

THE NEWS ROOM

FOR RELEASE:
September 29, 2011

THE BUREAU OF OCEAN
ENERGY MANAGEMENT,
REGULATION AND
ENFORCEMENT

Office of Public Affairs

BOEMRE Announces Regulatory Authorities for New Agencies

WASHINGTON – The Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, Regulation and Enforcement (BOEMRE) today announced a final rule that separates the federal regulations that govern offshore energy and resource development between the Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement (BSEE) and the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM), effective October 1, 2011. The two bureaus will become operational on that date, completing the reorganization of the former Minerals Management Service (MMS). The organization of the regulations reflected in the final rule tracks the set of activities that will now be undertaken separately by BSEE and BOEM.

"This is a critical step in our reorganization efforts," said BOEMRE Director Michael R. Bromwich. "Recodifying the regulations for BSEE and BOEM reflects the clear separation of missions between each agency and provides each bureau with the necessary authority to immediately fulfill their responsibilities to the nation. As important, this rule provides industry and the public with clarity regarding the detailed allocation of responsibilities between the two new agencies that will oversee the safe and environmentally responsible development of our offshore energy and mineral resources."

Those regulations that will apply to BSEE will remain in Title 30 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Chapter II, but will be renamed "Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement." Regulations that apply to BOEM will be removed from Chapter II and placed in a newly created Chapter V entitled, "Bureau of Ocean Energy Management." A complete listing of the relationship between existing BOEMRE regulations and new BSEE and BOEM regulations can be seen here:

<http://www.boemre.gov/pdfs/ChartBSEEBOEMRegulatoryAuthorities.pdf>. The bureau previously reassigned regulations governing royalty management to the Office of Natural Resources Revenue, which has been operating separately from the rest of the agency since October 1, 2010.

In addition, a proposed rule that will address changes to BOEM and BSEE regulations required by the split will be issued in the next few weeks. That proposed rule will address specific issues raised by splitting the functions of one agency into two bureaus. The public will be invited to comment on the proposed rule when it is announced.

Throughout September, BOEMRE staff met with stakeholders from the offshore oil and

gas industry, non-governmental organizations, and other federal agencies in Washington, D.C., New Orleans, La., and Anchorage, Alaska, to explain in detail the organizational restructuring and the concept of operations for the two new bureaus.

The Final Rule is available for public inspection in the Federal Register today at: http://www.ofr.gov/OFRUpload/OFRData/2011-22675_PI.pdf and will be published in the Federal Register on October 18, 2011.

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