prison sentence of 20 years. However, the court must consider the Federal Sentencing Guidelines before imposing sentence.