

# 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 seven NCOE's that were 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 U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) 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 USCG's repository of expertise and best practices associated with the OCS statutory function that includes Offshore Supply Vessels (OSVs), windfarm Service Operation Vessels (SOVs) and Wind Turbine Installation Vessels (WTIVs), Floating OCS Facilities (FOFs), Mobile Offshore Drilling Units (MODUs), Fixed Facilities (Platforms) and other vessels utilized for OCS mineral and non-mineral (i.e., renewable) energy operations. The OCS NCOE is a USCG 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 USCG 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 USCG 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 OCS NCOE 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, field offices and to industry. Finally, through valued partnerships with industry, the OCS NCOE coordinates "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 USCG 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 Coast Guard units with OCS-related inspections, responses, and

investigations, as well as interacted with foreign OCS regulatory agencies. As part of the USCG and Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement (BSEE) partnership, the OCS NCOE and BSEE's training branch coordinate shared training opportunities that include classroom and offshore on-the-job training.

### Team

The OCS NCOE team consists of three active duty and three civilian members. Collectively, current members have advanced degrees in Naval Architecture & Marine Engineering and over 20 years of OCS merchant marine experience. Additionally, the team has more than 50 years of marine inspection experience, including 25+ years with OSVs and 20+ years with OCS drilling and production units. Current members have had previous assignments as command cadre, chiefs of vessel inspection, new construction oversight, marine casualty investigations, incident management, and pollution response.

### 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.

