

Minutes



Complaints Task Group, Meeting #12

Date: October 28, 2014
Time: 9am – 3:30pm
Place: CASA office, Edmonton

In attendance:

Name	Stakeholder group
Ann Baran	Southern Alberta Group for the Environment
Mike Bisaga	Lakeland Industrial Community Association
Roxane Bretzlaff (by phone)	CAPP (CNRL)
Keith Denman	Alberta Environment and Sustainable Resource Development
Jennifer Fowler	Hinton Pulp
Joseph Hnatiuk	Canadian Society of Environmental Biologists
Jim Lapp	City of Edmonton/SWANA
Tanya Moskal-Hébert	Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development
Ludmilla Rodriguez (by phone)	Alberta Health Services
Dalene Meiers	Alberta Energy Regulator
Lori Weltz (12-3pm)	Yellow Dog Communications Ltd.
Celeste Dempster	CASA

Action Items:

Action Items	Who	Due
8.1: At the appropriate time, members will review the protocols related to ‘repeat callers’.	All	As time permits.
12.1: Celeste will update the document ‘Booklet Worksheet – Potential topics to be covered’ based on discussion at meeting #12.	Celeste	Meeting #13.
12.2: Jen will identify information from the background report that relates to each of the topics identified under Initial Response at meeting #12.	Jen	November 12, 2014.
12.3: Keith will prepare a generic ‘initial response triage matrix’ as described at meeting #12.	Keith	November 12, 2014.
12.4: Keith will provide a list of the province-wide numbers and a one-line description of when those numbers should be called.	Keith	November 5, 2014.
12.5: Jim, Dalene, Jen and Keith will help to fill in the ‘odour boxes’ in the decision tree by answering: <ol style="list-style-type: none">What activities would produce those odours?What province-wide number would you call in that case?	Jim, Dalene, Jen, Keith	November 5, 2014.
12.6: Ludmilla will send Celeste the names of the HealthLink Alberta participants for pilot testing.	Ludmilla	November 12, 2014.
12.7: Celeste will ask Lori if she is available to write the ‘Booklet’.	Celeste	ASAP.

1. Administrative Items

Jen chaired the meeting which began at 9:05am. Participants introduced themselves and were welcomed to the meeting. Quorum was achieved.

The agenda and meeting objectives were approved.

The minutes from meeting #11 were reviewed and approved. The action items from meeting #11 were reviewed as follows:

Action Items	Who	Status
8.1: At the appropriate time, members will review the protocols related to 'repeat callers'.	All	As time permits.
10.1: Keith will provide Celeste the names of the CIC staff who are available to provide input to the consultant's work.	Keith	Complete.
11.1: Task group members identified at meeting #11 will solicit groups to participate in the decision tree pilot testing.	Various	Complete.
11.2: Lori will prepare a short write-up of pilot testing requirements that can be used to support Action Item 11.1.	Lori	Complete.
11.3: Celeste will update the document 'Booklet Worksheet – Potential topics to be covered' based on discussion at meeting #11.	Celeste	Complete.
11.4: All members should review the updated document 'Booklet Worksheet – Potential topics to be covered' and come prepared to discuss at meeting #12.	All	Complete.
11.5: Tanya will identify information from the background report that relates to each of the topics identified under Data Collection at meeting #11.	Tanya	Complete.
11.6: Celeste will complete the OMT pilot testing proposal template and send to the task group for review.	Celeste	Complete.
11.7: Celeste will prepare a presentation for the OMT on the plan for pilot testing the decision tree.	Celeste	Complete.

2. CASA Update

Celeste provided an update on the Odour Management Team:

- The OMT last met on October 2nd.
- The OMT is also working on details to assemble and to roll-out the Good Practice Guide.
- The OMT will meet next on November 13th, 2014.

Celeste also provided an update on the work of the task groups:

Health Task Group:

- The task group is focused on two pieces of work:
 - Stream 1 - A backgrounder about odour and health:
 - The task group is currently working to finalize the backgrounder.
 - Stream 2 - Tool(s) for individuals to track the health-related impacts of odour
 - The task group has developed a prototype and is conducting pilot testing to ensure clarity and ease of use.
- The task group is currently working to finalize both streams of work and to prepare their final report for the OMT.

