



RE: where does 20 pct come from?

Richard Harris o Marcia K McNutt  
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06/03/2010 06:09 PM

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I'm certainly not trying to be hard on the admiral. It's a confusing situation for all of us, and I'm trying to put out the best information I can.

Richard

Richard Harris | Science Correspondent | NPR News

**From:** Marcia K McNutt [mailto:mcnutt@usgs.gov]  
**Sent:** Thursday, June 03, 2010 3:59 PM  
**To:** Richard Harris  
**Subject:** RE: where does 20 pct come from?

Off the record, I think we need to cut the Admiral a break. There are so many groups out there associated with this spill, and the FRTG does have a BP liaison who gets us data, that it could be that he thought that the BP engineers who estimated the 6 to 20% increase in flow rate were associated with teh FRTG. Isn't that far fetched.

Marcia

**From:** Richard Harris <RHarris@npr.org> [mailto:Richard Harris <RHarris@npr.org>]  
**Sent:** Thursday, June 03, 2010 3:51 PM  
**To:** "Marcia K McNutt" <mcnutt@usgs.gov>  
**Subject:** RE: where does 20 pct come from?

Adm. Allen has indeed been attributing this to the FRWG – in fact yesterday he even highlighted a conflict between the FWRG's 20 percent and BP's own figure, which he put at 10 percent. I don't have time to dig up the transcript at the moment, but I can later on if you need it.

Richard

Richard Harris | Science Correspondent | NPR News

**From:** Marcia K McNutt [mailto:mcnutt@usgs.gov]  
**Sent:** Thursday, June 03, 2010 3:08 PM  
**To:** Richard Harris  
**Subject:** RE: where does 20 pct come from?

This was the message I sent last Saturday when asked what effect cutting off the top of the LMRP would have on flow rate:

The engineers believe that after the riser is removed from the LMRP, the flow from the well will increase about 20%. Based on the meeting we had today, they DO NOT think that the mud kill

operation significantly changed the resistance inside the BOP, because the majority of the mud was escaping through the rupture disks in the 16" casings into deep formations rather than flowing upward and eroding the BOP. So the 20% increase should be the only change observed to the flow rates.

Based on that analysis, the flow rates from the mass balance team would be raised to 14,400 barrels per day to 22,800 barrels per day. The lower bounds on flow rates from the plume team would rise to 14,400 barrels per day to 30,000 barrels per day. I understand that the plume team is working on upper bounds to their flow rates as they have a larger amount of high quality video in hand to choose from. I will of course keep you informed as soon as those numbers are available from the plume team.

I hope that this helps and answers some of your questions.

Marcia

By "engineers" I meant the BP engineers. I hope that Admiral Allen did not mistake that for the FRTG scientists.

Marcia

**From:** Richard Harris <RHarris@npr.org> [mailto:Richard Harris <RHarris@npr.org>]

**Sent:** Thursday, June 03, 2010 2:46 PM

**To:** <mcnuttt@usgs.gov>

**Subject:** FW: where does 20 pct come from?

Hi, Dr. McNutt:

Admiral Allen has said several times that the Flow Rate Technical Group estimates that flow could increase 20 percent once the bent riser has been removed. I have talked to several people on the FRTG and they say they have not been asked to make that estimate -- and at least one says it's certainly not the number he would have offered.

Where exactly does that 20 percent figure come from?

Thanks.

Richard Harris

Richard Harris | Science Correspondent | NPR News | (202) 513-2786