

## **MMS AND USCG Sign Agreement Reaffirm Commitment to Offshore Environmental Protection and Safe Operations**

Increasing interest in building liquefied natural gas import facilities and additional security requirements created under the Maritime Transportation Security Act of 2002, are among the factors that prompted the Minerals Management Service and the U.S. Coast Guard to sign a revised Memorandum of Understanding today. The MOU details how the two agencies will work together to regulate the oil and gas activities on the Outer Continental Shelf to keep pace with an industry facing evolving technologies and new engineering standards.

MMS Director Johnnie Burton and the Commandant of the Coast Guard, Adm. Thomas Collins, signed the new MOU in a ceremony at the U.S. Department of the Interior in Washington, D.C. The MOU reaffirms a federal commitment to safe and environmentally sound offshore operations.

"Safety for offshore workers and mariners, and protection of the environment are top priorities for MMS," said Burton. "MMS has enjoyed a longstanding cooperative relationship with the Coast Guard in the regulation of safety of offshore activities and facilities."

"Our regulation of the offshore industry may be less visible, but is no less vital for the security of our nation than our more obvious security activities," said Collins. "While many things have changed as a result of our increased focus on security in the maritime environment, our partnerships with other agencies are key to success in all our missions."

The two agencies also signed a Memorandum of Agreement, which is the first in a series of documents to outline agency responsibilities on specific technical areas ranging from deepwater ports to oil spill response. Bud Danenberger, Chief of Offshore Engineering and Operations for MMS and the Coast Guard's Rear Adm. Thomas Gilmour, assistant commandant for marine safety, security and environmental protection, signed the MOA.

"These new documents will enhance further cooperation and consistency between the MMS and the Coast Guard, ensuring we all work successfully toward the same goals," added Burton.

"For decades we've worked closely with the Minerals Management Service and these documents provide a foundation for continuing that successful partnership," said Collins.

The MOU will help minimize duplication of effort, and aid the MMS and the Coast Guard in the successful completion of their assigned missions and responsibilities. Under the MOU, the two agencies will continue to foster communication and cooperation, optimize the use of government resources, develop common, compatible regulations and policies, encourage adoption of similar codes and standards and assist the offshore operators in understanding applicable regulations.

The Minerals Management Service is the federal agency in the U.S. Department of the Interior that manages the nation's oil, natural gas, and other mineral resources on the Outer Continental Shelf in Federal offshore waters. The agency also collects, accounts for, and disburses mineral revenues from Federal and American Indian lands. MMS disbursed more than \$8 billion in FY 2003 and more than \$135 billion since the agency was created in 1982. Nearly \$1 billion from those revenues go into the Land and Water Conservation Fund annually for the acquisition and development of state and Federal park and recreation lands.

**Relevant Web Sites:**  
[MMS Main Website](#)

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