

Yes No |X|

press release

May 20, 2010

UPDATE ON GULF OF MEXICO OIL SPILL RESPONSE

BP today provided an update on developments in the response to the MC252 oil well incident in the Gulf of Mexico.

Subsea Source Control and Containment

Subsea efforts continue to focus on progressing options to stop the flow of oil from the well through interventions via the blow out preventer (BOP), and to collect the flow of oil from the leak points. These efforts are being carried out in conjunction with governmental authorities and other industry experts.

The volume of oil and gas being collected by the riser insertion tube tool (RITT) containment system at the end of the leaking riser is estimated to be about 3,000 barrels a day (b/d) of oil and some 14 million standard cubic feet a day of gas. The oil is being stored and gas is being flared on the drillship Discoverer Enterprise, on the surface 5,000 feet above.

This remains a new technology and both its continued operation and its effectiveness in capturing the oil and gas remain uncertain.

BP also continues to develop options to shut off the flow of oil from the well through interventions via the failed BOP.

Plans continue to develop a so called "top kill" operation where heavy drilling fluids are injected into the well to stem the flow of oil and gas, followed by cement to seal the well. Most of the equipment is on site and preparations continue for this operation, with a view to deployment in the next few days. Options have also been developed to potentially combine this with the injection under pressure of a variety of materials into the BOP to seal off upward flow.

Work on the first relief well, which began on May 2, continues. The DDII drilling rig began drilling the second relief well on May 16. Each of these wells is estimated to take some three months to complete from the commencement of drilling.

Surface Spill Response and Containment

Work continues to collect and disperse oil that has reached the surface of the sea. Over 930 vessels are involved in the response effort, including skimmers, tugs, barges and recovery vessels.

Intensive operations to skim oil from the surface of the water have now recovered, in total, some 187,000 barrels (7.8 million gallons) of oily liquid. The total length of boom deployed as part of efforts to prevent oil reaching the coast is now more than 1.9 million feet, including over 500,000 feet of sorbent boom.

In total over 19,000 personnel from BP, other companies and government agencies are currently involved in the response to this incident.

So far about 19,000 claims have been filed, and some 8,000 payments have been made.

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SIGNATURES

Pursuant to the requirements of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, the registrant has duly caused this report to be signed on its behalf by the undersigned, thereunto duly authorized.

BP p.l.c.
(Registrant)

Dated: 20 May 2010

/s/ D. J. PEARL
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D. J. PEARL
Deputy Company Secretary