

Minutes



Health Task Group, Meeting #2

Date: December 3, 2013
Time: 9am - 3:30pm
Place: CASA office, 10035 108 Street, Edmonton, Alberta

In attendance:

Name	Stakeholder group
Dr. Rocky Feroe	Alberta Environmental Network
Debra Hopkins	Alberta Environment and Sustainable Resource Development
Dr. Alvaro Osornio-Vargas	University of Alberta/The Lung Association
Cindy Quintero (by phone)	Hinton Pulp
Bob Scotten (at 11:45am)	West Central Airshed Society/Palliser Airshed Society
Karina Thomas	Alberta Health
Opel Vuzi	Health Canada
Celeste Dempster	CASA
Michelle Riopel	CASA

Action Items:

Action Items	Who	Due
1.5: Karina will ask Alberta Health librarians to conduct a search for tools that track the health-related impacts of odour and any related publications.	Karina	Meeting #3
2.1: Task group members will read section 2.0 of the BC final report (2005) including the associated table.	All	Meeting #3
2.2: Alvaro will review the document "Measurements of perceived air quality: Correlations between odor intensity, acceptability and characteristics of air".	Alvaro	At least one week prior to meeting #3
2.3: Cindy will review the document "Measurements of the Effects of Air Quality on Sensory Perception".	Cindy	At least one week prior to meeting #3
2.4: Opel will review the document "A Review of The Science and Technology of Odor Measurement".	Opel	At least one week prior to meeting #3
2.5: Members will provide comments on the initial brainstorm of topics that could be included in the Stream 1 backgrounder.	All	13 December 2013
2.6: Celeste will compile members' comments on the Stream 1 backgrounder for discussion at meeting #3.	Celeste	Meeting #3
2.7: Celeste will poll for dates for meeting #3.	Celeste	ASAP
2.8: Celeste will prepare the team update presentation and send to the task group for review.	Celeste	January 2014

1. Administrative Items

Karina chaired the meeting which began at 9:00am. Participants introduced themselves and were welcomed to the meeting. Quorum was achieved.

The agenda and meeting objectives were approved.

The minutes from meeting #1 were reviewed and approved. The action items from meeting #1 were updated as follows:

Action Items	Who	Status
1.1: Celeste will share the Alberta Health presentation with the task group.	Celeste	Complete.
1.2: Karina will ask the Alberta Health literature review consultant if the review contains any tools for tracking the health-related impacts of odour and if there are any references that could be made available that provide an overview of odour and health while the task group waits for the review to be made available.	Karina	Complete. See agenda item 3.
1.3: Celeste will create a polished version of the template and distribute it to the group for their use.	Celeste	Complete.
1.4: Task group members are each responsible for reviewing an odour management document using the provided template.	All	Complete.
1.5: Karina will ask Alberta Health librarians to conduct a search for tools that track the health-related impacts of odour and any related publications.	Karina	Carry forward.
1.6: Celeste will ask Dr. Irena Buka if she is aware of any tools for tracking the health-related impacts of odour that are directed at health care professionals.	Celeste	Complete. See additional info below.
1.7: Celeste will ask the Odour Management Team if animal health is included in the scope of the Health Task Group's work.	Celeste	Complete. See additional info below.
1.8: Celeste will provide the original Odour Management Statement of Opportunity to the task group.	Celeste	Complete.

Additional Information:

Action Item 1.6: Dr. Irena Buka forwarded the request to her network of colleagues and three documents were put forward:

1. "Measurements of perceived air quality: Correlations between odor intensity, acceptability and characteristics of air"
 - <http://vbn.aau.dk/files/18311676/103.pdf>
2. "Measurements of the Effects of Air Quality on Sensory Perception"
 - <http://chemse.oxfordjournals.org/content/26/3/345.full>
3. "A Review of The Science and Technology of Odor Measurement"
 - http://www.iowadnr.gov/Portals/idnr/uploads/air/environment/afo/odor_measurement.pdf

Action Item 1.7: The team discussed this issue and determined that, although animal health is a concern, addressing it at this point would make the scope of work for the Health Task Group and the team too large. It could be noted as an area for future work in the final report. The Health Task Group should keep their work focused on human health.

2. CASA Update

Celeste provided an update on the Odour Management Team:

- The Odour Management Team has received a \$150,000 grant from ESRD.

- The team discussed how to manage communications between team and task groups to ensure that the task group receives timely feedback and that team members are kept informed of the task group's work. As such, after each task group meeting Celeste will prepare a short 1-page update to send to the team which includes status/highlights, key decisions, and any items requiring team feedback. The update will also be shared with the task group.
- The team will be asking each task group to present an update at the next team meeting on January 30th. The update should include: status, budget, timelines, any items where feedback from the team is required and any upcoming challenges for the task group. The task group discussed that one of the co-chairs will present the update and the whole task group will have the opportunity to review the presentation in advance.

