

The because the
companies that are
associated



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The recent oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico has left many people astonished because the companies that are associated with it are among the most reputable organizations.

The companies include BP public limited company, Halliburton, Transocean, and Cameron International Corporation. These companies are the major players in the explosion that killed eleven people and released an estimated five million barrels of oil into the gulf. This paper will focus on the roles that were supposed to be played by these companies towards preventing the occurrence of an oil spill. This is not the first oil spill to occur in the energy sector because the others that have happened in the past were expected to be a wake up call for organizations dealing with oil products to be prepared in handling such disasters. When oil leaks into the waters, it causes serious damage to the ecosystems that are occupied by both plants and animals. The oil layer covers the water body and hinders light and oxygen from penetrating through the waters hence the lives of plants and animals that dwell in the water are at risk. In most cases fishing activities are the ones that are adversely affected by such spills because the numbers of fish reduce drastically since they die due to lack of oxygen.

Even as the companies involved tried to clean up the mess the damage had already been done. There are reasons that have been provided by investigators who were analyzing the reasons that could have caused the spillage. Each of the four companies involved is believed to have contributed to the occurrence of the spillage in one way or another.

BP Public Company Limited

This is a renowned company in the energy sector because it has been operational for a very long time.

This means that the many years it has been in business has made it earn a lot of experience but this was not reflected in the way it handled the well prior to the spill. One would have expected this company to have adequately prepared for such incidences because of the level of experience the company has gained over the years. Investigations into the incidence revealed that the cement that is supposed to seal the well pipe was not serving its intended purpose and may be this is what made the BP officials to demand for the removal of that cement. The place that was covered with cement was then covered by water. If the staff found that the cement was not preventing oil and gas from being ejected out of the well through the well pipe, they should have found another alternative of covering the pipe (Elliot 1). Perhaps they thought the oil could not go through the large volumes of water owing to its density which is higher than that of water. Although BP had assigned this role to Halliburton, it should have considered supervising their operations because when things went wrong its BP's reputation that was tainted. The rules that govern the companies that operate in the energy sector state that oil plants and wells should be subjected to regular evaluations so that if there are any mechanical problems they can be detected early enough.

According to Elliot BP staff carried out a joint evaluation with another company on the pressure of the well but then their evaluation does not make sense because they were quick to ignore the results of the evaluation (1).

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One wonders why the findings of the evaluation were ignored while the management teams knew that they were putting their lives at risk and indeed their ignorance led loss of lives. This kind of ignorance implies that they had ignored other findings in the recent past and since nothing bad had happened back then, they did not see the need of attending to such minor issues. Mechanical problems do not happen in an overnight because they develop gradually. BP should have established strategies of vetting all its contractors by having standards that must be adhered to. A keen observation of this issue reveals that the faults took place because the contracted companies were doing their own things without fear. This is because there was no one to criticize the decisions they made. If Bp was committed to its task they would have vetted the engineers who were to do the cementing job plus the cementing materials before they allowed them to go ahead.

BP should have analyzed all the contractors by conducting a back ground check on their previous projects and may be they would have identified the ones that have poor reputation (Carrington 1).

Halliburton

Halliburton were contracted to take the role of providing the cement and placing it on top and below the well pipe. This was expected to have been the first party to realize there was a leakage since they are the ones who were engaged with ground work. This company should not have waited for BP's verdict to remove the cement because they should have done so early enough (Elliot 1). Depending on their role in this well, they were expected to have back up materials just incase the cement did not function as required.

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They were the most knowledgeable party as far as sealing materials are concerned. May be they had never experienced such a thing before and that is why they were unable to handle the situation. Investigations into the incidence revealed that the cementing was not well done and that is why the oil and gas was able to exit the well pipe.

The cement used could have been of good quality but then the problem could have been the people who did the job of cementing the oil well, that is, if they were not experienced masons and engineers. Carrington explains that if this was the case, Halliburton has a case to answer because the company's negligence caused more than ten innocent people to loose their lives (1).

The company should have deployed its experienced staff to inspect the cementing from the initial stages to prevent any faults from happening. It is most likely that this company's engineers had never performed a similar task because, if they did the cementing, the well would have remained intact.

There is enough evidence against Halliburton because after the incidence there was an employee who confessed publicly that the well was not cemented and thus it is clear that there were some standards that were not met. Halliburton is both answerable to BP and the other companies that were working at the well because the mistake they made deliberately sabotaged the efforts of the other companies. Halliburton should be heavily punished by revoking its license and imposing a heavy monetary fine upon it.

Transocean

Transocean runs the drilling rig that sunk in the water after the explosion. This company was assigned the role of providing the blow-out preventer that

is supposed to hinder the spillage of the oil after the explosion had taken place.

This company failed in its role of managing the risk of an explosion. BP had contracted Transocean to take care of the risk because it was aware that explosions happen quite often and they knew that this particular contractor had the appropriate equipment that could stop the spillage. Investigations into the incidence revealed that the device that was supposed to prevent the oil and gas from leaking into the water was faulty.

The blow out preventer is powered by a battery that is located in its control pod. Prior to the explosion, the battery was not working and that is why when the explosion took place the device failed to stop the spillage (Elliot 1). If Transocean had conducted routine check ups on this device, they would have realized earlier that the device was not functioning as it should. This ignorance implies that when this company was assigned its role, they simply moved their equipment within the well compound and sat back and waited until an explosion took place. This company deserves to be penalized for its contribution in the oil spill.

This is because they knew they were stationed at the well so that they could handle any oil spill that would occur and since their role relied on the efficiency of the blow out preventer they should have carried out check ups so that they could correct any faults on the device. Although it is the device that failed them, they are the ones to bear its blame because they are the ones who run it.

Cameron International Corporation

Cameron Company is the manufacturer that is said to have produced the blow out preventer device that was operated by Transocean. Orvetti states that this company denied any responsibility because its officials were quoted saying that if the device was faulty from the beginning it would not have remained as one piece after the explosion (1).

This statement implies that the company is trying to direct its blame towards Transocean company. However, this statement can be true if the battery in the device requires to be replaced after it has been in use for some time.

This company does not bear much blame because if the battery that powers the device requires frequent replacement or charging that is the role of the Transocean. This means that Transocean failed in its role of maintaining the equipment and hence this company is free from any blame. In conclusion, all the parties involved in the oil spill bear some blames and it is important for corrective measures to be taken by the concerned bodies. The government also failed by not enacting laws that would govern the companies that work in the energy sector. In future the US government should establish a task force team that would regulate the operations of all companies in this sector.

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