

Conference Call Notes

“Characterizing Chemicals in Commerce: Using Data on High Production Volume (HPV) Chemicals” Conference Steering Committee

March 25, 2006

Participants: Jeff Burke, NPPR; Cathy Crumbley, LCSP; Jim Cooper, SOCMA; Seth Dibblee, EPA Region 5; Daryl Ditz, CIEL; Veronica Eddy, NYLPI; Christina Franz, ACC; Ken Geiser, LCSP; Terri Goldberg, NEWMOA; Liz Harriman, TURI; Rachel Heckl, GLU; Karen Hoffman, EPA HQ; Nancy Kim, NYS DOH; Robin Knobloch, WI DHFS; John Morawetz, ICWU; Valerie Myers; TCEQ; Tom Natan, NET; Dwight Peavey, EPA Region 1; Lynn Penniman, OSHA; Paul Richard, MA OTA; Robin Ruppel-Kerr, ACC; Ted Smith, Great Lakes Program; Diane Sheridan, EPA HQ; Wilma Subra, Subra Company; Maria Tartaglia, EPA Region 10; Heather Tenney, TURI; Mike Wilson, Univ. of CA

Draft notes prepared by Terri Goldberg, NEWMOA

Terri Goldberg opened the conference call with a review of the agenda and introductions

HPVIS Launch

Diane provided an update on the EPA launch of the HPVIS. She indicated that the Agency was planning for the launch to occur on March 31. This launch will cover about 290 submissions or about 500 chemicals. She stated that she would inform the group when the launch has occurred.

The group discussed the challenges associated with the deadline for submitting preliminary research proposals and the launch of HPVIS. Participants on the conference call felt it would be difficult for researchers to submit their pre-proposals without being able to review what's in the database. Ken agreed to allow researchers to submit full proposals at the end of April without going through the pre-proposal process.

Conference Title

Terri described the process that EPA and NEWMOA has gone through to arrive at two final choices for the conference title. Several conference call participants indicated a preference for the title with the word “characterizing” in it. The group provided the following additional feedback:

- Don't use the HVP acronym alone in the title without defining what it is
- Take out the word “new” in the title
- Make it clear that international presenters and information will be included/are welcome
- Indicate something about “challenges and opportunities” in the title

The final choices for the conference title were narrowed to:

- Characterizing Chemicals in Commerce: Using Data on High Production Volume (HPV) Chemicals
- Characterizing Chemicals in Commerce: Using Data from the High Production Volume (HPV) Challenge and International Programs

Draft Call for Presentations

The group reviewed the draft call for papers that was circulated prior to the call and provided the following comments and suggestions:

- do not refer to health data in the write-up; change wording to “toxicity”
- use the term “screening level hazards information” where possible
- make it clear that the conference scope is beyond EPA’s HPVIS
- make a clear connection to presentations on HPV and occupational health and safety work – add a bullet under “data accessibility” section that directly addresses interests of workers and communities

Plans for Reviewing Proposed Presentations

The Steering Committee decided that the best way to develop the conference agenda and review the proposals for presentations was to break into smaller groups as follows:

- Sub-committee to develop the plenary sessions and training sessions (on the phone the following people volunteered for this: Jim Cooper, SOCMA; Ken Geiser, LCSP; and Diane Sheridan, EPA)
- Sub-committee to focus on selecting the presentations for the Data Use Track
- Sub-committee to focus on selecting the presentations for the Data Accessibility Track
- Sub-committee to focus on selecting the presentations for the Connecting Data Sources Track
- Sub-committee to focus on selecting the presentations for the International Track

Members of the group agreed to get back to Terri via email to let her know in which of these groups they would like to participate. Terri will then post who is in what group on the conference planning webpage.

Other comments on the conference agenda included:

- In the first plenary session, make sure that one of the presenters frames the HPVIS and indicates what the data is and is not
- Focus on where to get good data and fill in the holes with the existing data in the first plenary

Research Papers Solicitation

Ken reported on the activities surrounding the research papers solicitation and the Research Projects Subcommittee. The Subcommittee has been holding conference calls, and they developed the research paper solicitation. The group talked at length about the challenges associated with the timing of the deadline for pre-proposals and the release of HPVIS.

It was noted that the request for pre-proposals did not mention "tribes." Ken agreed this was an oversight and agreed to add this to future versions of the solicitation.

Cathy Crumbley and Ken Geiser, LCSP indicated that they have sent out the solicitation to over 80 organizations to date, including a wide number of business, academic, state, and non-governmental organizations. They will try to send out another notice to make it clear to all of these groups that researchers can send in a final proposal without having done a pre-proposal. The group also suggested that they roll the deadline for the proposals if there is a delay in the release of HPVIS. Robin Ruppel-Kerr volunteered to participate in the Research Projects Subcommittee. Ken agreed to follow-up with her.

Outreach on the Conference and the Call for Presentations

Terri Goldberg reviewed the results of the conference call of the Outreach Subcommittee. The group held a conference call and recommended the following outreach activities:

- contract with a graphic artist to create a logo and image for the conference to be used on all conference materials to provide some visual unity and identity
- develop a post card size handout that can be circulated at upcoming conferences and events to announce the conference and give people the URL for getting more information
- create a button with the conference logo that conference co-sponsors and others can use to create links on their website to the conference website
- identify the appropriate listservs for circulating the announcements about the conference
- develop a press announcement on the conference for the trade press

The participants in the conference call offered the following additional suggestions on conference outreach:

- create a conference flyer and send to the trade press and others
- consult closely with EPA Region 6 and TCEQ on outreach in their region and state
- create a way for participants to indicate that they would like to receive conference updates (perhaps monthly) including registration deadlines and other deadlines via email; the idea would be to send out a notice to urge people to send their email address to NEWMOA indicating an interest in being included on an one-way listserv to receive periodic conference updates

Terri asked the members of the Steering Committee to keep her in the loop when they forward conference information and messages so that there is some idea of who is receiving the notices and to avoid duplication.

Possible Keynote Speakers

The group brainstormed possible keynote speakers and suggested the following:

- Jack Moore, OECD
- Warren Muir
- Gus Speth, Yale Univ.

One alternative idea was to have a panel of experts to show differing perspectives and ideas rather than one speaker.

Next Steps

Terri, Ken, and EPA will follow-up on the items identified above. Terri will send out a request to the full Steering Committee asking for volunteers for the various Subcommittees.

The group decided that full Steering Committee would not meet via conference again until the summer when the various Subcommittees can report out and there is a good version of the agenda to review and discuss.