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Shell Investigated for Corruption By Department of Justice, SEC

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By BENOIT FAUCON

LONDON -- The U.S. Department of Justice is examining corruption allegations in the use of a freight-forwarding firm by Royal Dutch Shell PLC, the company said in regulatory filing published last week.

A probe by the Securities and Exchange Commission is also under way, it said.

In its annual report with the SEC, the Anglo-Dutch oil company said it was contacted in July by the Department of Justice regarding its use of a unit of Panalpina World Transport Ltd., a Swiss-based shipping and logistics-management company.

Shell said in the filing the Justice Department was looking at potential violations of the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act as a result of such use. Shell declined to comment beyond the filings Wednesday.

Panalpina said in May that U.S. authorities had requested documents related to its services to Nigeria, adding the review had been extended to Kazakhstan and Saudi Arabia.

Eleven oil and oil-service firms received a July 2 letter from the Justice Department's criminal fraud section asking them to detail their relationship with Panalpina, people familiar with the matter said last year. Last year, Houston-based oil-services companies Transocean Inc. and Schlumberger Ltd. said they received inquiries from the department related to the Panalpina investigation.

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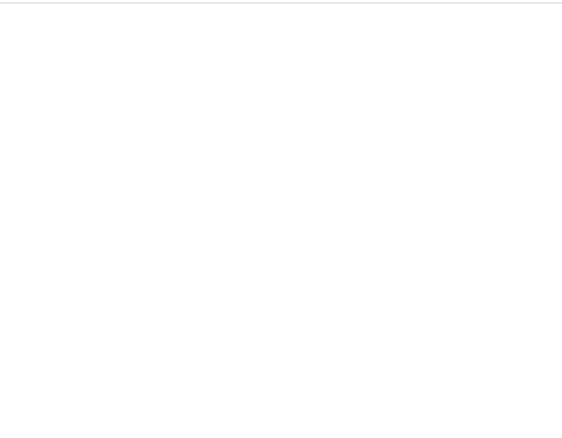
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