

Paul E Martin - Talking Points

MMS TECHNOLOGY ASSESSMENT & RESEARCH PROGRAM

("MMS" is now "Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, Regulation, & Enforcement")

@ COMPONENTS: (A) Operations Safety & Engineering Research

(B) Oil Spill Response Research (OPA 90 - early 90's)

@ Early History

- 1970's "MMS" was Conservation Division of USGS
- Marine Board investigation of Offshore accidents Stated:
 - * Government was responsible for SAFETY as well as INDUSTRY
 - * Set up TA&R within USGS - \$500 K per year;
- John Gregory & Charles Smith - Navy Labs and Structures focus (1/3 of all)
- USGS management - non-supportive: "Safety is Industry Responsibility, NOT Government"
- Interaction with Regional Offices - Non-Existent (No need for "research")
- Process: "Joiner" of projects with Govt. labs and service companies
- Little cooperative work with Industry - Industry did NOT want Govt. involvement
- And, so it went !!!!

MMS formed in 1982 - James Watt & Associates

@ (1) Conservation Division of USGS; (2) Offshore Leasing Functions of BLM & (3) OCS Policy Office

@ All Senior Positions filled with BLM & Policy Office personnel

- Lawyers, Economists, Accountants, Environmental Specialists, etc.
- Continued throughout MMS History (Ex. Rod Pearcy and Lars Herbst)

@ Emphasis upon LEASING and Environmental Protection - NOT OPERATIONS

TA&R funding \$866k vs \$25 - \$30 million for Environmental Studies

@ TA&R continued to be "joiners" vs. "originators" and "structure oriented"

@ LSU given about 60% of \$\$\$; conducted annual workshops; focus was GOM

@ OPA 90 (Oil Pollution Act of 1990) - AFTER Exxon Valdez

- Provided "tax" on OCS production to fund Oil Spill Liability Trust Fund
- USCG, MMS, EPA, & NOAA Committee to Identify & Fund Research Needs
- Added about \$1.5 - 2.0 million for research
- Generally "Low Priority" at all agencies - (low \$ and mission responsibilities)
- Regional & Headquarters office interface - Non-existent (Same as TA&R)
- Transferred OHMSETT to MMS

* The National Oil Spill Response Test Facility; (Leonardo, NJ)

* 2 Football fields long; Saltwater tank; Waves up to 4 - 5 ft;

* ONLY facility in world for controlled testing using REAL OIL

* Mission: Site for TESTING of Equipment, TRAINING, and RESEARCH

* Managed by MMS (??? Future) and Operated (contract) by MAR, INC.

*NATIONAL ASSET but VASTLY UNDER-UTILIZED

* More Later -- BUT CRITICAL COMPONENT OF FUTURE OIL SPILL
RESEARCH, TESTING, & TRAINING REQUIREMENTS

@ PEM entered TA&R Program in 1996 -6 Major Changes

* Cancelled Funding at LSU; MMS to Determine own Priorities

* Defined 4 Primary Objectives and Allocated funds Accordingly:

A) TECHNICAL SUPPORT of Regulatory Decisions (35%)

B) TECHNOLOGY ASSESSMENT - New Industry equipment & practices (35%)

C) RESEARCH CATALYST - operational safety AND oil spill response(15%)

D) INTERNATIONAL REGULATORY - joint research projects (15%)

* "Topic Teams" versus "Regional Flags" & control of priorities (funding)

- DRILLING

- PRODUCTION

- PIPELINES

- STRUCTURES

- DECOMMISSIONING

- HUMAN FACTORS

- FIRE & BLAST

* OFFSHORE TECHNOLOGY RESEARCH CENTER (OTRC) added in 1994 ;

- 10 year Cooperative Agreement

- National Science Foundation \$\$ dropped

- INDUSTRY Mergers cut \$\$\$, people, etc.
- \$1.4 million annual funds, but MMS directed to spend \$1.8 million
- OTRC and MMS developed RESEARCH PLANS focused upon SAFETY/POLICY
- Rick Mercier and Skip Ward innovative approach - Industry & Academia issue
- Cooperative Program ended in 2009
- * MMS (Instead of LSU) established Research Priorities, Published Annual Proposal Solicitation;
 - Annual Solicitation of Needs based upon topic team recommendations
 - OTRC had "first call"; API, OOC, NOIA, etc. co-op solicited
 - Academia and JIP's prevalent research means
- * Launched program to publish results from ALL past and present projects on web-site

TA&R Program works pretty much same way today; Continues to be under-funded (\$ Research), understaffed, "Not our Job" mentality continues with Senior Management, Regional/Headquarters interface has disappeared, insufficient travel funds to monitor/manage projects etc.

Website: www.mms.gov has current listing and results of more than 660 projects funded over the years - both OPERATIONS SAFETY and OIL SPILL RESPONSE

IMPORTANT POINTS;

- * OPERATIONAL SAFETY AND OIL SPILL RESPONSE IS JOINT RESPONSIBILITY OF INDUSTRY AND GOVERNMENT -

(PROBLEM: "Industry" is a collection of individual companies, each with different cultures, goals, priorities, successes & failures, etc. Same with Government Agencies)

* Future Research Coordination Necessary

- TOPICS & PRIORITIES must be GOAL ORIENTED
- FUNDING OPTIONS
- PARTICIPATION & INTERACTION - All Aspects of Projects
- TRANSPARENCY OF PROCESS, DATA, & RESULTS

* OHMSETT & OTRC Can Play Crucial Roles; USE THEM

* "SAFETY RESEARCH" must be handled SEPARATE from Energy Policy Act of 2005 projects (Ultra-Deepwater Research Projects funded through DOE - NETL.)

