

# US BSEE: Are your emergency procedures and equipment good enough?

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The US Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement (BSEE) has published a Safety Alert on the readiness for medical evacuation and dealing with emergency hazards.

## What happened?

An inspection of offshore sites in the Gulf of Mexico revealed:

- Inconsistencies in the documentation and recording of injuries and illnesses.
- Procedural gaps and possible flaws in working practices.
- Problems with medical support and evacuation resources.
- All which could affect the emergency response capabilities of facilities.

## What went wrong?

The BSEE found that:

- It took an average of 6.8 hours, according to the evacuation reports, from the time an incident occurred to the time evacuees arrived at medical facilities.
- Medical supplies for facility personnel were inadequate.
- Offshore workers *did not know* where first aid kits were located or how to properly use them.
- Emergency action plans were out of date, difficult for workers to find, and contained incorrect contact information. In some instances, the plan was only known to the person in charge.
- Many operators could not show proof they had carried out medical emergency drills on a regular basis, even though it was a requirement.
- Several facilities had equipment obstructing high-traffic areas, creating trip hazards, blocking escape routes, and posing safety risks.
- Rescue baskets (“Stokes litters”) were found inoperable at several facilities, inconveniently located, unsuitable for hoisting during emergencies, and rarely included in drills.
- Although all facilities except one had automatic external defibrillators (AEDs), the equipment was not easily accessible, and only medical staff had been trained on proper use of AEDs.

## What to do next?

The BSEE recommended:

- Have a review and update of medical evacuation procedures, confirming the accuracy of all details, including personnel information, service providers, contact phone numbers, and related data.
- Ensure all crew are fully aware of the contents of emergency plans.
- Ensure robust quality checks and inventory management of emergency, first aid and medical equipment and supplies, including checking:
- Ensure robust quality checks and inventory management of emergency, first aid and medical equipment and supplies, including checking:
  - Expiration dates of medicines and other materials.
  - Evacuation chairs, rescue baskets, Stokes litters, stretchers etc.
  - Defibrillators.

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