

## VERDICTSEARCH

# 2005's LEADING VERDICTS AND SETTLEMENTS IN TEXAS

*The following are the top 10 Texas verdict and settlement summaries of 2005 that were reported in VerdictSearch Texas, a Texas Lawyer affiliate. They are ranked by dollar amount. Because settlement agreements are often confidential, the list of settlements only considers those settlement amounts that have been reported. The verdicts and settlements below were reported and written by VerdictSearch Texas. The full text of these verdicts and settlements can be found at VerdictSearch.com.*

### *ADMIRALTY/MARITIME*

#### **Victims of bridge collapse collect millions**

Three injured survivors of a bridge collapse, the heirs of eight decedents, four injured rescuers and the state of Texas reportedly will receive between \$13 million and \$14 million from the insurer of the barge-towing service that rammed into one of the bridge's pillars. The heirs, survivors and rescuers are getting about \$9 million and the state is getting the rest, which will go to reconstruction of the Queen Isabella Causeway, which connects South Padre Island to Port Isabel. The plaintiffs claimed that Brown Water Marine Services, Rockport, did not provide its captain with a vessel powerful enough to correct its course, resulting in the Sept 15, 2001 accident. The defense argued that the channel was mismarked and that the captain was not an employee. Pretrial settlement of the Brownsville federal court case occurred June 29, 2005.

*In Re: The Limitation and/or Exoneration of Brown Water Five*, No. B01-157

**Court:** U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Texas, Brownsville

**Plaintiffs' Attorneys:** Mikal C. Watts and Ray R. Marchan, Watts Law Firm, Brownsville and San Antonio; Heriberto "Eddie" Medrano, Law Offices of Heriberto "Eddie" Medrano, Harlingen; Michael Ratliff, Office of the Attorney General, Austin; S. Mark Strawn, Ajamie LLP, Houston

**Defense Attorneys:** Will W. Pierson, Jack C. Partridge and Keith N. Uhles, Royston, Rayzor, Vickery & Williams, Brownsville; Glenn G. Goodier, Jones, Walker, Waechter, Poitevent, Carrère & Denègre, New Orleans