



United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF OCEAN ENERGY MANAGEMENT, REGULATION, AND ENFORCEMENT

Washington, DC 20240

AUG 20 2010

The Honorable Raul M. Grijalva
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representative Grijalva:

Thank you for your letters dated February 24, 2010, and May 19, 2010, cosigned by your colleagues, requesting an investigation into allegations related to environmental and safety standards for BP's Atlantis oil and gas production facility in the Gulf of Mexico. On March 26, 2010, we sent you an interim response agreeing to conduct a full investigation of this matter and complete the report by the end of May 2010. This letter updates that response. A similar letter is being sent to each signer of the letter.

Under a Secretarial Order, signed June 18, 2010, the Minerals Management Service is now the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, Regulation and Enforcement (BOEM), as the agency undergoes reorganization and reform.

In April 2009, Mr. Kenneth Abbott, a former contractor for BP Exploration and Production Inc., filed a sealed complaint under the False Claims Act alleging that BP falsely certified to BOEM the existence of certain engineering documents because BP did not have "approved" and "as built" documents for many of the subsea components of BP's Atlantis Project. Mr. Abbott voluntarily dismissed his lawsuit in January 2010. Upon Mr. Abbott's motion, the court reopened and unsealed the case in May 2010. Because the complaint remained under seal until May 2010, we were unable to disclose any investigative information related to Mr. Abbott's allegations. Nevertheless, BOEM's investigation of the BP Atlantis matter began in response to this lawsuit in 2009 and continues now.

On April 19, 2010, BOEM personnel arrived at BP's office in Houston to review BP's documentation for each subsea component involved in bringing the Atlantis facility to production. The documentation under review included drawings, specifications, procedures, and test results compiled for each subsea component submitted to BP's Offshore Installation Manager before production began.

The BOEM investigation team was onsite in BP's Houston office when the Deepwater Horizon incident occurred. The investigators were immediately redirected to respond to the Deepwater Horizon incident and the Atlantis investigation was temporarily suspended. However, by May 19, 2010, BOEM personnel were redirected from the Horizon incident back to the Atlantis investigation. Additional personnel were assigned to the Atlantis investigation on June 1, 2010.

Given the sheer volume of BP documents, this was a lengthy and complex review process. During this review, the BOEM team examined the process that BP went through to bring the Atlantis Project to production, including the documentation involved in that process. BOEM has determined that an extensive review is necessary to complete the review of the required engineering drawings for Atlantis that you directed. BOEM therefore requested specified documents from BP, and has recently received them. Once the team completes its review of these documents, we anticipate providing you a final report of BOEM's investigation, which will include an explanation of BOEM's regulations governing engineering documents and its findings regarding BP's compliance with these rules with respect to BP Atlantis. We expect to provide a report by October 15, 2010.

We appreciate your interest in the safety of Outer Continental Shelf oil and gas operations. If you have any further questions, please contact me at (202) 208-3500 or Ms. Lyn Herdt, Chief, BOEM, Office of Congressional Affairs, at (202) 208-3502.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Michael R. Bromwich" followed by a stylized monogram or set of initials.

Michael R. Bromwich
Director