

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

NTL No. 2006-G17

Effective Date: September 7, 2006
Expiration Date: December 31, 2006

**NOTICE TO LESSEES AND OPERATORS OF FEDERAL OIL, GAS, AND SULPHUR
LEASES AND PIPELINE RIGHT-OF-WAY HOLDERS IN THE OUTER
CONTINENTAL SHELF, GULF OF MEXICO OCS REGION**

Conducting Platform Operations Before MMS Approval

This Notice to Lessees and Operators (NTL) is issued pursuant to 30 CFR 250.103. It makes provisions for you to conduct certain platform operations before you receive approval from the Minerals Management Service (MMS) Gulf of Mexico OCS Region (GOMR).

This NTL supersedes NTL No. 2006-G13. Section 5 of that NTL, titled "Removing a platform and performing site clearance," has been removed. Accordingly, you must obtain approval from the MMS before you begin any platform removal operations. This change was made to (1) reflect new decommissioning guidelines resulting from programmatic Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA) take-authorization rulemaking, and (2) imminent receipt of a new "generic" Biological Opinion/Incidental Take Statement from a recently concluded Section 7 Endangered Species Act (ESA) Consultation.

Platform Applications

In accordance with 30 CFR 250.900(b), you must submit an application and obtain MMS approval before you install a new platform or make major modifications or repairs to an existing platform. In accordance with 30 CFR 250.1727, you must submit an application and obtain MMS approval before you remove a platform.

However, pursuant to 30 CFR 250.142, the MMS GOMR has determined that you can perform the following platform installations, modifications, and repairs after you submit the appropriate application but before you receive approval:

1. Installing a new platform that
 - a. has site-specific soil data;
 - b. meets High Consequence Criteria, L-1 (per Section 2 of API RP 2A, 21st edition);
and
 - c. has all connections with fatigue lives greater than 100 years.

2. Making major modifications and repairs to an existing platform that
 - a. has a deck height that meets the new design deck height requirements in Section 2 of API RP 2A, 21st edition;
 - b. meets High Consequence Criteria, L-1 (per Section 2 of API RP 2A, 21st edition);
 - c. has site-specific soil data;
 - d. has no corrosion, as evidenced by a coating system grade of A; and
 - e. has no Hurricane Katrina or Hurricane Rita damage.

3. Adding a well to an existing platform that
 - a. was installed within the last 5 years;
 - b. has a deck height that meets the new design deck height requirements in Section 2 of API RP 2A, 21st edition; and
 - c. has an original platform design that provided for the additional well.

4. Converting a platform to a right-of-use and easement platform that
 - a. was installed within the last 5 years;
 - b. has a deck height that meets the new design deck height requirements in Section 2 of API RP 2A, 21st edition; and
 - c. is on a terminated lease, and all wells have been permanently plugged.

Notify the MMS GOMR at least 48 hours before you begin any work under the provisions of this NTL.

Please be reminded that the MMS GOMR must review and approve all major repairs of damage resulting from Hurricanes Katrina and Rita before you conduct the work.

Contacts

You may e-mail your platform applications and notifications to the Office of Structural and Technical Support at structures@mms.gov or send hard copies to

U.S. Department of the Interior, Minerals Management Service
 Gulf of Mexico OCS Region, Office of Field Operations
 Attention: Office of Structural and Technical Support (MS 5210)
 1201 Elmwood Park Boulevard
 New Orleans, Louisiana 70123-2394

If you have any questions, contact the Office of Structural and Technical Support by

Telephone at (504) 736-2895; or
 Telefax at (504) 596-4052

Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (PRA) Statement

The collection of information referred to in this NTL provides clarification, description, or interpretation of requirements contained in 30 CFR 250, subparts I and Q. The Office of

Management and Budget (OMB) approved the information collection requirements for Subparts I and Q and assigned OMB Control Numbers 1010-0149 and 1010-0142, respectively. This NTL does not impose additional information collection requirements subject to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995.

[original signed]
Chris C. Oynes
Regional Director