



**U.S. Department of the Interior
Minerals Management Service
Gulf of Mexico OCS Region**

Notice No. 107

June 8, 1982

OCS Operations Safety Alert

Fire

During January an unsafe act resulted in a fire on a platform in the Gulf of Mexico.

Personnel were removing and loosening the bolts of a 3-inch water discharge companion flange on the water compartment of the low-pressure production separator (normal pressure 760-1300 psi) in order to flush the separator of produced sand. After two of the eight bolts had been removed, natural gas and sand began to escape from the separator and the gas was immediately ignited from an unknown source. Later investigation showed that the separator had been isolated, but not bled down.

The fire was extinguished in approximately 35 minutes, but not before it destroyed two tool storage areas and the companion office building, nine drums of methanol, and severely damaged the compressor control panels and building. One man was injured in the fire.

In order to prevent a recurrence of this type of accident, the operator will issue a letter of instruction to all production personnel regarding proper precautions when working around pressure vessels.

[signed] D.W. Solanas

Deputy Minerals Manager

Offshore Operations Support

Gulf of Mexico OCS Region

[Editorial note: Safety Alert No. 107 was the first to be issued by the newly created Minerals Management Service. It bore the heading "Department of the Interior, Minerals Management Service, Post Office Box 7944, Metairie, Louisiana 70010." Previously, Safety Alerts No. 001 through 095 bore the heading "Geological Survey, Gulf of Mexico Area, Office of the Oil and Gas Supervisor." In addition, Nos. 009 through 074 bore a fourth line, "Field Operations." Nos. 075 through 095 replaced "Field Operations" with the line "Operations Support." Finally, Gulf of Mexico OCS Region Safety Alert No. 096 through 106 bore the heading "Geological Survey, Gulf of Mexico OCS Region, Office of the Deputy Conservation Manager, Offshore Operations Support."]