

Minutes



Odour Management Working Group, Meeting #3

Date: Tuesday, February 5th, 2013

Time: 11:00 am to 4:00 pm

Place: CASA Office, Edmonton

In attendance:

Name	Stakeholder group
Keith Denman	Alberta Environment and Sustainable Resource Development
Carolyn Kolebaba (by phone)	Alberta Association of Municipal Districts & Counties
Lance Miller	Devon Canada Corporation
Al Schulz (by phone)	Chemistry Industry Association of Canada
Janis Seville	The Lung Association
David Spink	Prairie Acid Rain Coalition
Merry Turtiak	Alberta Health
Angella Vertzaya	City of Edmonton
Robyn Jacobsen	CASA
Celeste Dempster	CASA
Struan Robertson	CASA

Action Items:

Action Items	Who	Due
3.1: David will send Celeste the two odour information pieces he mentioned during the meeting which will then be shared with the group.	David, Celeste	ASAP.
3.2: Merry will forward to Celeste the summary of the update provided on the literature review being conducted by Alberta Health which will then be shared with the group.	Merry, Celeste	ASAP.
3.3: Merry will investigate if an advanced copy of the literature review being conducted by Alberta Health looking at odour and health can be provided to the working group.	Merry	ASAP.
3.4: Celeste will update the straw dog and send it to the working group for review.	Celeste	8 February.
3.5: Celeste will review the 'Potential Outcomes/Deliverables' for alignment with the three categories of deliverables and report back to the group.	Celeste	For next meeting.
3.6: The group will complete the two brainstorming exercises (stakeholders and resources) and send to Celeste.	All	By 8 February.

1. Administrative Items

The meeting began at 11:10am. 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.

The action items from meeting #2 were updated as follows:

Action Items	Who	Status
2.1: Merry will provide an update about the literature review being done by Alberta Health looking at odour and health.	Merry	Completed. On today's agenda.
2.2 Celeste will update the straw dog project charter and send to the working group for review.	Celeste	Completed. Sent to group on 31 January.

2. Action Item 2.1

Merry provided an update on the literature review being conducted by Alberta Health looking at odour and health.

The report was initially completed in November 2011 by a consultant for Alberta Health. The report has three objectives:

- Collection of scientific literature pertaining to odour-induced health effects.
- Provide a summary of the current state of knowledge regarding odours and health.
- Evaluate the factors and mechanisms involved in odour induced responses.

The following were exemptions not included in the report.

- Link between odour and memory, pain, taste, appetite.
 - The consultant has been instructed to include pain, taste and appetite in the next iteration of the review.
- Aromatherapy treatments for medical conditions or procedure anxiety.
- The effect of certain diseases on olfaction, multiple chemical sensitivity/hyper-reactivity and pheromones.
- Odour control and management.

Listed below are some of the conclusions that could be drawn from the literature review:

- Odour is a complex issue and is heavily influenced by odour characteristics and individual factors.
- Evidence demonstrates that all odours are not of equal consequence, a wide range of responses can be induced by different odorants and the health impacts of odors are often odorant specific.
- The variation in odour character and subjective nature make it particularly difficult to examine the health impacts of odours using typical risk assessment approaches.

Merry outlined some of the next steps for the literature review as follows:

- Alberta Health is in the midst of updating the literature review and making it accessible to stakeholders.
- This update will include better definition around odour annoyance and health, and other areas previously exempted.
- In regards to CASA's Odour Management Project, it is hoped that this work can be integrated into the team's work.
- A tentative completion date for the literature review is March 2013.

After the update, the group had a discussion and the opportunity to ask questions. Highlights of the discussion include:

- The literature review cites over 100 papers.
- The literature review did not differentiate between odourants. Rather it focused on response to odourants.
 - Having information on different odourants may be useful for the project team as they discuss odour assessment.
- As the literature review is updated, it would be useful to further focus the scope on impacts described in Alberta.
- People smelling an odour do not often differentiate between an annoyance factor (I smell something) and an irritation factor (My eyes are burning).
- People can sometimes ascribe a health effect to an odour where it is not warranted (ex. The flu).
- Individual reactions and symptoms to the same odour can vary.
- Odour can evoke different emotions in different people. How can we tease apart the psychological and physiological effects of odour?
- The literature shows that odour has a physical effect on the brain, but it is unclear exactly what that effect is.
- The issue of the health effects of odour is complex.

