



ABP Regulatory Review Working Group Consultation Meeting

**Session Notes
August 29th and 30th, 2007**

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INTRODUCTION

The Board of Directors of Alberta Beef Producers is reviewing its regulations with the option that the regulations be re-passed in their present form or in an amended form following the review. The review is scheduled to be completed by June 30, 2008. The structure, activities and operations of Alberta Beef Producers are governed by the *Marketing of Agricultural Products Act* and the following regulations enacted under that statute:

- Authorization Regulation A.R. 352/2003 - this regulation sets out the regulation making powers that have been given to ABP under section 26 of the Act.
- Plan Regulation A.R. 336/2004 - this regulation sets out the structure and procedure under which ABP is governed and carries on business.
- Cattle Marketing Regulation A.R. 204/09 - this is ABP's regulation under section 26 of the Act requiring producers to pay a service charge on the sale of cattle.

The first step in this review was consultation with a group of producers from various producer organizations (the Working Group). A list of the members of the Working Group is attached as Appendix II.

To start the review process seven topics from the three regulations were selected for discussion at the first Working Group meeting held on August 28 and 30, 2007. This document reports on the comments received from the members of the Working Group at this consultation meeting. A copy of the Consultation Document 1 reviewed by the Working Group is available from Alberta Beef Producers.

Topic 1: ABP Objectives, Purpose and Mandate

The first topic for discussion was the mandate of the commission as set out in section 7(1) of the Plan Regulation. Subsection (1) confirms that the primary mandate of the commission is to stimulate, increase or improve the production or marketing, or both of cattle and cattle products with subsection (2) listing eight areas in which the commission may initiate and carry out project or programs.

Topic 1: Emerging Themes

- Communication and marketing with consumers is working
- Communication and marketing to producers is not working
- ABP Plan is missing reference to being 'fiscally responsible'
- It would be usefulness and helpful to conduct some further research on alternative governance models and practices
- ABP cannot be everything for every one; the organization needs to narrow its focus

Topic 1: Discussion Summary

What Is Working?

- Government advocacy groups have worked . . . too well maybe!
- Good source of information

- Increased beef consumption
- Older animals going to market; BIC promotion of commercial beef
- Focus on research
- ABP has shown leadership in CCA; have had influence on Federal Government policies
- Portrays positive image of the industry to the public
- Objects are generally appropriate

What Is Not Working?

- As a Delegate, communication is excellent; however, once a person is 'out of the loop,' they lose touch; currently lacking adequate communication to the grassroots (however, this is a process issue and not one related to changes in the Plan)
- 7.2 (a):
 - We are an interdependent production system
 - ABP was created to represent beef producers and have meaningful impact; if we broaden the definition, it will water down that impact; packers aren't really interested in being involved; conflicting goals may make policy development difficult
 - This statement is too broad to be meaningful
 - Possible rewording: "to assist, educate, inform producers (delete reference to others in the value chain)"
 - This clause may have been helpful in creating CIC
- 7.2 (b): promotion and marketing
 - this point relates to the promotion of the product; ABP provides money to other organizations to conduct this work
 - doesn't currently include reference to retailers and wholesalers of beef; only collect check off on cattle so others should not be included
- 7.2 (c): promote industry as stewards of the land
- 7.2 (d): should be advocates for producers to the Government
 - wording is good
 - lobbying is based on voluntary membership
 - this object has not worked well in the past
 - could this object be deleted?
 - there are a variety of options we could explore here
 - MAPA is the legislative framework that allows ABP to exist
- 7.2 (e): refocus on identifying the research priorities, not actually conducting the research
 - Does ABP make a difference with respect to research?
 - ABP does not have the capital to conduct research
 - Should this be included as an object?
- 7.2 (f): should be advocates for producers to the Government
 - Suggest that 7.2 (f) could maybe be deleted or incorporated as a subset of 7.2 (c)
 - ABP cooperates with other organizations, not persons
 - "in the opinion of the Board" may not be needed and could be deleted
- 7.2 (h): may be inappropriately worded; perhaps it could be deleted as this is really someone else's responsibility
- 7.2 (g): what is the difference between 7.2 (a) and 7.2 (g)? Are both required?

Suggestions for Improvement

- Mandate is too broad (the Plan gets bogged down in details)
 - Reduce / simplify what we are doing
 - Refocus on 'identifying key priorities'
 - Avoid including 'lists' in the Plan
- Potentially missing elements (to consider adding to the Plan's objects):
 - Broaden mandate beyond Alberta (ABP spends money outside the province supporting national objectives)
 - Fiscal responsibility
 - Ownership of intellectual property; cost-benefit analysis needs to be undertaken; trademark "Alberta Beef"
 - Potential to offer services for fees; for example, collect levy for other organizations?
 - Leadership development (currently offer training for Zone chairs and delegates, media training, Strive workshops, funding of 4H)
 - Policy research; policy development
- Clarify the industry's impact
- Promote industry as 'steward of the land'

TOPIC 2: Regulation Making Powers and Service Charge

The second topic addressed the regulation making powers listed in section 26 of the *Marketing of Agricultural Products Act* that have been and could be granted to Alberta Beef Producers by Marketing Council.

Topic 2: Emerging Themes

- Administration of check-off is working well
- Money is well used by ABP at its discretion
- Mailing lists are not accurate or comprehensive enough to keep producers well informed
- Some are excluded from paying check off (e.g., exporters)
- Need procedures for accurately collecting contact information for mailing lists.
- The discussion on refundability needs to go to the broader membership.

Topic 2: Discussion Summary

What Is Working?

- Established system in place to collect check-off effectively
- Can use money for what they need; refer to 7.2 (d) and 7.2 (e)
- Service charge means we never run out of money!

What Is Not Working?

- Valid points on both sides of the argument for refundable versus non-refundable; we have gone through this debate in the past and the last vote was very close to a split:
 - Non-refundable means *predictable funding* for ABP as well as for our marketing organizations (but is this really true because each year a variable number of transactions occur and so we are faced with 'unpredictable funding levels' even with non-refundable check off)
 - "Never run out of money" is the best argument for making the check off refundable; we have no idea if our money has impact; however, studies suggest that we are experiencing about \$0.5 million in annual slippage
 - If refundable, members would feel empowered; provides a mechanism for members to disagree; offers a measure of accountability
 - Do we have 'democracy' working under the current arrangement?
 - Who else has refundability? Answer: Grains, bison, elk ...
 - For those that have refundability, refunds go up and down each year but tend not to be used as a performance measure; these groups experience less than 10% refunds annually and sometimes zero refunds
 - Refundability would require that ABP have all the producers' names
 - Refundability may increase administrative costs
 - Experience has suggested that more slippage may occur upfront when refundability is an option because producers don't pay the check off if they are expecting to ask for a refund later
 - Currently, no reasons need to be given when asking for a refund
 - Present system has been working relatively well so why focus on this at this time? Our efforts become counter-productive; we have more important things to focus on

- But why not take a 'market driven' approach for ABP itself?
 - Choice matters to people
 - A feeling of being able to influence also matters to people
 - Our industry changes so rapidly; therefore, we need a responsive organization
 - If we do our job well, producers will not ask for a refund
- Perhaps we should consider another form of governance
- Producer communication is not working well because the mailing lists are not accurate:
 - ABP could collect names; this would help when diseased cattle have been identified
 - Currently, dealers and auction markets that sell cattle don't provide producer names
 - Is there a different way to get names and addresses?
 - ABP has not yet exercised this power
 - It is helpful to know who is producing and who is selling
 - Are we afraid that "money will go away"
 - If we are serving the producers, we will not be afraid
 - Results matter
 - Money is one aspect
- Missing from current mandate: fiscal responsibility (and, therefore, accountability to producer)
- What about farmers from Saskatchewan working in Alberta?

Suggestions for Improvement

- Additional 'powers' to consider adding to the Plan:
 - 26. (a) General interest by the working group to investigate options further
 - If there is a desire to add 'production', then approval from Marketing Counsel is required
 - To communicate to producers; share information with other organizations?
 - Several drawbacks related to 'mandatory registration' were identified:
 - Need another staff person to collect and maintain lists?
 - Need to penalize those that don't register; maybe consider voluntary registration.
 - What will information be used for?
 - Is the 'cure' worse than the problem?
 - A 'voters' list is necessary to help with public relations
 - Don't need to know everyone's name in order to register them.
 - 26. (b) No interest to pursue at this time
 - 26. (c) Not required
 - 26. (d)(e)(f)(g) No interest to pursue at this time
 - 26. (h) investigate further

Topic 3: Producers, Eligible Producers and Representation

Alberta Beef Producers was established as a marketing commission at the request of producers. Every member of the commission is a producer or a representative of a producer if the producer is a corporation. The third topic dealt with the definition of producer and eligible producer in the Plan Regulation and the manner in which producers are represented, namely geographically and by industry sector.

Topic 3: Emerging Themes

- Definition of producers is good 'as is' in the Plan.
- Support for the democratic control and balances (i.e., one person has one vote).
- Not all sectors are properly represented.
- Need to rethink zoning structure to best fit the needs to the industry.
- Need greater diversity in membership and representation of all sectors in the value chain.
- Need to further investigate the 'skills based' board concept and how it might be applied.

Topic 3A (Producers and Eligible Producers): Discussion Summary

What Is Working?

- Gives everyone a voice (i.e., 'little' guy and 'big' guy).
- Most democratic form of government that there is.

What Is Not Working?

- Doesn't include packers, but:
 - Regulated product is "beef", not "cattle" (to clarify: regulated product is cattle and cattle products)
 - Not part of the definition (or the check-off)
- Adding diversity to Commission
 - Why would we want non-producers on our Board?
 - Can this diversity be accomplished in a different mechanism? E.g., Sitting on a committee?
- Has the honorarium gone up? If not, why would they want to sit on our Commission?
- Can we discuss definitions of other stakeholders?

Topic 3B (Geographic Representation): Discussion Summary

What Works?

- Objective – get representation from across the Province.
- Have the demographics changed since the last time we considered this point (further research may be required and helpful)
 - Number of producers and number of cattle in each zone?
 - How are the zones identified?
 - What is the objective behind the zone structure?
 - What would we do about zone boundaries if producers and cattle have moved?

