



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
12:41:49 -04'00'

Cc: Charles Barbee
Adam Henson
Leadership Team

Subject: Board Action Report – Notation Item 2025-60 | Recommendation to the Department of the Interior - Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement (DOI-BSEE) (2010-10-I-OS-R12) from the Macondo Blowout and Explosion investigation (2010-10-I-OS)

Date: June 20, 2025

On June 18, 2025, the Board approved Notation Item 2025-60, thereby designating Recommendation 2010-10-I-OS-R12 to the Department of the Interior - Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement (DOI-BSEE) from the Macondo Blowout and Explosion investigation (2010-10-I-OS) with the status of Closed – Acceptable Alternative Action.

Voting Summary – Notation Item 2025-60

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-R12
Date Issued:	April 17, 2016
Recipient:	Department of the Interior - Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement
New Status:	Closed – Acceptable Alternative Action
Date of Status Change:	June 18, 2025

Recommendation Text:

Augment the capabilities and functioning of BSEE to incorporate the following proactive oversight mechanisms:

- a. *Review of the documentation required to be submitted under CSB 2010-I-OS-R11(b) by technically qualified regulatory personnel who have the capability and authority to require modifications and improvements to the major hazards report as necessary, either before an acceptance process and commencement of the major hazards operation(s) or during periodic proactive review by the regulator;*
- b. *Establish a program for preventive, comprehensive inspections and audits with technically qualified staff as described in R13(a) to ensure that the responsible party as defined in R11(a) can demonstrate the risk reduction commitments stipulated in its major hazards report.*

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 (DOI-BSEE). The other 9 recommendations intended for the offshore industry regulator, BSEE, were issued to DOI who, in turn, delegated responsibility to address the recommendations to BSEE, now referred to as DOI-BSEE in this status change summary. As a part of the investigation, the

CSB looked at the regulatory environment and the role that DOI-BSEE plays in it. This status change summary is specific to CSB Recommendation No. 2010-10-I-OS-R12 (R12) from volume four of the investigation report.

B. Response to the Recommendation

DOI ensured responsiveness specific to the Macondo recommendations. In addition to correspondence, the CSB and DOI-BSEE have had several electronic and in-person meetings to discuss all of the Macondo recommendations including R12. DOI-BSEE has implemented several rulemakings and risk identifying projects since the Macondo incident; all with the goal of increasing safety and preventing environmental damage in the offshore oil and gas industry. In response to R12, DOI-BSEE provided extensive documentation to demonstrate that their capabilities and functioning had been enhanced, to include a new bureau directive, revised inspector competencies, a third-party model on inspector talent development, and an inspector certification program.

A. Board Analysis and Decision

Based upon the information above, the Board concurs that DOI-BSEE has implemented acceptable alternatives to the original recommendation language that meet the objectives or a majority of the objectives envisioned by the Board. As such, the Board voted to change the status of CSB Recommendation No. 2010-10-I-OS-R12 to: “Closed – Acceptable Alternative Action.”