Action Item 3.1: David will send Celeste the two odour information pieces he mentioned during the meeting which will then be shared with the group.

Action Item 3.2: Merry will forward to Celeste the summary of the update provided on the literature review being conducted by Alberta Health which will then be shared with the group.

Action Item 3.3: Merry will investigate if an advanced copy of the literature review being conducted by Alberta Health looking at odour and health can be provided to the working group.

3. Project Objectives, Part 1

At the last meeting the group had a thorough discussion of each of the seven topics put forward as potential objectives. At this time, the Secretariat suggested that there was enough information to compose draft objectives for inclusion in the straw dog project charter. The group reviewed each of the draft objectives in the straw dog project charter to ensure that the wording reflected discussions at the last meeting. The group clarified and modified objectives as required and also reviewed the work and potential outcomes/objectives outlined under each objective. For each objective the group was also asked to keep in mind what work could be accomplished in the proposed timeframe of 18 months. These changes will be reflected in the next iteration of the straw dog project charter and the highlights of the discussion follow:

1. Complaints

- The process to manage complaints should be consistent, timely, step-wise and applicable to any odour incidence.
- The process should also be comprehensive in that it should characterize and attempt to quantify the odour. This assessment can help to clarify the appropriate type and level of response.
- The process should include a communications component which includes guidance for the person receiving the complaint and ongoing information about the actions taken to resolve the complaint.

2. *Odour Assessment*

- The results of an odour assessment can be used to determine the appropriate type and level of response to address an odour issue.
- The protocols and criteria for odour assessment should be practical and appropriate to the situation.
- A variety of groups are involved in odour assessment and monitoring from airshed zones to regulators, etc.
- The project team should think about the role of odour assessment in odour management.

3. *Prevention/Mitigation*

- During the discussion of this objective, the group had some specific thoughts that should be included in the 'Scope' section of the project charter:
 - The project team should focus on adverse odours using the definition from the *Environmental Protection and Enhancement Act*.
 - Recognizing that there are harmful emissions that can have a health effect before they reach the threshold where a person can smell them, the work of the project team should focus on detectable odours. At this time, including odours that are below thresholds detectable by the human nose would be too much work for the project team.
- Complaints about health effects, but no odour is smelled, can offer clues about emissions.
- The interface between odour-causing activities and residents should be a specific focus for prevention and mitigation strategies.

4. *Enforcement/Role of Regulations*

- The term 'regulation' can have a specific meaning and the group did not want to restrict the project team. Regulation here will be used as a generic term.
- Completing a gap analysis of regulations would allow the team to look at emerging odour sources.
- The project team should come up with a set of criteria to evaluate existing regulations.
- Delving into specific industry practices may be too much work for the team, but recommendations could be put forth to encourage an analysis of industry practices.
- The project team should look at all three levels of government (municipal, provincial and federal).
- While looking at the bylaws for every municipality in Alberta would be time consuming, the project team needs to understand what bylaws are effective. The project team should consider this when they are coming up with the plan for this piece of work.

5. *Health*

- Health and well-being are drivers of odour management and are embedded throughout the work of the project team.
- Understanding the impacts of odour on health will help the project team to make more informed choices about odour management.
- The objective should be more generic so that it applies to both communities and individuals.
- The second objective should be combined with the first.
- There may be an opportunity to recommend possible venues for future research.
- Possible venues for future research could be included in the *continuous improvement* section.

6. *Education/Communication/Awareness*

- The wording of the objective should include the importance of odour management to maintaining air quality.

- An outcome could be a communications plan (similar to Recommendation 9 from the 2008 CFO team). This would need to include target audiences as well as the most appropriate ways and means to communicate with them.
 - It would be helpful for industry to know what tools are available to address odour complaints.
 - It would be helpful for municipalities to be able to increase understanding of jurisdictional responsibilities (ex. Municipalities don't have influence over facilities outside their boundaries).

