

## Press Releases

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January 24, 1997

OTS 97-07 - Two OTS Teams Win Hammer Award

## Office of Thrift Supervision

# NEWS

FOR RELEASE at 1:00 p.m. EST  
Friday, January 24, 1997  
OTS 97-7

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### **TWO OTS TEAMS HONORED FOR 'REINVENTION' WORK**

WASHINGTON, D.C., Jan. 24, 1997 -- Two teams of staff members from the Office of Thrift Supervision (OTS) received Vice President Gore's Hammer Award for their work in furthering the principles of the National Performance Review to create a government that costs less and works better. Treasury Secretary Robert Rubin presented the awards Friday. OTS is a bureau of the Treasury.

One OTS team worked throughout 1996 updating, revising and rewriting a substantial portion of the agency's regulations to make them more compact, readable and understandable. The other team plowed new ground in helping pave the way for the establishment of a true Internet bank.

The regulatory revision team -- headed by John Downey, executive director of supervision; Chief Counsel Carolyn Buck and John Price, director of supervision policy -- revised five major packages of rules beginning with the lending rules. The revisions in all cases strike a balance between increasing the flexibility of savings associations to compete in a changing marketplace and maintaining adequate safety and soundness guidance to protect depositors and taxpayers.

The team was composed of more than 20 staff from the agency's business transactions and regulations and legislation units of the chief counsel's office, supervision policy and representatives from the agency's regional offices.

The application processing-electronic banking, or Internet, team was led by Ronald Karr, OTS central regional director, and Diana Garmus, director of corporate activities. Their organizations along with compliance policy, business transactions and regulations worked directly with Security First Network Bank, Pikesville, Ky., which became the first full Internet bank in 1995. The agency's assistance was provided without compromising either its independence or its responsibility for promoting banking innovation within the parameters of safety and soundness. Another 20 staff members from Washington and the regional offices served on this team.

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The Office of Thrift Supervision (OTS), a bureau of the U.S. Treasury, regulates and supervises the nation's thrift industry. OTS' mission is to ensure the safety and soundness of thrift institutions and to support their role as home mortgage lenders and providers of other community credit and financial services.

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