

**NTL No. 2010-N05  
Increased Safety Measures  
for  
Energy Development on the OCS  
Effective June 8, 2010**

**Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's)**

**A. General Questions**

QA1: With the issuance of NTL No. 2010-N05, can BOEMRE please confirm that we will be allowed to drill a waterflood, disposal, or injection well?

A: These wells can be drilled, but are affected by NTL No. 2010-N05. You need to submit information regarding the general compliance certification and BOP configuration and performance information by the dates prescribed in the NTL. If you have not begun to drill the waterflood, disposal, or injection well, you will have to submit information to address the other sections of the NTL (BOP Certification Requirements for Floating Drilling Operations, BOP Compatibility Verification for All Wells), via the permitting process.

QA2: Do the BOP requirements of the NTL also apply to coiled tubing, electric line, and slickline BOPs?

A: The only section that applies to these types of BOP stacks are as follows:

1. BOP Inspection, Maintenance, and Repair for All Wells
2. Verification that Blindshear Rams will Shear the Pipe in the Hole
3. If you have to shear pipe then you would have to abide by the "BOP Inspection and Testing after Well Control Event for All Wells"

**B. General Certification of Compliance with Existing Regulations and National Safety Alert**

QB1: Do the emergency shut down (ESD) requirements mentioned in bullet #3, under General Certification of Compliance with Existing Regulations and National Safety Alert, also apply for production platforms ESD stations?

A: No. The emergency shut down referenced in the NTL is directed to rig operations specifically.

QB2: Is it acceptable for a Chief Operating Officer or some other Officer to sign the certification letter on behalf of the Chief Executive Officer (CEO)?

A: Yes, as long as that person is authorized to sign for the CEO.

QB3: Does the requirement for a general certification statement signed by the CEO apply to operators that may only have production operations or pipeline right-of-way operations?

A: Yes, but you may specify that your company complies with applicable regulations of 30 CFR 250.

QB4: In the event there are no operations pertaining to a Specific Item listed under this general certification section, is it necessary to address the item or can a statement be made regarding applicability?

A: If you do not have those operations ongoing, you may make a statement regarding its applicability.

QB5: Do the bullets numbered 1 through 4 in this general section apply to both drilling and production operations?

A: Bullets 1-4 in this section apply only to drilling operations. Bullets #1, #2, and #4 apply to all drilling operations and #3 applies only to drilling operations with a subsea stack.

QB6: If there are currently no operations being conducted, is this certification required at this time?

A: If you do not have any operations that would be regulated under 30 CFR 250 ongoing, then this certification is not required.

QB7: Does bullet #3 in this section “Review all emergency shutdown and dynamic positioning procedures that interface with emergency well control operations” apply to operations on jack-up rigs?

A: No, #3 requirements only apply to subsea BOPs and surface BOPs on floating platforms, bullets #1, #2 and #4 apply to all BOP stacks (including jack-ups and shallow water platform rigs)

QB8: Does bullet #4 in this section apply to all Subpart O type personnel directly involved in just well operations (i.e., drilling, completion, workover), or does it also apply to production operations?

A: This section applies to drilling, completion, and workover personnel, it does not apply to production personnel.

QB9: Assuming an operator cannot submit the required certification due to an outstanding INC and/or civil penalty; they can submit a letter to that effect along with a schedule to close out these items. As long as that letter is submitted and accepted by BOEMRE, can they continue to operate platforms and obtain permit approvals?

A: Yes.

QB10: Is this certification process a snapshot in time for the date submitted, or must these be updated to reflect changes in certifications, such as post-submittal of letters where an operator receives INC's and/or civil penalties?

A: The certification is for a snapshot in time. Depending on the significance of a violation or incident, you may be required to resubmit a new certification.

QB11: Does, "to re-certify the BOP" mean to tear down the BOP and rebuild it to spec?

A: No, recertification means that the BOP will operate as originally designed and if any modifications or upgrades were made, that the BOP will work as designed.

QB12: The NTL states that all operators are required to submit a General Certification that they are knowledgeable of all operating regulations at 30 CFR 250 - Oil and Gas and Sulphur Operations in the OCS - and that they are conducting their operations in compliance with those regulations. Does this mean all of Part 250 or just Subpart D that relates to Drilling Operations?

