

**Summary Minutes of the  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
Science Advisory Board  
Quality Review Committee (QRC)  
Public Teleconference Meeting  
May 18, 2004, 1:00 pm - 3:00pm (Eastern Time)**

Meeting Location: Room 3704 USEPA Woodies Building,  
1025 F Street NW, Washington, DC 20004

**PURPOSE:** The Quality Review Committees (QRC) for the review of two draft Science Advisory Board Committee reports met to conduct a public telephone conference review. Reports reviewed included the draft report of the SAB review of EPA's Air Toxics Research Strategy and Air Toxics Multi-Year Plan and a report on the SAB review of the Environmental Economics Research Strategy. Attachment A is the Federal Register notice announcing the meeting (69 FR 22791, April 27, 2004). A meeting agenda is included as Attachment B.

**LOCATION:** Participation in the teleconference was via phone for QRC members and in person by SAB Staff and some agency personnel.

**DATE AND TIME:** Tuesday, May 18, 2004. 1:00 pm – 3:00 pm Eastern Daylight Time.

**PARTICIPANTS:** The following individuals participated in this meeting: Dr. Dom Grasso (QRC Chair); Drs. James Bus, Trudy Cameron, Myrick Freeman, Linda Greer, Philip Hopke, Jill Lipoti, and Rebecca Parkin (all QRC members); Drs. Maureen Cropper and Frederick Miller (Review Panel Chairs); Tom Miller; Vanessa Vu, Kathleen White (SAB Staff); and Drs. Matthew Clark, William Wheeler, Brian Heninger, Chon Shoaf (Agency representatives); and Dr. Mark MacMillan (Panel Member Air Toxics).

**MEETING SUMMARY:** The Teleconference followed the agenda (Attachment B). A summary of the Teleconference follows.

1:00 pm	<u>Convene the Teleconference Call</u> Announcements, Summarize Agenda, Attendance	Mr. Thomas Miller, Designated Federal Officer
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Convene the Meeting and Introductory Remarks - Mr. Thomas Miller, QRC Designated Federal Officer (DFO) opened the meeting at 1:03 pm and took a roll-call of the members, followed by asking other participants to introduce themselves. Mr. Miller gave an overview of teleconference procedures and then outlined the purpose of the meeting, namely to review two draft reports. Mr. Miller noted that he would DFO the Air Toxics Research Strategy Report and Dr. Maciorowski would DFO the Economics portion. Mr. Miller noted that the meeting which was to be held under the authority of the Federal Advisory Committee Act.

1:05 pm	<u>Welcome</u>	Dr. Domenico Grasso, Chair QRC
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Dr. Grasso then provided introductory comments noting that use of QRC's to review Draft SAB Committee Reports was directed by the SAB in its reorganization plan during 2003. The QRC looks at

reports to see if they are clear and logical, responsive to the agency charge, contain technical errors, and whether the report's conclusions are supported by the body of the report. He noted that there would be two reports reviewed, the Air Toxics Research Strategy report and the Environmental Economics Research Strategy report.

**Review of Reports Prepared by SAB Panels: EPA's Air Toxics Research Strategy and Air Toxics Multi-Year Plan – A Review by the Air Toxics Research Strategy and Multi-Year Plan Panel of the EPA Science Advisory Board.**

Review Panel – Air Toxics Research Strategy and Multi-Year Plan Panel of the EPA Science Advisory Board (ATRSMYPP)

Current Chair - Dr. Frederick Miller, CIIT

Designated Federal Officer (DFO) - Mr. Thomas Miller, SAB Staff

Discussants - Drs. James Bus, Linda Greer, Philip Hopke, Jill Lipoti

a) Dr. Grasso then introduced the Air Toxics Research Strategy and Multi Year Plan QRC members: Drs. James Bus, Linda Greer, Philip Hopke, and Jill Lipoti, and noted that the review was Chaired by Dr. Fred Miller.

