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BOEMRE Strengthens Offshore Inspections Program

Improvements Include Use of Multi-Disciplinary Inspection Teams and Expansion of Training and Recruiting Programs

WASHINGTON – Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, Regulation and Enforcement (BOEMRE) Director Michael R. Bromwich announced today that the bureau will begin to use multiple-person inspection teams for offshore oil and gas inspections. This internal process improvement will improve oversight and help ensure that offshore operations proceed safely and responsibly. The new process will allow teams to inspect multiple operations simultaneously and thoroughly, and enhance the quality of inspections on larger facilities.

“We are bolstering our inspection program with additional resources and new approaches,” said BOEMRE Director Michael R. Bromwich. “As more inspectors are hired, we will be deploying multi-disciplinary inspection teams instead of individual inspectors, providing broader oversight to ensure that offshore operators are complying with federal regulations and conducting their operations in a safe and environmentally responsible manner.”

In addition to on-the-job training, BOEMRE recently established the National Offshore Training Center and has developed the agency’s first formal training curriculum, which has been piloted with new BOEMRE inspectors. An initial introductory course for new inspectors was recently held for 13 new BOEMRE inspectors. In the coming months, 24 additional courses will be developed covering specific areas of offshore inspections. BOEMRE is currently in the process of hiring a training director who will be have the responsibility to further develop the bureau’s training policies, procedures, and programs and improve the technical and professional capabilities of offshore inspections and compliance personnel.

“We are extremely proud of the steps we have taken to bolster our inspections program,” said Director Bromwich. “We believe that establishing a formal curriculum for inspector training is central to developing a more rigorous and consistent inspections program across the agency.”

Multiple reviews and investigations, including by the National Commission on the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill and Offshore Drilling, the Department of the Interior’s Inspector General, the Department’s Safety Oversight Board, and multiple Committees of the House and Senate, have highlighted the need for reform in the bureau’s inspections program. The multi-disciplinary team approach and the need for a national training program were recommended by BOEMRE’s Inspections Strategies implementation team, one of several internal implementation teams that have been analyzing critical aspects of BOEMRE’s structures, functions and processes, and implementing needed changes.

BOEMRE will continue to focus its recruiting efforts to attract more subject matter experts to bolster existing expertise in the bureau’s district offices. Specifically, the bureau is looking to expand expertise in well operations, production operations, safety and environmental management systems, accident investigations, measurement systems and deepwater drilling.

Director Bromwich has conducted two nationwide recruitment tours to colleges and universities for positions in BOEMRE’s engineering and environmental sciences career fields. The Director highlighted, among many benefits, that the bureau offers a Student Loan Repayment Program to

petroleum engineers, civil engineers, geologists and geophysicists who join BOEMRE.

The bureau has also made efforts to contact various petroleum engineer organizations to encourage retired professional engineers to bring their experience, expertise and familiarity with complex technological and engineering issues associated with offshore drilling to BOEMRE. These efforts are ongoing and will assist with the goal of expanding the number of BOEMRE offshore oil and gas inspectors.

Additional information about BOEMRE recruiting efforts and current openings can be found at: <http://www.boemre.gov/jobs>.

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