



DOMESTIC PETROLEUM COUNCIL

July 7, 2004

Docket Clerk, EPA Docket Center
United States Environmental Protection Agency
EPA West Building, Suite B-102
1301 Constitution Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20004

(Also filed 7/7/04 by EDOCKET)

Attention: Docket ID No. OPA-2004-0003

Re: Oil Pollution Prevention and Response; Non-Transportation-Related Onshore and Offshore Facilities

The Domestic Petroleum Council (DPC) strongly supports the proposed 12-month extension of upcoming compliance dates for the 2002 Spill Prevention and Control and Countermeasure amendments.

As the national trade association representing the largest US independent natural gas and oil exploration and production companies, the DPC knows that current significant uncertainty regarding requirements under the 2002 amendments and their applicability to exploration and production sites and facilities almost mandates a compliance extension.

Perhaps as important, the DPC and a broad coalition of organizations representing many sectors have continued to raise a number of serious legal and operational issues caused by the amendments. As a result, while we support the proposed extension we also urge the EPA to take whatever time is necessary to ensure that we have a well-crafted, responsible and achievable set of requirements that can be clearly articulated and effectively implemented. And that may require a further extension.

Among DPC priority unresolved issues that may have serious energy and economic effects are:

- Definition of Produced Water
- Definition of Bulk Storage Containers
- Integrity Testing
- Definition of a Production Facility
- Preparation of SPCC Plan Prior to Operations

We have provided EPA staff with material and discussed each of these issues with them on numerous occasions. We will continue to work constructively to see that they are resolved.

Finally, we urge that during any compliance extension period the EPA complete a cost-benefit analysis of its proposals in each of the priority areas listed above and of the SPCC amendments overall.

Thank you for considering our views.

Sincerely,

William F Whitsitt
President

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