



## BP's Deepwater Oil Spill - Static Kill to Begin Shortly - and Open Thread

Posted by [Gail the Actuary](#) on August 2, 2010 - 10:30am

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At Sunday's press conference, Admiral Allen indicated that static kill could start this evening (Monday evening) or on Tuesday.

At the time of the press conference, the pressure had built up to 6,980 pounds per square inch (psi). Admiral Allen indicated this was the type of pattern that would be expected with well integrity. According to his report:

As you know we are in the process right now of laying the final casing run for the relief well and with that casing has now been placed at the bottom of the well bore. It is – they are circulating fluids just to make sure it's clean and ready to go.

And probably in the next four to five hours they will begin cementing the relief well in. As you know following that we are making preparations to do the hydrostatic or static kill as we have talked about. That could start as early as Monday night into Sunday depending on the steps that are taking.

They have to do what's called an injectivity test to make sure that all the systems are operating properly. And there is a sequence of events that has to be followed before they can actually start pumping mud into the capping stack itself.

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When asked about whether the static kill could threaten the integrity of the well bore, Admiral Allen replied:

That's a great question and that's exactly what the science team was discussing over the last few days with the BP engineers. What they're going to do is put the mud in at a very slow rate and I think it's going to be like several barrels per minute and I think during – and I don't have the numbers in front of me right now but I think at the maximum point I think we're approaching 80 barrels per minute and putting mud down during the top kill we were trying to overcome the pressure of the oil coming up.

We've taken a look at putting the mud in very slowly so if there is a rise in pressure, we would expect there is some, that we could monitor that very, very closely. And we've established 8,000 PSI as the upper limit for pressure inside the capping stack as we put the mud into it. So we'll be monitoring that.

Regarding the use of dispersants, Admiral Allen seemed to indicate less controversy than reported in the press--or if there is a question, it is not a BP decision that is the problem.

The basis for the numbers are EPA's own numbers. And they are in agreement with it, that those are the numbers. These are decisions that are being made by the Federal on-scene coordinator.

Let me clear it up. It's not a decision by BP on whether or not to use dispersants. It's a decision by the Federal on-scene coordinator whether to approve the incident commander's recommendation to use dispersants once they've been located by surveillance aircraft and has an opportunity to use them.

It's a very disciplined doctrinal process on how this works. In the end it may be executed by BP through a contractor. But these are all decisions made by the Federal on-scene coordinator because that's where the responsibility rests.

And those are closely supervised and on several occasions. I've been privy to those briefs in New Orleans when the decision's being made for the following day. And I'm satisfied that we only use them when they're needed.



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