

## BSEE proposes revisions and reductions in offshore drilling regulations

May 11, 2018

On May 11, the Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement (BSEE) published a proposed rule in the Federal Register that would revise and reduce regulations on offshore drilling outlined in the Blowout Preventer Systems and Well Control Final Rule of 2016 (WCR). The original WCR was developed and implemented in response to the *Deepwater Horizon* disaster of 2010. In 2016, President Donald Trump signed an executive order instructing BSEE to review these regulations. Of the 342 provisions of the 2016 WCR, fifty-nine have been selected and proposed by BSEE for revision, including regulations on drilling margins, real-time monitoring (RTM), blowout prevention (BOP) systems, mechanical barriers, and inspection and reporting requirements. Under the proposed regulations, certifications of BOP systems would be conducted by independent third parties and not BSEE Approved Verification Organizations (BAVO). According to BSEE, these revisions will address implementation, consistency, and redundancy issues of the original rules and will “reduce significant burdens on oil and natural gas operators... while ensuring safety and environmental protection.” The proposed rules have received conflicting positive and negative reviews from industry leaders and environmental organizations, respectively.

BSEE is soliciting comments by July 10 on the proposed rulemaking, particularly relating to BOP testing materials, the 0.5 ppg (pounds per gallon) drilling margin rule, and alternative ways to meet the RTM provisions.

*Sources: E&E News; Federal Register.*

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