

Human Health Risk Assessment (HHRA) - Flin Flon / Creighton Community Advisory Committee (CAC)

November 1, 2007 - Victoria Inn
Meeting #2

Attendance

Community Advisory Committee (CAC) Membership					
Don Aasen Town of Creighton	X	Shelly Jones General Public	X	Deb Odegaard FF&D Env't Council	X
Rob Bratvold Creighton School Board	X	Tom Lindsey Steelworkers Union	X	Bill Pauley Flin Flon School Division	X
Ian Cooper HBMS	X	Charlene Logan MCRRHA	X	Dave Price Green Project	X
Cheryl Hordal General Public	X	Barb Lyons General Public	X	Tom Therien City of Flin Flon	X
Bev Hill NorMan Regional Health	X	Christa McIntyre Healthy Flin Flon	X		

Guests / Other		
Heather Acres (Guest) Green Project	Joel Nilsen (Secretary) HBMS	
George Bihun (Guest) Saskatchewan Environment	Audrey Romanchuk (Guest) Manitoba Conservation	
Alan Hair (Speaker) HBMS	Elliot Sigal (Guest) Intrinsic Environmental	
Darren Keam Jacques Whitford AXYS		
Sheldon McLeod (Facilitator) S.L. McLeod Consulting		

Introduction

- A review of the draft notes of the October 15, 2007 meeting was conducted. The following comments were received:
 - Respecting the right of the CAC to close portions of the meetings, there was no discussion as to under what circumstances (if any) the CAC would choose to exercise this right.
 - There was a request for clarification on whether the CAC would decide issues through a voting process or consensus.
 - The discussion regarding whether or not the CAC should provide advice to government was not completed at the previous meeting.
 - The discussion regarding consideration of actionable levels lower than the CCME guidelines was not completed at the previous meeting.
 - There was some discussion surrounding whether the HHRA was in fact the appropriate response to the question of whether there is an obligation to react to soil levels above the CCME guidelines.
 - The following points of discussion were not appropriately captured by the meeting notes:
 - The role of air quality in the HHRA.
 - Consideration of workplace exposure versus exposure at home.
 - The process of obtaining copies of other HHRA reports was discussed.

- Action Items from the previous meeting were reviewed.
 - Items #001 - #003 were completed.

- Item #004 – Sheldon McLeod had contacted a reporter from The Reminder. However, the reporter did not respond to the request.

Presentation – HHRA Governance Structure – Alan Hair, HBMS

Reference Documentation - HHRA Governance (PowerPoint Presentation, handout)

- A presentation was given describing the origins of the HHRA, the history behind the development of the CAC, and a description of how the CAC interacts with the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), the government regulators, HBMS, Intrinsic, and the (yet to be formed) Communications Working Group (CWG).
- It was noted that the HHRA is not a study of past health effects, but is focused on identifying safe levels of exposure for the future.
- The roles of the TAC and CAC are to provide oversight and credibility to the process. Both groups provide advice to HBMS and Intrinsic on how the HHRA is to be carried out.
- Both the CAC and TAC may wish to advise government on issues related to or outside the scope of the HHRA.
- It was noted that the CWG role on the handout should include an “arrow to the public”, reflecting that group’s communication activities with the public.
- George Bihun of Saskatchewan Environment provided some brief comments on the HHRA process:
 - The HHRA process as described is not unique to Flin Flon / Creighton, and is being used at 10 – 12 sites throughout Saskatchewan.
 - The CAC should in no way feel that they are “working for HBMS”.
 - The CAC and the general public should feel free to communicate directly with their provincial governments.

Question: Do all CAC Members have a good understanding of their role?

Response: To be familiar with what’s happening in the HHRA, ensure the credibility of the process by questioning it, reflect the opinions of the public, provide advice to the TAC, and provide a diversity of input.

Question: Is there information available from other “CAC”s on what worked for them in their role?

Response: Contact information from other similar groups will be provided to the CAC (including at least one group that has had no prior involvement with Intrinsic). The CAC can then select representatives to speak to these other groups about their experiences.