- Don't we have more important things to focus on? Our issues transcend geography.
- Get rid of sub zones in Zone 9 (they can make this decision locally).
- Look at zone structure just to make sure we are not limiting the best people from participating; do we need 9 delegates from every zone?
- AB Milk changed its structure recently: now have delegates-at-large.
- Nine zones are too many:
 - This number may be ineffective
 - Maybe 3 -4 zones is adequate
 - Communication is electronic
 - Think about this after we determine size of board
 - FAA has 5 zones and 59 associations (one delegate for each)
- Cumbersome and costly to administer
 - Consider "no zones"
- Personally, I like knowing the people standing for election; therefore, I like the zones.
- Regional representation is good
 - I have no idea what 83 delegates do?
 - Too many? Just enough?
 - Make up committees that is independent of delegates
- Alternatives (to geographic representation):
 - Representative by sector, age, high profile names, or skills-based
 - Want more information about the alternatives
- Governance Board vs. Operating Board

Suggestions for Improvement

- ABP should be run more like a 'corporation'
 - Have someone on the board outside the industry
 - Provides a different perspective
 - Still have the voice of producers at the table
- We should be run more like a "corporation":
 - Have someone on our Board from outside the industry; provides a different perspective
 - Still have the voice of producer at the table
 - Perhaps consider a representation from another agricultural sector?
- Can we discuss definitions of other stakeholders?
- Further research as to whether demographics have changed.
- Review of how zones are identified and what is the objective behind the Zone structure needs to take place, to ensure that the best people are not being limited from participating.
- Need to get rid of the sub-zones.
- Government Board vs. Operating Board
- Regional representation alternatives:
 - High profile names
 - Sector
 - By age
 - Skills-based (need to find out more)
- Industry sector representation
 - Have adequate representation, but an adequate structure is lacking
 - Focus on purebred, cow-calf through a specific committee (i.e. structure)

- Need to leave specific interests at the door (e.g. feedlot)
- Opportunity to send delegates where we need them most (enable us to decide where delegates go).
- Purebred: may be time to look at this at the provincial level – CCA table previously.

Topic 3C (Industry Sector Representation): Discussion Summary

What is Working?

- Organization has made significant improvements in broadening its perspective.
- Enjoyed opportunity to be a delegate here (AB Milk) in order to share research, information.
- Election process, more than adequate opportunity for all sectors to be represented.
- Feeder represented through well by CFC.

What to Improve?

- Have adequate representation
- Not adequate means of representing purebred and cow/calf
 - Focus through specific Committee structure.
 - Need to have the means to focus on specific sectors.
- Need to leave specific interests at the door (e.g., Feed Lot); organize to the benefit of the whole industry, not just a specific sector.
- Opportunity to send delegates where we need them most (enable us to decide where delegates go)
- CIC structure is too restrictive; suggest we have one delegate on CIC and one on other committee.
- CBBC taken off CCA; purebred industry tends to be a national organization; at CCA, downloaded sectoral representation to the provinces. All sector have to be adequately engaged.
- Is there value to a pure bred committee on ABP

Topic 4: Rights of Eligible Producers and Delegates

The fourth topic looked at the rights eligible producers have to attend meetings, and stand for election as delegates, as well as the number, categories and rights of delegates. The role of zone delegates, producer association delegates, cattle feeder council delegates and cattle industry council delegates were reviewed.

Topic 4: Emerging Themes

- Process is working fine (no need for change).
- The 'checks and balances' of the democratic process are solid.
- Producers are not fairly represented at the annual meeting.
- We have a structure that seems to concentrate power.
- Too many delegates.
- Need greater communication/feedback for producers.
- Committees should be formed when needed, and should be disbanded or re-organized.
- Responsive board required.
- Consider removing reference to 'sub zones'.

Topic 4A: Discussion Summary

What Is Working?

- Process is working fine (implying no need for change)

What Is Not Working?

- Producers are not fairly represented at the annual meeting
 - In particular, resolutions passed by participants at the Zone meeting
 - Producer should be able to introduce and speak to the motion at the annual meeting without being invited
 - If we were starting from scratch, would this be the most effective way to represent the producers? Is there a simpler and better way to govern?
- We have a structure that seems to concentrate power
 - Producers feel "they are not being heard"
 - Not all resolutions passed at Zone meetings are considered at the floor of the annual meeting
 - How do we 'de-concentrate' this power?
- "Do you have anything to say worth hearing?"
 - this is not disrespect that resolutions don't get to the floor; they are viewed as not appropriate
 - We need to maintain a system that is efficient
 - Put your name in for election; get involved
 - Delegates have a responsibility to follow up with producers to let them know what happened to their resolutions, but this communication is an operational issue; and delegates need to know their responsibilities
- Voter turnout has been low and the reasons are unknown
 - We get 'bad' resolutions (due to small turnouts at meetings)
- Delegates become paid employees of the organization; being a Director does not make you an employee of the organization – so which is it??

- Producer association delegate
 - Has no vote at Zone meeting (doesn't have vote because they are not elected by the members/producers from the Zone)
 - In some cases, a person must be elected 3 times in order to have the right to vote
- Consider removing reference to 'Sub Zones'
- How did we arrive at 7 delegates per Zone?
 - Initially, 10 delegates per Zone (initially 5 with a one year term and 5 with two year term in order to establish rotation; decreased to 7 when other groups were added as delegates)

Topic 4B (Number and Rights of Delegates): Discussion Summary

What Is Not Working? Suggestions for Improvement

- Too many delegates and committees; too cumbersome and costly
- What percentage of budget is the cost for the annual meeting?
 - Relate this cost to the value derived
 - Significant opportunities for communication (time for policy debate and exchange of information)
 - A larger cost is incorporating all delegates into Committee work; some delegates don't have the expertise or skills for the work they are assigned; get the right people on the Committees (delegates should know people in their Zone that they can draw from to serve on these Committees)
 - Does every delegate need to sit on a Committee? Maybe just attend annual meeting
- How about one delegate per Zone sit on the Board?
 - Become a governance board
 - Seek out skills-based (experts)
- Natural formation of a Committee: Based on interest and expertise
- AGM's should be for producers (idea)
 - Not delegates
 - Draws again from grassroots
 - Producers have the right to come today but they aren't invited
 - Resolutions are pre-packaged to topic which gives guidance to a vision or a direction
- Delegates have been elected
- Prefer to have elected delegates make decisions (due to Special Interest groups)
- How big is our governance board now? (19)
- All resolutions from Zones were clustered and circulated to delegates before meeting
- Fall meeting process is cumbersome
- Need to be prescriptive (i.e., clear) regarding numbers
- The whole 'delegate process, director, committees' is very time consuming
- Cattle feeders don't feel heard and want more input; structure is not as effective as it could be; time is limited and it is a time consuming process to get elected to the Board of Directors; there are challenges to involvement
- Term of Office:
 - Alberta Milk has three-year terms; can sit for two terms
 - Two-year terms gives better recall ability

TOPIC 5: Board of Directors and the Executive

The Board of Directors and the executive was the subject of the fifth topic under review. The Working Group looked at the number of directors (9 zone directors, 5 directors at large, 3 cattle feeder council and 2 cattle industry council directors) and the composition and role of the executive.

Topic 5: Emerging Themes

- Election process is working well.
- 19 board members seems to be working; reduce the number of board members.
- Too many delegates.
- There appears to be a communication gap among delegates and members.
- It would be better to have fewer zones, which would result in fewer delegates.
- Emphasize a skill based board.

Topic 5: Discussion Summary

What Is Working?

- Having cattle feeders and CIC – brings broader, valuable perspective to Board
 - Broader than just cow / calf perspective.
- Appropriate that Executive is chosen from among the Board
- Need 4 people on Executive to help resolve deadlocks

What Is Not Working? Suggestions for Improvement

- 19 directors may be too many
 - Trend in board governance is a board of 8 to 12. What is the “right” number?
 - Role is to set policy but it becomes difficult to achieve consensus (be heard and understood) when the group is large.
- Elected process still appropriate?
 - If less than 19, then we need a different way to elect them (e.g., fewer zones? Fewer zone directors?).
- Believe in a lean, mean, Board that defines framework (i.e., policy).
- Smaller number of zones then opens us up to:
 - Smaller Board
 - A need to focus on building a skills-based board
- Executive:
 - Trend is not to have an Executive Committee; new approach is distributed responsibility and better engagement of all directors in all discussions and decisions
 - Not such ‘difficult’ tasks:
 - Set agenda and background information
 - Nothing decided without policy
 - Created to promote efficiencies
 - Review and set CEO salary but this information is still available to rest of the Board members if they ask for it.
- An ‘issues-focused’ board engages the directors to be more active
- Ideas:
 - Reduce number of zones to 4
 - Reduce other directors

- 3 at large
 - 1 for each council
- reduce number of committees from 5 to 3
 - Two Standing Committees: Nomination/Election, and Finance/Audit
 - The remainder be Ad Hoc / Task-based Committees
- Are our current committees performing staff roles?
- This is an area where ABP needs an overhaul.
 - Maybe not list Committees
 - Does every delegate need to sit on a Committee?
 - Can we bring on outside experts onto Committees?
 - We have expert staff; we get into conflict with delegates / staff.
 - When on a committee, you are a worker
- Important to continue to involve CIC in some way.
 - Standing committee or ad hoc committee?
 - Originally embedded in Plan in order to keep it in existence.
- Think CFC and CIC remain in the Plan at this time.
 - May be the stabilizing factors through a period of change.
- At AB Milk, they have many more Committees with smaller, more focused tasks.
 - Seems to work well.

Topic 6: Committees

The sixth topic looked at the existing committee structure with two committees, namely the Cattle Feeder Council and the Cattle Industry Council, being established by the Plan Regulation and the remaining 5 committees, namely, Promotion, Producer Liaison, Public Affairs, Government Affairs and Technical, being established by the Board of Directors.

Topic 6: Emerging Themes

- CFC and CIC are necessary; although there may be overlap between CFC and CIC
- Overhaul the committee structure.
 - Too many committees!
 - Don't list all the committees in the Plan.
 - Focus the tasks of committees.
 - Use more ad hoc committees to address issues and then disband.

Topic 6: Discussion Summary

Conducted as part of Topic 5 above.

