



ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION
Division of Spill Prevention and Response
Prevention and Emergency Response Program
SITUATION REPORT



Repsol Q2 Pad Gas and Mud Release

SITREP # 5

SPILL NUMBER: 12399904601

TIME/DATE OF SPILL: Repsol reported the incident to ADEC at 10:29 AM on February 15, 2012.

TIME/DATE OF SITUATION REPORT: 2:00 PM on February 18, 2012

TYPE/AMOUNT OF PRODUCT SPILLED: Repsol estimates that approximately 42,000 gallons (1,000 barrels) of fresh-water-based drilling mud have been released to the ice drilling pad and adjacent snow-covered tundra. An unknown amount of gas has been released. The mud that was released is a mixture of minerals (primarily barium sulfate) and water. Drilling mud is used to lubricate the drill, control formation pressure, and remove cuttings from the bore. No oil has been spilled.

INCIDENT LOCATION: Qugruk #2 Pad, on the Colville River Delta, approximately 18 miles northeast of Nuiqsut and approximately 150 miles southeast of Barrow (70° 27' 19" N, 150° 44' 52" W).

CAUSE OF SPILL: Repsol contractor Nabors Drilling was drilling an exploratory well when the drill penetrated a shallow gas pocket at a depth of 2,523 feet, resulting in a gas kick. The gas kick drove drilling mud out of the well and through the gas diverter, which extends 75 feet from the drilling rig, onto the ice pad and adjacent snow-covered tundra. Additional mud was pumped into the well in an attempt to control it, but that mud was also forced out by the gas.

POTENTIAL RESPONSIBLE PARTY (PRP): Repsol E&P USA

RESPONSE ACTION: The well control team began last night and continues today to thaw equipment on the drilling rig and to evaluate its condition. The team is not yet able to estimate when the rig will be ready to return to service. Air monitoring continues to indicate safe working conditions around the rig.

The start of well fluids cleanup awaits completion of the well control work. Photographs from yesterday's fixed-wing overflight of the drilling pad show a deposit that may include drilling mud, water and cuttings from the well extending 100 feet or more from the edge of the pad. An additional area may have been misted with the same materials. Another overflight was conducted this afternoon by helicopter to provide North Slope Borough personnel and an ADEC responder a more detailed look at the spill site.

Two ADEC personnel remain stationed at the Palm Pad forward command post. One will conduct a document inspection at the Qugruk #2 Pad as soon as today. Two U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service personnel are scheduled to arrive at Palm Pad at 2:00 PM today to determine whether a collared polar bear may be denning in the vicinity of the spill site.

Yesterday, in an incident unrelated to the Qugruk #2 Pad gas release, residents of Nuiqsut reported smelling natural gas in the village. The source of the odor was a vent on a building where methanethiol (also called mercaptan), a chemical used to give a characteristic odor to natural gas in the village's gas distribution system, is stored. An Alaska Clean Seas team detected no natural gas during air monitoring conducted today in Nuiqsut at Repsol's request. In the interest of safety, the North Slope Borough has hired a contractor to continue air monitoring in the village.

SOURCE CONTROL: The well ceased flowing at about 9:00 PM on February 16. Preparations for a well control operation are ongoing.

RESOURCES AFFECTED: Snow-covered tundra and ice pad. Drilling mud can affect tundra plants by changing soil pH and salinity. Brackish water produced by the well may also increase soil salinity.

FUTURE PLANS AND RECOMMENDATIONS: Cleanup cannot safely begin until the well is under control. The well control team will give cleanup personnel approximately 24 hours notice in advance of completion of the well control operation. Plans are in place for delineating and cleaning up the spill, and necessary personnel crews and equipment are on standby. A reduced incident management team will continue to monitor the operation from Anchorage and two ADEC responders will remain at Palm Pad until cleanup operations are imminent, at which time additional staff will be recalled.

UNIFIED COMMAND AND PERSONNEL:

Incident Commander: Jeremy Michels, O'Brien's Response Management

F.O.S.C.: Matt Carr, EPA

S.O.S.C.: Steve Russell, ADEC

L.O.S.C.: Gordon Brower, North Slope Borough

Field SOSC: Wes Ghormley, ADEC

WEATHER: Today: Scattered flurries, areas of fog; high temperature -7°F; east wind 15 mph; wind chill to -37°F.

Tonight: Scattered flurries, areas of fog; low -17°F; east wind 15 mph; wind chill to -37°F.

Sunday: Partly sunny with areas of blowing snow, scattered flurries and fog; high -8°F; east wind to 22 mph; wind chill to -38°F.

TIME/DATE OF THE NEXT REPORT: 2:00 PM on February 19, 2012

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION CONTACT: Ty Keltner, Public Information Officer, ADEC (907) 465-5009