Question: Should the CAC be asking government if Health Effects Studies or Environmental Risk Assessments are required?

Response: As the HHRA develops, government may have further insight into the need for these studies.

Question: How valid are HHRAs? There is concern that the process is a tool to downplay hazards and doesn’t answer questions of whether effects are currently happening. Is there a value in determining the effect on the community first and then considering exposure routes?

Response: The HHRA process is considered accurate, as it was originally developed by regulatory groups. However, HHRAs do not provide insight on historical exposures, which is the role of Health Effects Studies. Health Effects Studies generally look at incremental health risks of 1 in 1,000,000. Given that the risk of cancer nationwide is 1 in 3, it becomes very difficult to accurately identify incremental risks in a small population like Flin Flon / Creighton. Health Effects Studies also do not provide any information related to minimizing or eliminating future exposures.

- A discussion ensued surrounding the relative value of a HHRA versus a Health Effects Study and whether or not concurrent studies should be conducted.

Question: Should a representative of the provincial Health Departments address the CAC to offer insight into the Health Effects / HHRA issue?

Response: Health officials are already discussing this very issue and are working on a fact sheet for Flin Flon / Creighton with interim risk management measures. Sheldon McLeod agreed to speak with the provincial Health Departments about attending the next CAC meeting.

Question: Does / should the TAC have a representative with an academic background, as opposed to regulatory personnel who may be influenced by politics?

Response: The TAC will select an independent organization to peer review the HHRA, removing any political influence to the process.

#	Action	Responsibility	Target Date	Status
005	Provide the CAC with contact information of similar groups from other HHRA studies.	Elliot Sigal, Alan Hair, Darren Keam	2007-11-22	2007-11-01, new
006	Arrange for representatives of the provincial Health Departments to be present for the next meeting.	Sheldon McLeod	2007-12-06	2007-11-01, new

Presentation – Sampling Update – Darren Keam, Jacques Whitford AXYS

Reference Documentation - Soil_Methods_1Nov07 (PowerPoint Presentation, handout)

- A presentation was provided on the soil sampling survey that was conducted on residential properties and sampling equipment was passed around for the members to view.
- It was noted that the same analytical methods are being used as in the Manitoba Conservation study.
- In addition to residential samples, a number of native, or undisturbed forest soil, samples were collected along with samples from specific sites suspected to have high metal levels.
- Sampling at residences was in the centre of lawns, avoiding possible contamination from lead paint near walls or arsenic preservatives near wooden structures.

Question: Will this data be integrated with the Manitoba Conservation results?

Response: Not at this time.

Question: What were the QA/QC samples?

Response: Duplicate samples taken from specific lawns at the same time and then submitted to the lab as two separate samples. This will check on how repeatable the lab results are.

Question: Were the sandboxes that were sampled public or private?

Response: The sandboxes were sampled at private residences. Whenever possible, sampling at residences with children was preferred.

Question: Why were more front yards sampled than backyards?

Response: The rocky terrain meant that not all residences had back yards. Rather than have no samples from a particular area, some samples were collected from residences with only front yards.

- A discussion ensued regarding the logistics of the indoor dust sampling program and how to arrange for participation by schools and daycares.
- A request was made by Jacques Whitford AXYS to obtain more information / geomatics on the timeline of residential developments.

Question: What is “geomatics”?

Response: The “art” of putting geographic images on maps.

#	Action	Responsibility	Target Date	Status
007	Provide Darren Keam with contact information for local public and private daycares.	Deb Odegaard	2007-11-05	2007-11-01, new
008	Formal, written request to be made of local public and private daycares respecting involvement with the indoor dust sampling program.	Darren Keam	2007-11-09	2007-11-01, new
009	Formal, written request to be made of local schools respecting involvement with the indoor dust sampling program.	Darren Keam	2007-11-09	2007-11-01, new
010	Formal, written inquiry to be made of the City of Flin Flon respecting residential development timeline.	Darren Keam	2007-11-09	2007-11-01, new

Input on Wild Food Sampling

- A discussion was held regarding how to best obtain information on the intake of local foods such as fish, game, berries, etc. It was determined that circulation of a questionnaire would be appropriate.

