

June 14, 2010

President Obama tours Theodore, Ala. staging area for oil spill response

By George Talbot

THEODORE, Ala. -- Marine One landed in Theodore around 1:50 p.m. this afternoon and within 10 minutes President Barack Obama arrived at **Patriot Environmental Services Inc.** in Theodore.

Patriot, an environmental management and cleanup firm based in Long Beach, Calif., has been hired by BP to clean, stage and repair boom at the facility on the Theodore Industrial Canal.

The president was accompanied by Alabama Gov. Bob Riley, U.S. Coast Guard Adm. Thad Allen, and Walt Dorn, director of emergency services for Patriot Environmental Services.

The president toured the boom staging area and talked to workers in hazmat suits who were decontaminating boom using pressure washers. Noise from the washers prevented members of the press from hearing the conversations, but the president spent about 10 minutes watching them clean boom and talking to workers.

The president left the outdoor yard and met **Patriot** workers undergoing hazmat training. The president thanked them for the work that they were doing and encouraged them to pay attention to their safety briefing.

"It's tough. It's hot out here. It's a lot of stress, but it is absolutely critical what you are doing," the president told about 20 workers who were underneath a tent during their training. "This is not going to be a one-day affair, or a one-week affair. It's going to take a while," the president said.

The president then went to a boom-repair warehouse where about 25 workers were working on boom laid out along a row of long, wooden tables. He greeted the workers and thanked them for the work they were doing.

The president then went to a briefing for all media.