

## **AEC Orientation Workbook**

### **Consensus Decision-Making**

#### **Definition of Consensus**

Consensus has been achieved when everyone in the meeting can honestly say the following four statements to every other person:

1. I believe you understand my point of view.
2. I believe I understand your point of view.
3. I believe the decision has been made in an open and fair manner.
4. I am willing to support the group's decision, whether or not it is my preference.

#### **Steps in Reaching Consensus**

1. Rounds will be done for each key decision.
2. In the event a decision can not be reached by consensus, the AEC will decide to:
  - a) continue the discussion in the current meeting and push back other items.
  - b) table the item for further discussion in future meetings and identify any further information people will need to facilitate that discussion.
  - c) refer the item to committee or staff for further discussion and formulation of recommendations, or other arena for resolution; or
  - d) declare that there is no consensus and decide to:
    - continue with a modified goal or objective
    - disband
    - seek assistance to reach a resolution.

## Levels of consensus

During a round, each person indicates where they are with respect to the decision being proposed:

1. Fully support
2. Support with reservations
3. Acceptable
4. Will not block it, can live with it
5. Need more information or more discussion. (Identify what information is needed, how it will be obtained, and when)
6. No, cannot accept it

Any response at # 4 or above constitutes consensus. # 5 indicates that with more information or discussion, consensus may be possible. # 6 indicates a fundamental disagreement.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Adapted from B.C. Labour Force Development Board