

June 1, 1990

POLICY STATEMENT NO. PS-1

**Blaster Certification Requirements, Surface Coal Mining and Reclamation Operations**

WHEREAS:

Recognizing the physical nature of the unconsolidated overburden materials associated with coal and lignite in Louisiana, the Office anticipates that there will be no blasting operations necessary for surface coal mining and reclamation operations permitted under the Louisiana Surface Mining and Reclamation Act (Act) and the Regulations issued pursuant to the Act, Statewide Order 29-O-1 (Rules). Therefore, the Office has determined that it would be inappropriate and non-productive to develop a blaster certification program within the State at this time.

Recognizing further, in the unlikely event that blasting should become necessary relative to those operations permitted under the Act and the Rules, it will be necessary for the Office to develop a valid blaster certification program, in that the fundamental requirement for certification focuses on knowledge of blasting regulations within the State. Such a blaster certification program would be promulgated in full accordance with Subchapter M, 30 CFR Part 850.

THEREFORE:

It is hereby declared to be the Policy of the Office that any person responsible for the conduct of blasting operations related to surface coal mining and reclamation operations permitted under the Act and the Rules must be certified.

The Office will, until further notice, recognize and accept as valid a current blaster's certification legitimately obtained from any other State Regulatory Authority (or the Federal Government) having an approved Blaster Certification Program under 30 CFR Part 850. Proper evidence of this certification will be required to be supplied to the Office prior to any blasting operations being conducted under the Act or the Rules.

With the development of a State Certification Program, the Office will ensure that candidates for blaster certification are examined by reviewing and verifying the competence of persons directly responsible for the use of explosives in surface coal mining and reclamation operations through a written examination in technical aspects of blasting and State and Federal laws governing the storage, use and transportation of explosives, and practical experience of the candidates as necessary to qualify a person to accept the responsibility for blasting operations in surface coal mining and reclamation operations. Such experience shall demonstrate that the candidate possesses practical knowledge of blasting techniques, understands the hazards involved in the use of explosives, and otherwise has exhibited a pattern of conduct consistent with the

acceptance of responsibility for blasting operations. The Commissioner shall verify the candidate's successful completion of the blaster training program and examination on the topics.

Any blasting operations deemed necessary must fully comply with Sections 5353-5363 of the Rules. Further, a blaster shall immediately exhibit his or her certificate to any authorized representative of OSM or the Office upon request; a blaster's certification shall not be assigned or transferred; blasters shall not delegate their responsibility to any individual who is not a certified blaster; and certified blasters shall take every reasonable precaution to protect their certificate from loss, theft or unauthorized duplication.

This Policy Statement adequately reflects the policy of the Office in regard to Blaster Certification requirements within the State, and this Policy Statement is hereby included in the approved Louisiana Regulatory Program.

Issued this 2<sup>nd</sup> day of July, 1990 in Baton Rouge, Louisiana.