

## SELECTED LIST OF SPECIALIZED WORDS AND THEIR DEFINITIONS

### **bottom-supported offshore drilling rig**

a type of mobile offshore drilling unit that has a part of its structure in contact with the seafloor when it is on site and drilling a well. The remainder of the rig is supported above the water. The rig can float, however, allowing it to be moved from one drill site to another. Bottom-supported units include submersible rigs and jackup rigs.

### **caisson**

1. one of several columns made of steel or concrete, which serves as the foundation for a rigid offshore platform rig. 2. a steel or concrete chamber that surrounds equipment below the waterline of an arctic submersible rig, thereby protecting the equipment from damage by moving ice.

### **caisson-type platform rig**

a rigid offshore drilling platform that stands on steel caissons and is used to drill development wells. The caissons are firmly affixed to the seafloor, and the drilling and production decks are laid on top of them. The platform is used in certain arctic waters, where the caissons are needed to protect equipment from moving ice.

### **derrick**

a large load-bearing structure, usually of bolted construction. In drilling, the standard derrick has four legs standing at the corners of the substructure and reaching to the crown block. The substructure is an assembly of heavy beams used to elevate the derrick and provide space to install blowout preventers, casingheads, and so forth. Because the standard derrick must be assembled piece by piece, it has largely been replaced by the mast, which can be lowered and raised without disassembly.

### **drill ship**

a self-propelled floating offshore drilling unit that is a ship constructed to permit a well to be drilled from it. While not as stable as Semisubmersible, drill ships are capable of drilling exploratory wells in deep, remote waters.

### **drilling block**

a lease or a number of leases of adjoining tracts of land that constitute a unit of acreage sufficient to justify the expense of drilling a wildcat.

### **floating offshore drilling rig**

a type of mobile offshore drilling unit that floats and is not secured to the seafloor (except for anchors). Floating units include inland barge rigs, drill ships and ship-shaped barges, and semisubmersibles.

### **jackup drilling rig**

a mobile bottom-supported offshore drilling structure with columnar or open-truss legs that support the deck and hull. When positioned over the drilling site, the bottoms of the legs rest on the seafloor. A jackup rig is towed or propelled to a location with its legs up. Once the legs are firmly positioned on the bottom, the deck and hull height are adjusted and leveled. Also called self-elevating drilling unit.

**mast**

a portable derrick that is capable of being erected as a unit, as distinguished from a standard derrick that cannot be raised to a working position as a unit. For transporting by land, the mast can be divided into two or more sections to avoid excessive length extending from truck beds on the highway.

**mobile offshore drilling unit (MODU)**

a drilling rig that is used exclusively to drill offshore exploration and development wells and that floats upon the surface of the water when being moved from one drill site to another. It may or may not float once drilling begins. Two basic types of mobile offshore drilling units are used to drill most offshore wildcat wells: bottom-supported drilling rigs and floating drilling rigs.

**Notices to Lessees and Operators (NTL's)**

Formal routine documents that provide clarification, description, or interpretation of a regulation or OCS standard; provide guidelines on the implementation of a special lease stipulation or regional requirement; provide a better understanding of the scope and meaning of a regulation by explaining MMS interpretation of a requirement; or transmit administrative information such as current telephone listings and a change in MMS personnel or office address.

**platform rig**

an immobile offshore structure from which development wells are drilled and produced. Platform rigs may be built of steel or concrete and may be either rigid or compliant. Rigid platform rigs, which rest on the seafloor, are the caisson-type platform, the concrete gravity platform, and the steel-jacket platform. Compliant platform rigs, which are used in deeper waters and yield to water and wind movements are the guyed-tower platform and the tension-leg platform

**production rig**

a portable servicing or workover outfit, usually mounted on wheels and self-propelled. A well servicing unit consists of a hoist and engine mounted on a wheeled chassis with a self-erecting mast. A workover rig is basically the same, with the addition of a substructure with rotary, pump, pits, and auxiliaries to permit handling and working a drill string.

**rig**

the derrick or mast, drawworks, and attendant surface equipment of a drilling or workover unit.

**semisubmersible drilling rig**

a floating offshore drilling unit that has pontoons and columns that when flooded cause the unit to submerge in the water to a predetermined depth. Living quarters, storage space, and so forth are then reassembled on the deck. Semisubmersible rigs are either self-propelled or towed to a drilling site and either anchored or dynamically positioned over the site, or both. In shallow water, some semisubmersibles can be ballasted to rest on the seabed. Semisubmersibles are more stable than drill ships and ship-shaped barges and are used extensively to drill wildcat wells in rough waters such as the North Sea. Two types of semisubmersible rigs are the bottle-type semisubmersible and the column-stabilized semisubmersible.

**wildcat**

a well drilled in an area where no oil or gas production exists.

**An extensive List of Specialized Words and Their Definitions is available on the MMS website at:**

<http://www.mms.gov/glossary/index.htm>



**MMS** *Securing Ocean Energy &  
Economic Value for America*

www.mms.gov