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Congress of the United States
OFFICE OF TECHNOLOGY ASSESSMENT
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20510
March 8, 1977

EMILIO Q. DADDARIO
DIRECTOR
DANIEL V. DE SIMONE
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

MEMORANDUM

TO: Program Managers ✓
FROM: The Director
SUBJECT: Public Participation

To further develop OTA's public participation capabilities, we are going to build on the extensive experience gained in our assessment of the Coastal Effects of Offshore Energy Systems by establishing a central resource for all OTA programs that offer exceptional opportunities for public participation.

I have appointed a Public Participation Committee, consisting initially of Emilia Govan (Chairperson), Barbara Balbiani, Barry Barrington, Joseph Coates, Elizabeth Horvath, Tom Jemmings, James Sullivan, and Chuck Wixom.

The purpose of this Committee will be to identify worthwhile opportunities for public participation in OTA's work, formulate proposals and plans for taking advantage of such opportunities, review them with the Director's Office and the responsible program managers, and help to put plans into effect. Emilia Govan will be in touch with you in the near future.



EMILIO Q. DADDARIO

cc: Public Participation Committee members
Hazel Henderson
Lynn Davis
Robert Daly
Gretchen Kolsrud
Tom McGurn
John Holmes

OTA Committee on Public Participation
Summary Minutes of the Meeting of March 10, 1977

Present: Barry Barrington, Barbara Balbiani, Joe Coates, Dan De Simone, Linda Garcia, Emilia Govan, Elizabeth Horvath, Tom Jennings, Jim Sullivan, Chuck Wixom

The first meeting of the Office of Technology Assessment Committee on Public Participation was held on Wednesday, March 10th, 1977 at 3:00 p.m. in Room 404 of the Old Immigration Building. Opening the meeting, the Chairperson, Emilia Govan, asked the Deputy Director, Dan De Simone, to describe the purpose of the committee.

Purpose of the Committee

The Committee on Public Participation, said Mr. De Simone, was established by the Director to serve as a central resource on public participation for all program areas of OTA. Building on OTA's already substantial experience in reaching out to involve the interested public, and especially that of the Oceans Group, the committee will be responsible for developing processes and strategies for carrying out public participation activities. It will help to identify appropriate areas for activities and to buttress the work of the program staffs. As a central resource the committee will, moreover, serve as an integrating force for OTA, cutting across program areas. Program Managers will be invited periodically to brief the committee on their project activities and plans. The committee's first major area of concern, and the first assignment for Elizabeth Horvath, a Coordinator for Public Participation, and Barbara Balbiani, an Assistant Coordinator, will be the automobile assessment. As new opportunities for public participation are developed within the program areas, additional members of the OTA staff will become involved in the committee's work. The Director may appoint new members of the committee from time to time, but, for effectiveness, it will be kept to about its present size.

Members of the Committee

Noting the varied background of the members of the committee, Emilia Govan asked each one to describe the experience and resources that he or she brings to the group. Describing her own background, Emilia pointed out that having directed the public participation program within the Oceans Group, she is now Assistant Director for the Energy Facilities Siting Assessment within the Oceans Group. She looks forward to sharing with the members of the committee the experience of the Oceans Group in public participation.

Tom Jennings, noting his own experience during the past two and a half years, pointed out that the time was right for establishing the committee.

Chuck Wixom pointed out that he hoped to gain as much from his participation on the committee as he would give to it. As Public Affairs Officer, he will gain useful, and otherwise unavailable, information about OTA. He hopes that he will be able to serve the committee by providing mailing lists and channels for communications with the media.

Joe Coates, Assistant to the Director for Methodology, offered several observations. He noted that there are hundreds of people who, although they do not see themselves as stakeholders, would like to serve as a resource for OTA. Mr. Coates advised the committee not to equate the "public" in public participation with the laity. He suggested, moreover, that OTA try out some of the unexplored but interesting techniques for public participation. Our performance in this area, he added, might have a multiplier effect, inspiring the more timid federal agencies to follow suit.

