

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

NTL No. 97-15

June 27, 1997

NOTICE TO LESSEES AND OPERATORS OF FEDERAL OIL, GAS, AND SULPHUR LEASES AND
PIPELINE RIGHT-OF-WAY HOLDERS
IN THE OUTER CONTINENTAL SHELF,
GULF OF MEXICO OCS REGION

Interim Guidance for Regional Oil Spill Response Plans

On March 25, 1997, the Minerals Management Service (MMS) published its final rule (see Federal Register, Vol. 62, No. 57, pages 13991-14003) governing oil spill response plans (OSRP) and related requirements for facilities located seaward of the coast line. These new regulations become effective on June 23, 1997. In accordance with 30 CFR 254.3(a), you may group leases and facilities which are located in the same MMS Region in a regional OSRP. In accordance with 30 CFR 254.3(d), the Regional Supervisor may specify how to address the elements of a regional OSRP. The Gulf of Mexico OCS Region is presently developing guidance on how to prepare and submit regional OSRPs. The purpose of this notice is to provide information on regional OSRPs pending issuance of the guidance.

1. If, by June 23, 1997, you have not filed a regional Oil Spill Contingency Plan (OSCP) under regulations in effect prior to June 23, 1997, you will submit a regional OSRP (using guidance found in our letter dated February 1, 1989, as amended) and receive approval of a written worst case certification in accordance with 30 CFR 254.2(b) before you may conduct operations or use a facility.

2. If, prior to June 23, 1997, you have filed a regional OSCP under regulations in effect prior to June 23, 1997, you will amend the regional OSCP in accordance with those regulations at the time your annual update is due. This procedure will allow you to conduct operations or use a facility until your OSRP is submitted and approved.

The information collection provisions of this notice are intended to provide clarification, description, or interpretation of requirements contained in 30 CFR 254. The Office of Management and Budget has approved the information collection requirements for these

regulations and assigned OMB Control Number 1010-0091. This notice does not impose additional information requirements subject to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Chris C." followed by a stylized, cursive "Oynes".

Chris C. Oynes
Regional Director