



Planning Towards The BEIR VIII Report

OBSERVATIONS AND LESSONS LEARNED FROM BEIR VII

NATIONAL ACADEMY OF SCIENCES

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Overview and Organization of the Presentation

- ▶ People
- ▶ Technical/Scientific and Process Issues
- ▶ Interactions With The Public and Communications
- ▶ General Comments

PEOPLE

- ▶ Strong and broad scientific expertise, including non-scientific and communications
- ▶ Experience in working with communities
- ▶ Demonstrated objectivity; no clear advocacy
- ▶ Legitimate difference of opinion can be very helpful; advocacy is generally not
- ▶ Avoid known conflicts – don't ask for trouble from the beginning
- ▶ The Chair:
 - ▶ Doesn't have to be a content expert (e.g., radiation)
 - ▶ Must be well organized
 - ▶ Must be strong and have experience leading a group as complex and as visible as this; should be respectful and open

Process Issues

- ▶ FIRST – Decide how the committee will make decisions
- ▶ Try to establish a timeline with specific milestones and deliverables
- ▶ Determine the most effective use of meeting time
 - ▶ Link with specific points in the timeline
 - ▶ How long should each meeting be (it may vary)?
 - ▶ Where should the meetings be?
 - ▶ Does the entire committee need to attend every meeting? Can there be sub-group meetings?

Technical/Scientific Issues

- ▶ What evidence should the committee consider?
 - ▶ Peer reviewed published reports only?
 - ▶ In press; under review; finished but not yet reviewed; nearly finished?
 - ▶ Other types of material submitted directly to the committee?
- ▶ New analysis
 - ▶ Availability of relevant data
 - ▶ Who will do it and what relationship do they have with the committee?
 - ▶ Who will interpret the new results?
 - ▶ How long should the committee wait for access to data that are likely to be of major significance in estimating risk?

Interactions With The Public And Communications

- ▶ How will the committee follow up with people who submit materials?
- ▶ How should committee members respond to direct contact from the public?
- ▶ What are the rules of engagement with the media?
 - ▶ Print, tape, live

General

- ▶ Importance of participating in social functions
- ▶ Importance of a broad array of skills, expertise and experience
- ▶ Importance of objective approach

“Bottom-Line” Questions

- ▶ What is the added value of an analysis of either new data that have not been described yet in the published literature, or new aspects of existing data?
- ▶ How much of this report will be truly NEW and will significantly improve our understanding of the risks associated with the radiation exposures studied?