



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

Notice No. 106

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### OCS Operations Safety Alert

#### Blowout

A drilling crew was completing a dual zone gas well which was taking fluid at a rate of 15 barrels per hour. The lower zone had been perforated, gravel packed, and washed and the upper zone perforated. The CaCl<sub>2</sub> completion fluid was cut from 9.5 to 9.1 ppg in an attempt to reduce fluid loss. With both zones in communication, the crew spent six hours testing the BOPs, cutting the drill line, and running a 160-foot gravel packed assembly for the upper zone. While attempting to run a 1-inch OD pipe cross-over tool in the assembly, the well started to flow. Within minutes, the 1-inch pipe was blown out of the assembly, The blind rams were closed on the assembly and the alarm was sounded to abandon the platform. Four persons were slightly injured in the evacuation. The well caught fire 11 hours later destroying the upper deck of the platform, the drilling rig and the living quarters. The well was killed by injecting 220,000 bbls of salt water through a relief well.

Operators should consider the following in order to prevent this type of accident:

1. Constantly monitor the fluid level of the hole while completing.
2. Schedule routine repairs, maintenance, and tests of equipment before the casing is perforated or after the well is secured.
3. Consider the use of a polymer type low fluid loss pill when excessive fluid loss is a problem.

[signed] D.W. Solanas

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Offshore Operations Support

Gulf of Mexico OCS Region