

Minutes



Complaints Task Group, Meeting #3

Date: February 3, 2014
 Time: 10am - 3:30pm
 Place: CASA office, 10035 108 Street, Edmonton, Alberta

In attendance:

Name	Stakeholder group
Ann Baran	Southern Alberta Group for the Environment
Roxane Bretzlaff	Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers (Canadian Natural Resources Limited)
Keith Denman	Alberta Environment and Sustainable Resource Development
Jennifer Fowler (by phone)	West Fraser - Hinton Pulp
Joseph Hnatiuk	Canadian Society of Environmental Biologists
Carolyn Kolebaba (by phone)	Alberta Association of Municipal Districts & Counties
Darren Morissette	Peace Airshed Zone Association
Tanya Moskal-Hébert	Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development
Merry Turtiak	Alberta Health
Dalene Wilkins	Alberta Energy Regulator
Celeste Dempster	CASA
Michelle Riopel	CASA

Action Items:

Action Items	Who	Due
2.3: Keith will investigate specifics around CIC staff training.	Keith	Meeting #4.
2.6: Celeste will look into presenters from Champion Petfoods.	Celeste	Meeting #4.
3.1: Everyone will read the sections of the BC document as outlined in Action Item 2.2.	All	Meeting #4.
3.2: Jennifer will talk to Cindy Quintero, RN at Hinton Pulp, if she has any thoughts about the complaints process.	Jennifer	Meeting #4.
3.3: Merry and Joseph will check if the federal government (specifically Transport Canada) does anything with respect to odour.	Merry, Joseph	Meeting #4.
3.4: Keith will check if odour is written into sewage approvals.	Keith	Meeting #4.
3.5: Celeste will distribute the presentations from meeting #3.	Celeste	ASAP.
3.6: Celeste and co-chairs will have the initial meeting with Scott about the background report.	Celeste, Tanya, Jennifer, Darren	ASAP.
3.7: Celeste will poll for dates for a one-hour teleconference to review the background report proposed format.	Celeste	ASAP.
3.8: Keith will ask Christine King to speak at meeting #4.	Keith	ASAP.
3.9: Celeste will prepare a one-page summary of the discussion on input from complainants and send to the task group for review.	Celeste	ASAP.
3.10: Celeste will poll for dates for meeting #4.	Celeste	ASAP.

1. Administrative Items

Darren chaired the meeting which began at 10:00am. Participants introduced themselves and were welcomed to the meeting. Quorum was achieved.

The agenda and meeting objectives were approved.

The minutes from meeting #2 were reviewed and approved with the following edits: several typos were noted, and Celeste was asked to clarify the last sentence in bullet 4 on page 4 and add to the last bullet on page 4 that callers who choose to remain anonymous do not receive a call back. The action items from meeting #2 were updated as follows:

Action Items	Who	Status
1.4: Darren will look into possible presenters from the transportation sector.	Darren	Complete. See agenda item 3.
1.6: Celeste will ask the Odour Management Team if feedback from complainants would be useful for the broader work of the team and/or other task groups.	Celeste	Complete. See agenda item 4.
2.1: Celeste will look into any relevant material from NCRB's 2008 conference in Banff.	Celeste	Complete. See additional information below.
2.2: Ann will highlight relevant sections from the BC document for the task group to read.	Ann	Complete.
2.3: Keith will investigate specifics around CIC staff training.	Keith	Carry forward.
2.4: Celeste will distribute the presentations from meeting #2.	Celeste	Complete.
2.5: Celeste will look into presenters from Life in the Heartland.	Celeste	Complete. See additional information below.
2.6: Celeste will look into presenters from a dog food plant.	Celeste	Carry forward. See additional information below.
2.7: Celeste will contact Scott Rollans to determine his availability and rates.	Celeste	Complete. See additional information below.
2.8: Celeste will poll for dates for meeting #3.	Celeste	Complete.
2.9: Celeste will prepare the team update presentation and send to the task group for review.	Celeste	Complete.

Additional Information:

Action Item 2.1: The conference was put on by AARD and was focused on odour, in particular an odour index. The presentations have been posted to the OMT login page.

Action Item 2.5: Celeste contacted Laurie Daniels from Life in the Heartland. They do have an odour complaint protocol but have not received an odour complaint in over 10 years. Laurie provided the protocol which Celeste has shared with the task group. Given that the protocol has not been activated in over 10 years it was felt that a presentation was not necessary.

