

BRITISH BROADCASTING CORPORATION

RADIO 4

TRANSCRIPT OF "FILE ON 4" - 'BP'

CURRENT AFFAIRS GROUP

TRANSMISSION: Tuesday 24th October 2006 2000 - 2040

REPEAT: Sunday 29th October 2006 1700 - 1740

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PROGRAMME NUMBER: 06VQ3624LHO

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“FILE ON 4”

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O’HALLORAN: For years the oil giant BP has presented a carefully crafted image of social and environmental responsibility.

ACTUALITY - BP PROMOTIONAL VIDEO (BBC COPYRIGHT)

O’HALLORAN: But as BP reports quarterly profits of over 3 billion pounds, how well do its actions in the old, tough core business of getting oil out of the ground and refining it match up to the idealistic title Beyond Petroleum? A major oil spill in the Arctic and the partial shutdown of a vast oilfield triggered a sharp fall in BP’s share price and infuriated American politicians. Critics of the company in Alaska alleged that corners had been cut on maintenance. And in Texas similar claims are being made over a huge BP refinery explosion last year. Federal investigators have revealed to File on 4 a raft of new findings alleging safety lapses by the company. They say near misses weren’t correctly investigated, and faults were not put right at the plant for many years leading up to the disaster which killed fifteen workers and injured hundreds more.

ROWE: When we were at the gas station somebody in there said something about you know the refinery had exploded. That BP’s plant had had

an explosion and it was like the plant you're parents work at and so you know she gave me her phone and I tried to call my mom and my mom didn't answer.

WEBSTER: She's crying and I hugged her. Have you ever had to tell somebody that both their parents were gone? Have you ever had to do that?

SIGNATURE TUNE

ACTUALITY AT FERRY PORT

O'HALLORAN: I'm looking across a large expanse of grey choppy rather murky water at huge snow-capped mountains shrouded in dense rain clouds. Perched next to the water a couple of miles ahead is the vast Valdez oil terminal topped off by an array of giant storage tanks clinging to the mountainside. Feeding the terminal from the North from my left, but hidden from view is the end of the 800 mile long Trans Alaska pipeline, which supplies a large part of the fuel needs of the Western United States. Now it was that supply which in August this year suffered a severe cut back, it caused shock to America's politicians and drivers, and embarrassment to Alaska's dominant oil company BP.

ACTUALITY – NORTH SLOPE

O'HALLORAN: It was on Alaska's bleak Arctic North Slope that problems for BP began to emerge in March. BP runs the oilfields there for the various companies which own them. The Prudhoe Bay field produces around 400,000 barrels of oil a day. Small oil spills are frequent on the North Slope, there's an average of more than one a day. But in March, Alaskans learned of one that was bigger than usual, says environmental lawyer Peter Van Thuyne.

VAN THUYN: One of the transit lines at the British Petroleum facility in Prudhoe Bay had a spill of between 200,000 and 250,000 gallons of oil. And the spill wasn't discovered for some time because the leak detection system there
 VAN THUYN cont: wasn't operating correctly and they didn't have a backup system that worked very well. And a worker who was just driving by this

pipeline had a window slightly open and smelled oil and then stopped to investigate and found the spill which had apparently been going on for sometime. And of course in March there's snow on the ground and the oil had gone beneath the snow, so it wasn't immediately obvious. And that in itself was the largest oil spill in North Slope history.

O'HALLORAN: Wildlife groups in Alaska were dismayed not just by the size of the spill but how long it went on before it was discovered. One source close to the industry told us a spill alarm sounded but was switched off several times as around 40,000 US gallons a day flooded into the snow. In the end, the leak was found largely by chance and then only after five days. Peter Van Thuyne says that four years earlier environmental groups had been pressing the regulator - Alaska's Department of Environmental Conservation – to ensure that BP installed a better leak detection system.

VAN THUYNE: In 2002, there was an administrative procedure for spill prevention activities and detection activities at Prudhoe Bay. And we in the conservation community had written a very pointed letter to the Department of Environmental Conservation saying that the leak detection system at Prudhoe Bay was not up to the state of the art standards and the law requires state of the art. The law says best available technology shall be used. And BP had objected to a particular leak detection system because of cost. But in hindsight it was a paltry 9.9 million dollars or so for this leak detection state of the art system, BP objected due to cost. The law said you must use best available technology and the Department of Environmental Conservation said BP does not have to use that state of the art system.