A: The general certification covers all of 30 CFR Part 250.

QB13: What exactly must be submitted for the following (found on page 3, paragraph 3): "Operators must identify the facilities they are certifying by region, company, BOEMRE company number (5 digits), area and block, and rig name."

A: This statement refers to rigs that you were operating on May 27, 2010. As it states, list the Region (GOM, PAC, AK), company (Operator), BOEMRE company number, area/block, and rig name. The identifying information requested (region, company, etc) pertains to the 4 specific certifications.

QB14. Does the CEO also need to certify compliance with the 4 specific items, or can that be made by other appropriate operator's representatives?

A. The CEO or authorized official, as long as he is authorized to sign for the CEO, needs to provide both the general and specific certifications.

### **C. BOP Configuration and Performance Information**

QC1: Do the requirements in the BOP configuration and Performance Information apply to BOPs on jack-up rigs?

A: No, these requirements only apply to subsea BOPs and surface BOPs on floating platforms.

QC2: Do we submit BOP and well control system test results (charts, forms, etc) for all tests or only submit results for initial failed attempts?

A: It is all tests, not just failed attempts, for the period the rig was under contract to you (not to exceed 3 years).

QC3: Will the 4 items listed under the BOP Configuration and Performance Information be required for future wells?

A: No, these requirements are only for operations using a subsea BOP system or using a surface BOP stack on a floating platform on May 27, 2010.

**D. BOP Certification Requirements for Floating Drilling Operations**  
**(This section applies only to subsea and surface BOP stacks used for floating drilling operations)**

QD1: Do the requirements in the BOP Certification Requirements for Floating Drilling Operations apply to BOPs on jack-up rigs?

A: No, these requirements only apply to subsea BOPs and surface BOPs on floating platforms.

QD2: Is this certification and third party verification along with the blind shear ram certification required for all completion and workover operations, in addition to drilling?

A: Yes, if you are currently conducting workover, completion, or abandonment activities, then you must conduct this inspection and design review before you begin work on another well.

QD3: Do these requirements apply also to the choke manifold?

A: Yes, this certification applies to the entire pressure containing system.

QD4: Does the entire system have to be sent in to shore for this certification?

A: No, this inspection and certification can be performed in any location that allows proper access to the BOP to conduct the inspection and certification.

QD5: What qualifies a company or individual as an “independent third party” capable of these certifications?

A: A technical classification society or an American Petroleum Institute (API) licensed manufacturing/inspection/certification firm or licensed professional engineering firm will qualify as an “independent third party” under the NTL, capable of providing the verifications required for BOP compatibility and blind shear ram capability, if:

- Such firm is reputable, and the firm or its employees hold appropriate licenses (e.g., engineering) to perform this work in the appropriate jurisdiction, and the firm carries industry-standard levels of professional liability insurance and has no record of violations of applicable law (or ethical guidelines) and is willing to sign a certification under penalty of perjury; and
- The firm must allow an official representative of the BOEMRE access upon request to the place where tests and inspections take place, to verify the information submitted in the application, or to witness tests and inspections.

QD6: Can the original manufacturer of the BOP (e.g., Cameron) act as the independent third-party inspector?

A: No, it must be a party independent of the original manufacturer or any the contractor that made any modifications to the BOP.

QD7: Can a company that manufactures BOPs act as an “independent third- party” and certify another manufacturer’s BOP stack?

A: Yes, as long as they have no legal or financial interest in the results of the certification.

QD8: Would the below third-party inspection process satisfy the requirements set forth in NTL 2010-N05? A qualified third party would review present certifications and testing records for BOPs on the rig, verifying that they meet all requirements set forth in the NTL. The qualified third- party would travel to the rig’s location, physically verify that the BOP functions as designed, and that no modifications have been made that compromise the design or operation of the BOP.

A: Yes.

QD9: What are the guidelines for making the BOP certifications for floating drilling operations publicly available?

A: The operator will determine what format and how this information is made available to the public.

**E. BOP Inspection, Maintenance, and Repair for All Wells**  
**(This section applies to all BOP stacks in all water depths)**

QE1: Where should the records for the maintenance and inspections of the BOP systems be kept?

A: The records for maintenance and inspections of the BOP systems should be kept on the rig.

