

MEETING RECORD FOR THE
148th MEETING OF THE IJC SCIENCE ADVISORY BOARD
February 13, 2008; 1 – 5 PM
Crowne Plaza Hotel
8000 Merriman Road, Romulus, MI

MEMBERS PRESENT

John Carey (Canadian Co-chair).....NWRI, Burlington, ON
Michael J. Donahue (United States Co-chair) URS Corporation, Farmington Hills, MI
William Bowerman Clemson University, Pendleton, SC
David Carpenter University at Albany, Rensselaer, NY
Milton Clark United States Environmental Protection Agency, Chicago, IL
Miriam Diamond.....University of Toronto, ON
Pierre FilionUniversity of Waterloo, ON
Gary Klecka Dow Chemical Co., Midland, MI
Joseph Koonce Case Western Reserve University, OH
Hugh MacIsaac University of Windsor, ON
Donna Mergler University of Quebec, Montreal, PQ
Jeffrey Ridal.....St. Lawrence River Institute, Cornwall, ON
Susan Schantz University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign, IL
Deborah Swackhamer University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN
William Taylor.....University of Waterloo, ON
Marcia Valiante.....University of Windsor, ON
Richard Whitman USGS, Porter, IN

MEMBERS ABSENT

C. Scott Findlay University of Ottawa, ON

LIAISONS, INVITED GUEST & IJC STAFF

Douglas Alley International Joint Commission, GLRO
Kay Austin International Joint Commission, US Section
Peter Boyer..... International Joint Commission, GLRO
John Jackson Great Lakes United
Karen Vigmostad International Joint Commission, GLRO
Joel Weiner International Joint Commission, CDN Section

Minutes

1.0 Welcome and Introductions

Dr. Donahue welcomed everyone in attendance and recognized the new members, Drs. Ridal and Schantz. Brief self introductions followed.

2.0 Approval of Agenda

Dr. Carey requested that a review of the history and issues in relation to the controversy over the ATSDR report on human health concerns in RAPs be included under “Other Business”. The agenda was then accepted as presented.

3.0 Science Advisory Board Organization and Structure under the GLWQA

Dr. Donahue presented the report and recommendations of the SAB writing team. The members of the writing team included Drs. Carey, Donahue, Swackhamer, Findlay and Diamond. A summary of the central discussion points following the presentation is summarized as follows:

- The driver for change is not simply a desire for cost savings, but primarily operational effectiveness and efficiency. The issue is redundancy, and best use of volunteer’s time, and most importantly the development of consistent advice to the Commission that is not conflicting among groups.
- The many different advisory groups to the Commission rarely meet together, and when they do, there are too many members for there to be a meaningful discussion. Because members rarely know each other, and may not necessarily share a common purpose, there can be significant barriers to moving forward on issues.
- There is a high transaction cost of trying to coordinate among the advisory groups in terms of difficulties arranging meetings, conference calls , and achieving consensus on work products. Involved members now have to participate in up to 20 meetings/year (and more) to be involved in IJC activities.
- A more agile structure will allow outside expertise to be recruited as and when needed.
- Current situation is that all priority activities are being undertaken by WG’s not the Boards. IJC activities are currently entirely collaborative.
- Some examples – HPTF and SAB WGEH – Fish Consumption/Omega 3 workshop; HPTF and SAB each wrote their own reports. There are some significant differences that are not reflected in the HPTF document. During the development of the 10th Biennial report the HPTF and the SAB gave contrary advice to the Commission with respect to the fish consumption recommendation.

- Urbanization Priority; many advisory groups involved on the paper, but some did not contribute substantively, and then criticized the work as not including their input. (IAQAB, HPTF and WQB).
- Some Task Forces have been very successful – VETF, Ad hoc Health WG on Agreement Review – they were successful because they had a defined mission and a horizon date for completing their work. They did not report through the Boards.
- GLRO section: scientific capacity has eroded the most. A culture of excellence where staff were encouraged to publish papers, attend international meetings, speak as experts at conferences and in the media, and host international delegations and visiting scholars has been seriously diminished.
- Link bulleted points with the appropriate paragraphs in the Terms of Reference for the GLRO in the Agreement.
- The report focuses on the GLRO of the past, and should include the GLRO of the future.
- There is a concern that the formation of one Board could result in a diminution of scientific input, if the new Board that is created is dominated by government managers. It was noted in response to this concern that all IJC appointments are for individuals to serve in their personal and professional capacities.