O'HALLORAN: To be fair to BP the oil price was pretty low at that time a fraction really of where it is today and at the end of the day if you have a state of the art on everything that amounts to tens and hundreds of millions of dollars and some things I guess are not always affordable?

VAN THUYNE: Let's be honest it's a cost-benefit analysis that you're doing on every decision and be open about that. This is a great example of not walking your talk. And frankly, as an Alaskan who cares about our environment up here,

VAN THUYNE cont: I'm affronted when I see those kind of decisions being made based on what is not an unreasonable cost.

O'HALLORAN: BP refused us access to its North Slope activities and rejected our requests for an interview. But the state environmental regulator the Alaskan Department of Environmental Conservation did agree to talk to us. Its Commissioner, Kurt Fredriksson, said he knew nothing of efforts by environmental groups to get BP to install a better spill detection system. However, he did concede the March spill did not show the system up in a good light.

If has happened the oil was detected by someone who happened to be driving by and smelled it doesn't that mean that the leaked detection system whatever it was a total failure?

FREDRIKSSON: I wouldn't characterise as a total failure.

O'HALLORAN: But it didn't work did it?

FREDRIKSSON: I would say the leak detection system we have in place is about the best that I've come across in terms of government required leak detection systems.

O'HALLORAN: But the detection system didn't cause the alarm to be raised effectively anytime within 5 days?

FREDRIKSON: Whether it rang, when it rang to the extent that it operated is still under investigation.

O'HALLORAN: Is it right that alarms did go off and were switched off no fewer than three times during that five days?

FREDRIKSON: I know it's under investigation and I have heard those claims as well. I just until the investigation is completed would be a premature for me to speak as to whether or not in fact it's true.

O'HALLORAN: The cause of the March spill turned out to be internal corrosion, causing deep indentations, one of which became a hole in the wall of

the pipe. Regulators now suggest two key things need to be done to combat it. Regular running of a device called a pig through the pipes to clear out sludge and sending a so-called “smart pig” through the length of each pipeline, periodically, to get an inside picture of the wall of the pipe. On Alaska’s biggest pipeline, run by a separate company, these smart devices are run every 2 or 3 years. However, independent economic and environmental consultant Richard Fineberg says BP had not run a “smart pig” through one of its Arctic transit pipelines since 1998.

FINEBERG: Internal corrosion moves very fast when it builds up under the sludge and it goes five times faster than external corrosion, but that’s precisely why you want to run the pigs and they were not pigging.

O’HALLORAN: So they hadn’t run that inspection device in the pipeline on one side for 8 years before this year, what about on the other side of the oil field?

FINEBERG: On the other side of the line they hadn’t run the ‘pig’ for even longer since 1992 and that’s where they found when they did run the ‘pig’, they found 16 reports that didn’t match their computer model that said we’ve got problems and that’s why they decided they had to shutdown the field.

O’HALLORAN: After the March spill, BP was ordered to do extensive testing with smart pigs, but this couldn’t be done for some time because of a build up of sludge in the pipes. Finally early in August, recalls Peter Van Thuyne, the company disclosed that they’d conducted “smart pig” runs and that these had revealed extensive corrosion in vital transit pipelines.

VAN THUYNE: I believe it was August 6th they got the results. Holy Cow, we’ve got a lot of places on our transit lines and half of this oilfield that are extremely thin. In fact they are so thin that we’re going to stop putting oil through these lines and shutdown the field. And they were concerned enough they shutdown the entire Prudhoe Bay which is 400,000 barrels a day.

O’HALLORAN: But in recent weeks BP have been allowed to start running the oil through most of those pipelines again haven’t they?

VAN THUYN: The reason they did that is because they could test them using the ‘pig’ and much more invasive devices, I mean they literally had hundreds of people out there stripping the insulation and running ultrasonic testing. A massive mobilisation of employees and contract workers to go there, but there are 187 spots of significant wall thinning in these pipelines. And some of those I think they can patch up and fix and they have been doing some of that and then other ones are so significant they need to actually replace the physical pipeline.

O’HALLORAN: To what extent has this saga damaged would you say the green image that BP has been developing now over several years and very successfully so?

VAN THUYN: It is stunning how large a fall BP has taken as a result of this. The Beyond Petroleum carefully crafted image of environmental stewardship has been severely tarnished. We have a senior and very powerful senator from Alaska named Ted Stevens who is very avidly pro drilling and he said this “I am disturbed not only by the fact that over the years we’ve been briefed that this is the safest area in the world and how they got special procedures to check for corrosion and any sludge inside the pipeline. As a matter of fact it just wasn’t done, they sold us the fact their processes would perform and they didn’t.”

