Final Minutes

Clean Air Strategy Governance Subgroup meeting #2

Date: October 15, 2008
Time: 9.00 – 2.00
Place: Shell Canada, Calgary

In attendance:

Name	Stakeholder group
Tricia Bell	Alberta Environment
Gerry Ertel	Shell Canada / CPPI
Jillian Flett	Alberta Environment
Steve Kennett	Pembina Institute
Bettina Mueller	Alberta Environment
Manuel Figueroa	Alberta Environment
Jennifer Allan	CASA

Bettina Mueller chaired the meeting, which convened at 9:15 a.m. Quorum was achieved.

Action Items:

Action items	Who	Due
2.1 Subgroup members will forward comments on the meeting one minutes to Jennifer	All subgroup members	November 3
2.2 Create an initial grouping of the gaps identified and an initial draft of the introduction section	Jennifer	November 3
2.3 All subgroup members will update their matrices.	All subgroup members	November 3

1) Administration

a. Approval of the agenda: Agenda approved by consensus
   - Approval of the minutes from the previous meeting: The subgroup agreed to send any comments on the minutes from meeting #1 to Jennifer by November3.

Action item 2.1: Subgroup members will forward comments on the meeting #1 minutes to Jennifer.

2) Governance Matrix

The subgroup confirmed the purpose of the governance matrix is to identify governance mechanisms in place in the air quality management system for each focus area identified at the Rafter Six workshop. The table and the criteria of good governance are ways to order the large task. Subgroup members had worked on the matrices for their topics, but did not have time to share amongst the group.

There was a question if the final product will assess the basic governance structure or assess the current management system for each focus area. A principle governance issue is that not all policy

decisions that affect air are taking air quality into account. The questions at the top of the matrix are extremely helpful and apply to all the focus areas.

The subgroup agreed to share the initial findings from their matrices at this meeting, then focus on finding re-occurring themes and develop goals and potential actions around those themes. The goal is to answer the question 'what will enable management of air quality to an acceptable level?' This will apply across issues and include various groups.
The answer to this question could include a mechanism for meaningful government-wide coordination on air quality policy including all levels of government. There is also room to identify issues currently not dealt with and an assessment of 'classic' air quality management system. Governance options that influence the external drivers of air quality, e.g. pricing, could be applied as well. Generally, there is not a high sense of urgency about air quality in our province, tradeoffs between economic and environmental choices could be made more explicit.

The subgroup recognized there are two levels of governance in the air quality management system. First is the 'direct' management of air quality. This is now generally overseen by Alberta Environment and includes the operational aspects of the air quality management system as it relates to industrial emissions. Second, the indirect level of governance includes issues and groups outside the current air quality management system. Issues such as agriculture or energy production are influenced by policy decisions made by decision makers currently not part of air quality management. In this case, non-decisions are also decisions with regards to the future of air quality in the province.

The subgroup shared the learnings from their matrices that were captured on a flipchart to be grouped into common themes.

a. Renewable Energy
Alberta Environment seems to have a mandate, but Alberta Energy sets the direction. Overall, there seems to be a lack of a comprehensive policy framework for renewables. While renewable energy has been pursued through other initiatives, such as climate change or criteria air contaminants, the connection to air quality at times is not explicit, for example with biofuels. There are incentives such as removing the gas tax from biofuels to encourage their use.

Relating renewable energy to the criteria of good governance, the decision making is scattered and who influences the renewable energy portfolio is unclear. The goals and objectives are difficult to pinpoint because the many different initiatives lack a coherent direction. The groups involved include: Alberta Agriculture and Food, Alberta Energy, Energy Resources Conservation Board (transmission lines) and Alberta Environment.

b. Energy Efficiency
This topic relates to numerous areas such as fuel use, residential use, etc. There doesn't appear to be an overall strategy, but there are initiatives for many of the sectors. Pricing mechanisms can be used to influence energy efficiency.
The 1991 Clean Air Strategy has energy efficiency recommendations. There is a mixed record of success. The government has established provincial government fleet fuel efficiency standards; however, other recommendations such as establishing a revenue-neutral rebate and fee system for vehicles and encouraging retrofitting buildings are yet to be accomplished.

This issue again seems to involve numerous groups and accountability lines were not clear.