Odour Assessment Task Group:

- The task group is working with a consultant to prepare an inventory and analysis of odour assessment tools. The report will contain a 2-page overview of each odour assessment tool (with links to more detailed resources), general guidance steps for choosing tools depending on the purpose of the odour assessment, and a matrix outlining the characteristics of each tool allowing users to easily compare tools.
- The task group is currently working with the consultant to finalize the report.

Prevention/Mitigation:

- The task group is working with a consultant to prepare an inventory and analysis of odour prevention and mitigation tools.

Enforcement/Role of Regulation Task Group:

- The task group is working with a consultant to collate and review regulatory approaches.

Celeste provided an update on CASA activities:

- The Board met last on September 18th 2014 in Edmonton.
 - They were provided with a written status report on the OMT.
 - The Board reviewed and approved in principle the non-point source air emissions project charter. The Board wishes to obtain funding for the work before giving final approval for the project charter.
- CASA is holding a one-day training on interest-based negotiation on November 27, 2014. Anyone interested in attending should contact Celeste.
- The next Board meeting will be on December 4th 2014 in Calgary.

3. Review Worksheet – Potential topics to be covered in ‘Booklet’

The task group continued this exercise begun at meeting #11. The purpose of this exercise is to review the list of potential topics that could be included in each of the three sections (brainstormed originally at meeting #9) and determine which topics should be included. The task group determined what topics would be covered under initial response and had initial discussions on investigation response as outlined in Appendix A.

The task group aims to complete discussions on investigation response at meeting #13.

The task group will use information from the background report as the starting point to develop content for the ‘Booklet’ under each topic. This task group will begin this exercise at meeting #13.

Action Item 12.1: Celeste will update the document ‘Booklet Worksheet – Potential topics to be covered’ based on discussion at meeting #12.

Action Item 12.2: Jen will identify information from the background report that relates to each of the topics identified under Initial Response at meeting #12.

Action Item 12.3: Keith will prepare a generic ‘initial response triage matrix’ as described at meeting #12.

The task group noted that there is a difference between repeat callers and abusive callers. This will be further discussed under the area of work “repeat callers”.

4. Meeting with Lori from Yellow Dog Communication

Lori, from Yellow Dog Communications, joined the task group to discuss the draft decision tree and to finalize the plan for pilot testing.

The task group began by discussing what worked well about the draft decision tree:

- Provides the right level of complexity and detail.
- Like the bottom boxes with contact information.
- Like the ‘flow chart’ nature of the decision tree that uses arrows to provide specific direction about what to do next.
- Like that organizations are directed to their own internal process once the source has been confirmed.

Next, the task group discussed what didn’t work well/what could be improved about the draft report and developed specific feedback for Lori.

The task group provided general comments as follows:

- Odour Complaint Form: NB: The task group simplified this ‘form’ (see comments below) but determined that this work should be carried over to the ‘Data Collection’ area of work. The feedback below will be applied to ‘Data Collection’.
 - Under Offensiveness, the sentence “causing physical symptoms” should be removed.
 - Should include messaging about why the information is being collected.
 - Questions about reporting the odour previously should be moved to the end.
 - Remove option for a follow-up email. The task group determined that a call is the common practice.

The task group prepared specific feedback and comments for Lori on the decision tree as follows:

- The purpose of the decision tree is to help call operators to make good referrals. The purpose of the decision tree is not to help the caller problem-solve their situation.
- The decision tree will be a template that an organization can customize to their specific situation.
- The decision tree needs to provide the province-wide numbers that the call operator can direct the caller to, including:
 - HealthLink Alberta
 - 911 (for an emergency situation – see below)
 - AER (for hydrocarbon odours)
 - NRCB (agricultural odours)
- Organizations will be able to customize the decision tree to their local context. I.e. there should be blank spaces for other local numbers (ex. a plant) and they can customize the odour boxes at the bottom of the form for any particular odours that are relevant to their situation.
- Decision tree will clearly state that:
 - If the complainant is making a health complaint, they should immediately be directed to contact a doctor.
 - If the complainant is phoning about an emergency situation they should be immediately referred to 911.
- The odour boxes at the bottom of the decision tree were taken from the City of Edmonton odour wheel. The odour wheel groups similar odours. Each box represents the ‘header’ for a grouping. The Guidance Document offers additional detail about these odour descriptors.
 - The task group noted that callers describe odours using their own words and these descriptors can vary significantly.

