



governmentattic.org

"Rummaging in the government's attic"

Description of document: Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) FOIA program internal administrative quarterly status reports, 2015-2016

Requested date: 01-November-2016

Release date: 09-November-2016

Posted date: 30-December-2019

Source of document: BOEM FOIA Officer
45600 Woodland Road
Sterling, Virginia 20166
Fax: (703) 787-1209
Email: boemfoia@boem.gov

The governmentattic.org web site ("the site") is a First Amendment free speech web site, and is noncommercial and free to the public. The site and materials made available on the site, such as this file, are for reference only. The governmentattic.org web site and its principals have made every effort to make this information as complete and as accurate as possible, however, there may be mistakes and omissions, both typographical and in content. The governmentattic.org web site and its principals shall have neither liability nor responsibility to any person or entity with respect to any loss or damage caused, or alleged to have been caused, directly or indirectly, by the information provided on the governmentattic.org web site or in this file. The public records published on the site were obtained from government agencies using proper legal channels. Each document is identified as to the source. Any concerns about the contents of the site should be directed to the agency originating the document in question. GovernmentAttic.org is not responsible for the contents of documents published on the website.



United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF OCEAN ENERGY MANAGEMENT
WASHINGTON, DC 20240-0001

45600 Woodland Road, VAM-BOEM DIR
Sterling, VA 20166

Telephone (703) 787-1818
Facsimile (703) 787-1209

November 9, 2016

Via Electronic Mail

RE: Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Request No. BOEM-2017-00013

This letter is in response to your FOIA request dated November 1, 2016 and received by the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) on the same date. Your request has been assigned request number BOEM-2017-00013. Please cite this number in any future communications with our office regarding your request.

Description of the Requested Records

You requested a copy of the weekly, biweekly and monthly internal administrative status reports on the BOEM FOIA program produced by BOEM for the Interior Departmental Offices, during the time period calendar years 2015 and 2016.

The Bureau's Final Response to Your Request

In response to your request, the Bureau located 8 documents totaling 36 pages that are responsive to your request. We have determined that these documents may be released to you their entirety.

Fees

We have classified you as an "other-use" requester. As such, we may charge you for some of our search and duplication costs, but we will not charge you for our review costs; you are also entitled to up to 2 hours of search time and 100 pages of photocopies (or an equivalent volume) for free. *See* 43 C.F.R. § 2.39. Inasmuch as there were no billable costs incurred for this request, it has been processed at no charge to you.

Mediation Services

The 2007 FOIA amendments created the Office of Government Information Services (OGIS) to offer mediation services to resolve disputes between FOIA requesters and Federal agencies as a

non-exclusive alternative to litigation. Using OGIS services does not affect your right to pursue litigation. You may contact OGIS in any of the following ways:

Office of Government Information Services
National Archives and Records Administration
8601 Adelphi Road – OGIS
College Park, MD 20740-6001

Email: ogis@nara.gov
Web: <https://ogis.archives.gov>
Telephone: (202) 741-5770
Fax: (202) 741-5769
Toll-free: (877) 684-6448

Please note that using OGIS services does not affect the timing of filing an appeal with the Department's FOIA/PA Appeals Officer.

Conclusion

This concludes BOEM's response to your request. If you have any questions concerning this response, please feel free to contact us by email at boemfoia@boem.gov; by phone at (703) 787-1818; or by postal mail at: FOIA Office; Bureau of Ocean Energy Management; Mail Stop: VAM-BOEM DIR; 45600 Woodland Road; Sterling, VA 20166.

Sincerely,

X



Natasha Alcantara

FOIA Officer/Public Liaison

Signed by: Bureau of Ocean Energy Management

Attachment

Bureau/Office Accomplishments – FY15 Q1

1. Describe steps taken to improve your component’s FOIA Program this quarter. (Please include at least two steps and explain each with a detailed sentence or two. We are especially interested in how you have improved your program’s responsiveness.)

BOEM continues to provide interim responses when it cannot respond within 20 - 30 workdays, and keeps requesters informed of the status of their requests. BOEM also negotiates with requesters on alternative processing schedules when requests are too broad or complex to respond to within 30 workdays.

BOEM Headquarters continues to work closely with Regional FOIA Coordinators to reduce duplication and enhance consistency in its responses to requests involving records maintained at multiple locations. This includes assigning a single request number to a request when both Headquarters and a Region are responding to it, and coordinating to complete the request on behalf of the Bureau.

BOEM is still recovering after losing key personnel in FY14 and is still experiencing a significant increase in the number of new requests received as compared to previous years, particularly requests for records at Headquarters. New personnel are now in place and BOEM’s FOIA backlog is starting to come down again. While this temporarily prevented BOEM from resuming efforts to improve the layout and content of its FOIA websites, including making proactive FOIA disclosures, the Bureau expects to complete the planned improvements in the spring.

2. Please list at least two instances of meaningful discretionary disclosures your component has made this quarter.

Discretionary Disclosures		
Subject of the Request	Exempt information that was released	Exemption(s) that would have covered the released information
Public Affairs communications plans.	Draft plan	Exemption 5
Documents relating to a Senate field hearing in Alaska on ‘Increased Arctic Maritime Activity’	Draft testimony	Exemption 5

3. Please list at least two instances of meaningful proactive disclosures your component has made this quarter.

Proactive Disclosures and Transparency	
Description of new records, datasets, videos, etc. posted	Website URL or FOIA Library location
Publications related to archaeological sites in the Gulf of Mexico.	http://www.boem.gov/BOEM-Newsroom/Library/Publications/Gulf/Archaeology.aspx
Companies with pending Geological and Geophysical permits in the Atlantic.	http://www.boem.gov/About-BOEM/BOEM-Regions/Atlantic-Region/Currently-submitted-Atlantic-OCS-Region-Permits.aspx

Bureau/Office Accomplishments – FY15 Q1

Current Construction and Operations Plans Guidelines	http://www.boem.gov/BOEM-Newsroom/Notes-to-Stakeholders/2014/note10222014.aspx
Detailed information, presentation and information used for the Mid-Atlantic Regional Planning Body Webinar	http://www.boem.gov/Environmental-Stewardship/Mid-Atlantic-Regional-Planning-Body/MidA-RPB-Webinar-October-29-2014.aspx
Notice of public meetings and public comment period for Oil & Gas Lease Sale 193 in Alaska	http://www.boem.gov/BOEM-Newsroom/Press-Releases/2014/press10312014.aspx
Atlantic Geological and Geophysical (G&G) Activities with additional “quick links” for more in-depth information behind the decision	http://www.boem.gov/Record-of-Decision/
Upcoming Mid-Atlantic Planning Meeting	http://www.boem.gov/Environmental-Stewardship/Mid-Atlantic-Regional-Planning-Body/Mid-Atlantic-Regional-Planning-Body-Public-Meeting-January-21-2015.aspx

4. Please provide at least one example of how your component has improved its online presence (e.g., new efforts to solicit feedback on website content/presentation, improve content and search capabilities).

As mentioned under Item 1 above, the BOEM FOIA Program is planning enhancements to its FOIA websites to include improved content and navigability of each site, and these enhancements are expected to be completed this spring.

The Bureau’s main website (www.boem.gov) is constantly being enhanced to promote public engagement in the Bureau’s decisionmaking process. In addition to hosting a ‘Public Engagement Opportunities’ page and a ‘Stakeholders’ page, BOEM programs post the dates, locations and agendas for upcoming public meetings on various energy projects and adds meeting notes after the meetings have occurred, posts information about open comment periods, etc.

BOEM announces public engagement opportunities on Twitter and on Facebook. Most recently BOEM tweeted and posted on Facebook that: DOI archaeologists were available to answer questions at the 2015 Society for Historical Archaeology in Seattle; a photo of the swearing-in ceremony for the new BOEM Director; information about extended the public comment period for an offshore wind project in Virginia; 107 new species of marine life were discovered through BOEM-sponsored collaborative research; etc. BOEM also regularly posts photos on Flickr.

5. Please discuss your efforts to reduce your backlog.

BOEM has succeeded in meeting or exceeding its backlog reductions goals since the Bureau was created in October 2011. However, the BOEM Headquarters FOIA Office suffered a loss of personnel toward the end of FY14. BOEM also began receiving a record number of new requests at around the same time. These events have contributed to a spike in the backlog from eight requests at the end of FY14, to more than twenty requests

Bureau/Office Accomplishments – FY15 Q1

in the first quarter of FY15. While the situation has improved slightly since new personnel were brought on board, the rate of new requests remains unusually high. Therefore, the Bureau is carefully monitoring the situation and considering a range of options for addressing the backlog.

6. Please discuss your efforts to close the ten oldest requests reported in your component's last FOIA Annual Report.

Thus far in FY15, BOEM has completed three of its ten oldest requests reported in BOEM's FY14 annual report. BOEM is on track to complete the remaining seven requests by the end of FY15.

7. Please discuss your training efforts this quarter, including:

- a. The number of conferences or trainings held;**
 - b. Who lead the training;**
 - c. A brief description of the topics covered;**
 - d. an estimate of the number of participants from your bureau who were in attendance; and**
 - e. Whether all bureau employees in the 0306 job series have received core, substantive FOIA training this year (if they have not, please include your plans for ensuring they do receive this training this year).**
- a. No general conferences or trainings were held this quarter. However, HQ held conference calls with two regions, another bureau and SOL, regarding specific sensitive requests to provide guidance and enhance coordination between affected offices and bureaus.
 - b. The request-specific calls were led by the Bureau FOIA Officer.
 - c. When to consult SOL, how and when to conduct consultations, litigation considerations, search issues, and fees.
 - d. One call involved eleven participants from BOEM, BSEE, and SOL; the other involved approximately nine participants from BOEM, BSEE and SOL.
 - e. In this, the first quarter of FY15, not all 0306 series employees have received core, substantive FOIA training yet. We are planning another training conference this fall.

8. Has your bureau fully complied with the Department's FOIA Certification Program this quarter? If not, please include how you plan to remedy this deficiency this fiscal year.

BOEM will fully comply with the Department's FOIA Certification Program by the end of FY15 via teleconferences and/or training sessions with all BOEM FOIA personnel. No dates have been set for these conferences yet.

