

2010 Performance Evaluation Report



Prepared by the
CASA Secretariat
for the
Clean Air Strategic Alliance
Board of Directors

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Introduction:

The CASA renewal process is a by-law requirement whereby every 3 years the members must evaluate the performance of the society. At the September 30, 2010 Board meeting, members agreed to a two-step caucus-based activity as follows:

1. Each stakeholder caucus – government, industry and NGO's will meet independently to discuss questions such as:
 - a. Which elements of CASA's processes are most valuable?
 - b. Where is there room for improvement?
 - c. How has CASA changed to stay relevant?
 - d. Where has CASA shown the greatest success?
 - e. What else should CASA be doing?

The results of the 3 caucus sessions, together with the Strategic Planning session slated for June 8 and 9, 2011, will be used to answer the question: Is there still value in CASA and its approach?

For the purposes of this report, the CASA Secretariat has deliberately captured the results as they were provided so as not to lend any bias to or categorization of responses.

Industry Caucus:

Industry is very interested in seeing CASA thrive:

- the process can be painful, but at least the output of recommendations is understood
- CASA's work is very relevant, and key issue topics need to be kept that way
- Industry can get involved at the front end
- Important opportunity to ensure industry sectors beyond oil and gas have a seat at the table
- In the absence of CASA, the dialogue is none-existent or happens in the media

Key areas to work:

- helping Alberta Environment in development and implementation of CAMS
- development of regional/air shed plans
- ongoing implementation of Land Use Framework
- implementing Alberta's new Clean Air Strategy
- cumulative effects – implementing CEMS
- air standards within multiple jurisdictions and regions
- development of provincial standards and policies

Key opportunities for improvement:

- strengthen all participants' consensus making skills
- more proactive, strategic thinking versus tactical, technical debates
- engaging the board earlier when breakdowns are coming
- stronger caucus alignment and empowerment between project team members and board members (outcomes should not be so dependent on the individual project team members)
- more senior level commitment and participation at the Board and in Project Teams by all stakeholders

NGO Caucus:

Introduction

As part of the CASA 2011 Performance Evaluation, the Clean Air Energy Caucus (CAE) of the Alberta Environmental Network (AEN) solicited the participation of any and all caucus members that are serving, or have served on the board and/or project teams of the Clean Air Strategic Alliance. Two notices were dispatched over the AEN's CAE Caucus list serve announcing a February 7, 2011 workshop to discuss and compile responses to the 6 performance evaluation questions identified by the CASA board at its September 20, 2010 board meeting.

This report also provides additional advice from the ENGO Caucus which arose at their evaluation workshop. **Priority messages are in bolded text.**

1. *Which elements of CASA processes are most valuable?*

There are several elements of CASA's consensus process that are valued by the ENGOs:

- **Dialogue and communication: Having decision makers represented in the room is more direct and efficient than lobbying ministers or working bi-laterally with the government; and,**
- **Opportunity to dialogue with all of the key players that are involved in or are impacting air quality management issues; ability to understand their perspective and develop relationships to further initiatives.**
- **ENGOs have an equal voice and opportunity to participate in the decision making process.**
- **Follow-up: efforts to ensure decisions are implemented as they were originally agreed upon, and to ensure long-term management and viability.**
- **Joint information gathering where stakeholders agree on the information to be acquired and who is trusted to gather it. This is in contrast to "battling expert consultants".**
- **CASA strives towards a culture of fairness that tries to level the playing field of participation. Policies of balance and stakeholder support help ensure that CASA is inclusive and supportive, and tries to ensure that finances are not a barrier to participation.**
- **The recommendations themselves: CASA recommendations are products that stand the test of time; more influential, carries more weight.**

- The promise that CASA consensus recommendations will be implemented as policy.

- CASA's internal communications with stakeholders process is effective.

- CASA's resource library which is open to stakeholders is valued.

- Project teams, science symposium, workshops - helps all to enhance knowledge and get information.

- CASA's respect for sectoral self-selection for delegates.

2. Where is there room for improvement?

CASA needs a new set of challenges - a new suite of projects that are both contentious and fit government's priorities so CASA can continue to demonstrate value. The need for stakeholder involvement should be apparent.

Update stakeholder support policy - availability is appreciated, but current level causes many groups to limit their involvement or not participate at all. This undermines effective long-term participation by members of the sector which creates a comparative disadvantage.

CASA should reach out to local governments. CASA is virtually unknown in the towns and cities.

CASA should be in the education system as part of curriculum.

The importance and significance of CASA Consensus Recommendations needs to be re-established. CASA Consensus Recommendations are "decisions", not merely "recommendations for consideration".

Improvements in implementation monitoring is needed. Some recommendations are not being implemented as expected by CASA participants due to a lack of clarity or misinterpretation by implementers.

Preliminary training for participants in consensus-based decision making basics should be made available. Consensus-based decision making processes can be a challenging. Basic training for stakeholders would improve both the effectiveness of the process and the quality of the end-result.

A stronger mentorship program for new/novice members in CASA norms to expedite cultural understanding, promote essential behaviours, and appreciate the significance of the organization.

Improve the rank of participation - participants have to be empowered to make deals, or have effective access to decision-makers.

CASA must be more product-output based vs. process-base

Need more government leadership and direction.

First Nations participation - while there is some participation at the board level, it is low/non-existent in project teams

There needs to be better intra-sector communication, stability, and consistency of participation. Last-minute, surprise participants must be avoided.

Overall attendance needs to have consistent carry-over of experience from meeting to meeting.

Long-term monitoring of past frameworks for updating where necessary to ensure they remain relevant.

Project Management - the role as relationship/information broker seems to have disappeared from CASA's project managers. This role needs to be re-introduced.