- The task group noted that some callers may not know the difference between some of the headers (ex. putrid).
- The odour boxes are meant to be a ‘short-cut’ for the call operator when they are speaking with a caller.
- Not all the odour boxes will be relevant to every situation.

Action Item 12.4: *Keith will provide a list of the province-wide numbers and a one-line description of when those numbers should be called.*

Action Item 12.5: *Jim, Dalene, Jen and Keith will help to fill in the ‘odour boxes’ in the decision tree by answering:*

1. *What activities would produce those odours?*
2. *What province-wide number would you call in that case?*

Lori will use this information to update the decision tree. If the information from Action Item 12.5 is not available in time it will be included post-pilot testing.

The task group prepared specific feedback and comments for Lori on the ‘Odour Complaint Form’ as follows:

- The ‘Odour Complaint Form’ is not meant to gather information on the complaint itself – this is the purview of ‘Data Collection’. Detailed information on the complaint should only be collected once the complainant is speaking to the correct group to take their call. Repeating the same information multiple times leads to caller frustration and fatigue.
- The decision tree should only be gathering information from the complainant that is needed to direct their call. This form is meant to allow an organization to keep track of any calls that they have received and redirected.
- This piece will be retitled as a ‘Call Log’.
- The task group determined that the following information is needed to solicit sufficient information to direct the caller to the correct organization:
 - Odour descriptors: This information will be used by the call operator to try to determine the source. If the call operator can determine the source, they can more accurately direct the call.
 - Location: This information could help the call operator to determine the likely source of the odour. This relates to the ability of organization to customize the decision tree. If the call operator can determine the source, they can more accurately direct the call.
- The task group determined that the rest of the information currently in the ‘Odour Complaint Form’ falls under the work of ‘Data Collection’ and will be carried over to this area of work (with additional specific feedback provided earlier in the meeting).
- The task group imagined that the ‘Call Log’ could take the form of the table with columns including who took the call, to where they caller was directed as well as odour descriptor and location.

The task group prepared specific feedback for Lori on the Guidance Document (for using the decision tree and form) as follows:

- The guidance document should be updated to reflect the feedback provided on the decision tree and the ‘Call Log’.

The task group then discussed and finalized the plan for pilot testing:

Pilot testing will take a two-pronged approach:

- Organizations that refer callers (WBEA, Strathcona Industrial Association, SPOG) will be asked to 1) Customize the decision tree, and 2) Use their customized decision tree. They will then provide feedback, using a form, on the customization process and their experience using the decision tree.
- Organization to whom callers are referred (Hinton Pulp, NRCB, 311 Edmonton, NCIA, CIC, HealthLink Alberta) will be asked to review the decision tree and provide feedback on 1) Do they think that the process outlined in the decision tree would direct callers to the correct organization, 2) Does the decision tree ask the right questions to help direct callers and, 3) any additional feedback based on their experience handling odour complaint calls.

Lori will be responsible for contacting pilot test participants.

Action Item 12.6: Ludmilla will send Celeste the names of the HealthLink Alberta participants for pilot testing.

The task group discussed next steps as follows:

Date	Event
November 5, 2014	Action Items 12.2, 12.3, 12.4 and 12.5 due
November 7, 2014	Lori will update the draft decision tree and associated materials. Celeste will distribute updated materials to task group.
November 14, 2014	The task group will have the opportunity to review the updated materials for accuracy to ensure that the comments from today's meeting have been accurately captured. The task group agreed that this IS NOT an opportunity to provide new feedback, but rather is the opportunity to ensure the feedback from meeting #12 has been correctly captured before pilot testing begins.
November 17 – December 12, 2014	Pilot testing period
Meeting #13: TBA January 2014	The task group will review the results of pilot testing with Lori and make adjustments, as necessary, before Lori finalizes the material.
TBA (depending on date for meeting #13)	Lori delivers final materials.

3. Workplan: Timelines and Budget

The task group noted that the pilot testing has been delayed so the consultant work will not be complete until January 2015. This likely won't affect the overall timelines. The task group is still aiming to complete their work by February 2015. If timelines are affected, it will likely be minimal (1-2 months).

