

BOEMRE HOSTS INTERNATIONAL REGULATORS FORUM SPECIAL MEETING

WASHINGTON, DC – The International Regulators Forum (IRF), offshore oil and gas regulators from eight countries, wrapped up a two-day meeting hosted by the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, Regulation and Enforcement (BOEMRE) this afternoon in Herndon, VA. The IRF is a group of regulators of health and safety in the offshore upstream oil and gas industry, including BOEMRE. It exists to drive forward improvements in health and safety in the sector through collaboration in joint programs and through sharing information.

The Forum meets periodically to share experiences and to compare regulatory approach, safety and performance. This meeting was the first special meeting convened in the Forum's 17-year history, and was called specifically to address issues related to recent offshore oil and gas incidents, particularly the loss of well control related to the Montara well off Australia and the Macondo well in the Gulf of Mexico.

"As regulators, our role is to provide the public assurances that offshore petroleum activities will be conducted safely, and that operators, who are responsible for managing the associated risks, are held accountable for their safety performance," said Magne Ognedal, General Director, Petroleum Safety Authority of Norway, on behalf of the Forum. "We must learn from each other and share ideas to achieve safety and environmental objectives."

During the meeting, each member country shared case studies about their response to recent incidents, and the group discussed key regulatory processes, lessons learned, and best practices. Additionally, the American Petroleum Institute, the International Association of Oil & Gas producers, the International Association of Drilling Contractors, and the Offshore Operators Committee briefed the Forum on initiatives to improve safety of offshore operations.

The Forum confirmed its commitment to improve the safety of offshore operations and to provide leadership in global offshore safety regulations.

The Forum resolved to:

- Provide leadership on safety and safety related regulatory matters for offshore oil and gas activities. A strategic agenda will be discussed and adopted at the next IRF meeting in October in Vancouver.
- Develop an audit protocol looking at blowout preventer (BOP) integrity and operational issues, for use by all IRF members to provide a consistent approach.
- Continue to strengthen sharing of regulatory practice and experience and provide a sounding board for key initiatives of members.

These matters will be discussed at the next meeting following the IRF 2010 Offshore Safety Conference to be held in Vancouver, B.C. on October 17-20, 2010.

For more information on the IRF see www.irfoffshoresafety.com

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