Bureau/Office Accomplishments – FY15 Q2

1. Describe steps taken to improve your component's FOIA Program this quarter. (Please include at least two steps and explain each with a detailed sentence or two. We are especially interested in how you have improved your program's responsiveness.)

BOEM has filled its FOIA vacancies, but is still experiencing a significant increase in the number of new requests received during FY15 as compared to previous years. Three-quarters of the new requests are for records maintained by Headquarters. By way of comparison, during the first half of FY14, BOEM Headquarters received 25 requests while during the first half of FY15, BOEM Headquarters received 71 requests. Most of BOEM's requests fall into the Complex processing track which reduces response times for these requests.

BOEM continues to provide interim responses when it cannot respond within 20 - 30 workdays, keeps requesters informed of the status of their requests, and negotiates with requesters on alternative processing schedules for requests that are too broad or complex to answer within the time limits. BOEM Headquarters also continues to work closely with Regional FOIA Coordinators to reduce duplication and enhance consistency in its responses to requests involving records maintained at multiple locations, including providing consolidated responses.

2. Please list at least two instances of meaningful discretionary disclosures your component has made this quarter.

Discretionary Disclosures		
Subject of the Request	Exempt information that was released	Exemption(s) that would have covered the released information
None for this quarter.		

3. Please list at least two instances of meaningful proactive disclosures your component has made this quarter.

Proactive Disclosures and Transparency	
Description of new records, datasets, videos, etc. posted	Website URL or FOIA Library location
The Atlantic Geological and Geophysical (G&G) Permitting Process (Diagram)	http://www.boem.gov/Atlantic-Permitting-Process/
New Mid-Atlantic Region	http://www.boem.gov/Environmental-Stewardship/Mid-Atlantic-Regional-Planning-Body/Campus-Map-2013.aspx
2011 MOU with USCG, <i>Offshore Renewable Energy Installations On The Outer Continental Shelf</i>	http://www.boem.gov/Renewable-Energy-Program/MOA_USCG_BOEMRE_July_27_2011-pdf.aspx
Fact Sheet on Selected Sound-Related Studies Funded and Co-Funded by BOEM (contains description and links to relevant studies)	http://www.boem.gov/Select-Sound-Related-Studies-funded-and-co-funded-by-BOEM/
Minimizing Impacts of Human-generated Sound on Marine Life	http://www.boem.gov/Fact-Sheet-on-Sound-Studies/
Climate change study announced - <i>Synthesis of Arctic Research (SOAR) Physics to Marine Mammals in the Pacific Arctic</i> (AK-11-05)	http://www.boem.gov/PSPO_1105/

Bureau/Office Accomplishments – FY15 Q2

Study titled, <i>Development of Mitigation Measures to Address Potential Use Conflicts between Commercial Wind Energy Lessees/Grantees and Commercial Fishermen on the Atlantic Outer Continental Shelf, Final Report on Best Management Practices and Mitigation Measures</i>	http://www.boem.gov/OCS-Study-BOEM-2014-654/
Listing of environmental assessments in the Gulf of Mexico performed on OCS plans	http://www.boem.gov/Environmental-Assessment-for-OCS-Plans/
GOM Air Emissions Calculations Instructions	http://www.boem.gov/BOEM-0139-instructions/
Description of new BOEM-funded research in Hawaii for the Renewable Energy Program	http://www.boem.gov/PROUA-Hawaii-Studies-Fact-Sheet/
Fact sheets on the renewable energy program	http://www.boem.gov/Commercial-Leasing-Process-Fact-Sheet/ http://www.boem.gov/BOEM-RE-Programs-Fact-Sheet/ http://www.boem.gov/BOEM-Overview-Renewable-Energy/ http://www.boem.gov/BOEM-Lease-Areas-Metadata/
Data on lease offerings	http://www.boem.gov/OCS-Lease-Sale-Statistics-All-Lease-Offerings/
List of companies with supplemental bond waiver	http://www.boem.gov/Companies-with-Supplemental-Bond-Waiver/
Procedures for Change of Operation, Oil & Gas Program, Pacific Region	http://www.boem.gov/Operator-Procedures/
New study titled, <i>Aerial Surveys for Roseate and Common Terns South of Tuckernuck and Muskeget Islands</i> July-September 2013.	http://www.boem.gov/Environmental-Stewardship/Environmental-Studies/Renewable-Energy/2014-665.aspx

4. Please provide at least one example of how your component has improved its online presence (e.g., new efforts to solicit feedback on website content/presentation, improve content and search capabilities).

The BOEM FOIA Program had planned to complete enhancements to its FOIA websites this spring. However, due to the higher than normal receipts of new requests continuing through the second quarter of FY15, and the limited resources available, the web project has been postponed again. The Bureau FOIA Officer has alerted senior managers about the drain on the Headquarters' FOIA Office brought about by the spike in requests for Headquarters documents, the need to assist new personnel in the Regions, including assisting on litigated and high profile requests, and the complexity of the requests received.

Traditionally, BOEM has used its website to promote public engagement in its decisionmaking process. In addition to hosting a 'Public Engagement Opportunities' page and a 'Stakeholders' page, BOEM programs post the dates, locations and agendas for upcoming public meetings on various

Bureau/Office Accomplishments – FY15 Q2

energy projects, meeting notes after the meetings have occurred, information about open public comment periods, etc. BOEM also uses Twitter and Facebook to get word to the public about these opportunities.

5. Please discuss your efforts to reduce your backlog.

While BOEM has succeeded in meeting or exceeding its backlog reductions goals since the Bureau was created in October 2011, the BOEM Headquarters FOIA Office is experiencing a larger-than-normal backlog. The Office suffered a loss of personnel toward the end of FY14 at the same time it began receiving a record number of new requests. These events have contributed to a spike in the backlog from eight requests at the end of FY14 to 19 requests at the end of the second quarter. While the situation has improved slightly after new personnel were brought on board, the rate of new requests remains unusually high. The Bureau is carefully monitoring the situation and considering a range of options for addressing the backlog.

6. Please discuss your efforts to close the ten oldest requests reported in your component's last FOIA Annual Report.

BOEM has completed three of its ten oldest requests reported in BOEM's FY14 annual report, and expects to complete the remaining seven requests by the end of FY15.

7. Please discuss your training efforts this quarter, including:

- a. The number of conferences or trainings held;**
 - b. Who lead the training;**
 - c. A brief description of the topics covered;**
 - d. an estimate of the number of participants from your bureau who were in attendance; and**
 - e. Whether all bureau employees in the 0306 job series have received core, substantive FOIA training this year (if they have not, please include your plans for ensuring they do receive this training this year).**
- a. No general conferences or trainings were held this quarter. However, HQ held conference calls with two of its regions and SOL to provide assistance on highly sensitive requests, one of which is now the subject of litigation.
 - b. The calls were led by the Bureau FOIA Officer.
 - c. Litigation considerations, such as search adequacy, and how to coordinate to ensure consistent handling of documents involved in separate litigation.
 - d. One call involved six participants from BOEM and SOL; the other involved four participants from BOEM and SOL.
 - e. Not all 0306 series employees have received core, substantive FOIA training yet. We are planning a training conference this summer.

Bureau/Office Accomplishments – FY15 Q2

8. Has your bureau fully complied with the Department's FOIA Certification Program this quarter? If not, please include how you plan to remedy this deficiency this fiscal year.

BOEM will fully comply with the Department's FOIA Certification Program by the end of FY15 via teleconferences and/or training sessions with all BOEM FOIA personnel. No date has been set for the training conference yet.

Bureau/Office Accomplishments – FY15 Q3

1. Describe steps taken to improve your component's FOIA Program this quarter. (Please include at least two steps and explain each with a detailed sentence or two. We are especially interested in how you have improved your program's responsiveness.)

BOEM continues to provide interim responses when it cannot respond within 20 - 30 workdays, keeps requesters informed of the status of their requests, and negotiates with requesters on alternative processing schedules for requests that are too broad or complex to answer within the time limits. BOEM Headquarters worked even more closely than usual with Regional FOIA Coordinators, the majority of whom are relatively new to FOIA or new to BOEM, to enhance consistency in responses to requests, ensure compliance with the law and DOI and Bureau policies, and reduce duplication of effort. In addition, the BOEM FOIA Office is now able to conduct searches for congressional correspondence logs without the need to send the search request to the Office of Congressional Affairs. This allows us to process requests for the logs in the Simple track and keep them out of the much larger Complex track.

2. Please list at least two instances of meaningful discretionary disclosures your component has made this quarter.

Discretionary Disclosures		
Subject of the Request	Exempt information that was released	Exemption(s) that would have covered the released information
Records relating to NEPA and ESA analyses or conclusions performed in connection with any proposal to engage in fracking in the Gulf of Mexico OCS Region (GOMR), revisions to DOCs not posted online for oil & gas drilling operations in GOMR where fracking was used or proposed, & records of communications between BOEM &/or BSEE & other federal &/or state agencies &/or regulated entities regarding fracking in GOMR.	Internal discussion on a draft environmental impact statement.	Exemption 5, Deliberative Process Privilege
(Same request)	Internal discussion about growing number fracking proposals in connection with explorations plans.	Exemption 5, Deliberative Process Privilege

3. Please list at least two instances of meaningful proactive disclosures your component has made this quarter.

Proactive Disclosures and Transparency	
Description of new records, datasets, videos, etc. posted	Website URL or FOIA Library location
Updated fact sheet on BOEM's Renewable Energy Program to reflect new wind energy leases	http://www.boem.gov/Environmental-Stewardship/Mid-Atlantic-Regional-Planning-Body/BOEM-RE-Programs-Fact-Sheet.aspx
Charter for the Mid-Atlantic Regional Planning Body	http://www.boem.gov/Environmental-Stewardship/Mid-Atlantic-Regional-Planning-Body/MidA-RPB-Charter.aspx

