

State of Alaska
Department of Law

Gregg D. Renkes
Attorney General
P.O. Box 110300
Juneau, Alaska 99811
NEWS RELEASE



Press Contact: Theresa Woelk

907-465-6711
FAX: 907-465-2075
www.law.state.ak.us

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: April 12, 2004

Attorney General Gregg Renkes Makes Statement on Ethics Investigation of Randy Ruedrich

(Juneau, AK) – Randy Ruedrich, former member of the Alaska Oil and Gas Conservation Commission (AOGCC), has waived the confidentiality protection of the Executive Branch Ethics Act.

“The Department can now disclose that it is conducting an ethics investigation of Mr. Ruedrich’s activities while he was on the Alaska Oil and Gas Conservation Commission. Before Mr. Ruedrich gave us a written confidentiality waiver, the Ethics Act prohibited us from disclosing even the existence of an investigation,” Attorney General Gregg Renkes said.

Paul Lyle, Senior Assistant Attorney General and State Ethics Attorney, is conducting the investigation. Barbara Ritchie, Chief of the Opinions, Appeals & Ethics section, is supervising the case.

“In order to avoid any appearance of impropriety or conflict of interest, I formally recused myself and delegated my authority concerning this matter to Barbara Ritchie on January 16, 2004. I did not participate in the evaluation of the preliminary investigation or the decision to prepare and file an ethics complaint,” Renkes said.

“Barbara has been with the Department for nearly 12 years and served as Deputy Attorney General for the Civil Division under the last administration. Paul has been with the Department for over 20 years. I delegated to Barbara my authority to supervise all actions on this investigation and any proceedings on this case through to final disposition. She has the final decision-making authority on all aspects of this matter,” Renkes continued.

The Department of Law opened a preliminary ethics investigation into conduct by Mr. Ruedrich on November 4, 2003. On November 10th, the Department requested that the AOGCC preserve and compile certain records and information for the investigation. The Department received records from the AOGCC in early December. Further investigation and interviews were conducted in January and February 2004.

The Department concluded its preliminary investigation in February. Based on that investigation, the Department determined that the statutory standard for initiating an ethics

complaint was met. The standard is that the allegations, if true, would constitute conduct in violation of the Ethics Act. The Department of Law then initiated an ethics complaint. The complaint was served on Mr. Ruedrich on March 1, 2004, and his response to the complaint is due on April 12, 2004.

The written waiver also lifts the confidentiality of documents obtained by the Department during the investigation. Public records requests were denied by the State because the records sought were documents or information obtained by the Attorney General during the investigation. The Ethics Act requires that such records are confidential and not subject to inspection by the public before formal ethics proceedings begin unless the subject of the complaint has, in writing, waived the confidentiality protection of the law.

Questions about this matter should be referred to Barbara Ritchie at (907) 465-2133.

###