

National Commission on the BP Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill and Offshore Drilling

For Immediate Release
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Commission Releases Letter to Bureau of Ocean Energy Management

National Commission on the BP DEEPWATER HORIZON OIL SPILL AND OFFSHORE DRILLING

Commissioners

Bob Graham - Co-Chair
William H. Reilly - Co-Chair
Frances Beinecke
Donald Boesch
Terry D. Garcia
Cherry A. Murray
Frances Ulmer

Richard Lazarus
Executive Director

August 6, 2010

Michael Bromwich
Director, Bureau of Ocean Energy Management
Department of the Interior
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Director Bromwich:

On behalf of the National Commission on the BP Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill and Offshore Drilling I want to express my appreciation for the testimony you provided at the Commission's first hearing, in New Orleans on July 12-13, 2010. Your testimony will be critical to assisting the Commission in developing the report and recommendations required by the Executive Order establishing the Commission. I also want to thank you for making your staff available to meet

with Commission staff to discuss matters of relevance to the Commission's work. We look forward to a continued productive and cooperative relationship with you, in the spirit of the Executive Order.

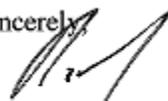
I am writing to request follow up information regarding some of the issues that arose during the hearing as well as during the Commission members' site visits to locations affected by the oil spill. The Commission members heard extensive testimony regarding the economic impacts both of the spill and of the Department of the Interior's moratorium on deepwater drilling. Although the lawfulness of the Administration's decision to issue a moratorium falls outside the President's charge to the Commission, the rationale for, and the effectiveness of, using a moratorium as a method for preventing further spills in the immediate aftermath of a spill are factors for the Commission to consider in making recommendations for the future.

Accordingly, we request detailed information regarding:

- 1) the nature and scope of the Bureau's efforts to review the adequacy of the safety procedures applicable to, and used on, individual drilling rigs covered by the moratorium. Please provide a description of when the Bureau identified the criteria for what constitutes adequately safe procedures and technology, how the Bureau's review has progressed over time and its current status, when the Bureau expects its review to be completed, and what specific information is being evaluated with respect to individual rigs or categories of rigs. We are particularly interested in whether individual rigs, or categories of rigs, subject to the moratorium are sufficiently safe to allow the moratorium to be lifted with respect to those rigs. We recognize that the safety of the rigs is not the only issue the Bureau is considering in determining the need for the moratorium, which extends to the availability of adequate containment and response resources, as well as the Bureau's own ability to oversee rig operations.
- 2) the nature of the actions that the Bureau may take as a result of its review, including promulgation of an interim final rule on drilling safety and steps to buttress resources available for containment and response.

As you know, the Executive Order imposes a six-month deadline for producing the Commission's report. We have noticed our next public hearing on August 25, 2010, and would appreciate an answer to these questions by Monday, August 23, 2010 because the Commissioners may wish to consider these matters during their August hearing later that week. Again, thank you for your assistance in addressing these critical issues.

Sincerely,



Richard Lazarus
Executive Director