

## How were the topics of the Virginia Offshore Oil and Gas Readiness Study selected?

The budget language directing DMME to conduct the study is quite specific:

G. Out of this appropriation, \$250,000 in the first year from the general fund shall be used to fund a study to analyze Virginia's readiness for offshore oil and gas exploration and production. Specifically, the study will address the concerns raised by the U.S. Department of Interior (DOI) in its decision to exclude Virginia's lease sale 220 from the DOI 2007-2012\* Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) 5-year plan. Additionally, the study should address: (1) a detailed overview of the infrastructure needed to support oil and gas exploration and development, and (2) a plan to address any concerns that may be raised by the military. The agency shall report the findings of this study to the Governor, the Secretary of Commerce and Trade, and the Secretary of Natural Resources by April 15, 2015.

The budget language refers to "the concerns raised by the U.S. Department of Interior..." These concerns are contained in the Summary of Decision section in the Proposed Final Outer Continental Shelf Oil and Gas Leasing Program 2012-2017 document:

[http://www.boem.gov/uploadedFiles/BOEM/Oil\\_and\\_Gas\\_Energy\\_Program/Leasing/Five\\_Year\\_Program/2012-2017\\_Five\\_Year\\_Program/PFP%2012-17.pdf](http://www.boem.gov/uploadedFiles/BOEM/Oil_and_Gas_Energy_Program/Leasing/Five_Year_Program/2012-2017_Five_Year_Program/PFP%2012-17.pdf)

The narrative concerning the Atlantic OCS begins on page 12. At the top of its list of concerns, DOI determined that current geological and geophysical information regarding oil and gas resources in the Atlantic is outdated. Modern geological and geophysical data are needed to evaluate the potential for oil and gas resources and to inform decisions about future oil and gas leasing activity. The summary goes on to state that leasing should not occur until new data acquisition is carried out using advances in instrumentation and technology made in recent decades. BOEM is currently considering approval of permits for such data acquisition.

DOI also identifies "complex issues relating to potentially conflicting uses, including...those of the Department of Defense..." According to the decision document, these conflicting uses must be addressed so that future leasing activity will respect the DoD's mission in protecting the U.S. DOI states that it will continue to work closely with the military to deconflict the Mid- and South Atlantic planning areas as it considers future OCS energy development.

The final area of concern identified in the Summary of Decision is port readiness. Specifically, DOI states that "the Mid- and South Atlantic planning areas lack the infrastructure necessary to support oil and gas exploration and development, including infrastructure necessary to support exploration and development activity and for responding to emergencies such as a spill."

Using the budget language in combination with the DOI's 2012 Summary of Decision, DMME determined the three focus areas for the study.

\*This is a technical error. It should read "2012-2017"