

joint plan of operations. You must submit the joint plan within 90 days after the Regional Supervisor makes a final determination that the reservoir is competitive. The joint plan must provide for the development and/or production of the reservoir. You may submit supplemental plans for the Regional Supervisor's approval.

(d) If you and the other affected lessees cannot reach an agreement on a joint Development and Production Plan within the approved period of time, each lessee must submit a separate plan to the Regional Supervisor. The Regional Supervisor will hold a hearing to resolve differences in the separate plans. If the differences in the separate plans are not resolved at the hearing and the Regional Supervisor determines that unitization is necessary under § 250.1301(b), MMS will initiate unitization under § 250.1304.

[62 FR 5331, Feb. 5, 1997. Redesignated and amended at 63 FR 29479, 29486, May 29, 1998]

**§ 250.1303 How do I apply for voluntary unitization?**

(a) You must file a request for a voluntary unit with the Regional Supervisor. Your request must include:

- (1) A draft of the proposed unit agreement;
- (2) A proposed initial plan of operation;
- (3) Supporting geological, geophysical, and engineering data; and
- (4) Other information that may be necessary to show that the unitization proposal meets the criteria of § 250.1300.

(b) The unit agreement must comply with the requirements of this part. MMS will maintain and provide a model unit agreement for you to follow. If MMS revises the model, MMS will publish the revised model in the FEDERAL REGISTER. If you vary your unit agreement from the model agreement, you must obtain the approval of the Regional Supervisor.

(c) After the Regional Supervisor accepts your unitization proposal, you, the other lessees, and the unit operator must sign and file copies of the unit agreement, the unit operating agreement, and the initial plan of operation

with the Regional Supervisor for approval.

[62 FR 5331, Feb. 5, 1997. Redesignated and amended at 63 FR 29479, 29487, May 29, 1998]

**§ 250.1304 How will MMS require unitization?**

(a) If the Regional Supervisor determines that unitization of operations within a proposed unit area is necessary to prevent waste, conserve natural resources of the OCS, or protect correlative rights, including Federal royalty interests, the Regional Supervisor may require unitization.

(b) If you ask MMS to require unitization, you must file a request with the Regional Supervisor. You must include a proposed unit agreement as described in §§ 250.1301(d) and 250.1303(b); a proposed unit operating agreement; a proposed initial plan of operation; supporting geological, geophysical, and engineering data; and any other information that may be necessary to show that unitization meets the criteria of § 250.1300. The proposed unit agreement must include a counterpart executed by each lessee seeking compulsory unitization. Lessees who seek compulsory unitization must simultaneously serve on the nonconsenting lessees copies of:

- (1) The request;
- (2) The proposed unit agreement with executed counterparts;
- (3) The proposed unit operating agreement; and
- (4) The proposed initial plan of operation.

(c) If the Regional Supervisor initiates compulsory unitization, MMS will serve all lessees of the proposed unit area with a proposed unitization plan and a statement of reasons for the proposed unitization.

(d) The Regional Supervisor will not require unitization until MMS provides all lessees of the proposed unit area written notice and an opportunity for a hearing. If you want MMS to hold a hearing, you must request it within 30 days after you receive written notice from the Regional Supervisor or after you are served with a request for compulsory unitization from another lessee.

(e) MMS will not hold a hearing under this paragraph until at least 30

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days after MMS provides written notice of the hearing date to all parties owning interests that would be made subject to the unit agreement. The Regional Supervisor must give all lessees of the proposed unit area an opportunity to submit views orally and in writing and to question both those seeking and those opposing compulsory unitization. Adjudicatory procedures are not required. The Regional Supervisor will make a decision based upon a record of the hearing, including any written information made a part of the record. The Regional Supervisor will arrange for a court reporter to make a verbatim transcript. The party seeking compulsory unitization must pay for the court reporter and pay for and provide to the Regional Supervisor within 10 days after the hearing three copies of the verbatim transcript.

(f) The Regional Supervisor will issue an order that requires or rejects compulsory unitization. That order must include a statement of reasons for the action taken and identify those parts of the record which form the basis of the decision. Any adversely affected party may appeal the final order of the

Regional Supervisor under 30 CFR part 290.

[62 FR 5331, Feb. 5, 1997. Redesignated and amended at 63 FR 29479, 29487, May 29, 1998]

**Subpart N—Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) Civil Penalties**

SOURCE: 62 FR 42668, Aug. 8, 1997, unless otherwise noted. Redesignated at 63 FR 29479, May 29, 1998.

**§ 250.1400 How does MMS begin the civil penalty process?**

This subpart explains MMS's civil penalty procedures whenever a lessee, operator or other person engaged in oil, gas, sulphur or other minerals operations in the OCS has a violation. Whenever MMS determines, on the basis of available evidence, that a violation occurred and a civil penalty review is appropriate, it will prepare a case file. MMS will appoint a Reviewing Officer.

**§ 250.1401 Index table.**

The following table is an index of the sections in this subpart:

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[62 FR 42668, Aug. 8, 1997. Redesignated and amended at 63 FR 29479, 29487, May 29, 1998]

**§ 250.1402 Definitions.**

Terms used in this subpart have the following meaning:

*Case file* means an MMS document file containing information and the record of evidence related to the alleged violation.

*Civil penalty* means a fine. It is an MMS regulatory enforcement tool used in addition to Notices of Incidents of Noncompliance and directed suspensions of production or other operations.

*I, me* in a question or *you* in a response means the person, or agent of a

person engaged in oil, gas, sulphur, or other minerals operations in the Outer Continental Shelf (OCS).

*Person* means, in addition to a natural person, an association (including partnerships and joint ventures), a State, a political subdivision of a State, or a private, public, or municipal corporation.

*Reviewing Officer* means an MMS employee assigned to review case files and assess civil penalties.

*Violation* means failure to comply with the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act (OCSLA) or any other applicable laws, with any regulations issued