QE2: Are the BOP maintenance and inspection records required to be kept for all rig activity?

A: Yes, BOP maintenance and inspection records should be kept for all rig activity, including drilling, workover, completion, and abandonment activity.

**F. BOP Compatibility Verification for All Wells**  
**( This section applies only to subsea and surface BOP stacks used for floating drilling operations)**

QF1: Once the BOP system has been inspected and verified by an independent third party for compatibility with the equipment on the rig and the shearing capacity of the blind-shear rams has been verified, will any further third-party verification be required for subsequent wells drilled utilizing the same equipment and within the rated capacity of the BOP system?

A: Yes. The certification that the shear rams are appropriate for the well can be based on previous certification if the same drillpipe is used under similar conditions. However, on each new Permit to Drill, you must address in the independent third-party certification that the BOP is designed for the specific well

location and execution plan. This submittal also requires that you provide independent third-party certification to assure that the BOP stack has not been compromised or damaged from previous service. The certification related to assurance that the stack has not been compromised or damaged from previous service may be submitted with a revised permit.

QF2: Does the compatibility verification require a review of documentation, maintenance records, and planning documents or does it require a physical or mechanical inspection of the BOP system?

A: This section requires a document review, not a physical inspection.

QF3: Do these compatibility requirements apply to surface BOPs on jack-up drilling rigs and platform rigs?

A: No, these requirements only apply to subsea BOPs and surface BOPs on floating platforms.

QF4: What qualifies a company or individual as an “independent third party” capable of these certifications?

A: A technical classification society or an American Petroleum Institute (API) licensed manufacturing/inspection/certification firm or licensed professional engineering firm will qualify as an “independent third party” under the NTL capable of providing the verifications required for BOP compatibility and blind shear ram capability, if:

- Such firm is reputable, and the firm or its employees hold appropriate licenses (e.g., engineering) to perform this work in the appropriate jurisdiction, and the firm carries industry-standard levels of professional liability insurance and has no record of violations of applicable law (or ethical guidelines) and is willing to sign a certification under penalty of perjury; and
- The firm allows an official representative of the BOEMRE access upon request to the place where tests and inspections take place, to verify the information submitted in the application, or to witness tests and inspections.

QF5: The section on BOP compatibility verification references "drilling" only. Please confirm that this section does not apply to completions, workovers, or abandonments.

A: The BOP compatibility verification is only required for drilling; this section does not apply to completions, workovers, or abandonments.

### **G. Secondary Control System Requirements and Guidelines for Subsea BOP Stacks (This section applies only to subsea BOP stacks)**

QG1: The NTL states the following: "Your emergency shut down system must be powered by a separate and independent rechargeable subsea accumulator bank with

sufficient capacity to close as a minimum one set of blind shear rams." What exactly is required?

A: The subsea accumulator bank must be able to close a blind shear ram without assistance from the surface accumulator system. The system must be capable of being recharged from the surface.

**H. ROV Hot Stab Function Testing of the ROV Intervention Panel**  
**(This section applies only to subsea BOP stacks)**

QH1: Does the requirement to notify the District Manager 48 hours before we begin testing the BOP only apply to stump tests or does it apply to subsea tests as well?

A: The notification requirement applies only to the stump tests.

QH2: Does the requirement to record and submit the results of the performance and function tests to the District Manager only apply to stump tests or does it apply to subsea tests as well?

A: The notification requirement applies only to the stump tests.

**I. Verification that Blind Shear Rams will Shear Pipe in the Hole**  
**(This section applies to all BOP stacks in all water depths)**

QI1: Do the verification of shearing requirements extend to all blind/shear rams including coiled tubing and hydraulic workover units?

A: Yes, it applies to all blind shear rams.

QI2: Does the verification of shearing requirements extend to both surface and subsea BOP stacks?

A: Yes, it applies to all blind shear rams on both surface and subsea BOP stacks.

QI3: What qualifies a company or individual as an "independent third party" capable of these certifications?

