



Adm. Thad Allen, USCG (Ret.)

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On May 1, 2010, President Barack Obama selected Admiral Thad Allen to serve as the National Incident Commander (NIC) for the unified response to the Deepwater Horizon oil spill, a position he held concurrently while finishing his tenure as the Commandant of the Coast Guard.

In this position, Allen was charged with oversight of all ongoing response efforts to cease the flow of oil and mitigate the effects of the worst oil disaster in U.S. history. Working closely with the federal on-scene coordinator, Environmental Protection Agency and organizations including the Departments of Homeland Security, Defense, Interior, Commerce and Health and Human Services, he sought to bring a global unity of effort to response endeavors. As the government's accountable party, Allen was also in charge of coordinating with various federal, state and local organizations and directing the efforts of BP, the responsible party in the spill.

In May 2010, Allen completed his duties as the 23rd commandant of the USCG, the most senior post in that service. Continuing to serve his nation as the national incident commander in lieu of retiring at that time, he officially retired from active duty service on June 30th, 2010 after 39 years of service. Prior to his assignments as commandant and the Coast Guard chief of staff, Allen served as commander of the Coast Guard Atlantic Area in Portsmouth, Virginia, where he led the Coast Guard's Atlantic Area response forces following the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. In 2005, Allen was designated the principal federal official (PFO) for Hurricane Katrina and Rita responses and recovery operations throughout the Gulf region.

Now, Allen is one of George Washington University's Distinguished Professors of Practice. He teaches a course entitled "Leadership in Large, Complex Organizations." It focuses on how large, complex organizations react to and manage unprecedented, anomalous events such as Hurricane Katrina, the Deepwater Horizon oil spill and the Haitian Earthquake. Included are how these organizations interact with volunteer and non-governmental organizations, social media and state and local governments.

Allen is a native of Tucson, Arizona and graduated from the U.S. Coast Guard Academy in 1971. He holds a Master of Public Administration degree from the George Washington University and received the Alumni Achievement Award in 2006. Allen also holds a Master of Science degree from the Sloan School of Management of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. In 2003, he was elected a National Academy of Public Administration fellow.