MESSEY ROBERT J

Form 4

February 24, 2006

FORM 4

UNITED STATES SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION Washington, D.C. 20549

STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN BENEFICIAL OWNERSHIP OF

SECURITIES

OMB Number:

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obligations may continue. See Instruction

Filed pursuant to Section 16(a) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, Section 17(a) of the Public Utility Holding Company Act of 1935 or Section

30(h) of the Investment Company Act of 1940

1(b).

(Last)

(Print or Type Responses)

1. Name and Address of Reporting Person *

(First)

MESSEY ROBERT J

2. Issuer Name and Ticker or Trading Symbol

ARCH COAL INC [ACI]

(Month/Day/Year)

5. Relationship of Reporting Person(s) to Issuer

(Check all applicable)

ONE CITYPLACE DRIVE

3. Date of Earliest Transaction

02/23/2006

Director 10% Owner X_ Officer (give title Other (specify

below) below) Senior Vice President & CFO

(Street) 4. If Amendment, Date Original

(Middle)

Filed(Month/Day/Year)

6. Individual or Joint/Group Filing(Check

Applicable Line)

X Form filed by One Reporting Person Form filed by More than One Reporting

Person

ST. LOUIS, MO 63141

(City) (State) (Zip)

Table I - Non-Derivative Securities Acquired, Disposed of, or Beneficially Owned

1. Title of Security (Instr. 3)

2. Transaction Date 2A. Deemed (Month/Day/Year)

Execution Date, if

(Month/Day/Year)

3. 4. Securities TransactionAcquired (A) or Code Disposed of (D) (Instr. 3, 4 and 5) (Instr. 8)

5. Amount of Securities Beneficially Owned Following

6. Ownership 7. Nature of Form: Direct Indirect (D) or Indirect Beneficial Ownership (I) (Instr. 4) (Instr. 4)

Reported (A) Transaction(s) (Instr. 3 and 4)

Code V Amount (D) Price

Reminder: Report on a separate line for each class of securities beneficially owned directly or indirectly.

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Table II - Derivative Securities Acquired, Disposed of, or Beneficially Owned (e.g., puts, calls, warrants, options, convertible securities)

1. Title of Derivative Conversion Security or Exercise

3. Transaction Date 3A. Deemed (Month/Day/Year)

Execution Date, if any

4. 5. Number Transaction of Derivative Expiration Date Code Securities

6. Date Exercisable and (Month/Day/Year)

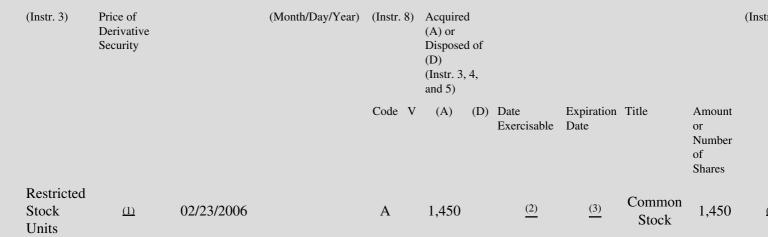
7. Title and Amount of 8. Pr **Underlying Securities** (Instr. 3 and 4)

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Reporting Owners

Reporting Owner Name / Address Relationships

Director 10% Owner Officer Other

MESSEY ROBERT J ONE CITYPLACE DRIVE ST. LOUIS, MO 63141

Senior Vice President & CFO

Signatures

/s/ Gregory A. Billhartz, Attorney-in-Fact

02/24/2006

**Signature of Reporting Person

Date

Explanation of Responses:

- * If the form is filed by more than one reporting person, see Instruction 4(b)(v).
- ** Intentional misstatements or omissions of facts constitute Federal Criminal Violations. See 18 U.S.C. 1001 and 15 U.S.C. 78ff(a).
- (1) Each restricted stock unit represents a right to receive one share of common stock unless otherwise deferred, at the reporting person's election, pursuant to the Arch Coal, Inc. Executive Deferred Compensation Plan.
- (2) The restricted stock units vest ratably over a three-year period.
- (3) The restricted stock units do not expire.

Note: File three copies of this Form, one of which must be manually signed. If space is insufficient, *see* Instruction 6 for procedure. Potential persons who are to respond to the collection of information contained in this form are not required to respond unless the form displays a currently valid OMB number.

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