A: A technical classification society or an American Petroleum Institute (API) licensed manufacturing/inspection/certification firm or licensed professional engineering firm will qualify as an "independent third party" under the NTL capable of providing the verifications required for BOP compatibility and blind shear ram capability, if:

- Such firm is reputable, and the firm or its employees hold appropriate licenses (e.g., engineering) to perform this work in the appropriate jurisdiction, and the firm carries industry-standard levels of professional liability insurance and has no record of violations of applicable law (or ethical guidelines) and is willing to sign a certification under penalty of perjury; and
- The firm allows an official representative of the BOEMRE access upon request to the place where tests and inspections take place, to verify the

information submitted in the application, or to witness tests and inspections.

QI4: For the verification showing that the blind shear rams installed in the BOP stack are capable of shearing the drill pipe in the hole under the maximum anticipated surface pressure (MASP) – should we be using the maximum anticipated BOP pressures instead of MASP for subsea stacks?

A: You can use MASP for the verification of blind shear ram capability for subsea stacks – the MASP is at the subsea stack.

QI5: Is the verification that blind shear rams will shear drill pipe also applicable to the shearing of tubing in the event of abandonment operations?

A: Yes, the blind-shear rams must shear tubing in abandonment operations.

QI6: What is acceptable to confirm shear ram cutting capability?

A: Actual shear test results are required. At a minimum this may be accomplished by supplying the following:

1. Test results of all pipe to be used in the well or, test results from the pipe that would require the highest shear pressure that you would use in your well, or test results from pipe that requires a higher shear pressure than any pipe you plan to use in the well.
2. Calculations of shearing capability of all pipe to be used in the well including correction for MASP.
3. Independent third-party verification.

#### **J. BOP Inspection and Testing after Well Control Event for All Wells** **(This section applies to all BOP stacks in all water depths)**

QJ1: What does “fully controlled” mean in the following: “If you activate your blind-shear rams or casing shear rams in a well control situation in which pipe or casing was sheared, you must inspect and test the BOP stack and its components after the situation is fully controlled.”? If in open hole, can you drill to the next casing point?

A: No. If you have sheared pipe while in the open hole, you must control the well, secure the well with appropriate plugs and retrieve the stack and physically inspect the shear rams and retest the entire stack before resuming drilling operations.

#### **K. Well Design and Construction for All Wells** **(This section applies to all drilling wells in all water depths)**

QK1: Which “registered” professional engineer (PE) license is acceptable – civil, electrical, mechanical, industrial, petroleum or any other field?

A: Any PE that the operator has determined is capable of reviewing and certifying that the casing design is appropriate for the purpose for which it is intended under expected wellbore conditions is acceptable.

QK2: What does it mean to have all well casing designs and cementing program/procedures “certified”?

A: It means that the design of the item under discussion, such as the casing, well, or cement, can operate under expected well conditions (pressure, temperature, type of fluids).

QK3: How does an operator certify a casing program?

A: The operator submits the letter of certification from the PE, along with the analysis that was conducted. The letter should not be submitted by the PE.

QK4: How are cementing procedures certified?

A: The operator needs to have a PE certify the cementing procedures are adequate for the well being drilled.

QK5: How closely must the operator stick to the procedure submitted? How much can the operator deviate from the procedure before the PE certification is voided?

A: The operator should not deviate from the submitted procedure. If deviation is needed, the operator must contact the appropriate District.

QK6: Do we send the BOEMRE District Manager the morning report or is a statement verifying that dual mechanical barriers were installed sufficient?

A: Instead of these options, you can submit this information in the End of Operations Report (EOR).

QK7: Do the requirements under Well Design and Construction for All Wells apply to new wells, bypasses, and/or sidetracks?

A: Yes, all three.

QK8: Do the requirements for the dual mechanical barriers only apply to "final casing string" and not all casing strings? Confirm if they are also applicable to final casing string if a liner.

A: The requirements for the dual mechanical barriers only apply to the final casing string and to a liner if the final casing string is a liner.

#### **L. Submittal of Revised Application for Permit to Drill (APD)s or Application for Permit to Modify (APM)s**

QL1: If I already have an approved APD/APM and have not started drilling, can I submit the additional information discussed in this NTL initially in a revised permit (RPD/RPM)?

A: Yes, you may submit the additional information initially as part of a Revised Permit to Drill/Revised Permit to Modify.

QL2: Please confirm if the “10 days to review the information” specified in the NTL on page 6 are “calendar” or “business” days.

A: The 10 days referred to in this section are business days.