



**U.S. Department of the Interior
Minerals Management Service
Office of Communications**

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NEWS RELEASE

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MMS Issues Proposed Rule for Training Offshore Workers

The Department of the Interior's Minerals Management Service recently issued a proposed rule for training lessee and contractor employees working offshore in oil, natural gas, and sulfur operations on the Outer Continental Shelf (OCS). The proposed rule was published in the *Federal Register* on April 20, 1999.

The rule, the first true performance-based regulation, proposes to establish a training system that would lead to safer and cleaner OCS operations; allow the development of new and innovative training techniques; impose fewer prescriptive requirements on the oil and gas industry; and provide for increased training flexibility. It is consistent with the broader efforts of MMS to provide a regulatory framework for industry to achieve a high level of safety and environmental performance in the most efficient way possible.

The MMS plans to use a series of performance measures to assess lessee and contractor performance related to their training programs. These measures may include audits, written tests, hands-on tests, and employee interviews.

To solicit ideas from constituency groups, the MMS will hold a workshop June 10, 1999, in Houston, Texas. The workshop will be from 8:30 - 12:30 at the Sheraton Crown Hotel, 15700 John F. Kennedy Boulevard. For directions please call the Sheraton at (281)442-5100.

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 last year disbursed about \$6 billion in revenues from federal offshore mineral leases and from onshore mineral leases on federal and Indian lands.

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