The task group noted that they are on budget and that they have \$15,000 put aside for a writer to assist them with the 'Booklet'. The writer would need to:

- Attend meetings #13, 14, and 15 to observe as the task group develops the content for the 'Booklet'
- After each meeting, write-up the content prepared by the task group.
- Incorporate feedback from the task group on this content.
- Once all the content is ready, the consultant would prepare a draft version for the task group to review.

- The consultant would incorporate this feedback and deliver the final version of the ‘Booklet’. Possibly two rounds of feedback on this draft will be needed.

Action Item 12.7: Celeste will ask Lori if she is available to write the ‘Booklet’.

4. Meeting Wrap-up

The task group reviewed the action items from today’s meeting.

The objectives for meeting #13 are:

- Finalize topics for inclusion in the ‘Booklet’ under investigation response.
- Develop content for each topic under data collection and initial response.

The meeting adjourned at 3:15pm.

Minutes



Appendix A

Initial Response Time:

“Complaint Response Triage/Protocol Table”:

You (i.e. the user) should spend some time thinking about your triage process: -provide a template that a group could complete in the context of their particular situation. Helping a non-expert, giving them a tool.

Similar aware to AER triage process diagram from background report

Emergency situation (red)	A. Depending what the call is about, what is the response time? a. The question is: Does it require immediate attention? b. Triaging is used to determine the answer c. The Answer would be the response	The triage piece from this morning, different triggers have a different response. Matrix of situations and timelines (almost like a triage process) – to determine a response Example: Emergency
H2S Health complaint -include emergency numbers		
When to forward call to investigator.		

Table 1: Initial Response Time

Initial Response Time:

refers to the first contact back to the complainant after a call has been made. It acknowledges the complaint and should help the caller to feel heard. It is not about rushing a conclusion or solution in order to meet this timeline (which often takes much longer). For complainants who do not wish to have a call back, the initial call to lodge the complaint is the initial response.

Initial contact is complete once the complainant has been informed about any next steps.

- Caller satisfaction with the process is the goal of initial response. They feel heard and know the next steps (even if they aren't necessarily happy about them).

<i>Topic</i>	<i>Notes from meeting #12</i>
A. Timeframes for different processes:	Now covered under telling the caller what to expect

<p>a. Call back to complainant b. Inspector in field c. Triage - getting information out</p>	
1. Give complainant a reference number or point of contact (i.e. some way that the complainant can follow up)	<p>Depends on who they call, if calling small organizations don't necessarily need one, larger organizations will have one, some organizations don't have reference numbers Can reduce frustration if complainant feels that they can follow-up themselves if need be</p>
2. Who is receiving the call (i.e. who is answering the phone)?	<p>Organization needs to understand who will be taking the call and ensuring that they have the appropriate information. Person receiving the call should know their boundaries, not speculate about the odour. Having the right training (including soft skills).</p>
3. Who is calling (and does this affect the response)?	<p>Assume that we're dealing with an individual not an agency. Response would be different for an agency (more under investigation response). A call from a political figure representing an agency, is taken as an agency. If they're calling on behalf of themselves, treated like an individual. Don't want to introduce bias. Policy shouldn't reflect a difference based on the individual calling and will be recorded and triaged the same way.</p>
4. Coordinating amongst agencies regarding who will be communicating with the complainant	<p>This relates to agencies. It may be unavoidable (i.e. could still receive multiple call backs). When referring a complaint to a different agency, need to clarify who will be communicating with the complainant. Ensuring that person who receives the initial call understands if the complainant has a particular desire about how/who they are communicated with them.</p>
5. Letting the caller know about next steps (what will or will not happen).	<p>AER triage piece When they will receive a call back/updated Ex. You will receive a call back in 24 hours Ex. We will be sending out an investigator Ex. We will not be sending out an investigator If voicemail message, making it known how often machine is checked. We'd like to provide advice about how to deliver this messaging. There are environmental factors (example can't expect inspectors to go out in a blizzard) If can't do what said they would do, letting the complainant know.</p>

Table 2: Investigation Response - Things you should consider when investigating a complaint:

