

RELEASE IN FULL

From: Abedin, Huma <AbedinH@state.gov>
Sent: Saturday, September 10, 2011 1:59 PM
To: H
Subject: Fw: Search under way for 10 oil workers in Gulf of Mexico (CNN)

From: OpsNewsTicker
Sent: Saturday, September 10, 2011 01:34 PM
To: NEWS-Mahogany; NEWS-H; NEWS-CA; NEWS-WHA
Cc: SES-O
Subject: Search under way for 10 oil workers in Gulf of Mexico (CNN)

Colleagues:

Senator Mary Landrieu (D-LA) has been in contact with Charge Feeley, Mexico, regarding the status of the missing oil workers. She has also sought to confer with the Mexican Ambassador to the U.S. The press below indicates at least four of the workers are American citizens.

(CNN) -- Mexico's state-owned oil company searched in rough seas Friday for 10 workers missing from a U.S.-owned oil vessel in the tropical-storm-roiled Gulf of Mexico.

The workers, contracted by Texas-based Geokinetics, abandoned ship Thursday afternoon after Tropical Storm Nate caused their liftboat to take on water in the Bay of Campeche, according to Brenda Taquino, spokeswoman for Geokinetics.

The crew of a ship several miles away saw the workers board a life raft, but conditions were too dangerous for them to assist, Taquino said.

The life raft does not have a radio aboard, but it is stocked with enough food, water and supplies for several days, as well as flares for the nighttime, she said.

The company has contacted the workers' families, Taquino said.

Four of the workers were identified as employees of Louisiana-based Trinity Liftboat Services. They are Jeremy Parfait of Houma, Louisiana, and Craig Myers, Ted Derise Jr. and Nick Reed, all of New Iberia, Louisiana, according to Heather Lanie, an administrative assistant at Trinity.

Reed is the son of Trinity's president, Randy Reed, Lanie said. She described the mood of the company as "very somber."

Mexico's Pemex, the marine authority in charge of the rescue operation, said two chartered rescue boats were searching for the missing workers. Geokinetics also has a helicopter assisting with the search.

Two additional boats were monitoring the damaged liftboat, which was slowly drifting to the northeast and couldn't be secured because of the high seas, Taquino said.

A liftboat is a self-propelled vessel that looks like a miniature oil platform. It is often used to perform maintenance on oil and gas platforms.

Nate, 150 miles west of Campeche, Mexico, on Friday afternoon, was drifting west-southwestward with maximum sustained winds of 50 miles per hour.

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