

# Agricultural Air Quality Task Force

Accelerates open meeting cost-efficiency and accessibility



According to the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), American farms created more than 1 million U.S. jobs and fueled \$136.3 billion in exports in 2011, making it the 2nd most productive sector of the U.S. economy. Since its establishment in 1996, the Agricultural Air Quality Task Force's (AAQTF) sole purpose has been to advise and counsel the Secretary of Agriculture on major air quality issues. In particular, the AAQTF aims to ensure environmental regulations impacting the agricultural community—farmers, ranchers, and growers—are properly vetted by the scientific community.

Every year, the AAQTF meets 3-4 times to address policies facing the agricultural community. Under the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA), these meetings must be cost-efficient and open to the public. When the AAQTF realized it was spending large amounts of staff time and money on their recordkeeping and public information processes, they quickly prioritized an initiative to mitigate this with comprehensive Meeting Services provided by Granicus. Since then, the AAQTF has been able to streamline their meetings and meet FACA requirements with greater speed, openness, and cost-efficiency.

“Granicus helps us save time and make our committee meetings more readily accessible.”

- Elvis Graves, Designated Federal Officer

## Success Highlights

- Reduced the time spent on minutes and recordkeeping by 80%
- Saved \$10,000 on recordkeeping and public information processes
- Achieved a 98% reduction in time spent responding to information requests
- Increased the timeliness of public information delivery by 100%
- Improved the accessibility and quality of open meeting records
- Heightened awareness of committee goals and initiatives

### Fast Facts

**Agency Type:** Fed Advisory Committee

**Meeting Services:**

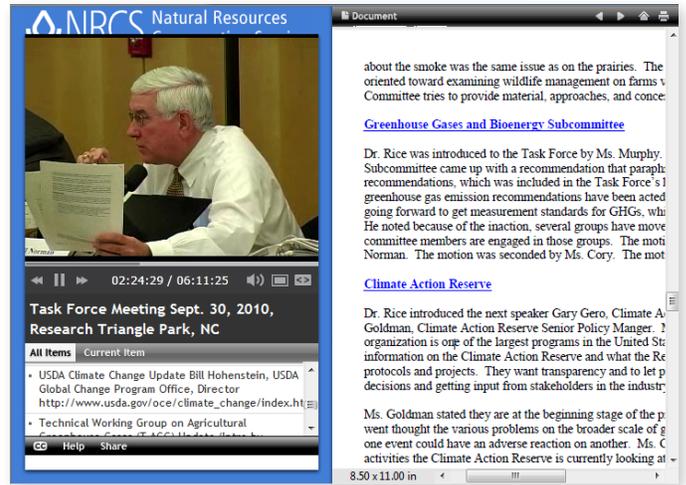
Webcasting  
Closed Captioning  
Minutes Annotation

**Active Since:** 2010

Before Granicus, the AAQTF relied on its members—industry representatives, farmers, ranchers and professors—to help fulfill FACA recordkeeping and public information requirements by transcribing the actions and decisions occurring during their regular meetings. Members were also heavily involved in review cycles after the meeting to ensure records accuracy. “This required a lot of staff time,” said Elvis Graves, Designated Federal Officer (DFO) for the Agricultural Air Quality Task Force.

As the DFO, Mr. Graves is ultimately responsible for ensuring the AAQTF meets FACA requirements by overseeing the entire meeting process. He manages and maintains meeting records, facilitates public access, and ensures efficient meeting operations. Before Granicus, Graves would spend countless hours gathering meeting notes from members, consolidating, editing and transcribing the official minutes records, as well as, managing the review cycles and publishing. Overall, the process would take roughly 3-4 weeks to complete. Graves also had to respond to roughly 30-40 requests for meeting materials on average after each meeting.

It was clear that this recordkeeping and public information process wasn’t sustainable—it required too much time and money. To address this, the AAQTF added Granicus Meeting Services. Instead of consuming valuable staff time and resources, Granicus transcribes meeting actions for the public record and even expands public access to this information through webcasting, closed captioning, and robust online archival.



*The integrated public record produced by Granicus*

During the AAQTF meetings, Granicus staff goes on-site to accurately annotate meeting actions into a digital minutes record. They also capture, manage, and deliver a webcast of the meeting for staff and the public to access live, on-demand, and from their mobile devices. Afterwards, the webcast and records are indexed, cross-linked, and archived in a keyword searchable meeting portal. This makes historical research on meeting issues much easier for online audiences. “I no longer have to spend time compiling information to respond to information requests. People can access it instantly online,” said Graves. “We’re now able to facilitate much more timely and meaningful public access to our meetings and records online,” Graves added.

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With Granicus, the AAQTF was able to reduce the time spent on minutes production by staff members and the DFO by 80%. “Now staff can stay focused on the discussions happening during the meetings rather than transcribing notes,” said Graves. “Also, it’s significantly decreased the time spent finalizing and publishing meeting records—we have immediate access to the meeting recording and can publish higher quality public records within 10 days rather than 4 weeks,” he added.

Overall, staff reports that Granicus has helped them increase awareness of the committee’s goals and actions by delivering faster and more comprehensive access to its meetings.

RETURN ON INVESTMENT	
Reduction in time committee staff spends on note-taking and reviews	80%
Minutes transcription and editing time-savings	80%
Increased timeliness and speed of information delivery	100%
Reduction in time spent on information requests	98%