Investigation Response: is focused on good practices for investigating complaints. Person who receives that call is not necessarily investigating the complaint. You should have an investigation complaint process. Here are the elements that you should include and some considerations. Lay out high level principles/common ground, but not getting into details. Not writing a manual for field investigators.	
<i>Topic</i>	<i>Notes from meeting #11/12</i>
How frequently to update the complainant?	Depends how long the investigation lasts. Should at least get a call back when investigation complete. May want to contact at key milestones in the investigation if it is particularly complex.
Safety concerns (ex. weather)	If hinders the investigation (ex. Blizzard), should let the complainant know that something has changed (ex. The investigator couldn't make it out). Provide some short guidance on considerations around this topic.
A. How long to keep documentation?	Could be a legal requirement for some organizations How long does CIC keep it? Provide some examples Emphasize the importance of tracking Could be influenced by the type of issue
B. Timing of investigation response	Example if far away, could call local industry to investigate What makes something urgent/not urgent? -odour could indicate that there is an emergency and the response would reflect that
1. Consistent triage process (see next three bullets) 2. Determine what is the incident 3. Determine level of response a. What triggers a response (link to determining validity of concern)? Type of response	
Determining urgency of concern and appropriate investigation response -this type of matrix does not currently exist, but we can provide some considerations that you can consider when determining your investigation response, including:	All complaints are valid. It's always urgent for the caller. Need to decide how to use available resources (ex. Wake someone up at 3am to investigate). It can take to change a process to reduce an odour. Most complaints aren't urgent. Many times a situation can be resolved without a field visit. <i>Urgency – do they send an email to weekend person, call directly, call on Monday</i>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Upset or routine operations at potential source? - Filling out the decision tree (bottom boxes relating to source) in order to determine source (to help you determine where to start your investigation not to point fingers in front of the caller) 	<p>Could be valid but maybe there is nothing to be done about it What do you say when you determine that you shouldn't go out to investigate?</p>
Upset or routine operations at potential source? <p>If source is found, should try to find root cause (using root cause analysis)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Make a very short reference to it in the section only as being covered by PMTG. 	<p>Upset – has certain connotations – be careful of wording (non-routine?)</p> <p>Usually responsibility of the industry (not government). Usually a long-term. Could be short. Could be multiple sources. Difficult to get. Don't want call operator to speculate. This is "stage 3" investigation. This is more mitigation. Sometimes the root cause is a standard practice. It will still smell. The root cause is acceptable. We're not managing for zero odour. If the root cause is not acceptable, can we do anything about it? Getting at the cause of the event rather than dealing with the symptoms only This can be a longer process Could never get to the root cause or could not be solveable We're not sure about the word "root cause"</p>
4. Alternative data sources (other than the complainant, such as monitoring stations)	<p>Where available. Can be useful, example wind direction can help determine source. Need to be careful of false positives. Monitoring stations don't necessarily look for odour and so can't necessarily provide data. Need to be clear about what monitoring stations can and can't provide. Need to note these limitations in this section. Providing information on how to access this data (what is and is not available).</p>
5. Multiple calls regarding the same issue (trends) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How this impacts your <u>investigation</u> (not how to deal with them on the phone) 	<p>If are already working on the issue, may not need to go out and investigate. If receive many calls with the same complaint, can indicate a trend. Can reassure that is already being investigated.</p>
6. Who are your partners in the investigation (ex. airshed zones, NRCB, environmental public health)	<p>Provide high level guidance only (we're not writing a field manual). This is something that the investigator should be aware of.</p>
7. Any existing mitigation practices going on?	<p>This falls under the jurisdiction of the Prevention/Mitigation Task Group. It's piece that occurs much farther down the road.</p>
End of meeting #12.	
8. What preventative measures to address issue?	
9. What is considered closure?	
10. Correspondence with complainants (who, how,	

what)	
11. What boundary is being used (link to who are your partners?)?	
12. Existing protocols to deal with that issue may affect level of response (i.e. regulation)	
13. Has this issue happened before (trends)?	
14. Trends	
15. <i>Staff training*- come back to this later, seems to be a cross-cutting issue, not sure where it fits</i>	Providing staff with training in investigating odours Not everyone is able to investigate an odour complaint.
16. Suitability of person responding -providing some high level guidance about who should be going out and training	Some people very sensitive to odour and some people can't smell Underscore for people creating a process <i>Choosing the right person to investigate</i> Compliance and investigating officers often have to be "jack of all trades" Training and classifying odours vs dealing with the public We could possibly make this into a recommendation later?