

Supporting Statement, A
1082-AA05 Joint BOEM/BSEE Proposed Rule
Revisions to the Requirements for Exploratory Drilling on the Arctic Outer Continental Shelf
30 CFR Part 250, Subpart A, General
OMB Control Number 1014-NEW2

Terms of Clearance: In accordance with 5 CFR 1320, the information collection is approved for three years.

General Instructions

A completed Supporting Statement A must accompany each request for approval of a collection of information. The Supporting Statement must be prepared in the format described below and must contain the information specified below. If an item is not applicable, provide a brief explanation. When the question, “Does this information collection request (ICR) contain surveys, censuses, or employ statistical methods?” is checked “Yes,” then a Supporting Statement B must be completed. The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) reserves the right to require the submission of additional information with respect to any request for approval.

Specific Instructions

Justification

Introduction

The Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement (BSEE), in conjunction with the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, is proposing to revise its existing regulations for exploratory drilling and related operations on the Arctic Outer Continental Shelf (OCS), to reduce unnecessary burdens on stakeholders while ensuring that energy exploration on the Arctic OCS is safe and environmentally responsible. This proposed rule, titled *Oil and Gas and Sulfur Operations in the Outer Continental Shelf—Revisions to the Requirements for Exploratory Drilling on the Arctic Outer Continental Shelf* (RIN 1082-AA05), would revise certain requirements promulgated through the rule entitled, *Oil and Gas and Sulfur Operations on the Outer Continental Shelf—Requirements for Exploratory Drilling on the Arctic Outer Continental Shelf* (“2016 Arctic Exploratory Drilling Rule”) (see 81 FR 46478), and modify existing Arctic OCS blowout preventer (BOP) real-time monitoring requirements, as well as add new provisions to BSEE’s regulations pertaining to requirements for crane operations on artificial islands, suspensions of operations (SOO), and suspensions of production (SOP). The purpose of new rulemaking is to revise BSEE’s existing regulations for exploratory drilling and related operations on the Arctic OCS, to reduce unnecessary burdens on stakeholders while ensuring that energy exploration on the Arctic OCS is safe and environmentally responsible.

1. Explain the circumstances that make the collection of information necessary. Identify any legal or administrative requirements that necessitate the collection.

The Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) Lands Act (OCSLA) at 43 U.S.C. 1334 authorizes the Secretary of the Interior to prescribe rules and regulations necessary for the administration of the leasing provisions of the Act related to mineral resources on the OCS. Such rules and regulations will apply to all operations conducted under a lease, right-of-way, or a right-of-use and easement. Operations on the OCS must preserve, protect, and develop oil and natural gas resources in a manner that is consistent with

the need 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 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.

Notice of Proposed Rulemaking

In January 2025, the President signed multiple Executive Orders (E.O.), including E.O. 14153, Unleashing Alaska's Extraordinary Resource Potential (see 90 *FR* 8347), and E.O. 14154, Unleashing American Energy (see 90 *FR* 8353), aimed at expanding natural resource development throughout the Nation and in Alaska in order to promote American energy independence. These E.O.s. also call upon the heads of Federal Agencies, including the Secretary of the Interior (Secretary) to review all existing regulations, orders, guidance documents, policies, and any other similar agency actions, and rescind, revoke, revise, amend, defer, or grant exemptions from those that limit energy development on Federal lands and waters.

The ICs related to this rulemaking concern requirements under 30 CFR part 250, specifically 30 CFR §§ 250.108, 250.171, 250.174, and 250.175 regarding suspension requests and crane requirements on OCS artificial islands. Currently, BSEE's regulations at 30 CFR § 250.108(e) include crane requirements that apply to fixed platforms installed on open waters. BSEE established these regulations to ensure operational safety when using a crane on a platform. In 30 CFR § 250.108(e), BSEE would apply the existing crane requirements, including the requirements to retain records related to the design and construction, installation, inspection, testing, maintenance, and personnel qualification of a crane, to cranes used on OCS artificial islands.

BSEE's regulations for suspensions of operations (SOO) and suspensions of production (SOP) do not address seasonal environmental conditions unique to the Alaska OCS that may interfere with the operator's ability to diligently explore and develop a lease within the maximum 10-year term. In §§ 250.171, 250.174, and 250.175, BSEE would add provisions that allow an operator in the Alaska OCS to request and receive approval for an SOO or SOP in cases where exploration or production-related activities may not be completed due to unfavorable weather conditions. The changes BSEE proposes in §§ 250.171, 250.174, and 250.175 describes how operators may submit information when making requests on such suspensions, which would be subject to BSEE's review and approval.

