



U. S. Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board RECOMMENDATION STATUS CHANGE SUMMARY

Report:	Gas Well Blowout and Fire at Pryor Trust Well 1H-9
Recommendation Number:	2018-01-I-OK-R6
Date Issued:	June 12, 2019
Recipient:	American Petroleum Institute (API)
New Status:	Closed – Acceptable Alternative Action
Date of Status Change:	July 28, 2021

Recommendation Text:

Update API Bulletin 97 Well Construction Interface Document Guidelines to specify that it applies to both onshore and offshore drilling operations.

Board Status Change Decision:

A. Rationale for Recommendation

On January 22, 2018, a blowout and rig fire occurred at Pryor Trust 0718 gas well number 1H-9, located in Pittsburg County, Oklahoma. The fire resulted in the fatalities of five workers, who were inside the driller's cabin on the rig floor. They died from thermal burn injuries and smoke and soot inhalation. The blowout occurred approximately three-and-a-half hours after removing drill pipe ("tripping") out of the well. The cause of the blowout and rig fire was the failure of both the primary barrier (hydrostatic pressure produced by drilling mud) and the secondary barrier (human detection of influx and activation of the blowout preventer) which were intended to be in place to prevent a blowout.

As a part of its investigation, the U.S. Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board (CSB) determined that the lack of a Well Construction Interface Document (WCID) between the drilling contractor and lease operator likely contributed to the lack of hazard analysis and management of change by both companies when there were signs that the operations were veering from the original plans. However, American Petroleum Institute Bulletin 97, *Well Construction Interface Document Guidelines*, applies solely to the offshore drilling industry. Had API Bulletin 97 also applied to onshore operations, it could have potentially prevented this incident. As a result the Board issued a recommendation to API to update API Bulletin 97 so that it applies to both onshore and offshore drilling operations

Response to the Recommendation

In January of 2021, API communicated to the CSB that rather than update Bulletin 97 to apply to onshore drilling operations, in December 2020 API published Recommended Practice 97L, *Onshore Well Construction Interface Document*, to address WCID issues for onshore drilling operations due to the differences between offshore and onshore operations, terminology, and environmental conditions. In their response, API outlined how Recommended Practice 97L

addresses the provisions contained in the CSB Recommendation. The CSB purchased and reviewed a copy of the December 2020 edition of API Recommended Practice 97L to evaluate the information provided in API's response.

B. Board Analysis and Decision

Although API did not extend the scope of Bulletin 97 to include onshore drilling operations as envisioned in the CSB Recommendation, API met the intent of the recommendation by issuing a new Recommended Practice 97L that applies WCIDs to onshore drilling operations. Thus, the Board voted to change the status of CSB Recommendation No. 2018-01-I-OK-R6 to: "Closed - Acceptable Alternative Action."