

October 10, 2007



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Dear Corinne,



On behalf of the four state regional groups, we wanted to take a moment to recognize and thank you for your effort to incorporate our suggestions into the Kansas City TEC/WG meeting agenda. As you know, our regions have been active participants in the TEC/WG since its inception, and we regularly attend TEC/WG meetings. The suggestions provided in our previous letter were spurred by a declining interest among the states in participating in these meetings.



The initial concept for the TEC/WG was to establish a forum for interaction and discussion between DOE and its stakeholders, and we feel that the agenda for the Kansas City meeting was a fine example of this cooperation. While we always appreciate having the opportunity to comment on draft agendas for the TEC/WG meetings, never before have so many of our suggestions and revisions been accepted into the final agenda. We are confident that the continuation of this interaction will again make participation in the TEC/WG a priority for the states.



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In particular, we were very glad to see EM's expanded presence at the meeting. EM has been very successful in planning and executing shipping campaigns with heavy stakeholder input, and it would be wise for RW to emulate that process and learn from EM's accomplishments as well as their mistakes. Any attempt to incorporate lessons learned from previous and ongoing shipping campaigns can only help shape the Yucca Mountain transportation system and refine transportation practices in general. We expect that EM will continue to be a presence at TEC/WG meetings, perhaps even organizing one or more topic groups to address pertinent issues.

Having seen significant improvement in the general sessions at the TEC meeting, we are hopeful that you will be able to exert a similar positive influence on the topic groups. Each topic group is a forum for stakeholders to discuss their ideas and develop or revise proposals for DOE to take back to review and, ultimately, decide whether to incorporate into the transportation program. Since the topic groups only meet twice a year, it is understandably a

daunting task to narrow down the list of topics to discuss at the meetings and bring focus to the various stakeholder concerns. This is necessary, however, in order to make the most of our face-to-face sessions and help the topic groups make progress on their work plans.

We feel the 180(c) Topic Group is an excellent example of a productive and successful topic group. You adeptly managed that topic group by developing a focused agenda for each meeting and conference call. The 180(c) Topic Group had a seemingly impossible task, but by realizing that the group would not come to consensus on every topic, we were able to move through the issues and produce a laudable set of recommendations. We hope the other topic groups can follow the 180(c) Topic Group's fine example. In particular, we have several specific recommendations for the topic group meetings that would be helpful for the states:

- The topic groups should have a specific focus and objectives for each meeting. While discussion will inevitably wander, the leader or facilitator should emphasize the purpose of the particular meeting – both well in advance of the meeting and throughout the discussion. Topic group members should be involved in developing the agenda and the specific objectives.
- Participants should be reminded at the start of each meeting that the minutes of previous meetings and calls provide a good log of issues already discussed and decisions already made. Doing so will eliminate the need to recap everything that has taken place since the last meeting. For the many people that have invested their time in participating in conference calls, it is more productive to hit the ground running and trust that our fellow members have taken the time to prepare.
- Because the meetings are intended to be a continuation of previous topic group discussions, space at the meeting tables should be limited to topic group members. At our own SRG meetings, some of us have found it useful to set up the table in advance with name tents for our committee members and speakers so that they will have priority seating. This same practice might work for the topic group meetings.
- Related to the issue of having members at the table, it is important for the rooms to be set in a way that facilitates discussion. Experience has shown how difficult it is to carry on productive discussions when there are 40+ people sitting around a large table with a few dozen observers looking on. The rooms for topic group meetings need only be big enough to accommodate the anticipated number of topic group members that will attend, plus a few extra chairs for staff and observers. While non-members should be welcome to observe, it is important to make sure their presence in the room does not come at the expense of a productive topic group meeting.
- Each topic group should develop a list of action items – with deadlines – at the end of each meeting. DOE staff could also hand out a comprehensive list of action items or immediately e-mail them to the TEC/WG meeting attendees.
- The topic groups would benefit greatly from professional facilitation. We realize that budget limitations and understaffing make it difficult for any one DOE employee to devote much time to the topic groups, and therefore, perhaps professional facilitators could be relied upon to provide the necessary structure and help to focus discussion at the meetings.
- Ideally, the TEC/WG website would be a comprehensive, up-to-date resource for members. Logistics and agenda information for meetings and conference calls should be posted as soon as they are available. Additionally, work plans, work products, background information, member lists, conference call dates, and any reference materials should be added and maintained for each topic group.

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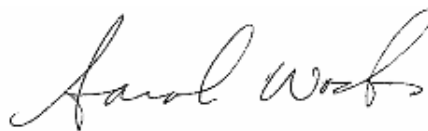
Again, we want to reiterate our appreciation for your hard work and consideration of our input on the Kansas City TEC/WG meeting agenda. We hope this cooperation will continue in the future and that it will be reflected in the individual topic group agendas as well. If you would like to follow up on our letter with a conference call to discuss positive changes to the topic groups, please coordinate with Lisa Janairo at 920-458-5910 to set up a date and time for the call.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter and for your continuing support of the TEC/WG and the state regional groups.

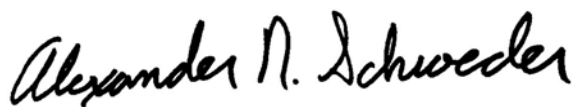
Sincerely,



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