TOPIC 7: Meetings

The last topic looked at the number and purpose of the meetings being held, both as required by the Plan Regulation and as established by the Executive, the Board of Directors and the Committees.

Topic 7: Emerging Themes

- Annual meeting is working.
- Meetings at the call of the chair.
- Too many meetings!
- Relieve agendas by discussing items by conference calls, or other communication mechanisms.
- Use technology such as conference calls and video conferencing for interim meetings.

Topic 7: Discussion Summary

What Is Working?

- Meetings, as necessary, at the call of the Chairs.

What Is Not Working? Suggestions for Improvement

- Relieve agendas by discussing items by conference calls.
- The north east has a tough time participating in meetings because it is so time consuming to attend
- Examine alternative means for hosting meetings.
- Size of Committees
 - Time consuming
- Eliminate reference to 'sub zone'.
- We really have one meeting per year:
 - Delegate meeting several months later
 - Producer hears 12 months later
 - Producer needs to hear the resolution of issues sooner
 - Half as many director meetings / twice as many producer meetings
- "Call us any time"
- Disengagement (silent majority)
 - What is meaningful "input"? If ABP is consumed by what it is *doing* rather than *listening* to what producers' needs are then producers input will never be considered in a meaningful way; this is an operational issue that could be addressed by providing some training for zone directors and delegates.
- Quorum in zones
 - "5" → means that the delegates don't need producers vote at all; (issues)
 - 7 + 8 → vote for delegate body

Review of Meeting Process: Discussion Summary

What Went Well Today?

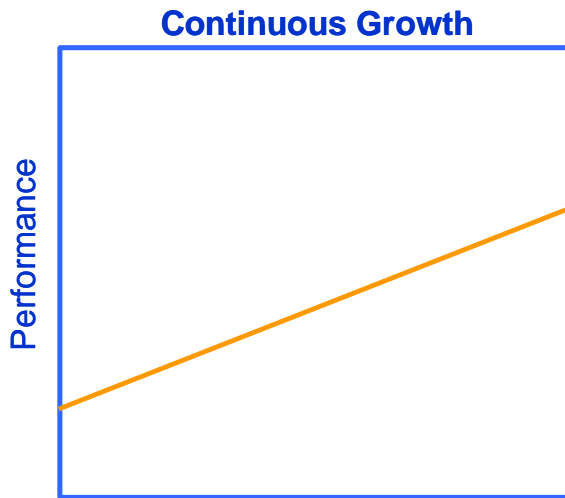
- Constructive dialogue.
- Good diversity of the industry.
- Milk!!
- Size of the meeting.
- Got through a lot of material.
- Challenged us to think a little bit different about some issues.
- Safe to express passionately different opinions.
- Loves getting into opinions.

Suggestions for Improvement

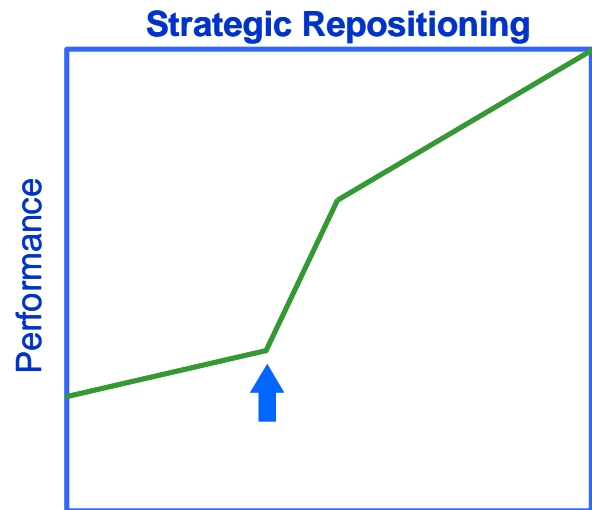
- Conduct meeting in winter.
- Involve more independent producers.
- Difficult to make comments (I learned a lot!)
- Go home and phone 5 people; tell them what we are doing and get their input.

Continuous Improvement versus Step-change Transformation

Participants were asked to identify what approach would they like to see ABP take towards renewing its Plan. Participants voted as follows:



**Doing the Same Things Better
Doing More of the Same Thing**



Doing Different Things

Continuous Improvement: 5
Step-change Transformation: 16
Combination of the two: 1
No vote: 1

APPENDIX I

Individual Feedback

Topic 1: ABP Objectives, Purpose and Mandate

Topic 1: Individual Feedback (23 responses)

What Is Working?

- 7.1 works
- 7.2 (a) (d)
- 7.2 (c): I think we have become a very credible voice for the industry
- 7.2 (g): we do a good job communicating to consumers (that beef is good)
- Government advocacy has been effective
- Communication with producers may be too effective, i.e., tends to try to convince producers that policies are 'correct'
- Producers should be communicating with the Board
- 7.2 (a, d, f, g) are working; (c) – minor role
- General structure of ABP
- Bottom-up electoral process
- Funding security
- General promotion of the cattle industry is OK
- Positive image put out for the general public
- General public awareness and knowledge to the beef business; what we do as producers and industry as a whole
- Promotion working OK as far as awareness goes; has this impacted beef consumption?
- Research function has been somewhat lacking in focus (operational concern) but ABP is one of several groups/agencies involved in cattle research
- The objects are generally appropriate and are implemented with varying degrees of success
- Well funded and therefore able to respond quickly to big issues like countervail or trade disruptions (this takes a lot of money)
- Able to attract top quality staff
- Well respected by Government and media
- Has a clear policy setting procedure
- Is able to finance and oversee marketing arms
- Is democratically accountable
- Mandate is broad to allow ABP flexibility to work/be involved with most aspects of the beef industry; some things not included (e.g., owning / operating a packing plant)
- Includes producers, dealers, and processors and others; allows others to participate at some level (maybe not as elected directors, but participate nonetheless)
- 7.1 working
- 7.2 (a-f and h) working
- The fact that we have this organization to speak for industry
- A better relationship with the Government
- The promotion of Alberta beef
- Communicating with consumer

- 7.2 (c) promote cattle industry
- 7.2 (d) advising government of concerns
- 7.2 (f) support and cooperation with other persons and government
- 7.2 (g) communicating with producers, dealers and others
- Education and promotion
- Research support is a priority
- Working well with government departments
- 7.2 (a) is a packer a processor?
- 7.2 (b) BIC promoting foodservice
- 7.2 (c) OK
- 7.2 (d) OK
- 7.2 (e) OK
- BIC
- Promotion of industry is excellent
- 7.2 (d) is good as is
- The expansion of the programs to stimulate marketing
- The open process in which ABP works
- Communication are very open
- High industry with various sectors
- All facets of industry
- Have made strides in previous years recently but not without battles
- Strategies haven't been clearly defined
- ABP does promote beef well in export markets but falls short on domestic promotion
- 7.2 (b) expanding market awareness and demand of cattle within Alberta
- 7.2 (g) ABP handbook available on issues of the Commission
- 7.2 (h) not the mandate of the Commission; this is CFIA or other bodies
- Some consumer education
- Could be a leader in these areas but have taken mandate much further than I think they should
- Government advocacy
- Promotion of the cattle industry as a whole
- 7.1 working well
- 7.2 (a) some what limited
- 7.2 (b) working well
- 7.2 (c) promoting works well
- 7.2 (d) working extremely well
- 7.2 (e) working well

What Is Not Working?

- 7.2 (e) we should not be doing research
- 7.2 (h) have input
- 7.2 (g) I wouldn't worry as much about producers; I think they already get all the information they need
- I questions whether money and effort spent on opening international markets has been effective; we put in a large effort with very few tangible results
- Domestic promotion is questionable also
- 7.2 (b, e)
- Very board mandate; we play a minor role; packing industry and retailers are by far the biggest players
- 7.2 (h) market place will decide (government, health, regulation)

- Lack of knowledge about industry by delegates
- Failure to communicate complex issues to producers
- Inability to maintain commitment to one organization
- Though I agree with most of the points in ‘mandate of the Commission’ I believe that the segmentation of the industry makes consensus or success in many of these areas (in the mandate) difficult to achieve
- Difficult to engage dedicated people from the production sector given breadth of mandate
- Gaining producers awareness of the support from ABP, i.e., production and marketing
- The combination of a levy authorized by provincial statute (indeed mandated) with the object of advising governments on matters concerning the cattle industry is at best a conflict of interest
- In the past there has not always been support and cooperation with other persons / governments; perhaps the board were of the opinion it would not further the purposes of the Plan or the objects of the Commission
- 7.2 (h) establishing quality standards are not within the legal scope of ABP’s responsibility
- 7.2 (e) should include research on issues of competitiveness
- Potential missing objects: policy development and the responsibility to manage the check off funds
- Very difficult to maintain current mailing list
- Difficult to engage all producers (e.g., turnout at fall meetings is poor)
- Very heavy demands on board and executive members
- ABP is trying to be all things to all people; need to prioritize
- Communication with producers
- Flip side of flexibility is that the organization may lose focus
- ABP is sometimes working on livestock or broad agriculture issues not specific to cattle
- Sections 7.2 (f) could be broader to work with “other organisations” or “other livestock organisations”
- Quality standards – is it time to remove? ABP does work with quality programs or on-farm food safety programs – where do they fit?
- 7.2 (g) not working
- I agree we need new delegates, but their attitude toward us is disrespectful
- Being all to everyone spreads us too thin
- Bringing new delegates with off-farm jobs and not making their living in agriculture, we are being influenced by people with another income
- Strike these from the mandate:
 - 7.2 (h) to establish quality
 - 7.2 (e) to research and study production
 - 7.2 (g) assist educate and inform
- Somewhat reactive to issues
- May be some duplication of focus on areas and issues by two or more committees and / or councils
- Communication with producers is often a concern
- 7.2 (a) Packers not getting carcass data back to producer or cow-calf guys
- 7.2 (d) voice fragmented (ABP – cattle feeders – purebred)
- Advising government: group is fractured by sub-groups, e.g., cow-calf versus feedlot
- What quality standards? Can this be improved?