Bureau/Office Accomplishments – FY15 Q3

Roster of Members and Alternates for the Mid-Atlantic Regional Planning Body	http://www.boem.gov/Mid-Atlantic-RPB-Roster/
Over 70 descriptions of new ongoing environmental studies that are or will be available in the Environmental Studies Program Information System (ESPIS)(see http://www.data.boem.gov/homepg/data_center/other/espis/espisfront.asp) have been posted. We have provided links to a few of them as representational samples. Let us know if you would like to see links to all of them.	http://www.boem.gov/Environmental-Stewardship/Environmental-Studies/Renewable-Energy/Benthic-Habitat-Study-Profile.aspx http://www.boem.gov/Environmental-Stewardship/Environmental-Studies/GOMR/Protected-Species/GM-13-05.aspx http://www.boem.gov/Environmental-Stewardship/Environmental-Studies/Gulf-of-Mexico-Region/Ongoing-Studies/GM-11-06.aspx http://www.boem.gov/Environmental-Stewardship/Environmental-Studies/Gulf-of-Mexico-Region/Ongoing-Studies/GM-13-03a.aspx http://www.boem.gov/Environmental-Stewardship/Environmental-Studies/Gulf-of-Mexico-Region/Ongoing-Studies/GM-13-03b.aspx http://www.boem.gov/Environmental-Stewardship/Environmental-Studies/Gulf-of-Mexico-Region/Ongoing-Studies/GM-13-03c.aspx http://www.boem.gov/Environmental-Stewardship/Environmental-Studies/Gulf-of-Mexico-Region/Ongoing-Studies/GM-13-06.aspx http://www.boem.gov/Environmental-Stewardship/Environmental-Studies/Gulf-of-Mexico-Region/Ongoing-Studies/GM-14-04.aspx http://www.boem.gov/Environmental-Stewardship/Environmental-Studies/Alaska-Region/Alaska-Studies/aq-1301.aspx
Alaska Region Historical Lease Sales	http://www.boem.gov/Historical-Alaska-Region-Lease-

Bureau/Office Accomplishments – FY15 Q3

	Sales/
Funding Forecast of Prime Contracting Opportunities for FY15 Acquisitions	http://www.boem.gov/About-BOEM/Procurement-Business-Opportunities/FY2015-BOEM-AP.aspx
Gulf of Mexico Region Environmental Assessments for Plans since January 1st, 2013	http://www.boem.gov/About-BOEM/BOEM-Regions/Gulf-of-Mexico-Region/Environment/Environmental-Assessment-for-OCS-Plans.aspx
Gulf of Mexico Environmental Assessments for Geological & Geophysical Surveys since January 1st, 2013	http://www.boem.gov/About-BOEM/BOEM-Regions/Gulf-of-Mexico-Region/Environment/Environmental-Assessments-for-G-and-G-Activity.aspx
Gulf of Mexico Environmental Assessments for Structure Removals since January 1st, 2013	http://www.boem.gov/About-BOEM/BOEM-Regions/Gulf-of-Mexico-Region/Environment/Environmental-Assessments-for-Structure-Removals.aspx

BOEM also posts a lot of scientific data, such as mapping data. We did not include links to all of this type of information, but we can provide them to the Department upon request.

4. Please provide at least one example of how your component has improved its online presence (e.g., new efforts to solicit feedback on website content/presentation, improve content and search capabilities).

The BOEM FOIA Program made small enhancements to its FOIA websites, adding navigational links to the upper right side of each page. However, because of the growing backlog due to increased request receipts, and limited resources at Headquarters, planned improvements to the content of the website remain on hold.

However, the BOEM.gov site, in general, seeks to promote public engagement in its decisionmaking process and includes ‘Public Engagement Opportunities’ and ‘Stakeholders’ pages. Further, some BOEM programs post online the dates, locations and agendas for upcoming public meetings on various energy projects, meeting notes after meetings have occurred, information about open public comment periods, and the like. BOEM also uses Twitter and Facebook to get word out to the public about these opportunities.

5. Please discuss your efforts to reduce your backlog.

BOEM is still experiencing a significant increase in the number of new requests received during FY15 as compared to previous years despite the fact that productivity also increased significantly. The increase in receipts primarily affects the BOEM Headquarters FOIA operation. Nearly three-quarters (72%) of requests received thus far in FY15 are for records maintained by Headquarters. By way of comparison, during the first three quarters of FY14 BOEM Headquarters received 34 requests (51% of all requests received by BOEM), while during the same period in FY15, BOEM Headquarters received 97 requests (72% of all requests received). The Headquarters FOIA Office nearly tripled its productivity, completing 33 requests during the first three quarters of FY14 compared to 91 requests completed during the same period in FY15.

Bureau/Office Accomplishments – FY15 Q3

BOEM management is taking steps to try and address the need for additional FOIA Program resources at Headquarters. BOEM reached out to the OS FOIA Office and is receiving assistance from OS in the form of a trained FOIA processor who provides part-time assistance with reviewing documents, preparing draft responses and other processing actions to assist the Headquarters FOIA team. BOEM is looking into the possibility of hiring FOIA contractors next quarter or in the first quarter of FY16 to provide full-time FOIA support and, thereby, improve consistency in all phases of the process. These efforts are aimed at reducing the backlog, reducing response times and improving compliance overall.

Most of BOEM's requests fall into the Complex processing track which reduces response times for these requests. However, one category of requests can now be handled in the Simple track, i.e., requests for congressional correspondence logs (see Item 1 above). This reduces the size of the Complex queue and allows us to answer these requests very quickly.

6. Please discuss your efforts to close the ten oldest requests reported in your component's last FOIA Annual Report.

BOEM has completed three of its ten oldest requests reported in BOEM's FY14 annual report, and expects to complete the remaining seven requests by the end of FY15.

7. Please discuss your training efforts this quarter, including:

- a. The number of conferences or trainings held;**
 - b. Who lead the training;**
 - c. A brief description of the topics covered;**
 - d. an estimate of the number of participants from your bureau who were in attendance; and**
 - e. Whether all bureau employees in the 0306 job series have received core, substantive FOIA training this year (if they have not, please include your plans for ensuring they do receive this training this year).**
- a. No conferences or trainings were held this quarter. However, the BOEM HQ FOIA Office will hold a two-day FOIA workshop for its regional FOIA personnel at the end of July 2015.
 - b. The Headquarters FOIA team, including the Bureau FOIA Officer and Senior FOIA and Privacy Act Specialist, will lead the work.
 - c. Details will be provided shortly.
 - d. All six employees who handle FOIA requests in BOEM's regional offices will attend either in person or via video conferencing.
 - e. With the completion of the July training, all BOEM personnel in the 0306 series will have received substantive FOIA training.

8. Has your bureau fully complied with the Department's FOIA Certification Program this quarter? If not, please include how you plan to remedy this deficiency this fiscal year.

BOEM will fully comply with the Department's FOIA Certification Program in July 2015.

Bureau/Office Accomplishments – FY15 Q4

1. Describe steps taken to improve your component’s FOIA Program this quarter. (Please include at least two steps and explain each with a detailed sentence or two. We are especially interested in how you have improved your program’s responsiveness.)

BOEM continues to provide interim responses when it cannot respond within 20 - 30 workdays, keeps requesters informed of the status of their requests, and negotiates with requesters on alternative processing schedules for requests that are too broad or complex to answer within the time limits. The Headquarters FOIA Office processes approximately 75% of FOIA requests received by the Bureau. After searches are completed, the FOIA Office has begun performing preliminary reviews of responsive documents, when located, to determine whether the request should be moved to a faster track.

BOEM Headquarters continues to work closely with the Regional FOIA Coordinators who are relatively new to BOEM or new to FOIA to enhance consistency in responses to requests, ensure compliance with the law and DOI and Bureau policies, and reduce duplication of effort. BOEM Headquarters also provided a two-day training seminar and workshop to all BOEM Regional FOIA personnel, which was pre-approved by the DOI FOIA Policy Office, to improve compliance with the FOIA and fulfill the DOI FOIA Certification requirement.

2. Please list at least two instances of meaningful discretionary disclosures your component has made this quarter.

Discretionary Disclosures		
Subject of the Request	Exempt information that was released	Exemption(s) that would have covered the released information
Records relating to Shell’s Revised Chukchi Sea Exploration Plan.	Emails regarding internal discussions and a draft letter regarding coordination of agency oversight of related to the company’s integrated operations plan.	Exemption 5, Deliberative Process Privilege
(Same FOIA request described above.)	Emails regarding internal discussions on a draft briefing paper prepared for Deputy Secretary Connor.	Exemption 5, Deliberative Process Privilege
Records relating to environmental analyses or conclusions performed in connection with any proposal to engage in fracking in the Gulf of Mexico OCS Region (GOMR), revisions to DOCDs not posted online for oil & gas drilling operations in GOMR where fracking was used or proposed, & records of communications between BOEM &/or BSEE & other federal &/or state agencies &/or regulated entities regarding fracking in GOMR.	Internal discussions between BOEM and BSEE about development of a proposal to update an environmental study that better explains “fracking” in the GOM.	Exemption 5, Deliberative Process Privilege

Bureau/Office Accomplishments – FY15 Q4

3. Please list at least two instances of meaningful proactive disclosures your component has made this quarter.

Proactive Disclosures and Transparency	
Description of new records, datasets, videos, etc. posted	Website URL or FOIA Library location
Announcement of contract with the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine to establish a new 14-person committee on environmental science and assessment for offshore energy resources. The new “Standing Committee on Environmental Science and Assessment for Ocean Energy Management” will provide independent information and support discussions on issues relevant to BOEM’s environmental studies and assessment activities.	http://www.boem.gov/NAS-Committee/
Roster of members for the new committee described above.	http://www.boem.gov/NAS-BOEM-Standing-Committee-Short-Roster/
BOEM issued revised guidelines for the submission of geophysical, geotechnical and geohazard information under its regulations. The guidance separates archaeological and historic property guidance; incorporates additional information about geotechnical investigations; and includes specific recommendations to lessees regarding data quality, equipment, and deliverables.	http://www.boem.gov/BOEM-Newsroom/Notes-to-Stakeholders/2015/note07132015.aspx
BOEM’s letter declining to approve Shell’s Aug. 6, 2015 request for a deviation from Condition #2 of the conditionally approved Chukchi Sea Exploration Plan. (BOEM has received many FOIA requests for BOEM-Shell communications.)	http://www.boem.gov/uploadedFiles/BOEM/About_BOEM/BOEM_Regions/Alaska_Region/Leasing_and_Plans/Plans/2015-08-12-Shell-Condition2-deviation-denial.pdf
Invitation to the public for a North Carolina Renewable Energy Task Force meeting on October 7, 2015, including an overview of the meeting and Task Force.	http://www.boem.gov/BOEM-Newsroom/Notes-to-Stakeholders/2015/note09222015a.aspx
Over 15 descriptions of new ongoing environmental studies that are or will be available in the Environmental Studies Program Information System (ESPIS)(see http://www.data.boem.gov/homepg/data_center/other/espis/espisfront.asp) have been posted. We have provided links to a few of them as representational samples. Let us know if you would like to see links to all of them.	http://www.boem.gov/Environmental-Stewardship/Environmental-Studies/GOMR/Archaeological/GM-12-04.aspx http://www.boem.gov/Environmental-Stewardship/Environmental-Studies/GOMR/Biological/GM-92-42-104.aspx http://www.boem.gov/Environmental-Stewardship/Environmental-Studies/GOMR/Biological/GM-09-01-07.aspx http://www.boem.gov/Environmental-Stewardship/Environmental-Studies/GOMR/Biological/GM-