O’HALLORAN: BP says it was doing hundreds of pig runs a year on the North Slope but that the transit pipelines which suffered corrosion weren’t being tested in that way. And they say it’s now clear they should have been. But how much warning did BP have that there might be serious problems with those pipelines? One oil industry man we met in Anchorage with twenty years experience reckoned the writing had been on the wall for years if only BP had been willing to read it.

ACTUALITY OUTSIDE BP BUILDING

PLUMLEE: The building with the yellow and green logo, that’s the BP building and I was on the 10th floor.

O'HALLORAN: So you were pretty close to the BP operation there were you physically?

PLUMLEE: Yes, I mean we went on the 11th floor where the BP pipeline people were who dealt with us and right up and down the stairwell all the time.

O'HALLORAN: Until April this year Glen Plumlee was strategic planning co-ordinator for Alyeska, which runs the Trans Alaska Pipeline, in which BP has a 46 per cent stake. At the BP headquarters building which the two companies share he rubbed shoulders with BP staff and executives. Plumlee, who's been in the oil industry more than 20 years, says four years ago a senior pipeline inspector working on the North Slope came to him with serious fears over safety. He wanted Glen Plumlee to pass them on them to top people in the BP headquarters.

PLUMLEE: He had warned North Slope BP management that there was a catastrophe in the offing if they did not, you know, do some things different. He was not only concerned about an oil spill; he was also concerned about loss of life in explosion or fire.

O'HALLORAN: What was he really saying this employee, about the problems up there at the pipelines?

PLUMLEE: He was saying that they were not spending enough money on corrosion detection, documentation and that the people who were raising concerns were being harassed and intimidated by senior BP management on the slope.

O'HALLORAN: So he came to you and said?

PLUMLEE: Well he came to me and just explained that he had warned them and sent emails, and he didn't feel like that they were elevating it up any higher.

O'HALLORAN: Glen Plumlee said he agreed to help and passed on the inspector's fears to the top executive level at BP. A short time later when he saw the inspector again he asked if the safety concerns had been addressed.

PLUMLEE: No, the pipeline inspector told me nothing had happened and actually his situation was worse, that they were intimidating him further because he brought it forward.

O'HALLORAN: How?

PLUMLEE: By telling him not to put things in writing, suggesting that he may not be working there any longer, that he was putting his career in jeopardy, those sorts of things.

O'HALLORAN: Really, told him not to put that sort of thing in writing about a fundamental safety maintenance issue on the pipelines?

PLUMLEE: Yeah, that is not so uncommon. That's one of the ways that inspectors are intimidated.

O'HALLORAN: So what did the pipeline inspector do?

PLUMLEE: He felt he was going to be fired so he began looking to find another position and he did. And he left very abruptly and was very anxious to get away from the North Slope.

O'HALLORAN: And that's not an isolated incident according to a man who's made a speciality of trying to get BP to take more vigorous action on safety. Retired oil broker Chuck Hamel alleges North Slope workers who challenge management over safety risk losing their jobs, so he's become an informal ombudsman for O'HALLORAN cont: them, trying to safeguard their anonymity while pressing BP to act on their concerns. He claims that he began to hear long ago allegations from technicians and engineers that BP wasn't spending enough to combat corrosion and other hazards.

HAMEL: They were trying to save money so they were cutting corners and they weren't admitting how bad the corrosion was becoming, all to save money. It just was a money money money saving. It's sort of a Russian roulette where cut to the bone and hope that the final bullet doesn't come through. And that in March it came through.

O'HALLORAN: So you heard about these problems six, seven years before the big spill in March?

HAMEL: Correct, I had documents. I had the personnel warning me and documents to go with it.

O'HALLORAN: And what did you do about the information coming to you?

HAMEL: Well I went to the BP chairman of the Environmental Committee of the Board of Directors and I offered to provide him my engineered friends and I would agree that they would meet with anyone chosen by this committee that would guarantee the anonymity of these workers and he, well he didn't do anything about it.

O'HALLORAN: BP claimed in a statement that it doesn't tolerate intimidation and that it supports the right of workers to air safety issues inside or outside the company. However, BP's chief in North America Bob Malone conceded to Senators last month that when staff had raised concerns in the past the company had not always responded correctly. These were his words:

READER IN STUDIO: The problem has not been in workers raising concerns, sometimes it's been our responsiveness in recognising the current situation may not provide complete assurance, I've created a new position of ombudsman reporting directly to me.