The subgroup discussed current government coordination. There is a new inter-departmental ministers committee and some mandate letters specify coordination with other departments. There is currently no backstop if a department (or other government level) does not live up to its obligations.

c. Cumulative Effects Management
Alberta Environment is accountable for CEM, but can't fulfill the obligations alone because some decisions are made in other departments. Historically, integration on this issue has been lacking on the ground and in policy decisions.
It was noted air management has the longest track record with cumulative effects because modelling for permitting facilities' includes all sources in the area. The pilot project in the Industrial Heartland considers existing, proposed and planned facilities against the carrying capacity of the area.

d. Indoor Air Quality
Indoor air quality is a patchwork of accountabilities, and no clear responsible party. There is no single point for access to information or for regulation. Enforcing residential regulations or standards would be difficult, but can provide guidance. There seems to be a lack of structure outside occupational health and safety standards. Although there are some pollution prevention strategies for consumer products (e.g. fumes from paints), there are difficulties associated with market interference for personal products. Education and ventilation standards are also important pollution prevention activities.

e. Agriculture
There are numerous air related items in this focus area including emissions from confined feeding operations (CFOs), odour, pesticides drift, fertilizers, dust from cropping and harvesting and emissions from agricultural vehicle's fuel use. There is a knowledge gap in Alberta related to the contribution of agricultural operations to air quality issues.
CFOs are exempted from EPEA approval requirements (and as a result there is little consideration of their contribution to ambient air quality concerns). The industry is regulated under AOPA which uses setbacks as regulatory tools (rather than controlling source emissions).
Some of the themes emerging apply to this focus area. The accountable department (Alberta Agriculture and Food) is outside the current air quality management system. There may be decisions made that do not take air quality into effect.

f. Forestry
Air impacts from naturally caused fires are difficult to prevent, although some land use planning and fire prevention activities are used (e.g. control amount of combustible material near residences). This area focused more on controlled burns and their impact on air quality, particularly PM. There is a permitting process for approval of controlled burns. The question is the exent to which Sustainable Resource Development considers air quality impacts in their decision process and how they monitor and control the impact of controlled burns on air quality.

g. Transportation
Transportation is unique among the focus areas. Air quality issues are management by multiple groups:

1. Federal government manages fuel and new vehicle standards
2. Vehicle use is provincial in terms of licensing and regulating speeds and others
3. Demand side management is important but does not have a strategy or authority

The federal government has done a lot, moreso than provincial authorities. Some examples of provincial action include Ontario Drive Clean Program, GVRD Air Care program and municipal anti-idling programs. CASA recently made recommendations to government for vehicle emissions.

Pollution prevention has been successful as emissions have decreased despite increases in vehicle kilometres travelled.
The jurisdictional lines are clear between Alberta Environment, TransCanada, Environment Canada, Alberta Transportation and municipalities. There isn't single point accountability, but jurisdictions are defined and respected. Overall, the governance system is working well.

h. Urban Air Quality / Planning
This focus area is closely associated with transportation and transit. There doesn't appear to be clear direction in terms of AQ being considered when decisions are being made. There are multiple bylaws and various air quality issues. Municipalities administer building permits, which guide development. Alberta Municipal Affairs is also involved. Funding is a key issue for municipalities. There are isolated examples of sustainable planning, but overall sprawl is the norm.

i. Industrial Point Sources
The mechanisms are in place although there are sometimes application and transparency issues. Performance standards setting needs updates and consistency in the application of standards can be improved.
Overall, the system has delivered but needs to be updated. There is clear accountability but improved consistency in implementation would increase the system's performance. The decision-making varies from CASA providing recommendations to government setting (and consulting on) regulations. Pollution prevention, incentives, market-based instruments and regulation are areas that need further consideration.

3) Drafting process

The subgroup agreed to an outline for the governance 'story' that will appear in the Clean Air Strategy. The goal is a few pages.

1. Outline
    a. Importance of governance: *How governance influences air quality; current air quality management system*
    b. Gaps: *this should be tied to our goals, probably an iterative process*
    c. Goals and potential actions:
        i. Two levels:
            1. the air system itself (vis-à-vis the governance criteria) – the structure
            2. broader policy management (direction setting)

4) Next steps and meeting date(s)

Subgroup members will update their matrices based on the conversation at this meeting. Jennifer will record the solutions parking lot and take an initial draft of the grouped gaps identified at this meeting.

Subgroup members will have an opportunity to work with the gaps groupings at the next meeting. The goals for the next meeting are to translate the gaps (themes in the problem areas) into goals and potential actions.

Action item 1.2: Jennifer will create an initial grouping of the gaps identified and an initial draft of the introduction section

Action item 1.3: All subgroup members will update their matrices.

Date	Time	Place
November 10	10.00 – 3.30	CASA

5) Adjournment – The meeting was adjourned at 2.20 p.m.

Solutions Parking Lot:

- One level, or department, of government is held accountable and holds others accountable through measurable, legal obligations.
- Auditor-general style independent review of implementation of the Clean Air Strategy or of air quality accountabilities
- An independent court for holding groups accountable (see New Zealand)
- Examine legislation for backstop of implementation
- Look internationally and see if there are lessons applicable to Alberta
- Identify renewable and alternative energy barriers and create a 5 year plan to address the barriers (see PPC Goal 1, Action b)
- Mandates include environmental benefits (e.g. urban shelterbelts)