Jim Sullivan, a consultant to the R & D program, is presently looking at various concepts of public participation. In an effort to determine the best ways of presenting technology as a public policy issue to lay citizens, he has been carrying out three separate studies. One study, involving citizen participation in electric utility policy, looks at various models of public participation. A study of the Federal Energy Advisory Committee examines those aspects of the program which are or are not helpful to committee members. The third study entails nine case studies of citizen action on environmental impact statements.

By representing the voice of those who, for whatever reasons, cannot be heard, Barry Barrington, Executive Secretary of the TAAC, hopes to bring a sense of equity to the committee. He believes that his twenty years of experience in industry, and the approach that this experience has given him, will also be useful to the committee.

Barbara Balbiani described her experience in civic activities and particularly the National Conference on Telecommunications and Rural America, a major undertaking which brought together diverse and conflicting groups to consider a wide ranging agenda of controversial issues.

Elizabeth Horvath described her activities in community affairs. Her broad experience in civic matters includes the Chairmanship of the Transportation Committee of the Northern Virginia Conservation Council.

Linda Garcia, research assistant for the automobile assessment, who has helped to organize and plan the project and is rapporteur for the automobile advisory panel, will serve as Executive Secretary of OTA's Public Participation Committee.

Task Assignments

The Chairman assigned each member of the committee a task to complete prior to the next meeting. Each task is aimed at helping to identify the "public" for the automobile assessment. Task assignments are as follows:

- Chuck Wixom -- Determine which of the mailing lists that he has collected will be useful to the automobile assessment. Identify clipping services and media contacts which might be useful, indicating what they might cost.

- Tom Jennings -- Identify useful contacts, particularly in the labor field.
- Emilia Govan -- Describe how the public was identified for the Oceans Assessment and relate this experience to the automobile assessment.
- Jim Sullivan -- Identify national groups, specifying which ones we should zero in on.
- Barry Barrington -- Identify the TAAC members who could serve as an additional resource for identifying the affected groups.
- Joe Coates -- Provide a conceptual framework for identifying stakeholders.

There followed a brief discussion of who constitutes the public. Members agreed that the discussion of who is the public must take place within the context of a specific set of issues.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:00 p.m. The next meeting of the committee was scheduled for Wednesday afternoon, March 16th, at 3 o'clock.

OTA COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC PARTICIPATION
Summary of the Meeting, March 16, 1977

Present: Barry Barrington, Barbara Balbiani, Joe Coates, Dan De Simone, Linda Garcia, Emilia Govan, Elizabeth Horvath, Tom Jennings, Chuck Wixom, Bob Smith, Rita Jenrette, Vickie Sibley.

A meeting of the OTA Committee on Public Participation was held on March 16th, in the Director's conference room of the Old Immigration Building. Emilia Govan opened the meeting at 3:00 p.m. The discussion focused on the procedures and strategies that might be useful in identifying stakeholders in public participation programs. Several members of the committee described the resources that they can make available to project directors for that purpose.

Chuck Wixom and Vickie Sibley outlined three types of services that the Office of Public Affairs can provide: (1) a mailing list, (2) a newsletter, and (3) a clipping service.

•The OTA mailing list. The Office of Public Affairs maintains a mailing list that is coded according to program areas, interest groups, and activities. The list can also be broken down by geographic region. At present, the list is being revised to incorporate additional names. When complete, it shall be double in length. Supplementary lists of names can be purchased at a price that varies with the quality of the list. The cost of adding a new name to the list is about seven cents. OTA is presently negotiating with DOT to acquire a copy of its list.

•The OTA newsletter. The Office of Public Affairs also puts out a newsletter, announcing the completion of assessments. Announcements might also be made when new assessments are approved or initiated.

•The OTA clipping service. The clipping service, Press Intelligence Inc., reviews 250 leading dailies for information pertaining to OTA. If it were useful, the service could be instructed to clip according to additional code words.

Members of the committee suggested additional ways to increase the general mailing list. Joe Coates noted that Philip Ritterbush has collected a list of organizations dealing with technology which he might make available to us. Emilia Govan pointed out that the Oceans Group has collected many names which were never incorporated into the computer list. She suspects that there might be additional names in other programs as well.

