



# United States Department of the Interior



## MINERALS MANAGEMENT SERVICE

Gulf of Mexico OCS Region  
1201 Elmwood Park Boulevard  
New Orleans, Louisiana 70123-2394

In Reply Refer To: MS 5030  
(FOIA Request No. MMS-2010-00082)

APR 30 2010

CERTIFIED MAIL -  
RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED

Mr. Zach Corrigan  
Food & Water Watch  
1616 P Street NW, Suite 300  
Washington, DC 20036

Dear Mr. Corrigan:

This is in response to your Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request, Number MMS-2010-00082, dated March 1, 2010.

Your request is itemized as follows, together with our response.

1. **You requested:** Records detailing the number of platform approval applications in the Gulf of Mexico Region submitted pursuant to 30 CFR 250.905, that have been granted and denied since January 1, 2005, and records explaining the reasons that any such platform applications were denied.

**Minerals Management Service (MMS) Response:** A report of Platform Applications and Approvals can be found on our website at the following link:

<http://www.gomr.mms.gov/homepg/pubinfo/repcat/platform/pdf/Platform%20Applications%20and%20Approvals.pdf>

MMS does not keep separate records of platform approval and denial letters.

2. **You requested:** Records listing the Certified Verification Agents (CVAs) (see 30 CFR 250.911(e)) for projects in the Gulf of Mexico (GOM) that the (MMS) has determined should be approved by MMS under 30 CFR 250.914 (a).

**MMS Response:** MMS does not keep a record listing the

TAKE PRIDE<sup>®</sup>  
IN AMERICA 

CVAs approved for projects in the GOM, therefore one cannot be provided to you.

3. **You requested:** Agency guidance and/or memoranda regarding the prevention and/or addressing of conflict-of-interest issues arising out of the relationships, financial or otherwise, between OCS operators, MMS staff, and companies approved as CVAs.

**MMS Response:** MMS follows the MMS Code of Ethics, Ethics Guide for the Department of the Interior Employees and the MMS-Specific Standards. The MMS Code of Ethics can be found at the following link:

[http://www.mms.gov/adm/PFD/Code of Ethics 01 29 09.pdf](http://www.mms.gov/adm/PFD/Code%20of%20Ethics%2001%2029%2009.pdf)

The Ethics Guide for the Department of the Interior Employees can be found at this link:

<http://www.mms.gov/adm/PFD/EthicsGuide.pdf>

MMS-Specific Standards can be found in the Code of Federal Regulations under 5 CFR 3501.103(b) and (c) and can be found at the following link:

<http://ecfr.gpoaccess.gov/cgi/t/text/text-idx?c=ecfr&sid=277ae83b528ca5476adc23e0c636909a&rqn=div8&view=text&node=5:3.0.15.11.1.0.50.3&idno=5>

4. **You requested:** Records indicating that the CVA(s) nominated by British Petroleum Exploration and Production Inc. (BP) for the verification of its Atlantis Project, presented conflict of interest issues, otherwise stood to benefit from the verification of the project, or had too close relations with BP to ensure an adequate verification of the project.

**MMS Response:** MMS has no records indicating a conflict of interest between the CVA for the Atlantis Project and BP, therefore no records can be provided to you.

5. **You requested:** Written non-deliberative agency legal opinions, analyses, or guidance explaining which platform subsea components, structures, or substructures are subject to Subparts H (30 CFR 250.800-808), versus Subpart I (30 CFR 250.900-921), versus Subpart J (30 CFR 250.1000-1019) of MMS's regulations.

**MMS Response:** MMS uses no other guidance beyond the regulations located at 30 CFR 250, "Oil and Gas and Sulphur Operations in the Outer Continental Shelf", for identifying which components are covered under which subparts. However, under Subpart A (30 CFR 250.101-250.105) additional general guidance specifying the scope and application of the regulations can be found.

6. **You requested:** Records created since January 1, 2005, indicating the oil/gas platforms in the GOM for which MMS has inspected as-built drawings for subsea components; and
7. **You requested:** Records indicating the number of MMS staff visits and numbers of staff per visit that MMS has employed to inspect the BP Project Atlantis and/or its Houston, Texas office after January 1, 2002, to determine whether the company has maintained as-designed, as-constructed, or as-built drawings for the project's subsea components.

**MMS Response:** MMS does not require "as-built" drawings for subsea components and therefore has not inspected any "as-built" drawings for subsea installations. Therefore, no such records can be provided to you.

If you interpret this response to be a denial of your request, under 43 CFR Part 2, Subpart D, you may appeal our response to your request by writing to:

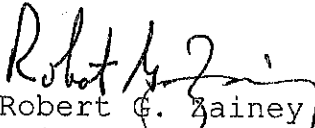
Attention: FOIA Appeals Office  
Office of the Solicitor  
Mail Stop 6556  
1849 C Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20240

Your appeal must be in writing and received no later than 30 workdays after the date of this letter. The appeal should be marked, both on the envelope and the face of the appeal letter, with the legend "FREEDOM OF INFORMATION APPEAL". It should be accompanied by a copy of your original request and this letter, along with any information you have which leads you to believe the information does in fact exist, including where it might be found, if the location is known to you.

Since you were granted a fee waiver in our letter to you dated March 4, 2010, no fees will be assessed for this information.

If you have any questions please feel free to contact  
Ms. Karen Miller at (504) 736-2964 or by e-mail at  
[karen.miller@mms.gov](mailto:karen.miller@mms.gov).

Sincerely,



Robert G. Zainey  
Chief, Information Resources  
Freedom of Information Act Officer