

**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
MINERALS MANAGEMENT SERVICE**

NTL No. 2000-N06

Effective Date: October 1, 2000

**NOTICE TO LESSEES AND OPERATORS OF FEDERAL
OIL AND GAS AND SULPHUR LEASES IN THE OUTER CONTINENTAL SHELF**

Deepwater Operations Plans (DWOP)

This Notice to Lessees and Operators (NTL) supersedes NTL 98-8N. We have increased the number of copies of a DWOP that lessees/operators (you) should submit but have made no other substantive changes. This NTL continues to address all deepwater development projects (water depths greater than 1,000 feet) and all projects utilizing subsea production technology. Projects that rely solely on the use of conventional fixed-leg platforms for development do not need a DWOP. NTL 98-8N provided a new set of guidelines that were structured to be more user friendly and to answer many of your commonly asked questions. The intent and goal of the DWOP remain:

“The DWOP is designed to address industry and MMS concerns by allowing an operator to know, well in advance of significant spending, that their proposed methods of dealing with situations not specifically addressed in the regulations are acceptable to MMS. The DWOP will provide MMS with information specific to deepwater/ subsea equipment issues to demonstrate that a deepwater project is being developed in an acceptable manner as mandated in the OCS Lands Act as amended and 30 CFR 250. The MMS will review deepwater development activities from a total system perspective, emphasizing the operational safety, environmental protection, and conservation of natural resources.”

Attachment 1 provides general guidance on when it may be appropriate for you to submit each part of the DWOP to MMS. Attachment 2 is the Deepwater Operations Plan Guideline, which continues to specify a Conceptual Part for all development projects in water depths greater than 1,000 feet and all projects utilizing subsea production technology. For those subsea projects in less than 1,000 feet of water that are similar to previously approved projects, MMS may waive the requirement for a Preliminary Part. The Guideline further describes this approach.

Submit **four** copies of a DWOP to the Minerals Management Service, Gulf of Mexico OCS Region, Attention: Chief, Technical Assessment and Operations Support Section (MS 5220). Once we determine that each part of the DWOP contains all the necessary information, we will approve each part within the following time schedule:

Conceptual Part -- 30 days
Preliminary Part -- 90 days
Final Part -- 60 days

The guidelines for the DWOP do not address resource conservation information. You should refer to NTL 2000-N05 (October 1, 2000) for guidelines on submitting conservation information.