

**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
MINERALS MANAGEMENT SERVICE
GULF OF MEXICO OCS REGION**

No. 97-11

April 29, 1997

**NOTICE TO LESSEES AND OPERATORS OF FEDERAL OIL, GAS AND SULPHUR
LEASES IN THE OUTER CONTINENTAL SHELF, GULF OF MEXICO OCS REGION**

**Special Security Handling of Well Logs and Data
Generated from Oil and Gas Leases**

This Notice to Lessees and Operators (NTL) rescinds NTL 73-4, dated June 1, 1973, and NTL 89-02, dated March 30, 1989. The Gulf of Mexico OCS Region recognizes the need to provide security handling for all proprietary well logs and data. Since June 1, 1973, NTL 73-4, a *Special Security Handling* was also provided for wellbore data collected within 2,000 feet of open or unleased acreage. This service was modified by NTL 89-02 to limit the time that access to these data would be restricted within the Minerals Management Service (MMS). Under NTL 89-02, the access was restricted until after the open acreage was included in a lease sale offering, the data's proprietary term expired pursuant to 30 CFR 250.18, a determination was made pursuant to 30 CFR 250.11 that the well was capable of producing in paying quantities, or the lease involved was placed on production, whichever occurred first. This resulted in a period of restricted access to these data of less than 12 months.

Special security handling meant only one set of data was submitted to the regional office and maintained in a locked file cabinet in our security vault instead of the usual two sets of data required for submittal. In lieu of the second set of data, a letter of information was sent to the district office, and when data were removed from special security handling, the second set was sent to and maintained in the district office.

For the following reasons, this special service will no longer be provided:

- Well logs are no longer kept in district offices.
- All proprietary well logs, including special security well logs, are checked out of the regional security vault on a need-to-know basis.
- MMS mission responsibilities frequently require that these well logs be used simultaneously by more than one individual.
- MMS currently receives and uses well logs in a digital form.
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Chris C. Oynes

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The MMS believes elimination of special security handling will not compromise the proprietary nature of the data submitted by lessees and operators. The MMS believes that all proprietary data and privileged information submitted are adequately protected in our security vaults and through the checkout procedures required to utilize this data and information.

Chris C. Oynes
Regional Director