OMB Approved Control Number 1014-0022

The existing OMB-approved Control Number 1014-0022 covers 30 CFR 250, Subpart A, which concerns the general regulatory requirements of oil, gas, and sulfur operations in the OCS. If this proposed rule becomes effective and OMB approves this ICR, BSEE would update the existing OMB Control Number 1014-0022 in Subpart A by increasing the total annual burdens.

2. Indicate how, by whom, and for what purpose the information is to be used. Except for a new collection, indicate the actual use the agency has made of the information received from the current collection. Be specific. If this collection is a form or a questionnaire, every question needs to be justified.

Notice of Proposed Rulemaking

BSEE's existing crane requirements are addressed at 30 CFR § 250.108(e). This section establishes requirements to retain records related to the design and construction, installation, inspection, testing, maintenance, and personnel qualification of a crane used on a fixed OCS platform, only. The regulations, however, do not address cranes used on artificial islands. It is not uncommon for

exploration activities to take place from artificial islands in the Alaska OCS. BSEE would apply the existing crane requirements to retain records related to the design and construction, installation, inspection, testing, maintenance, and personnel qualification of a crane to cranes used on OCS artificial islands. Having the data available when needed enables BSEE to perform audits, investigations, or other types of analyses, as part of its regulatory oversight functions.

In 30 CFR §§ 250.171 and 250.174, BSEE proposes to add provisions that would allow the operator to request an SOP for their unitized Alaska OCS leases if it is able to provide a commitment to complete its initial development obligations or one or more of its continuing development obligations. BSEE's existing suspension regulations at 30 CFR §§ 250.171 and 250.174 currently do not take into account that the maximum 10-year term issued for Alaska OCS leases is inadequate to sufficiently explore and develop the resources on the lease to reach sustained production without the need for one or more lease suspensions. The isolated nature of the region and the tough seasonal conditions of the Alaska OCS make data collection, pre-development planning efforts, and decision-making for the operator difficult to achieve in a timely manner. And if an operator is able to progress to the exploratory drilling stage, they face the challenge of acquiring the drilling rigs or vessels suitable for the area's harsh conditions. These provisions could provide the certainty operators may need to commit their resources in an area with extremely high investment risks for success. The information the operator must submit as part of their suspension request would allow BSEE to consider granting a suspension if the operator is able to demonstrate a commitment to continued diligent development to ensure the maximum economic recovery of unitized OCS lease resources.

In 30 CFR §§ 250.175, BSEE proposes to add a provision that would allow an operator to request an SOO if they may be precluded from properly developing their lease because it is not possible to conduct leaseholding operations for significant portions of the 10-year term on an Alaska OCS lease. Offshore drilling locations in the Alaska OCS can be inaccessible for a significant portion of each year, due to seasonal changes that make operating conditions unsafe or otherwise preclude operations. This proposed change would facilitate the proper development of a lease by addressing those seasonal conditions that limit leaseholding operations and providing an operator ready and able to complete its operations with the opportunity to obtain an SOO. The information the operator must submit as part of their suspension request would allow BSEE to consider granting a suspension if the operator is able to demonstrate that unfavorable seasonal operating conditions are precluding an operator from completing its leaseholding operations.

3. Describe whether, and to what extent, the collection of information involves the use of automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology, e.g., permitting electronic submission of responses, and the basis for the decision for adopting this means of collection. Also describe any consideration of using information technology to reduce burden and specifically how this collection meets GPEA requirements.

BSEE encourages respondents to submit the information electronically.

4. Describe efforts to identify duplication. Show specifically why any similar information already available cannot be used or modified for use for the purposes described in Item 2 above.

The information collected is unique to a specific drilling/well operation and does not duplicate any other available information; similar information is not readily available or discernible from other sources. The Department of the Interior and other government agencies have Memoranda of Understanding which

define the responsibilities of their agencies with respect to activities in the OCS. These are effective in avoiding duplication of regulations and reporting requirements.

5. If the collection of information impacts small businesses or other small entities, describe any methods used to minimize burden.

Notice of Proposed Rulemaking

The regulatory updates could have an economic effect on a substantial number of small entities. Any direct effects primarily impact the OCS lessees and operators. However, many of these OCS lessees and operators may have less than 500 employees and would be considered small businesses as defined by the Small Business Administration. Regulations require safe work practices and protection of the environmental resources; therefore, the hour burden on any small entity subject to these regulations and associated collections of information cannot be reduced to accommodate them.