Action Item 2.6: Celeste contacted the Champion Pet Food Plant in Morinville. They were not available for today's meeting but may be amenable to presenting at the next meeting. Celeste will continue to follow-up.

Action Item 2.7: Celeste contacted Scott who provided an estimate for the work that was thought to be reasonable when it was shared with the OMT co-chairs. Scott also said that he would be able to dedicate two weeks in February exclusively to this piece of work. At the OMT meeting on January 30 2014, the team approved contracting Scott Rollans.

Action Item 3.1: Everyone will read the sections of the BC document as outlined in Action Item 2.2.

2. CASA Update

Celeste provided an update on the Odour Management Team:

- The team met on January 30th where they received an update presentation from each of the task groups including status, budget, timelines, and feedback required from the team.
- The team was pleased with the work of all the task groups so far.
- The team discussed the feedback that was requested by the Complaints Task Group regarding input from complainants about their experiences and whether this type of input would be useful for other task groups and/or the broader work of the team. The team discussed this item and has asked each task group to outline their needs around engagement with complainants and the key questions they would like to ask. At the next OMT meeting, the team will consider the feedback from all three task groups and determine a path forward. The Complaints Task Group will further discuss their needs under agenda item 5.

Celeste also provided an update on the work of the Odour Assessment and Health Task Groups:

Odour Assessment Task Group:

- The task group has met twice so far and will meet again on March 14th. The task group has spent a significant amount of time developing an RFP and a table of contents for a consultant's report that will address their main deliverables:
 - An analysis of odour assessment tools/practices and their applicability to the Alberta context including when/when not they are appropriate to use.
 - A 'key' to facilitate access to the information in the analysis (ex. Decision tree, roadmap).
- The RFP has been posted and responses are due on February 17th.
- In between now and their next meeting the task group is developing criteria to evaluate RFP responses and, once RFP responses are received, task group members will use the evaluation to review each RFP response.
- At their next meeting the task group will review RFP responses and recommend a consultant to do the work. The team will be asked to approve this decision electronically as per the protocol outlined at OMT meeting #4.
- The task group will have additional information about budget and timelines once they have reviewed the RFP responses. The original timeline projection for the task group was 6 months. This target will not be met, but the task group is focused on developing a quality product in a timely manner.

Health Task Group:

- The task group has met twice so far and will meet again on February 7th. The task group is focused on two pieces of work:
 - A backgrounder about odour and health:
 - The task group has begun brainstorming the type of information that could be included in this piece. Alberta Health is providing in-kind the literature review they have developed on odour and health. The task group will be receiving an update on February 7th about when this material will be made available.
 - Tool(s) for individuals to track the health-related impacts of odour:
 - The task group has gathered information on currently available tools and have begun discussions about the kinds of tools that may be developed.

- At their next meeting the task group will continue discussions on the type of information that could be included in the backgrounder on odour and health as well as next steps for developing tools.
- The task group hopes to have additional information about budget and timelines after their next meeting.
- Feedback will be required from the team as interim products are developed.

Celeste provided an update on other CASA initiatives:

- The next CASA Board meeting will be March 13th in Edmonton. The CASA 20th year celebration will take place on June 6th in Calgary.
- The Electricity Framework Review Team has been exploring the question of how the federal Greenhouse Gas Regulation for coal-fired plants impacts the Alberta situation, from a macro- and micro-economic perspective.
- Non-Point Source Emissions:
 - A workshop was held in Calgary on October 22 to explore the potential for CASA to have a role in NPS management in Alberta. From these discussions, three priority opportunities were identified:
 - Understanding the NPS issue: emissions inventory, data management, and modeling
 - Assessing options for action: templates and tools
 - Building awareness and support
 - The outcomes of the workshop were presented to the Board at their December meeting. At this time, GoA indicated an interest in championing the issue, and plans to develop a new SoO to bring to the Board at the March Board meeting. An invitation was extended for any other parties who wish to influence the SoO to come forward with their interests as soon as possible.

3. Presentations

The task group heard two presentations to gather information about current processes for handling complaints, with highlights as follows. The presenters were asked to speak to a list of questions developed by the task group in their presentations and there was also the opportunity for additional Q&A.

