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News Releases

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ICE and South Carolina company sign first-ever IMAGE agreement in the state

Coastal Steel and Acoustics (CSA) partners with ICE to ensure legal status of workforce

LONGS, S.C. - The owners of a Longs' privately-owned construction company signed the state's first-ever agreement with U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) today to strengthen hiring practices and to combat the unlawful employment of illegal aliens.

Jack Doyle and Jim Shealy, owners of Coastal Steel and Acoustics (CSA), signed an agreement in a public ceremony at the company's headquarters in Longs with ICE Special Agent in Charge of the Office of Investigations in Atlanta Kenneth A. Smith.

The agreement is part of a voluntary employer program known as IMAGE, or ICE Mutual Agreement between Government and Employers, which is a joint initiative between government and the business community to restore integrity to the U.S immigration system. By voluntarily participating in the IMAGE program, companies can reduce unauthorized employment and the use of fraudulent identity documents.

"ICE recognizes that the highest level of employment integrity can only be achieved through close coordination with industry partners," said Smith. "CSA will join IMAGE business participants around the country who are committed to protect the integrity of their workforce by helping ensure that their employees are who they represent themselves to be."

"We are committed to ensuring that those who work for us are lawfully present in the country," said Shealy. "We hope that other South Carolina businesses would follow our lead. Through programs like these, we can ensure that Americans and those lawfully in the country aren't competing with those unlawfully in the country who will work for fewer wages than what they're entitled to."

As part of IMAGE, ICE will provide CSA with education and training on proper hiring procedures, fraudulent document detection, use of the E-Verify employment eligibility verification program and the Social Security Number Verification Service, and anti-discrimination procedures.

All IMAGE participants gain membership to the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) E-Verify employment eligibility verification program. Through this program, employers can verify that newly hired employees are eligible to work in the United States. This Internet-based system is available throughout the nation and is free to employers. It provides an automated link to the Social Security Administration database and DHS immigration records.

Upon enrollment in and commitment to DHS's Best Employment Practices, program participants will be deemed "IMAGE certified," a distinction DHS and ICE believe will become an industry standard.

CSA was formed in 2004 by Doyle and Shealy, with the purchase of a small drywall company. The company has two locations: a corporate headquarters in Longs, S.C. and an office in Lumberton, N.C. CSA does work in metal framing, drywall and acoustic ceiling installation, painting, stucco, and office and retail renovation.

-- ICE --

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) is the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security.

ICE comprises four integrated divisions that form a 21st century law enforcement agency with broad responsibilities for a number of key homeland security priorities. For more information, visit www.ICE.gov. To report suspicious activity, call 1-866-347-2423.

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