

Air Quality Management Work Group

Following the release of the National Research Council's (NRC) report titled "Air Quality Management in the United States," the Clean Air Act Advisory Committee (CAAAC) formed a work group to develop recommendations for improvements to the air quality management program. The charge to the Air Quality Management (AQM) Work Group was to evaluate the NRC's recommendations as well as other potential improvements, and develop recommendations for consideration by the CAAAC. The AQM Work Group is comprised of representatives from EPA, State and local agencies, Tribes, industry, and environmental and research organizations.

Under the AQM Work Group, two sub-groups have been formed to research and develop specific recommendations. They are the Policy and Planning Sub-group and the Science and Technology Sub-group. The Policy and Planning Sub-group is charged with examining and providing recommendations on short and long-term approaches for improving air quality management. This includes ways to:

- Develop a more integrated approach to air quality management;
- Assess the most appropriate roles for the different levels of government;
- Take action on a local, regional, and national level to improve the state implementation plan (SIP) process; and
- Address ecosystem protection in developing standards and control strategies.

The Science and Technology Sub-group is charged with evaluating issues and providing recommendations for improving the scientific and technological foundations of air quality management in the United States. In particular, this group will specifically examine ways to:

- Improve accountability and performance of air quality management in achieving environmental goals;
- Improve emissions inventories, refine meteorological data bases, enhance air quality models, and target information on control techniques for relevant industrial source categories;
- Support the integrated management of multiple pollutants; and
- Develop measures to define and assess multimedia and ecological impacts of multiple air pollutants.

Recommendations from the AQM Work Group are expected to include specific actions that could be taken by EPA in the short term (next 1 to 2 years) within the

existing statutory framework. The AQM Work Group also expects to address other issues that could potentially be implemented over a longer time period (beyond 2 years). Should the Work Group identify areas where legislative changes would be necessary to the existing Clean Air Act to remedy an issue, it would identify those potential areas to the CAAAC for consideration.

For further information on the NRC's report on "Air Quality Management in the United States," published in January 2004, visit <http://www.nap.edu/catalog/10728.html>. For hard copies, this report is available from the National Academies Press (NAP) <http://www.nap.edu/>.