Bureau/Office Accomplishments – FY15 Q4

	12-x10.aspx http://www.boem.gov/Tracking-Northern-Long-Eared-Bat-Offshore-Foraging-and-Migration-Activities/ http://www.boem.gov/Environmental-Stewardship/Environmental-Studies/ESPIS-3Qtr-2015.aspx http://www.boem.gov/Environmental-Stewardship/Environmental-Studies/Alaska-Region/Alaska-Studies/index.aspx
Disaster and Recovery Initiatives Atlantic Coast: Emergency Response and Hurricane Sandy Rebuilding Initiatives	http://www.boem.gov/Non-Energy-Minerals/Disaster-and-Recovery-Initiatives-Atlantic-Coast.aspx
Mid-Atlantic Regional Ocean Planning Events	http://www.boem.gov/Environmental-Stewardship/Mid-Atlantic-Regional-Planning-Body/September-2015-Meeting/index.aspx
Statistics for the Western Gulf of Mexico Lease Sale 246 held on August 19, 2015.	http://www.boem.gov/Western-Gulf-of-Mexico-Lease-Sale-246-Statistics/
Record of Decision for the Gulf of Mexico OCS Western Area Oil and Gas Lease Sale 246	http://www.boem.gov/Environmental-Stewardship/Environmental-Assessment/NEPA/Record-of-Decision-Sale-246.aspx
Suspension of Operations Approval for Cape Wind Renewable Energy Lease Number OCS-A-0478	http://www.boem.gov/Renewable-Energy-Program/Studies/Lease-Suspension-Order.aspx

BOEM also posts a lot of scientific information, such as mapping data and published environmental studies. We did not include links to all of this type of information, but we can provide them to the Department upon request.

4. Please provide at least one example of how your component has improved its online presence (e.g., new efforts to solicit feedback on website content/presentation, improve content and search capabilities).

Because of the growing backlog resulting from increased request receipts and limited resources at Headquarters, planned improvements to the content of the website remain on hold. Updating the FOIA website and providing direct electronic access to our regional FOIA offices will be a priority FY 2016. The BOEM.gov site, in general, seeks to promote public engagement in its decisionmaking process and includes ‘Public Engagement Opportunities’ and ‘Stakeholders’ pages. Some BOEM programs use the site to post dates, locations and agendas for upcoming public meetings on various energy projects, meeting notes after meetings have taken place, information about open public comment periods, and the like. BOEM also uses Twitter, Facebook, Flickr, and RSS Feeds to reach out to the public and publicize these opportunities.

Bureau/Office Accomplishments – FY15 Q4

5. Please discuss your efforts to reduce your backlog.

BOEM continued to experience a significant increase in the number of new requests received during FY15, as compared to previous years, while productivity also increased significantly. BOEM was unable to meet its FY15 backlog reduction target, primarily because the increase in receipts affected only the BOEM Headquarters FOIA operation which received or had significant action on close to three-quarters of all requests received by the Bureau during FY15. BOEM's total number of requests received in FY15 increased by 82% (from 94 requests received in FY14 to 171 requests received in FY15). Including interim responses, BOEM Headquarters was responsible for processing all or part of 131 requests during FY15.

Notably, from FY 14 to FY 15, "Complex" requests received by BOEM increased 76% (from 29 to 51); "Exceptional/Voluminous" requests increased 75% (from four to seven); and "Expedited" requests increased from none in FY14 to four requests in FY15. While BOEM did not meet its backlog reduction goal for the year, it was able to complete or close 165 requests in FY15, as compared to 92 in FY14, which represents a 79% increase in productivity without a corresponding increase in resources.

BOEM management is taking steps to try and address the need for additional FOIA Program resources at Headquarters. BOEM expects to be able to hire a contractor in FY16 to provide FOIA support and, thereby, significantly increase productivity as well as improve consistency in all phases of the process by freeing up the Headquarters FOIA staff to provide more assistance to the regions. BOEM reached out to the OS FOIA Office and received assistance from OS in the form of a trained FOIA processor who provided part-time support reviewing documents, preparing draft responses and other processing actions to assist the Headquarters FOIA staff. All of these efforts are aimed at reducing the backlog, reducing response times, and improving compliance overall.

Most of BOEM's FOIA/PA requests fall into the "Complex" processing track which tends to slowdown response times for these requests. BOEM Headquarters staff have begun the practice of taking time to conduct a preliminary assessment of any responsive documents identified in order to offer a requester meaningful ways to narrow the scope of the request and facilitate the Bureaus' response. If appropriate, the staff will take time to consider if it is possible to move the request to a different track if the projected search and/or review are not as complex as anticipated. This has allowed BOEM to reduce the size of the Complex queue, ensure consistent decisions are made on track placement, and answer some requests more quickly.

6. Please discuss your efforts to close the ten oldest requests reported in your component's last FOIA Annual Report.

During FY15, BOEM completed five of its ten oldest requests pending from the FY14 annual reporting period. Three of the remaining five requests are in the Exceptional/Voluminous category. The Bureau intends to work with the requesters again and offer, where possible, meaningful ways to narrow these requests to facilitate their completion as soon as possible in FY16.

7. Please discuss your training efforts this quarter, including:

a. The number of conferences or trainings held;

Bureau/Office Accomplishments – FY15 Q4

- b. Who lead the training;**
- c. A brief description of the topics covered;**
- d. an estimate of the number of participants from your bureau who were in attendance; and**
- e. Whether all bureau employees in the 0306 job series have received core, substantive FOIA training this year (if they have not, please include your plans for ensuring they do receive this training this year).**

- a. The BOEM HQ FOIA Office held a two-day FOIA training workshop for its regional FOIA personnel at the end of July 2015.
- b. The Headquarters FOIA team, including the Bureau FOIA Officer and Senior FOIA and Privacy Act Specialist, designed and led the training. Attorney Advisors from the Divisions of General Law and Mineral Resources, Office of the Solicitor, participated in one of the sessions.
- c. The primary focus of the training was to gain greater knowledge of available FOIA guidance, tools and resources from Headquarters, DOI and DOJ. It also provided a collaborative environment for candidly sharing ideas, work processes, challenges and solutions throughout the Program.
- d. All six employees having FOIA duties in BOEM's regional offices attended, either in person or via video conferencing.
- e. The Headquarters FOIA staff, as well as all regional FOIA personnel, completed the Department of Justice online training for "FOIA Professionals." Thus, all Bureau employees in the 0306 job series have received core, substantive FOIA training this year.

While our focus this year was on training Bureau FOIA personnel, we hope to have DOJ's online "FOIA Training for All Employees" assigned to all BOEM staff in FY16.

8. Has your bureau fully complied with the Department's FOIA Certification Program this quarter? If not, please include how you plan to remedy this deficiency this fiscal year.

BOEM has fully complied with the Department's FOIA Certification Program in July 2015, as described in item 7 above.

Bureau/Office Accomplishments – FY16 Q1

1. Describe steps taken to improve your component’s FOIA Program this quarter. (Please include at least two steps and explain each with a detailed sentence or two. We are especially interested in how you have improved your program’s responsiveness.)

BOEM continues to provide interim responses when it cannot respond within 20 - 30 workdays, keeps requesters informed of the status of their requests, and negotiates with requesters on alternative processing schedules for requests that are too broad or complex to answer within the time limits.

BOEM established a separate FOIA email address for our Alaska Office, the regional office that receives a significant number of “Complex” requests. This allows requesters to send requests directly to the region when they are only seeking records from the regional office.

BOEM experienced a drop in new request of approximately 25% in the first quarter of FY16 as compared to FY15; however, the Bureau FOIA Officer departed the agency during this time. Also during the first quarter of FY16, the Headquarters FOIA Office has been responsible for processing approximately 73% of all FOIA requests received by the Bureau.

2. Please list at least two instances of meaningful discretionary disclosures your component has made this quarter.

Discretionary Disclosures		
Subject of the Request	Exempt information that was released	Exemption(s) that would have covered the released information
Records relating to Shell’s Revised Chukchi Sea Exploration Plan.	Emails regarding internal discussions with BOEM and other DOI personnel reporting an incident that happened during the company’s operations	Exemption 5, Deliberative Process Privilege
(Same FOIA request described above.)	Emails regarding internal discussions with BOEM personnel discussing mitigation measures related to Shell’s Letter of Authorization from the USFWS	Exemption 5, Deliberative Process Privilege

3. Please list at least two instances of meaningful proactive disclosures your component has made this quarter.

Proactive Disclosures and Transparency	
Description of new records, datasets, videos, etc. posted	Website URL or FOIA Library location
Announcement of the selection of the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine Committee members, a new 14-person committee on environmental science and assessment for offshore energy resources. The new “Standing Committee on Environmental Science and Assessment for Ocean Energy Management” will provide independent information and support discussions on issues relevant to BOEM’s environmental studies and assessment	http://www.boem.gov/BOEM-Newsroom/Press-Releases/2015/press10132015.aspx