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

- Odour Assessment Task Group:
 - Met on November 26th where they prepared a draft RFP to conduct an inventory and analysis of odour assessment tools. The task group will finalize the RFP electronically and develop a set of criteria to evaluate responses.
 - The next meeting will be in early February to evaluate RFP responses and recommend a consultant to do the work.
- Complaints Task Group:
 - Held their first meeting on November 15th where they reviewed their workplan and discussed next steps. Members decided that the next step is to gather information about existing complaints processes in Alberta. The task group will invite a variety of agencies who handle odour complaints to give a presentation on their process. This information will be compiled into a background document for the task group's use. The task group discussed hiring a writer to compile this information.
 - The next meeting is scheduled for 8 January 2014 where the task group will hear presentations about existing complaints processes in Alberta.

The Complaints Task Group had health-related question about when in the complaints process a medical professional should be involved. The Health Task Group discussed this issue and advised that a complainant should be directed to a medical professional as soon as a symptom is reported. The task group also noted that the TACPHOGI document which outlines a checklist for environmental public health to investigate health complaints from oil and gas has a protocol for when a physician should be involved.

3. Update – Alberta Health, Odour and Health Literature Review

Karina provided an update on the availability of the Alberta Health odour and health literature review. Alberta Health is optimistic that they can provide the literature review to the task group and team in January 2014. This would be a limited release, as the literature will not yet have approval to be released to the public.

Karina also shared a hard copy of the table of contents and executive summary of the literature review to help the task group to better understand its contents. This copy is not for distribution beyond the task group.

Based on the update, the task group had the following discussion:

- Alberta Health did not use current policies to influence the type of literature that was reviewed nor the consultant's interpretation of the literature.
- The literature review is focused on science and contains no policy.
- Alberta Health plans to use the literature review as the scientific basis to inform policy development and discussions with other groups.
- The literature review is not organized by chemical.

4. Review Completed Templates

At meeting #1, the task group developed a template to gather information from a variety of odour management documents. Each task group member was tasked with reviewing a particular document using the template questions. Each member spoke briefly to the document they had reviewed and the group had the opportunity to ask questions:

1. State of Oregon Department of Environment Quality Proposed Odour Nuisance Strategy
 - This document was fairly vague but referenced a variety of other state's complaints processes (ex. Texas). It focused on nuisance conditions rather than health.
2. Texas Commission on Environmental Quality: ODOR COMPLAINT INVESTIGATION PROCEDURES
 - This document provided more detailed information than Oregon. It provides timelines around investigating complaints, it links complaints to meteorological data and provides a FIDO-based (frequency, intensity, duration, offensiveness) questionnaire tool for investigating complaints. This data is used to help make investigations more effective.
3. Good Practice Guide for Assessing and Managing Odour in New Zealand
 - The tone of this document as it discusses the health perspective could be more respectful. It will be important for the health task group to set a good tone in all deliverables.
 - The tool in this document is aimed towards recording health symptoms. The tool does not note specify symptoms. Health reporting is done by the individual.
4. Odour Guidance 2010, Scottish Environment Protection Agency
 - This document is for regulators both to enforce the release of odours and as a proactive planning tool to prevent odours. It is not aimed at health but does discuss symptoms.
5. Final Report, Odour Management in British Columbia: Review and Recommendations
 - This document reviews odour management of a variety of countries. It notes that some countries will act on chemicals that are known odourants. It contains a list of chemicals. This document may be useful for the team as well as the odour assessment task group.

Action Item 2.1: Task group members will read section 2.0 of the BC final report (2005) including the associated table.

6. Greater Vancouver Regional District Odour Management Strategy
 - This document acknowledges that health is an important outcome and motivator but is not the focus of the document. Intro provides background information about health.
7. Odour Guidance for Local Authorities, UK Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

- This document contains no background information or tool.
8. Environmental Public Health Field Manual for Oil and Gas Activities in Alberta, Technical Advisory Group for Public Health in the Oil and Gas Industry (TACPHOGI)
- This document is focused on health complaints (not necessarily odour complaints) from oil and gas. It contains a detailed questionnaire which gathers the environmental health history of the complainant, assesses exposures and its impact on health. The questionnaire is used as part of the complaint investigation process.
 - If the task group applied this type of approach there may be issues around privacy.

The task group noted that there are several tools within the reviewed documents that recognize health but the task group would like to see a tool that is more comprehensive as a deliverable for this group. The task group also noted that the presentation “Health Effects of Odors” by Robert Blairsdell offers a good overview of odour.

