



**U.S. Department of the Interior  
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Office of Communications**

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***NEWS RELEASE***

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**CONTACT:** [Anne-Berry Wade](mailto:Anne-Berry.Wade@MMS.gov)  
(202) 208-3985

**MMS AND COAST GUARD  
SIGN OIL AND GAS AGREEMENT**

Today the U.S. Department of the Interior's Minerals Management Service (MMS) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the U. S. Coast Guard specifying which agency will be responsible for certain aspects of oil and natural gas exploration, development, production, and transportation activities on the Outer Continental Shelf (OCS).

The MOU identifies 27 areas of responsibilities for both agencies. For example, MMS will be responsible for most drilling and production matters, pipeline operations, emergency shutdown systems, inspection and testing of production and drilling equipment, decommissioning platforms, and investigating oil pollution related to provisions in the OCS Lands Act.

Under the terms of the MOU, the Coast Guard responsibilities will be related to fire protection, aids to navigation, communications, life saving equipment, workplace safety and health, oil pollution under the Clean Water Act, diving operations and equipment, hazardous material storage and handling, emergency evacuation plans, and transfers of petroleum and other products to and from vessels.

"This MOU provides an opportunity for MMS and the Coast Guard to continue to develop more efficient methods to perform our important functions," said MMS Director Cynthia Quarterman. "We are dealing with a changing industry and this new MOU gives us the framework to improve the procedures we use to conduct inspections, issue civil penalties, and conduct accident investigations."

Today's MOU replaces two previous agreements. MMS developed this MOU working cooperatively with the Coast Guard and with the oil and gas industry. By eliminating duplication of efforts between the two agencies, the MOU will simplify procedures for the oil and gas industry as well.

MMS is the federal agency that manages the Nation's natural gas, oil, and other mineral resources on the OCS, and collects, accounts for and disburses about \$6 billion yearly in revenues from offshore and onshore federal mineral leases.

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MMS Internet website address: <http://www.mms.gov>  
24 hour Fax-on-Demand Service:(202) 219-1703