

CASA Odour Management Project Charter

- Keith Denman
- CPANS, May 3, 2013

Background

- Government staff, industry and communities have wrestled with odours and odour complaints for many years.
- Sources include sewage treatment, rendering plants, intensive livestock operations, coffee roasters, small and large industrial activity, etc.
- It seems like it ought to be simple: find the source and make them stop. It isn't.
- Who decides how much odour is too much, and on what basis? What legal tools exist to avoid or respond to odours?

Why CASA?

- Challenging issue
 - Difficult to measure
 - Difficult to attribute
 - Difficult to evaluate acceptability
 - Cuts across various regulators and unregulated sources
 - Emotional issue for impacted people
- Due to the complexity and number of stakeholders a good issue for CASA
- Working Group has developed a Project Charter for this work, which will be beginning in the coming weeks.

Background

● Working Group Formed in January 2013

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Lance Miller

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Vision and Goal

- **Vision for Odour Management in Alberta:**
 - There is a comprehensive framework for odour management in Alberta.
- **Goal for this Project Team:**
 - To create a good practice guide for assessing and managing odour in Alberta.

Project Scope

- Among the challenges was and will be finding a useful chunk of work that can be completed in a reasonable time period with the available resources.
 - Focus on odours that are “adverse”*
 - Work should apply to all sectors (no individual sector is meant to be singled out)
 - Recognize that in some instances, all reasonable efforts may have been made to manage a source of odour, but eliminating it may not be feasible

*“adverse effect” means impairment of or damage to the environment, human health or safety or property (EPEA, 2011)

Project Objectives

A number of topics have been identified for the Project Team's work.

1. **Complaints**
2. **Odour Assessment**
3. **Health**
4. **Prevention/Mitigation**
5. **Enforcement/Role of Regulation**
6. **Education/Communication/Awareness**
7. **Continuous Improvement**

Complaints

- Odour issues are often driven by complaints, which are received by various levels and branches of government.
- When complaints are not responded to, or when people are bounced around various departments, frustration builds and emotions can complicate the process.
- The project team will work to clarify the roles of the various groups and design a predictable, timely, stepwise and comprehensive process to document, investigate and address odour concerns.

Odour Assessment

- It is difficult to ascertain the appropriate response without some means of assessing how bad the odour is. This is a challenge given the subjective nature of odours and the limitation of existing tools.
- There are a number of methods used to put a number on odours, based on FIDOL (Frequency, Intensity, Duration, Offensiveness and Location)
- The project team will review and assess existing protocols, criteria and methods for evaluating odours and how they might be useful in Alberta's management of odours.

Health

- Human, animal and ecosystem health is the underlying driver in odour management. The line between direct (i.e. toxic) and indirect (i.e. “nuisance”) effects is not clearly defined and may not be important to affected communities.
- Original health research is not within the timelines or resources available to the project team, but recommendations for focused work may be among the products it delivers.
- Given the episodic and anecdotal nature of many of the concerns, better tools for tracking health impacts on a community and individual basis will be among the goals of the project team.

Prevention/Mitigation

- Anticipating where odours are likely to occur may make it possible to prevent issues before they arise. The source-pathway-receptor model provides a number of places at which interventions may take place.
- Actions could include:
 - emissions management, changes in industrial or agricultural practices to reduce odours, use of shelter belts, zoning, ensuring that new home buyers are aware of existing activity in the area
- The project team will look at best practices and make recommendations for Alberta.

Enforcement/Role of Regulation

- There are regulations “on the books” in Alberta that speak to odours and odour causing activities. They have not always been as effective in handling concerns as some have hoped.
- The project team will look at the existing regulations in Alberta and make recommendations on how they might be improved, both in their content and in their application.
- This will include successes, challenges and learnings from current regulation as well as a look at practices in other jurisdictions.

Education/Awareness

- Residents, government staff and industry will be better able to manage odours if they are well informed about the nature of the issues.
- This would include roles and responsibilities, health impacts, odour management strategies as well as the outcome of the project team's work.
- Some of this work should focus on existing groups, such as Airsheds, that may be asked to become involved in odour issues.

Continuous Improvement

- Once the work of this project team has been completed, consideration will be given to its ongoing review and improvement.
- The project team will also discuss how to encourage/require continuous improvement in odour management at odour causing facilities.

Project Deliverables

- Final Report and Recommendations:

- Final report and package of SMART (specific, measurable, action-oriented, realistic and time-bound) recommendations
- Identify and prioritize any further work

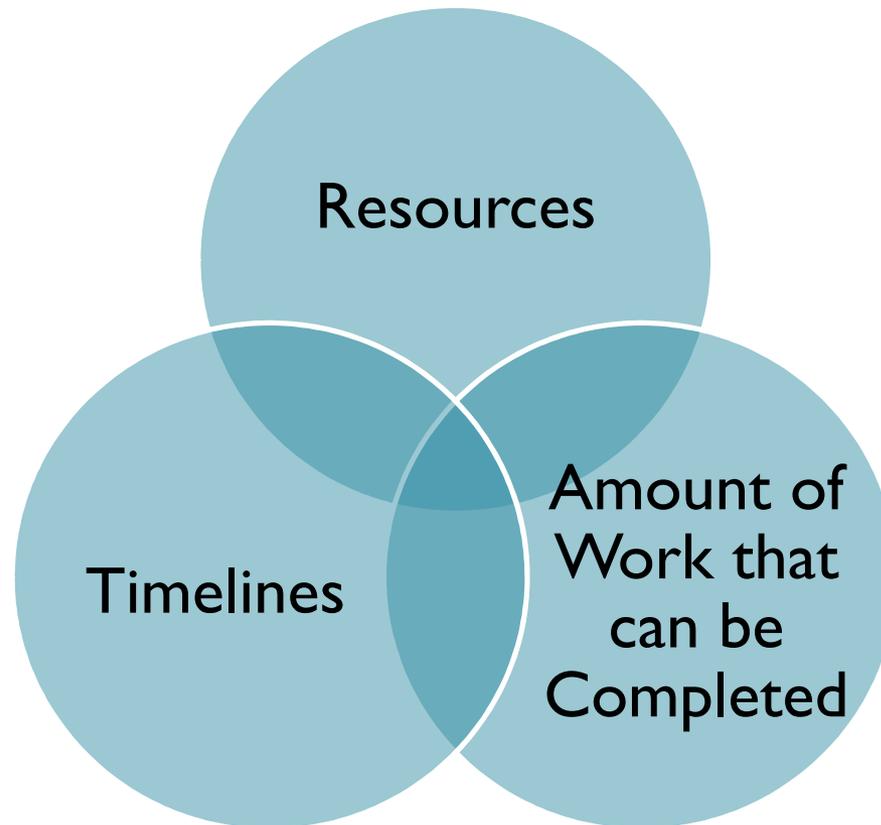
- Good Practice Guide:

- Used to communicate the results of the project team as well as the “toolkit” resulting from their work
- The purpose of the GPG is that people involved in odour management or an odour issue can easily access the work of the project team and apply it.

Project Deliverables

- The project team has been asked to focus its work on achievable products, and report to the Board regularly on its progress.
- In the allotted timeframe, the project team will not be able to delve deeply into all topics, but can make recommendations for future work where a need is identified.
- Work should be focused on creating usable products for managing odour in Alberta

Risk Analysis



Interested?

- For more information please contact Celeste Dempster at CASA:
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Questions?