6. Describe the consequence to Federal program or policy activities if the collection is not conducted or is conducted less frequently, as well as any technical or legal obstacles to reducing burden.

If BSEE did not collect the information, the Bureau would still be able to carry out its responsibilities for granting suspensions of operations and production. However, the suspension regulations would lack clarity on how to request an SOO or an SOP for circumstances (unfavorable seasonal weather conditions common throughout the Alaska OCS) that are unique to the Alaska OCS.

7. Explain any special circumstances that would cause an information collection to be conducted in a manner:

(a) requiring respondents to report information to the agency more often than quarterly;

(b) requiring respondents to prepare a written response to a collection of information in fewer than 30 days after receipt of it;

(c) requiring respondents to submit more than an original and two copies of any document;

(d) requiring respondents to retain records, other than health, medical, government contract, grant-in-aid, or tax records, for more than 3 years;

Section 250.108(e) clarifies that design and construction records are kept for the life of the crane, including installation records for any anti-two block safety devices. Respondents retain crane operator and rigger qualifications; as well as, inspections, testing, and maintenance records for 4 years at the OCS fixed platform. Retaining this information for the life of the crane at the OCS artificial island is critical to determining its current safety, probable strength, and integrity, based on its history. As equipment ages, access to all aspects of its inspections, design, maintenance, testing, etc., is necessary to determine whether standards for safety are maintained. The type of information collected is such that it is not unreasonable to expect that respondents would retain it as usual and customary business practice, even if not required in regulations. Crane operators must receive appropriate training every 4 years, and this record retention period allows the records to be available through appropriate refresher training.

(e) in connection with a statistical survey, that is not designed to produce valid and reliable results that can be generalized to the universe of study;

(f) requiring the use of statistical data classification that has been reviewed and approved by OMB;

(g) that includes a pledge of confidentiality that is not supported by authority established in statute or regulation, that is not supported by disclosure and data security policies that are consistent

with the pledge, or which unnecessarily impedes sharing of data with other agencies for compatible confidential use; or

(h) requiring respondents to submit proprietary trade secrets, or other confidential information, unless the agency can demonstrate that it has instituted procedures to protect the information's confidentiality to the extent permitted by law.

Other than requiring respondents to retain records for more than 3 years, there are no special circumstances that would require the collection to be conducted in a manner inconsistent with the guidelines. We do not exceed the guidelines in 5 CFR 1320.5.

8. If applicable, provide a copy and identify the date and page number of publication in the Federal Register of the agency's notice, required by 5 CFR 1320.8(d), soliciting comments on the information collection prior to submission to OMB. Summarize public comments received in response to that notice and in response to the PRA statement associated with the collection over the past 3 years and describe actions taken by the agency in response to these comments. Specifically address comments received on cost and hour burden.

Describe efforts to consult with persons outside the agency to obtain their views on the availability of data, frequency of collection, the clarity of instructions and recordkeeping, disclosure, or reporting format (if any), and on the data elements to be recorded, disclosed, or reported.

Consultation with representatives of those from whom information is to be obtained or those who must compile records should occur at least once every 3 years – even if the collection of information activity is the same as in prior periods. There may be circumstances that may preclude consultation in a specific situation. These circumstances should be explained.

As required in 5 CFR 1320.11, BSEE is providing for and has described the 60-day review and comment process in the preamble of the proposed rule. We will address comments received on the information collection in the final rulemaking process.

9. Explain any decision to provide any payment or gift to respondents, other than remuneration of contractors or grantees.

BSEE will not provide payments or gifts to respondents in this collection.

10. Describe any assurance of confidentiality provided to respondents and the basis for the assurance in statute, regulation, or agency policy.

BSEE will protect any confidential commercial or proprietary information according to the Freedom of Information Act (5 U.S.C. 552) and DOI's implementing regulations (43 CFR 2); section 26 of OCSLA (43 U.S.C. 1352); 30 CFR 250.197, *Data and information to be made available to the public or for limited inspection*; and 30 CFR part 252, *OCS Oil and Gas Information Program*.

11. Provide additional justification for any questions of a sensitive nature, such as sexual behavior and attitudes, religious beliefs, and other matters that are commonly considered private. This justification should include the reasons why the agency considers the questions necessary, the specific uses to be made of the information, the explanation to be given to persons from whom the information is requested, and any steps to be taken to obtain their consent.

This collection does not include questions of a sensitive nature.