The perception of the CASA process as too slow should be addressed. CASA needs to be fairly compared to other processes. Where CASA is slow due to training issues, this should be addressed. Where CASA is "slow" due to the complexity of an issue, this should be accommodated.

3. How has CASA changed to stay relevant?

There have been no apparent significant changes.

Creation of the Strategic Foresight Committee.

Vision statement was updated.

Executive Committee has started meeting with other Government of Alberta Departmental Committees.

Promoting the CASA approach to different audiences and jurisdictions (eg. CAMS to CCME).

4. Where has CASA shown the greatest success?

A demonstrated model of a working, functional, multi-stakeholder consensus-building process.

The Martha Kostuch course.

Flaring and Venting (1996 - 2006), Particulate Matter and Ozone Framework, Acid Deposition Management Framework, Electricity Management Framework.

Creating a long-term forum for constructive dialogue; reducing confrontation / acrimony between stakeholder groups, and facilitating understanding of different positions and interests

Science Symposiums (Nitrogen)

Exporting CASA onto the National stage with CAMS.

5. What else should CASA be doing?

CASA should have some role in all aspects and activities that impact air quality in the province. The role could be information-based, ensuring that CASA and its stakeholders are aware of activities related to air quality; or the more active role of providing policy advice through project teams and other initiatives. Currently, CASA is too limited by relying solely on the statement of opportunity process.

CASA needs to examine its role relative to overall air quality management, where its niche is, and have all stakeholders agree on its appropriate role.

CASA should seek opportunities to be more involved in the delivery of certain air quality management system components similar to its role with the CASA data warehouse.

CASA is not generally involved in the actual process of implementation. This can be a weakness as CASA may not be aware that its consensus recommendations are being misinterpreted or not implemented at all. CASA should consider whether a different approach to its role in implementation is needed.

6. Is there still value in CASA and its approach?

CASA is better than any other process that the Provincial government uses.

Recent experiences with regional plans seem to focus more on gathering industry input and draw attention away from participating in the CASA process.

CASA has inherent values and qualities that are hard to replicate such as its history of success, its organizational culture, and the relationships it has fostered among the many of the stakeholders across the sectors. A new mandate is preferred to closing up shop.

There is value in CASA, but a more deliberate approach is recommended. The organization's momentum has decreased in the last couple of years. To revitalize itself, CASA needs to seek important, challenging issues to act on.

Other Advice of the ENGO Caucus

CASA should be cautious about attempting to address an issue where the need for change from the status quo is not clear. CASA should address issues where the status quo is not acceptable. There should be a willingness on the part of government to act on the issue in order to create leverage for stakeholders to work through the CASA process.

There is a need to reconfirm some of CASA's guiding principles (ie., precautionary principle), and that CASA's vision includes protecting the health of all people, and not only the health of the population in aggregate.

Government Caucus:

Consensus model may not be perfect, but you can live with it.

Revisit what consensus is and how best to support it. Have to define whether it is the GoA/ministerial consensus or CASA

Be clear on GoA consensus vs. authority to make a decision. There is a distinction to be made between best efforts or commitment.

Government is in a unique position as many recommendations are either given to or for government.

Government is also unique in that it has all 3 orders of government represented – municipal, provincial and federal. Municipal elected officials bring their council mandate to the table.

Understand what consensus means

Does consensus work for the control entity i.e. whoever holds the authority to complete the action?

Appropriateness for CASA approach and the ability to assess issues. Does consensus as an approach fit the issue?

1. Understand consensus
2. More thoughtful and deliberate selection of issues for the consensus process.

The structure is also important as there are 3 sectors represented; ensure that those who need to be there are there.

Valuable to have 3 sectors that are integrated.

If an issue is cross-cutting how do you set reasonable expectations – is this the next bar that CASA sets for itself?

Past success is based on regulatory solutions

What is the “fit” of CASA’s role in the emerging reality of integration?

Should CASA alter its clear “line of sight” role?

The issues have been at the CASA table but there has been no clear approach

Change thinking around non-consensus being a failure

Don’t want to lose the value that the CASA process has built.

Emerging issues – robust thinking to address an issue.

The “product” is enhanced knowledge about an emerging issue

Probing for understanding the interests around an issue

Could be pre-work for a Statement of Opportunity.

Extension of the CASA CAMS process

Do a test issue and learn from it...i.e. unregulated point sources (dog food around Morinville)

Issues around odour problems that don't seem to fit in any one department or jurisdiction

Changes the level of thinking around an issue.

Test issues with respect to "built" environments as it could integrate more than air

Where to have the discussions about odours.

What is a path forward?

Do you necessarily need to regulate, or is there another avenue to address the issue?

No technical way to quantify odours

How do you deal with odours in general?

Odours around Ft. McKay

Vehicle Emissions

Indoor Air Quality

Improvements:

Re-communicate CASA across government; CASA needs to be described in the changing context.

Correctly frame the challenge and position oneself accordingly

A peace-making/peace-keeping or custodial function with respect to the nature and kinds of recommendations that are made

CASA is effective at engaging stakeholders who should be responsible for engaging the public

Determine if the answer is at the appropriate level; is the nature of the issue best handled by a project team or at the Board

Ensure a strong connection between; the sector on the project team and their counterpart on the Board

The process behind the project team member to foster efficient participation

Project team expectations are clearly outlined and understood

Orienting team members to role

Check back with constituency at milestones – clear messages

Do more of an analysis of the process throughout the life of the project as well as at the end

Check back for a common understanding and do the implications lend themselves to moving forward

Create a culture where stakeholders feel comfortable clarifying interests

Success:

Outreach to stakeholders and fostering engagement

Should/does CASA speak for the air i.e. "air keeper".

Bringing interests together to: a) understand the problem

b) understand the interests

c) understand the path forward

Odour issues do involve the public.