

Radon Stakeholder Consensus Building Dialogue Group Protocols

I. Goals

The Goals of the Radon Stakeholder Dialogue are to expand our capacity as a thoughtful group of cooperating and mutually dependent participants to increase public awareness, testing and mitigation of existing homes, and radon-resistant construction of new homes so that we will achieve, or even exceed, our national goals. To that end, we have designed this Dialogue to:

- To increase mutual understanding among groups and members of the Radon community regarding their respective roles and responsibilities, capacities and limitations, and interests and concerns.
- To seek increased collaboration, participation and engaged decision-making among all interested groups on a range of issues affecting the radon community, and to develop new decisions and agreements on these issues that will increase and improve national radon awareness, testing, and mitigation.
- To improve relationships, trust, and protocols of communication within and between groups and sectors working on radon.

II. Participation

The Dialogue group consists of the following categories of stakeholders and organizations:

- American Association of Radon Scientists and Technologists (AARST)
- AARST Consortium on National Radon Standards
- ASTM International
- Conference of Radiation Control Program Directors (CRCPD)
- National Environmental Health Association - National Radon Proficiency Program (NEHA-NRPP)
- National Radon Safety Board (NRSB)*
- State Radon Contacts
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

Each group will be represented by a determined number of individuals, dependent upon the size of the organization, the diversity of the members, and the range of interests and viewpoints to be represented. Representatives represent their organizations and constituencies, not just themselves and their

* NRSB has declined to participate.

own particular interests, within their capacity. Representatives were also selected to meet the following criteria:

- willingness and interest in attending all meetings and participating actively in discussions;
- capacity to represent and articulate the interests and concerns of the stakeholders they represent, seek input from those they represent, and keep those people informed about the discussions and proceedings of the Dialogue, and;
- willingness to engage in respectful and constructive dialogue with other stakeholder group representatives, and seek creative resolutions of differences that meet the interests of their own and other groups.

Representatives have been self-selected by the groups of stakeholders they represent, based on the criteria above and the recommended numbers, through a nomination by organizational or group leadership. Group members will be informed of the nominations and invited to share comments or concerns if they feel that their interests and concerns will not be represented by the nominated individuals for their stakeholder group.

Additional members may join the Dialogue at a later time, based on need. Any requests for membership shall be approved by consensus of the group under such conditions as may be established at the time.

Other organizations or individuals may be invited to participate in Dialogue meetings or smaller working group meetings, as needed and decided by the group.

III. Decision Making

- A. The Stakeholder Group will operate by consensus, meaning that there may be no dissent by any representative in order for the Group to be considered to have achieved consensus on final process and substantive agreements. Thus, no minority of representative can be outvoted. Consensus means that one can live with the agreement or approach, even if elements of that final agreement are not ideal.
- B. Decisions made by the group as a whole will require consensus. Other decisions requiring organizational changes will require approval from constituencies. For example, For CRCPD, many decisions would require a vote from the voting members of CRCPD. State representatives can not make agreements that bind other states. Representatives should be clear about their authority with their constituents. Authorization for decisions can be determined on a case by case basis. The group may need to come back with authority after getting a vote.

- C. Representatives should not block or withhold consensus unless they have serious reservations with the approach or solution that is proposed for consensus. Absence will be equivalent to not dissenting. If representatives disagree with the approach or solution proposed, they should make every effort to offer an alternative satisfactory to all members. All consensus agreements reached during the negotiations are assumed to be tentative agreements until representatives of the group agree to make them final agreements, which may involve approval by stakeholder organizations.
- D. If the Group cannot reach consensus, they agree to document the majority and minority viewpoints, clarify the points of disagreement, present options on how the disagreements might be resolved, and move forward. If there is overall dissent from one individual, the decision cannot be named as a consensus, but the group can still move forward with recommendations and even commitments that do not include the dissenting party.

IV. Agreement

- A. The goal of the Group is to develop a set of Consensus Agreements on issues of primary importance to the Radon community. Any such agreements will be recognized by all parties as the consensus of the groups involved, and will be disseminated, supported, implemented and honored by all participating parties.
- B. Should consensus be reached, EPA agrees to disseminate and post appropriate agreements on their website and in other public documents, and use them as the basis of any recommendations and actions on these topics. All parties will be held accountable for their commitments from this process. As opinion leaders, they will commit to advocate for any decisions made by the group.
- C. Any final consensus summaries should be distributed to all of the constituents within the radon community or those with a particular interest in the matters at hand.

