

# Joint Information Center Press Release

## Gulf of Mexico - Transocean Drilling Incident

DATE: April 23, 2010 12:30:07 EST

### **UPDATE 5: Search and rescue continues; joint environmental response efforts in place**

NEW ORLEANS, La. -- The Coast Guard continues the search for 11 missing crewmembers from the mobile offshore drilling unit (MODU) Deepwater Horizon.

"Our deepest prayers and sympathy go out to the families of the 11 missing workers as we continue in this phase of the Search and Rescue case. While 115 workers have been successfully saved, our focus is on the 11 missing workers and we realize that with every hour that passes the chance of survivability decreases. At this time we continue to actively search for survivors, prepare to respond to potential pollution, assess potential salvage options for the MODU Deepwater Horizon, and continue with our marine casualty investigation," said Rear Admiral Mary Landry, commander of the Eighth Coast Guard District. Since the search commenced late Tuesday evening, the Coast Guard has searched over 3402 square miles using air and surface assets.

Mid-morning Thursday, there was a second explosion causing the MODU to settle below the surface. There were 700,000 gallons of diesel in enclosed tanks inside the pontoons at the time of the initial explosion. At this time, it is not known if the diesel remains contained, if it was released as part of the secondary explosion which occurred yesterday just prior to the MODU's sinking, or consumed in the fire. Members from the Coast Guard National Strike Force are on scene monitoring the situation and assets deployed for ongoing and potential pollution response include dispersant airplanes, Hoss (High Volume Offshore Skimming System) barges, oil spill skimming vessels, and ancillary equipment and personnel as necessary.

The Department of the Interior, MMS, and the Coast Guard continue to support the efforts of the responsible parties to secure all potential sources of pollution. Both federal agencies have technical teams in place overseeing the proposals by BP and Transocean to completely secure the well. Until that has occurred and all parties are confident the risk of additional spill is removed, a high readiness posture to respond will remain in place.

Although the oil appears to have stopped flowing from the well head, Coast Guard, BP, Transocean, and MMS remain focused on mitigating the impact of the product currently in the water and preparing for a worst-case scenario in the event the seal does not hold. Visual feed from deployed remotely operated vehicles with sonar capability is continually monitored in an effort to look for any crude oil which still has the potential to emanate from the subsurface well.

"From what we have observed yesterday and through the night, we are not seeing any signs of release of crude in the subsurface area. However we remain in a 'ready to respond' mode and are working in a collaborative effort with BP, the responsible party, to prepare for a worst-case scenario," Landry stated early Friday morning.

Watchstanders at the U.S. Coast Guard District Eight command center here received a report at approximately 10 p.m. Tuesday of an explosion and fire aboard the Deepwater Horizon, approximately 42 miles Southeast of Venice, La.

Video is available at the following link: [http://cgvi.uscg.mil/media/main.php?g2\\_itemId=46](http://cgvi.uscg.mil/media/main.php?g2_itemId=46)

Updates are available on the following Web site: <http://www.d8externalaffairs.com/go/site/2931/>

The Coast Guard and MMS both have an important regulatory and oversight function with regard to safety, security, and stewardship of the offshore oil and gas industry. We have commenced a comprehensive and collaborative joint investigation and will work together to uncover the root cause of this tragic incident and to make recommendations to prevent the recurrence of similar incidents and preclude any loss of life or risk to the environment.