

**Notice of Inquiry by the  
STATE OF ALASKA  
Alaska Oil and Gas Conservation Commission**

The Alaska Oil and Gas Conservation Commission (Commission) acting pursuant to AS 31.05.030, hereby seeks comments in Docket OTH-10-16 concerning whether changes or additions may be needed to the Commission's regulations governing drilling, rig workover and well control in offshore and ultra-extended reach wells drilled in areas of the State of Alaska under the Commission's jurisdiction. This inquiry will examine, without limitation, the following:

1. The Commission's currently prescribed drilling fluid systems and programs as a mechanism for providing primary well control, including requirements for degassing of drilling mud;
2. The Commission's currently prescribed blowout prevention equipment (BOPE) and diverter requirements as a mechanism for providing fail-safe secondary well control for well drilling and completion;
3. The Commission's requirements for configuration of BOPE;
4. Whether regulations should be adopted to require third-party certifications of BOPE;
5. The Commission's current requirements regarding methods, frequency and reporting of testing of BOPE used in offshore and ultra-extended reach drilling operations;
6. Whether the current frequency of BOPE inspections and test witnessing by the Commission is sufficient to identify improperly functioning BOPE;
7. The Commission's practices for probationary follow-up inspections of BOPE failing a test;
8. Commission regulations governing casing and cementing programs and evaluation of same, including without limitation:
  - (a) whether there is need for a new regulation governing performance of cement bond tests,
  - (b) whether there is need for a new regulation prescribing procedures for use of centralizers, and
  - (c) whether there is need for a new regulation governing use of lock-down sleeves;
9. The criteria the Commission should consider in determining requirements for BOPE size and pressure containment capability;
10. Casing requirements for offshore and ultra-extended reach drilling, including use of single casing strings versus tie-backs;

11. Should the Commission require operators drilling offshore or ultra-extended reach wells to demonstrate the ready capability to drill a relief well if necessary;
12. Should the Commission consider requiring concurrent relief well drilling in offshore and ultra-extended reach drilling operations;
13. The regulatory requirements of other jurisdictions (domestic or foreign) governing the drilling of offshore and ultra-extended reach wells; and,
14. Any other matters related to blowout prevention and/or well control.

The Commission will conduct a thorough review of all AOGCC regulations applicable to offshore and ultra-extended reach drilling operations to assure the use of safeguards sufficient to prevent losses of well control or to facilitate immediate reestablishment of well control.

Interested persons may comment on these and related issues by submitting written comments to the Alaska Oil and Gas Conservation Commission, 333 West 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Suite 100, Anchorage, Alaska 99501.

Thirty days after the National Commission on the BP Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill and Offshore Drilling (National Commission) has completed and reported on its inquiry into the causes of the April 20, 2010 Gulf of Mexico incident, the Commission will notice a public hearing as part of this inquiry. At this hearing, public testimony will be received and the Commission will examine relevant issues in light of the findings and conclusions of the National Commission.

Interested persons may request from the Commission copies of the comments filed in this proceeding. For a copy of comments filed in this docket contact the Commission's Special Assistant at the address above or at (907) 793-1221; or e-mail your request to [Jody.Colombic@alaska.gov](mailto:Jody.Colombic@alaska.gov).

By Order of the Commission this 24<sup>th</sup> day of June, 2010.



Daniel T. Seamount, Jr.  
Chair, Commissioner