

**FINAL MEETING SUMMARY**

**HANFORD ADVISORY BOARD**  
**PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING**  
*November 4, 2009*  
*Richland, WA*

**Topics in this Meeting Summary**

Welcome and Introductions ..... 1  
Tri-Party Agreement – draft advice on the updating and editing the Tri-Party Agreement (TPA) agencies’ Community Relations Plan (CRP)..... 1  
Draft advice on the proposed consent decree and TPA modifications ..... 4  
TPA Strategic Public Involvement Plan ..... 5  
Committee Business..... 8  
Action Items/Commitments ..... 10  
Handouts ..... 10  
Attendees..... 10

*This is only a summary of issues and actions in this meeting. It may not represent the fullness of ideas discussed or opinions given, and should not be used as a substitute for actual public involvement or public comment on any particular topic unless specifically identified as such.*

**Welcome and Introductions**

Steve Hudson, Public Involvement and Communications Committee (PIC) Chair, welcomed the committee, introductions were made and the committee adopted the October meeting summary.

Steve reviewed some ongoing committee issues:

- The committee needs better membership and participation
- The committee should review Board priorities and PIC goals by February 2010.
- After attending a public meeting, Board members should provide Steve with comments about what worked well and what did not.
- The committee will revisit the issue of hosting evening seminars on specific cleanup topics.

**Draft advice on the updating and editing the Tri-Party Agreement (TPA) agencies’ Community Relations Plan (CRP)**

Steve introduced the draft advice on updating and editing the CRP. The advice focused on ways to improve the CRP and was broken down into three areas: Content, structure and technical/mechanical aspects of the CRP. Steve said it is organized to provide high-level information at the beginning.

Susan Hayman noted that the draft advice already has committee consensus and is going to the full Board tomorrow. Content changes or suggestions should be brought up at the Board meeting.

Bob Suyama asked if the CRP is being updated through the current proposed TPA modifications. Susan Leckband said no, the CRP update is a separate process.

Susan Leckband confirmed that PIC is taking a more active role in producing draft advice, like other committees on the Board.

### *Agency perspective*

Emy Laija, Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), said the TPA agencies asked PIC and the Board for advice on updating the CRP. The TPA agencies' public involvement officers are meeting in December to collectively review the CRP in order to complete internal draft revisions by the end of 2009.

Lori Gamache, Department of Energy-Office of River Protection (DOE-ORP), thanked PIC for drafting advice and said if the Board adopts it, the agencies will use it while they revise the CRP.

Paula Call, Department of Energy-Richland Operations Office (DOE-RL), thought it was a good piece of advice. She noted that DOE will not likely endorse providing agency responses to public comment two weeks prior to any formal action taken by the agency, as the advice states.

John Price, Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology), agreed with Paula and said providing responses to comments two weeks before any agency action is inconsistent and more stringent than current regulations. He thought Ecology would be reluctant to commit to that. He noted that the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA) requires a written summary of significant comments, criticisms and new relevant information submitted during the public comment period and the lead agency response to each issue. He said the responsiveness summary is available with the record of decision (ROD). Washington State law requires a response to comments at the time that any final permit is issued.

### *Discussion*

Dirk Dunning thought the advice was overly prescriptive in some cases. He said the intent behind receiving responses to comments two weeks before agency action was to give people the chance to see if the agencies understood and interpreted their comments correctly, in addition to simply seeing the response before action is taken.

Laura Hanses agreed that the intent was to make sure comments are captured accurately, and to give commenters the chance to clarify their original comment. John said there is a

mechanism for correcting comments and the agencies do want to know if their responses are insufficient. John thought the Board could review agency responsiveness summaries to ensure comments were understood and received appropriate responses. Steve agreed PIC should do more “follow-up” work.

Susan Hayman clarified that the intent was to clarify or correct comments before the agency makes a decision, not before it actually takes *action*, or performs the actual cleanup. The concern is a misinterpretation of comments and the ability to correct the comment and response before a decision is made.

Susan Leckband was “skeptimistic” about PIC’s capacity to follow up on responsiveness summaries and advice responses simply because they are very busy this year. She asked the agencies to be more responsive to the public in general, no matter what regulations require. She thought the agencies should be able to provide responses before making a decision.

Doug Mercer commented that PIC may want to respond to agencies responses if necessary. The committee decided to table the discussion about adequacy of advice responses. Lori said the agencies have heard the Board’s comments about the quality of advice responses and are continually working to improve. Susan Hayman noted that responses to advice is a separate discussion and one that the committee has said it wants to undertake at some point.