Bureau/Office Accomplishments – FY16 Q1

activities.	
Presentations and the agenda from BOEM's NC Renewable Energy Task Force Meeting (October 2015).	http://www.boem.gov/Renewable-Energy-Program/State-Activities/NC/Fifth-BOEM-NC-Renewable-Energy-Task-Force-Meeting-October-2015.aspx
Presentation and Q&As including video of the 2015 Houston Offshore Financial Assurance Forum detailing the development of a new Notice to Lessees regarding Financial Assurance	http://www.boem.gov/Forum-on-Proposed-Financial-Assurance-Criteria/
BOEM's public outreach effort asking for identification of potential study ideas for consideration on Alaska, Atlantic, Gulf of Mexico and Pacific OCS areas. BOEM's ESP is particularly interested in study ideas that include hypothesis testing, and the opportunity to include a citizen-science component	http://www.boem.gov/BOEM-Newsroom/Notes-to-Stakeholders/2015/note10262015.aspx
Over 15 descriptions of new and ongoing environmental studies that are or will be available in the Environmental Studies Program Information System (ESPIS)(see http://www.data.boem.gov/homepg/data_center/other/espis/espisfront.asp) have been posted. We have provided links to a few of them as representational samples. Let us know if you would like to see links to all of them.	http://www.boem.gov/Environmental-Stewardship/Environmental-Studies/Alaska-Region/Alaska-Studies/fe-1604.aspx http://www.boem.gov/Environmental-Stewardship/Environmental-Studies/Alaska-Region/Alaska-Studies/fe-1604.aspx http://www.boem.gov/Environmental-Stewardship/Environmental-Studies/Alaska-Region/Alaska-Studies/IM_1602.aspx http://www.boem.gov/Environmental-Stewardship/Environmental-Studies/Pacific-Region/Studies/pc-16-03.aspx http://www.boem.gov/Environmental-Stewardship/Environmental-Studies/Renewable-Energy/Understanding-Whale-Presence-in-the-Virginia-Offshore-Wind-Energy-Area-using-Passive-Acoustic.aspx http://www.boem.gov/Environmental-Stewardship/Environmental-Studies/Renewable-Energy/Virginia-Ocean-Geophysical-Survey-Phase-II-Analyses-Offshore-Virginia-Wind-Energy-Area.aspx

Bureau/Office Accomplishments – FY16 Q1

	http://www.boem.gov/Environmental-Stewardship/Environmental-Studies/Alaska-Region/Alaska-Studies/ps-1606.aspx
A summary of the bidding results from Atlantic Wind Lease Sale Five (ATLW5) for the Wind Energy Area (WEA) offshore New Jersey held by BOEM on the November 9, 2015.	http://www.boem.gov/New-Jersey/
BOEM's Call for Information and Nominations (Call) to gauge the offshore wind industry's interest in acquiring commercial wind leases offshore South Carolina dated November 23, 2015.	http://www.boem.gov/SC-CALL/
BOEM's Mid-Atlantic Regional Planning Body public webinar from December 8, 2015 to include the presentation, summary, video, transcript and participant list.	http://www.boem.gov/Environmental-Stewardship/Mid-Atlantic-Regional-Planning-Body/December-8-Webinar/MidA-RPB-Dec-8-2015-Webinar.aspx
Summary of BOEM's November 2015 Commercial Fishing Public Meetings providing input into BOEM's Identification of an Offshore Wind Energy Area in Offshore New York	http://www.boem.gov/NY-Summary-Fisheries-Outreach-Call-Area/
A report titled <i>The Pacific Regional Ocean Uses Atlas (PROUA): Data and Tools for Understanding Ocean Space Use in Washington, Oregon and Hawaii</i> , is the result of a three year collaboration between BOEM and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) that documents where coastal communities use the ocean along the Pacific Northwest and around the main Hawaiian islands	http://www.boem.gov/note12182015/

BOEM also posts a wealth of scientific information, such as mapping data and published environmental studies. We did not include links to all of this type of information, but we can provide them to the Department upon request.

4. Please provide at least one example of how your component has improved its online presence (e.g., new efforts to solicit feedback on website content/presentation, improve content and search capabilities).

BOEM ensured the new contact information and email for our Alaska Region Office is posted on our website. Because of the growing backlog resulting from increased requests received and limited resources at Headquarters, including the loss of the Bureau FOIA Officer, planned improvements to the content of the website remain on hold. Updating the FOIA website and providing direct electronic access to our regional FOIA offices will be a priority during the second quarter of FY 2016. The BOEM.gov site, in general, seeks to promote public engagement in its decisionmaking process and includes 'Public Engagement Opportunities' and 'Stakeholders' pages. Some BOEM programs use the site to post dates, locations and agendas for upcoming public meetings on various energy projects; meeting notes, presentations and videos of key speakers after meetings have taken place; information about open public comment periods; and the like. BOEM also uses Twitter, Facebook, Flickr, and RSS Feeds to reach out to the public and publicize these opportunities.

Bureau/Office Accomplishments – FY16 Q1

5. Please discuss your efforts to reduce your backlog.

After BOEM's significant increase in the number of new requests received during FY15 as compared to previous years, and the loss of the Bureau FOIA Officer at the end of the first quarter of FY16, the Bureau is carefully monitoring the situation and considering a range of options for addressing the backlog. There was an approximate 25% decrease in new requests received during the first quarter of FY16 as compared to FY15; however, the Headquarters FOIA Office is responsible for more than 73% of new requests. The Headquarters Office was also responsible for more than 70% of the requests completed during the first quarter. Approximately 81% of BOEM's open requests are in the "Complex" and "Exceptional/Voluminous" processing tracks.

BOEM management is taking steps to try and address the need for additional FOIA Program resources at Headquarters. BOEM expects to be able to hire a contractor in the second quarter of FY16 to provide FOIA support and, thereby, significantly increase productivity as well as improve consistency in all phases of the process by freeing up the Headquarters FOIA staff to provide more assistance to the regions. All of these efforts are aimed at reducing the backlog, reducing response times, and improving compliance overall.

Many of BOEM's FOIA/PA requests initially fall into the "Complex" processing track which tends to significantly slowdown response times for these requests. BOEM Headquarters staff continue to employ the practice of taking time to conduct a preliminary assessment of any responsive documents identified in order to offer a requester meaningful ways to narrow the scope of the request and facilitate the Bureau's response. This has allowed BOEM to reduce the size of the Complex queue, ensure consistent decisions are made on track placement, and answer some requests more quickly by placing them in faster processing tracks when appropriate.

6. Please discuss your efforts to close the ten oldest requests reported in your component's last FOIA Annual Report.

While BOEM did not complete any of our ten oldest requests during the first quarter, we are diligently working toward completing all ten before the end of FY16. We plan to complete or close three of the ten requests in the second quarter of FY16. To date, BOEM sent a "Still Interested" letter for one request where the requester has not responded to emails or correspondence for a year; negotiated a smaller scope for one request; and our Headquarters FOIA Office continues to meet weekly with our Gulf of Mexico Regional Office in an effort to complete the Department's oldest request.

7. Please discuss your training efforts this quarter, including:

- a. The number of conferences or trainings held;**
- b. Who lead the training;**
- c. A brief description of the topics covered;**
- d. an estimate of the number of participants from your bureau who were in attendance; and**
- e. Whether all bureau employees in the 0306 job series have received core, substantive FOIA training this year (if they have not, please include your plans for ensuring they do receive this training this year).**

Bureau/Office Accomplishments – FY16 Q1

- a. No conferences or training were held this quarter. However, BOEM, the USFWS FOIA Officer and a new Attorney Advisor from SOL met to discuss how to improve procedures, coordination, and consultation for the Alaska Regional Offices.
- b. The Headquarters Senior FOIA Specialist led the discussion.
- c. When to consult with or refer to the other Bureau, when to consult the SOL, and the SOL role in FOIA.
- d. Three personnel in the 0306 job series.
- e. While we did not hold a training session during the first quarter of this FY, the plan is to hold one training session each quarter for all BOEM personnel in the 0306 series beginning in the second quarter. The Acting Bureau FOIA Officer and the Lead Regional FOIA Specialists will work together to cover hot topic items for the Bureau FOIA Team.

8. Has your bureau fully complied with the Department's FOIA Certification Program this quarter? If not, please include how you plan to remedy this deficiency this fiscal year.

While we have not complied with the Department's FOIA Certification Program this quarter, we intend to accomplish this as described in Item 7e above.

Bureau/Office Accomplishments – FY16 Q2

1. Describe steps taken to improve your component's FOIA Program this quarter. (Please include at least two steps and explain each with a detailed sentence or two. We are especially interested in how you have improved your program's responsiveness.)

BOEM continues to provide interim responses when it cannot respond within 20 - 30 workdays, keeps requesters informed of the status of their requests, and negotiates with requesters on alternative processing schedules for requests that are too broad or complex to answer within the time limits.

BOEM experienced a drop in new request of approximately 24% in the first half of FY16 as compared to FY15; however, the Bureau FOIA Officer position is still vacant. Also during the first half of FY16, the Headquarters (HQ) FOIA Office has been responsible for processing approximately 70% of all FOIA requests received by the Bureau.

2. Please list at least two instances of meaningful discretionary disclosures your component has made this quarter.

Discretionary Disclosures		
Subject of the Request	Exempt information that was released	Exemption(s) that would have covered the released information
Records relating to Shell's Revised Chukchi Sea Exploration Plans	An email regarding sending a draft document of a Request for Additional Information to an Attorney Advisor in the Office of the Solicitor for review and advice. The final version of the document was posted on the Bureau website.	Exemption 5, Attorney Client Privilege
(Same FOIA request described above.)	A follow-up email to an attorney advisor in the Office of the Solicitor updating the submission of a letter to Shell regarding the same topic above.	Exemption 5, Attorney Client Privilege

3. Please list at least two instances of meaningful proactive disclosures your component has made this quarter.

Proactive Disclosures and Transparency	
Description of new records, datasets, videos, etc. posted	Website URL or FOIA Library location
A series of accurate and realistic visual simulations of a hypothetical, commercial-scale wind energy facility within the New York Call Area were posted In response to stakeholder interest regarding visual impacts from potential future renewable energy development within the New York Call Area, BOEM has undertaken a project to develop visual simulations of a hypothetical wind energy facility on the Outer Continental Shelf offshore Long Island, New York.	http://www.boem.gov/Renewable-Energy-Program/State-Activities/NY/Visual-Simulations/Summer-Single-Frame-Simulations.aspx
A video of Director Abigail Ross Hopper joined by kindergarteners and fifth	http://www.boem.gov/BOEM-Newsroom/Video/How-

