

INSIGHTS

Vanessa Allen Sutherland Stepping Down as Chair of U.S. Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board

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Vanessa Allen Sutherland just announced that she is resigning from the U.S. Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board (CSB). President Barack Obama nominated Sutherland to be Chairperson, and she was confirmed in August 2015. Ms. Sutherland's resignation will be effective in June.

During her three years as Chair, Ms. Sutherland helped the agency to close 12 incident investigations, and she was a tireless advocate for the importance of the Board's mission. The CSB investigates the root cause of industrial chemical incidents and advocates for the implementation of safety recommendations to better protect workers, the public, and the environment. The Trump administration has proposed eliminating the Board, but the House recently proposed to continue the Board and increase its funding by \$1 million.

We will continue to monitor whether the CSB will continue to exist, and if it does, the impact that this change in leadership may have at the agency. We are available to answer questions about what those changes might mean for CSB, its objectives, and the impact on industry.

Lawyers in Bracewell's Incident Prevention and Response practice frequently guide companies through CSB investigations. We have significant experience helping companies respond to CSB inquiries and navigating matters related to the CSB's jurisdiction, use of administrative subpoena power, and its typical investigative goals. We also assist our clients in understanding the CSB's "recommendation process" and assess the impact CSB recommendations may have on their organization.