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Appendix to Terms of Reference

Transmission of Recommendations

The Multi-Stakeholder Working Group on Sodium Reduction will explore options for reducing the overall consumption of sodium by Canadians and provide advice to the Minister of Health. The Minister retains decision-making authority and responsibilities.

Some Working Group recommendations may extend beyond the scope of the Health Portfolio. In this case, these recommendations will be provided to the appropriate parties.

Approval of Terms of Reference

The Terms of Reference of the Working Group on Sodium Reduction were approved by the Working Group and the Minister of Health.

Member Selection Process

Stakeholder organizations from the following areas: the scientific community, health professional community, health-focused non-governmental organizations, consumer-advocacy groups, food manufacturing and food service industries and government were invited to submit one or two nominees to participate in the Working Group. Health Canada selected members, based on nominations put forward by participating organizations in the various sectors, to ensure a mix of disciplines, skill sets and perspectives. Consideration was also given to geographical representation.

Affiliations and Interests

Members of the Working Group must complete the *Affiliations and Interests Declaration Form* and submit it to the Secretariat. It is incumbent upon the member to update their statement in writing, should their personal situation change.

In keeping with the [Privacy Act](#), a completed Affiliations and Interests Declaration Form is confidential. The HPFB will not make public any information in the form without the member's permission, but members must agree to the online publication of a summary of their affiliations and interests.

Members are expected to conduct themselves in an appropriate manner, i.e., the use of their positions cannot be reasonably construed to be for their private gain or that of any other person, company, or organization.

Confidentiality

Every member participating in the Working Group must sign a confidentiality agreement. The agreement prohibits the disclosure of any protected information received through participation in the Working Group, including information received orally or in writing. The Secretariat of the Working Group will mark information according to the level to which it is protected under the [Government Security Policy](#).

The Chair will ensure that everyone participating in the meeting, telephone discussion, e-mail exchange, or in another form of communication has received clear instructions on the confidentiality of the proceedings.

Security Clearance

All members must undergo a security clearance to the "reliability status" level.

Indemnification of members when serving as volunteers

All members serve on the Working Group on a volunteer basis. In keeping with the [Treasury Board's Policy on the Indemnification of and Legal Assistance for Crown Servants](#) and the [Volunteers Policy](#), members are eligible for the same protection against personal civil liability as federal employees when faced with comparable risks while acting within the mandate of the committee and serving as volunteers.

Quorum

Advice from the Working Group is in the form of recommendations. The Working Group will not meet unless a quorum is present. Quorum will be achieved when two thirds of all Working Group members and half the representatives of each "stakeholder community" (as defined in the Terms of Reference) are present. The foregoing notwithstanding, all members should strive to be present at each Working Group meeting.

Working Group Deliberations: Consensus

As much as possible, decisions will be made based on consensus amongst the Working Group members. When consensus is not possible, the meeting record will reflect the diversity of opinions. In the case of major issues, in the absence of consensus and following the exhaustion of reasonable efforts to find a consensus-based solution, members of the Working Group who disagree with the decision will issue a minority report, stating the reasons for the disagreement.

Guests and Observers

The Chair, in consultation with the Steering Committee, may invite individuals with particular expertise or experience to provide input on a specific topic or agenda item. However, an invited guest may not participate in the formulation of advice or recommendations to the Minister.

The Working Group may allow individuals, organizations, or members of the general public to observe a meeting, or parts of a meeting.

Alternates

Members who are unable to attend a Working Group meeting will not be permitted to have an alternate serve as a replacement. The objective of this policy is to maximize members' ownership of Working Group decisions and to maintain the momentum of the Working Group.

Process for Resignation and Replacement

Members will provide 14 days' notice of their intent to resign. The resignation notice must be in writing and be addressed to the Chair, and a copy to the Secretariat. The letter should state the effective date of resignation.

Organizations whose representatives must withdraw from the Working Group during the course of its mandate will be invited to nominate a replacement. Appointments to the Working Group are subject to approval by the Chair.

Reasons for Termination

A member's failure to act according to the Working Groups's Terms of Reference may give cause for termination. If this is the case, the Chair, in consultation with the Steering Committee, will make a recommendation to Health Canada to end the appointment of the member. Health Canada will advise the member in writing, stating the reason for the termination and the effective date.

Notice and Agendas of Meetings

Working Group members will be notified of upcoming meetings and canvassed for agenda items at least 4 weeks in advance.

Transparency

The Secretariat will post meeting reports on the Health Canada Web site after approval by the Working Group. Reports posted online will be available in both official languages and will comply with [Treasury Board's Common Look and Feel Guidelines](#), and [Health Canada's Guidelines for Presentation of Reports and Publications and Guidelines for Presentation of Public Involvement Activities and Consultations](#). There will be no references to comments made by individual members or the public.

Media and Communications

Before the end of each meeting, the Working Group will establish the key outcomes that will be included in messaging developed for communication purposes. All media calls

related to the Working Group will be directed to Health Canada, Media Relations who will coordinate responses with the Chair, the designated spokesperson.

Review of Working Group

Health Canada and the Chair will review the Working Group mandate, activities, terms of reference and relevance upon completion of its first report to the Minister. The Department retains the prerogative to disband the committee following such review.