Discussing how the mailing list can be specifically used to help identify stakeholders, Emilia suggested that it is a good place to start. The Oceans Group, she said, also used a local clipping service to help identify the publics. Later, after the press had mentioned the brochures in their stories on the assessment, the Oceans Staff was able to identify names through requests for the brochures. Additional names were obtained by sifting through hearings before congressional committees.

Joe Coates summarized and distributed a draft paper in which he outlined a conceptual framework for identifying stakeholders. He suggested three strategies for identifying publics.

- Focus on and trace the places where the impacts occur.
- Network, beginning perhaps with a workshop, until there are no new names.
- Concentrate on the technology itself. Looking at the physical background of the technology, trace the effects.

Discussing these approaches, Mr. Coates emphasized the importance of being evenhanded. If you want to use a workshop, he said, you might even start out with a small group of nonexperts.

Relating the experience of the Oceans Group, Emilia Govan pointed out that it might be necessary to make a special effort to identify public interest groups. The real problem, she added, may come in limiting the scope of names. Once you get an initial list, you will have a lot of self identification.

To illustrate how the TAAC might assist in identifying affected parties, Barry Barrington distributed a list outlining the background, memberships, and interests of TAAC members. Individuals were not identified by name.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:00 p.m. The next meeting of the Public Participation Committee will be held on Monday, March 28th at 3:00 p.m. in the Director's conference room. At that time, Bob Maxwell, the Project Director of the Automobile Assessment and Acting Program Manager of the Transportation Group, will present a brief summary of the automobile assessment. Beth Horvath and Barbara Balbiani will also discuss their detailed plan for identifying interested parties for the automobile assessment.

OTA COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC PARTICIPATION
Summary of the Meeting, March 28, 1977

Present: Barry Barrington, Barbara Balbiani, Joe Coates, Dan De Simone, Linda Garcia, Emilia Govan, Elizabeth Horvath, Larry Jenney, Tom Jennings, Rita Jenrette, Robert Maxwell, Jim Sullivan.

The Monday, March 28th meeting of the OTA Committee on Public Participation was held in the Director's Conference Room in the old Immigration Building. Presiding, Emilia Govan opened the meeting at 3 P.M. The discussion focused on the automobile assessment. Bob Maxwell described the purpose, scope and time framework of the assessment, and Elizabeth Horvath presented a plan to identify stakeholders for the purpose of the program of public participation.

Sketching out the most important aspects of the automobile assessment, Bob Maxwell pointed out that its purpose is to assess changes in the future use and characteristics of the automobile transportation system both in the near and in the long term. Since, said Mr. Maxwell, we are looking at the entire automobile transportation system, as well as at how it relates to the system of public transportation, our problem has been one of narrowing the scope of the study so that it can be managed within our time and budgetary constraints. To do this, we are focusing the study by concentrating on specific issues within the six areas of mobility, energy, safety, environment, cost and capital, and materials.

Reporting on the progress of the study, Bob Maxwell pointed out that the staff, together with contract and panel assistance, is presently defining the issues to be examined by the major (Task 7) contractor. On the basis of these issues, the contractor will develop policy alternatives and evaluate their impacts under various future scenarios. Task 7 will be carried out in two phases, each of which will be approximately six months in length. Additional inputs will be integrated into the assessment after the first phase, so that the second phase will not only examine some issues in greater depth, but it will consider additional inputs from the other tasks. These tasks include a Government Policies Task to outline the Government's role in the automobile transportation system, a Foreign Experience Task to examine areas in which foreign experience in the area of transportation might be applicable to the United States, and a NSF study of the public's use and preferences with respect to automobiles, the factors affecting this use, and how these factors might operate to alter future preferences.

Describing the time frame of the study, Bob Maxwell pointed out that the staff, having just held an issues workshop attended by the panel members, members of the OTA staff, and the issues contractors, is presently completing the process of issue identification. The foreign experience contract with Harbridge House, he said, is well underway and we are presently receiving our first inputs from them. The National Science Foundation is about to award its contract and we are at about the same stage with Task 7, having completed our evaluations of the bidders. The first phase of the assessment is scheduled to be completed by the end of the year when an interim report will be issued. The final report should be completed by the end of 1978.