V. Safeguards for Representatives on the Committee

- A. All representatives must act in good faith in all aspects of these negotiations.
- B. Contact with the press shall generally be limited to discussions of the overall objectives and progress of the Dialogue, along with statements for the press approved by the Group.
- C. In communication to the press and to constituent groups, representatives in the Group will not attribute statements to others involved in the Group nor attempt to speak on behalf of the Group.

- D. Draft documents and agreements will not be circulated outside of that representative's organization or constituency and such drafts will not be released to the press, media, or others, or used in any other forums such as conferences, summits, or hearings, until the drafts are considered final (see decisionmaking above).

VI. Roles and Responsibilities of Representatives

- A. In order to facilitate an open and collaborative discussion, the participants in this dialogue agree to abide by the following ground rules:
- Participants will make every effort to attend all of the scheduled meetings, and arrive at the meetings prepared to discuss the issues on the agenda, having reviewed the documents distributed in advance.
 - Participants will communicate with the group candidly and respectfully about their interests and concerns, and listen carefully and openly to the interests and concerns of others.
 - Participants will seek understanding rather than assuming motives, attributes, and assumptions of others.
 - Each person is encouraged to generate options and ideas without fear of commitment.
 - Each person will make every effort to stay on track with the agenda and to move the deliberations forward. Each person will avoid grandstanding (extended comments and questions) in order to allow everyone a fair chance to speak and to contribute.
 - Participants will communicate respectfully. Only one person will speak at a time as called upon by the facilitator. Participants will refrain from personal attacks. Each person will express his or her own views rather than speaking for others at the table.
 - Where possible, each person should seek to speak not only their own views, but also for the constituent groups they represent.
 - All participants will strive throughout the process to bridge gaps in understanding, to seek creative resolution of differences, and to pursue the goal of achieving consensus on the content of the topics under discussion.
- B. Responsibilities to constituents

- Each group should figure out what is most comfortable in terms of finding ways to communicate and represent their constituents. State representatives will work out a structure for ensuring that other states are kept apprised of the dialogue proceedings and have an opportunity to provide their input and feedback.
- Each participant agrees to explain and interpret the process and its proposed outcomes to his/her constituents.
- Inform and educate their constituents about the issues and options being addressed by the Dialogue group, as well as any recommendations that emerge from the group.
- Seek the input and advice of other people on the issues, options, and recommendations being considered by the Group.
- *The Group may want to develop a public communication and participation plan to further clarify how these provisions will be accomplished.*

VII, Communication Protocol between meetings

Group members and CBI will seek to utilize appropriate communication channels for key issues and discussion outside of regular group meetings. The goal is to provide open, transparent, and efficient communication. Specifically:

- CBI and stakeholders will make contact with identified organizational leads to set up prospective meeting dates.
- In order to follow up on key tasks and responsibilities, CBI and stakeholders will communicate directly with the parties responsible for those tasks.
- If there is uncertainty about who should be contacted or about how to maintain communication, the whole working group will be notified in order to clarify appropriate protocol.

VII. Dialogue Facilitation

A. Dialogue facilitation will be provided by Stacie Nicole Smith (and Merrick Hoben), of the Consensus Building Institute. The facilitators will be responsible for:

- helping to develop and refine the process so that it runs smoothly and effectively
- ensuring compliance with the ground rules

- identifying and synthesizing points of agreement and disagreement
 - drafting meeting agendas, and documenting and distributing to participants draft and final summaries, and
 - helping the parties resolve their differences and achieve consensus on the issues to be addressed.
- B. The facilitators will be available to consult confidentially with Dialogue participants during or between meetings.
- C. The facilitator will abide by the Ethical Standards of the Association for Conflict Resolution (ACR).
- D. Summaries of Dialogue meetings will be provided by the facilitator and, after review and approval by the Group, will be made available to the public. All participants should provide comments on the draft meeting summary before it is finalized and circulated. The meeting summary will not be a published document or a press release.
- E. Representatives are expected to share these summaries with their constituents between meetings, to inform them of process and solicit their feedback. Those who wish to include statements in the summaries may so request. The summaries will identify points of tentative agreement and final agreement. If points of discussion or disagreement are included in the summary, it will be without attribution. The meeting summary will not attribute names to specific comments. Very sensitive topics may be omitted from the meeting summary upon request.

VII. Transparency Clause

In the spirit of transparency, CBI will inform all Radon Dialogue Working Group members regarding any CBI radon-related financial and / or contractual relationships outside of regular working group meetings.