7. *Continuous Improvement*

- Many industries are undertaking work in the field of continuous improvement.
 - Looking at what industry already has in place for continuous improvement might be beneficial.
- There should be a third objective about encouraging continuous improvement at odour-generating facilities.
 - The project team will need to consider how to implement and evaluate this objective to see what is feasible. This is a project team level discussion.

4. Project Objectives, Part 2

The group began a preliminary discussion on sequencing and prioritization of project team work. Due to time constraints the group decided to defer this discussion to the next meeting.

5. Review Project Goal

At the last meeting, it was suggested that there may be a need to revisit the project goal that was drafted at meeting #1:

To create a comprehensive framework for odour management in Alberta.

One suggestion was that the current project goal could be used as the vision for odour management in Alberta and a more focused goal could be drafted to represent the work of this project team. The group felt that, given the proposed timeframe of 18 months and available resources, the goal as written was not realistic or achievable. The group decided to repurpose the original goal as a vision for odour management in Alberta, which could be used to guide ongoing and future work:

There is a comprehensive framework for odour management in Alberta.

The group proposed a new project goal which was adapted from the New Zealand Ministry for the Environment document “Good Practice Guide for Assessing and Managing Odour in New Zealand” (June 2003):

To create a good practice guide for assessing and managing adverse odour in Alberta.

The group felt that the new project goal was more realistic and achievable, and better reflected the overall work of the project team discussed at today's meeting.

Going forward, references to a ‘framework’ in the straw dog project charter will be changed to a ‘best practice guide’.

6. Project Deliverables

At meeting #1, the group described three categories of deliverables:

- A good practice guide (previously ‘a framework’) consisting of a package of SMART (Specific, Measurable, Action-oriented, Realistic, Time-bound) recommendations,
- Tools for assessing and managing odour issues, and

- Identify and prioritize any further work.

In the straw dog project charter reviewed today, there are ‘Potential Outcomes/Deliverables’ listed alongside the objectives. The ‘Potential Outcomes/Deliverables’ were intended to help capture the texture of the working group’s discussions around each topic. Given these two pieces, Celeste asked the group for direction on how to update the deliverables section of the project charter for the next iteration of the straw dog. The group agreed that, for now, the ‘Potential Outcomes/Deliverables’ should remain alongside the objectives. Once the group has a better idea of how well the ‘Potential Outcomes/Deliverables’ align with the three categories of deliverables from meeting #1, the group can update the deliverables section of the straw dog at the next meeting.

Action Item 3.5: Celeste will review the ‘Potential Outcomes/Deliverables’ for alignment with the three categories of deliverables and report back to the group.

6. Next Steps

To advance discussions between meetings, the group was tasked with two brainstorming exercises:

1. A list of potential stakeholder groups.
 - a. Which groups are critical to building consensus at the table?
 - b. Which can be engaged in other ways?
 - c. Why?
2. Preliminary discussion on resources (resources – identifies costs associated with the project as well as strategies for obtaining the costs).
 - a. What are possible funding sources for this project?
 - b. If funds are limited, how should work be prioritized?

The results of the brainstorming exercises will be compiled and used as the basis for discussions on these topics.

Action Item 3.6: The group will complete the two brainstorming exercises (stakeholders and resources) and send to Celeste.

To ensure that the project charter is ready to be presented at the March Board meeting, the group set an additional face-to-face meeting date for Thursday February 28th from 11am-4pm in Edmonton. The group discussed that this meeting could be changed to a teleconference if work is sufficiently advanced that a face-to-face meeting is not required. The group discussed next steps and timelines as summarized in the table below:

Task	When
Group undertakes two brainstorming exercises and sends to Celeste: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Stakeholder groups 2. Resources 	Friday 8 February
Celeste updates straw dog project charter and sends to group for review	Friday 8 February
Group reviews straw dog project charter and sends comments to Celeste	Noon Wednesday 13 February
Celeste updates straw dog project charter and send to group	End of day Wednesday 13 February
Working Group meeting #4	Friday 15 February from 9am to 2pm
Working Group meeting #5	Thursday, February 28th from 11:00 am to 4:00 pm

Key tasks for the next meeting include:

- Finalizing project objectives and deliverables.
- Continuing discussions on project scope.
- Discussing the two brainstorming exercises.
- Continuing discussions on sequencing, prioritization and project structure.

The meeting adjourned at 4:00 pm.