Commenting on the role of public participation in the assessment, Bob noted that the study has already benefited from one form of public participation, the inputs from the advisory panel. Representing many diverse and competing interests, he said, our panel serves an important public participation function. (Attached is a list of the members of the advisory panel.)

Asked to what extent the public participation program might be able to piggy back on the NSF study, Larry Jenney, a member of the automobile assessment staff, said that NSF would probably be willing to meet our needs so long as they do not interfere with their own objectives. Of special use to us, he said, will be the national survey to be conducted at the individual household level. Joe Coates interjected to note that, since NSF does not have any institutional objectives of its own, we should be very explicit and forceful in voicing our needs.

Beth Horvath and Barbara Balbiani outlined their plan, basically a networking technique, to identify the stakeholders in the automobile assessment. Beginning with an initial list of interested parties, they plan to continue to identify the public as they go along. Beth and Barbara distributed a list to the committee, outlining the kinds of people that they will initially contact. They have already spoken to some citizen groups, such as Environmental Action, and have received promises of lists of individuals concerned with transportation issues. Other groups, such as the American Lung Association, promise to review their own lists for interested parties, once they have seen some introductory material on the assessment.

Commenting on the proposed technique, Joe Coates suggested that, many groups would not be overlooked, if the networking technique were complemented with a more systematic approach. Other members of the committee suggested classes of people who should also be considered. They include:

- o The Urban Coalition
- o heritage groups and historical societies
- o the elderly and the handicapped
- o rural coalitions
- o federal, state and local authorities such as state highway authorities, law enforcement agencies, toll authorities, and park officials.
- o quasi-governmental stakeholders, such as the national academy
- o university groups
- o Car and Driver

A more systematic approach would also provide a basis for limiting the number of stakeholders if, for some purposes, that is necessary. Chuck Wixom suggested that another way of mapping out stakeholders is to match people with the goals of the public participation program.

The suggestion of using local radio stations as an arena for conducting workshops provoked a discussion of the relationship between the budget and the design of public participation projects. After some discussion, it was agreed that the program for public participation in the automobile assessment should initially be designed irrespective of budgetary considerations.

Since, as Beth and Barbara discovered, it is necessary to have some literature describing the assessment as early as the stage of party identification, they will draw up a draft letter to be sent to interested groups. This letter will be reviewed at the next meeting of the Committee, to be held on Wednesday, April 6th at 3 O'clock.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:30 P.M.

January, 1977

Automobile Assessment Advisory Panel
and Affiliations

Dr. William G. Agnew	Technical Director, General Motors Research Laboratories
Mr. Leo Blatz	Executive Officer, Exxon Corporation
Professor Anne P. Carter	Department of Economics, Brandeis University
Dr. B. J. Campbell, Chairman	Director, Highway Safety Research Center
Dr. Frank W. Davis, Jr.	Transportation Center, University of Tennessee
Mr. Clarence Ditlow	Director, Center for Auto Safety
Dr. Lamont Eltinge	Director of Research, Eaton Corporation Research Center
Mr. Norman Emerson	Executive Assistant to the Mayor City of Los Angeles
Mr. Kent Joscelyn	Highway Safety Research Institute University of Michigan
Mr. Joshua Menkes	Director, Division of Exploratory Research and Systems Analysis, National Science Foundation
Mr. Wilfred Owen	The Brookings Institution
Ms. Angela Rooney	Upper Northeast Coordination Council
Mr. Richard Shackson	Director of the Office of Environmental Research, Ford Motor Company
Mr. Howard Young	United Auto Workers

To: Public Participation Committee
From: Emilia Govan
Re: Agenda for meeting of Wednesday, April 6 (3 P.M.)

Continuing our step-by-step approach to planning a public participation program, with emphasis on the auto assessment, I would like to suggest that our next meeting focus on the preparation of a brochure (or whatever type of informational material the auto staff wishes to prepare). Enclosed for your information is the brochure used by the Oceans Program. As you read through the brochure (ignoring the questionnaire for now), please ask yourselves these questions:

- Does the brochure contain the right kind of information to help citizens understand the function of OTA, the scope of the particular assessment and its relation to the congressional process, the technologies involved, and the rationale for involving the public? Is there too much or too little information? How effective is the format?
- Note that the brochure does not discuss potential impacts, issues or alternatives. That was a deliberate decision on the part of the Oceans Program for reasons which I will explain at the meeting. Thinking in terms of the auto assessment, should this additional type of information be included? In what form? Should it be presented in addition to or in lieu of portions of the Oceans brochure?