O'HALLORAN: He said the new ombudsman a former judge would review all worker allegations raised on the North Slope over the last 6 years. File on 4 has also learned that as long as seven years ago officials at Alaska's Department of Environmental Conservation decided BP's methods of combating pipeline corrosion needed outside scrutiny. BP was asked to draw up an annual report on the subject. And an independent firm, Coffman Engineers, was asked by the regulators to review it. The firm duly drew up a draft report in November 2001, but it didn't contain good news for BP. Indeed, it implied the company's report was very short on hard detail.

READER IN STUDIO: The actual magnitude of corrosion increase is not reported, subsequent damage to pipe wall is not quantified, no differentiation between weight loss and pitting corrosion is discussed, no statistics on the extent of corrosion defects was reported.

O'HALLORAN: That was the draft Coffman report but when the final version was submitted those incisive comments and questions had disappeared. From an 11 page draft about three pages of such comments had been removed, leaving the report a pale shadow of the original. The cuts followed an angry memorandum from BP protesting that the Coffman report "contained very few positive references" and seemed "extremely negative", as economic and environmental consultant Richard Fineberg recalls.

FINEBERG: It was a very devastating report. BP objected to it and the Department of Environmental Conservation ruled over and watered down the public report. The change was between night and day really, there were huge changes.

O'HALLORAN: And do you think that had an overall impact and may have contributed towards the oil spill the disaster this year?

FINEBERG: The watering down of the Coffman report is not the cause of BP's problems, it's a clear example of the operating climate in which this shocking oversight and gaps in the corrosion programme occurred and were not fixed.

O'HALLORAN: So how does Commissioner Kurt Fredriksson of the Department of Environmental Conservation explain the degree to which BP were able to get the Coffman report watered down.

Let me quote a few incisive comments in the first Coffman draft. The actual magnitude of the corrosion increase is not reported, no differentiation between weight loss and pitting corrosion discussed, no statistics on the extent of corrosion defects were reported. Do you remember how those were put in the final report?

FREDRIKSSON: I do not.

O'HALLORAN: Well they weren't in the final report at all. All of those questions were removed from the final report.

FREDRIKSSON: As to why they were not removed would be a question to Coffman. I think what we're learning here is that we need to increase the oversight and we need to more importantly increase the accountability of the operators in terms of the state and federal expectations. Knowing overall corrosion rates are fine, but I want to know and I expect the oil companies to tell us, what exactly is the pipe wall loss within the segments of their different pipelines?

O'HALLORAN: But that's exactly what Coffman was pointing out in late 2001 wasn't it? Here it is. Unfortunately no report on the magnitude of the wall loss. That statement is deleted from the revised report which was published after BP's objections.

FREDRIKSSON: And if it was rejected then it was Coffman that rejected that and why they rejected...

O'HALLORAN: It was BP who rejected it and your department which allowed really a sanitised report to go, well to go to you.

FREDRIKSSON: The department commissioned Coffman to analyse the BP report.

O'HALLORAN: That's what I'm saying.

FRERIKSSON: And they were obligated to accept or reject comments based on their best professional judgement and we were not in a position to question Coffman's professional judgement.

O'HALLORAN: BP's North America chief executive, Bob Malone, argued to Senators last month that in the final Coffman report and the firm's next two annual reports?

READER IN STUDIO: While there were areas recommending additional inspection and maintenance activities, on balance they offered support for the efficacy of BP's corrosion management programme.

O'HALLORAN: BP says it's spending on maintenance, operations and combating corrosion on the North Slope has gone up by well over 50 per cent in the last five years. But Bob Malone conceded to congress that the public's faith in BP had been tested, and he pledged the company would be working hard to restore confidence. He issued a broad apology.

READER IN STUDIO: BP has fallen short of the high standards we hold for ourselves and the expectations others have for us.

ACTUALITY AT TEXAS CITY

O'HALLORAN: BP's pipeline crisis in Alaska has sent shock waves right through the company's American and worldwide operations. And here, thousands of miles South of the Arctic on the Gulf coast of Texas, BP's critics have refocused their attention on an event which took place a year before the Alaska oil spill. It

O'HALLORAN cont: happened at one of America's biggest oil refineries Texas City. And in human terms it was much more destructive.