Question: Would it be more appropriate to collect samples first and circulate a questionnaire later?

Response: The preference is to collect samples from lakes that are actively fished, berries from areas where people regularly collect them, and so on. Without a questionnaire to identify these sampling areas, a sampling program might not accurately reflect the local food supply.

- It was suggested that there might be value in sampling outward from the community to determine the radius of local fish / produce / game that are unsuitable for consumption.
- It was suggested that local commercial fisherman may be able to provide information on species and size ranges. However, it was noted that this information may not come from within the exposure area and might be of limited use.

#	Action	Responsibility	Target Date	Status
012	Develop a draft questionnaire respecting consumption of local food sources.	Elliot Sigal	2007-11-22	2007-11-01, new

Committee Operations

- A discussion was held regarding whether or not the CAC should exercise its right to close portions of the meetings. It was decided that in the interest of ensuring credibility and transparency, meetings should usually remain open. However, it was also recognized that closing the meeting may rarely be required.
- A discussion was held regarding the nature of committee consensus. It was decided that consensus would be reached when no members had any "significant" objections.
- Revision to the CAC Terms of Reference included:
 - Distribution of meeting notes is to occur within one week of meetings.
 - Supporting materials for the next meeting are to be provided one week before meetings.
- A discussion was held regarding whether the CAC had appropriate diversity.

- It was noted that no representatives of the First Nations were present. The Metals in Soil study had been discussed with the PBCN, and while they did not indicate a wish to participate they asked to be kept informed about the process. It was suggested that the Flin Flon Indian Métis Centre be contacted regarding representation.
- It was noted that no Seniors groups were present.
- It was noted that no Youth groups were present. There was discussion about canvassing the high schools for interest.
- It was noted that Baker's Narrows and Denare Beach were not represented. It was indicated that although these communities use the Flin Flon / Creighton infrastructure, their residences are outside the immediate exposure area.
- It was decided that there should be more publicity for the next meeting and HBMS was asked to provide a larger venue to accommodate public observers.
- The CAC were asked to provide volunteers to sit on the Communications Working Group (CGW).

Question: What is the role of the CWG? Are they "spin doctors" or simply disseminating information?

Response: The role of the CWG will be to co-ordinate communications coming out of the HHRA process, including both the CAC and TAC, to the public. It is not always practical or an efficient use of committee time to try and do this with the larger group. The CWG can prepare material for review by the other groups as appropriate.

- Rob Bratvold and Dave Price volunteered to sit on the CWG.
- Alan Hair would arrange a meeting of the CWG and notify the CAC volunteers.

Question: How should CAC Members deal with questions from the public?

Response: A "round table" on community feedback will be included on all future meeting agendas.

- The CAC were asked to provide two volunteers to attend the TAC meetings as observers. Tom Lindsey and Tom Therien volunteered.

Question: Should contact information for CAC members be distributed to the general public?

Response: It was decided that only the names and affiliation (if any) would be distributed.

- CAC Members were asked to review and comment on the latest draft of the CAC Terms of Reference.

#	Action	Responsibility	Target Date	Status
013	Arrange a large venue for the next meeting to accommodate public observers.	Ian Cooper	2007-12-06	2007-11-01, new
014	Distribute comments received from Saskatchewan Health to the rest of the CAC.	Sheldon McLeod	2007-11-15	2007-11-01, new
015	Arrange to fax all CAC correspondence to Charlene Logan.	Sheldon McLeod	2007-11-01	2007-11-01, new
016	Arrange meeting of the Communications Working Group.	Alan Hair	2007-11-08	2007-11-01, new
017	Future meeting agendas to include a round table regarding community feedback on the HHRA.	Sheldon McLeod	2007-12-06	2007-11-01, new

**NEXT MEETING: Thursday, December 6st, 5:00 pm – 8:00 pm
Venue to be confirmed**