

INNOVATION #3  
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### MMS USES TECHNOLOGY TO ADVANCE INNOVATIONS AND CUT COSTS

The U.S. Department of the Interior's Minerals Management Service (MMS) announced today that it is aggressively moving towards using new technology to share information and improve customer services while cutting costs.

"MMS has established a Home Page on the World Wide Web," said MMS Director Cynthia Quarterman. "Features include program descriptions and contacts, an archive of news releases and a listing of publications. Regular updates will be made to share new and timely MMS information."

"For quite some time," said Quarterman, "we've emphasized the use of good science in making sound resource decisions. We are taking the first step now to provide much of that scientific information. By the end of September 1996, more than 20 years of data will be accessible on the Internet.

"We're talking about more than 700 MMS-sponsored environmental research projects totalling in excess of half a million pages on a wide range of subjects," declared Quarterman, "all of which pertain to the interaction of offshore natural gas and oil development with the human, marine and biological environments."

Quarterman said the MMS royalty management program also is working with industry to make greater use of technology in filing reports and conducting financial transactions.

"We process a lot of data related to federal mineral revenues and the payment of royalties," said Quarterman. "More than two-thirds of the data were transmitted electronically in FY'95. Our goal is to receive 100 percent of incoming reports electronically by the end of 1997. Once that happens, MMS could save about \$1 million a year; industry would also realize substantial savings. These savings are critical to MMS and the regulated community in these times of tight budgets for both

government and the private sector."

MMS is the federal agency that manages the Nation's natural gas, oil and other mineral resources on the Outer Continental Shelf, and collects, accounts for, and disburses about \$4 billion yearly in revenues from mineral leases and federal and Indian lands.

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FACT SHEET  
ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES PROGRAM  
INFORMATION SYSTEM

The MMS Environmental Studies Program (ESP) was initiated in 1973 to support the Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) natural gas and oil program.

The goal of the ESP is to provide information needed for prediction, assessment, and management of impacts from offshore activities on human, marine, and coastal environments.

Information will be more easily available to MMS customers and stakeholders including environmental groups and academia for related research.

Prior to ESPIS, the only source for the ESP information was paper reports. ESPIS archives these paper reports to ensure that valuable information is not lost.

Considerable savings in time will result as computers will perform the function of searching for information.

ESPIS will result in considerable financial savings through more efficient use of personnel time, reduced photocopying, and reduced storage space needed (fewer paper copies will need to be retained).

Approximately \$600 million has been expended on environmental research in support of the OCS natural gas, oil and minerals program since 1973.

OCS Lands Act requires that environmental information be collected in any oil and gas lease sale area "in order to establish information needed for assessment and management of environmental impacts on the human, marine, and coastal environments of the outer Continental Shelf and the coastal areas which may be affected by oil and gas development in such area or region."

ESPIS, the Environmental Studies Program Information System,

harnesses the results of over 20 years of ESP research into a user friendly integration of related databases and textbases.

Full text search capability aided by relational algorithm ranking ensure that pertinent information will not be overlooked.

Text search is provided by Fulcrum Technology software and passed through the Internet by Fulcrum's Surfboard.

An outside contractor is responsible for development of database interface and reporting capabilities for research information, development of a textbase search interface with full query and intuitive search capability for reports of MMS-sponsored research, scanning and optical character recognition (OCR) of full report text, and providing availability of databases and text through DOI net and full text through Internet.

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FACT SHEET  
ROYALTY MANAGEMENT PROGRAM  
ELECTRONIC COMMERCE TECHNOLOGY

∅ The Minerals Management Service (MMS) now offers a variety of electronic reporting and paying options to its customers. Recent company surveys indicate widespread interest in moving away from paper reporting. The MMS goal is to receive 100 percent of incoming reports electronically by the end of 1997.

∅ For several years, MMS has worked with industry to develop national standards for the exchange of petroleum information, and to identify, implement and test processes that are beneficial to both industry and the Federal government.

∅ With these national standards in place, MMS conducted a pilot project for electronic data exchange with Amoco and Chevron to test data formats, software, and telecommunications, which was successfully completed in January 1995. Procedures have also been tested for electronic transmission of production and billing information.

∅ The options being offered via electronic commerce include: Submission of reports for royalty sales and production; Payment of funds for royalties, rents, bonuses and assessments; and Transmission of bills for collection.

∅ This technology will reduce the volume of paper and its attendant processing costs, simplify reporting and ease reporting burdens. Error correction will be expedited. (Error rates average 6.07% for paper reports and less than 1% for those submitted electronically).

∅ Customer data processing costs will be reduced as mainframe computers make way for less expensive desk top models.

∅ Reports and payments can be sent precisely when they are due. Timeliness, accuracy, convenience, security and reliability will be improved with the electronic transfer of both funds and

data.

ø The technical infrastructure is in place to accommodate full implementation of electronic commerce and MMS is looking at all options to assure that both large and small companies can be accommodated. In the near future, MMS will send a letter to selected company CEO's announcing the availability of these options and inviting their participation. MMS will provide orientation, training, and technical support to any interested company.

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