

The NewsRoom

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Thunder Horse Response Effort Continues

Houston - In a joint-agency response, the Department of Homeland Security's U.S. Coast Guard and Department of the Interior's Minerals Management Service are coordinating with BP and other agencies on the ongoing operations to right the listing Thunder Horse semi-submersible platform. Thunder Horse is located 150 miles southeast of New Orleans, in Mississippi Canyon Block 778 and is operated by BP, with a 75 percent working interest. Exxon Mobil owns the remaining 25 percent.



Response and recovery efforts for the semi-submersible platform will continue as contract crews and BP employees work to remove water from the platform. The U.S. Coast Guard Captain of the Port for the Morgan City, Louisiana zone is the Federal On-Scene Coordinator for this operation.



"The Coast Guard is working closely with BP and its partners in maintaining the Thunder Horse platform's stability and its recovery," said Capt. Terry Gilbreath, the Coast Guard's Federal On-Scene Coordinator for this operation. "We have representatives from MSO Morgan City monitoring the operation."

BP has re-boarded the platform and established power on the facility. Crews are now focusing their efforts on pumping operations in order to right the vessel. The platform continues to list at approximately 20 degrees. An MSRC oil-spill response vessel, the Gulf Coast Responder, is on location to deal with any potential environmental issues.

MMS Director Johnnie Burton noted that "MMS inspectors have been on the scene of the incident everyday. We are coordinating with both the Coast Guard Federal On Scene Coordinator and the BP command center in Houston. MMS structural engineers have been involved as well."



MMS has formed an internal multi-person team to coordinate all aspects of the incident that are of concern to MMS. The multi-person team will deal with operational matters, structural engineering and stability, and oil-spill response planning.



These coordination steps have been taken under the 2004 Memorandum of Agreement between MMS and the Coast Guard. The MOA identifies which areas of offshore structures are under the lead responsibility of each agency, and it establishes procedures for coordination.

Personnel from U.S. Coast Guard Marine Safety Office Morgan City, remain on scene today overseeing the safety of all personnel involved in the operation. Additional personnel in Morgan City and Houston are working to review and approve recovery and safety plans for the effort.

The Coast Guard Cutter Pelican, an 87-foot patrol boat homeported in Abbeville, La., is on scene enforcing a safety zone and will provide search and rescue response capabilities in the event of an emergency.

The cause of the incident remains under investigation.

Relevant Web Sites:

- [Securing Offshore Oil & Gas Production in the 2005 Hurricane Season](#)
- [Hurricane Information](#)
- [Hurricane and Tropical Storm Procedures](#) (PDF-251 KB)
- [MMS Main Web Site](#)
- [Gulf of Mexico Website](#)

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