Dr. Swackhamer moved that the Board accept the report in principle subject to final revision based on the forgoing discussion. Dr. Mergler seconded the motion. The motion was passed by the majority of the membership with two abstaining members, Drs. Diamond and Ridal.

Dr. Donahue indicated that he would revise the paper and circulate the final version of it to the Board prior to formal submission to the IJC.

4.0 Update on Priority Activities

- Nearshore Framework – Workshop #2
Dr. Vigmostad provided a brief overview on the upcoming Nearshore Management Workshop to be held March 12 – 13 in Dearborn, MI. [Nearshore](#)
- Eutrophication
The Eutrophication WG will be using the output of the Nearshore Framework workshops to guide its activities and is just getting started on its work plan.
- Beach Closures
Dr. Whitman reported that the WG has met several times, and their approach is consistent with the recommendations contained in a recent GAO report. Two white papers will be undertaken, one to address indicators, and the second to address economics.
- Fish Consumption

Dr. Carpenter reported that a one day session is planned for March 10 to discuss the risks and the benefits of fish consumption based on current knowledge of omega 3s in Great Lakes fish. In order to understand the benefits of omega 3 it is necessary to monitor omega 3s in humans as omega 3s from fatty fish may not be absorbed by humans, and some Great Lakes fish have reduced levels of omega 3s, particularly in the winter months. Dr. Carey suggested that since Environment Canada (EC) has taken over the fish contaminant monitoring program that an opportunity exists to request that the program include omega 3s. He suggested that such a request could be sent as a letter from the WG immediately, and did not need to wait until a report was prepared.

- **Chemicals of Emerging Concern**

Dr. Klecka reported that the WG has met two times to date. He said that the meeting this morning focused on work plan deliverables, including the request that the activity include assessment and the generation of quantifiable data for use by the IJC in their 15th Biennial Report, in 2010. He said that a challenge for the WG is to identify the chemicals of interest and bound their study. In order to do this the WG will focus on nearshore waters and sources such as WWTPs and CAFOs. He indicated that it is hoped that a literature search will be conducted by March 31, and a review of international programs and policies will follow. He said that the intent of the WG is to identify policy gaps within the existing Great Lakes binational chemicals management framework (s).

- **Aquatic Nuisance Species**

Dr. MacIsaac outlined the Rapid Response rationale and approach being undertaken by the WG. He indicated that the steps would include (1) a literature review (2) compilation of a list of binational rapid response programs as models (3) determination of best practices (4) determine agency responsibilities and potential implementation barriers (5) field test the outcomes in terms of three species, silver carp, *Dikerogammarus villosus* (a.k.a. "killer shrimp"), and *hydrilla verticillata*. He said that the deliverables from the WG will be strategic and specific policy direction with recommendations to the governments about how to implement a binational rapid response program.

5.0 Future Meetings

- #149; May 14 – 15, 2008, Windsor, Ontario
- #150; October 28 – 29, 2008 to coincide with the IJC fall Semi Annual Meeting in Ottawa
- #151; January 7 – 8, 2009, Windsor, Ontario

6.0 Other Business

Dr. Carpenter provided a brief overview of the genesis of the ATSDR report on the U.S. AOCs that started in 2001 at the request of the IJC. He said that the

current controversy is more about the alleged suppression of the report than it is about the results, as the results mirror findings that are well known to the SAB and were reported in other Great Lakes locations throughout the 1990's. Dr. Clark added that some factual errors were found in the reports during their review by EPA; however it did not warrant their delayed release

7.0 Adjournment

There being no further business of the Board, the meeting adjourned at 5 PM.