

The Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement (BSEE) promotes compliance with safety and environmental standards through regular inspections. Each year BSEE's 120+ inspectors conduct over 20,000 inspections annually at more than 1750 facilities on the federal Outer Continental Shelf (OCS).

CONDUCTING AN INSPECTION

In 1953, Congress enacted the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act (OCSLA), which gave the Secretary of the Department of the Interior authority to regulate oil and gas exploration, development, and production operations on the OCS. This authority was delegated to BSEE.

The OCSLA authorizes and requires BSEE to provide:

- *An annual scheduled inspection, and*
- *A periodic unscheduled (unannounced) inspection of all oil and gas facilities on the OCS.*

The annual inspection examines all safety equipment designed to prevent blowouts, fires, spills, or other major accidents.

BSEE is responsible for promoting safety, protecting the environment and conserving resources offshore through vigorous regulatory oversight and enforcement.

BSEE conducts its inspections of drilling rigs and production platforms using multi-person, multi-discipline inspection teams. These teams usually consist of two to four inspectors.

An inspector represents BSEE in meetings with offshore operators, lease holders, and state inspectors to clarify inspection and compliance issues or explain BSEE policies.

Inspectors travel to the inspection site by helicopter, boat, or hovercraft and facility inspections begin as soon as the facility is in sight.

Once onboard a facility, the BSEE inspection team meets with the

facility's management team to discuss operations.

Next, the inspection team divides into two groups to inspect the facility. These groups are:

1. A documentation review panel
2. A physical inspection team

The documentation team reviews logs, permits and documents, while the physical inspection team conducts a thorough walkthrough of the rig to look for any instances of noncompliance, and may even conduct informal interviews with facility personnel.

The BSEE inspector performs inspections of oil and gas facilities on the OCS to ensure safety of operations and personnel, and to identify deficiencies or violations of environmental and safety laws and regulations.



INSPECTIONS

BSEE manages a national inspection program that includes annual inspections on all production facilities, monthly inspections on rigs, spot check inspections on non-rig operations, and risk-based inspections on higher-risk facilities. Through timely notice of detected violations, BSEE provides operators clear direction for coming into compliance, and a reasonable opportunity to make corrections.

BSEE inspectors use the Potential Incident of Noncompliance (PINC) checklist - inspection items compiled

from all regulations and guidelines for safety and environmental requirements, when conducting inspections. When companies fail to meet regulations or the conditions in a permit approval, an inspector issues an Incident of Non-Compliance (INC).

INCs issued to an operator result in either a warning or a shut-in, depending on the severity of the violation. A Shut-in INC may be for a single component (a portion of the facility) or the entire facility, while Warning INCs must be corrected within

a reasonable amount of time (specified on the INC). All violations must be corrected before an operator is allowed to continue any activity in question.

In addition to the enforcement actions specified above, the bureau can assess a civil penalty if 1) the operator fails to correct the violation in the reasonable amount of time specified on the INC; or 2) the violation resulted in a threat of serious harm or damage to human life or the environment.

PINC LIST: <https://www.bsee.gov/reporting-and-prevention/potential-incident-of-noncompliance-pinc>

POLICY & REGULATIONS

Nearly every task performed onboard an offshore facility is governed by government regulation or by company policy. BSEE inspectors ensure facility

management and staff comply with all regulations and policy, and ensure operations personnel are aware of any hazards onboard.