12. Provide estimates of the hour burden of the collection of information. The statement should:

(a) Indicate the number of respondents, frequency of response, annual hour burden, and an explanation of how the burden was estimated. Unless directed to do so, agencies should not conduct special surveys to obtain information on which to base hour burden estimates. Consultation with a sample (fewer than 10) of potential respondents is desirable. If the hour burden on respondents is expected to vary widely because of differences in activity, size, or complexity, show the range of estimated hour burden, and explain the reasons for the variance. Generally, estimates should not include burden hours for customary and usual business practices.

(b) If this request for approval covers more than one form, provide separate hour burden estimates for each form and aggregate the hour burdens.

Potential respondents comprise of Federal oil, gas, and/or sulfur OCS lessees and operators. It should be noted that not all the potential respondents will submit information at any given time, and some may submit multiple times. The burden estimates include the time for gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Refer to the following table for a breakdown of the hour burdens for this proposed rule. This rule proposes to remove the following:

BURDEN BREAKDOWN
[Changes due to the proposed rule shown in bold]

Citation 30 CFR 250 Subpart A; Related Forms/NTLs	Reporting or Recordkeeping Requirement*	Hour Burden	Average No. of Annual Responses	Annual Burden Hours (rounded)
		Non-Hour Cost Burdens		
108(e)	Retain records of design and construction for life of crane, including installation records for any anti-two block safety devices; all inspection, testing, and maintenance for at least 4 years; crane operator and all rigger personnel qualifications for at least 4 years; all records must be kept at the OCS fixed platform or OCS artificial island.	7	+1 record-keeper	+7 annual burden hours
168; 171 ; 172; 174 ; 175; 177; 180(b), (d)	Request suspension of operation or production (including in the Alaska OCS) ; submit schedule of work leading to commencement; supporting information; include pay.gov confirmation receipt.	11	+2 requests	+22 annual burden hours
		\$2,469 fee x 2 = +\$4,938		
	Submit progress reports on a suspension of operation or production (including in the Alaska OCS) as condition of approval.	3	+2 reports	+6 annual burden hours
TOTAL BURDEN			+5 responses	+35 hours
			\$4,938 Non-Hour Cost Burden	

* In the future, BSEE will be allowing the option of electronic reporting for certain requirements.

(c) Provide estimates of annualized cost to respondents for the hour burdens for collections of information, identifying and using appropriate wage rate categories. The cost of contracting out or paying outside parties for information collection activities should not be included here.

The average respondent cost is \$105/hour. This cost is broken out in the following table using May

2024 data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics tables for the oil and gas extraction industry. See the BLS website:

<https://data.bls.gov/oes/#/industry/211100>

Position	Hourly Pay rate (\$/hour estimate)	Hourly Pay Rate (including benefits) (1.4* x \$/hour)	Percent of time spent on collection	Weighted Average (\$/hour/ rounded)
Facilities Managers (11-3013)	\$91.99	\$128.79	10%	\$12.88
Architectural and Engineering Managers (11-9041)	\$117.33	\$164.26	10%	\$16.43
Compliance Officers (13-1041)	\$49.68	\$69.55	10%	\$6.96
Database Administrators (15- 1242)	\$63.60	\$89.04	10%	\$8.90
Industrial Engineers (17-2112)	\$81.44	\$114.02	10%	\$11.40
Mechanical Engineers (17-2141)	\$89.80	\$125.72	10%	\$12.57
Petroleum Engineers (17-2171)	\$81.39	\$113.95	10%	\$11.39
First-Line Supervisors of Mechanics, Installers, and Repairers (49-1011)	\$62.07	\$86.90	20%	\$17.38
Inspectors, Testers, Sorters, Samplers, and Weighers (51- 9061)	\$53.77	\$75.28	10%	\$7.53
Weighted Average (\$/hour)				\$105

* A multiplier of 1.4 (as implied by BLS news release USDL-25-1358, September 12, 2025 (see <http://www.bls.gov/news.release/ecec.nr0.htm>)), was added for benefits.

Based on a cost factor of \$105 per hour, we estimate the hour burden as a dollar equivalent from this proposed rule is \$3,675 (\$105 x 35 hours = \$3,675).

13. Provide an estimate of the total annual non-hour cost burden to respondents or recordkeepers resulting from the collection of information. (Do not include the cost of any hour burden reflected in Item 12).

