

The NewsRoom

Release #: 3043

Date: March 18, 2004

**Taking Offshore Safety to a Higher Level:
MMS Honors Finalists in Annual Competition**

Only the best of the best become finalists in the much-anticipated Safety Awards for Excellence (SAFE) annual competition sponsored by the Minerals Management Service.

Presented annually to Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) oil and gas operators and contractors who achieve excellent safety and pollution prevention, the SAFE awards recognize that even complex and risky offshore oil and gas operations can be conducted with ever-improving levels of safety and environmental protection.

"This year's finalists make offshore energy facilities safer for everyone in the energy business," said Johnnie E. Blevins, Director of the MMS. "Offshore operators face enormous safety and pollution prevention challenges. MMS salutes the efforts of these companies which work diligently to secure America's energy resources while raising the standards for safety and pollution prevention."

Established in 1983, the SAFE Awards recognize and honor companies which make concerted efforts to train and educate their employees to conduct offshore operations in a safe and environmentally responsible manner.

Each year, OCS oil and gas operators from the high and moderate activity categories as well as drilling and production contractors are selected as finalists for the award. A company that qualifies under the high activity category produces at least 10 million barrels of oil per year and operates a minimum of 1,000 in-service components during the year. A moderate activity company produces at least one million barrels of oil per year and operates a minimum of 100 in-service components during the year. MMS selects one winner from each category.

Winners will be announced at an awards luncheon to be held on Tuesday, April 27, 2004, at the Houston Intercontinental Hotel. Registration information is available by calling: Deborah O'Brien at 703-787-1579; Valerie Russ at 703-787-1598; Cheryl Blundon at 703-787-1598.

The 2003 SAFE categories and finalists are:

High OCS Activity

ExxonMobil Corporation
Kerr-McGee Corporation
Newfield Exploration Company
Shell Exploration & Production Company
Stone Energy Corporation

Drilling Contractor

Diamond Offshore Drilling Inc.
Helmerich & Payne Int'l Drilling Co.
Noble Drilling (U.S.) Inc.

Moderate OCS Activity

ConocoPhillips
Dominion Exploration & Production, Inc.
Hunt Petroleum (AEC) Inc.
Nexen Inc.
Taylor Energy Company

Production Contractor

Danos & Curole Marine Contractors, Inc.
Grasso Production Management, Inc.

Interior that manages the nation's oil, natural gas, and other mineral resources on the Outer Continental Shelf and offshore waters. The agency also collects, accounts for, and disburses mineral revenues from Federal and Anishinabe Indian lands. MMS disbursed more than \$8 billion in FY 2003 and more than \$135 billion since the agency was established in 1982. Nearly \$1 billion from those revenues go into the Land and Water Conservation Fund annually for the development of state and Federal park and recreation lands.

Relevant Web Sites

[MMS Main Website](#)

Media Contacts

[Rebecca Phipps](#)

(202) 208-3985

[MMS: Securing Ocean Energy & Economic Value for America](#)
U.S. Department of the Interior