

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Minerals Management Service

Agency Information Collection
Activities: Proposed Collection;
Comment Request

AGENCY: Minerals Management Service (MMS), Interior.

ACTION: Notice of revision of a currently approved information collection (OMB Control Number 1010-0006).

SUMMARY: As part of its continuing effort to reduce paperwork and respondent burden, MMS invites the public and other Federal agencies to comment on a proposal to extend and revise the currently approved collection of information discussed below. The Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (PRA) provides that an agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid Office of Management and Budget (OMB) control number.

DATES: Submit written comments by October 27, 1997.

ADDRESSES: Direct all written comments to the Rules Processing Team, Minerals Management Service, Mail Stop 4020, 381 Elden Street, Herndon, Virginia 20170-4817.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Alexis London, Rules Processing Team, telephone (703) 787-1600.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Title: 30 CFR Part 256, Leasing of Sulphur or Oil and Gas in the Outer Continental Shelf.

Abstract: The Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act (OCSLA), as amended, 43 U.S.C. 1331 *et seq.*, requires the Secretary of the Interior (Secretary) to preserve, protect, and develop offshore oil and gas resources; to make such resources available to meet the Nation's energy needs as rapidly as possible; to balance orderly energy resource development with protection of the human, marine, and coastal environments; to ensure the public a fair and equitable return on the resources of the OCS; and to preserve and maintain free enterprise competition. The Energy Policy and Conservation Act of 1975 (EPCA) prohibits certain lease bidding arrangements (42 U.S.C. 6213 (c)).

The MMS uses the information collected under Part 256 to determine if applicants are qualified to hold leases in the OCS. For example, MMS uses the information to: (a) verify the qualifications of a bidder on an OCS lease sale; (b) develop the semiannual List of Restricted Joint Bidders that identifies parties which are ineligible to

bid jointly with each other on OCS lease sales, under limitations established by the EPCA; (c) ensure the qualification of assignees; (d) document that a leasehold or geographical subdivision has been surrendered by the record title holder, and (e) verify that lessees have adequate bonding coverage. If MMS did not collect the information, we would be unable to comply with the mandates of the OCSLA and the EPCA.

The individual responses to Calls for Information are the only information collected involving the protection of confidentiality. The MMS will protect specific individual replies from disclosure as proprietary information in accordance with section 26 of the OCSLA and 30 CFR 256.10(d). No items of a sensitive nature are collected. Responses are required to obtain or retain a benefit.

Estimated Number and Description of Respondents: Approximately 130 Federal OCS sulphur or oil and gas lessees.

Frequency: The frequency of reporting and number of responses vary for each section and are mostly on occasion or annual (see chart below). There are no recordkeeping requirements in 30 CFR part 256.

Estimated Annual Reporting and Recordkeeping Hour Burden: 17,525 burden hours (see chart below).

BURDEN BREAKDOWN

Citation 30 CFR Part 256	Reporting requirement	Annual Number of responses	Burden per response (hours)	Annual burden hours
Subparts A, E, H, L, M	None	Not applicable		0
Subparts B, D, F	Public notice and comment process through the Federal Register .	Exempt as defined in 5 CFR 1320.3(h)(4)		0
Subpart C	Reports from Federal agencies	Exempt as defined in 5 CFR 1320.3(c)(4)		0
Various Subparts: 256.37; 256.53; 256.68; 256.70; 256.71; 256.72; 256.73.	Request approval for various operations or submit plans or applications.	Burden included with other approved collections in 30 CFR Part 250		0
Subpart G: 256.41; 256.43	Submit qualification of bidders for joint bids and statement of production.	200 responses	4.5	900
256.46	Submit bids	2,000 bids	1	2,000
256.47(c)	File agreement to accept joint lease on tie bids.	1 agreement	4	4
256.47(e)(1), (e)(3)	Request for reconsideration of bid rejection.	Exempt as defined in 5 CFR 1320.3(h)(9)		0
256.47; 256.50	Execute lease (includes submission of evidence of authorized agent and request for dating of leases).	629 leases	1	629
Subpart I	Provide bonding document certifications, etc.	Exempt as defined in 5 CFR 1320.3(h)(1)		0
256.53(c), (d), (f)	Demonstrate ability to carry out present and future financial obligations and/or request reduction in amount of supplemental bond required.	150 submissions ....	.25	37.5
256.55(b)	Notify MMS of action filed alleging lessee, surety, or guarantor are insolvent or bankrupt.	1 notice .....	.5	.5

