
ATTORNEYS of the YEAR

~~~~~ 2015 ~~~~~



## *Environment*



**BRAD D. BRIAN, DANIEL B. LEVIN, MICHAEL R. DOYEN, and LUIS LI**  
*Munger, Tolles & Olson, Los Angeles*

**T**he victory by Brian's legal team on behalf of Transocean, the owner of an offshore drilling rig, may have major implications for the future of oil extraction in the Gulf of Mexico. Transocean owned the Deepwater Horizon platform, which it leased to BP for drilling. The 2010 explosion onboard triggered the worst marine oil spill in U.S. history. Brian argued in district court in New Orleans that the Transocean crew relied on safety assurances from BP officials. The court agreed in 2014 that Transocean was not grossly negligent, shielding it from punitive damages. By enforcing BP's contract to indemnify Transocean, the court gave rig operators confidence that other indemnification contracts would be honored. Brian also represented Transocean in its agreement to pay \$400 million to settle criminal charges and \$1 billion to settle civil claims under the Clean Water Act.

**ADDITIONAL CALIFORNIA LAWYERS:** Susan E. Nash of Munger Tolles.

**STATUS:** Resolved. The Fifth Circuit declined to reconsider its ruling apportioning liability in the Deepwater spill.