- Should 7.2 (h) be deleted? Other regulatory agencies already do this
- More advertising could be done to promote the cattle industry
- Producer awareness is questionable
- Communication between sectors; not seen as 'one' industry
- Not sure about world marketing
- Strategy differences between farming as a business and farming as a lifestyle
- ABP is not front and center in improving production
- ABP fails in representing all sectors of livestock industry from cow-calf to backrounder to finisher
- Advice to Government is not always a consensus of all industry sectors
- ABP does not set quality standards
- I believe the mandate of the Commission has not provided enough progress in the regard to R&D in making our industry as efficient as the chicken or pork industries
- 7.2 (d) the mandate must involve more focus and attention into government regulation, including CFIA and government policy
- (ABP) should not be establishing quality standards for cattle and products
- (ABP) should not be a supporter of Government policy, regulation, etc. It should be ensuring Government is a follower (i.e., should be a producer advocate not a government advocate)
- (ABP) should not be marketers of cattle
- (ABP) should be responsive to producers on what they want researched. The funds available are 'creating the projects', instead of the other way around
- ABP is making funding available for mandate development, but the results are questionable
- Establishing quality standards for cattle and cattle products is not being done and it should be removed from the mandate
- 7.2 (d) educating producers in developing and improving their production and marketing of cattle; will not research for age (operational in 7.2 (e))
- 7.2 (g) communication with identified groups does not seem to be working
- Objects are missing reference to 'fiscal responsibility'

Suggestions for Improvement

- 7.2 (d) I think that our #1 priority should be to "advise Government ...the cattle industry" based on sound economics and sound management and leave a lot of these other areas to private enterprise.
- We are trying to be all things to all people; let government do that
- I think that democratically elected directors will serve us well
- Absolutely narrow focus
- Suggestion for rewording mandate: "*To provide a structure whereby producers pay a fee on cattle produced the proceeds of which will be spent as a democratically elected board as they see fit to generally benefit the industry.*"
- The problem may be structural, with no clear mandate could be dangerous. As how the board is formed is similar to the Wheat Pool, which prevents effective leaders from reaching board level
- Improve communication skills for directors and delegates
- Eliminate promotion of beef as a consumer product (e.g., we don't sell or control the sale of hamburger)
- Minimize the options in the mandate, i.e. promotion, research
- Mandate is too broad and needs to be 'boiled' down into clearer, more defined measurable goals:

- Communication with producers
- Government advocacy and advisement
- General promotion of industry
- Work with other members of value chain (leverages your resources)
- Make younger generations more aware of the industry through local groups such as 4H, feeder associations, and ATB website
- What was the original mandate and intent when the Commission was formed? Did it include lobbying or was it promotion, research and funding a national organization?
- ABP should function in identifying priorities for research and partially funding in conjunction with other funders
- Mandate needs to be narrower and more focused
- May want to:
 - Remove 7.2 (h)
 - Remove details and add “on issues of importance to the cattle industry” to 7.2 (e)
 - Consider adding ‘policy development’ as a separate article
 - Consider combining 7.2 (a) and 7.2 (g)
 - Adding an article regarding ‘fiscal responsibility’
- Establish priorities for research
- Lobby government fundamentals to this industry
- Improve industry council; focus on CIC and better involving other groups
- Rewrite objects in line with the gist of this discussion
- Would like to see words from ABP’s Strategic Direction Summary included in 7.1 (i.e., “*to enhance the competitiveness and sustainability of beef production*”)
- 7.2 (b) also need to add focus on market access
- Not sure why 7.2 (f) needs “*in the opinion of the Boards of Directors*”, when 7.2 says “*the Commission*”
- “Government” covered in 7.2 (d) so we don’t need it in 7.2 (f); advise versus support
- Other question: What’s missing, if anything if industry wants organization to take a new focus
- As a market operator, I still run into some producers that are not quite sure of what ABP really is all about and they don’t relish the thought of giving up their money. This may be a product of their own misguidance and lack of knowledge. Maybe a producer education pamphlet would help. Let them know who the participants are for ABP and what the participant roles are.
- Amalgamate some of the paragraphs as stated by the group today and maybe the deletion of some as suggested by the group
- Need to pull in, we are spread too thin
- Bring all industry groups to work together
- Create a respectful and good working relationship
- 7.2 (c) need more promotion of the cattle industry and not just of the beef industry
- 7.2 (b) provide funding for...
- 7.2 (f) strike “in the opinion of the Board of Directors”
- In light of present direction of the Alberta cattle industry, ABP needs to keep up its excellent work for producers. However, it may have to lean itself down a little to keep this level of involvement (due to shrinking budget); therefore,
 - Possibly combine some committees

- Possibly better definition or narrowing of each committee's or council's role and area of focus
- ABP needs to keep a broad view on all sectors of the industry
- Try not to affect the staff. Support them more rather than less
- Construct and maintain a viable and comprehensive mailing list to aid in communicating objectives and goals to producers
- Remove 7.2 (h)
- Combine 7.2 (a) and (g)
- More lobbying to open the border in a 'timely matter'; show leadership in dealing with the American government
- Tighten up the rules to help producers
- Open the board to a broader base, e.g., cow-calf, dairy, backgrounder and finisher on an even basis
- If we are going to communicate with processors they must be at the table
- Many things are good in theory but it should not be the Commission that initiates; should be the sectors (e.g., cow-calf, backgrounder, etc.) that request
- Accountability (financial)
- Tighten up mandate: most objects are "feel good" statements; focus is needed
- Need more technical expertise in research area (more of an operational issue)
- Conflict of interest could arise due to 7.2 (d) related to ABP's ties to MAPA
- Remove 7.2 (h) and (g)
- Combine 7.2 (a)(c) and (f)
- Difficult to offer suggestions for 7.2 (g) as producers appear not interested in their organization
- Develop and include a statement about fiscal responsibility and sustainability (stewardship of funds) in the objects
- 7.2 (a)-(f) Include a broad statement to indicate working with other segments of the value chain
- Streamline wording and improve clarity of focus
- 7.2 (c) Promoting the industry as good stewards in this day of environmental concerns

Topic 2: Regulation Making Powers and Service Charge

Topic 2: Individual Feedback (24 responses)

What Is Working?

- Check-off is working. Money seems to get collected as it is supposed to.
- ABP is able to fulfill its monetary obligations to the Federal check off.
- Check-off is secure once it is collected.
- 26. (b)(c)(d)(e) seem to be working.
- Fee collection is probably fairly efficient.
- Powers for collecting check off are working from a regulations standpoint.
- Paying commission on cattle that is traded. I think this is key to keeping a governing voice for the industry.
- Allowing the ABP to spend the check-off as they see fit.
- Non-refundability.
- 26. (a) collection of fees on cattle.
- 26. (c) marketed through auction facilities.
- Non-refundable check off would make it impossible for ABP to carry on its business.
- 26. (a) and (b)
- Collection and distribution working well.
- Non-refundable check off gives the organization the ability to protect the industry and cow-calf.
- Well established process.
- Money gives organization power.
- Non-refundable is good.
- Not all powers have been implemented.
- Funds are collected from producers so that ABP may operate.
- There is a record of most producers who are producing cattle.
- The collections are made at point of sale with reasonable cooperation of all participants.
- Money is used at the discretion of ABP.
- Service charge collection and remittance is working reasonably well.
- Non-refundable is working well:
 - Predictable
 - Non manipulative
 - Marketing organizations have predictable budgets
- ABP is able to collect check off reasonably seamlessly and has withstood legal challenge.
- Non-refundable is better:
 - Predictable funding source
 - Refundable gives a hand full of big producers the opportunity to make demands of ABP that may not be in the best interests of the entire industry
- Actual collection of revenue.
- The fact that they are not enforcing license to produce and market cattle.
- Check off works as is.
- Collection of fees from central points, i.e., auction markets, order buyers.
- Revenue collection good; not much slippage.
- Provides funding to national organization.

- Money check off is being collected in most sectors.
- There is no need to give money back!
- Revenue is being collected; leave check off as non-refundable.
- System for collecting is working; can use money for what is needed.
- Non-refundable service charges allows for good financial planning and execution of the Plan, projects and programs (particularly in the long term).
- Service charge is largely collected (not much slippage) with the assistance of auction marts, processors, buyers.
- Regulations give flexibility for any legitimate 'eligible' producers to participate.
- Non-refundable gives more funds (more predictable budgeting) for ABP to work with for the industry benefit.

What Is Not Working?

- Database is weak (producer list).
- Is there some check off and falling through cracks, e.g., private treaty cattle.
- Cattle going states-side don't pay a check off.
- Eastern Canadian markets don't pay check off.
- Check-off should be voluntary. Members are forced to pay check-off to fund policies we do not agree with.
- Funds has been used to build a large infrastructure that continually needs more money and is not responsive to its members.
- The method for collecting fees is inefficient.
- There's too much slippage.
- 'Powers' for collecting check-off are not working from an operational standpoint.
 - Audits invariably return more in un-submitted levy than the cost of the audit.
 - Modelling suggests significant shortfall in levy collection.
 - Some of the primary collectors of the levy (processors) are, by definition, not 'eligible producers' so they are charged with collecting a levy for an organization to which they cannot belong.
- 26. (c) does not happen in reality in producer-to-producer sales.
- Non-refundable levy:
 - is not responsive
 - does not permit 'freedom of association'
 - does not align with the free market / private enterprise approach ABP takes on for other issues
- Current producer mailing (membership) list which is a key component to keeping producer awareness as to current events and what ABP is here to provide for their benefit.
- Mailing list / membership list.
- Collection of check offs; estimates are that as much as \$0.5 million is not being collected that is eligible plus exported cattle do not pay a check off which puts cattle sold in Alberta at a competitive disadvantage.
- Refundability.
- Collection of check off on private marketing of cattle, e.g., bulls, some smaller groups of feeders sold direct, breeding cattle sold directly between producers.
- Slippage needs to be addressed.
- Difficult to update mailing list.
- Accountability to the producer for his 'service charge'.
- Open ended use of money (d) by the Board for its expenses; relates to accountability to its 'shareholders'. No mandate to be accountable (see Topic 1).

