

From: Franklin.Shaffer@NETL.DOE.GOV  
Sent: Wednesday, June 09, 2010 9:55:59 AM  
To: Mehrdad.Shahnam@NETL.DOE.GOV; Nathan.Weiland@UC.NETL.DOE.GOV  
CC: Madhava.Syamlal@NETL.DOE.GOV; George.Richards@NETL.DOE.GOV  
Subject: Re: assumptions

Yes. When we finish this estimate of the maximum oil leak rate, we are being told by the White House to do an estimate of how much the flow rate increased when BP cut the riser to do the Top Hat procedure. They want results by the end of this week.  
I know that is not enough time to do an engineering analysis, but we are not being asked to do an engineering analysis. We're being asked to do a best estimate so the White House has more information upon which to make decisions. That's the way policy decisions work.  
I believe we're doing what engineers call a SWAG analysis.  
Frank

>>> Mehrdad Shahnam 6/9/2010 9:51 AM >>>  
Frank,

Is the deadline for submitting our portion of the report still COB today?

Mehrdad

>>> Franklin Shaffer 6/9/2010 9:42 AM >>>  
Mehrdad, Nate,

As you are writing your sections of our report, I want to reiterate that we are being asked to do a "best estimate" by the deadline imposed on us by the White House. We are NOT doing the kind of engineering analysis we are used to.

We are doing a "best estimate" that will be used to inform the public and for policy decisions. We are being ordered to make necessary assumptions to get an estimate by the deadline imposed on us.

We will present our results with all assumptions stated. Then our results will be passed on to top government officials who make policy decisions. It is their responsibility -- not ours -- to use our best estimate properly. They will weigh our estimate and assumptions along with all of the other analyses and information they have, then make decisions. That is their job.

Please understand that a statement will be at the beginning of the Plume Team Report saying that we only did a best estimate in the time frame we had, and that as more information is available, and with more time, the results of our analysis may change and may be different than the results in this report. I will also put an ever stronger statement in the NETL report. We should be completely insulated from criticism for our assumptions.

Furthermore, both Geo and Syam have been chosen to review the entire Plume Team report. So they'll see our section of the report along with the analyses of the other team members.

So have no worries about the assumptions you are making. Just do the best you can in this time frame and state the assumptions you made. That is all we're being asked to do.

If you still have concerns, please let me know.

Thank you,  
Frank

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