

MA Statewide EE Database Subcommittee Meeting Minutes

Monday April 27, 2014, 10am – 12pm

Mass DEP offices, 1 Winter Street, 2nd floor, Conference Rooms B&C

Attendees: Christina Halfpenny (DOER), Matt Saunders (AG), Christina Dietrich (ENE), Sharon Weber (DEP), Brad Swing (Boston), Bob Rio (AIM), John Howat (NCLC), Paul Johnson (Greentek), Amy Vavak (MECA), Eric Winkler (ISO), Shaela Collins (Rich May), Lynn Westerlind (National Grid), Lisa Shea (NU), Leo Steidel (Energy Platforms), Mike Myser (Energy Platforms), Eric Belliveau (Optimal), Steve Bower (Optimal), Ian Finlayson (DOER), Lawrence Masland (DOER), Nancy Seidman (DEP), Ben Davis (DPU), Barry Perlmutter (DPU), Jeff Leupold (DPU), Justin Brant (DPU), Cara Mottola (DPU)

Tina opened the meeting. Tina said that this is a big day, that we have decisions to make. We have produced a Vision Statement, and we have produced the final specification.

We have a difference of opinion between the subcommittee and the PAs. The PAs expressed their concerns in the memo of 4/15 and DOER has responded. We also received comments from the Green Justice Coalition (GJC) and the Optimal consultant team.

Tina believes we have more things in common than we think:

There is common agreement that we need to centralize statewide data. We need to move past the point of having 11 different reports.

We all agree that ratepayer privacy is very important to protect.

While the PAs were not initially on board regarding TRM automation, we now agree as to the benefits of TRM automation and the PAs are moving ahead with a project.

Shaela stated that the PAs were always on board regarding TRM automation, and that we already have a statewide view but there are some inefficiencies we have to address.

Tina said that her understanding is that the PAs will issue an RFP for a draft TRM by May 1.

Tina stated that moving to a common naming convention process is a big step that is underway. The PAs are creating MAREE as an interim reporting solution with centralization of the existing data with better access to the 80-50 table data. DOER does not however see MAREE as a database.

We all agree that the data we are talking about collecting must be protected. We are not proposing going out for an RFP to build the database at this time, but will engage the DPU first. We must decide how to move forward. With that goal we agreed to provide a concise request to the DPU.

Ian showed an old powerpoint slide presented to the EEAC early in the process, and said that the fundamental design originally proposed for the database has not changed throughout the process. It proposes collecting source data, and producing any reports from the source data. We have spent time discussing with data and its protection and this will now be resolved through another process. The PAs will upload data, clean the data and then publish results and reports under their control.

The proposed public reporting area resembles MAREE, presenting data to the public and allowing some queries while protecting ratepayer privacy.

Tina stated that she hopes we won't continue to call it MAREE.

Ian said that we also want to collect granular data and the Vault is designed to ensure we address privacy concerns. The best analogy for the Vault is the current KEMA EM&V database – which demonstrates privacy and access can be dealt with. Clearance to access the source data in the Vault might be limited to the EM&V team, the Optimal consultant team might also have reasons to access it. DOER does not expect to see the raw data, but to be able to query it directly. Data in the vault would remain under PA control.

Since December the TRM concepts have changed, open to discussion. Is it possible that MAREE could become the public face of the statewide database?

Tina stated that this is an unusual situation. In the last five years, we have begun moving beyond our previous level of 1% of retail sales, to becoming the most aggressive state in the nation in terms of percentage of retail sales from energy efficiency. MA has produced \$5.5B in benefits in the past three years. We have created an energy efficiency industry in MA and a lot of jobs. The statewide database makes sense as the next step and will help us achieve our goals.

Sharon stated that the DEP is in favor of seeing a 'statewide' database. The currently available spreadsheets are unwieldy. We need better tools. They are particularly interested in usage data around wastewater treatment plants.

EricW stated ISO will take no official position. He said that he already has a rich data set. Is the ISO willing to capitalize on their data system which serves 6 states? He proposes the use of the ISO data system as a solution. The ISO data includes 450 power plants and 12 million data points.

The ISO is willing to discuss using the system's resources. The only challenge is defining the UI. The ISO is already collecting the data on the electric side but not on the gas side. EricW has gotten senior management at the ISO to see the value in doing this.

Bob said that the goal is to get his members to use the energy efficiency programs. He wants data for penetration purposes. This will allow him to target outreach, like Sharon's goals.

John stated that he had a LEAN meeting last week in which they had an in-depth discussion. This was big picture among LEAN agencies. There is strong interest in getting better statewide data, to be used for penetration and savings analysis, and to build support.

John expressed a concern that better, fresher data may lead to more frequent program changes, which may make programs more difficult to promote. Should scope and access be second to development? These are fundamental questions to be addressed up front. He is glad to hear we are holding off on the RFP. He agrees with the GJC statement of support for the database. John is concerned about others having access to data that would allow other vendors to run programs around theirs and its impact on state budget. There are some bad actors out there.

Tina thanked John for bringing up the issue of program implementation volatility. It is something that we have to guard against.

Brad supports the idea of a centralized statewide database including usage data to support the efforts of cities and towns. We need the information to better target neighborhoods, a New Day. The ARRA Block Grants demonstrated what can be done and Boston has partnered with NU and National Grid to make this happen. Cities and towns are interested in data as demonstrated by BERDO. Brad agrees with the GJC position – zip code level geographic data. He hopes we can move forward, but we need to clarify sequencing. The database needs to and can include usage data to improve penetration and effectiveness. Brad supports the goals of the statewide database.