- Slippage in fees paid: private sales, farm to farm etc. Do 'producers' understand they need to submit, who to, etc. Further communication required?
- There is not a totally accurate record of all producers.
- Too many names from establishment.
- FOIP: incorrect database.
- Producer information gathering is not working well. This results in missed or redundant communication with producers.
- There is some slippage with service charge collection.
- Mailing list.
- No check-off collected on export cattle
- No check-off collected on imported cattle or beef.
- Incomplete database limiting flow of communication.
- Mailing list expanded by family members, e.g., sons and daughters.
- Collection of fees from private treaty sales.
- We should know who is paying check off if we are to continue with it. Tells us who the producers actually are.
- All regulations involving licensing, suspension, classification and prohibition of certain procedures should be stricken. They do not apply to cattle industry.
- The act allows for refund of service charge – not even up for discussion.
- Is check off being collected from all cattle marketings?
- How do you do a better job of collecting (e.g., private sales, etc.)?
- No real control of practices (i.e., quality starts here!)
- Check-off was raised by \$3 to fight BSE crisis, but when, if ever, will the crisis be over?
- Proper contact information isn't being collected:
 - Results in poor communication
 - Could be disastrous in case of a disease outbreak
- Producer communication is not working well because mailing list is not accurate.
- Might be some slippage (service charge not coming in) in some farm to farm sales.
- ABP (it appears) does not have a very accurate list of who the producers are, who submits service charges and who is eligible to vote.
- Will need producer registration or better system to know how much service charge each producer is paying.
- Refundability appears not to work as well in industries where there are fewer concentrated (i.e., large) producers.

Suggestions for Improvement

- Perhaps we could move ahead with the registration of producers.
- ABP needs to walk a fine line on disclosure of information.
- U.S. cattle plus eastern Canada should pay.
- Check off needs to remain mandatory.
- Refundable check off works against (producer list database).
- Advance discussion with broader membership.
- Make check off refundable like many of the other Commissions. Members will feel empowered and the organization will be more dynamic.
- Take discussion to the members.
- Comments on 'points to ponder':
 1. Only for the stated purpose of making lists and voter lists.
 2. Contradiction – voluntary is that. Asking is why?
 3. Purpose should be limited to voting and mailing lists.

- I wouldn't open up the refundable debate. Develop a better fee collecting system; stop slippage on US bound cattle. Refundability has been discussed at length. The debate was dismissive. Those that promote ABP refundability promote non-refundability for LIS. The inconsistency in these matters shows that there are other issues at play.
- Is the collection of the check-off only on cattle when cattle and cattle products are the regulated product.
- Make levy refundable – leads to a more responsive organization.
- Market Council should not be expressing opinions pro or con. Market Council is supposed to be neutral and willing to take on recommendations of the industry. Cannot have members on Market Council with a predetermined position.
- Yes - the discussion on refundability should go to a broader audience.
- Yes – the discussion on refundability needs to go to greater or larger membership areas.
- Ask for a \$5.00 voluntary membership in order to be a voting member. The check-off as it is non-refundable is a tax and we should call it that.
- Remove (b-e) and (g) from page 3 of review.
- Refundability gives choice, responsiveness of the organization, and accountability. Voluntary membership gets people more involved. We should advance this to the entire membership.
- If check offs were to become refundable all the information people want to keep private would be available for ABP.
- I feel ABP has sufficient power in executing its mandate.
- By registering producers I feel it may simplify the distribution of information.
- Do a plebiscite with all ABP members on having a refundable check-off. By ballot to get the clear picture.
- Get producers to register name and address.
- Yes, at Fall meetings about refundable.
- Refundable check-off is important. Organizations are driven by voluntary membership. If they are doing the job the membership will stay.
- Yes, we should put out to producers but with “non-biased” pros and cons.
- Collect check off on exported animals.
- The disadvantage to refundable check-off is that 2 or 3 large feed lots could dictate the actions of the ABP by requesting a refund that would amount to a huge portion of the ABP budget.
- I think the fact that consumers use of beef continued on and higher was due to ABP's diligence.
- Consider requiring remitters to submit names and addresses of producers from whom they have collected and remitted check-off. This could be done annually.
- Consider alternative methods of collecting check-off e.g., LIS.
- If check-off collection method does not change, increase audit or review of remitters.
- The issue of refundability should be further considered with pros and cons detailed and position rationalized.
- Everybody in this debate fully understands the merits of the other's arguments. This debate will never go away.
- The topic of the refundable service should be pursued further.
- One mailing to one address or one box number.
- If check off is refundable we may as well not collect it. Let's go home!
- Get an agreement with LIS to collect check-off when they do a LIS inspection.

- However, make the check-off refundable. A mandatory fee is against the free-market principles. Retention of funds would indicate satisfaction with ABP policies.
- Registration of names should be voluntary.
- Licensing is not required.
- The fear of refundable check-off seems to be that big feedlots will ask for a rebate. However if they are sending cattle to the States, they are not paying check-off anyway so there is no refund coming.
- More focused mandate may eliminate need for many of these powers (potential powers). Needs discussion with broader group!
- Registering is okay, license will be hard to pass by members.
- Can dialog be started, so 20 years (?) from now when public demands licensing it isn't as extreme an idea as it is today.
- How do you regulate what is a refundable reason? Could groups regulate policy by holding back their check off?
- Every other commodity (dairy, poultry, hogs) have a mandatory registration or licensing process. This allows for communication to all of the grass roots members. This would be imperative in the case of disease eradication.
- Only names and addresses should be collected.
- This information should be used for communication purposes only and not shared.
- Producers should be included.
- Keep check-ff non-refundable and leave the debate for another time!
- Need a mechanism to get names / addresses of all active producers and maintain the list so that it is reasonably accurate.

Topic 3: Producers, Eligible Producers and Representation

Topic 3: Individual Feedback (23 Responses)

What Is Working?

- CIC in particular and CFC have strengthened/ improved the organization and the functioning of the BOD
 - Broadened their perspective.
- CIC working okay.
- Ensures “producers” control check-off.
- More of industry has better representation.
- Definition of eligible producers is adequate.
- Across province representation.
- CFC is working.
- Generally, one person one vote → democratic control with democratic checks and balances
- Have shown flexibility in structure → i.e., CFC, CIC
- Geographic results in representation across province and is better than other alternatives so far.
- Good
- ABP most democratic form of government there is.
- Good spread of AB representation.
- Good representation sectors (industry).
- ABP – as a producer organization working within an industry, has been successful – will it be for the future?
- Cattle industry struggles with some sectoral representation which ABP has tried to address through committee structures.
- Zones largely work for geographic representation.
- Industry sector – ABP only organization to do this.
- That the members of the commission have to be producers it is working.
- All producers represented
- Democratic process
- The net working opportunity provided by a large number of delegates should not be overlooked!
- It creates a better understanding of the whole industry
- There is more than adequate opportunity for all aspects of the industry to be represented.
- Definition of producer is satisfactory
- Election process is good avenue to place persons as a delegate.
- Producer association – cooperation between different groups is necessary and working.
- Producers only.
- Representation by the 5 producer associations.
- CIC seems to adequately represent all of its member groups.
- I like how the current system is set up.
- I like the idea of representatives being in a Council but not automatically on Board of Directors
- I think the zones are correct
- Definition of a “Producer” is acceptable.
- 3A and 3B both are working.

- Representation from across the province.
- Bringing more diversified views to the organization.
- One vote / producer is democratic.
- 3C: has broadened perspective by including other groups
- that those who fund ABP are those who can be on the Commission – voice for all involved.
- Good provincial representation.
- Industry Council – good concept.
- Representation is spread throughout the province.
- Industry representation is working well.
- Progress being made with CFC.
- The fact that large and small have a voice and are eligible,
- Only producers.
- Good representation – zones are good
- Including sectors helped ABP.
- An organization for cattle producers basically represents cattle producers concerns much better than a watered down organization.
- Geographical representation is good – I see no need to change it. Gets a good cross section of producers from across the province.
- The number of delegates is working well.
- Over the last few years ABP has refocused its membership to allow a variety of organizations to become members. This seems to be working well.
- Definition for eligible producers seems to be adequate.
- Committees that have been formed are useful in their current state.
- I believe the representation is proper or correct across the province as a whole.
- The election process is democratic and fine.
- The eligible producers have every opportunity to get involved and have their say and give input.

What Is Not Working?

- The zone and delegate structure is not a very responsive sort of governance.
- The current structure tends not to adequately/ appropriately reflect the industry: one producer / one vote when in fact the number of 'shares' in the corporation vary significantly.
- Zone system
- CFC was a pretty good idea but has not in practice satisfied the sector.
- Feedlot operators pay a large portion of the check-off and have very limited representation.
- Page 7. – Yes.
- We shouldn't try to represent non-producers unless it benefits our industry to do so.
- 3,4,5 – same as above.
- Definition of a producer is too restrictive.
- Not necessary; besides why would someone not involved in industry get involved unless they really felt they could contribute.
- Getting more and more difficult to attract delegates and directors.
- Needs of cattle industry in Alberta not determined by geography.
- Zone structure guarantees that we fill spots, not necessarily with the right people.
- Geography only serves to muddy many discussions.
- All sectors not represented properly.

- Election process does not ensure that we have balanced representation or the skills that the industry requires.
- Zone 9 sub zones are not working.
- Number of zones could be re-evaluated. It is difficult to engage enough capable producers to operate.
- Engaging cattle feeders is a challenge.
- Sub zones – too many!
- Membership seems to be an issue in that ‘some’ producers don’t seem to realize that are members simply by paying a check off. For whatever reason or reasons!
- Definition – “producer”.
- Every avenue probable not addressed – Purebred?
- More effective involvement of other stakeholders to ensure ABP is effective beyond just the producer level issues. Attempts so far to address this need time to work.
- Committees – as regulated structures add a lot of regulation – don’t need to be in regulation, but the regulations may add trust and confidence.
- Having it stipulated that they have to be producers.
- Eligible producer definition not working at election time due to auction market policies.
- Portion of industry is not included i.e. packers.
- Geography doesn’t necessarily get the best representation for the industry.
- Is 9 zones too many?
- Are there too many delegates? There seems to be a problem getting people to run.
- Have some questions why certain groups are “guaranteed” seats. If they are viable candidates they should be able to be elected by general membership.
- The question of zone 9’s sub zones should be left up to voters from that zone.
- Should eliminate 4-H members as producers.
- No need for zones.
- Why do we need geographic diversity? What is different between a producer in Grande Prairie or Manyberries?
- Points to Ponder 3:
 - 1. Yes, it’s working
 - 2. They are not producers
 - 3. ✓
 - 4. ✓
 - 5. ✓
 - Go back to item 7 on 3A points to ponder.
- Does not include packers or processors who market beef and beef is the regulated product.
- Nine zones are not required. In today’s ways of information exchange where you live is less important than in the past.
- Producer associations feel marginalized.
- Producer associations delegates are restricted in where they can sit (which committee).
- Only applies to AB. Some have SK addresses with cattle in AB and vice versa. Does the “trading” of dollars inter-provincially reflect what is a producer etc.?
- Regulated product (the whole chain is not included).
- The board is way bigger then it needs to be.
- The rest of the value chain is not included.
- Are 5 sub zones needed in Zone 9?

