



**U.S. Department of the Interior
Minerals Management Service
Gulf of Mexico OCS Region**

Notice No. 101

June 8, 1981

OCS Operations Safety Alert

Explosion

An explosion occurred on an OCS platform in the Gulf of Mexico recently, caused by the bypassing of a malfunctioning automatic control system. The main fuel automatic shutdown valve in a gas fired heater of the platform's heat transfer unit had been taken out of service.

An employee, attempting to manually light the heater, failed to purge the fire box and the explosion resulted.

As a result of the explosion, the employee was seriously injured and the heater destroyed.

The operator has indicated that, in order to prevent a recurrence, employees have been instructed on the danger of bypassing automatic controls on a gas fired burner and warned of stern disciplinary action should this occur again.

[signed] D.W. Solanas

Deputy Conservation Manager

Offshore Operations Support

Gulf of Mexico OCS Region