Message

From: David Leffler [dleffler@publichealthwatch.org]
Sent: 12/5/2022 4:13:00 PM
To: Sullivan, Melissa [sullivan.melissa@epa.gov]
Subject: Re: Interview request — Mr. Daniel Hoyt

Hi Melissa,

I hope this message finds you well and you had a great weekend. I'm following up to check on the status of this request. Please review my previous email and let me know if you have any questions whatsoever. I really appreciate your continued help with this.

Best,
David

On Tue, Nov 29, 2022 at 1:24 PM David Leffler <dleffler@publichealthwatch.org> wrote:

Hi Melissa,

Thanks for your response on this.

Just to clarify, are Mr. Hoyt and Schneider unavailable throughout the next month due to scheduling? We can talk in early January, too, if need be — and I can adjust to any date/time preferences they have.

Or are you saying they're now no longer available to speak over the phone due to the medium (i.e., written questions/responses are the only allowable correspondence)? Just checking to make sure I understand correctly and can explain to my editor — she's always asking me for clarification!

Thanks again for all your help.

Best,
David

On Tue, Nov 29, 2022 at 1:13 PM Sullivan, Melissa <sullivan.melissa@epa.gov> wrote:

Good afternoon David,

We will respond in writing.

Please share any additional questions you have.

We will respond as quickly as we are able.

Thank you for your patience and understanding.

Melissa A. Sullivan (She/Her/Hers)
Office of Public Affairs
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
202 913 3840
Sullivan.Melissa@epa.gov

On Nov 29, 2022, at 11:58 AM, David Leffler <dleffler@publichealthwatch.org> wrote:

Hi Melissa,

Thanks for following up with this information. While I absolutely understand the difficulty of navigating schedules this time of year, I'd appreciate it if we can make phone interviews happen with both Mr. Hoyt and Mr. Schneider here. Written questions and responses tend to be less helpful, especially with interviews like these, where there are technical questions that will likely require clarification and follow-up inquiries.

My schedule is open through Christmas. Do Mr. Hoyt and Mr. Schneider have any availability over the next three weeks? I'll take any time with them that I can get.

Thanks again for all your time and assistance. I really appreciate it.

Best,
David

On Mon, Nov 28, 2022 at 2:38 PM Sullivan, Melissa <sullivan.melissa@epa.gov> wrote:

Good afternoon David,

I hope you had a great holiday.

Due to availability challenges, we will respond in writing.

I have your original set of questions for Dan Hoyt below.

Do you have additional questions for Matthew Schneider? If so, please send them forward.

- What first drew your attention to ITC/lead to the facility's inspection in 2012? Essentially, what compelled Region 6 to visit the facility that fall?
- Had you been out to ITC before? Or was it your first time there?
- The inspection report is very detailed, but I'm hoping to better understand what your experience on the ground was like. What was your process like during the inspection? What kind of tools did you use (FLIR cameras, etc.)? I'm hoping to, from a narrative perspective, understand what it's like to be a part of one of those inspections.
- The inspection notes potentially high emissions from a number of tanks. Can you contextualize these findings in any way for me? I'm just hoping to better understand the scale/severity of these emissions (since there are so many factors that go into measuring them), what you + your team were seeing, etc.

- Your team also saw high emission levels at Vopak, correct? How did those compare with those found at ITC, in terms of scale, scope, and frequency?
- Who was your team's main contact at ITC at the time?
- Looking back, what stood out to you most about the facility and inspection? Any takeaways that stick out in your mind?

Thank you,

Melissa

Melissa A. Sullivan (She/Her/Hers)

Office of Public Affairs

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

202 913 3840

Sullivan.Melissa@epa.gov

From: David Leffler <dleffler@publichealthwatch.org>
Sent: Tuesday, November 22, 2022 10:41 AM
To: Sullivan, Melissa <sullivan.melissa@epa.gov>
Subject: Re: Interview request — Mr. Daniel Hoyt

Hi Melissa,

Absolutely, that makes sense. I understand and appreciate your ongoing help with this. I'll be sure to check back in next week as people get settled back in from the holiday.

