



United States Department of the Interior
BUREAU OF SAFETY AND ENVIRONMENTAL ENFORCEMENT
WASHINGTON, DC 20240-0001

August 8, 2014

TO: Douglas Morris, Chief, Office of Offshore Regulatory Program

FROM: Brian Salerno, Director

I wish to thank you and your staff for completing the report entitled: Evaluation of Connector and Bolt Failures. I appreciate your team's work on this technical evaluation, and upon my initial review, I generally concur with their recommendations. We will post a copy of the report on our website, and I ask that you and your staff share the report with industry trade associations and standards development organizations.

While I will conduct a more detailed review of the report, I believe there are some immediate steps the Bureau can take to address your team's findings and recommendations.

First, you and your staff should request that the Ocean Energy Safety Institute (OESI) explore the feasibility of a joint research project with the industry that will address issues involving material hardness, coatings, and cathodic protection for subsea equipment. This is an important area for research, particularly for materials being utilized in operations in high temperature and high pressure settings and in other frontier areas such as the Arctic.

I will be attending the upcoming OESI forum on Data Sharing, and while in Houston, I will meet with representatives from the Original Equipment Manufacturers community. I plan to discuss the need for enhanced equipment reliability through better quality control standards and data sharing and will seek feedback on the work they are conducting in those areas.

I ask that you and your staff continue to monitor information related to the performance of connectors and bolts, and to update this report as new information becomes available and as you continue to discuss these issues with the industry and standards development organizations. I look forward to reviewing your implementation plan to more comprehensively address the team's recommendations.

Sincerely,

Brian M. Salerno
Director