



U.S. Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board

OFFICE OF GENERAL COUNSEL

Memorandum

To: Board Members

From: Steven Messer
Acting General Counsel

Steven
Messer

Digitally signed by Steven
Messer
Date: 2025.06.20
12:24:49 -04'00'

Cc: Charles Barbee
Adam Henson
Leadership Team

Subject: Board Action Report – Notation Item 2025-58 | Recommendation to the Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement (BSEE) (2010-10-I-OS-R2) from the Macondo Blowout and Explosion investigation (2010-10-I-OS)

Date: June 20, 2025

On June 18, 2025, the Board approved Notation Item 2025-58, thereby designating Recommendation 2010-10-I-OS-R2 to the Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement (BSEE) from the Macondo Blowout and Explosion investigation (2010-10-I-OS) with the status of Closed – Acceptable Alternative Action.

Voting Summary – Notation Item 2025-58

Disposition: APPROVED

Disposition date: June 18, 2025

	Approve	Disapprove	Calendar	Not Participating	Date
S. Johnson	X				6/18/2025
S. Owens	X				6/18/2025
C. Sandoval	X				6/18/2025



U. S. Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board

RECOMMENDATION STATUS CHANGE SUMMARY

Report:	Macondo Blowout and Explosion
Recommendation Number:	2010-10-I-OS-R2
Date Issued:	June 5, 2014
Recipient:	Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement
New Status:	Closed – Acceptable Alternative Action
Date of Status Change:	June 18, 2025

Recommendation Text:

Publish safety guidance to assist the responsible parties in fulfillment of regulatory obligations stipulated in R1 for the identification and effective management of safety critical elements (SCEs)—technical, operational, and organizational—with the goal of reducing major accident risk to As Low As Reasonably Practicable (ALARP), including but not limited to each of the identified minimum requirements (See R1, items a-d).

Board Status Change Decision:

A. Rationale for Recommendation

On April 20, 2010, a multiple-fatality incident occurred at the Macondo oil well approximately 50 miles off the coast of Louisiana in the Gulf of Mexico during temporary well-abandonment activities on the Deepwater Horizon (DWH) drilling rig. Control of the well was lost, resulting in a blowout which is the uncontrolled release of oil and gas (hydrocarbons) from a well. On the rig, the hydrocarbons found an ignition source. The resulting explosions and fire led to the deaths of 11 individuals; serious physical injuries to 17 others; the evacuation of 115 individuals from the rig; the sinking of the Deepwater Horizon; and massive marine and coastal damage from approximately 4 million barrels of released hydrocarbons.

The U.S. Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board (CSB) produced a four-volume investigation report and issued 16 recommendations; 2 of those recommendations were issued to the Department of the Interior's (DOI) Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement (BSEE), the offshore industry regulator. As a part of the investigation, the CSB looked at the regulatory environment and the role that BSEE plays in it. This status change summary is specific to CSB Recommendation No. 2010-10-I-OS-R2 (R2) from volume two of the investigation report.

B. Response to the Recommendation

DOI has ensured responsiveness specific to the Macondo recommendations. In addition to correspondence, the CSB and BSEE have had several electronic and in-person meetings to discuss all of the Macondo recommendations including R2, which is directly linked to CSB Recommendation 2010-10-I-OS-R1 (R1).

BSEE implemented R1 through acceptable alternatives that achieved an equivalent level of safety as the original recommendation language and met the objectives or a majority of the objectives envisioned by the Board. BSEE subsequently published safety guidance that addressed those acceptable alternatives, all of which can be found on their website.¹²³⁴⁵

C. Board Analysis and Decision

Based on information above regarding BSEE's publishing of safety guidance addressing the acceptable alternatives for R1, the Board voted to change the status of CSB Recommendation No. 2010-10-I-OS-R2 to: "Closed – Acceptable Alternative Action."

¹ [BSEE Risk-Based Inspection Program](#)

² [Safety and Environmental Management Systems - SEMS | Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement](#)

³ [Safety Bulletins | Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement](#)

⁴ [Safety Alerts Program | Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement](#)

⁵ [Notice to Lessees \(NTLs\) | Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement](#)