

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: **28-MAR-2021** TIME: **1115** HOURS

2. OPERATOR: **Cox Operating, L.L.C.**

REPRESENTATIVE:

TELEPHONE:

CONTRACTOR:

REPRESENTATIVE:

TELEPHONE:

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

3. OPERATOR/CONTRACTOR REPRESENTATIVE/SUPERVISOR

ON SITE AT TIME OF INCIDENT:

8. OPERATION:

4. LEASE: **G02445**

AREA: **VK** LATITUDE:

BLOCK: **900** LONGITUDE:

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

5. PLATFORM: **A**

RIG NAME:

6. ACTIVITY:

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

9. CAUSE:

7. TYPE:

INJURIES:

HISTORIC INJURY

OPERATOR CONTRACTOR

REQUIRED EVACUATION

LTA (1-3 days)

LTA (>3 days)

RW/JT (1-3 days)

RW/JT (>3 days)

FATALITY

Other Injury

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

POLLUTION

FIRE

EXPLOSION

LWC  HISTORIC BLOWOUT

UNDERGROUND

SURFACE

DEVERTER

SURFACE EQUIPMENT FAILURE OR PROCEDURES

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

10. WATER DEPTH: **340** FT.

11. DISTANCE FROM SHORE: **18** MI.

12. WIND DIRECTION:  
SPEED: M.P.H.

13. CURRENT DIRECTION:  
SPEED: M.P.H.

14. SEA STATE: FT.

15. PICTURES TAKEN:

16. STATEMENT TAKEN:

**Incident Summary:**

On 28 March 2021 at approximately 1115 hours, a fire occurred on a pipeline pump located at Viosca Knoll (VK) 900 A, owned and operated by Cox Operating, L.L.C (Cox). No major damage occurred and there were no injuries or pollution. The fire was immediately extinguished by operators nearby.

**Sequence of events reported by the company:**

Per the operator's report, at approximately 1105 hours on 28 March 2021, production operators shut down Pipeline Pump #2 labeled PAX 1243 and switched to Pipeline Pump #1 for better volume and pressure using the Supervisory Control And Data Acquisition (SCADA). Roughly ten minutes later, two production operators in route to the Lease Automatic Custody Transfer (LACT) unit smelled something burning. They looked towards the pipeline pump area and saw smoke originating from the exhaust piping insulation of Pipeline Pump #2. Using a nearby potable water hose, the operators were able to extinguish the flame quickly and safely. The pump was then isolated.

**BSEE Investigation:**

On Sunday, 28 March 2021 at 1600 hours, an Accident Investigator (AI) from the Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement (BSEE) received notification of the incident.

On 29 March 2021, the BSEE AI flew offshore to conduct an onsite investigation of the incident. The AI took photographs within the area of Pipeline Pump #2 and gathered reports and documents. The AI observed an approximately four-inch hole in the inlet piping of the exhaust upstream of the muffler and found damaged piping insulation. The fire occurred within a Class 1 Division 2 area.

The AI reviewed the information gathered and determined the cause of the fire was the hole in the inlet piping of the exhaust upstream of the muffler. The hole was caused due to corrosion. The hole in the piping allowed heat to ignite the piping insulation.

**Conclusion:**

Corrosion weakened the wall of the muffler causing it to crack and introduce excessive temperatures to the insulation blanket. This caused the insulation to smolder and catch fire. BSEE found that Cox's response to fire was adequate and followed regulations.

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

- Equipment failure - Inadequate preventative maintenance, excessive corrosion on the Pipeline Pump # 2's exhaust is the main contributor to the fire.

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

N/A

**20. LIST THE ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:**

21. PROPERTY DAMAGED:

NATURE OF DAMAGE:

N/A

N/A

ESTIMATED AMOUNT (TOTAL): \$8,900

22. RECOMMENDATIONS TO PREVENT RECURRENCE NARRATIVE:

23. POSSIBLE OCS VIOLATIONS RELATED TO ACCIDENT: YES

24. SPECIFY VIOLATIONS DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY CONTRIBUTING. NARRATIVE:

G-111: Lessee failed to maintain equipment properly. Corrosion to the exhaust muffler located on Pipeline Pump #2 resulted in section loss which caused the insulation blanket to smolder and catch fire.

25. DATE OF ONSITE INVESTIGATION:

28. ACCIDENT CLASSIFICATION:

29-MAR-2021

29. ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION  
PANEL FORMED: NO

26. INVESTIGATION TEAM MEMBERS:

OCS REPORT:

Nathan Bradley (Accident Investigator)  
/

30. DISTRICT SUPERVISOR:

27. OPERATOR REPORT ON FILE:

David Trocquet

APPROVED

DATE: 06-JUL-2021