

# Managing Multi-stakeholder Processes and Teams

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Presenter: Norm MacLeod



# Overview

- Use of Multi-stakeholder Groups
- Critical Elements
- Tips from the field
- CASA's new direction



# Our Operating Environment

- Issues are more inter-related and complex
- A cluttered landscape of players that wear many hats
- An abundance of information that is more distributed and more available
- A sense of anxiety over clashing economic and environmental views
- A global policy development model that favours dialogue and negotiation over unilateral action
- The sum total of these compel governments to seek advice

# CASA's Mission

“The Clean Air Strategic Alliance is a multi-stakeholder alliance empowered by representatives selected by industry, government and non-government organizations to provide strategies to assess and improve air quality for Albertans , using a collaborative consensus process”

*CASA Strategic Plan 2012 - 2016*

# A Successful Multi-stakeholder Process

- More than a sequence of planning steps and following an agenda, however well designed they are
- More than the gathering of information, however credible and relevant it is
- More than the integration of competing needs and the preparation of options, however creatively they are developed
- Effective multi-stakeholder process is about people. It's about dialogue, negotiation and relationships

# When to Establish Multi-stakeholder Group

- Identifiable parties with something to exchange and the capacity to negotiate
- Parties are interdependent
- Parties are ready to reach an agreement
- There is an agreement on the issues and some shared interests
- Without direct engagement, the outcome is unpredictable

# When to Establish Multi-stakeholder Group

- There is a sense of urgency and/or a clear deadline
- External factors favour a settlement
- The process of negotiation can be properly supported



# Yes, but...

- Yes, but... we need an outcome quickly. It will take too much time to reach an agreement with others
- Yes, but... if we engage other parties we will have less control than we have now
- Yes, but... we have no assurance that government will use the outcome
- Yes, but... our interests are very different from others in our sector



# The Value of a Question

- A negotiator's most powerful tool
- Use questions that provide you with information, not to make a point
- The information gained enables you to negotiate with “currencies” that other parties understand and value
- Parties behave differently if there is evidence that they are being listened to

# A Word on Interest-based Negotiation

- Not just a good idea... it's the only idea
- What is your concern?
  - Identifies the issue
- What is your solution?
  - Identifies positions
- How would that solution solve your issue?
  - Describes the underlying interests

# A Word on Timing

- There is an optimal window of opportunity to reach an agreement
- There are limitations on the time stakeholders are prepared to invest in dialogue. It is an account to be spent wisely.
- Building agreement goes through predictable stages that cause varying degrees of anxiety for stakeholders

# 5 Practices That Make a Difference

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4. Embrace the storm before the calm
5. Change the setting... socialize



# Hard Work

- Multi-stakeholder processes involve some “tough sledding”
- They require the full-time attention of a dedicated practitioner
- They require all of us to stretch our comfort zone and our beliefs
- They need a high level of participant commitment to get past the “conventional wisdom” that external interests will apply
- BUT....they are where exciting new things happen

# CASA's Job

*Provide strategic advice on emerging air quality issues and the impacts of major policy initiatives on air quality*

- ID issues, conduct comprehensive problem analyses, and provide advice on best ways/means to address.
- Purpose is to provide good actionable advice, without presuming that all issues are appropriate to CASA.
- Policy analysis and consistency analysis. Seek inconsistencies/synergies/ impacts of policy frameworks at the national, provincial, regional level.

# CASA's Job

*Support the continued development and implementation of effective and efficient air quality management in Alberta.*

- Seek candidates for “strategic intervention”, modeling best practices for lasting impact.
- Contribute more widely to collaborative dialogue in Alberta.
- CASA will not be involved in regular program delivery.
- Engage aboriginal communities more effectively.

# CASA's Job

***Contribute to the development of a reliable, comprehensive, objective base of knowledge and information on emissions, ambient air quality, health and environmental impacts, and potential management and mitigation mechanisms.***

- Review our knowledge system; know what information is needed to address which issues, and what information is available. Conduct gap analyses and fill the gaps.
- CASA should not manage the CASA Data Warehouse, but should provide advice on its attributes (e.g. quality of data, what is collected, accessibility, transparency).

# CASA's Job

***Communicate information that builds awareness, understanding and commitment to air quality management in Alberta***

- Act as a collaboration hub. Transfer awareness and knowledge of collaborative processes.
- Provide information, engage and educate on those issues related to Project Teams and other CASA work.

# Managing Collaborative Processes Guide

- A new guide for practitioners and participants in the front line
- A marriage of three disciplines
  - Project management
  - Strategic decision-making
  - Collaborative dialogue and negotiation
- Collaboration or Consensus?
- Roll-out in the Spring of 2012

# Implications for CASA

- Do the homework on each issue to provide a more detailed and thoughtful starting point
- Apply a broader toolkit. Continue to drive for consensus where possible but also identify and clarify points of departure. Add value for decision-makers
- Match the right issue to the right process
- More integrated approaches across media to reduce stakeholder burden and improve stakeholder commitment
- Secretariat will shift to a more directed style of facilitation, brokering relationships and coaching

# Implications for CASA

- Streamline our approach, in order to improve timelines without losing buy-in.
- More effective training for new and existing members
- Provide more ways to be engaged than through Board membership. Consider tiered membership, based on need for engagement and nature of interests