b) Dr. Miller introduced the report. He mentioned that the actual documents reviewed were developed in 2002 and that it had taken a substantial time to get to the point of completing the reports. Dr. Miller noted that the SAB Panel – EPA staff interaction during the meetings were a strong asset. He noted that in some ways, the use of the strategy and the multi-year plan in EPA was not clear and that in any case, the total funding available to implement the plan was inadequate.

c) Dr. Lipoti then noted her comments on the Panel's reports (see Attachment C). She highlighted from her written comments her feeling that the communication of uncertainty to the public was also important as was transparency in informing people of how the list of toxic air pollutants went from 155 to 33.

d) Dr Greer then provided her comments (see Attachment D). She too was concerned that the delay in reporting on the research strategy and plan might concern others on the Board and cause them to believe the document had become obsolete. She asked if the plan had been implemented already and if the priorities had changed from those articulated in the documents.

Dr. Choaf of EPA noted that the strategy and plan are still timely. He said that many of the large priorities had not yet been implemented. He noted that the MYP is revised periodically and that the comments of the Board are still of importance to the next revision.

e) Dr. Hopke provided his comments (see Attachment E) in writing and during the call highlighted a few points. He believes that the strategy is inadequate and overlooks a number of issues. He believes that the report did not highlight these and that it is therefore inadequate (e.g. source to dose modeling, approach to human health and environmental portions of the plan). He also felt that the plan and the report did not show integration of research across other plans that also benefits the air toxics research plan. Dr. Miller responded that some of the information is in the report. Dr. Vu noted that it is valid to be concerned with the lack of integration from other MYPs.

Dr. Choaf noted, in response to a question from Dr. Greer, that there were a number of motivating forces for preparing the strategy. These included NATA, Urban Air Toxics issues, and the need for Community Assessments.

f) Dr. James Bus provided his comments in writing (see Attachment F). He noted a major disconnect between the tone in the cover letter (rather complimentary and soft) as opposed to the more critical comments in the text that provide strong conclusions and recommendations. He also noted the lack of integration across MYPs, the need for prioritization across topics in the strategy, and the need to more clearly highlight the recommendations in each of the charge questions.

g) Members and Dr. Miller then discussed the questions raised by the QRC.

Dr. Miller noted that different authors prepared the text sections and the summary letter to the Administrator. He noted in response to Dr. Grasso's question that a formal economic analysis was not done nor was it necessary to have one to say that the \$20 M budgeted for the MYP is inadequate. Knowledge of the topics alone tells one that the plan cannot be implemented with that level of investment.

Dr. Grasso asked for a motion for disposition of the report. After recommendations were suggested and revised, the final determination was that i) the cover letter to the Administrator be rewritten so that the tone matches the strength of the comments in the text of the document and ii) the recommendations in the text are to be highlighted in the text under headers for each charge question. Once the revisions are made, the document will be sent to the vector's for review (Dr. Lipoti and Dr. Hopke). All members of the QRC voted to accept this recommended disposition.

h) Dr. Lipoti agreed to draft a memo providing the QRC's recommendation to the Board on this report. It will be available for circulation, comment and concurrence on May 21, 2004. The intent is to email the recommendation to the Board on May 25, 2004.

Dr. Grasso thanked the QRC members for their work on the report and noted that they could leave the call at this point.

**Review of Reports Prepared by SAB Panels: *Review of the Environmental Economics Research Strategy of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency***

Review Panel – Environmental Economics Advisory Committee EERS Review Panel

Chair - Dr. Maureen Cropper, the World Bank

Designated Federal Officer (DFO) - Mr. Thomas Miller, SAB Staff

Discussants – Drs. Trudy Cameron, Myrick Freeman, Rebecca Parkin

a) Dr. Grasso introduced the report on the SAB review of the Environmental Economics Advisory Committee and the QRC members: Drs. Myrick Freeman, Trudy Cameron, and Rebecca Parkin and noted that the review was Chaired by Dr. Maureen Cropper.

