

## ENVIRONMENTAL ALERT

**ALERT NUMBER: 02/2012**

**ISSUE DATE: 29 November 2012**

### INCIDENT / ALERT DETAILS:

An incident occurred during a recent FPSO cargo offloading operation which resulted in a release of oil to deck, which could have potentially resulted in oil going to sea.

The release occurred during a crude offload from a filter unit lid seal on the oil fiscal metering skid.

The seal within the filter unit was energised and 'inflated' prior to the commencement of the offload. However, during the operation, issues with tanker telemetry resulted in an offloading trip. This 'relaxed' the seals in the filter unit and a back flow of fluids, containing debris from the filter basket, contaminated the seal face. Upon start-up and re-energising the seals, this contamination prevented the formation of an effective seal allowing crude to be released from the filter unit to deck, after overflowing the filter unit bund.

### INITIAL/ALERT FINDINGS:

There is no mechanism to prevent, in the event of a pump shutdown and fluid back flow, filter basket debris from contaminating filter unit seals.

It was not anticipated that in the event of a trip the 'relaxed' seals were vulnerable to contamination from the filter basket.

There was no watchman posted in this area and no CCTV cameras trained on the metering skid which could have alerted operators to the problem before the filter unit bund over-flowed to deck.

Operators of FPSOs are advised to review cargo offload systems to ascertain if the potential for a similar incident exists and to take the necessary mitigating actions.

### Further Information

Any queries relating to this alert should be addressed to:

Offshore Environmental Inspectorate  
Offshore Environment and Decommissioning  
Atholl House  
86-88 Guild Street  
ABERDEEN  
AB11 6AR

Or:

[Offshore.inspectorate@decc.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:Offshore.inspectorate@decc.gsi.gov.uk)