The task group discussed if there were any other documents that should be reviewed using the template (Round 2 of reviews).

Action Item 2.2: Alvaro will review the document “Measurements of perceived air quality: Correlations between odor intensity, acceptability and characteristics of air”.

Action Item 2.3: Cindy will review the document “Measurements of the Effects of Air Quality on Sensory Perception”.

Action Item 2.4: Opel will review the document “A Review of The Science and Technology of Odor Measurement”.

After discussing the results of the document review exercise, the task group had a general discussion about Stream 2 work and the tool(s) for tracking the health-related impacts of odour that will be developed:

- The task group agreed to use the WHO definition of health as a guide.
- Information needs to be collected in a comprehensive, non-biased manner. For example, in Mexico City, information is collected by a random survey of individuals.
 - This speaks to a broader surveillance piece that rests with Alberta Health and Alberta Health Services
 - Alberta Health also has a cluster investigation protocol for health outcomes.
- The tool could be part of the investigation process or could trigger an investigation.
- For acute health impacts related to odour, complainants should seek immediate medical attention. A tool directed towards this circumstance would not be useful.
 - It may be useful for the task group to work with the complaints task group to develop several questions to gather health-related info for acute health impacts (this is related to the tools they are developing for handling complaint response that will assist responders).
- For chronic health impacts or one-time non-acute health impacts related to odour, a tool to record health impacts would be useful. Individuals would fill out this tool themselves.
 - A possible format for the tool would an app.
 - Could this information be sent to a central coordinating body? Is there a central coordinating body in Alberta?

- The task group discussed that doctors would not likely be interested in this information if it was brought to them by patient. It would likely be more useful to share this information with a medical officer of health.
 - Public health inspectors collect and share information with medical officers of health.
- The task group needs to understand existing complaints processes and roles in Alberta and how the tools being developed would intersect.
 - The complaints task group is currently undertaking this work and it will be shared with the health task group.
 - This work will help the health task group to understand where tools are needed/most useful.
 - It would be useful to have a decision tree/system map that would show where health information is going.
- The task group needs to understand the privacy issues around sharing health information especially if this information will be feeding into a complaints investigation.
- The task group noted that there may be a link to work under 'Education' from the team's project charter.

The task group agreed the next steps are:

- To have a robust discussion about the characteristics of the potential tools that were identified today.
 - Questions to assist responders to gather information about acute health impacts.
 - A tool that would allow individuals to record chronic health impacts or one-time non-acute health impacts.
- To review the results of Round 2 of the document reviews.
- To discuss how the tools will be developed.
 - The task group noted that this could include developing a tool from scratch, using an existing tool, or modifying an existing tool.

5. Stream 1: Background Material

After lunch, Celeste chaired the meeting.

The task group reviewed the audience for the Good Practice Guide that the team is preparing and to which the health task group will be contributing its work. The Good Practice will mainly be geared towards government and industry but should be easily understood and useful to members of the public.

The Stream 1 background piece should be short (1-5 pages) and should speak from a health perspective. The task group brainstormed what types of information might be included in the Stream 1 background material:

- Physical and psychological impacts
 - Odour complaints can be perception driven and cause complainants stress related health impacts
- Limitations of current knowledge
 - Challenges of linking odour and health impacts
- Odours that have known health impacts associated with them
 - This should be focused on the Alberta context

- Individual sensitivities to odour
 - The physiological aspect of smelling
- Could provide references to other relevant literature

The task group discussed how the background material piece would be written. The task group will use their expertise to populate the backgrounder and an editor could be hired to make it flow. The task group also noted that it may be useful to develop an extra piece specifically for the public that could feed into the 'Education' work of the project charter (ex. A factsheet about odour and health directed specifically at the public).

The task group agreed the next steps for Stream 1 work are:

- To use this initial brainstorm to create a straw dog for discussion at the next meeting.

Action Item 2.5: Members will provide comments on the initial brainstorm of topics that could be included in the Stream 1 backgrounder.

Action Item 2.6: Celeste will compile members' comments on the Stream 1 backgrounder for discussion at meeting #3.

6. Budget Check-in

The task group identified that there would be a cost to hire an editor to edit Stream 1 backgrounder material. This would need to be scoped further.

7. Meeting Wrap-up

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

Next meeting:

- Meeting #3 will take place in Edmonton in last week of January 2014/first week of February 2014.

Action Item 2.7: Celeste will poll for dates for meeting #3.

Objective for next meeting:

- See next steps outlined under item 4 and 5.

The task group will provide an update to the team on their activities at the next team meeting on January 30th.

Action Item 2.8: Celeste will prepare the team update presentation and send to the task group for review.

The meeting adjourned at 2:00pm.