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SUBJECT: Key Outcomes from October 2, 1996 Assurances Work Group Meeting

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This memo provides my observations of the October 2 meeting and procedural recommendations to address issues raised at the meeting. Feel free to contact me with questions or comments regarding this memo.

MEETING PROCESS OVERVIEW

As with the first Work Group meeting, the second meeting was run in an orderly fashion, given the fact that nearly 55 people attended. People had ample opportunities to express their views, and just a few did not speak through the Chair. There was **active participation** during the discussion on the Needs/Objectives paper; around 21 people, including Work Group members, spoke. At least one person from each of the following major stakeholder groups spoke up: Business and Labor, Mountain Counties/Watershed Groups, Urban and Agricultural Water Users, Environmental, State and Federal Agencies.

The number of people who attended underscores the importance of the assurances issue and the need to **tighten up accountability** to the process. Due to importance of the issue, the meetings will likely continue to attract more individuals, including those new to the CALFED Program.

Recommendations: To ensure people consistently **speak through the Chair**, Hap may want to ask people to raise their hands, keep track of their names, and call on them in the order they raise their hands.

To begin tightening up accountability, I suggest we ask people to clearly **state whether they are speaking for an organization or constituency**. This will also reinforce the introductions made at the beginning of the meeting. I strongly recommend that before they speak they carry on an internal conversation with their group. This recommendation directly relates to the next point.

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FORMALIZING THE FEEDBACK LOOP

Hap's request for participants to review **Work Group reports and papers with their constituents** was a good first step towards hearing and understanding stakeholder concerns. Gary Bobker, in mentioning the fast pace of the CALFED process, reminded the Group to allow enough time for participant and constituent review. In addition, B. J. Miller again raised his preference for closing off the comment/input period for stating concerns. Although he received little support for his position, he does raise a valid point regarding the timing of people's input.

Recommendation: As I expressed at the meeting, the loop can be completed by asking the participants to **report their constituent feedback**. This feedback can occur in at least two ways: either during a time set aside for this purpose or in the context of discussing agenda items. If the latter is preferred, a **question** specifically requesting constituent comments may be asked on the agenda.

Gary Bobker's comment is well taken. Meeting attendees must have **enough lead time** before meetings to review materials, brief their constituents, and then come forward with a response that reflects the organization or constituency view. This will become more appropriate and necessary as the Group moves closer to developing the assurances.

Formalizing the feedback loop will partially address B. J.'s issue regarding a constituency **coming to the process late with a concern**.

CLARITY OF WORK GROUP MISSION AND DEFINITION OF TERMS

A good portion of the meeting (about an hour) was taken up with discussing the **Work Group's purpose and mission**. More time was spent discussing the **definition of qualifying terms** such as "significant". The discussion although not surprising, given the level of interest in the Group's activities, highlights the need to be clear and to repeat the basic tenets of the group.

Recommendations: Tom Hagler's suggestion to include the mission and explanation that the Group's purpose is to recommend assurances for successful implementation of the preferred solution in a cover letter for the upcoming meeting packet is a good way to reinforce the Group's purpose. **A reminder at the beginning of each meeting** (for the benefit of new attendees, at a minimum) may help deflect lengthy discussion on the topic. Another option is to include a **one page mission and purpose statement** in the packets of each new attendee.

White papers and other reports issued for the Group should contain a **definitions section** to explain terms that are used by the CALFED Program.

AGENCY AND PUBLIC CONCERNS AND NEEDS

The first page of the Needs/Objectives paper (October 17, 1996 draft) states that " 'assurances' are measures designed to develop confidence among the public, stakeholder groups, the legislature, and state and federal agencies that the long term solution will be implemented as agreed." However, the paper and the October 2 discussion focussed on

private stakeholder concerns and needs. At the post Work Group meeting debrief on 10/2 we discussed this issue extensively and concluded that many agency and public concerns are similar to those expressed by private stakeholders and that other agency concerns are addressed in the draft alternative components. I am concerned that not explaining this situation will contribute to the Work Group omitting important considerations, exacerbate the perception of CALFED decisions being made in a "black box", and allow issues to crop up later than desired in Work Group deliberations.

Recommendation: Explain that agency and public concerns are addressed in the stakeholder list of concerns and/or in the Program components. Also, check in with the agencies at PCT, CALFED Management Team, or other agency meetings to ensure critical concerns are indeed being addressed by Work Group deliberations.

ADDRESSING THE FRAMING QUESTIONS LISTED ON THE AGENDA

Most of the questions on the agenda were answered, as least partially, by the participants. Therefore, I think they were helpful in framing the discussion and keeping it on track. During the Needs and Objectives discussion, reference was made to the questions. Most responses focussed on the first question and the first part of the second. People did not refer to the CALFED program objectives. The Group received feedback on the process and schedule; mainly that more time will be needed. We also received suggestions regarding the tools, methods of assurance, guidelines and principles.

Recommendation: At subsequent meetings, Mary or Hap might introduce or conclude an agenda item by specifically asking the questions, to help ensure focussed discussion and provide the needed detail from attendees to proceed with the tasks.

NEXT STEPS

For the next meeting we might want to pay special attention to 1) representation of different stakeholder groups, and making sure we hear from as many as are represented, 2) any questions or issues that could be addressed at the November Goals and Targets Workshop and BDAC meeting, and 3) providing definite deadlines for submittal of comments.