EXTRACT OF NEWS REPORT

NEWSREADER: A huge explosion ripped through a BP oil refinery in Texas killing at least 14 workers and injuring more than 100 others. Crews are searching through the rubble for more survivors. The blast shook Texas City 35 miles south of Houston.

EYEWITNESS: We felt the explosion sitting at the intersection and we thought a car had hit us at that time. And then we looked up at that time we'd seen a plume of smoke, flames going up and you know...

O'HALLORAN: One refinery worker we spoke to who was close to the blast still has fear and disbelief in his eyes more than 19 months later.

WEBSTER: I still have nightmares, I still hear men screaming. I'd never seen nothing so horrendous and it's raining, it's raining fire, a fire of rain you know it's just coming down everywhere.

O'HALLORAN: Fire, this is like out of the sky?

WEBSTER: Yeah liquid fires, I mean liquid fire coming down out of the sky and debris and everything else.

O'HALLORAN: Many of Dan Webster's friends and colleagues were in a mobile office, a trailer that was very close to the centre of the explosion.

What could you see off the trailers that had taken the full impact of the blast?

WEBSTER: No one it's gone. At a blink of an eye you'd look at a trailer and when it caught live gas it's gone, you blinked your eye and the trailer was gone and there was nothing there but bar, nothing.

O'HALLORAN: The trailer had disintegrated?

WEBSTER: In a blink of an eye. I had a radio in my sack and I heard people begging for their lives, burning, and I couldn't help.

O'HALLORAN: People who've subsequently died?

WEBSTER: And people died because they burned.

O'HALLORAN: All told fifteen people in or near the trailers were killed, and around five hundred people were injured or suffered long term damage to their health. 22 year old Eva Rowe lost both her parents in the explosion. She believes they died because not enough money was spent on safety and maintenance.

ROWE: My dad was actually in the trailer that collapsed on people. My mother was actually outside the trailer at that time and it was right after the lunch hour and my dad had forgotten his safety glasses where she worked and so she was bringing them back to his office during and she was outside when the blast happened. You know BP's desire to save money is what killed my mum and dad and to me that's wrong and they you know they cannot cut their costs some years ago and fixed things and kept it up to maintenance and they didn't and so my parents are dead because of that.

O'HALLORAN: Many of the injured and relatives of dead have settled out of court with BP over the blast. The company has set aside \$1.2 billion to cover such claims. But Eva Rowe wants the reasons why her parents died brought out at a court hearing, due to take place in early November. Her lawyer Brent Coon alleges one cause of the accident was the use of out-of-date technology.

COON: Well what we found out was that one of the units was being started up that day, and that it was overfilled and that when it overfilled, the extra vapour and liquids that came out of it when the unit was over-pressured went to an open containment system. Instead of going to a flare which is where they should go, it

COON cont: went to an old antiquated open vent system and it spewed out the top of it and landed back on the ground, and it caught on fire and exploded. This explosion was tragic and it was unnecessary and it was avoidable. BP had had many near-misses, they were aware of many near-misses and they knew that if they continued in the practices of under-investing in the condition of the infrastructure of that

refinery that they would have an explosion, a catastrophic explosion, and that's what this was.

O'HALLORAN: BP which had acquired Texas City through a merger in the late 1990s published its own investigation report last December. It portrays a plant where there was apathy, ignorance and lack of care over hazardous operations and equipment. The report seems to lay much of the blame, though not all, on staff at Texas City.

READER IN STUDIO: The failure to take effective emergency action resulted in the loss of containment that preceded the explosion. Supervisors assigned to the unit were not present to ensure conformance with established procedures.

ACTUALITY AT INAUD UNIT

SANDERS: Beyond the security gates where we're standing there's a massive complex. We're looking directly at the auto crafting and the INAUD unit. The auto craft of the unit is the unit that maintenance was being performed on the date of March the 23rd. The INAUD unit is the unit where the blast occurred where the 15 people were killed.

O'HALLORAN: Sonny Sanders leader of the local union branch of the United Steelworkers says that BP has placed too much of the blame for the disaster on workers. He point out that there was a general BP policy not to site trailers, mobile offices close to hazardous refinery equipment, but a few months before the accident managers decided to vary the policy allowing vehicles to be placed much closer. Sonny Sanders says union officers never agreed to the move.

SANDERS: BP has a policy that you cannot spot trailers within 300 feet of a process unit or a process where there could be a fire or an explosion or a release or any type of danger.

O'HALLORAN: So you cannot site mobile offices within 300 feet in theory of that sort of equipment?