Transportation Sector:

- Altex Energy provided information on their experiences dealing with odour complaints with the transportation sector.
- Transloading facilities do not require an approval but do require a municipal development permit. They also have reporting requirements relating to any spills.
 - Setback distances are set by the municipality under the jurisdiction of the Municipal Government Act.
- Altex regularly receives one or two odour related complaints. Complaints are received mostly during loading but they have also received complaints when the facility is not operating.
- The complaint process is informal. Complaints are received via phone and are dealt with when they are received on a case by case basis. There is no additional follow-up with complainant.
- Transloading facilities are not responsible for the sections of road leading to and from the facility.
- Altex would like to continue to engage with the local community.
- The task group noted that transloading facilities are also a suburban/urban issue, not only a rural issue.
 - Kinder-Morgan undertook extensive consultation with Fort Saskatchewan with respect to their transloading facility.

- Transloading facilities in urban areas have a high potential for odour complaints.
- There is confusion around regulation.
 - Transportation is under federal jurisdiction. Roads present an inter-provincial issue.

Rural Municipalities:

- The AAMDC represents all of Alberta's 69 municipal district and counties. In preparing for this presentation, 36 AAMDC members responded to brief survey to identify what processes are in place to address odour management issues in their municipality.
- Many AAMDC members responded that they rarely receive odour complaints. This ranged from receiving one to 20 complaints per year to only receiving one odour complaint in the last 12 years.
- Municipalities that have growing industrial sites located in their boundaries are anticipating increased complaints.
- Municipalities examine complaints as they are submitted and determine how they should be addressed. Many rural municipalities do not have municipal bylaws in place to address odour issues specifically but will handle complaints on an issue-by-issue basis or have them fall under another municipal bylaw (e.g. nuisance, land-use).
- Depending on the nature of the complaint, enforcement falls to municipal staff, the Government of Alberta, or an external party.
- Rural municipalities include a variety of land-uses within their boundaries. Industrial development, agricultural production and residential living all share land so sound planning practices is essential to managing competing demands.
- Municipal land use planning plays a role in managing the potential for complaints related to odour, noise and dust. Industry, development and agricultural practices play an important role in providing a balanced economic base for rural municipalities.
- It is important that municipalities engage with stakeholders, residents, regulatory bodies and neighbouring municipalities for land-use planning and positive development.
- The task group noted that:
 - AAMDC would be a useful for partner for distributing material and education.
 - Depending on the industry and who has jurisdiction, municipalities have the opportunity to comment on a facility's approval – this is forwarded to the regulatory body who makes a final decision about the approval.

Action Item 3.2: Jennifer will talk to Cindy Quintero, RN at Hinton Pulp, if she has any thoughts about the complaints process.

Action Item 3.3: Merry and Joseph will check if the federal government (specifically Transport Canada) does anything with respect to odour.

Action Item 3.4: Keith will check if odour is written into sewage approvals.

Action Item 3.5: Celeste will distribute the presentations from meeting #3.

For the next meeting, the task group will hear presentations from:

- Environmental Public Health
- ESRD Field Officers
- Champion Pet Food Plant, Morinville (see Action Item 2.6)

4. Background Report

At the last meeting, the task group decided that they needed to have a fulsome discussion about their expectations around the background report to share with Scott:

- The audience for the background report is this task group as well as the Odour Management Team.
- The purpose of the background report is to compile all the information that the task group has gathered in order “to understand the current mechanism(s) in place to manage odour complaints” (excerpt from Complaints Task Group Workplan). Scott will compile all the information the task group has gathered but will not conduct any analysis as this is the work of the task group.
- The task group will use this background report to have a discussion about odour complaint management gaps and strengths in Alberta (Workplan – Step 1, deliverable 2). This discussion, combined with the cross-jurisdictional review (Workplan – Step 2 deliverable), will help the task group to determine what types of tools should be developed (Workplan – Step 3, deliverable 1).
- The task group has suggested that the background report could be organized according to the 12 questions given to presenters but are open to suggestions from and collaboration with Scott.
- The Complaints Task Group Workplan will be shared with Scott.
- The task group noted that they have heard from the majority of presenters and there are three presentations to be given at the next meeting. The task group agreed that Scott should get started on the report and the three remaining presentations will be provided to him after meeting #4 to be incorporated into the background report.

