

The feasibility of ending halon use appears to have been the most contentious topic of discussion for the Technology Review Panel. Although much less used than CFCs, halons have an extremely high ODP and a relatively high GWP. Alternatives do exist for halons used in fire extinguishers and fire control systems, but in the minds of some there is a question of the cost:benefit ratio should these alternatives be used on sensitive electronic equipment. They argue that the failure of computerized functions could threaten the environment and human life, health or security.

Apparently economic analyses weighing the costs and benefits of using halons have not been performed. Recent developments by chemical manufacturers suggest that less harmful non-halon and non-CFC alternatives may be available sooner than previously anticipated. Phasing out the use of halons may be less of a technical problem than envisioned.