

SFIREG'S WORKING COMMITTEES POM AND EQI

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A BRIEF HISTORY OF AAPCO

- AAPCO is the Association of American Pesticide Control Officials, Inc.
- We are a non-profit trade association, originally formed in 1947 as a means for states to communicate about pesticide management with each other, the federal government, Congress, and other interested parties.
- AAPCO has several permanent standing committees including Worker Protection, Laboratory Directors, and SFIREG, as well as working committees and liaisons with all sister associations.

SFIREG

- SFIREG – the State FIFRA Issues Research and Evaluation Group – was formed in 1978 after Congress gave the states’ the ability to assert PRIMACY for the state pesticide enforcement and certification programs.
- With states managing implementation through primacy and EPA’s role in federal registration and rule-making (i.e. WPS and C&T) the two entities needed a mechanism to discuss what each other was doing and how to work together for the overall success of the pesticide programs.
- Thus SFIREG was born....

EPA'S SUPPORT OF SFIREG

- EPA supports SFIREG in several ways
 - Financially! SFIREG is funded through a cooperative agreement between U.S.EPA and AAPCO. The SFIREG grant is non-competitive and uses State and Tribal Assistance Grant (STAG) funding, and has been in place since 1978.
 - Participation in problem identification and resolution.
 - The SFIREG Roles and Responsibilities document is guidance for the committee that was developed, agreed to, and adhered to by the states and EPA.

AAPCO'S SUPPORT OF SFIREG

- AAPCO ensures that SFIREG is state lead agency only – there is no lobbying with SFIREG funding, no multi-stakeholder workgroups/committees, no tribal or other federal/Canadian pesticide program representatives. **SFIREG is only for the state agencies with primacy for pesticide programs.**
- Funding for SFIREG activities helps support the AAPCO Executive Secretary and Treasurer roles, and both positions work together to ensure that SFIREG is run appropriately per federal guidelines and that the committee is stable, well supported, and ongoing.
- AAPCO recognizes the vital role of SFIREG for the benefit of SLA programs.

HOW DOES SFIREG WORK?

- There are 10 EPA regions, and SFIREG consists of a representative from a state within each region. The selection of the representative is up to the states within the region, as is the length of their term. Generally most regions have a rotating schedule for SFIREG representation. SFIREG representatives are responsible for holding Pre-SFIREG meetings with their states to assess interest/concern in various topic areas and solicit input on emerging issues.
- Issues that are of importance for multiple regions are a priority for SFIREG.

SFIREG'S WORKING COMMITTEES

- When SFIREG agrees that an issue is of interest, the issue generally needs to be explored more. In that case, usually SFIREG will assign the topic to one or both of the working committees. Eventually Full SFIREG will interface with EPA directly to work together for issue resolution.
- Likewise, because the working committees are populated by subject matter experts in technical areas such as registration, water quality, certification, and enforcement, these committee members frequently are aware of issues at the ground level and SFIREG relies on them to bring these potential topics to the committees first.
- It's a Two-Way Street.

HOW DO THE WORKING COMMITTEES WORK?

- Membership on the working committees is based on a nomination process that aims to select subject matter experts in all areas of pesticide regulation and education.
- The terms are for 3 years, and 2 terms may be served consecutively.
- The Chairperson's term is 2 years, and 2 terms may be served consecutively.
- The Chairpersons for each committee are responsible for selecting the members, with agreement from the Full SFIREG Chairperson, AAPCO President and EPA's SFIREG Liaison.

MY RECOMMENDATIONS

- I have served on EQI, on Full SFIREG, on the AAPCO board, and as the AAPCO Executive Secretary, and I have a couple of suggestions, especially for folks newly involved with SFIREG.

1. THERE ARE NO DUMB QUESTIONS EVER. ASK AS MANY QUESTIONS AS YOU WANT TO AND NEED TO. A lot of times overlooked snags, inconsistencies, and missed opportunities are captured by 'dumb' questions. Please discuss topics with each other and do not hesitate to speak up in meetings.

MY RECOMMENDATIONS

2. It is so much information! Do your best to keep up, but evaluate where your actual interests are and where your subject matter understanding falls and focus on those topics. Speak up and let your fellow committee members and chair know how you can contribute or if there are subject areas you would like to learn more about. Use SFIREG to develop your professional expertise.

3. It is a little overwhelming! Don't expect to go home after a meeting (especially in person) and do much more than hug your loved ones, animals and pillows for at least a day (or two or three). It's a lot to process! Schedule appropriately.

**THANK YOU
FOR OFFERING YOUR TIME AND
EXPERIENCE TO SFIREG!!!**

Do any experienced members have more to add for our new folks?

Please reach out to the committee chairs and myself with any questions as we move forward.