Joint Cover Memo on
Joint Investigation Team Report of Investigation

The United States Coast Guard and the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, Regulation & Enforcement (BOEMRE) have completed their joint investigation into the explosion and fire onboard the Mobile Offshore Drilling Unit (MODU) *DEEPWATER HORIZON* that occurred on April 20, 2010.

A jointly-issued Convening Order dated April 27, 2010, formed a Joint Investigation Team (JIT) to help both agencies identify the causal factors that led to the blowout at the Macondo well and the explosion and fire on the *DEEPWATER HORIZON* and make recommendations to prevent similar incidents in the future. The joint investigation was conducted under an agreed Statement of Principles that ensured the investigative process was rigorous, comprehensive, independent and transparent. The JIT was composed of four lead members and supporting technical staff from each agency. Together, the JIT held seven public hearings and took the testimony of more than 80 witnesses; conducted multiple interviews with more than 25 individuals: received, processed, and analyzed hundreds of thousands of pages of documents; and maintained custody of hundreds of pieces of physical evidence, ranging from small rock samples to the blowout preventer that had been in place at the Macondo wellhead. The JIT designated 17 Parties in Interest, who were afforded their statutory rights specified in 46 U.S.C. § 6303. We thank the members of the JIT for their diligent work in completing this challenging assignment and commend them for their thorough inquiry.

The enclosed Report of Investigation contains the findings, analyses, conclusions, and recommendations of the JIT. Volume I, as accepted by the Commandant's Final Action, of the report addresses issues within the jurisdiction of the United States Coast Guard, specifically the factors related to the vessel and its systems that likely contributed to the marine casualty, and the subsequent evacuation, firefighting and search and rescue efforts. Volume II addresses the causes of the blowout, including factors related to the Macondo well drilling operations, well abandonment procedures and well control that are within the jurisdiction of BOEMRE. Each volume was prepared according to the respective agency's internal processes and complements the other. Together, they provide a comprehensive assessment of the incident. The two volumes comprise the completed joint Report of Investigation.

As reflected in the Report of Investigation, the United States Coast Guard and BOEMRE are already undertaking significant reforms of the domestic regulatory and oversight regime for MODUs and offshore activities on the outer continental shelf (OCS), and where appropriate, within the international maritime community. The United States Coast Guard and BOEMRE are committed to maintaining a close partnership that will leverage our respective authorities and expertise for protecting our OCS and the offshore industry workforce. We will work to keep pace with changes in industry practices and drilling procedures, and will work together to implement a structured framework with appropriate standards to effectively manage risks to ensure safe, secure, and environmentally responsible operations.

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Admiral R. J. Papp, Jr.
Commandant, U.S. Coast Guard

[redacted]

Director, Bureau of Ocean Energy
Management, Regulation & Enforcement

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