Have a wonderful Thanksgiving.

Best,
David

On Tue, Nov 22, 2022 at 9:33 AM Sullivan, Melissa <sullivan.melissa@epa.gov> wrote:

Good morning David,

I am checking.

Most are out of the office this week.

I will likely not know about availability until next week when folks are back.

Thank you,

Melissa

Melissa A. Sullivan (She/Her/Hers)

Office of Public Affairs

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

202 913 3840

Sullivan.Melissa@epa.gov

From: David Leffler <dleffler@publichealthwatch.org>
Sent: Tuesday, November 22, 2022 10:27 AM
To: Sullivan, Melissa <sullivan.melissa@epa.gov>
Subject: Re: Interview request — Mr. Daniel Hoyt

Hi Melissa,

Thanks for sending this over. Unfortunately, I've had a few last-second things stack up on my end. Does Mr. Hoyt have any availability next week? And does Mr. Schneider? My apologies for the sudden shift here. Looking forward to making this happen very soon.

Best,

David

On Tue, Nov 22, 2022 at 8:24 AM Sullivan, Melissa <sullivan.melissa@epa.gov> wrote:

Good morning David,

Dan Hoyt is available today at 2:00 PM.

Does that work for you?

Unfortunately, Matthew is out of the office.

Thank you,

Melissa

Melissa A. Sullivan (She/Her/Hers)

Office of Public Affairs

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

202 913 3840

Sullivan.Melissa@epa.gov

From: David Leffler <dleffler@publichealthwatch.org>
Sent: Monday, November 21, 2022 11:07 AM
To: Sullivan, Melissa <sullivan.melissa@epa.gov>
Subject: Re: Interview request — Mr. Daniel Hoyt

Hi Melissa,

Thanks for following up. Wednesday is a little tricky, but I should be pretty open all of tomorrow. Let me know when works best and I'll make sure I'm available.

Best,

David

On Mon, Nov 21, 2022 at 9:49 AM Sullivan, Melissa <sullivan.melissa@epa.gov> wrote:

Good morning David,

Can you please share your availability for an interview Tuesday (tomorrow) and Wednesday?

Thank you,

Melissa

Melissa A. Sullivan (She/Her/Hers)

Office of Public Affairs

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

202 913 3840

Sullivan.Melissa@epa.gov

From: David Leffler <dleffler@publichealthwatch.org>
Sent: Friday, November 18, 2022 1:48 PM
To: Sullivan, Melissa <sullivan.melissa@epa.gov>
Cc: Powell, Shayla <Powell.Shayla@epa.gov>
Subject: Re: Interview request — Mr. Daniel Hoyt

Hi Melissa,

It's good to hear from you. Yes, that would be great. Definitely works for me.

Feel free to let me know what next steps are/which dates and times work best on your end. I'm happy to adjust to any scheduling preferences your team/Mr. Hoyt/Mr. Schneider may have.

Best,

David

On Fri, Nov 18, 2022 at 8:07 AM Sullivan, Melissa <sullivan.melissa@epa.gov> wrote:

> Good morning David,
>
> We can provide an interview with Dan and Matthew on background.
>
> Does that work for you?
>
> Thank you,
>
> Melissa
>
> Melissa A. Sullivan (She/Her/Hers)
>
> Office of Public Affairs
>
> U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

202 913 3840

Sullivan.Melissa@epa.gov

From: David Leffler <dleffler@publichealthwatch.org>
Sent: Monday, November 14, 2022 12:02 PM
To: Powell, Shayla <Powell.Shayla@epa.gov>
Cc: Sullivan, Melissa <sullivan.melissa@epa.gov>; EPA Press Office <Press@epa.gov>
Subject: Re: Interview request — Mr. Daniel Hoyt

Hi Shayla,

Perfect — thank you. Don't hesitate to reach out if any questions arise on your end.

One quick (and random) question: Who is the best press contact for NEIC inquiries? I'm having trouble tracking that information down.

