



Safety Alert

From the International Association of Drilling Contractors

ALERT 04 – 23

DISCHARGE OF SYNTHETIC BASED MUD OVERBOARD

WHAT HAPPENED:

Approximately 60 barrels of Synthetic Based Mud (SBM) was discharged overboard when the trip tank overflowed.

WHAT CAUSED IT:

While tripping out of the hole and arriving at the BHA, a flow check was performed prior to pulling BHA through the BOPs. After no flow was confirmed the trip tank was filled by the mud mixing pump. When an alarm sounded in the Driller's shack, the AD acknowledged the alarm but did not notice that the alarm was sounding for a full trip tank. The trip tank continued to fill until it overflowed, causing approximately 135 barrels of SBM to overflow the boundary containment and allowing approximately 60 barrels to be discharged overboard.

CORRECTIVE ACTIONS: To address this incident, this company issued the following:

Directives

- The Driller is to ensure that there is proper monitoring of all mud transfers.
- Ensure that all visual and audible alarms on all mud control and return systems/tanks are functioning properly.
- Inspect tank overflow return lines on all similar tanks to ensure they are of sufficient diameter to cope with the flow rate of fluid in the event of an overflow.
- Ensure that mud loggers are correctly monitoring level alarms and that they communicate any variations to the Driller.
- Rigs are to verify that any alarm specific to mud/volume/flow/gain/loss/trip tank are separated from any other "common alarm".
- The alarm should be readily distinguishable from others either by sound or visual indication, whichever is applicable.

The Corrective Actions stated in this alert are one company's attempts to address the incident, and do not necessarily reflect the position of IADC or the IADC HSE Committee.

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