

## § 227.601

royalty reports to identify and resolve reporting or payment discrepancies. States may perform the following:

(a) Automated comparison of sales volumes reported by royalty reporters to sales and transfer volumes reported by production reporters. If you request delegation of automated comparison of sales and production volumes, you must perform at least the following functions:

(1) Performing an initial sales volume comparison between royalty and production reports;

(2) Performing subsequent comparisons when reporters adjust royalty or production reports;

(3) Checking unit prices for reasonable product valuation based on reference price ranges MMS provides;

(4) Resolving volume variances using written correspondence, telephone inquiries, or other media;

(5) Maintaining appropriate file documentation to support case resolution; and

(6) Issuing orders to correct reports or payments;

(b) Any one or more of the following additional automated verification functions:

(1) Verifying compliance with lease financial terms, such as payment of rent, minimum royalty, and advance royalty;

(2) Identifying and resolving improper adjustments;

(3) Identifying late payments and insufficient estimates, including calculating interest owed to MMS and verifying payor-calculated interest owed to MMS;

(4) Calculating interest due to a lessee or its designee for an adjustment or refund, including identifying overpayments and excessive estimates;

(5) Verifying royalty rates; and

(6) Verifying compliance with transportation and processing allowance limitations;

(c) Issuing notices and bills associated with any of the functions under paragraphs (a) and (b) of this section; and

(d) Providing assistance to MMS for any of these delegated functions on appealed demands or orders, including meeting timeframes, supplying information, using the appropriate format,

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taking remanded actions, modifying orders, and providing oral and written briefing and testimony as expert witnesses.

### § 227.601 What are a State's responsibilities if it performs automated verification?

To perform automated verification of production reports or royalty reports, you must:

(a) Verify through research and analysis all identified exceptions and prepare the appropriate billings, assessment letters, warning letters, notification letters, Lease Problem Reports, other internal forms required, and correspondence required to perform any required follow-up action for each function, as specified in the *Standards* or your delegation agreement;

(b) Resolve and respond to all production reporter or royalty reporter inquiries;

(c) Maintain all documentation and logging procedures as specified in the *Standards* or your delegation agreement;

(d) Access well, lease, agreement, and production reporter or royalty reporter reference data from MMS and provide updated information to MMS; and

(e) Comply with procedures for appealed demands and orders, including meeting time frames, supplying information, and using the appropriate format.

### § 227.700 What enforcement documents may a State issue in support of its delegated function?

This section explains what enforcement actions you may take as part of your delegated functions.

(a) You may issue demands, subpoenas, and orders to perform restructured accounting, including related notices to lessees and their designees. You also may enter into tolling agreements under section 15(d)(1) of the Act, 30 U.S.C. 1725(d)(1).

(b) When you issue any enforcement document you must comply with the requirements of section 115 of the Act, 30 U.S.C. 1725.

(c) When you issue a demand or enter into a tolling agreement under section 15(d)(1) of the Act, 30 U.S.C. 1725(d)(1),

the highest State official having ultimate authority over the collection of royalties or the State official to whom that authority has been delegated must sign the demand or tolling agreement.

(d) When you issue a subpoena or order to perform a restructured accounting you must:

(1) Coordinate with MMS to ensure identification of issues that may concern more than one State before you issue subpoenas and orders to perform restructured accounting; and

(2) Ensure that the highest State official having ultimate authority over the collection of royalties signs any subpoenas and orders to perform restructured accounting, as required under section 115 of the Act, 30 U.S.C. 1725. This official may not delegate signature authority to any other person.

#### PERFORMANCE REVIEW

#### § 227.800 How will MMS monitor a State's performance of delegated functions?

This section explains MMS's procedures for monitoring your performance of any of your delegated functions.

(a) A monitoring team of MMS officials will annually review your performance of the delegated functions and compliance with your delegation agreement, the *Standards*, and 30 U.S.C. 1735, including conducting fiscal examination to verify your costs for reimbursement.

(b) The monitoring team also will:

(1) Periodically review your statistical reports required under § 227.200(e) to verify your accuracy, timeliness, and efficiency;

(2) Check for timely transmittal of production report or royalty report information to MMS and other affected agencies, as applicable, to allow for proper disbursement of funds and processing of information;

(3) Coordinate on-site visits and Office of the Inspector General, General Accounting Office, and MMS audits of your performance of your delegated functions; and

(4) Maintain reports of its monitoring activities.

#### § 227.801 What if a State does not adequately perform a delegated function?

If your performance of the delegated function does not comply with your delegation agreement, or the *Standards*, or if MMS finds that you can no longer meet the statutory requirements under § 227.106, then MMS may:

(a) Notify you in writing of your non-compliance or inability to comply. The notice will prescribe corrective actions you must take, and how long you have to comply. You may ask MMS for an extension of time to comply with the notice. In your extension request you must explain why you need more time; and

(b) If you do not take the prescribed corrective actions within the time that MMS allows in a notice issued under paragraph (a) of this section, then MMS may:

(1) Initiate proceedings under § 227.802 to terminate all or a part of your delegation agreement;

(2) Withhold compensation provided to you under § 227.112; and

(3) Perform the delegated function, before terminating or without terminating your delegation agreement, including, but not limited to, issuing a demand or order to a Federal lessee, or its designee, or any other person when:

(i) Your failure to issue the demand or order would result in an underpayment of an obligation due MMS; and

(ii) The underpayment would go uncollected without MMS intervention.

#### § 227.802 How will MMS terminate a State's delegation agreement?

This section explains the procedures MMS will use to terminate all or a part of your delegation agreement:

(a) MMS will notify you in writing that it is initiating procedures to terminate your delegation agreement;

(b) MMS will provide you notice and opportunity for a hearing under § 227.803 of this part;

(c) The MMS Director, with concurrence from the Secretary, will decide whether to terminate your delegation agreement.

(d) After the hearing, MMS may:

(1) Terminate your delegation agreement; or