

Fire at platform shuts down High Island pipeline

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GALVESTON, TEXAS: A fire at the High Island A-264 gas compressor platform around 90 miles (144.8 km) offshore Texas caused an explosion on Aug. 4. The fire is now out.

The fire was at the B platform of the facility.

The U.S. Coast Guard Sector Houston – Galveston responded to the fire on Aug. 4, shortly after 10:00 p.m. Coast Guard Cutter Manta arrived on the scene early on Aug. 5, reporting that the fire was out. A flight over the platform reported a light sheen around the facility, but no extensive pollution.

Around 39 to 40 crew members aboard the High Island A-264 facility were evacuated safely with no injuries by Freedom Marine Services offshore supply vessel Gulf Endeavor, which was tied up at a nearby platform. The facility's emergency shut-off switch was engaged upon evacuation.

After the platform is deemed safe for re-boarding, the Coast Guard will investigate the cause of the fire and explosion.

The platform is part of the 291-mile (468.4 km) High Island Offshore System, a natural gas pipeline system operated by Enterprise Products Partners. Enterprise has mobilized emergency response crews and is calculating the extent of the damage.

The platform is a junction platform, connecting a 42-inch main pipeline to third party pipelines. Gas flows and operations at the High Island Offshore System pipeline and the platform have been temporarily suspended while the damage is assessed.

Enterprise spokesperson Rick Rainey characterized the event as a small equipment fire, the cause of which is currently unknown. He stated that the incident did not involve a blow out or natural gas explosion.