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MMS ADOPTS INTERNATIONAL OFFSHORE SAFETY STANDARDS

For the first time, the Minerals Management Service is including safety standards issued by an international organization into the agency's offshore oil and gas regulatory program. MMS has updated one of its rules to incorporate the international safety standard.

Published in today's *Federal Register*, the final rule (*Section 30, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 250*) now includes the international standard that specifies the minimum acceptable requirements for subsurface safety valve equipment. The SSSV will shut off flow of hydrocarbons in the event of an emergency and is considered the last line of defense in securing a well and/or preventing pollution to the environment.

"We recognize that we are regulating a global industry and that there is value in using global standards wherever practical. Using common standards, based on strong technical analysis by industry and government makes sense for all parties. We have made a concerted effort to lend our expertise to international standard setting bodies such as the ISO. We see the adoption of this standard as the first step in a process to harmonize technical requirements on a global basis with the aim of lowering costs and enhancing performance, not only in the U.S., but worldwide," said MMS Director Walt Rosenbusch.

The International Organization for Standardization, which issued the standard, is a non-profit, worldwide federation of national standards bodies, based in Geneva, Switzerland. Founded in the mid 1940's, its purpose is to promote the development of international standards and related activities to facilitate the global exchange of goods and services.

This ISO safety standard has also been adopted by the American Petroleum Institute in its standard, API Specification 14A, Tenth Edition, November 2000. The API is a national trade association representing the U.S. oil and natural gas industry. It has developed industry standards, specifications and recommended practices for over 75 years.

MMS is the federal agency that manages the nation's natural gas, oil and other mineral resources on the Outer Continental Shelf. The agency also collects, accounts for and [disburses over \\$5 billion per year in revenues](#) from federal offshore leases and from onshore leases on federal and Indian lands.

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MMS Internet website address: <http://www.boem.gov>