Bureau/Office Accomplishments – FY16 Q2

graders from Pierpont Elementary School in Ventura, California during the Day of Service beach clean-up to commemorate the Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday.	Clean-is-your-Beach.aspx
Presentation and posters from BOEM's public scoping meetings in Charleston, SC (Jan. 5, 2016), Murrells Inlet (Jan. 6, 2016), and North Myrtle Beach (Jan. 7, 2016) to inform stakeholders of BOEM's environmental review process and solicit input regarding resources and alternatives BOEM should consider in the environmental assessment.	http://www.boem.gov/Renewable-Energy-Program/State-Activities/SC/Public-Scoping-Meetings-Jan-5-7.aspx
The Agenda, presentation and timeline of BOEM's Mid-Atlantic Regional Ocean Planning Body Meeting held in Baltimore, Maryland in March 2016.	http://www.boem.gov/Environmental-Stewardship/Mid-Atlantic-Regional-Planning-Body/March-2016-Meeting/MidA-RPB-Public-Meeting-March-2016.aspx
Over 20 descriptions of new and ongoing environmental studies that are or will be available in the Environmental Studies Program Information System (ESPIS)(see http://www.data.boem.gov/homepg/data_center/other/espis/espisfront.asp) have been posted. We have provided links to a few of them as representational samples. Let us know if you would like to see links to all of them.	http://www.boem.gov/Environmental-Stewardship/Environmental-Studies/Renewable-Energy/Spatially-Explicit-Social-Values.aspx http://www.boem.gov/Environmental-Stewardship/Environmental-Studies/Renewable-Energy/Integration-of-Offshore-Avian-Spatial-Data.aspx http://www.boem.gov/Environmental-Stewardship/Environmental-Studies/Renewable-Energy/BOEM-WECA-Final-Report-NCCOS.aspx http://www.boem.gov/Environmental-Stewardship/Environmental-Studies/Renewable-Energy/Appendices-2016-003-NOAA-Tech-memo-NOS-NCCOS-196.aspx http://www.boem.gov/Environmental-Stewardship/Environmental-Assessment/NEPA/BOEM-2016-005.aspx http://www.boem.gov/Environmental-Stewardship/Environmental-Assessment/NEPA/WPA-248-Special-Information-Notice.aspx http://www.boem.gov/Environmental-Stewardship/Environmental-Studies/Renewable-Energy/Appendices-2016-003-NOAA-Tech-memo-NOS-NCCOS-196.aspx

Bureau/Office Accomplishments – FY16 Q2

	Stewardship/Environmental-Assessment/NEPA/BOEM-2016-006.aspx http://www.boem.gov/Environmental-Stewardship/Environmental-Assessment/NEPA/CPA-247-Special-Information-Notice-NOA.aspx http://www.boem.gov/Environmental-Stewardship/Environmental-Assessment/NEPA/Record-of-Decision-Lease-Sale-226.aspx http://www.boem.gov/Environmental-Stewardship/Environmental-Studies/Pacific-Region/Studies/2016-011.aspx http://www.boem.gov/Environmental-Stewardship/Environmental-Assessment/Air-Quality/Air-Quality-Rule-Regulatory-Impact-Analysis.aspx
Statements of BOEM's Congressional Testimony	http://www.boem.gov/Congressional-Testimony/
BOEM's National Aviation Plan, a cohesive national aviation management plan that will allow all regional, district/field offices, and aviation users to easily acquire the necessary information and policy to manage its aviation program.	http://www.boem.gov/BOEM-National-Aviation-Management-Plan-2016/
Progression Hawaii Offshore Wind, Inc.'s Unsolicited Application for a Section 585 Commercial Wind Lease on the Outer Continental Shelf Offshore of the South Coast of Oahu	http://www.boem.gov/Progression-South-Coast-of-Oahu-Project/
BOEM's 2016 Assessment of Undiscovered Technically Recoverable Oil and Gas Resources of the Nation's Outer Continental Shelf including the report, maps, fact sheets, and a downloadable Geodatabase.	http://www.boem.gov/National-Assessment-2016/
BOEM and BSEE's joint Public Information Data System (PIDS) is regularly updated with a wealth of information regarding Active/Inactive/Expired Leases, Adjudications, Geological and Geophysical Permits (G&G), Exploration/Development/Production Plans, Renewable Energy Lease Files, and Unit Agreements, and Well Information. These documents include the Public	https://www.data.boem.gov/homepg/data_center/other/Web_Store/pifront.asp

Bureau/Office Accomplishments – FY16 Q2

Information copies of Plans, Permits, and Well information submitted by stakeholders. During the second quarter of FY 2016, 808 G&G permit files (13759 pages) and 447 Exploration/Development/Production Plans and supporting Environmental Analyses (26668 pages) were imported into the system and are available publicly.	
---	--

BOEM also posts a wealth of scientific information, such as mapping data and published environmental studies. We did not include links to all of this type of information, but we can provide them to the Department upon request.

4. Please provide at least one example of how your component has improved its online presence (e.g., new efforts to solicit feedback on website content/presentation, improve content and search capabilities).

Because of the growing backlog resulting from limited resources at Headquarters (HQ), including the loss of the Bureau FOIA Officer, planned improvements to the content of the website remain on hold. Updating the FOIA website will be a priority during FY 2016. During the first half of FY 2016, BOEM provided direct electronic access to all of our regional FOIA offices by ensuring the Alaska Region Office opened and monitors its own email account. Additionally, the BOEM.gov site, in general, seeks to promote public engagement in its decisionmaking process and includes ‘Public Engagement Opportunities’ and ‘Stakeholders’ pages. Some BOEM programs use the site to post dates, locations and agendas for upcoming public meetings on various energy projects; meeting notes, presentations and videos of key speakers after meetings have taken place; information about open public comment periods; and the like. BOEM also uses Twitter, Facebook, Flickr, and RSS Feeds to reach out to the public and publicize these opportunities.

5. Please discuss your efforts to reduce your backlog.

After BOEM’s significant increase in the number of new requests received during FY15 as compared to previous years, and the loss of the Bureau FOIA Officer at the end of the first quarter of FY16, the Bureau is carefully monitoring the situation and considering a range of options for addressing the backlog. The HQ FOIA Office is responsible for more than 70% of new requests. The HQ Office was also responsible for approximately 73% of the requests completed during the first quarter. Approximately 84% of BOEM’s open requests are in the “Complex” and “Exceptional/Voluminous” processing tracks.

BOEM management is taking steps to try and address the need for additional FOIA Program resources at HQ. BOEM expects to be able to fill the Bureau FOIA Officer vacancy and hire a contractor in the third quarter of FY16 to provide FOIA support and, thereby, significantly increase productivity as well as improve consistency in all phases of the process. This should effectively free up the HQ FOIA staff to provide more assistance to the regions. All of these efforts are aimed at reducing the backlog, reducing response times, and improving compliance overall.

Many of BOEM’s FOIA/PA requests initially fall into the “Complex” processing track which tends to significantly slowdown response times for these requests. BOEM HQ staff continue to employ the practice of taking time to conduct a preliminary assessment of any responsive documents

Bureau/Office Accomplishments – FY16 Q2

identified in order to offer a requester meaningful ways to narrow the scope of the request and facilitate the Bureaus' response. This has allowed BOEM to reduce the size of the Complex queue, ensure consistent decisions are made on track placement, and answer some requests more quickly by placing them in faster processing tracks when appropriate.

6. Please discuss your efforts to close the ten oldest requests reported in your component's last FOIA Annual Report.

During the first quarter, BOEM was able to close one of our ten oldest requests when a requester did not respond to a "Still interested" letter. We plan to complete or close four of the ten requests in the third quarter of FY16. Our HQ FOIA Office continues to meet weekly with our Gulf of Mexico Regional Office in an effort to complete the Department's oldest request. During the second quarter of this FY, BOEM made partial releases to the requesters for three of the requests including the Department's oldest request. We also plan to send still interested letters for two of the requests. We are diligently working toward completing or closing all ten before the end of FY16.

7. Please discuss your training efforts this quarter, including:

- a. The number of conferences or trainings held;**
 - b. Who lead the training;**
 - c. A brief description of the topics covered;**
 - d. an estimate of the number of participants from your bureau who were in attendance; and**
 - e. Whether all bureau employees in the 0306 job series have received core, substantive FOIA training this year (if they have not, please include your plans for ensuring they do receive this training this year).**
- a. BOEM held one training session during this quarter via VTC for all of the Regional FOIA Offices and HQ.
 - b. The Acting BOEM FOIA Office led the training.
 - c. Topics included Exemption 4, consultations, and referrals.
 - d. All BOEM FOIA personnel in the 0306 job series attended. Additionally, records management support staff in two of the regional offices also attended.
 - e. In addition to the training detailed above, BOEM still intends to hold one training session each quarter for all BOEM FOIA personnel in the 0306 series. The Acting Bureau FOIA Officer and the Lead Regional FOIA Specialists will work together to cover hot topic items for the Bureau FOIA Team.

8. Has your bureau fully complied with the Department's FOIA Certification Program this quarter? If not, please include how you plan to remedy this deficiency this fiscal year.

While we have not complied with the Department's FOIA Certification Program this quarter, we intend to accomplish this as described in Item 7e above.

Bureau/Office Accomplishments – FY16 Q3

1. Describe steps taken to improve your component's FOIA Program this quarter. (Please include at least two steps and explain each with a detailed sentence or two. We are especially interested in how you have improved your program's responsiveness.)

BOEM has begun holding quarterly meetings with the Bureau FOIA Coordinators. We discuss common FOIA challenges for the bureau, provide training for common tasks, discuss requests in the backlog, including schedules for completion, and review current FOIA news from the Department's monthly FOIA Officers Meetings.

BOEM continues to provide interim responses when it cannot respond within 20 - 30 workdays, keeps requesters informed of the status of their requests, and negotiates with requesters on alternative processing schedules for requests that are too broad or complex to answer within the time limits.

BOEM experienced a drop in new requests of approximately 26% through the third quarter of FY16 as compared to FY15; However, approximately 70% off all requests received this FY are for the Bureau's Headquarters (HQ) FOIA Office. The HQ office has also been responsible for completing processing of approximately 71% of requests through the end of the third quarter. While the Bureau FOIA Officer position has been filled, the HQ Office is still facing a staffing shortage with the Bureau's Senior FOIA Specialist position now vacant. One of the Regional Offices is also providing support in monitoring the FOIA email inbox for new requests.

