

this team, accepted by the Board. The Committee talked at a high level about the shape the forum could look like, the risks and the resources involved (time, expertise). This forum would need to be stakeholder driven; therefore the Committee first wants to test interest among our stakeholders. This project is the responsibility of the Communications Committee, while MKLW team members can take part if they are interested, they are not obligated.

2) Review peer review comments

The team discussed the reviewers' comments generally noting that the exercise was extremely valuable. The tool currently represents what was said at the second day of the workshop, but that input needs refinement to identify the essential elements of a good consensus process. There were a few common themes to the comments related to the tool's purpose, audience and tone.

Purpose

The team discussed the comments related to purpose. The comments questioned if this tool should really be a checklist, or if it is a practical tool that offers solutions to problems encountered during a consensus process. Several comments looked for further guidance related to the purpose; for example, how many checkboxes need to be answered 'yes' for a process to proceed? The comments from reviewers pushed for greater clarity on what the important elements. Some commented that some of the points were relevant to any decision-making process and other reviewers stressed that some of the bullets were too detailed or not important at all.

The team intended the tool to be a guidance document or best practices style document that illustrates what elements exist in successful CDM processes. Like a recipe – here are the ingredients you're looking for. The team supported the comments to turn the questions into statements. This would help alleviate the perception that all the questions had to be answered when the intent was to list items to consider before, during and after a CDM process. Also, the team did not want to spend considerable time anticipating the answers to the questions posed in the checklist. Flexibility and context are very important in consensus processes and the team felt that it would be impractical and inappropriate to try to address each question.

Audience

Reviewers responded that the audience is CASA, AWC and others that use formal CDM processes. The team agreed that the tool is targeted at those groups, rather than the general public or those using informal CDM processes. There may be hints or tips of use to those in the informal processes, but the structure and language are suited to formal processes. The team agreed to put a statement regarding the audience and applicability to informal processes in the introduction.

As it stands, the checklist does require a knowledge of consensus processes and terminology. This could be mitigated by providing other sources (e.g. CASA, AWC, NRTEE). Also, making statements instead of asking questions should help.

Tone

Reviewers responded that the tone of the checklist was negative (i.e. a list of everything that can go wrong). This wasn't the intention of the committee; rather, they hoped to provide a series of considerations or conversations that could help a group to success. It sounds very prescriptive as it is. Creating statements from the questions should help the tone. The document should be enabling.

Overall, the tool needs work. Many of the ideas are there, but need refining. In particular, the team agreed that the recognition section can be changed to discuss evaluation. There could be a note that successes should be celebrated, but that doesn't need elaboration. Many of the specific comments can't be addressed until we deal with the structural concerns outlined above.

To achieve this work, the team agreed to hire a consultant to develop the next iteration of the tool. The consultant would be asked to develop a 10 page tool that could act as a reference guide for those involved in formal consensus processes. The team is looking for text that is illustrative of a healthy CDM process. The focus should be on what enables the process to work best, rather than issues that could stall the process. It would be a reference a stakeholder could continually use to determine if they, or the team, are following best, or most appropriate, practices. Specifically, the team would like to see the questions turned into statements and the recognition section focus on evaluation. The document should also be consistent and compatible with the Alberta Arbitration and Mediation Society's training program.

The team entrusted the chair to finalize the details to hire the consultant.

3) Implementation of tool

The team discussed implementation of the tool into the CAMS process. However, it is beyond most project team's mandate to change CASA's process. The team members felt the Board should be responsible to using the tool, in its final form. If the board decides that some elements need to be incorporated into Statements of Opportunity or Screen and Scoping processes, that should be a board decision. The secretariat intends to share the tool with team members and use it internally.

4) Next steps

The board book deadline is May 10. The team will have a teleconference to discuss the final draft of the tool and reporting to the board. The teleconference will be May 5 10-12.

Meeting adjourned at 11.45.