



PRESS RELEASE

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Emmitt Sparkman Named Deputy Commissioner of Institutions for Mississippi Department of Corrections

Jackson—Mississippi Department of Corrections (MDOC) Commissioner Christopher Epps today announced the appointment of Emmitt Sparkman as Deputy Commissioner of Institutions for MDOC. Sparkman, who has served as Superintendent of the Mississippi State Penitentiary since June of 2001, will assume his new position effective December 1, but will continue to supervise the Mississippi State Penitentiary (MSP) until a replacement is found.

“Our agency is most fortunate to have an administrator with Sparkman’s experience to head our Institutions Division,” said Commissioner Epps. “On November 22, MSP was recommended for accreditation by an American Correctional Association audit team after the prison received an assessed score of 100% on 41 mandatory standards and 97.2 % compliance tally on 431 non-mandatory standards. Sparkman’s extensive knowledge about accreditation coupled with his administrative skills unquestionably led to MSP receiving this historic recommendation.”

Emmitt Sparkman, 46 has served 27 years in corrections. He began his career in 1975 as a Correctional Officer for the Texas Department of Corrections (TDOC). He has worked in county and state correctional systems for 19 years, both in Texas and Kentucky, overseeing education programs, security, and directing the daily operation of three separate maximum-security institutions with populations ranging from 1,000 to 2,500 inmates. In September 1996, he began serving as Warden at the Marshall County Correctional Facility at Holly Springs, Mississippi’s first privately managed prison operation, a position he held before assuming his role as Superintendent of MSP in June 2001. He has served as an Education Consultant, Captain, Major, and Adult Probation Officer, as well as an Intake Supervisor and Director of a juvenile detention center.

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“I’m deeply honored to have been selected to serve as Deputy Commissioner of Institutions,” said Emmitt Sparkman. “I have spent my entire adult career working in corrections, and I am looking forward to meeting the many new challenges that lie ahead in association with my new position. MDOC has made great strides in its accreditation effort. However, there is much work left to be done to complete this important process.”

Accreditation creates a safe working environment for employees and inmates while continuing to ensure public safety. Employees feel a strong sense of professionalism and a deep devotion to duty.

Sparkman, an Alto, Texas native, received his bachelor’s degree in criminology at Sam Houston State University and his master’s degree in criminal justice at Eastern Kentucky University. The Texas Department of corrections in 1981 named Sparkman Education Consultant of the year. He was named Warden of the Year by the Wackenhut Corrections Corporation in 1997 and later bestowed the same honor by the North American Association of Wardens and Superintendents in 2002.