The task group agreed on the following next steps:

- Celeste and the co-chairs will meet with Scott to share the task group’s expectations around the background report. Scott will be asked to prepare a short summary of outlining how the report should be formatted. They will also confirm Scott’s schedule and create a report writing schedule which includes liaising with Scott, or propose an alternate path forward if Scott’s schedule has changed.
- The format summary will be emailed to the task group and will review it together at a one-hour teleconference.

Action Item 3.6: Celeste and co-chairs will have the initial meeting with Scott about the background report.

Action Item 3.7: Celeste will poll for dates for a one-hour teleconference (meeting #4) to review the background report proposed format.

5. Input from Complainants

The team has asked each task group to outline their needs around engagement with complainants and the key questions they would like to ask. The task group had a hearty discussion and, while a definitive answer was not reached, the task group developed several key points:

- There are two points in the Complaints Task Group workplan where it might be useful to engage with complainants:
 - Information gathering stage:

- Key Questions:
 - The task group discussed that it would be useful to ask the complainants for their experiences and feedback around ‘first contact’ (i.e. when they first call-in). What makes a successful initial exchange for them? What are their expectations when they call in? What are their expectations with regards to a response to their complaint? These questions are focused on ‘process’ rather than ultimate outcomes.
 - How input could be used:
 - This information could be used to help build tools and determine what sorts of tools are needed.
 - Tool development stage:
 - Key Questions:
 - As tool(s) are developed, complainants could be asked for feedback.
 - How input could be used:
 - This information could be used to tweak tools and make sure that the final products are useful and appropriate.
- The task group discussed how they might engage with complainants:
 - There should be a focus on quality exchanges rather than the number of exchanges. The task group would like to have conversations with people rather than collect statistics.
 - The task group discussed a web survey but decided that was not the ideal option because:
 - It would be expensive to design and analyze the survey.
 - It would not provide the quality exchange the task group is looking for.
 - The task group discussed that it would be better to gather input one-on-one through interviews or a focus group.
 - Interviews could be done via telephone which could help the task group reach people across Alberta and in rural areas. The task group thought 10 interviews would likely be sufficient. The team could hire a consultant to do the interviews.
 - Focus groups (perhaps workshop style) would allow for a dialogue between complainants as well. It could, however, be intimidating for some participants, and it might be difficult to gather a cross section of people due to travelling distance. It may also be expensive as would need to pay expenses for participants to attend and participate.
 - The task group also discussed open houses. This option would be relatively expensive.
- The task group discussed the difficulty with selecting who to engage. The task group did not come to a definitive answer, but had several thoughts:
 - People could self-select.
 - Could target people in “hot spots” where odour is currently an issue.
 - Could ask available networks, such as airshed zone organizations, industries, municipalities, and GoA, who know of frequent callers to put names forward.
 - The input should focus on complainants who are ‘in the middle of the bell curve’. At one end are people who don’t call in, at the other end are those who will call in no matter what, and in the middle are those who are upset and looking to improve the situation and work towards a solution.

- The selection process could leave the task group open to criticism.
- The task group also noted that the path forward will be dependent on the resources available to put towards this endeavour as well as the needs of the other task groups.

The task group noted that Christine King, Senior Policy Analyst with Alberta Energy, is co-chair of the Hydrocarbon Emissions Response Committee in the Three Creeks area that liaises with residents to listen to their concerns about odour. Christine may have lessons learned and input that she can share with the task group.

Action Item 3.8: Keith will ask Christine King to speak at meeting #4.

Action Item 3.9: Celeste will prepare a one-page summary of the discussion on input from complainants and send to the task group for review.

6. Budget Check-in

Other than the cost of hiring Scott Rollans, the task group noted that there would be an expense associated with gathering input from complainants.

7. Meeting Wrap-up

The team reviewed the action items from today's meeting.

Next meeting:

- Meeting #5 will take place in Edmonton in the first two weeks of March 2014.

Action Item 3.10: Celeste will poll for dates for meeting #4.

Objective for next meeting:

- To hear the three presentations as outlined under item 3.
- To speak with Christine King as outlined under item 5.
- To hear an update on the background report.
- Discuss next steps to action the Complaints Task Group workplan.

The meeting adjourned at 2:50pm.