

**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
MINERALS MANAGEMENT SERVICE  
GULF OF MEXICO OCS REGION**

NTL No. 2006-G15

Issue Date: June 12, 2006  
Effective Date: July 12, 2006

NOTICE TO LESSEES AND OPERATORS (NTL) OF FEDERAL  
OIL, GAS, AND SULPHUR LEASES IN THE OUTER CONTINENTAL SHELF (OCS),  
GULF OF MEXICO OCS REGION (GOMR)

**Guidance for Submitting Exploration Plans and  
Development Operations Coordination Documents**

This NTL is issued pursuant to 30 CFR 250.103 and provides guidance for submitting OCS plans required by 30 CFR 250, subpart B, to the Minerals Management Service (MMS) GOMR. This NTL, along with NTL No. 2006-G14, "Information Requirements for Exploration Plans and Development Operations Coordination Documents," supersedes NTL No. 2003-G17. This NTL provides guidance on changing approved or pending Exploration Plans (EP's) and Development Operations Coordination Documents (DOCD's), the number of copies required, electronic submission, and the submittal address.

**Authority and Background**

On August 30, 2005, MMS published final regulations in the Federal Register amending subpart B of 30 CFR part 250. These regulations became effective on January 1, 2006. Please note that all of the regulatory citations used in this NTL are those in the published final subpart B regulations that will be codified in the next edition of the Code of Federal Regulations as 30 CFR 250.200-299.

**Changing Approved and Pending EP's and DOCD's**

In addition to Initial EP's and DOCD's (which are the first OCS plans to be submitted after the lease is awarded), there are four types of changes that can be made to approved and pending EP's and DOCD's. These changes are referred to as supplemental, revised, modified, and amended EP's and DOCD's (see § 250.200(b) for definitions of these types of EP's and DOCD's).

Each supplemental and revised (in accordance with § 250.285(b)), modified (in accordance with §§ 250.234(a) and 250.273(a)), or amended (in accordance with §§ 250.232(d) and 250.267(d)) EP or DOCD need only contain that information related to or affected by the proposed changes to the EP or DOCD, as approved or pending. However, make sure the description of the proposed changes is complete and includes the rationale for the proposed changes as they relate to the approved or pending EP or DOCD. It would also be helpful if you would reference the approval date or MMS control number, if known, of the approved EP or DOCD you are changing.

1. Pursuant to § 250.283(b), supplement your approved EP or DOCD when you propose to conduct lease or unit activities that require applications or permits and are not described in your approved EP or DOCD.

2. Pursuant to § 250.283(a), revise your approved EP or DOCD when you

A. Change the type of drilling rig to one with a different impact on the seafloor (e.g., from a platform rig to a jack-up, from a semisubmersible rig with anchors to a drillship), production facility (e.g., caisson, fixed platform with piles, tension-leg platform), or transportation mode (e.g., pipeline, barge) you will use;

B. Change the surface location of a well (or associated anchor) by more than 30 meters (100 feet) in water depths less than 400 meters (1,312 feet), or by more than 152 meters (500 feet) in water depths 400 meters (1,312 feet) or greater;

C. For DOCD's that propose activities that affect the State of Florida, change the type of production from natural gas to oil;

D. Increase the emissions of an air pollutant to an amount that exceeds the amount specified in your approved EP or DOCD;

E. Request a new hydrogen sulfide (H<sub>2</sub>S) area classification, or encounter a concentration of H<sub>2</sub>S greater than 500 parts per million (ppm);

F. Change the location of your onshore support base from one State to another or to a new base requiring expansion; or

G. Change the approved anchor array pattern associated with your activities, or increase the anchor radius by more than 152 meters (500 feet) if the MMS GOMR did not approve a specific anchor pattern.

### Copies of EP's and DOCD's

1. Pursuant to § 250.206, submit the following number of copies for *Initial* and *Supplemental* EP's and DOCD's to the MMS GOMR:

<b>Initial and Supplemental EP's and DOCD's that describe activities on leases and unit areas on the OCS that affect the:</b>	<b>No. of Proprietary Copies</b>	<b>No. of Public Information Copies</b>	<b>Total No. of Copies</b>
A. State of Florida	5	17	22
B. State of Alabama	5	5	10
C. Both the States of Mississippi and Louisiana	5	6	11
D. Both the States of Mississippi and Louisiana and that are exempted from CZM certification requirements	5	4	9
E. Only the State of Louisiana	5	4	9
F. Only the State of Louisiana and that are exempted from CZM certification requirements	5	3	8
G. State of Texas	5	4	9
H. State of Texas and that are exempted from CZM certification requirements	5	3	8

2. Pursuant to § 250.206, submit the following number of copies for *Revised, Modified, and Amended* EP's and DOCD's to the MMS GOMR:

7 copies (5 proprietary and 2 public information)

### **Electronic Submission**

In accordance with § 250.190(a)(3), you may choose to submit copies of any EP or DOCD electronically. If you do, submit it as a single file on separate CD-ROM's and ensure that all electronic files are in portable document format (PDF) or other acceptable format. If you submit your EP or DOCD electronically, provide

1. In lieu of the five proprietary copies specified above, one proprietary copy on paper and one proprietary copy on CD-ROM; and

2. For EP's and DOCD's that propose activities that do not affect the State of Florida, one public information copy on paper, and one less than the specified number of public information copies on separate CD-ROM's; or

3. For EP's and DOCD's that propose activities that do affect the State of Florida (see Item A listed in the table above), provide 8 public information copies on paper and 11 public information copies on separate CD-ROM's.

### **Submittal Address**

Submit all EP's and DOCD's by mailing them to:

Regional Supervisor, Field Operations  
Plans Section (MS 5230)  
Minerals Management Service  
Gulf of Mexico OCS Region  
1201 Elmwood Park Boulevard  
New Orleans, Louisiana 70123-2394

### **Timely Submission of EP's and DOCD's**

The OCS Lands Act requires the MMS GOMR to review, analyze, and take final regulatory action on EP's and DOCD's within a relatively short period of time after their receipt. In addition, when requested, the MMS GOMR attempts to accomplish these tasks in even shorter periods to accommodate your drilling, platform installation, or pipeline construction schedules, or for other reasons. This expediting sometimes causes disruptions in the normal review and analysis process and makes it extremely difficult to meet the mandated deadlines for other OCS plans that have been submitted timely. Therefore, we seek your cooperation in ensuring that you submit all OCS plans and permit applications to the MMS GOMR sufficiently in advance to provide the MMS GOMR with the maximum review time possible.

**Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 Statement**

The information collection referred to in this NTL is intended to provide clarification, description, or interpretation of requirements contained in 30 CFR 250, subpart B. The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) has approved the information collection requirements in this regulation under OMB Control Number 1010-0151 (expiration date July 31, 2008). This NTL does not impose any information collection requirements subject to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995.

**Contact**

Please contact the MMS GOMR Plans Section at (504) 736-2419 if you have any questions regarding this NTL.

[original signed]  
Charles J. Schoennagel  
Acting Regional Director