CCME uses a consensus decision-making process in which jurisdictions work collaboratively to craft decisions that best satisfy their respective interests. This “Table Guide & Tool Kit” is designed to assist participants in that process.

ENCOURAGE
- Searching for the best solution that meets the interests of all jurisdictions
- Seeking a creative solution
- Moving from debating positions to creating solutions
- Team work

REINFORCING THE CONSENSUS PROCESS
- Focus on definable issues
- Seek out interests (underlying needs) not positions (a party’s perceived solution to meet their needs)
- Involve all participants
- Turn discussion from debating positions to creating solutions
- Generate options for possible solutions
- Look for creative solutions, not compromise
- Advance creative solutions

USEFUL TOOLS
- Clarifying - Asking questions to seek out interests
- Short breaks, opportunity for caucus
- Brainstorm - develop options
- Humour
- Defer topic until later in meeting, or another meeting
- Strike sub-committee, or delegate to another group to do analysis or follow-up on specific questions

AVOID
- Seeking compromise
- Finding the lowest common denominator
- Opting for the will of the majority
- Accepting might as right
- Debating positions

Consensus building is the shared responsibility of all participants.

Interests are more often compatible than positions.
## Consensus Building:
A Table Guide and Toolkit

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Problems</th>
<th>The Solutions</th>
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| Issue appears too complex | • Clarify the issue, or ask someone else to do so  
• Break the issue into logical parts and proceed  
• Suggest a short break  
• Assign issue (or parts) to a working group for analysis and recommendation |
| Parties tabling or arguing positions | • Note that discussion should focus on interests  
• Initiate process to identify interests, or re-state what you believe the interests to be  
• Explore options to satisfy interest  
• Discuss the evidence of facts supporting the interests  
• Move from positions to interests by asking “Why is this position important to you?” or “What is the underlying interest?” |
| Disagreement on facts | • Clarify the disagreement – What facts are in question?  
• Call on a member present or expertise to help clarify  
• Defer discussion and assign responsibility to resolve factual disagreement |
| No solutions are emerging | • Discuss components/elements/criteria for a solution  
• Brainstorm suggestions  
• Generation options or suggest a solution  
• Suggest a short break  
• Assign the issue or parts of it to a working group for further work and recommendations |
| If consensus is elusive | • Identify where consensus has been reached on components of the issue  
• Agree to as much as possible (principles, priorities, policies)  
• Agree that each jurisdiction will operate within the context of what has been agreed  
• Assign outstanding issues to a working group for further work and recommendations |

**Build on Small Wins**  
**Replicate the Process**  
**Celebrate Success**