

NO. 2010-CV-25752

|                              |   |                                     |
|------------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|
| MATTHEW DAVIS                | § | IN THE DISTRICT COURT OF            |
|                              | § |                                     |
|                              | § | HARRIS COUNTY, TEXAS                |
| VS.                          | § |                                     |
|                              | § | 151 <sup>ST</sup> JUDICIAL DISTRICT |
|                              | § |                                     |
| TRANSOCEAN LTD., TRANSOCEAN  | § |                                     |
| OFFSHORE DEEPWATER DRILLING  | § |                                     |
| L.L.C., BP EXPLORATION AND   | § |                                     |
| PRODUCTION, INC. and BP, PLC | § | <b>JURY TRIAL DEMANDED</b>          |

**PLAINTIFF'S FIRST AMENDED PETITION**

Plaintiff MATTHEW DAVIS complains of Defendants TRANSOCEAN LTD., TRANSOCEAN OFFSHORE DEEPWATER DRILLING, L.L.C., BP EXPLORATION AND PRODUCTION, INC., and BP, PLC, and for cause of action respectfully shows this Honorable Court the following:

**I.**

Discovery in this matter will be conducted pursuant to Level 2.

On April 20, 2010, a blow out occurred on a rig operated by the Transocean Defendants and leased by the BP Defendants. The resulting explosion and fire led to the severe injuries to the Plaintiff in this case. Because the Transocean Defendants were the rig operators and owners, and because the BP Defendants had leased the rig and had a significant hand in the control of the rig—importantly in the application of casing and cement and preparation of the well for production—Plaintiffs seek remedy against both the BP and Transocean Defendants. Because BP has a long history involving similar incidents, Plaintiff seeks punitive damages against the BP Defendants.

**II.**

Defendant TRANSOCEAN LTD. is a foreign company doing business in the State of Texas. TRANSOCEAN LTD. may be served with process through its registered agent for

service: Capitol Corporate Services, Inc., 800 Brazos, Suite 400, Austin, Texas 78701.

Defendant TRANSOCEAN OFFSHORE DEEPWATER DRILLING, L.L.C. is a foreign limited liability company doing business in the State of Texas. It can be served through its registered agent: Capitol Corporate Services, Inc., 800 Brazos, Suite 400, Austin, Texas 78701.

Defendants BP EXPLORATION AND PRODUCTION, INC. and BP, PLC are foreign entities that do business in Texas. These Defendants can be served via their registered agent in Texas: C.T. Corporation System, 350 North St. Paul St., Dallas, TX 75201-4234.

**III.**

Plaintiff is a resident of Mississippi.

**IV.**

The Court has jurisdiction over this matter in that Defendants do business in the State of Texas. Venue is proper in this matter because two of the Defendants are headquartered in this County.

**V.**

Plaintiff is an American seaman and brings this action pursuant to Title 46 U.S.C. § 688.

**VI.**

At all times material hereto, Plaintiff was aboard the DEEPWATER HORIZON as a borrowed employee of the Transocean Defendants. The DEEPWATER HORIZON was owned by the Transocean Defendants, but was leased by the BP Defendants.

**VII.**

On April 20, 2010, as Plaintiff was performing his regular duties aboard the, vessel, he sustained severe injuries to his body, including a injuries to his neck, back, both legs, shoulder, and

other parts of his body. Such injuries were legally caused by the negligence of the Defendants, and the unseaworthiness of the Vessel in question. Specifically, the DEEPWATER HORIZON caught fire and exploded, and ultimately sunk, injuring more than twenty, and likely killing eleven. During the explosion, Plaintiff was thrown more than fifteen feet. Such incident does not occur without an unseaworthy condition, or negligence. Due to his severe injuries, Plaintiff cannot work. Indeed, in light of the circumstances leading to Plaintiff's injuries, there is a rebuttable presumption that the vessel was unseaworthy. Further, because the vessel was leased to the BP Defendants, such Defendants have a duty to ensure that operations are conducted in a prudent manner. The BP Defendants failed in that regard, legally causing Plaintiff injury.