2. Please list at least two instances of meaningful discretionary disclosures your component has made this quarter.

Discretionary Disclosures		
Subject of the Request	Exempt information that was released	Exemption(s) that would have covered the released information
Records relating to the Carpinteria Offshore Field Redevelopment Project which lies in the Santa Barbara Channel in California	Discussions between BOEM and BSEE regarding development of the supplemental bond related to the decommissioning costs of the project.	Exemption 5, Deliberative Process Privilege

3. Please list at least two instances of meaningful proactive disclosures your component has made this quarter.

Proactive Disclosures and Transparency	
Description of new records, datasets, videos, etc. posted	Website URL or FOIA Library location
A Memorandum of Understanding signed on May 4, 2016 by Denmark and the United States as represented by BOEM Director Abigail Hopper to strengthen cooperation on offshore wind energy projects and recognize their countries' common interests in developing offshore wind as a clean and sustainable energy source	http://www.boem.gov/BOEM-Denmark-MOU/

Bureau/Office Accomplishments – FY16 Q3

Information and supporting documents regarding BOEM's Gulf of Mexico Region's Western Planning Area Lease Sale 248 is scheduled to be held in 2016 in New Orleans, LA.	http://www.boem.gov/Sale-248/
BOEM's Science Notes used to keep our community of stakeholders informed on our ongoing research as it is taking place in the field featuring findings from the 2015 field season of the Arctic Marine Biodiversity Observing Network study, or AMBON, monitoring biodiversity in the Arctic Chukchi Sea from an ecosystem perspective, looking at microbes, whales and everything in between.	http://www.boem.gov/Science-Notes/
Presentations and agenda from BOEM's sixth North Carolina Intergovernmental Renewable Energy Task Force meeting on April 19, 2016.	http://www.boem.gov/Renewable-Energy-Program/State-Activities/NC/Sixth-Task-Force-Meeting/Sixth-Task-Force-Meeting.aspx
Over 15 descriptions of new and ongoing environmental studies that are or will be available in the Environmental Studies Program Information System (ESPIS) (see http://www.data.boem.gov/homepg/data_center/other/espis/espisfront.asp) have been posted. We have provided links to a few of them as representational samples. Let us know if you would like to see links to all of them.	http://www.boem.gov/Environmental-Stewardship/Environmental-Studies/SDP-2017-2019.aspx http://www.boem.gov/Environmental-Stewardship/Environmental-Studies/Alaska-Region/Alaska-Studies/aq-130318.aspx http://www.boem.gov/Environmental-Stewardship/Environmental-Studies/Alaska-Region/Alaska-Studies/bio-130314.aspx http://www.boem.gov/Environmental-Stewardship/Environmental-Studies/Alaska-Region/Alaska-Studies/bio-130315.aspx http://www.boem.gov/Environmental-Stewardship/Environmental-Studies/Pacific-Region/Studies/2016-029.aspx http://www.boem.gov/Environmental-Stewardship/Environmental-Studies/Pacific-Region/Studies/2016-008.aspx
Presentations and agenda from BOEM's seventh New Jersey Intergovernmental Task Force meeting on Thursday, May 19, 2016 in Trenton, New Jersey	http://www.boem.gov/Renewable-Energy-Program/State-Activities/NJ/Seventh-Task-Force-Meeting.aspx

Bureau/Office Accomplishments – FY16 Q3

The Site Assessment Plan for meteorological evaluations and site assessment submitted to BOEM on March 2, 2016 regarding a commercial lease for a renewable energy project with Virginia Electric and Power Company for the Virginia Wind Energy Area	http://www.boem.gov/Renewable-Energy-Program/State-Activities/VA/Commercial-Lease-test.aspx
BOEM's Marine Minerals Program is tasked with managing the extraction of "non-energy minerals" (primarily sand and gravel) excavated from the ocean floor. "Before and After" photos of joint Beach Nourishment and Restoration projects.	http://www.boem.gov/Non-Energy-Minerals/MMP-Slideshows/MMP-Before-and-After-Show.aspx http://www.boem.gov/Non-Energy-Minerals/MMP-Slideshows/MMP-South-Carolina-Show.aspx http://www.boem.gov/Non-Energy-Minerals/MMP-Slideshows/MMP-Florida-Show.aspx
Presentations and agenda from BOEM's fourth New York task force meeting held on April 28 in Garden City, NY.	http://www.boem.gov/Renewable-Energy-Program/State-Activities/NY/2016-Task-Force-Meeting.aspx
BOEM and BSEE's joint Public Information Data System (PIDS) is regularly updated with a wealth of information regarding Active/Inactive/Expired Leases, Adjudications, Geological and Geophysical Permits (G&G), Exploration/Development/Production Plans, Renewable Energy Lease Files, and Unit Agreements, and Well Information. These documents include the Public Information copies of Plans, Permits, Environmental Analyses, and Well information submitted by stakeholders. During the third quarter of FY 2016, 107 G&G permit files (473 pages), 1471 Leasing Files (5964 pages), and 1412 Exploration/Development/Production Plans and supporting Environmental Analyses (69125 pages) were imported into the system and are available publicly.	https://www.data.boem.gov/homepg/data_center/other/WebStore/pifront.asp

BOEM also posts a wealth of scientific information, such as mapping data and published environmental studies. We did not include links to all of this type of information, but we can provide them to the Department upon request.

4. Please provide at least one example of how your component has improved its online presence (e.g., new efforts to solicit feedback on website content/presentation, improve content and search capabilities).

Because of the growing backlog resulting from limited resources at HQ, including the loss of the Bureau FOIA Officer, planned improvements to the content of the website remain on hold. Updating the FOIA website will be a priority during the final quarter of FY 2016. Additionally, the BOEM.gov site, in general, seeks to promote public engagement in its decisionmaking process and includes 'Public Engagement Opportunities' and

Bureau/Office Accomplishments – FY16 Q3

‘Stakeholders’ pages. Some BOEM programs use the site to post dates, locations and agendas for upcoming public meetings on various energy projects; meeting notes, presentations and videos of key speakers after meetings have taken place; information about open public comment periods; and the like. BOEM also uses Twitter, Facebook, Flickr, and RSS Feeds to reach out to the public and publicize these opportunities.

5. Please discuss your efforts to reduce your backlog.

After BOEM’s significant increase in the number of new requests received during FY15 as compared to previous years, the loss of the Bureau FOIA Officer at the end of the first quarter of FY16, and the vacancy of the Senior FOIA Specialist at the end of the third quarter, the Bureau is carefully monitoring the situation and considering a range of options for addressing the backlog. The HQ FOIA Office is responsible for more than 70% of new requests received. The HQ Office was also responsible for completion of approximately 71% of the requests through the end of the third quarter and also provided assistance to all of the Regional Coordinators for releases made during the quarter. Approximately 82% of BOEM’s open requests are in the “Complex” and “Exceptional/Voluminous” processing tracks.

BOEM management is taking steps to try and address the need for additional FOIA Program resources at HQ. BOEM filled the Bureau FOIA Officer position during the third quarter and is now in the process of replacing the Senior FOIA Specialist. Additionally, BOEM is considering hiring a Term employee to provide FOIA support and, thereby, significantly increase productivity as well as improve consistency in all phases of the process. This should effectively free up the Bureau FOIA Officer and Senior FOIA Specialist to provide more assistance to the regions and provide additional training. All of these efforts are aimed at reducing the backlog, reducing response times, and improving compliance overall.

Many of BOEM’s FOIA/PA requests initially fall into the “Complex” processing track which tends to significantly slowdown response times for these requests. BOEM HQ staff continue to employ the practice of taking time to conduct a preliminary assessment of any responsive documents identified in order to offer a requester meaningful ways to narrow the scope of the request and facilitate the Bureaus’ response. This has allowed BOEM to reduce the size of the Complex queue, ensure consistent decisions are made on track placement, and answer some requests more quickly by placing them in faster processing tracks when appropriate.

6. Please discuss your efforts to close the ten oldest requests reported in your component’s last FOIA Annual Report.

Through the third quarter of FY16, BOEM was able to close three of our ten oldest requests: two requesters did not respond to “Still interested” emails and letters sent in accordance with DOJ’s guidelines; and one request was completed through a shared effort with the Gulf of Mexico Regional and HQ Offices. We plan to complete or close the remaining seven requests before the end of FY16. Our HQ FOIA Office continues to meet weekly with our Gulf of Mexico Regional Office in an effort to complete the Department’s oldest request. During the third quarter of this FY, BOEM made partial releases (totaling more than 6,000 pages) to the requesters for two of the requests. We are diligently working toward completing or closing all ten requests before the end of FY16.

Bureau/Office Accomplishments – FY16 Q3

7. Please discuss your training efforts this quarter, including:

- a. The number of conferences or trainings held;**
 - b. Who lead the training;**
 - c. A brief description of the topics covered;**
 - d. an estimate of the number of participants from your bureau who were in attendance; and**
 - e. Whether all bureau employees in the 0306 job series have received core, substantive FOIA training this year (if they have not, please include your plans for ensuring they do receive this training this year).**
- a. BOEM held one training session during this quarter via VTC for all of the Regional FOIA Offices and HQ on June 29, 2016.
 - b. The BOEM FOIA Officer led the training.
 - c. Topics included DOI's Regulation updates, Adequacy of Searches including documentation, and the FOIA Improvement Act of 2016.
 - d. All BOEM FOIA personnel in the 0306 job series attended. Additionally, one records management support staff from the Gulf of Mexico Regional office also attended.
 - e. In addition to the training detailed above, BOEM intends to hold one training session each quarter for all BOEM FOIA personnel in the 0306 series. The Bureau FOIA Officer and the Lead Regional FOIA Specialists will work together to cover hot topic items for the Bureau FOIA Team.

8. Has your bureau fully complied with the Department's FOIA Certification Program this quarter? If not, please include how you plan to remedy this deficiency this fiscal year.

BOEM has fully complied with the Department's FOIA Certification Program as described in item 7 above.

Bureau/Office Accomplishments – FY16 Q4

1. Describe steps taken to improve your component's FOIA Program this quarter. (Please include at least two steps and explain each with a detailed sentence or two. We are especially interested in how you have improved your program's responsiveness.)

