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From: Barbara W Wainman <bwainman@usgs.gov>  
Sent: Tue, 17 Aug 2010 16:00:33  
To: GS FOIA 0134 <foia0134@usgs.gov>  
Subject: Fw: Answers to Admiral Allen questions re flow rate estimates: MKS suggested answers

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----- Forwarded by Barbara W Wainman/DO/USGS/DOI on 08/17/2010 04:00 PM

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From: Mark K Sogge/DO/USGS/DOI

To: Stephen E Hammond/GEOG/USGS/DOI@USGS

Cc: Barbara W Wainman/DO/USGS/DOI@USGS, Judy J  
Nowakowski/DO/USGS/DOI@USGS, Marcia K  
McNutt/DO/USGS/DOI@USGS

Date: 07/21/2010 09:05 AM

Subject: Answers to Admiral Allen questions re flow rate estimates: MKS suggested answers

Hi Steve,

My suggested responses to your questions. I am not sure that #3 gets to your interpretation of the Admiral's question or the answer you may have had in mind. If you want to discuss this one further, let me know.

He indicated that he had heard somewhere the oil estimate had changed. He asked whether that was true or not.. My answer was that the formal estimate being used remains at 35-60,000 barrels per day. Presently, there are no plans to modify those numbers. I did indicate that I would confirm that with the FRTG and report back. ACTION: Confirm that the government estimate by FRTG of 35-60,000 barrels per day has not changed.

The consensus estimate made by the FRTG and DOE on July 15 is still the official government estimate: 35,000 - 60,000 BPD.

Admiral Allen mentioned the recent Chairman Markey correspondence and spoke to the interest by many to come up with a more firm estimate. The Admiral specifically asked the following question. Based on the current condition of the capped BP well, what options are available to make an accurate estimate of the future flow of oil? My answer was that I would forward the

question to the FRTG knowing that conversations are already underway with DOE (and others) to discuss oil flow rate estimates. SUGGESTED ACTION: - respond to the Admiral's question by describing techniques that may permit accurate estimate of the future flow of oil.

There are three primary options for new or firmer flow estimates:

- (1) With the well capped and closed, it may be possible to generate new pressure-based flow estimates. This is within the domain of the DOE team, and outside the scope of the FRTG.
- (2) If the well is re-opened, measurement of the amount of oil recovered during full containment by BP may provide a firmer estimate. This would not be a FRTG estimate, though it would provide insights into earlier FRTG results.
- (3) During FRTG final report compilation, the sub-teams may collectively refine the current FRTG estimate. Given the complexity and uncertainties of estimating the flow, the FRTG's current estimate/range may not change. Note that the FRTG's estimates (current or refined) are not dependent on the state of the well cap.

Mark

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To: Marcia K McNutt/DO/USGS/DOI@USGS, Mark K Sogge/DO/USGS/DOI@USGS

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Wainman/DO/USGS/DOI@USGS, Stephen E  
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Date: 07/20/2010 12:16 PM

Subject: Meeting with Admiral Allen this morning

Good Afternoon Marcia and Mark,

I had hoped to send this note earlier but I had e-mail problems. I have since recovered. This morning I participated in a morning briefing for Admiral Allen. The entire IASG was invited to attend. There were several IASG topics on the agenda including an FRTG update, but more on that below.

There were several comments made during the course of the meeting that highlighted the importance of using science to make informed decisions.

Admiral Allen himself stated how impressed and pleased he is with the IASG and the work that is being accomplished by the group. He went on to say how important it is to establish a solutions groups whenever an event like this take place.

In regard to the FRTG report, I was asked to say a few words and then I looked to my colleague at NOAA to provide an update on the oil budget tool. I had two primary pieces of information to convey: 1) the various FRTG teams continue their work to summarize their results in support of the response. I mentioned that these results are not intended to be final Government estimates of exact amounts. Work on a final report is expected to be completed in early August. 2) I am expecting an update on phase 2 of the AVIRIS data collection and analysis today or tomorrow. We are presently sehceduled to provide a briefing on this topic to the NRT next Monday July 26th.

The Admiral had a couple of follow up questions.

- He indicated that he had heard somewhere the oil estimate had changed. He asked whether that was true or not.. My answer was that the formal estimate being used remains at 35-60,000 barrels per day. Presently, there are no plans to modify those numbers. I did indicate that I would confirm that with the FRTG and report back.  
ACTON: Confirm that the government estimate by FRTG of 35-60,000 barrels per day has not changed.

- Admiral Allen mentioned the recent Chairman Markey correspondence and spoke to the interest by many to come up with a more firm estimate. The Admiral specifically asked the following question. Based on the current condition of the capped BP well, what options are available to make an accurate estimate of the future flow of oil? My answer was that I would forward the question to the FRTG

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knowing that conversations are already underway with DOE (and others) to discuss oil flow rate estimates. SUGGESTED ACTION: - respond to the Admiral's question by describing techniques that may permit accurate estimate of the future flow of oil.

It was shortly after that briefing that FRTG & NOAA received a request here at the NIC to respond to items 3-6. We both responded with 'no comment'.

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