

**Minerals Management Service
Interim Policy Document**

Effective Date: December 19, 2007

IPD No.: 08-04

Series: Offshore Minerals Management

Title: Oil Spill Modeling

Originating Office: Environmental Division, Offshore Minerals Management

1. Purpose. This Interim Policy Document (IPD) describes the Minerals Management Service (MMS) Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) Oil Spill Modeling. It sets overall national policy and establishes headquarters and regional responsibility for program implementation and management.

2. Objective. The MMS Oil Spill Modeling Program is intended to provide statistical estimates of the probabilities of oil spill occurrence, oil spill contact, and the combined probability of occurrence and contact with environmental resources. These estimates are used in Environmental Impact Statements (EIS's), Environmental Assessments (EA's) and other documents, as part of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process. The estimates can be used to provide input to Oil Spill Response Plans.

3. Authorities.

- A. Section 19 of the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act (43 U.S.C. § 1345).
- B. National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. § 4321-4344).
- C. Oil Pollution Act of 1990 (33 U.S.C. § 2701-2761).

4. References.

- A. Outer Continental Shelf Oil and Gas Leasing (30 CFR 260).
- B. Oil and Gas and Sulphur Operations in the Outer Continental Shelf, Subpart B-Plans and Information (30 CFR 250.219 and 250.250).
- C. Oil-Spill Response Requirements for Facilities Located Seaward of the Coastline (30 CFR 254).
- D. MMS Gulf of Mexico Notice to Lessee, Operators, and Pipeline Right of Way Holders on Regional and Subregional Oil Spill Response Plans (NTL 2006-G21).
- E. Smith, Slack, Wyant and Lanfear, 1982, "The Oilspill Risk Analysis Model of the U.S. Geological Survey," USGS Professional Paper 1227, Alexandria, VA, 40 p.

5. Definition. Oil Spill Risk Analysis (OSRA) is the computer program used by the Oil Spill Modeling Program to estimate the probability of contact and the probability of occurrence and contact of spilled oil with environmental resources, including land.

6. Policy.

A. It is the MMS policy to perform oil spill modeling to support the NEPA analysis for offshore oil and gas lease sales and for preparation of Oil Spill Response Plans.

B. It is the MMS policy to document, follow, and update the procedures for the oil spill modeling process.

7. Responsibilities.

A. Deputy Associate Director, Offshore Minerals Management, is responsible for providing final OSRA Report approval.

B. Chief, Environmental Division, is responsible for:

(1) Ensuring that appropriate resources are available to create and process all necessary documentation and analysis required to generate an OSRA Report;

(2) Reviewing the OSRA Report for consistency with the associated NEPA document (EIS or EA) and for adequacy; and

(3) Coordinating with appropriate offices the scheduling of Critical Action Dates, and any subsequent deviations from those dates.

C. Chief, Environmental Sciences Branch, is responsible for reviewing the OSRA Report for adequacy.

D. Regional Supervisors, Leasing and Environment (Alaska, Gulf of Mexico), and Environmental Evaluation Program Office Chief (Pacific) are responsible for reviewing the OSRA Report for consistency with the associated NEPA document (EIS or EA) pertinent to their respective Region.

E. Regional OSRA Coordinators are responsible for:

(1) Coordinating the environmental resources, in consultation with Regional Environmental Analysis staff, other Department of the Interior Bureaus, and other Federal and State agencies, as appropriate;

(2) Coordinating the leasing scenario, including the lease areas, transportation scenario, and oil volume resource estimates with the Regional Leasing and Resource Evaluation Staffs;

(3) Disseminating the OSRA results to the Regional Environmental Staff; and

(4) Coordinating with Field Operations Staff to ensure the proper use of OSRA results in Oil Spill Response Plans.

F. Headquarters OSRA Staff are responsible for:

- (1) Obtaining and preparing the environmental data required for the OSRA runs;
- (2) Executing the OSRA computer program runs;
- (3) Generating the OSRA Report, including charts, tables and text;
- (4) Transmitting the results to the Regional OSRA Coordinator;
- (5) Publishing the OSRA Report and submitting it to the National Technical Information Service;
- (6) Reviewing the accuracy and appropriateness in the use of OSRA results in the regional environmental documents; and
- (7) Working with Environmental Studies Program staff to advocate needed data and model products to improve the input to the Oil Spill Model.

8. Procedures. The specific guidelines for implementing this process are contained in the Standards of Procedures for Oil Spill Modeling, maintained by the Offshore Environmental Division.

9. Cancellation. This IPD will remain in effect until incorporated into the MMS Manual, cancelled, or superseded by another IPD.

Chris C. Oynes
Associate Director for
Offshore Minerals Management