BURDEN BREAKDOWN—Continued

Citation 30 CFR Part 256	Reporting requirement	Annual Number of responses	Burden per response (hours)	Annual burden hours
256.56	Provide plan to fund lease-specific abandonment account and related information.	3 submissions	8	24
256.57	Provide third-party guarantee, related notices, and annual update.	10 submissions .....	.5	5
256.58(a)	Request termination of period of liability and cancellation of bond.	50 requests .....	.5	25
Subpart J: 256.62; 256.64; 256.67	File application for assignment or transfer.	2,275 applications ..	5	11,375
256.64(a)(8)	Submit non-required documents for record purposes.	Voluntary, non-required submissions of documents the lessee wants MMS to file with the lease.		0
Subpart K: 256.76	File written request for relinquishment ..	505 relinquish-ments.	5	2,525
Total Reporting .....	.....	5,824 .....	.....	17,525

Estimated Annual Reporting and Recordkeeping Cost Burden: \$420,875 for transfer application fees (approximately 2,275 applications × \$185 fee) and \$62,500 for non-required documents filing fees (approximately 2,500 requests × \$25 fee).

Comments: The MMS will summarize written responses to this notice and address them in its submission for OMB approval. All comments will become a matter of public record. As a result of comments we receive and our consultations with a representative sample of respondents, we will make any necessary adjustments to the burden in our submission to OMB. In calculating the burden shown in the chart above, MMS assumed that respondents perform many of the requirements and maintain records in the normal course of their activities. The MMS considers these to be usual and customary and took that into account in estimating the burden.

(1) The MMS specifically solicits comments on the following questions:

(a) Is the proposed collection of information necessary for MMS to properly perform its functions, and will it be useful?

(b) Are the estimates of the burden hours of the proposed collection reasonable?

(c) Do you have any suggestions that would enhance the quality, clarity, or usefulness of the information to be collected?

(d) Is there a way to minimize the information collection burden on respondents, including through the use of appropriate automated electronic, mechanical, or other forms of information technology?

(2) In addition, the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 requires agencies

to estimate the total annual cost burden to respondents or recordkeepers resulting from the collection of information. We need to know if you have any other cost burdens in addition to the filing fees required in 30 CFR part 256. Your response should split the cost estimate into two components:

(a) total capital and startup cost component, and
(b) annual operation, maintenance, and purchase of services component.

Your estimates should consider the costs to generate, maintain, and disclose or provide the information. You should describe the methods you use to estimate major cost factors, including system and technology acquisition, expected useful life of capital equipment, discount rate(s), and the period over which you incur costs. Capital and startup costs include, among other items, computers and software you purchase to prepare for collecting information; monitoring, sampling, drilling, and testing equipment; and record storage facilities. Generally, your estimates should not include equipment or services purchased: (i) before October 1, 1995; (ii) to comply with requirements not associated with the information collection; (iii) for reasons other than to provide information or keep records for the Government; or (iv) as part of customary and usual business or private practices.

MMS Information Collection Clearance Officer: Jo Ann Lauterbach, (202) 208-7744.

Dated: August 19, 1997.

E.P. Danenberger,
Chief, Engineering and Operations Division.
[FR Doc. 97-22874 Filed 8-27-97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310-MR-P

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Minerals Management Service

Notice and Agenda for Meeting of the Royalty Policy Committee of the Minerals Management Advisory Board

AGENCY: Minerals Management Service, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of meeting.

SUMMARY: The Secretary of the Department of the Interior (Department) has established a Royalty Policy Committee, on the Minerals Management Advisory Board, to provide advice on the Department's management of Federal and Indian minerals leases, revenues, and other minerals related policies.

Committee membership includes representatives from States, Indian Tribes and allottee organizations, minerals industry associations, the general public, and Federal Departments.

At this fifth meeting, the Minerals Management Service (MMS) will be prepared to respond to questions concerning plans to implement previously approved reports.

The Committee will consider progress reports and recommendations by the Net Receipts Sharing and Coal subcommittees. Additionally, the Committee will hear status reports from some of the current efforts being undertaken by the Royalty Management Program.

DATES: The meeting will be held on Thursday, September 25, 1997, 8:30 a.m.-4:00 p.m.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will be held at the Embassy Suites, Denver Southeast, 7525 East Hampden Avenue, Denver,