The discussion will be limited to the content and format of a brochure. The mechanics of preparing the final product and distributing it to potential participants will be taken up at the following meeting.

Think in terms of objectives of an informational brochure. Why would the auto assessment want to, or need to, prepare a brochure -- what purpose would it serve for whom? Who makes up the audience for this type of brochure? Can we accommodate the information needs of the various types of publics and audiences in one brochure? Generally, how wide a distribution would be envisioned?

If any of you wish to write up a memo in response to these questions, please do so and distribute through Linda Garcia before the meeting. Thank you.

OTA COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Summary of the Meeting, April 15, 1977.

Present: Barbara Balbiani, Joe Coates, Dan De Simone, Linda Garcia, Emilia Govan, Elizabeth Horvath, Larry Jenney, Tom Jennings, Robert Maxwell, Chuck Wixom.

The April 15th meeting of the Committee on Public Participation was held in the Director's room in the old immigration building. Presiding, Emilia Govan opened the meeting at 3:07. The subject on the agenda was how, after having been identified, stakeholders might best be organized to contribute to an assessment. As it became clear that most committee members anticipate using workshops as one channel for public participation, the focus of the discussion shifted to a consideration of the following questions:

- o Should workshops comprise homogeneous or heterogeneous groups?
- o What should be the primary objective for holding a workshop, or workshops?
- o In the light of the objectives, what should be the output of a workshop, and what form should the final product take?
- o Given financial limitations on the number of workshops that can be held, should workshops, in fact, be relied upon as the principle mechanism for conducting an outreach program?

Larry Jenney summarized what are, in his view, the major advantages and disadvantages of organizing workshops on the basis of common or diverse interests. Although heterogeneous groups, he said, might provide a microcosm of the real world, they tend to be unruly and unproductive. If we organize homogeneous workshops, on the other hand, we will have an opportunity to explore the participants' views in greater depth.

Joe Coates disagreed. If, he said, we accept the premise that the purpose of conducting workshops is to lend credibility to the assessment, then we will want to have a broad spectrum of opinions represented. Carrying the discussion further, he suggested that workshop participants, responding to a preliminary informational document prepared by the OTA staff, generate opinions and views that should be incorporated or reflected in a brochure used to describe the assessment to the general public.

Robert Maxwell agreed that since the purpose of the workshop is to provide credibility for the assessment, its membership should be broad based. He disagreed, however, with respect to the output of the workshop and the extent to which participants views must be incorporated

in the assessment. He had hoped that the brochure would be completed in time to serve as the basis for discussion at the workshop. He had, moreover, anticipated holding additional workshops in selected geographical areas, representing distinct transportation needs.

Reemphasizing that the purpose of the workshops is to provide credibility, Joe Coates questioned whether, given the limited budget, enough workshops can be held to meet this objective. It may be, he said, that, for the automobile assessment, workshops are not the best mechanism for conducting an outreach program.

Elizabeth Horvath pointed out that she hopes to keep costs down by piggybacking, whenever possible, on other programs.

Noting that the purpose of an initial workshop may differ from that of subsequent workshops to be held in limited number of geographic areas, Linda Garcia suggested that they be considered separately.

Emilia Govan agreed. The most important thing in developing a public participation program, she said, is to keep it flexible. In the Oceans assessment, we had the best results when we proceeded one step at a time.

After discussing possible target dates for an automobile assessment workshop, the meeting was adjourned at 4:20.

The next meeting of the Committee on Public Participation will be held on April 27th, in the Director's conference room, at 3 o'clock. Members and participants should be prepared to discuss the questions:

- o What can you get from a workshop format that you can't get from other formats of participation?
- o What is the best means of preparing for, and following up on, a public participation workshop?
- o In what ways are workshops useful in fulfilling the objectives of a public participation program?

In preparing for the meeting, it might be useful to review Barry Barrington's memo, Joe Coates' paper, and Emilia's letter of invitation.