



THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR
WASHINGTON

NOV 09 2010

Ms. Mary Kendall
Acting Inspector General
Department of the Interior
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Ms. Kendall:

Thank you for your investigation and report regarding the development of the *30-Day Safety Report to the President*, and the separate decision I made to place a temporary moratorium on offshore drilling. Your report, which examines the allegation that the Department misrepresented that the moratorium was reviewed and supported by a group of scientists and industry experts, confirms that there was no wrongdoing or intent to mislead the public.

From day one we have been focused – and will remain focused – on enhancing the safety of offshore oil and gas exploration and development. The safety recommendations contained in the *May 27, 2010, 30-Day Safety Report to the President* are the foundation of reforms we have undertaken to enhance safety on the Outer Continental Shelf in recent months. Those safety recommendations, which were peer reviewed by a group of outside experts, are being implemented through new regulations, notices to lessees, and other means.

Separate and apart from the outside experts reviewing the *30-Day Safety Report to the President*, I made the policy decision that – in light of the Deepwater Horizon oil spill that was ongoing at the time, the availability of spill response resources in the event of a second spill, and a number of other factors – a temporary moratorium on deepwater drilling was necessary to protect the safety of Gulf Coast communities and the environment. I issued a second temporary moratorium on deepwater drilling on July 12, 2010. In retrospect, both decisions to place a pause on deepwater drilling were appropriate and necessary in light of the risks at that time. As you know, I have since lifted the moratorium on deepwater drilling because the Macondo well has been killed, oil spill response resources are available again, and we have made significant progress in improving the safety of offshore drilling.

Again, I appreciate your thorough review of the development of the *30-Day Safety Report to the President*.

Sincerely,

Ken Salazar