b) Dr. Cropper introduced the report noting that the review focused on 5 areas of research need which were identified in the Charge (human health benefits, ecosystem benefits, environmental behavior and decision making, market methods and incentives, and benefits of information disclosure. The recommendations are given for each charge question for each of the topics. The Chair also received a request for clarification from Dr. Matthew Clark of the agency. Dr. Cropper noted that she had also reviewed the email information with the QRC members' reactions to the report.

c) Dr. Freeman provided his comments in writing (see Attachment G) and for the call noted that he considers the draft to be a good report and it is clear with respect to the discussion of each charge question, has good suggestions – especially with regard to ecosystem valuation. He noted a few typos that are in the report as well.

d) Dr. Cameron provided her comments in writing (see Attachment G) and noted there were three points that could use some additional discussion in the report. She congratulated the committee on a blissfully succinct report.

e) Dr. Parkin provided her comments in writing (see Attachment G) as well. She noted for the discussion that there are many good points in the report that gives EPA suggestions for improvement of the strategy. The conclusions are clear and supported by the discussions in the report. She did note that question 4 needed more discussion of how to communicate information to target groups and that it was not clear if the information needing to be communicated referred to the strategy, the Requests for Proposals, or the outcomes of the research that is ultimately conducted under the strategy.

Dr. Cropper noted some lack of clarity about the thing needing communicating as well. Dr. Wheeler, EPA, stated that the need was broader than just the Raps and would include letting the public know the agency goals so that research could be better tied to the EPA mission. Dr. Henninger, EPA, stated that the need is to better tie to the applicable research community so that those who can suggest ideas will know of the need for research. Dr. Clark, EPA, noted that the agency wishes to involve the academic community earlier so that the agency needs can be communicated earlier and allow sufficient time for the community to consider how research can meet the need for knowledge. They also wish to distribute research findings to a broader community. It is more than journal publication.

Dr. Parkin suggested that workshops organized within the context of professional society meetings might be an effective way to help with this communications needs. Dr. Cropper agreed that this was an excellent idea and agreed to add such ideas to the report. Dr. Cameron indicated that she would like to get the SAB report and the draft strategy out to her own graduate students so they can use it in understanding EPA needs.

f) Dr. Grasso asked for a motion for the disposition of the report. The motion was to approve the report subject to the edits agreed to by Dr. Cropper. The revisions will be sent to Dr. Parkin for vetting and thence to the Board for its action on June 4. Drs. Freeman, Cameron and Parkin voted for the motion.

g) Dr. Freeman will draft a memo providing the QRC's recommendation to the Board on this report.

NOTE: Dr. Freeman provided this note on May 18, 2004 and the EEAC Chair is incorporating them into the report.

“Comments requiring revisions:

1. In section 2.4.1, include the possibility of “resource-based compensation” as an influence on the compliance behavior of firms.

2. Regarding the effectiveness of alternative regulatory mechanisms, suggest that the Agency be aware of opportunities to exploit exogenous variation in eligibility for particular programs as a source of ‘natural experiments.’
3. Suggest that some attention be given to assessing the broader distributional consequences of regulations in the development of the research strategy.
4. Suggest consideration of new mechanisms such as special workshops at meetings of professional societies as a way of enhancing communication between the Agency research needs and opportunities.”

2:25 pm Dr. Grasso thanked the QRC, Chairs, and the Agency for participating in this review. He adjourned the meeting at 2:25 pm.

Respectfully Submitted:

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Mr. Thomas O. Miller  
Designated Federal Officer  
EPA SAB QRC

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Dr. Anthony Maciorowski  
Designated Federal Officer  
EPA SAB QRC – Economics Research Strategy

I certify that these minutes are accurate to the best of my knowledge:

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Dr. Domenico Grasso  
Chair  
EPA SAB Quality Review Committee

Attachments:

- A FR Notice; 69 FR 13829, March 24, 2004
- B Meeting Agenda
- C Dr. Lipoti’s written remarks
- D Dr. Greer’s written remarks
- E Dr. Hopke’s written remarks
- F Dr. Bus’s written remarks
- G Compilation of written remarks from Drs. Cameron, Freeman, and Parkin