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Transocean Settles First Deepwater Horizon Death Case

By Laurel Brubaker Calkins and Margaret Cronin Fisk -



Fire boats battle a fire at the off shore oil rig Deepwater Horizon April 21, 2010 in the Gulf of Mexico off the coast of Louisiana. Source: U.S. Coast Guard via Getty Images

[Transocean Ltd.](#) settled a lawsuit filed on behalf of one of 11 crew members killed when the company's Deepwater Horizon drilling rig exploded April 20 in the Gulf of Mexico. The terms weren't disclosed.

Karl Kleppinger Jr.'s family was one of the first to sue over deaths and injuries suffered by the 126 crew members who were on the rig when it blew out while drilling a well for BP Plc off the Louisiana coast. The explosion caused the largest offshore oil spill in U.S. history, with more than 4.1 million

barrels of oil spewing into the Gulf of Mexico.

"The Kleppingers have settled all of their claims arising out of the death of Karl Kleppinger Jr. against any current or possible defendants," [Steve Gordon](#), the family's lawyer, said today in an interview. "The Kleppingers' claim against BP has concluded."

The settlement was posted today in the docket of the New Orleans federal court handling suits arising from the explosion. Transocean attorneys and Gordon submitted a court filing asking for dismissal of the suit because of the settlement.

Gordon declined to disclose the amount of the settlement or who would be paying it. The claims are resolved "against all parties they sued or could have sued," he said.

"The terms are confidential," Ellen Barry, a Transocean spokeswoman, said in a phone

interview today.

Kleppinger was a floor hand on the rig when it exploded.

Closed Chapter

“The Kleppingers have tried to close a very terrible chapter in their lives,” said Gordon, of Gordon, Elias & Seely LLP in Houston. “It is time to move on.” Gordon also represents Transocean employees who were injured in the explosion. Those cases remain pending, he said.

The Kleppinger suit, filed in Texas state court, was removed to federal court in New Orleans and combined with hundreds of others seeking compensation for injuries and economic damages from the explosion and spill.

[Daren Beaudou](#), a spokesman for BP, declined to comment on the settlement.

The case is In Re: Oil spill by the Oil Rig Deepwater Horizon in the Gulf of Mexico on April 20, 2010, 2:10-md-2179, U.S. District Court, Eastern District of Louisiana (New Orleans).

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