- Once a member of Industry Council you cannot sit on any other committee.
- Could we be missing out on some good people – is there room for representation from the floor e.g. 2 or 3 delegates that aren't necessarily representing every zone.
- Getting increasingly difficult to draw good people into the organization.
- Sometimes the small producer with off farm job has the funding to create more charges for services.
- Check demographics.
- Check zone 9.
- With the addition of Cattle Feeds Council there is inadequate representation for cow-calf producers, purebred breeders. I would like to see at least a committee representing the purebred as well as the cow calf producers.
- Too many indirect not specifically focused. In my opinion!
- This could or should be in my eyes, more efficiently run.
- Too many delegates?
- Too many zones?
- Becoming increasingly difficult to attract people to the job of delegate. We may need to relax the right and regulations to let people go where needed.
- Do we need 86 delegates?
- Too many committees.

Suggestions for Improvement

- Reduce the number of zones and delegates and directors.
- Transfer some of the power vested (at least in practice) with the executive back to the board.
- I agree with further investigation into the 'skills-based board' concept.
- When half the delegates are being elected by acclamation we need to recognize that we have a problem.
- There are no beef producers in the organization – those would be cows. Everyone (including non eligible producers) simply facilitates beef production. We should incorporate more representation from service providers.
- Don't need 9 zones.
- Principle reason for any geographic representation is perception.
- Page 5. Points to Ponder.
 - 1. No.
 - 2 – 5: N/A
 - 6. No – ABP – should strive to represent the industry as a whole.
 - 7. Needs to concentrate on industry wide issues. i.e. access to foreign markets.
- Zones – zone structure is fine.
- Did zone 9 decide if they want sub zones?
- We need to concentrate on representing the industry.
- Need to focus on getting people involved who will do what is best for the cattle industry, not just what's good for ABP.
- Ways for partnering with others in the value change imperative,
- Need less focus on geographical representation and more on ensuring balanced representation from the various sectors (cow/calf, pure bred, feeders, etc.)
- As with other areas, ABP, in attempt to be inclusive, has really achieved nothing.
- Fundamental change in the organizational structure is required – not quick fixes.
- Drop sub zones in Zone 9.
- Consider reducing the number of zones in province.

- May need to review demographics to see if the zones have generally similar number of producers.
- A Purebred committee may be useful.
- Demographics factor.
- 3B: I would like consideration of zone boundaries similar to Alberta Agriculture (Counties). Similar ? Basically I think they are – not necessarily every one.
- How large can we get? Purebred industry bring a knowledge and set of skills that are not prevalent throughout cattle industry. Valid or not?
- Streamlined zone and committee structure.
- Depending on how ABP wants committees injected into the structure (e.g., as a board representative) much of the committee structure can be removed from the Plan.
- I think having a diverse membership and say adding specific number of positions for general public to join or be elected to the commission.
- I think adding diversity would add depth and strength to the membership.
- 3A – Point 1 – no.
- Point 7 – must remain voice of cattle producers.
- 3B – difficult to comment on without current demographics.
- It is the responsibility of the organization to represent all producers, regardless of size
- Remove sub zones from 9
- Cattle feeders should be representing all producers not just the feeder industry – and must be a producer who is eligible
- 3C – consideration of all aspects of industry represented at committee level – i.e. Purebred.
- No more delegates elected by producer organizations!
- Since producer associates can send 2 delegates, why are they prevented from having one delegate on Cattle Industry Council and one delegate on another committee? Why is it either-or but not both?
- A membership fee rather than a check off would allow non-producers a seat at the table as director and/or delegate.
- Dedication to the industry is more important, so remove zones.
- Less delegates elected by zone: more by electing members at large.
- The organization should focus more on developing or grooming leadership qualities in new delegates.
- Smaller board, smaller delegate body.
- More emphasis on being a Governance Board.
- Don't think people who don't pay a check off should be part of the Board.
- Should each sector be given delegates in each zone like the Feeder Association has the opportunity
- Delegates could be more organized
- Does skill-based take away from straight producers and gear the board to professional producers (i.e. accountants, lawyers, etc.)
- Eliminate sectoral reps.
- Do away with sub zones in zone 9.
- Explore a minimum number of marketings to be an “eligible producer”.
- No zones. One annual meeting. Elect a board from the meeting. Board of 12.
- Points to ponder (3A)
 - 1. No
 - 2 – 6 – become irrelevant

- 7. ABP should be forum for discussion of industry wide issues but remain the voice of cattle producers.
- Need to be run more like a corporation where there is broader representation. If there was a position on the board for a packer or processor they may engage themselves in the industry.
- If ABP only wants to be the voice of cattle producers then it should only collect check off from cattle producers.
- Cattle feeder delegates should be elected by and represent cattle feeders.
- Look into skill based – do not required board members to be producers.
- Under the plan, producer is wider than 1(0). Should be included.
- Have another “non-cattle” person on Board.
- Get rid of “sub zones” in zone 9.
- Less zones, less delegates.
- Purebred industry i.e. CBBC → at Industry Council level. Also should be a “producer association” if we continue to “name” the producer organization in the plan.
- Open up committee membership. If a person wants to sit on a specific committee a desire to help and improve exists.
- Could for e.g. CFC elect 2 members from the floor.
- Do we want packer representation?
- Can we implement in operations a Pure Bred Committee and a Cow Calf Committee? If you do that do you eliminate or combine other committees to make room for them?
- I would like to see more delegates that make total loving in agriculture.
- Get more sectors.
- Perhaps we should skills target at ABP nominations. However, I hate to select representations on a skill base only it is extremely difficult to tell producers they can't represent even if they can get elected because they are short of skills.
- No issues.
- Restructure the committees as a whole.
- Add a Finance Committee.
- Adjust the number of needed representation.
- Adjust the zones for more efficient operation.
- It only takes so much grease to make a wheel turn. Too much just pushes out the hub.
- Perhaps we need to be more active in letting people know they have a voice and a vote at the Fall meetings.
- Need to combine committees to cut delegates and committees.
- Don't necessarily need all board members on committees.
- Terms should remain at 2 years to support recall ability.
- Probably okay.

Topic 4A: Rights of Eligible Producers

Topic 4A: Individual Comments (21 responses)

What Is Working?

- Working well
- Producers have the right to be elected as a delegate to represent the zone.
- The fact that the best individual for a committee can come forward to add input even though they are not elected, if invited by the Board of Directors.
- Resolution process valuable.
- The role of producer is right; if they want to become more involved they can run for election.
- We adequately reflect the role of 'eligible producers'; they currently have the opportunity to not only make representation but also to run for election. Currently eligible producers have very few limitations within present structure. We should maintain this as we don't need people representing us at a higher level who can't get elected within their own zone.
- We do not want to lose the networking among elected delegates that occurs at the AGM level.
- Eligible producer representation is adequate. They have the ability to address their concerns to their elected representatives.
- All eligible producers have rights and roles under the plan – via the fall meetings and the delegate system.
- Eligible producers can attend as observers if he / she doesn't like what is happening can elect someone else.
- Points to Ponder:
 - 1. Yes
 - 2. Cannot come up with a better alternative
- Process is fine.
- Allows you to be involved if you want.
- Fall meeting gives opportunity for information sharing.
- It's fine as is. The board can appoint producers to committees if needed.
- Eligible producers have a voice.
- I believe the producer votes for delegates is appropriate. The alternatives so far are cumbersome.
- The whole thing has the democratic process as the check and balance.
- Having the 2 councils actually undermines the democratic principle but seems to be a fair compromise.
- Generally working okay.
- General rights appear appropriate for eligible producers as they are today.
- In my experience, delegates generally more knowledgeable and prepared to deal with issues at an AGM than a general assembly.

What Is Not Working?

- Concentration of power (if not a delegate, then doors are closed)
- Producers can make representations (i.e. resolutions) but, these can be diverted at ABP Board and never get to the AGM
- Delegates do not necessarily represent producer wishes (operational)? No reciprocity of representation.

- Producers are not being truly represented at the Annual or Semi Annual meetings. Delegates are representing the board to producers instead of representing producers to the board.
- Producers should be able to be elected to ABP, CCA and BIC without being a director.
- No reason that a non-elected delegate should not be able to run for CCA. If they are the best for the job they should be able to run.
- Zones vary from one end to another; therefore, difference in opinions.
- Past times we've had resolution but totally opposing opinions.
- Some issues are hard for Zone to vote on.
- Getting producers involved and attending Fall meetings and knowing their rights.
- Too many delegates.
- Very difficult for producers to effect change at the board level.
- Structure is cumbersome.
- Fall meeting process value is questionable. They are poorly attended and serve little purpose other than to elect delegates.
- Expensive.
- Why don't more producers exercise their franchise?
- Annual meetings are typically meetings of the membership (producers) to update them on the previous year's operation. ABP annual meeting is not for membership but delegates. Producers should have an opportunity to attend and speak at an annual meeting.
- Producers should have an opportunity to be elected as ABP directors, CCA directors or BIC members.
- Operational
 - restructured rights of eligible producers (shareholders) at the ABP (company) AGM.
- Engagement
 - producers are not exercising the rights they currently have
 - quorum of 5 at a Zone meeting with 7 delegates, means essentially that the delegates could proceed without any eligible producer input other than their own.
- There may be benefits in allowing CFC and CIC delegates in sitting on other committees.
- There may be a benefit in establishing a Purebred committee from existing delegates to meet occasionally and deal with purebred industry issues.
- Number of delegates seems high – but need an effective number – and what's that ??
- Agree that more and more the organization needs to include expertise or skills that may not be found in the delegates / directors.