Paula commented on the advice bullet requesting that the public involvement strategic plan be added to the CRP as an appendix. She thought the strategic plan may become outdated too quickly, but looked forward to hearing how PIC and the Board would like to use the strategic plan. Steve clarified that the appendix would be more of a template for the strategic plan, a flow chart of things to consider as the agencies address a specific issue; Paula understood.

At the Board meeting, Bob will suggest adding that the Board encourages the application and use of new computer and communication technologies as they become available. Susan Leckband reminded him to bring it up on Thursday since it is a substantive change.

Ginger Wireman, Ecology, commented that Ecology is starting to use social networking tools. Doug agreed to add that to the list he is developing of technologies to use for public involvement, and cautioned that the agencies should remember that social networking is only one tool – they should think about it in the context of a strategic effort.

## **Draft advice on the proposed consent decree and TPA modifications**

The committee reviewed the draft advice on the proposed consent decree and TPA modifications that the full Board will consider at the Board meeting. The committee discussed it in the context of PIC's involvement in its development.

Gerry Pollet said the agencies are hosting public hearings for the proposed consent decree and TPA modifications and the public comment period runs until December 11, 2009. He said the advice was drafted in part to serve as an educational piece and provide some background to the public. He said some people thought the background section was too long, but he thought it helps the public understand the proposed changes and the advice. The advice bullet regarding public involvement, similar to the draft CRP advice, requests responses to comments before the agencies sign a decision. The proposed two week period would allow for more dialogue, ensure the agencies understood the point of the comment, eliminate misinterpretation and ensure an appropriate response.

### *Discussion*

Susan Leckband asked about the moratorium on importing offsite waste to Hanford. Gerry said the current settlement says DOE will propose a moratorium as the preferred alternative in the draft Tank Closure and Waste Management Environmental Impact Statement (TC&WM EIS). John said there is an existing moratorium that would lapse once the TC&WM EIS is published. The TC&WM EIS preferred alternative would call for an extension or a new moratorium.

John commented that the agencies have already heard from the public many of the issues identified in the advice. He said the advice point that asks the TPA agencies to take public comment on all aspects of the proposed agreement, including the terms of the accompanying settlement commitment letters (referencing the agreement on offsite waste), is a Department of Justice product and Ecology does not have the ability to change a letter from the Department of Justice. Gerry said the advice does not ask Ecology to change the letter; it requests that the public be able to comment on it. Gerry said it is the only place where offsite waste is discussed and he thought it should be part of public discussion. John said the Board and public can comment on everything.

Susan Hayman noted that the draft advice has committee consensus from BCC, RAP and PIC and will be brought to the full Board. She noted that one person did not consent but was open to discussing it at the full Board. Gerry commented that the advice should not be delayed until February because the public comment period closes in December and the advice should be part of the record.

Bob commented that the advice was very long. Gerry said the advice section is short and the background provides information that will help the public make informed comments.

## **TPA Strategic Public Involvement Plan**

The purpose of the discussion was to review the current TPA strategic public involvement plan; to identify and discuss the objectives of the plan and how it serves the public, committee and agency needs; and to identify and discuss potential additional components to the plan as an appendix to the CRP.

Gerry introduced the topic and discussed basic components of a strategic plan – it is measurable, sets clear goals, and can be updated to include objectives for the coming year. He said a public involvement strategic plan should identify public involvement goals, audiences and tools. Finally, the strategic plan should be crafted so it can be used to plan public involvement for any particular issue, such as the Central Plateau cleanup completion framework. Gerry said the agencies’ current strategic plan instead starts with an issue and works backward.

Gerry said there are semantic issues with every strategic plan – what is a “goal” and what is an “objective?” For example, with the Central Plateau cleanup completion framework, the overarching public involvement goal could be to gain regional consensus on what site completion should look like. The objective could be to receive a particular number of comments that support the vision. Gerry said there should be a distinction between agency goals and policy issues, and public involvement goals. The agencies could then have a “tool kit” to pull from once they work their way through strategy and planning and get down to specific tools. Gerry said strategy selection also depends on public involvement goals.

### *Agency perspective*

Sharon Braswell, Mission Support Alliance, said the current strategic plan took the place of the Look Ahead, Look Back document. The agencies felt it was important to explain the policy questions related to each issue. A separate calendar identifies specific details and timelines. This current plan is distributed at every TPA Quarterly meeting.

Paula thought it was an interesting approach and would lend a level of consistency. She said TPA agency public involvement is shaped heavily by regulations, and it is important to consider that when developing a strategic plan. She was open to continuing the discussion and hearing the committee’s ideas.

