

Re: June 1st Session on Public Involvement in EPA Advisory Activities  
Supported by the SAB Staff Office  
Deborah Shprentz  
to:  
Angela Nugent  
05/26/2011 11:12 AM  
Cc:  
Janice Nolen

Dear Angela,

I wanted to offer a few thoughts in response to your notice of an upcoming public session.

I have seen many improvements in the CASAC process in the time I have been following the NAAQS reviews and appreciate your solicitation of input. The quality and depth of advice you are now receiving from the Committee has increased exponentially in recent years. I believe this is due to focused charge questions from the agency as well as to the expertise represented on the committees. In addition, the committee chairs and the professional staff managers have kept things moving forward and have instituted many efficiencies.

1. I appreciate the mechanisms you have provided for the public to participate via teleconference. However, it is often difficult to follow proceedings remotely -- it is hard to hear what is being said. The next logical evolution to increase opportunities for broad public participation would be a webinar or webcast arrangement. ORD has pioneered the use of webinars at EPA.
2. It would be very valuable if the CASAC website could be structured to retain draft committee letters, public testimony, and other meeting materials. Perhaps a section of archived materials could accompany the final letters now featured on the website. The historical record is valuable to EPA and stakeholders and is not publicly available elsewhere as far as I know. As someone involved in the NAAQS review process, I want to be able to track changes made to draft CASAC letters and to access EPA briefing materials, meeting agendas, public statements, and other materials such as charge questions. The draft letters were included in the previous version of the CASAC web site but somewhere along the line a decision was made not to archive "pre decisional" materials.

Other things that I would like to see included on the website are transcripts, minutes, and recordings from CASAC meetings. It is not always easy to track these down, and they are an important part of the public record.

One feature that I find very useful is the RSS feed of website updates.

3. It would be advantageous to establish ground rules on public speaking opportunities at CASAC meetings. One example that comes to mind is a recent meeting on the ozone reconsideration where the American Petroleum Institute had over a dozen people registered to speak. Was each speaker

limited to 3 minutes, or each organization? It would be great if this was clearly understood in advance.

When commenting on complex technical documents it is difficult to make more than a couple of points in three or five minutes. The public comment session is not perfunctory. It is the only opportunity the public has to interact directly with committee members and EPA staff.

Please consider holding some meetings in Washington D.C. where many EPA staff are located and many organizations and media outlets have representatives. Holding meetings in North Carolina insulates the proceedings to an untoward degree.

Thank you for your consideration.

P.S. Have the CASAC committee members been invited to offer their feedback on these issues?

Deborah Shprentz  
Atmospherix