Best,
David

On Mon, Nov 14, 2022 at 10:07 AM Powell, Shayla <Powell.Shayla@epa.gov> wrote:

> Hi David –
>
> Confirming receipt. Thanks!
>
> Respectfully,
>
> Shayla R. Powell
>
> Office of Public Affairs/Office of the Administrator

(Office) 202-564-1976

(Mobile) 202-573-5349

From: David Leffler <dleffler@publichealthwatch.org>
Sent: Monday, November 14, 2022 10:39 AM
To: Powell, Shayla <Powell.Shayla@epa.gov>
Cc: Sullivan, Melissa <sullivan.melissa@epa.gov>; EPA Press Office <Press@epa.gov>
Subject: Re: Interview request — Mr. Daniel Hoyt

Hi Shayla,

Thanks for the speedy response. I hope your morning is going great. Absolutely — more information below:

Story deadline: 11/29

Sample questions:

- What first drew your attention to ITC/lead to the facility's inspection in 2012? Essentially, what compelled Region 6 to visit the facility that fall?
- Had you been out to ITC before? Or was it your first time there?
- The inspection report is very detailed, but I'm hoping to better understand what your experience on the ground was like. What was your process like during the inspection? What kind of tools did you use (FLIR cameras, etc.)? I'm hoping to, from a narrative perspective, understand what it's like to be a part of one of those inspections.
- The inspection notes potentially high emissions from a number of tanks. Can you contextualize these findings in any way for me? I'm just hoping to better understand the scale/severity of these emissions (since there are so many factors that go into measuring them), what you + your team were seeing, etc.
- Your team also saw high emission levels at Vopak, correct? How did those compare with those found at ITC, in terms of scale, scope, and frequency?

- Who was your team's main contact at ITC at the time?
- Looking back, what stood out to you most about the facility and inspection? Any takeaways that stick out in your mind?

Please let me know if you need any clarification on these, Shayla, or if there are specific inquiries you have concerns about. I'm happy to flesh them out or simplify them.

Thanks again,

David

On Mon, Nov 14, 2022 at 9:23 AM Powell, Shayla <Powell.Shayla@epa.gov> wrote:

> Good morning, David,
>
> Thank you for your email. Can you please send a list of questions you'd like to ask and your deadline, please?
>
> Respectfully,
>
> Shayla R. Powell
>
> Office of Public Affairs/Office of the Administrator
>
> (Office) 202-564-1976
>
> (Mobile) 202-573-5349

From: David Leffler <dleffler@publichealthwatch.org>
Sent: Monday, November 14, 2022 10:22 AM
To: Sullivan, Melissa <sullivan.melissa@epa.gov>
Cc: EPA Press Office <Press@epa.gov>
Subject: Interview request — Mr. Daniel Hoyt

Good morning,

My name is David Leffler and I'm a reporter with Public Health Watch, a nonprofit, nonpartisan news organization focused on threats to America's well-being.

I'm currently working on a story looking back at the 2019 fire at the Intercontinental Terminal Company's (ITC) facility in Deer Park, Texas. Specifically, I'm hoping to better understand the facility's culture and history, including past violations and similar aspects of EPA and TCEQ oversight.

During my research, I came across Mr. Daniel Hoyt's inspection of the facility in the fall of 2012. (Mr. Hoyt is currently an environmental engineer at EPA headquarters in the Office of Enforcement and Compliance Assurance.) His inspection itself has been very helpful for the story, but I have a few follow-up questions that I'd like to, if at all possible, run by Mr. Hoyt. Just hoping to learn more about his experience during the inspection and what stood out to him most at the time.

Thanks in advance for your time and consideration here. Feel free to let me know if you have any questions or concerns that I can help address, or if you'd like more information about this project.

Best regards,
David Leffler
512-947-6436

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David Leffler

Reporter

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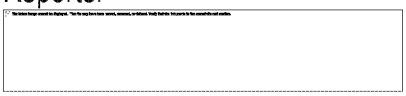
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