Suggestions for Improvement

- Should be open vote at AGM by all producers who are interested in attending the AGM.
- Need to communicate to producers that they do have rights and list their rights.
- 3(b). Only delegates should be ABP directors, CCA and BIC members.
- 4. Eligible producers, if interested can play a part at zone level with CAP, Beef Promotion or by attending meetings in the zone.
- 4b. 86 delegates seems to be okay.

- Do away with all producer association delegates, cattle feeder council delegates and 6 cattle industry council delegates!!! Have all delegates elected by producers.
- Once special interest groups / sectors are established then the organization becomes segmented and doesn't look at the industry as a whole for the betterment of the greater beef industry.
- I was happy with 90 delegates. However, I wouldn't spend time trying to change what we now have.
- I agree with removing sub zones.
- This is mostly operational.
- The organization has accommodated the democratic process and satisfied interests. That's a big achievement. Maintain flexibility.
- Eligible producers should be able to be elected to the board at AGM.
- Eliminate delegates – have producers directly elect board.
- Annual meeting open to everyone. Might be costly but would provide a broader public forum for producers to voice opinions amongst their peers.
- Let producers attend AGM and speak.
- Very cumbersome structure.
- Resolutions when they get to the AGM are filtered and sent to different committees. They should all be voted on at the AGM. Results of elections take a year until the next fall meeting to get back to the producers.
- Should be an ability for eligible producers to directly participate in election of CCA directors – currently only delegates vote.
- Feedback to producers only occurs once a year (as per the plan at required zone meetings) unless 50 producers from the zone request a special meeting.
 - Turnaround time too long and leaves producers feeling alienated / unheard.
- I think there are plenty of people at the meeting.
- Zone delegates could report back to the 'mover' of the resolution.
- Should zone delegates be required to vote for a resolution passed at their producer meetings?
- Sub zone issues should be left up to individual zones.
- Most suggestions for change in this area or others could be construed as attempts to obstruct democracy.
- Many of the people who have the most complaints about how ABP is structured are from other membership organizations that have been in decline in terms of membership and influence for years and are still in decline.
- There may be benefits in allowing CFC and CIC delegates in sitting on other committees.
- There may be a benefit in establishing a Purebred committee from existing delegates to meet occasionally and deal with purebred industry issues.
- Remove sub zones.
- If an organization allows 'non-producers' (if Act changes) the rights such as to vote in a plebiscite will become interesting (e.g., in a plebiscite vote 50,000 producer votes would likely outweigh 10 processor votes).
- Likewise strict sectoral boundaries for delegates / directors will be outweighed by a general plebiscite vote.

TOPIC 4B: Number and Rights of Delegates

Topic 4B: Individual Comments (17 responses)

What Is Working?

- 5a. (Does the organization continue to need zone delegates?) Fine.
- Okay.
- 3 – 2 year terms with 1 year whip out.
- Sometimes all 7 delegates are not all actively working for industry.
- Yes, it is working.
- Zone delegates.
- Number of delegates seem to be working.
- CIC on which I sit, seems satisfied with the representation we have.
- I'm happy with what we have.
- Participation in ACFA and WSG is very low; also, they are also the people who are unhappy about ABP structure.
- Open and transparent process.
- The organization structure of delegates, producers association, CFC and CIC is good – to a point. Different points of view, organization needs are brought forward and disseminated back to producers in different forums.
- Industry representation is very useful in providing lines of communication back to their respective boards.
- Good zone representation.

What Is Not Working?

- Too many delegates.
- Why are there so many from producer association, cattle feeders etc.? Seems to be “political” decisions to keep all inside ABP. Is it because these were set up because ABP was not meeting their needs?
- Too many delegates due to too many zones and too many committees.
- Cattle feeder delegates and CIC delegates should be able to go to other committees.
- CIC delegates and producer association delegates should have the right to vote at zone meetings (other than fall meetings).
- Eighty-six delegates are too many and cumbersome.
- People that do not make a living from agriculture should be careful what to criticize.
- Delegate system ensures we fill spaces, not necessarily with best people.
- Often no election (acclamation).
- Costly and inefficient system in place produces results of questionable value but allows a ‘feel good’ atmosphere.
- Producer Association delegates are not able to participate in committees the producers association would like input in i.e. CIC is either both or none. Why not 1 delegate in CIC and 1 on another committee?
- Very cumbersome system with so many delegates.
- Too many delegates – elect 5 per zone (45) and 5 at large = 50 (versus 63).
- Too many delegates.

Suggestions for Improvement

- ABP welcome to review entire delegate structure and terms of office for delegates / directors.
- Producer association delegates do not have a vote at zone meetings. If in fact a producer, association delegates should be able to vote.
- Should be producer driven. Should be only 1 -2 delegates / zone. Committees, task forces, etc. should be formed as needed and draw on all 'skills' required to address a problem – then disbanded.
- Committees should be formed when needed, and should be disbanded or re-organized. Responsive board required.
- Should be a term of 2 years x 2 terms. Then there should be a longer “knock out” period.
- Name recognition plays too large a role.
- Get disengaged producers involved.
- Possible room to adjust number of zone reps. to 8 rather than 9.
- I feel we need representation from all sectors of the livestock industry. We need to be unified in the direction the livestock industry is headed.
- ABP may need an Ombudsman to listen to disgruntled producers.
- P.10 (points 6 and 7) I would not do that. Unifarm tried bringing sectors together.
- Reduce committee size.
- Eighty-six delegates seems like a large number.
- Need fewer zones, fewer delegates.
- May be time to evolve from producer association delegates – a hangover from old political battles.
- Eighty-six delegates out of ~1,000 producers who are actively engaged may be overkill.
- Elect fewer delegates per zone, and allow some delegates to be elected at large.
- Smaller committees, some with limited responsibility or time commitment, give newer delegates a chance to “get their feet wet.”
- Three year terms vs. two year terms.
- With fewer delegates, you improve quality of delegates and then improve the quality of their work.
- Put the money (for staff effort) into directing and implementing programs instead of having meetings.
- Question if other sectors (cow-calf / purebred) be represented in the same way as cattle feeders.
- I like the idea of making committees smaller.

TOPIC 5: The Board of Directors and the Executive

Topic 5: Individual Comments (24 responses)

What Is Working?

- 19 directors seems to be working.
- The organization needs:
 - Zone Director
 - Cattle Feeder Council
 - Cattle Industry Councilto have direction from all aspects of the livestock industry.
- More people seems to keep more people happy at some level.
- Executive Committee chosen among Board.
- Hiring right people in office
 - Policy for one
 - Legal
 - Management
 - Clerical
 - Others
 - Marketing
 - Technical
 - Many others
- 19 directors should be sufficient
- Does have sufficient zone representation
- The Board has good representation of sectors
 - 19 seems to be working
 - all sectors represented
- It's working well and assists the board in its work.
- Board representation i.e. Feeders, Cow / Calf, industry – Board seems to be decisive.
- Have Feeder directors and cattle industry council directors increase overall knowledge of issues.
- Executive Committee works well and efficiently.
- Current systems works okay.
- One year term allows recall if necessary.
- CIC and CFC working well (even though it subverts democracy a bit).
- I believe there is good cross-sectorial representation and a good mix of skills at the board of director level. A larger pool of directors increases the potential for a mix of skills. If director numbers were reduced, ABP may need to look at strategies to ensure all skill sets are covered.
- Having different “sectors” represented.
- Small board desirable, if possible, without losing representation / skills.
- Board representation of industry.
- If the delegate group remains in same form, it is probably good that they select the Executive.
- Representation of different delegates is necessary but the total number seems large.
- Executive should be not more than Vice Chair, Chair and Finance Chair.
- Only delegates should be able to be elected to the board.
- Promote efficiency.

- Agendas.
- Adding broader perspective (i.e. cattle feeder council) a good move.
- The size of the executive is fine.
- Good representation of zones.
- It's working – don't fix it.
- Fine.
- Nineteen directors are just too many – how do you get the work done with less?
- Executive – 3 is fine. I think that they should be elected by the board.
- Not informed enough to draw many conclusions.
- Good that directors choose executive rather than generally elected.
- Generally working OK.
- 3 CFC directors is sufficient as several other directors may also be cattle feeders. CIC directors have been an asset.
- The executive is a strong structure.

What Is Not Working?

- Communication gap and too large a number. Hard to handle.
- Varying opinions not always 'best' if not handled well.
- Has always been discontent at some level. Good or bad.
- Connect
- Would like to see representation from the seed stock industry and cow / calf producers (they are the foundation of the industry).
- Some Board members do not see the big picture due to lack of experience.
- Still a boys Club.
- Zone representation may not be as important as skills and effectiveness of board members.
- Board is too large. Reduce the number of zones to 4, keep 3 feeder directors, 1 cattle industry director plus 3 directors at large.
- Board is too large.
- #6. Committees – need to fix committees.
- Too many – maximum 12.
- Power concentration in the Executive.
- Power is concentrated (if Board and delegates stripped down, perhaps we would end up with a small governance board who can engage others in the work).
- One year term for executive is short. It barely gives one a good grasp on the position.
- Board is too large.
- Too big!! Almost impossible to achieve any kind of consensus.
- No need for executive committee. Board needs to be engaged at all times.
- Seems to be an unwieldy amount of Directors.
- 19 too many.
- The board is plenty big.
- If the number of zones were reduced, the number of zone delegates could be reduced.
- Perhaps work load is falling to too few people.

Suggestions for Improvement

- Communication lines need clarifying.
- We are definitely zone directors but have to be careful cattle feeders and industry council doesn't outweigh other segments of the industry (seed stock and cow / calf).

