

July 8, 2010

## **Supplement to the 2009 Beaufort Sea Areawide Final Finding of the Director**

The following new information is added:

### **Deepwater Horizon Incident in the Gulf of Mexico**

The Deepwater Horizon was a semi-submersible drilling unit (Transocean 2010a) operating on Mississippi Canyon Block 252 (MC252) (British Petroleum 2010a) in federal Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) waters located in the United States Gulf of Mexico, about 41 miles offshore of Louisiana (Transocean 2010c; Transocean 2010b; Transocean 2010e). British Petroleum Exploration & Production, Inc., was the lease operator (Transocean 2010e).

According to official reports, on April 20, 2010, approximately 10:00 p.m. central time, a fire and explosion were reported on the Deepwater Horizon (Transocean 2010b; Transocean 2010e). The rig sank on April 22, 2010 (Transocean 2010e), coming to rest on the sea floor in about 5,000 feet of water, about 1,500 feet from the well center and away from subsea pipelines (Transocean 2010d). At the time of the incident, 126 crew members were onboard; 115 were evacuated and 11 died (Transocean 2010b; Transocean 2010e).

Before the rig sank, the response team was not able to stop the flow of oil and gas (Transocean 2010e), the blowout preventer failed (British Petroleum 2010b), and a large release of hydrocarbons into the water occurred. As of this time, various well control efforts have been attempted, including ongoing drilling of two relief wells begun on May 2, 2010 and May 16, 2010 (British Petroleum 2010b). As of this time, oil continues to escape from the well into the ocean and a large cleanup operation is underway.

The Minerals Management Service (MMS) and the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) have jurisdiction over the incident, and have a joint, ongoing investigation into the incident (USCG and MMS 2010a). The investigation is tasked with identifying the factors leading to the incident, and developing conclusions and recommendations regarding the incident (USCG and MMS 2010a). As of now, two hearings have been held by the joint USCG and MMS investigation: one on May 11-12, 2010, and a second on May 26-29, 2010. A third hearing is tentatively scheduled for July 19-23, 2010 (USCG and MMS 2010b). Analysis and conclusions are not being presented during the hearings (USCG and MMS 2010b). Evidence, facts, conclusions, and recommendations of the investigation team must be approved by both the USCG and MMS, after which a final investigative report will be made available to the public (USCG and MMS 2010a). A final report is scheduled to be released in January 2011 (USCG and MMS 2010c).

The State of Alaska is closely following the activities in the Gulf of Mexico. When the causes of the incident are established and made available, we will determine any applicability to Alaska, and will modify or issue new mitigation measures or lessee advisories, as needed.

### **References Cited**

British Petroleum. 2010a. BP forges ahead with Gulf of Mexico oil spill response. Press release, April 25, 2010. <http://www.bp.com/genericarticle.do?categoryId=2012968&contentId=7061518> Accessed June 24, 2010.

British Petroleum. 2010b. Update on Gulf of Mexico oil spill - 29 May. Press release, May 29, 2010. <http://www.bp.com/genericarticle.do?categoryId=2012968&contentId=7062487> Accessed June 24, 2010.

July 8, 2010

**Supplement to the 2009 Beaufort Sea Areawide Final Finding of the Director**

Transocean. 2010a. Deepwater Horizon. Fleet specifications.

<http://www.deepwater.com/fw/main/Deepwater-Horizon-56C17.html?LayoutID=17> Accessed June 24, 2010.

Transocean. 2010b. A message from the CEO. Transocean response site.

<http://www.deepwater.com/fw/main/Home-910.html> Accessed June 3, 2010.

Transocean. 2010c. Our rigs: list by location. <http://www.deepwater.com/fw/main/List-by-location-17.html> Accessed June 24, 2010.

Transocean. 2010d. Transocean Ltd. provides Deepwater Horizon. Transocean news release, April 26, 2010. [http://phx.corporate-ir.net/phoenix.zhtml?c=113031&p=irol-newsArticle\\_print&ID=1417958&highlight=](http://phx.corporate-ir.net/phoenix.zhtml?c=113031&p=irol-newsArticle_print&ID=1417958&highlight=) Accessed June 24, 2010.

Transocean. 2010e. Transocean Ltd. provides update on semisubmersible drilling rig Deepwater Horizon. Transocean news release, April 21, 2010. [http://phx.corporate-ir.net/phoenix.zhtml?c=113031&p=irol-newsArticle\\_print&ID=1417123&highlight=](http://phx.corporate-ir.net/phoenix.zhtml?c=113031&p=irol-newsArticle_print&ID=1417123&highlight=) Accessed June 24, 2010.

USCG and MMS (U.S. Coast Guard and Minerals Management Service). 2010a. Coast Guard, Minerals Management Service co-chair investigation into Deepwater Horizon mobile offshore drilling unit incident. Deepwater Horizon Joint Investigation: Press release, May 10, 2010. <http://www.deepwaterinvestigation.com/go/doc/3043/542459> Accessed June 24, 2010.

USCG and MMS (U.S. Coast Guard and Minerals Management Service). 2010b. Deepwater joint investigation board concludes 4th day in 2nd session of hearings. Deepwater Horizon Joint Investigation Team. <http://www.deepwaterinvestigation.com/go/doc/3043/573583> Accessed June 3, 2010.

USCG and MMS (U.S. Coast Guard and Minerals Management Service). 2010c. Frequently asked questions (FAQs). Deepwater Horizon Joint Investigation. Accessed June 24, 2010.