Madeleine Brown added that the agencies need to get smarter about evaluating public involvement efforts. Annette Carlson added that it would be helpful to consider the public involvement calendar, to make sure everyone can see when big issues are coming up.

Emy said she would like a clearer picture to better understand what the committee is proposing.

## *Discussion*

Liz Mattson said the current plan seems to identify how specific requirements will be met. She said involving the public should not be done just to meet laws and regulations. She commented that sometimes using tools in a specific format because it is required, like public meetings, does not necessarily make the topic interesting for the public. She suggested that the agencies step outside the legal requirements “box” and think about public involvement in the big picture.

Gerry thought PIC should get together with the agencies to identify overarching public involvement goals. Dirk commented that this is not a new issue; over the years, the agencies and Board have pushed to renew public involvement.

Susan Leckband noted that two of the Board’s most successful pieces of advice are the groundwater flowchart and the Central Plateau decision-making flowchart. She asked PIC to think about creating a process-oriented flowchart for public involvement. She thought legal public involvement requirements could be incorporated into the flowchart.

Bob recommended using a process similar to value engineering, which lays out a process and helps identify why certain things are done and if they are valuable.

Ginger noted that the International Association for Public Participation is a good resource.

Dirk encouraged the committee and issue managers to avoid delving into specifics when discussing public involvement goals and the strategic plan. He said it is important to keep it high-level.

Susan Leckband noted that the agencies and committee should think about “mining their captive audience,” as in asking audiences at public meetings how to get more people involved or ask them for comments about a related issue.

Liz thought PIC should look at the restrictions, procedures and practices of how the Board involves its members. She said the Board usually gets information through agency presentations, and that might not be the best way to learn and comment on cleanup issues. She thought the Board and agencies should think about more creative and interactive ways to jump start discussions.

The committee discussed enlisting the help of public involvement experts. Sharon commented that if the agencies bring in experts, more committee members need to participate. The agencies cannot justify obtaining experts if only six committee members are involved.

### *Action items*

The committee identified issue managers: Gerry Pollet, Liz Mattson, Norma Jean and Steve Hudson. The issue managers will:

- Coordinate with and solicit help from Board members who worked on past flowcharts or public involvement pieces: Gerry will contact Todd Martin, Norma Jean will contact Betty Tabbutt and Max Power. Steve will contact Doug and Ken.
- Identify public involvement experts to potentially involve.
- Invite the above resources to the December PIC meeting to develop overarching public involvement goals and objectives.

The December meeting will focus on lessons learned in public involvement strategic planning. The January meeting will focus on Hanford-specific public involvement goals, and the development of the public involvement flowchart. The committee should be ready to bring forward the public involvement flowchart concept to the Board at the February Board meeting.

### *Flipchart notes*

#### *Current Strategic Plan Comments*

- Make a distinction between agency goal/policy issue and public involvement goal.
- More specifically target tools (feels like the same for all right now).
- Measurable targets/objectives – how do you know the techniques will serve the goal?
- Could identify different strategies to achieve a particular public involvement goal – choose which based on case-by-case needs.
- Identify goal to build public understanding that could serve multiple decisions/issues.
- Improve evaluation of public involvement activities.
- Incorporate the current calendar into the strategic plan.
- Bigger conversation about working towards “meeting requirements” vs. identifying public involvement in “bigger” way:
  - Would inform strategic plan
  - Take a bigger look than just to the next meeting. How do we reach out better?
- Think about creating a process-oriented public involvement “flowchart” with accompanying document.
- Identify what you are doing in public involvement, who is using it, and assess (e.g. “value engineering”)
- Describe the strategic plan in the CRP as a broad outline for now. The appendix will have the details.

### *Strategic Planning Next Steps*

- Step 0: Provide examples of strategic planning efforts for public involvement, and lessons learned (December -- interactive).
  - Resources: Betty, Doug, Ken/Dirk, Norma Jean, Max Power, Gerry, Hanford PI staff, EnviroIssues
- Step 1: Session in January – What are the goals of public involvement at Hanford?
- Step 2: Develop flowchart/plan.

### *Follow-up*

- Identify people to begin work on a flowchart approach to public involvement, including contacting groundwater and Central Plateau flowchart folks.
- Evening tutorial on how to get involved at Hanford (public involvement):
  - Maybe tie into another subject matter...”mine your captive audience.”
- See strategic planning next steps – Gerry to coordinate.
- Challenge ourselves to get conversations going without presentations (interactive).