- Are we trying to run a business or are we trying to represent an industry? We have to be extremely careful not to create an organization that no longer represents cattle producers. We must be careful not to destroy the representation of the cow / calf and the seed stock aspect and increasing influence of cattle feeders and industry council.
- New Directors should be a delegate for at least 2 years.
- Go to skill-based Board. Perhaps shrink board and rely on zone delegates to bring grass roots issues to board. Reduce number of zones from 9 to 5.
- Move towards a more skills-based board and remove the committees except for Finance & Audit and CIC and CFC (for now).
- Make the executive board driven by removing it as an executive committee.
- Board of Directors
 - Nine elected from zone (the 9 from the elected body (delegates) need to have geographical representation and various skill sets – keep geographical representation / keep in mind skills etc.
 - Three elected from floor - delegates, CFC or CIC allows for special interest group but doesn't allow the focus only on special interest (dominate discussion)
 - Executive elected from Board – positive
 - Board reduce in size can be more effective in decision-making and more streamlined.
- Issue: Should chair of Feeder Council be formally made a member of executive is okay with me. Do we need to appoint CBEF rep. from Board? Other rep. from Board? #6 – don't list all the committees in the plan.
- Smaller board desirable, if possible, without losing representation/skills.
- Cut board to 12.
- Should be only an efficient Board i.e. 8 – 12 with a Chair etc. Work distributed over the entire Board who have task focused groups that come together when needed for issue background research etc.
- Board should be more efficient – no more than the '8 – 12' rule.
- Reduce total number of directors
 - Reduce number of zones, therefore reduce number of zone directors.
 - Reduce numbers of directors at large.
 - Three CFC and 2 CIC directors maybe need to be adjusted: maybe one each?
- If number of zones isn't decreased, perhaps they could be grouped into 3 electing bodies, each electing 2 directors.
- Smaller board, no executive committee.
- Need fewer zones therefore fewer zone directors.
- Would allow for more directors at large to be elected or for members of different industry segments (purebred, cattle feeders, etc.) to be elected.
- If not already the case, it should be policy of the ABP that an executive committee cannot supersede the board of directors.
- Reduce size of board.
 - Board may require less geographic representation and more balanced sectoral / industry council representation. Currently 10% CIC, 15% CFC, 45% zone (geographic), 30% at large
 - Not necessary that directors be delegates; get the best people forward
 - Executive setting agenda / preparing background information can influence outcome; people base their decision on the information they have at the time.

- I wonder what the Finance Chair is the Chair of, if there is not a Finance Committee?
- I would suggest 9 zone directors.
 - 2 cattle feeder directors
 - 2 directors at large directors
 - 1 cattle industry director
- Big question is whether you need to classify what sector the directors are from.
- The Board is really too large. The difficulty is how to achieve political acceptable downsizing.
- I believe we should have to be a delegate to be a director.
- I actually like 9 zone directors and 5 directors elected at large.
- If the number of zones are reduced, the board itself would shrink. This should be considered.
- Conference calls should be used when possible.
- The executive set up has served us well.
- I'm leery of using a CEO – potential for too much power in the wrong hands.

TOPIC 6: Committees

Topic 6: Individual Comments (18 responses)

What Is Working?

- Cattle Feeder Council, Cattle Industry Council should stay in ABP Plan Reps. The others could be Ad Hoc Committees. It's imperative to maintain these two councils in ABP. They are very influential and better kept as working partners with ABP.
- CFC is working.
- Covering a lot of topics – necessary or not.
- Some committees have ongoing business (e.g. reviewing research proposals each year). Other committees could be Ad Hoc.
- Feeder Council and Industry Council should stay (especially if reorganize the rest).
- CFC and CIC in the Plan is necessary as they are industry related.
- CFC, CIC seems to stabilize the organization. It provides a liaison between beef and industry organization.
- Industry Council and Cattle Feeder Council.
- Too much overlap. CFC is working, CIC is working – both effective.
- CIC, CFC.

What Is Not Working?

- CFC struggles with cattle feeder engagement.
- The committees are not always relevant to the strategic plan.
- The structure hinders staff.
- The committees take on a life of their own.
- No Finance and Audit Committee (?)
- No Nomination, Election and Governance Committee (?)
- Ability / disability to measure effectiveness.
- Don't need all committees outlined in Plan.
- Too many committees that perhaps are there just because "they have always been there".
- Only delegates serve on these.
- Are the other committees all required? Don't know as little information is brought forward.
- Some committees have a large time commitment. This discourages participation.
- Too many committees.
- Every delegate does not need to sit on a committee.
- Too many Standing Committees.
- Committees, particularly with the current turnover rate, often get in the way of staff administering board policy.
- Limitation of 1 delegate on 1 committee and the existence of committees primarily for the purpose of having someplace for the delegate to sit.
- I feel there are too many general committees. I question how effective they can be.
- Eliminate committees.
- Technical – not enough expertise on the committee.
- Promotion / Producer Liaison / Public Affairs all do the same thing but target slightly different audiences and should be combined or eliminated.

- I don't think committees need to be listed in the Plan.
- Committees become stagnant.

Suggestions for Improvement

- Eliminate all committees as we have them presently. All could be 'as needed' or ad hoc committees. I would remove CFC and CIC if there is a need they will activate.
- Tighter guidelines / mandates for committees would be useful.
- If a committee or council is part of the election process (you get directors from the committee) it should be outlined in the Plan.
- Need committees only to form when they are focused. Use and chase the best (skilled, knowledgeable) - not necessarily the delegates.
- Focus the tasks of committees.
- Use more ad hoc committees.
- Need to identify industry priorities and focus resources on them (2 – 3 at a time).
- Overhaul the committee structure.
- Let your staff do their jobs by Ad Hoc Committees directing policy, not staff.
- Have the Board do policy setting – not Executive Committees.
- Use ad hoc committees, more specific, more flexible, and more efficient.
- Committee priorities should be set each year based on resolutions passed at AGM and issues that arise as the year goes by.
- Abolish permanent committees; create ad hoc committees; maintain FC and IC under Plan.
- ABP loses many good people because the work load is too heavy.
- Ad hoc or renewed committees.

TOPIC 7: Meetings

Topic 7: Individual Comments (18 responses)

What Is Working?

- Annual meetings are necessary.
- Call of the Chair.
- Board meetings.
- Meetings are timely.
- Some use of conference calling and internet.
- Meetings are at the call of the Chairs.
- The Executive is a strong structure.
- Need AGM and semi-annual meeting.
- PTP should remain operational.
- I feel the current meeting structure is effective.
- Has worked but due to BSE had to meet more often at the call of the Chair.
- It's working. No further meeting specifics should be noted in the Plan.
- Board / Executive meetings at call of the Chair.
- Meetings as necessary at call of the Chair (either whole delegate body) or at Committee level.

What Is Not Working?

- Too many meetings overall.
- 4 – 6 board meetings should be sufficient.
- 10 – 12 meetings per year? Could a conference call replace some meetings? Is the information to be discussed pressing or could it be put off until next month?
- Lack of continuity:
 - Staff support
 - Committee members
- Large committees take longer to get through material. Number of meetings discourages delegates.
- Could more meetings be held over teleconference?
- Miscommunication.
- Total board not engaged.
- Committees become stagnant.
- Meetings should be demand-driven or issue-driven.
- Time for producers to get involved is always an issue.
- Perhaps the workload is falling to too many few people.
- Too many meetings are a negative for those people that are trying to run one or more businesses.
- Sometimes too many meetings for no reason due to committee.
- Committees meet at times out of obligation.
- Communication (body) producers' morale re. cattle industry; lack of knowledge (information) sharing.

Suggestions for Improvement

- Conference calls for emergencies or agenda items of lesser importance.
- Need a feedback loop back to the producers with a time interval less than one year; Even if they try to become engaged they lose interest in the intervening period.

- Board meetings could be cut in half.
- Executive meetings could be eliminated.
- Committees could be reduced = less meetings.
- If you decrease meetings you may increase quality of directors.
- I agree with not listing executive and committee meetings.
- Page 16, #6. I think the government is “using” us too often to help them build consensus. I think, on many issues, we might have to go back to just telling the government what we believe and what policies of theirs that we would support or not support and then let them worry about building consensus.
- Make better use of conference calls and video. Use e-mail. It can be efficient. Improve the website.
- Agendas should be operational.
- Allow time for producers on the agenda rather than reports.
- Meetings should be held as needed at the call of the Chairs.
- Should not specify the number of meetings for any group. Should only specify that an annual meeting be held and that the annual zone meetings be held.
- Use technology such as conference calls and video conferencing for interim meetings.
- Establish a proper quorum for zone meetings (maybe 15).
- Meetings should be only when there is something to do.
- If you have ad hoc committees obviously you meet until the task is completed.
- Do twice as many producers meetings, half as many board meetings.
- Smaller board would ensure an engaged board.
- Ad hoc or renewed committee.
- If committees are dissolved so will the meetings.
- If issues arise, have a meeting.
- Use internet and conference calls.
- Should be demand-driven.
- Examine remote meetings.
- Some leadership required, if all about getting input, then hire a pollster.
- Maybe instead of physical meetings, electronic meetings may be just as useful.
- Zone Chairman should contact the person as to how resolution results come out.
- Conference calls should be used when possible.
- Eliminate sub zones please.
- Look at different ways of facilitating meetings.
- Training for delegates to better communicate with producers.
- Review quorum requirements – look at eliminating the requirements at zone meeting for issue-based resolution but not for election.
- Different ways to meet (e.g. teleconferences, email), chair needs to take and assess accountability.

Other Comments and Feedback: Individual Comments (2 responses)

What Is Working?

- Competitiveness and market action are critical.
- Donna did an excellent job of keeping us on target and challenging us to think in different ways.

Suggestions for Improvement

- Policy research and development critical.
- I was disappointed with the structure of the group as only two people that I could see were truly independent of the organizations involved. Others were either past presidents, directors, delegates or family of current directors or executive members. I hoped to see more independent producers

APPENDIX II

ABP Working Group Members

ABP REGULATORY REVIEW WORKING GROUP MEMBERS	
Alberta Beef Producers - Steering Committee	Alberta Auction Market Association
Erik Butters	Jim Abel
Millie Boake	Cory Sekura
Charles Christie	Alberta Livestock Dealers and Order Buyers Assoc
Bill Newton	Jason Danard
ABP Delegate Volunteers	Terry Prescott
Travis Toews	Alberta Milk
Carol Wilson	Albert Kamps
Roy Eckert	Bill VanRootselaar
Producer Volunteers	Feeder Associations of Alberta
Len Vogelaar	Harvey Donahue
Ed Theissen	Ted Quist
Danny Hozack	Purebred Sector
Marilyn Sharp	Frank Murphy
Western Stock Growers Association	Kirk Wildman
Russ Pickett	Next Generation Producers
Wendy Adam	Chris Walters
Alberta Cattle Feeders Association	Travis Olson
Rick Sears	Marketing Council
Jeff Warrack	Ken Jersch
	Mike Pearson