

We do not believe that this rule will have a significant impact on the lessees and drilling contractors who explore for and produce oil and gas on the OCS, including those that are classified as small businesses.

Your comments are important. The Small Business and Agriculture Regulatory Enforcement Ombudsman and 10 Regional Fairness Boards were established to receive comments from small business about Federal agency enforcement actions. The Ombudsman will annually evaluate the enforcement activities and rate each agency's responsiveness to small business. If you wish to comment on the actions of MMS, call 1-888-REG-FAIR (1-888-734-3247). You may comment to the Small Business Administration without fear of retaliation. Disciplinary action for retaliation by an MMS employee may include suspension or termination from employment with the Department of the Interior.

Small Business Regulatory Enforcement Fairness Act (SBREFA)

This rule is not a major rule under (5 U.S.C. 804(2)) the SBREFA. The rule:

(1) Does not have an annual effect on the economy of \$100 million or more. As described above, we estimate that the annual cost of the rule to be approximately \$672,000. The cost for the blind-shear rams will be \$14,175,000, which will be spread over a 3-year period. This cost will not cause an annual effect on the economy of \$100 million.

(2) Will not cause a major increase in costs or prices for consumers, individual industries, Federal, State, or local government agencies, or geographic regions. The minor increase in drilling costs will not change the way the oil and gas industry conducts business, nor will it affect regional oil and gas prices; therefore, it will not cause major cost increases for consumers, the oil and gas industry, or any Government agencies.

(3) Does not have significant adverse effects on competition, employment, investment, productivity, innovation, or ability of United States-based enterprises to compete with foreign-based enterprises. All lessees and drilling contractors, regardless of nationality, will have to comply with the requirements of this rule. So the rule will not affect competition, employment, investment, productivity, innovation, or the ability of United States-based enterprises to compete with foreign-based enterprises.

Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA) of 1995

We examined the proposed rule and these final regulations under section 3507(d) of the PRA. The proposed rulemaking added only a few new information collection requirements, which we submitted to OMB for approval as part of the proposed rulemaking process. There have been some changes to the numbering of sections requiring the collection of information in the final regulations, as well as some clarifications. However, the final regulations do not impose any additional information collection paperwork burden.

MMS regulations in 30 CFR 250, subpart A, at §§ 250.140, 250.141, and 250.142 allow respondents to request the use of "alternative procedures or equipment" and "departures" to operating requirements. However, our information collection submission to OMB (1010-0114) indicated that the burden for these requests is covered under the applicable operating requirement. To account for these non-specific possibilities, as MMS renews the various collections covering subparts of the part 250 regulations and the other 30 CFR parts, as a standard procedure we are now including these requests as a "line item" in the regulation burden charts. Based on comments we received on the proposed subpart D rulemaking, §§ 250.408 and 250.409 of these final regulations

specifically address these issues and a line item has been included in the burden chart for this collection. It should be reiterated that these requests are not new information collection requirements. However, this inclusion will ensure that the burden is not overlooked for some operating requirements and will provide for any oversight.

Because of the adjustments discussed in the preceding paragraphs and section numbering changes, before publication, we again submitted the final subpart D information collection to OMB and OMB approved them under OMB control number 1010-0141, with a current expiration date of January 28, 2003. An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and you are not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

The title of the collection of information for this final rule is "30 CFR 250, Subpart D—Oil and Gas Drilling Operations." Respondents include approximately 130 Federal OCS oil and gas or sulphur lessees. The frequency of response varies, depending upon the requirement. Responses are mandatory. MMS will protect proprietary information according to the Freedom of Information Act and 30 CFR 250.196, "Data and information to be made available to the public."

The final regulations convert into plain language and restructure the requirements for oil and gas drilling operations. The approved information collection for this final rule will supersede the collection for current subpart D regulations (OMB control number 1010-0053), which we will cancel when the new subpart D regulations take effect.

We estimate the total annual paperwork "hour" burden for the final rule to be 111,209 hours. Following is a breakdown of the hour burden estimate.