SANDERS: That is correct. And it is BP's own policy. In this particular case, there is a method by which you can obtain a variance to your own policy. BP instituted the paperwork to have a variance issued so they could spot these trailers closer than 300 feet to a process unit. In fact the closest trailer was approximately 60 feet from the atmospheric vent where the product was released. If the trailers had not been spotted where they were, we would not have had the loss of life; we would not have had 15 fatalities because these people who were killed were in the trailers.

O'HALLORAN: Six months after the blast a record fine of over \$20 million was imposed on BP by America's Occupational Health and Safety Administration over a string of safety breaches. The company's also come under fire from federal investigators at the Chemical Safety Board, both on the sighting of mobile offices, and on the mistakes in the days leading up to the disaster. Now the Board has revealed to File on 4 a string of further serious alleged faults, which raise grave questions about health, safety and environment standards more widely at BP. At the plant itself the Board says there were eight serious incidents over about 12 years with the type of equipment at the heart of the explosion.

READER IN STUDIO: The 8 previous incidents were not properly investigated and appropriate corrective actions were not implemented. BP's mechanical integrity programme did not adequately maintain instruments and equipment. The training department budget was cut in half from 1998 to 2004.

O'HALLORAN: The Board also refers to an internal BP audit the year before the blast across no fewer than 35 of the company's business units. This found "significant common gaps" from a "lack of leadership competence" to "widespread O'HALLORAN cont: non-compliance with basic health, safety and environment rules". It says that over three years to 2001:

READER IN STUDIO: BP implemented a 25 per cent cut on fixed costs that adversely impacted maintenance expenditures and infrastructure at the Texas City Refinery.

O'HALLORAN: And, says the Board's lead investigator Don Holmstrom, a survey of staff at Texas City only months before the explosion showed they felt safety was not given top priority.

HOLMSTROM: BP had conducted a safety culture survey of Texas City employees including management employees, even the plant manager, in late 2004 and assessed those results in early 2005 before the incident and they devised, they identified some major cultural problems at the site. The survey results indicated that personnel at the plant thought that production was rewarded ahead of safety, there was also identified a significant maintenance back log and that a major cause of accidents at the site was this maintenance back log and problems due to maintenance.

O'HALLORAN: So yes, more than two-thirds of the staff said there was a significant back log on maintenance work and three-quarters I believe believed that was closely linked to safety?

HOLMSTROM: That's correct. And in an audit that was done as part of this overall corporate management system in 2003 by external auditors, they determined that BP had a cheque book mentality and what they meant by that is they would only spend the money that they had on hand and if they had identified risks that went beyond that budget, they wouldn't, would not obtain more money to address those risks. Consequently there were risks that were not being addressed.

O'HALLORAN: How preventable was this disaster in the view of your chemical safety board?

HOLMSTROM: We believe it was preventable.

O'HALLORAN: Totally preventable?

HOLMSTROM: Completely.

O'HALLORAN: After hearing the severity of the allegations over Texas City we asked to interview BP Group Chief Executive Lord Browne, but our request was rejected. The company's North America Chief Bob Malone has told congress

that Texas City is the greatest tragedy ever to hit BP. He acknowledged management failures and said big safety changes were being made with a billion dollars of investment over five years. However, Lawyer Brent Coon, representing many victims says the refinery inferno, BP staff surveys and the pipeline failure in Alaska, taken together, gravely undermine the responsible message put out by the company in the last few years.

COON: BP's environmental image, their marketing ploy as being environmentally friendly, is a façade. It's a fake, it's a scam, it is designed to make people think that they are something they are not. They want people to believe that they're environmentally friendly and the facts prove that they are not, not just at Texas City but at what our federal investigators have seen occur at BP plants nationally, what you see happening on the Alaskan Slope with, they don't even inspect their own pipes. They're running through environmentally sensitive places such as the North Slope of Alaska. We know from the depositions that we've taken in this case that the issues of maintenance and deferred maintenance are safety culture issues and profit-driven issues that are systemic within BP all over the United States, and probably all over the world.

O'HALLORAN: In both Alaska and Texas, BP has put its hands up to admit faults and failures and made clear it will be trying to repair the damage and clean up its act. But with the rumblings continuing over other incidents and with evidence of wider concern in BP about safety, the group has a long way to go before proving it's turned the corner, or changed the culture which lay behind the gigantic public relations disaster in Alaska and the huge human tragedy in Texas.

SIGNATURE TUNE