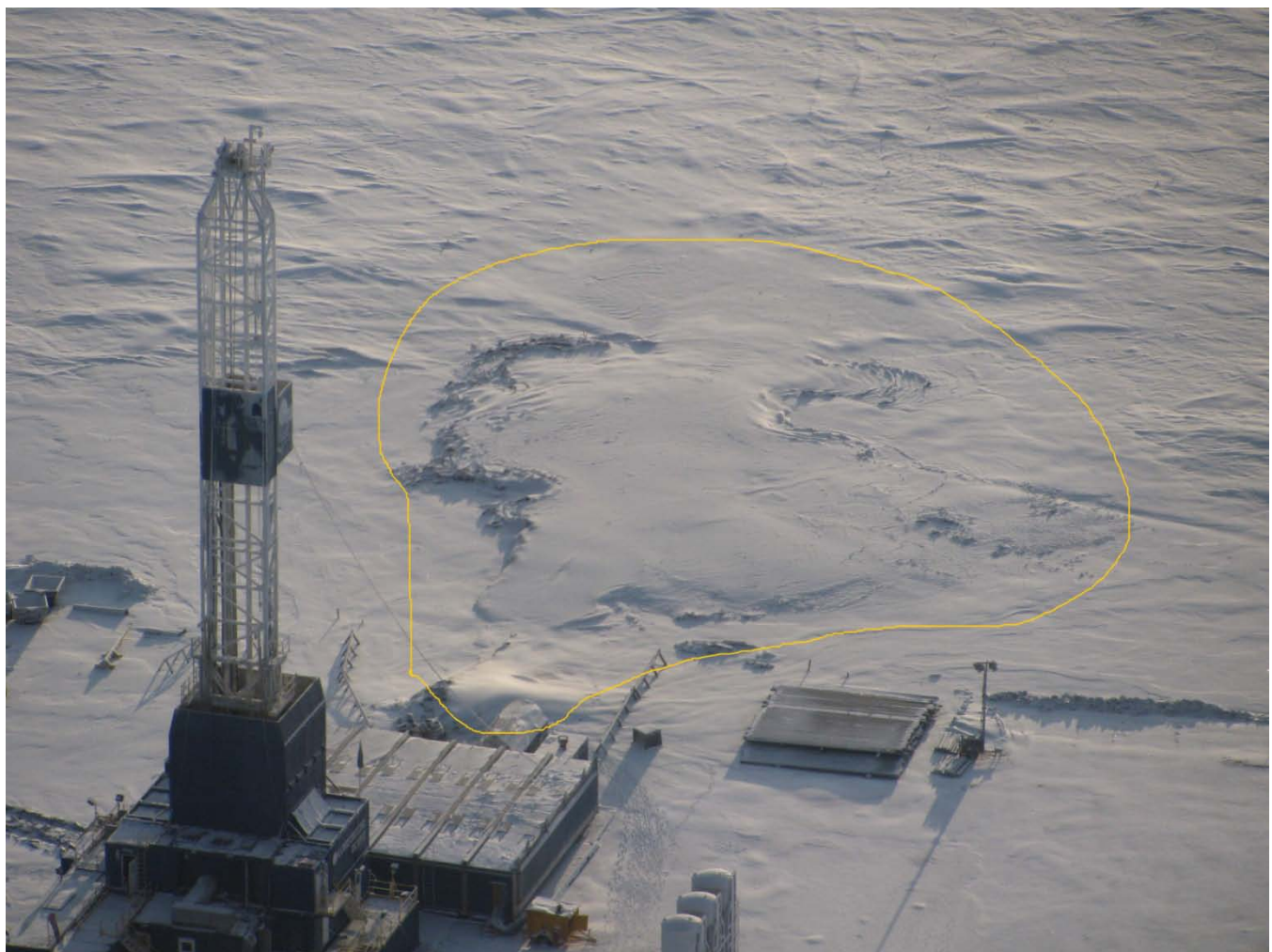
Photographs and other spill information will be available for viewing at:

<http://www.state.ak.us/dec/spar/perp/index.htm>

AGENCY/STAKEHOLDER NOTIFICATION LIST: This situation report was distributed to the agencies listed on the standard distribution list and includes: governor's office, Senator Begich's office, SECC, DOI, NMFS, and USFWS. This situation report was also distributed to the following agencies and stakeholders:

AGENCY / STAKEHOLDER	NAME	SENT VIA	ADDITIONAL INFORMATION	TELEPHONE	FAX
Repsol	Jan Sieving	email			
Nabors Drilling	Denny Smith	email			
AOGCC		Fax			276-7542
ADNR	Melissa Head/ Brian Jackson/	Fax	melissa.head@alaska.gov brian.jackson@alaska.gov	451-2719/ 451-2732/	451-2751 or

	Sean Willison		sean.willison@alaska.gov	451-2724	659-2965
ADNR Div of Oil & Gas	Bill Barron		bill.barron@alaska.gov		
ADF&G	Jack Winters Todd Nichols	Fax	jack.winters@alaska.gov todd.nichols@alaska.gov	459-7285 or 459-7279	459-7303
EPA	Matt Carr/Robert Whittier	Fax	Carr.matthew@epa.gov or whittier.robert@epa.gov	271-5083 or 271-3247	271-6340
Attorney General Office	Cam Leonard/ Steve Mulder	Fax	Cam.leonard@alaska.gov Steve.mulder@alaska.gov	451-2811 or 269-5100	451-2985/ 278-7022
Governor's Office (Fairbanks)	Parnell/Treadwell	Fax	Sean.parnell@alaska.gov Mead.treadwell@alaska.gov	451-2920	451-2858
Lt. Governor's Office (Juneau)	Parnell/Treadwell	Fax	Sean.parnell@alaska.gov Mead.treadwell@alaska.gov		465-5400
Senator Murkowski's Washington DC Office	Chief of Staff	Fax	North Slope only	(202) 224-6665	(202) 224-5301
Senator Murkowski's Office in Fairbanks		Fax	North Slope only	456-0233	451-7146
North Slope Borough	Charlotte Brower	Fax	Mayor	852-0200	852-0337
North Slope Borough	Rhoda Ahmaogak	Fax	Planning Director	852-0440	852-5991
Senate T/ Nome	Donnie Olson	Fax	Nome 5/16-1/09 Juneau 1/10-5/15	465-3707	465-4821
House 40/ Kotzebue	Reggie Joule	Fax	Kotzebue 5/16-1/09 Juneau 1/10-5/15	465-4833 or (800) 782-4833	465-4586



Approximate area of the main deposit of drilling mud/water/drill cuttings south of the Qugruk #2 Pad. A mist or spray of those materials may have affected a larger area. (ADEC photo February 17, 2012)