Offshore Milestones

1896 — 1st Well
1st Offshore oil well, Summerfield, CA

1947 — Moving Offshore
Klerr-McGee well is 1st beyond sight of land

1950 — Court Confirmation
2nd Supreme Court ruling upholding federal jurisdiction

1953 — Federal Jurisdiction
Supreme Court upholds federal jurisdiction over Outer Continental Shelf

1953 — DOI Assumes Oversight
Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act gives the U.S. Department of the Interior jurisdictional authority over lands extending to 200 nautical miles offshore - oversight during the next three decades was assigned to U.S. Department of Interior agencies including USGS and Bureau of Land Management

1954 — States Given Control of Nearshore Waters
Passage of Submerged Lands Act gives states jurisdiction over offshore lands closer to shore

1969 — Production Spikes
Offshore production is at 133,000 barrels per day

1969 — 1st Major Offshore Spill
Santa Barbara oil spill results in the passage of several acts designed to imprive regulatory authority offshore

1971 — Production Continues to Rise
Offshore production reaches 1.7 million barrels per day

1978 — Lands Act Updated
Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act of 1978 amends and expands on the principles of the 1953 act

1982 — MMS Established
Establishment of Minerals Management Service (MMS) to oversee offshore operations

1988 — Piper Alpha Disaster
Piper Alpha disaster in North Sea claims 167 lives. Lack of proper safety practices is blamed as the cause

2010 — Deepwater Horizon Tragedy
The drilling rig Deepwater Horizon experiences catostrophic exposion and fire, killing 11 workers, injuring scores more and resulting in an 87 day spill that deposited over 4 million barrels of oil into the Gulf of Mexico

2010 — Federal Reorganization Begins
MMS dissolved

2011 — BSEE Created on 1 Oct 2011
BSEE is established with the focused mission of ensuring worker safety and conservation of resources on the U.S. Outer Continental Shelf

2011 — Modern Safety Culture Era Begins
SEMS becomes law

2016 — Deepwater Reforms Finalized
BSEE publishes final Well Control Rule, which puts in place many of the reforms called for following the Deepwater Horizon tragedy