Christina D said that we need the database and ENE supports it, including project and usage data. Privacy is, of course, very important. The Vault can help. She recommended waiting on the RFP until the DPU weighs in on privacy and access.

Matt said the AG's Office supports the statewide database. The AG does not need or want access to the vault on a day-by-day basis. They are sensitive to data and the required security. Matt asked Energy Platforms about the flexibility of the specification if the DPU weighs in with respect to privacy and access.

Leo explained the specification was built with this in mind, e.g. having role based privileges and access.

Shaela stated that the PA comments speak for themselves. We can have the DPU look at it. From her perspective, there is not value in providing more data. People are interested in aggregate data, and the PAs are managing that. We can give you aggregate reports. A statewide database has no value to the PAs. This creates a redundant system since we have tracking systems. The proposed data cannot answer many questions and thus provide no additional value.

Tina said that participation needs to be defined.

Shaela suggested that the Massachusetts Energy Insight tool meets Brad's needs.

Brad disagreed, saying that this does not solve the problem of engaging beyond municipally owned buildings. He disagreed with the legal requirements regarding customer data.

Shaela said that they feel that geographic segmentation at the town level is sufficient, not ZIP code level, for privacy reasons. The PAs do not agree with the plan to build the database and then decide what to do with the data.

EricW said that this merits looking at potential studies and requirements.

EricB stated that there are a lot of variables, but certainly more data is better.

SteveB said that the vision has been focused on how the programs are doing. Potential studies are typically performed at a high level, with a span of, for example, 10 years. They are difficult to apply to a three year plan. Tapping into the data would really help. The granular data would be enormously valuable.

EricB said that they could then revisit the data, track, and adjust.

EricW expressed a concern about usage data. If you want to get this kind of answer the database won't have enough data to solve this. There are unanswered questions about how valuable the data would be. We need more discussion about what it needed. Let's proceed as if usage data is a sticking point. What are we trying to do with the data?

Shaela asked about the process of moving this forward. – suggesting taking it to the Exec Com is out of scope.

Tina said we should take a draft resolution requesting DPU involvement to the Exec Com next and then bring it to the Council for a vote. The subcommittee is not able to vote, so it needs to go to the full council.

Barry stated that the more we can narrow the scope, the better. This is a formal process, and quick is a relative term.

EricW stated that MA is unique in the world that six months after the fact they change all the numbers. due to the adjusted gross savings change based on evaluation results.

Lynn stated that they are now finalizing 2013 adjusted gross values.

Shaela stated that they will have an issue with scope. What is the consensus? Clarify what subcommittee "support." Is.

Barry said that it is not clear in the vision statement of purpose of the database. What is the stated purpose?

Tina said that the vision statement clearly expressed the purpose.

Barry said we should whittle it down.

Shaela said she has a process question. Is it the Executive Committee on Wed? This may be outside the open meeting requirements.

Tina stated that we have not had a subcommittee that has had this scope of work. We did not put out a draft resolution for comment, we can have this discussion. The entire council weighs in in May.

Tina asked the Subcommittee what should we do? What is our position on the specification and the vision statement?

John asked if we can flip this and go to the DPU. Not endorse the documents, but put open ended questions to the DPU. Should that be our task?

Tina stated that the plan orders the committee to develop the scope and the design of the statewide database. The council has the responsibility to sign off on this.

Shaela asked if we can just deem this done and not agree to the result?

Mike stated that these documents are the work put forth from the working group and subcommittee. This is the culmination of this effort. Clarified, we do not have a consensus.

EricW said that this is the work we have today.

Tina expressed the need to put out something stronger than that.

Matt said he is currently not prepared to support the Vision Statement as is. We have a document to present to the council. This is what we want to take to the DPU. Why May? Is there a deadline?

Tina said that the specification has been finalized.

EricW said there is nothing wrong with disagreement.

Tina said she is not sure we can articulate our areas of disagreement.

Nancy stated that we need to be as specific as possible in the DPU request. We are spinning our wheels.

Tina said that we are agreeing to disagree the the PAs about the scope of the database.

Ian asked that when we bring this topic to the council in May, can members articulate where your disagreements lie?

Brad asked what would that EEAC meeting look like?

Tina asked how could the full EEAC be expected to reach consensus if the subcommittee can't?

EricW said that the EEAC can accept it, send it back, or pass it on to the DPU. We should take it to the EEAC.

Ben stated that what you ask the DPU to do needs more definition. "Here is how we read the requirement." We have been respecting the operation of the subcommittee and working group and have not fully participated. If the DPU participated would this go better?

Matt said send the specification to the full council, because it can be adjusted.

Mike suggested the group ask the DPU to weigh in on the database inputs and the forming of a working group to deal with the privacy and access issues after it decides what data must populate the statewide database.

Brad stated support of the specification.

Christina stated support of the specification. What becomes of the Vision Statement?

Nancy stated support of the specification. We should resolve the Vision Statement.

Brad said he would like to avoid another subcommittee meeting to approve the Vision statement.

Tina asked that everyone send Vision statement edits to her as chair, and she will send out the red line version.

John said that we could send the record of all stakeholder comments to the DPU along with the questions.

John said that the PAs have asserted that by law they can't do this. The DPU is well situated in matters of law.

Barry said you must focus the DPU ask.

Tina adjourned the meeting.