Expert Panel on Emerging Risk Assessment Approaches (EPERA) Policies and Procedures

Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment

California Environmental Protection Agency

Introduction

The **Expert Panel on Emerging Risk Assessment** (EPERA) is a panel constituted by the **New Toxicology Evaluations Section (NTES) of the Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA), Division of Scientific Programs, California Environmental Protection Agency.** NTES was created in 2023 to work with CalEPA, academic partners, and other stakeholders to address assessment needs of data-poor chemicals. NTES will develop risk assessments and related methodologies for data-poor chemicals of interest for OEHHA and CalEPA contributing to regulatory documents, scientific manuscripts, review reports and other related products released by OEHHA. This document specifies:

- Purpose of the EPERA
- EPERA membership
- Expectations for EPERA members and NTES
- Roles and responsibilities of EPERA members and NTES

Purpose of the EPERA

The EPERA will provide feedback to the NTES on research projects, draft documents, and activities. The EPERA's advice to NTES does not require consensus among panel members; rather each individual can provide feedback based their own area of expertise, experience and point of view.

EPERA membership

EPERA members will have knowledge, experience, and interest in new assessment methodologies and their application in risk management.

EPERA members will be nominated by NTES staff based on current needs of the program. New nominations may be considered if key research expertise is missing from the EPERA or to replace a member. EPERA nominations will cover diverse research and application experience with expertise in toxicogenomics, toxicokinetics, bioinformatics, chemoinformatics, alternative animal models, use of new assessment methodology in risk assessment, and related areas.

EPERA aims to maintain seven members, but this number may change in the future depending on the needs of NTES.

EPERA appointment term is for 3 years and is renewable.

Expectations

To create an environment where participants are comfortable sharing their ideas and opinions, all parties are asked to keep the opinions and perspectives shared by individuals during EPERA meetings

confidential. Input from the meetings, including meeting minutes (i.e. general summary) and finalized materials are intended to be shared and will be made available to EPERA members by the NTES team.

EPERA members:

- Provide contact information and keep it up to date
- Respond to scheduling queries promptly and RSVP to meeting invitations
- Attend 2 meetings per year including remote and possibly, one meeting per year in person
- Review materials ahead of meeting and provide feedback at the meeting
- Review meeting summaries, especially for meetings missed so that information does not need to be repeated
- Listen carefully and provide constructive comments and feedback
- Offer suggestions to improve processes or materials based on area of expertise
- Commit to 12 hours per year for the activities of this group

OEHHA/NTES team:

- Hold meetings at times that are convenient to the greatest number of EPERA members
- Provide clear communications about meetings in advance
- Provide meeting materials a minimum of one week prior to the meeting, barring special circumstances
- Provide a clear agenda for each meeting and facilitate collaboration
- Consider all feedback and suggestions
- Keep overall process on timelines (e.g., meeting, review)
- Record feedback and input from EPERA members
- Organize and pay for travel and accommodations of EPERA members for in-person meetings

Roles and responsibilities

EPERA members:

The role of EPERA members is to share new ideas and NAMs, review and provide feedback on NTES research projects, draft documents and activities. Panel member feedback is welcome and critical for the success of our program. EPRA members should take into account how effective their feedback would be at helping NTES to achieve its goals in developing risk assessments and methodologies for data-poor chemicals, and to provide constructive suggestions. EPERA members will have specific subject matter expertise, to improve and strengthen NTES's work.

OEHHA/NTES team:

The role of the NTES team is to draft documents, plans, and activities, and to present these to EPERA for input. NTES will consider EPERA input and incorporate input that 1) will strengthen the document/plan, 2) address current knowledge and existing guidelines, and 3) is feasible. EPERA suggestions are not binding. More specifically, the NTES team will:

- Schedule and host EPERA meetings via Zoom or Teams.
- Provide materials to review at least one week in advance of EPERA meetings;
- Solicit constructive feedback from the panel and follow up on panel's suggestions;

- Facilitate a group process that allows for maximum participation by panel members;
- Organize in-person meetings and provide OEHHA travel accommodations and funding, where possible.