

The NewsRoom

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MMS Reports on Subsurface, High-Speed Current Jets in Deepwater

The Minerals Management Service (MMS) has issued a new report on subsurface, high speed current jets in the deep water Gulf of Mexico. The report provides new information that will aid the offshore industry in the design of drilling and production systems. Offshore operators design these drilling and production systems to account for forces exerted by ocean currents. However several deep water petroleum operators have recently reported unusual high-speed, subsurface, intensified currents, known as jets, on the upper continental slopes of the northern Gulf of Mexico. These jets have disrupted, suspended, or delayed platform operations.

This report, *Subsurface, High-Speed Current Jets in the Deepwater Region of the Gulf of Mexico, Final Report*, contains the analysis and characterization of jets, as well as exploration of possible mechanisms responsible for their generation. Frequency, persistence, and speed characteristics of jets are important factors to be considered in design criteria.

Thirteen jets were identified and analyzed for this study. Jets typically last a few hours to one day, have speeds up to 200 centimeters per second, and their peak speeds occur between 150 and 350 meters beneath the sea surface with little to no surface component. Jet-like phenomena were also identified, but these typically last longer and extend no deeper than 200 meters.

Copies of the report can be obtained from the MMS, Gulf of Mexico OCS Region, at a charge of \$15.00 by referencing OCS Study MMS 2004-022 or through the Gulf of Mexico OCS Region, Public Information Office at (504) 736-2519, 1-800-200-GULF.

The Minerals Management Service is the federal bureau in the U.S. Department of the Interior that manages the nation's oil, natural gas and other mineral resources on the Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) in federal offshore waters. Currently, about 30 percent of the oil and 23 percent of the gas produced domestically comes from these federal waters. The bureau also collects, accounts for, and disburses mineral revenues from Federal and American Indian lands. MMS disbursed approximately \$8 billion in Fiscal Year 2004 and more than \$143 billion since it was created in 1982. Nearly \$1 billion from those revenues go into the Land and Water Conservation Fund annually for the acquisition and development of state and federal park and recreation lands.

Relevant Web Sites:

[MMS Main Website](#)

[Gulf of Mexico Website](#)

Media Contacts:

Debra Winbush (504) 736-2597

Caryl Fagot (504) 736-2590

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