Defendant BP Exploration and Production, Inc. has a record of safety infractions in the Gulf of Mexico. In the last ten years, this Defendant has been fined by the Minerals Management Service (MMS) at least five times. These infractions include:

- \$41,000 fine for a "loss of well control." MMS found that this Defendant "failed to verify employees were trained to competently perform the assigned well control duties";
- \$190,000 fine for an improperly installed fire diverter system. This violation was discovered in the wake of a fire that damaged property and the environment;
- \$80,000 fine for bypassing relays for the Pressure Safety High/Low on four producing wells;
- \$70,000 fine for low pressure in the fire water system; and
- \$190,000 fine for the BP's rig operator, after it was found that BP's employees, working as contractors, bypassed the safety valves on a rig. MMS discovered that found that the rig failed to shut down in an emergency because the safety devices had been bypassed.

Because of BP's record, specifically because similar incidents had occurred on other rigs leased by

BP, and because, on information and belief, a well control issue led to the blow out that occurred in this case, Plaintiff seeks damages punitive damages, for the BP Defendants' gross negligence and malice.

Plaintiff also specifically pleads the doctrine of *Res Ipsa Loquitor*.

### **VIII.**

By reason of the occurrences made the basis of this action, including the conduct on the part of the Defendants, Plaintiff sustained severe bodily injuries. Plaintiff has suffered physical pain and mental anguish and, in reasonable medical probability, will continue to do so for the balance of his natural life.

### **IX.**

As a result of the foregoing injuries, the Plaintiff has suffered a loss of wages in the past and a loss of or reduction in the capacity to work and earn money in the future and, in reasonable probability, his earning capacity has been impaired permanently.

### **X.**

Additionally, Plaintiff has incurred reasonable and necessary medical expenses in the past and, in reasonable probability will incur reasonable medical expenses in the future.

### **XI.**

Additionally, as a result of the injuries sustained in the occurrences as set forth above, Plaintiff has suffered in the past and will, in reasonable medical probability, continue to suffer permanent physical impairment.

### **XII.**

Pleading further, in the alternative, if it is shown that Plaintiff was suffering from some

pre-existing injury, disease and/or condition, then such was aggravated and/or exacerbated as a proximate result of the occurrence made the basis of this lawsuit.

### **XIII.**

Plaintiff is physically impaired as a result of injuries sustained in the above-referenced occurrences. As a consequence, he has lost the ability to perform household services and, in reasonable probability, this loss is permanent.

### **XIV.**

Plaintiff would show that on the above-mentioned date, he was injured while in the service of a vessel. Because he is a borrowed employee, the Transocean Defendants have, and continue to have, a non-delegable duty to provide the Plaintiff with the benefits of maintenance and cure. Plaintiff would show that he has not reached maximum medical improvement and that Defendants' duty continues. Defendants have denied payment and/or have unreasonably delayed payments for maintenance and cure and/or have paid maintenance in an insufficient amount. Defendants' conduct towards this injured seaman is arbitrary, malicious, capricious, and wrong. As a result of Defendants' failure to pay and/or delay in paying the benefits of maintenance and cure, Plaintiff has suffered further injuries and damages, for which he now sues. Plaintiff would further show that Defendants' failure to provide the benefits of maintenance and cure was not only unreasonable, but was arbitrary and capricious, or willful, callous and persistent, and that as a result thereof, Plaintiff is thus entitled to PUNITIVE DAMAGES, and an award of attorneys' fees, for which he now sues, in addition to all other relief sought.

WHEREFORE, PREMISES CONSIDERED, Plaintiff prays for judgment against Defendants in the amount of FIVE MILLION, FIVE HUNDRED THOUSAND (\$5,500,000.00), DOLLARS, plus pre- and post-judgment interest at the legal rate, for all costs of court, and all such other and further relief, at law and in equity, to which he may be justly entitled.

**PLAINTIFF RESPECTFULLY REQUESTS A TRIAL BY JURY.**

Respectfully submitted,

**THE BUZBEE LAW FIRM**

By:           /s/ Anthony G. Buzbee            
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