BOEM held quarterly meetings with the Bureau FOIA Coordinators. We discussed common FOIA challenges for the bureau, provide training for common tasks, discussed requests in the backlog, including schedules for completion, and reviewed current FOIA news from the Department's monthly FOIA Officers Meetings.

BOEM continues to provide interim responses when it cannot respond within 20 - 30 workdays, keeps requesters informed of the status of their requests, and negotiates with requesters on alternative processing schedules for requests that are too broad or complex to answer within the time limits.

BOEM experienced a drop in new requests of approximately 20% through FY16 as compared to FY15; However, approximately 70% off all requests received this FY were for the Bureau's Headquarters (HQ) FOIA Office. The HQ office has also been responsible for completing the processing of approximately 70% of requests in FY16. While the Bureau FOIA Officer position has been filled, the HQ Office is still facing a staffing shortage with the Bureau's Senior FOIA Specialist position still vacant. Our Pacific Regional Office provided support in monitoring the FOIA email inbox for new requests and ensuring requests were entered into EFTS.

2. Please list at least two instances of meaningful discretionary disclosures your component has made this quarter.

Discretionary Disclosures		
Subject of the Request	Exempt information that was released	Exemption(s) that would have covered the released information
There were none this quarter to report		

3. Please list at least two instances of meaningful proactive disclosures your component has made this quarter.

Proactive Disclosures and Transparency	
Description of new records, datasets, videos, etc. posted	Website URL or FOIA Library location
An Environmental Assessment for Commercial Wind Lease Issuance and Site Assessment Activities on the Atlantic Outer Continental Shelf Offshore New York	http://www.boem.gov/BOEM-Newsroom/Notes-to-Stakeholders/2016/note07052016.aspx
BOEM's Annual Studies Development Plan for the Fiscal Year 2017-2019 Planning Period	http://www.boem.gov/BOEM-Newsroom/Notes-to-Stakeholders/2016/note07112016.aspx
A new webpage for the commercial fishing industry to serve as a single point of entry for updates on Atlantic offshore renewable energy planning and leasing efforts to include status updates, charts and maps, and project-specific developer	http://www.boem.gov/Atlantic-Fishing/

Bureau/Office Accomplishments – FY16 Q4

contact information for fisheries liaisons and fishery representatives.	
BOEM's Final Notice of Sale Package Western Gulf of Mexico Planning Area Outer Continental Shelf Oil and Gas Lease Sale 248	http://www.boem.gov/Final-Notice-of-Sale-248-Package/
Over 19 descriptions of new and ongoing environmental studies that are or will be available in the Environmental Studies Program Information System (ESPIS) (see http://www.data.boem.gov/homepg/data_center/other/espis/espisfront.asp) have been posted. We have provided links to a few of them as representational samples. Let us know if you would like to see links to all of them.	http://www.boem.gov/Environmental-Stewardship/Environmental-Studies/Alaska-Region/Alaska-Studies/bio-1609.aspx http://www.boem.gov/Environmental-Stewardship/Environmental-Studies/Corals-Studies-Fact-Sheet.aspx http://www.boem.gov/Environmental-Stewardship/Environmental-Studies/GM-15-06.aspx http://www.boem.gov/Environmental-Stewardship/Environmental-Studies/Pacific-Region/Studies/2015-042.aspx http://www.boem.gov/Environmental-Stewardship/Environmental-Studies/Pacific-Region/Studies/2016-031.aspx http://www.boem.gov/Environmental-Stewardship/Environmental-Studies/Renewable-Energy/Movement-and-Habitat-Selection-by-Migratory-Fishes-within-the-Maryland-Wind-Energy-Area-and-Adjacent-Sites.aspx
The Record of Decision and Environmental Analysis for the Sand Resources for the Mississippi Coastal Improvements Program Comprehensive Barrier Island Restoration.	http://www.boem.gov/Non-Energy-Minerals/Mississippi-Projects.aspx
BOEM's Gulf of Mexico OCS Region's 10th report highlighting oil and gas activities in the deepwater Gulf of Mexico.	http://www.boem.gov/Deepwater-Gulf-of-Mexico-Report-2014/
Supporting documents from the Mid-Atlantic Regional Planning Body Public	http://www.boem.gov/Environmental-Stewardship/Mid-

Bureau/Office Accomplishments – FY16 Q4

Webinar including the slide presentation, chat questions, participant list, transcript, and audio and video recording of the webinar.	Atlantic-Regional-Planning-Body/July-11-2016-Webinar/July-11-2016-Webinar.aspx
Presentations and agenda from BOEM's auction seminar for prospective bidders held September 20, 2016 regarding the Atlantic Wind Sale 7 in North Carolina (Kitty Hawk).	http://www.boem.gov/Renewable-Energy-Program/State-Activities/NC/Auction-Seminar-for-Atlantic-Wind-Sale-7-North-Carolina.aspx
BOEM and BSEE's joint Public Information Data System (PIDS) is regularly updated with a wealth of information regarding Active/Inactive/Expired Leases, Adjudications, Geological and Geophysical Permits (G&G), Exploration/Development/Production Plans, Renewable Energy Lease Files, and Unit Agreements, and Well Information. These documents include the Public Information copies of Plans, Permits, Environmental Analyses, and Well information submitted by stakeholders. During the fourth quarter of FY 2016, 173 G&G permit files (1152 pages), 1356 Leasing Files (8413 pages), and 1195 Exploration/Development/Production Plans and supporting Environmental Analyses (47826 pages) were imported into the system and are available publicly.	https://www.data.boem.gov/homepg/data_center/other/WebStore/pifront.asp

BOEM also posts a wealth of scientific information, such as mapping data and published environmental studies. We did not include links to all of this type of information, but we can provide them to the Department upon request.

4. Please provide at least one example of how your component has improved its online presence (e.g., new efforts to solicit feedback on website content/presentation, improve content and search capabilities).

Because of the growing backlog resulting from limited resources at HQ, including the loss of the Bureau FOIA Officer, planned improvements to the content of the website remain on hold. Updating the FOIA website will be a priority during FY 2017. Additionally, the BOEM.gov site, in general, seeks to promote public engagement in its decisionmaking process and includes 'Public Engagement Opportunities' and 'Stakeholders' pages. Some BOEM programs use the site to post dates, locations and agendas for upcoming public meetings on various energy projects; meeting notes, presentations and videos of key speakers after meetings have taken place; information about open public comment periods; and the like. BOEM also uses Twitter, Facebook, Flickr, and RSS Feeds to reach out to the public and publicize these opportunities.

5. Please discuss your efforts to reduce your backlog.

After BOEM's significant increase in the number of new requests received during FY15 as compared to previous years, the loss of the Bureau FOIA Officer at the end of the first quarter of FY16, and the vacancy of the Senior FOIA Specialist at the end of the third quarter, the Bureau carefully monitored the situation and was able to successfully reduce our backlog by 10%. The HQ FOIA Office is responsible for approximately 70% of new

Bureau/Office Accomplishments – FY16 Q4

requests received. The HQ Office was also responsible for completion of approximately 70% of the FY16 requests and provided assistance to all of the Regional Coordinators for processing very complex requests throughout the FY. All of BOEM's open requests are in the "Complex" and "Exceptional/Voluminous" processing tracks.

BOEM management is taking steps to try and address the need for additional FOIA Program resources at HQ. BOEM filled the Bureau FOIA Officer position during the third quarter and the Senior FOIA Specialist position will be filled in the first quarter of FY17. Additionally, BOEM is still considering hiring a Term employee to provide FOIA support and, thereby, significantly increase productivity as well as improve consistency in all phases of the process. This should effectively free up the Bureau FOIA Officer and Senior FOIA Specialist to provide more assistance to the regions and provide additional training. All of these efforts are aimed at reducing the backlog, reducing response times, and improving compliance overall.

Many of BOEM's FOIA/PA requests initially fall into the "Complex" processing track which tends to significantly slowdown response times for these requests. BOEM HQ staff continue to employ the practice of taking time to conduct a preliminary assessment of any responsive documents identified in order to offer a requester meaningful ways to narrow the scope of the request and facilitate the Bureaus' response. This has allowed BOEM to reduce the size of the Complex queue, ensure consistent decisions are made on track placement, and answer some requests more quickly by placing them in faster processing tracks when appropriate.

6. Please discuss your efforts to close the ten oldest requests reported in your component's last FOIA Annual Report.

Through the end of FY16, BOEM was able to close six of our ten oldest requests, including the oldest request in the Department. Two requesters did not respond to "Still interested" emails and letters sent in accordance with DOJ's guidelines; two requests were completed through shared efforts with the Gulf of Mexico Regional and HQ Offices; and two requests were completed by the HQ FOIA Office. One of the remaining four requests is in the Exceptional/Voluminous category, and we anticipate completing the request during the first quarter of FY17. The Bureau intends to work with the requesters again and offer, where possible, meaningful ways to narrow these requests to facilitate their completion as soon as possible in FY17.

7. Please discuss your training efforts this quarter, including:

- a. The number of conferences or trainings held;**
- b. Who lead the training;**
- c. A brief description of the topics covered;**
- d. an estimate of the number of participants from your bureau who were in attendance; and**
- e. Whether all bureau employees in the 0306 job series have received core, substantive FOIA training this year (if they have not, please include your plans for ensuring they do receive this training this year).**

- a. BOEM held one training session during this quarter via VTC for all of the Regional FOIA Offices and HQ on September 21, 2016.
- b. The BOEM FOIA Officer and Gulf of Mexico Region FOIA Coordinator led the training.

Bureau/Office Accomplishments – FY16 Q4

- c. Topics included DOI's Regulation updates, the FOIA Improvement Act of 2016, Scope, EFTS updates, consultations and referrals, and reasonable segregability requirements.
- d. All BOEM FOIA personnel in the 0306 job series attended. Two Technical Information Specialists from the Gulf of Mexico and Alaska Region Offices, respectively, also attended.
- e. In addition to the training detailed above, BOEM intends to hold one training session each quarter for all BOEM FOIA personnel in the 0306 series. The Bureau FOIA Officer and the Lead Regional FOIA Specialists will work together to cover hot topic items for the Bureau FOIA Team.

8. Has your bureau fully complied with the Department's FOIA Certification Program this quarter? If not, please include how you plan to remedy this deficiency this fiscal year.

BOEM has fully complied with the Department's FOIA Certification Program as described in item 7 above.