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JUSTICE NEWS

Department of Justice

Office of Public Affairs

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**Attorney General Eric Holder Announces Civil Lawsuit
Against Nine Defendants for Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill**

WASHINGTON – Attorney General Eric Holder announced today that the Justice Department has filed a civil lawsuit against nine defendants in the matter of the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill. The lawsuit asks the court for civil penalties under the Clean Water Act and to declare eight of the defendants liable without limitation under the Oil Pollution Act for all removal costs and damages caused by the oil spill, including damages to natural resources.

In the complaint filed today in the U.S. District Court in New Orleans, the United States alleges violations of federal safety and operational regulations which caused or contributed to the oil spill that began on April 20, 2010 when an explosion and fire destroyed the Deepwater Horizon offshore drilling rig in the Gulf of Mexico, approximately 50 miles from the Mississippi River delta. This action will become part of the multi-district litigation pending before Judge Barbier in federal court in New Orleans.

“We intend to prove that these defendants are responsible for government removal costs, economic losses, and environmental damages without limitation,” said Attorney General Holder. “Even though the spill has been contained, the Department’s focus on investigating this disaster and preventing future devastation has not wavered. Both our civil and criminal investigations continue, and our work to ensure that the American taxpayers are not forced to bear the costs of restoring the gulf area and its economy is moving forward.”

The defendants named in the lawsuit are BP Exploration and Production Inc.; Anadarko Exploration & Production LP and Anadarko Petroleum Corporation (known collectively as “Anadarko Defendants”); MOEX Offshore 2007 LLC; Triton Asset Leasing GMBH, Transocean Holdings LLC, Transocean Offshore Deepwater Drilling Inc., and Transocean Deepwater Inc. (known collectively as “Transocean Defendants”); and Transocean’s insurer, QBE Underwriting Ltd./Lloyd’s Syndicate 1036. QBE/Lloyd’s can be held liable only up to the amount of insurance policy coverage under the Oil Pollution Act and is not being sued under the Clean Water Act.

According to the complaint, important safety and operating regulations were violated in the period leading up to the April 20, 2010 Oil Spill, including:

- Failing to take necessary precautions to keep the Macondo Well under control in the period leading up to the April 20th explosion;
- Failing to use the best available and safest drilling technology to monitor the well’s conditions;
- Failing to maintain continuous surveillance; and
- Failing to use and maintain equipment and material that were available and necessary to ensure the safety and protection of personnel, equipment, natural resources, and the environment.

The complaint alleges that these violations caused or contributed to the massive oil spill, and that the defendants are therefore responsible for removal costs and damages without limitation under the Oil Pollution Act.

The complaint also includes claims for civil penalties under the Clean Water Act, which prohibits the unauthorized discharge of oil into the nation’s waters. It alleges that the defendants named in the lawsuit were in violation of the Act throughout the months that oil was gushing into the Gulf of Mexico.

The ongoing civil investigation into the Gulf Spill is being handled by the Assistant Attorneys General Ignacia Moreno and Tony West of the Environment and Natural Resources Division and the Civil Division of the U.S. Department of Justice, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the U.S. Coast

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Guard, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and the Department of the Interior's Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, Regulation and Enforcement and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

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Attorney General

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