

RECOMMENDATION At June 27 IRIS Meeting

Continue practice of holding an “Open Forum” session at the end of each Bimonthly Stakeholder meeting but expand its utility by soliciting topics for discussion and incorporating on the agenda.

Stakeholders should be encouraged to identify topics for inclusion on the agenda ideally 4-6 weeks prior to the next meeting. EPA can then decide whether appropriate to add the topic to the agenda for the next meeting or perhaps for the subsequent meeting.

The agency would use its discretion to decide the amount of time worth allocating to a specific topic; at the same time in my view, stakeholders should expect that no more than 15-30 mins (if that) would be spent on these Stakeholder initiated topics.

This could be accomplished by EPA acknowledging receptiveness to generic IRIS topics as well as chemical specific issues for substances not presently on the agenda. Possible specific topics could include:

- Preliminary thoughts on Scoping/problem formulation for early stage chemicals
- Research plans/ideas on specific compounds
- New research findings etc.
- Ideas/experts to consider at one of the upcoming chemical specific sessions (which would be even more useful if EPA were to provide its schedule)

EPA may decide that requested topics do not merit being discussed at a public meeting and in no way is this suggestion intended to supplant the current process.

Advantages:

This suggestion is intended to provide a public opportunity for EPA and stakeholder interaction that should in the long run accelerate the process and throughput on issues.

This interaction could lead EPA to decide to accelerate its schedule for specific chemicals or might cause EPA to decide to defer addressing a particular compound to a later date.

This suggestion is not intended to foreclose impromptu ad hoc topics from being raised. At the same time, if Stakeholders take the time to identify topics in advance and EPA incorporates on the agenda, this would hopefully allow for more focused constructive discussion on defined topics and increase the chance of getting the right people to participate from EPA and others.