(a) The cost estimate should be split into two components: (1) a total capital and start-up cost component (annualized over its expected useful life) and (2) a total operation and maintenance and purchase of services component. The estimates should take into account costs associated with generating, maintaining, and disclosing or providing the information (including filing fees paid for form processing). Include descriptions of methods used to estimate major cost factors including system and technology acquisition, expected useful life of capital equipment, the discount rate(s), and the time period over which costs will be incurred. Capital and start-up costs include, among other items, preparations for collecting information such as purchasing computers and software; monitoring, sampling, drilling and testing equipment; and record storage facilities.

We have identified one non-hour cost burden. Requests for a Suspension of Operation or a Suspension of Production (30 CFR § 250.171) requires a cost recovery fee of \$2,469. We estimate a total reporting non-hour cost burden of \$4,938 (+2 requests x \$2,469 fee = +\$4,938). Refer to the table in Section A.12 of this supporting statement for the specific non-hour paperwork cost burden breakdown. We have not identified any other non-hour cost burdens associated with this collection of information.

(b) If cost estimates are expected to vary widely, agencies should present ranges of cost burden and explain the reasons for the variance. The cost of purchasing or contracting out information collection services should be a part of this cost burden estimate. In developing cost burden estimates, agencies may consult with a sample of respondents (fewer than 10), utilize the 60-day pre-OMB submission public comment process and use existing economic or regulatory impact analysis associated with the rulemaking containing the information collection, as appropriate.

(c) Generally, estimates should not include purchases of equipment or services, or portions thereof, made: (1) prior to October 1, 1995, (2) to achieve regulatory compliance with requirements not associated with the information collection, (3) for reasons other than to provide information or keep records for the government, or (4) as part of customary and usual business or private practices. Not applicable in this collection.

14. Provide estimates of annualized cost to the Federal Government. Also, provide a description of the method used to estimate cost, which should include quantification of hours, operational expenses (such as equipment, overhead, printing, and support staff), and any other expense that would not have been incurred without this collection of information.

The average government cost is \$84/hour. This cost is broken out in the below table using the current Office of Personnel Management salary data for the REST OF THE UNITED STATES
<https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/pay-leave/salaries-wages/>

Position	Grade	Hourly Pay rate (\$/hour estimate)	Hourly rate including benefits (1.6* x \$/hour)	Percent of time spent on collection	Weighted Average (\$/hour)
Clerical	GS-5/5	\$22.12	\$35.39	4%	\$1.42
Technician(s)	GS-11/5	\$40.55	\$64.88	25%	\$16.22
Engineers(s)	GS-13/5	\$57.80	\$92.48	65%	\$60.11
Supervisory Engineer	GS-14/5	\$68.30	\$109.28	6%	\$6.56
Weighted Average (\$/hour)					\$84

* A multiplier of 1.6 (as implied by BLS news release USDL-25-1358, September 12, 2025 (see <http://www.bls.gov/news.release/eccec.nr0.htm>)), was added for benefits.

To analyze and review the information required by 30 CFR Part 250, Subpart A, we estimate the Government will spend an average of approximately 1 hour for each hour spent by lessees. Based on a cost factor of \$84 per hour, the annual burden on the Government for the regulatory requirements in this collection is \$2,940 (35 burden hours x \$84 = \$2,940).

15. Explain the reasons for any program changes or adjustments in hour or cost burden.

BSEE is requesting a new OMB control number, designated as 1014-NEW2, in this submission for the proposed rulemaking, 1082-AA05, *Revisions to the Requirements for Exploratory Drilling on the Arctic Outer Continental Shelf*. The 1014-NEW2 control number requests a program increase of +5 responses, +35 burden hours, and \$4,938 non-hour costs to 1014-0022 (Subpart A, General). Once the 1082-AA05 final rule is effective, BSEE will transfer the responses, hour burdens, and non-hour cost burdens from 1014-NEW2 to OMB Control Number 1014-0022, which expires May 31, 2027, and then discontinue the 1014-NEW2 control number.

16. For collections of information whose results will be published, outline plans for tabulation and publication. Address any complex analytical techniques that will be used. Provide the time schedule

for the entire project, including beginning and ending dates of the collection of information, completion of report, publication dates, and other actions.

BSEE will not tabulate or publish the data.

17. If seeking approval to not display the expiration date for OMB approval of the information collection, explain the reasons that display would be inappropriate.

BSEE will display the OMB control number and OMB expiration date where required.

18. Explain each exception to the topics of the certification statement identified in, “Certification for Paperwork Reduction Act Submissions.”

To the extent that the topics apply to this collection of information, we are not making any exceptions to the “Certification for Paperwork Reduction Act Submissions.”