

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

NTL No. 2000-G02

Effective: January 25, 2000

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

Deepwater Experimental Oil Release Study

The Minerals Management Service (MMS), along with six oil and gas companies, is planning a controlled deepwater release of oil and gas in the deep waters of the Norwegian Sea. The objectives of this study (called Deepspill) are to gather field data to calibrate computer models that predict oil and gas behavior and transport when oil and gas are released at the seafloor through the water column; to test the scalability of laboratory experiments; and to field test the suitability of various underwater surveillance systems for monitoring and tracking underwater releases.

The MMS needs this information to properly evaluate oil spill response plans (OSRP) that cover activities and facilities in deepwater. Under 30 CFR 254.26(b), the MMS requires an appropriate trajectory analysis specific to the area in which the facility is located. However, the models currently used are not adequate to predict the behavior of spills in deepwater.

Therefore, under the above authority for OSRP's covering deepwater activities and facilities, the MMS will soon be requiring that these trajectory analyses be based on a model developed and calibrated for the deepwater environment. Group efforts such as Deepspill will allow you to reference and use an established and recognized model to fulfill this requirement. If such a model or its equivalent is not referenced and used in your planning activities, the MMS may require that each individual operator with activities in deepwater provide this information on a case-by-case basis.

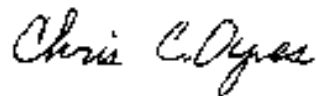
The data developed under Deepspill is proprietary. Companies wishing to join Deepspill or to obtain information developed from Deepspill should contact Robert LaBelle at (703) 787-1656.

Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 Statement

The information collection referred to in this NTL provides clarification, description, or interpretation of requirements contained in 30 CFR 254. The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) approved the information collection requirements for this regulation and assigned OMB Control Number 1010-0091. This NTL does not impose additional information collection requirements subject to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995.

Contact

Please direct any questions you may have regarding this NTL to Bud Danenberger at (703) 787-1598.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Chris C. Oynes". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "C" and a distinct "Oynes" ending.

Chris C. Oynes
Regional Director