



**U.S. Department of the Interior
Minerals Management Service
Gulf of Mexico OCS Region**

Notice No. 087

July 26, 1979

OCS Operations Safety Alert

Oil Spill

A crude oil spill of approximately 20 barrels occurred recently on an unmanned offshore production platform. Certain platform safety devices had been pinned out-of-service while a mechanic and a pumper were repairing a low pressure transfer pump engine. After repairs were completed the safety devices were placed back in service, with the exception of devices on four wells, when the pump engine again developed trouble. The pump was repaired and the men left the platform for the day without placing the safety devices on the four wells back in service. During the night the transfer pump failed causing a high level condition in the low pressure separator. The level safety high (LSH) sensor on the low pressure separator activated, but the safety equipment pinned out-of-service on the four wells permitted the wells to continue flowing and oil carried over from the separator to the flare scrubber and into the Gulf.

To prevent a recurrence of this type of accident the operator is taking the following action:

A reemphasis and strict enforcement is being made of the policy not to leave any safety system pinned out-of-service except as necessary during starting or maintenance operations and unless a responsible person is on the platform and aware of the situation. The person responsible for the pollution incident has been disciplined with additional loss of pay penalty.

[signed] D.W. Solanas

Oil and Gas Supervisor

Operations Support

Gulf of Mexico Area