

TOPICS
[NEWS HEADLINES](#)
[PAY AND](#)
[BENEFITS](#)
[RETIREMENT](#)
[TELEWORK](#)
[PER DIEMS AND](#)
[TRAVEL](#)
[NSPS](#)
[ENERGY](#)
[GREEN](#)
[GOVERNMENT](#)
[FISCAL 2010](#)
[BUDGET](#)
[THE BASICS](#)
[THE MAILBAG](#)
[GOVEXEC ON](#)
[TWITTER](#)

Administration defends handling of oil spill

 By Aamer Madhani | *National Journal* | October 7, 2010

The White House pushed back hard Thursday against stinging charges that the administration slowed scientists from letting the public know the full extent of the BP Deepwater Horizon oil spill.

Responding to preliminary reports released Wednesday by the presidential commission on the Gulf of Mexico oil spill and offshore drilling, White House press secretary Robert Gibbs said the White House worked diligently to provide "accurate and timely information" on the oil spill.

"The worst-case scenario was being discussed on national television," Gibbs said. "We know the response was robust in ensuring that every possible step was taken to protect the coastline and prevent more damage from being done."

The report criticizes the federal government for creating the impression that it was "either not fully competent to handle the spill or not fully candid with the American people about the scope of the problem."

It also paints a picture of an administration that failed to be frank with the American people, and lays out perhaps a more serious charge that the administration was trying to prevent scientists from publishing worst-case scenarios about the oil spill.


The [Office of Management and Budget](#) halted efforts in late April or early May by the [National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration](#) to reveal worst-case discharge numbers from the Deepwater Horizon well that exploded in the Gulf of Mexico, according to the report.

Kenneth Baer, a spokesman for [OMB](#), said the assertion is misleading. Baer noted that NOAA was tasked with analyzing the impact the oil spill could have on the shoreline -- not flow rates. OMB officials had suggested that NOAA revise its report to take into account various cleanup efforts that were already in progress.

"If you are going to analyze what the impact could possibly be, you probably need to account that all these mitigation efforts are under way," Baer said. "These were collegial discussions. They weren't denied or told 'you can't do it.' There wasn't a heavy hand."

The commission also contends that the federal government's estimates during the first month of the crisis that about 5,000 barrels of oil were flowing into the Gulf of Mexico each day "undermined public confidence." Government officials and independent scientists later concluded that about 60,000 barrels of oil poured into the gulf.

The report criticizes the federal government for creating the impression that it was "either not fully competent to handle the spill or not fully candid with the American people about the scope of the problem."

 [E-MAIL THIS ARTICLE](#)
 [PRINTER-FRIENDLY VERSION](#)
 [COMMENT ON THIS STORY](#)

RELATED STORIES

OMB blocked release of oil spill numbers 10/07/10

OMB nominee still on hold as Landrieu pushes drilling 09/30/10

Interior official says rebound from drilling moratorium will be slow 09/28/10

Reorganization of Minerals Management Service raises doubts 09/27/10

BP oil spill proves fertile ground for procurement 09/02/10

TODAY'S MOST POPULAR

[E-MAILED](#) [READ](#)

1. **Suspension of IT contractor has roots in 2008 bid protest**
2. **ICE sets record for deporting illegal immigrants**
3. **GAO denies protest in Air Force tanker contest**
4. **Unions to managers: Give employees a bigger voice in decisions**
5. **Postal Windfall**



Advancing the business of government

Carol Browner, Obama's climate and energy czar, was singled out for saying in a television report on August 4 that 75 percent oil was "gone."

Gibbs acknowledged that Browner misspoke, but the White House clarified Browner's remarks during a White House briefing hours after the interview. At that point, White House officials said about 50 percent of the oil was "completely gone."

"Carol probably did hundreds of hours of interviews, and may have misspoke once, which is a very good track record," Gibbs said.

COMMENTS

VIEW ALL COMMENTS | POST COMMENT

The NAVY should have been on site hours after the event instead the Coast Gaurd??
? Never did see the NAVY in the game they actually train for this type disaster
history books will tell the truth one day of what happened and why the US
government let BP swing in the wind. I fear it dirty but then again I dont trust any
of them.

LC | Posted October 8, 2010 | 9:27 AM

Nothing but lies and half-truths come out of this administration.

Mel | Posted October 8, 2010 | 8:57 AM

It all depends on what Ms Gibbs' intention was when she "misspoke." From what I
understand, she and her agency were attempting to silence the researchers who
were putting out data that conflicted with theirs.

nathan wolfson | Posted October 8, 2010 | 8:52 AM

VIEW ALL COMMENTS

through analysis, insight and the sharing of best practices.

SPONSORED RESEARCH

The Challenges of Implementing Sustainability in the Federal Government

DELOITTE

Cybersecurity Habits in Federal Agencies: An Assessment of User Responsibility

DELL, CITRIX, MICROSOFT and INTEL

Is Cybersecurity Slowing Federal Executives Down? CITRIX in partnership with INTEL

From the Bottom Up: Advice for the Chiefs SYMANTEC and CA

COOP Planning at Your Agency: Keep Systems Running During Disaster CDW-G and EMC

Advancing IT Innovation in Federal Agencies DLT and REDHAT

SPONSORED LINKS

\$14B in Fed Opps for Small Businesses

Free Download: INPUT's Top 10 Federal SMB Set-Aside Opportunities for FY 2011
www.INPUT.com

Free Federal Government Org Chart

With Names and Contact Info for Key Federal Decision Makers. Over 475 Org Charts
www.INPUT.com

NASA Contractors' Ratings

Complimentary Summary: First-Time Analysis Of NASA Vendors' Past Performance
www.INPUT.com

Defense Contracts Dominate 2011 Opps

Maximize Your Market Position-Free Download Of Top 20 Fed Business Opportunities
www.INPUT.com

The Altarum Health Policy Forum

Your best resource for commentary and analysis of health policy. Join the discussion.
www.altarum.org

See how Adobe helps agencies become more open and transparent

View case studies and download the Adobe government whitepaper at Adobe.com/OpenGov
ad.doubleclick.net

Download a FREE copy--Acquisition Reform: It s More Than the Contract

A holistic approach to improving acquisition, project and mission outcomes.
www.esi-intl.com

Click here to read about Primavera Portfolio Management from Oracle

Let Oracle help you Optimize Programs and Fulfill Mandate Expectations
GovExec.com/Vendor/SolutionCenter

[VIEW MORE PRODUCTS AND SERVICES...](#)

[BUY A LINK NOW...](#)

