

## Coast Guard Deepwater Horizon Report Questions Open Ship Registries



APRIL 25, 2011

On April 22, 2011 the U.S. Coast Guard issued its preliminary report on the *Deepwater Horizon* incident. Suffice it to say that the report, which is hundreds of pages long, contains numerous conclusions and recommendations of interest to the offshore drilling industry and the world-wide maritime industry. Of particular interest to non-drilling maritime industry is that the Report questions the safety of vessels documented by open registry countries. The report criticizes the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI), which documented the *Deepwater Horizon*, finding, among other things, that the “RMI effectively abdicated its vessel inspection responsibilities,” that the “incident raises serious questions about the regulatory model under which a flag state may rely entirely on classification societies to do its inspection and investigative work,” and “failings also raise questions with regard to the level of safety provided by ‘open registries.’” The RMI responded with a statement questioning the completeness of the Coast Guard report in that it was issued without the portion dealing with the cause of the loss of well control and alleged that it was based in part on “conjecture and speculation.”

1 Min Read

---

### Author

[Charlie Papavizas](#)

---

*This entry has been created for information and planning purposes. It is not intended to be, nor should it be substituted for, legal advice, which turns on specific facts.*