



**RE: Talking Points and Summary Report**

**Franklin Shaffer** to: ira.leifer, pdy, pmbommer, savas,  
pedro.espina, 'Bill Lehr', 'Steven T. Wereley',  
aaliseda, rileyj, Juan Lasheras, 'Marcia K  
McNutt'

05/31/2010 01:44 PM

I agree that we decided not to estimate an upper bound yet. What concerns me is that the press and top government officials are representing the 19000 or our 25000 bpd number as the upper bound.

It's everywhere in the press. Below is what Carol Browner told the press yesterday:

On NBC's "Meet the Press," Carol Browner, Obama's assistant on energy and climate change, said BP may have had an ulterior motive for underestimating the amount of oil leaking.

"BP has a financial interest in these numbers. They will pay a penalty based on the number of barrels per day," she said.

BP had originally said about 5,000 barrels of oil per day were leaking.

The latest estimate, Browner said, is between 12,000 and 19,000 barrels per day.

"This is probably the biggest environmental disaster we've ever faced in this country," she said.

>>> "Juan Lasheras" <lasheras@ucsd.edu> 5/31/2010 12:37 PM >>>

Marcia's' recollection of our discussions is correct. Nobody was told not to estimate an upper bound. We simple felt that we did not have sufficiently information to properly estimate the oil/gas flow rates (which is the KEY unknown in the whole problem), and therefore believe that we could not come up with a scientifically-defensible upper bound until we complete the analysis of the high resolution videos.

By the way, I'm half way through the analysis and I believe have a solid method to estimate the intermittency of the gas/oil flow rate. I'll let you know the results probably by tomorrow morning.

Juan

-----Original Message-----

From: Marcia K McNutt [mailto:mcnutt@usgs.gov]

Sent: Monday, May 31, 2010 9:24 AM

To: Franklin Shaffer; ira.leifer@bubbleology.com; pdy@clarkson.edu;

pmbommer@mail.utexas.edu; savas@newton.berkeley.edu; pedro.espina@nist.gov;

Bill Lehr; Steven T. Wereley; aaliseda@u.washington.edu;

rileyj@u.washington.edu; lasheras@ucsd.edu

Subject: Re: Talking Points and Summary Report

Frank -

On the call I was on, my recollection was that the plume team concluded that they did not yet have sufficient data to estimate an upper bound that they thought would not be misused by the press. I don't think anyone was told not to estimate an upper bound.

Please suggest changes to talking points and the summary. One team did provide an upper bound. The summary needs to be a balanced presentation of all of the inputs.

Marcia

----- Original Message -----

From: "Franklin Shaffer" [Franklin.Shaffer@NETL.DOE.GOV]  
Sent: 05/31/2010 12:16 PM AST  
To: "ira.leifer@bubbleology.com" <ira.leifer@bubbleology.com>;  
"pdy@clarkson.edu" <pdy@clarkson.edu>; "pmbommer@mail.utexas.edu"  
<pmbommer@mail.utexas.edu>; "savas@newton.berkeley.edu"  
<savas@newton.berkeley.edu>; "pedro.espina@nist.gov" <pedro.espina@nist.gov>;  
"Bill.Lehr@noaa.gov" <Bill.Lehr@noaa.gov>; "Steven T. Wereley"  
<wereley@purdue.edu>; "aaliseda@u.washington.edu" <aaliseda@u.washington.edu>;  
"rileyj@u.washington.edu" <rileyj@u.washington.edu>; "lasheras@ucsd.edu"  
<lasheras@ucsd.edu>; Marcia McNutt  
Subject: RE: Talking Points and Summary Report

Our team was told to estimate A RANGE OF MINIMUM oil leak rate. Is this correct or did I miss something?

I am very concerned that OUR numbers for RANGE OF MINIMUM are being represented to the public as a RANGE FROM MINIMUM TO MAXIMUM. This is NOT what we estimated or say in our report. Our numbers are being expressed this way by both the press and top government officials.

The talking points and summary draw conclusions by overlapping the numbers from three teams. What were the other team told to estimate? Were they told to estimate a range of minimum, or a range of minimum to maximum? If they were told to estimate a minimum to maximum, then our numbers cannot be directly compared or overlapped with the other teams' numbers.

i am very concerned that our report and numbers are still not being given to the public and correctly communicated to the public. This needs to be corrected immediately.

Frank

>>> "Wereley, Steven T." <wereley@purdue.edu> 5/30/2010 9:17 PM >>>  
Marcia, this is great. I think this is the level of detail that journalists might want to see. To confirm, it is acceptable to distribute this to journalists...

Best,

Steve Wereley, Professor of Mechanical Engineering  
Birck Nanotechnology Center, Room 2019, 1205 West State Street  
Purdue University  
West Lafayette, IN 47907  
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From: Marcia K McNutt [mailto:mcnutt@usgs.gov]  
Sent: Sunday, May 30, 2010 5:27 PM  
To: Bill.Lehr@noaa.gov; rileyj@u.washington.edu; pmbommer@mail.utexas.edu;  
Franklin.Shaffer@NETL.DOE.GOV; pedro.espina@nist.gov;  
aaliseda@u.washington.edu; lasheras@ucsd.edu; savas@newton.berkeley.edu;  
pdy@clarkson.edu; ira.leifer@bubbleology.com; Wereley, Steven T.  
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Here is what I have for the Summary Report and Talking Points.

They have not been "approved" by the NIC, but as far as I am concerned, they are good to go.

Marcia