

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
BUREAU OF SAFETY AND ENVIRONMENTAL ENFORCEMENT  
GULF OF MEXICO REGION

ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION REPORT

For Public Release

1. OCCURRED

DATE: 01-DEC-2018 TIME: 0339 HOURS

2. OPERATOR: Chevron U.S.A. Inc.

REPRESENTATIVE:  
TELEPHONE:

CONTRACTOR: Pacific Drilling Services Inc.

REPRESENTATIVE:  
TELEPHONE:

- STRUCTURAL DAMAGE
- CRANE
- OTHER LIFTING
- DAMAGED/DISABLED SAFETY SYS.
- INCIDENT >\$25K
- H2S/15MIN./20PPM
- REQUIRED MUSTER
- SHUTDOWN FROM GAS RELEASE
- OTHER EDS

3. OPERATOR/CONTRACTOR REPRESENTATIVE/SUPERVISOR ON SITE AT TIME OF INCIDENT: 8. OPERATION:

4. LEASE: G34451

AREA: MC LATITUDE:  
BLOCK: 607 LONGITUDE:

5. PLATFORM:

RIG NAME: PACIFIC SHARAV

6. ACTIVITY:

- EXPLORATION(POE)
- DEVELOPMENT/PRODUCTION (DOCD/POD)

7. TYPE:

- HISTORIC INJURY
  - REQUIRED EVACUATION
  - LTA (1-3 days)
  - LTA (>3 days)
  - RW/JT (1-3 days)
  - RW/JT (>3 days)
  - Other Injury

- FATALITY
- POLLUTION
- FIRE
- EXPLOSION

- LWC
- HISTORIC BLOWOUT
  - UNDERGROUND
  - SURFACE
  - DEVERTER
  - SURFACE EQUIPMENT FAILURE OR PROCEDURES

COLLISION  HISTORIC  >\$25K  <=\$25K

- PRODUCTION
- DRILLING
- WORKOVER
- COMPLETION
- HELICOPTER
- MOTOR VESSEL
- PIPELINE SEGMENT NO.
- OTHER

9. CAUSE:

- EQUIPMENT FAILURE
- HUMAN ERROR
- EXTERNAL DAMAGE
- SLIP/TRIP/FALL
- WEATHER RELATED
- LEAK
- UPSET H2O TREATING
- OVERBOARD DRILLING FLUID
- OTHER \_\_\_\_\_

- 10. WATER DEPTH: 6582 FT.
- 11. DISTANCE FROM SHORE: 67 MI.
- 12. WIND DIRECTION: SW  
SPEED: 105 M.P.H.
- 13. CURRENT DIRECTION: NW  
SPEED: 1 M.P.H.
- 14. SEA STATE: FT.
- 15. PICTURES TAKEN:
- 16. STATEMENT TAKEN:

## 17. INVESTIGATION FINDINGS:

On 1-Dec-2018 at approximately 03:35 hours, the Drillship Pacific Sharav experienced extreme unexpected changes in wind speed and direction due to strong thunderstorms in the area (Mississippi Canyon Block 607). This event resulted in a forced excursion of the vessel's planned position. At 03:37 hours, the excursion initially reached the Yellow Watch Circle (as defined by the Well Specific Operating Guidelines) that immediately raised the Dynamic Positioning (DP) Yellow Alert. With the winds increasing (91 knots), the excursion continued further. Meanwhile, the Driller on tour had already begun to execute the Senior Toolpusher's orders to space out, shut down the mud pumps and stop rotation. Prior to this event occurring, the operation being conducted was drilling out the 11.875" liner shoetrack (there was approximately 7-15' of undrilled shoetrack with cement remaining). At 03:38 hours, the vessel crossed the Red Watch Circle which immediately raised the Red Alert. The Chief Mate made the announcement over the Public Announcement System to inform the crew that the vessel was now in Dynamic Position (DP) Red Alert and advised everyone to stay clear of the moon pool.

At 03:39 hours, wind speeds were 84 knots and the vessel was 366 feet off the planned position. In the Drillers Cabin, the Senior Toolpusher confirmed with the Driller that space-out was completed. Once confirmed, the Toolpusher pushed the button on the Driller's Control Panel (DCP) to activate the Emergency Disconnect Sequence (EDS-3).

The manually activated EDS-3 actuated the Blowout Preventer (BOP) Casing Shear Rams (CSR's) and sheared the drill pipe across the stack. After activating the EDS-3, the Driller raised the drill string to ensure that the sheared end of the drill string was above the Blind Shear Rams (BSR's) prior to closing.

At 03:40 hours, the programmed EDS-3 disconnected the Lower Marine Riser Package (LMRP) from the BOP with the BSR's closed and the well secured. At this time, drilling fluid [14.9 ppg Synthetic Oil-Based Mud (SBM)] was released to the sea floor from the LMRP and attached riser column. The Operator (Chevron USA Inc.) calculated a total volume of 2,282 bbls of SBM inside the riser column at the time of the incident. After re-latching the LMRP to the BOP, the operator recovered 609 bbls of SBM (based on the operator's report). Therefore, the incident released a total of 1,673 bbls of SBM into Gulf of Mexico waters. At approximately 05:00 hours, an operator representative notified BSEE and the National Response Center (NRC Confirmation #1231769) of the incident. At 06:18 hours, ROV video surveillance verified the well was secure with no indication of flow.

## 18. LIST THE PROBABLE CAUSE(S) OF ACCIDENT:

The extreme unexpected changes in wind speed and direction due to strong thunderstorms caused an excursion of the vessel's planned position. Due to these rapid changes, the vessel was unable to maintain position while being latched up to the well. This event subsequently resulted in an Emergency Disconnect Sequence (EDS-3).

## 19. LIST THE CONTRIBUTING CAUSE(S) OF ACCIDENT:

N/A

## 20. LIST THE ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

N/A

21. PROPERTY DAMAGED: N/A

NATURE OF DAMAGE: N/A

ESTIMATED AMOUNT (TOTAL):

22. RECOMMENDATIONS TO PREVENT RECCURRANCE NARRATIVE:

**The BSEE New Orleans District makes no recommendations to the Office of Incident Investigation.**

23. POSSIBLE OCS VIOLATIONS RELATED TO ACCIDENT: **NO**

24. SPECIFY VIOLATIONS DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY CONTRIBUTING. NARRATIVE:

25. DATE OF ONSITE INVESTIGATION:

**04-DEC-2018**

28. ACCIDENT CLASSIFICATION:

29. ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION  
PANEL FORMED: **NO**

26. INVESTIGATION TEAM MEMBERS:

**Earl Roy / Alvin Edwards / Nick Fraiche**

OCS REPORT:

30. DISTRICT SUPERVISOR:

**David Trocquet**

27. OPERATOR REPORT ON FILE:

APPROVED

DATE: **30-AUG-2019**