

## BP America Ombudsman Program 2006 in Review\*

The Office of the Ombudsman was established in August 2006. Judge Sporkin's appointment to the role of Ombudsman was met with media interest, and articles appeared in many national and international media. In September, investigators were hired and call center staff were brought on board. In October, Judge Sporkin testified before the Alaska Legislature regarding the Ombudsman Program and its long term objectives. He spoke about the fact that many of the issues involve labor management and contracting matters that included "the common ingredient of presenting safety concerns." In November, Judge Sporkin was featured in the BP magazine Horizon, and the Ombudsman web site was brought on-line. The volume of calls increased as more employees and contractors became aware of the program. By early December communication materials were distributed throughout BP facilities in the United States.

Through December 31, 2006 the Ombudsman Program received between 40 and 50 calls on the 800 hotline. Twenty-two calls raised substantive issues. The rest of the callers asked questions about the program and Judge Sporkin. Of the 22 intakes handled in 2006, 11 remained open at year-end. Out of the 11 closed concerns, 9 concerns were substantiated, one is undetermined, and one was unsubstantiated. Investigations were conducted on two of the concerns. The remaining concerns were handled either through Rapid Resolution or Intervention. Five callers requested anonymity.

### 2006 Results

Respecting confidentiality is of the utmost importance to the staff at The Ombudsman Program. Little can be revealed about the issues raised or the investigations conducted out of concern for maintaining confidentiality. While few details of the cases can be discussed, the program did achieve significant results in 2006.

\*Excerpt from 2006 Annual Report BP America, Office of the Ombudsman