

The *DRILL DOWN*

by the USCG Outer Continental Shelf National Center of Expertise

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Introduction to the OCS NCOE

Introduction

The United States Coast Guard Outer Continental Shelf National Center of Expertise (OCS NCOE) is one of six (originally seven) NCOE's created to improve technical competencies, bolster marine inspector and investigator capabilities, and foster working relationships with industry. Under the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act, the Coast Guard (CG) has regulatory responsibilities for the offshore oil and gas industry and "shall enforce safety and environmental regulations" to ensure safety of life and property on the OCS.

The OCS NCOE is charged with being the CG's repository of expertise and best practices associated with the OCS statutory function including Offshore Supply Vessels (OSVs), Floating OCS Facilities (FOFs), Mobile Offshore Drilling Units (MODUs) and Fixed Facilities (Platforms). The OCS NCOE is a CG Headquarters unit located in southern Louisiana.

Mission Areas

The goal of the OCS NCOE is to maintain a team with exceptional OCS knowledge and experience to train CG personnel, support policy developers and assist field commanders.

The training needs for the OCS are expansive, and the OCS NCOE has assisted in the development of close to 500 Performance and Qualification Standard (PQS) tasks to ensure CG Marine Inspectors are properly trained. These standards include special addendums for small fleets of highly specialized vessels, as well as commercial diving. In addition, through coordination with a commercial offshore training facility and other CG offices, the NCOE has co-developed a formal 5-day resident course for MODU examiners, covering MODU examination techniques, hazardous locations, cranes, dynamic positioning and drilling and well control.

Specialized deployable training has been developed that can be taken "on the road" for in-house training at CG staff or field offices. Finally, through valued partnerships with industry, the NCOE coordinates MODU ship ride opportunities for marine inspectors to gain exposure to real world operations by spending up to two weeks offshore.

The OCS NCOE is in frequent communications with CG policy, standards and regulation developers, providing insight into some of the unique nuances of the OCS. Being located near a major operational hub for the industry allows us to gain a field level perspective through frequent assistance with inspections and interaction with industry.

Members of the OCS NCOE have traveled throughout the United States and the world to assist CG units with OCS-related inspections, responses, and investigations, as well as interacted with foreign OCS regulatory agencies. As part of the CG and Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement (BSEE) partnership, the OCS NCOE and BSEE training branch coordinate shared training opportunities including classroom and offshore on-the-job training.

Team

The OCS NCOE consists of three active duty and three civilian members. Although team composition may occasionally change, experienced personnel that specialize in the focus areas of the OCS NCOE are maintained. The collective and individual experience levels of team members provide for knowledgeable support to USCG headquarters offices, field operations and the regulated industry.

Conclusion

The OCS NCOE is a support-oriented team dedicated to assist internal and external customers. Please contact us for OCS-related issues, questions or field support. Our email address is below, and additional contact information can be found on our website.