### **Committee Business**

The committee reviewed its six-month work plan and discussed potential November meeting topics. Steve commented that PIC is very busy and needs more member participation.

The committee wanted to delay the discussion about using new technologies in public involvement until February. Susan Hayman noted that the committee is often sidetracked during meetings by talking about technologies. The group agreed to not discuss new technologies, such as Twitter and Facebook, in December if it is not an agenda item.

### **Six-Month Work Plan** (as captured on flip chart notes by Susan Hayman)

- December
  - TC&WM EIS: Public process for review and comment
  - Public involvement strategic planning: Best practices, lessons learned (Strategic Planning Step 0)
- January
  - CRP: Review first draft
  - TPA agreement-in-principle change package: Public process for review and comment
  - Review of TPA public involvement survey: Results and findings
  - Public involvement strategic planning: What are the goals of public involvement at Hanford? (Strategic Planning Step 1)
- February
  - Public Meetings: Input on design (implementation)
    - State of the Site public meetings
    - Budget public meetings
    - CRP public meetings



- PW-1,3,6 public workshops
  - Public involvement strategic planning: Development of flowchart, strategic plan (Strategic Planning Step 2)
    - Public involvement tool kit
    - Public involvement rubric
    - Using technology in public outreach
- March
  - RCRA public workshop: Input on design
  - Evening seminars (coinciding with Board meetings): Proposal development
  - Synthesis of advice / agency responses to date
- April
  - No potential topics identified
- May
  - No potential topics identified
- Holding bin
  - Currently empty

### December meeting topics

- Public involvement strategic plan
  - Provide examples of strategic planning efforts for public involvement
  - Discuss lessons learned
  - Initial brainstorming of how this might apply to Hanford
  - *Priority:* Agency and Board
  - *Committee lead:* Gerry Pollet, Liz Mattson, Norma Jean Germon, Doug Mercer
  - *Agency lead:* Ginger Wireman, Emy Laija, Lori Gamache, Paula Call
  - *Time allocation:* 3 hours
- TC&WM EIS – COTW process piece
  - What kind of information does the public need to effectively comment?
  - What might the public meeting/tools look like?
  - Note: This discussion could be held during the last hour of the COTW (rather than during a PIC meeting) to bring in more voices.
  - *Priority:* Agency and Board
  - *Committee lead:* Steve Hudson
  - *Agency lead:* Lori Gamache, Madeleine Brown
  - *Time allocation:* 1 hour
- Committee business
  - Review action items
  - Update 6-month work plan
  - Complete January meeting topics table

Sam Dechter asked if the committee should put its efforts into strategic planning over the next couple months, before delving into specific issues. The committee decided that while that would be an ideal process, strategic planning and working on specific issues will have to be done in parallel because there are big decisions being made at Hanford right now that the committee needs to work on.

## **Action Items/Commitments**

Issue managers for strategic public involvement planning: Gerry Pollet, Liz Mattson, Norma Jean Germond and Steve Hudson. They will:

- Coordinate with and solicit help from Board members who worked on past flowcharts or public involvement pieces: Gerry will contact Todd Martin, Betty Tabbutt, Ken Niles, and Max Power. Steve will contact Doug.
- Identify public involvement experts to potentially involve.
- Invite the above resources to the December PIC meeting to develop overarching public involvement goals and objectives.
- After the December PIC meeting, the issues managers will begin to outline a public involvement flowchart.
- The committee will be ready to bring forward the public involvement flowchart concept to the Board at the February Board meeting.

## **Handouts**

*NOTE: Copies of meeting handouts can be obtained through the Hanford Advisory Board Administrator at (509) 942-1906, or [tgilley@enviroissues.com](mailto:tgilley@enviroissues.com)*

- Draft committee consensus advice “Updating and editing the Hanford Site TPA Public Involvement Community Relations Plan”
- Draft committee consensus advice “Proposed consent decree and TPA modifications”
- October edition of the PIC 6-month work plan
- TPA agencies’ FY 2009/2010 communication/public involvement strategic plan (updated November 4, 2009)

---

## **Attendees**

### **HAB Members and Alternates**

Sam Dechter	Steve Hudson	Doug Mercer (Phone)
Dirk Dunning	Susan Leckband	Gerry Pollet
Norma Jean Germond	Liz Mattson	Bob Suyama
Laura Hanses		

### **Others**

Lori Gamache, DOE-ORP	Madeleine Brown, Ecology	Susan Hayman, EnviroIssues
Paula Call, DOE-RL	Annette Carlson, Ecology	Hillary Johnson, EnviroIssues
	Emy Laija, EPA	
		Sharon Braswell, MSA