

## Statewide Conformity Working Group Meeting Minutes

April 25, 2024

12:30 PM-3:30 PM

### Opening Remarks- **Rodney Tavitias and Erika Vaca, Caltrans HQ**

**Rodney Tavitias, Caltrans HQ** The Air Quality Branch plans to go back to hosting two meetings per year.

**Erika Vaca, Caltrans HQ** To start off, we will have FHWA and EPA present. We will have an update from CARB and Caltrans HQ. Please put your name and organization in the chat for the meeting minutes.

### Federal Updates - **Antonio Johnson, FHWA**

- **Staff Updates:** An offer on Joseph Vaughn's position has been made. The hope is that it will be complete in the next couple of weeks. Information will be forthcoming in the next 1.5 months. The person has a background in academia and is from San Jose State University.
- **Regulatory Updates-** No updates
- **FHWA, Caltrans, and MPO Roles in Conformity-** FHWA often gets items from the local level, which is outside of the procedures set up in California. When it is sent directly to us, the more black and white it gets. You have to work through Caltrans to address conformity/AQ issues and give Caltrans the opportunity to advocate for you. FHWA's role is to issue the conformity determination. We get there based on the analysis sent to FHWA and Caltrans. We do not go to find data. If you come to us and articulate things that are different than what is the analysis, that is where the black and white comes in and triggers stuff. As the federal agency in the NEPA assigned state, Conformity has not been delegated. My name is on the conformity determinations. I get concerned with any inconsistencies. Our role is not to check the documents for grammatical errors. In the past, we have reached out to many people to discuss the writing style. We cannot do that. For those in a leadership role, please check what is being sent to FHWA.
  - The state's role is the oversight agency. The Air Quality Branch is the first sign of defense. Work with them, if they do not agree with what you send, we will not approve the conformity determination. When I say the state, I mean Caltrans. It is their role to oversee your process and that is consistent with the conformity procedures and gives us confidence that the role is being carried out.

- The role of the MPO is to perform the analysis. When we have questions, we will not go to the City, we will go to the MPOs and the state. If you are not coordinating with your locals to develop those projects, you may need to. Especially in this new environment. We do not have the time or capacity to go to every local government to ask those questions.
- **NEPA/CEQA and Project Level Conformity**- I want to be clear. There is a difference between NEPA and CEQA. We have two agreements: 326 agreement and 327 agreements. FHWA is bound by that. FHWA deals with conformity. The Clean Air Act cannot be delegated. If it relates to conformity, that is FHWA. If not, that is not FHWA. If you have a disagreement, you must work it out with Caltrans. We are legally bound to not be involved in NEPA or CEQA. As part of the agreements, we occasionally check, but we cannot be involved in projects where there are challenges in getting that processed. FHWA- Conformity; NEPA CEQA- Caltrans
  - **Rodney Tavitias, Caltrans HQ** We can't always get the answer that you want. We will work with you to get the answer that you need.
  - **Ken Romero, Caltrans District 6** There are a lot of new employees in all of the Council of Governments (COG). We used to have a lot of training for Conformity in regard to FHWA/EPA requirements. I don't see that training coming through as much. We need the training. There are a lot of new processes. Who takes the lead on that? COGs used to give the trainings, everyone had their own training since it effects each entity differently. It opened a lot of questions to how we handle the situations. Who coordinates that?
  - **Rodney Tavitias, Caltrans HQ** That is something that is being discussed. We just haven't had the time. During Mike's [Brady] era, we had NEPA delegation. Some of the requirements that have been assigned to us have been challenging. We have a training coming up this October in San Diego with Sarah Sewik. She does a good job for an overall perspective. We plan to work with her on the project-level components.
  - **Ken Romero, Caltrans District 6** There are a lot of new employees and there is a lot of turnovers. There used to be a lot of trainings, but there needs to be more. A lot of things are falling through the cracks, who would take the lead on this?
  - **Rodney Tavitias, Caltrans HQ** We are happy to continue doing more of these [Statewide Conformity Working Group meetings] as well.

- **Antonio Johnson, FHWA** That is correct. My team will dedicate working closely with doing that. We have also noticed the staffing changes and are noticing some of these issues with the newer staff. Similar to the Air Quality Branch, we are in a reactionary period to address all of things going on. Our hope is that at some point this year we can get into a proactive period. FHWA goes through reviews every two years to identify risks and develop strategy plans. We are kicking off that process next month. That includes identifying risk in the air quality plan. As part of that we identify strategies for tackling that. We will work with Rodney's team to develop those strategies.
- **Karina O'Connor, EPA** We would be willing to work with everyone for the training. We have attended the trainings Sarah has hosted to address SIP issues and California processes. It is useful to make sure people understand our processes. We are willing to participate and to develop those guidance documents.
- **Antonio Johnson, FHWA** you are on the list of those contacts.
- **Rodney Tavitas, Caltrans HQ** we will make sure to reach out to make sure the key points are addressed.
- **Antonio Johnson, FHWA** Our new AQ specialists will be tasked with attending some of the trainings as well. For anyone new to the California process, it helps us to know what you are facing. The last thing I would say is to be patient as we get through this process. For team members not as familiar with air quality, tell them to be flexible. My last point- EPA is our federal partner. They are family. Everything that we approve and send to you, there is always EPA concurrence. Priority number one is to ensure that federal partners are on the same page. If you disagree with EPA, you disagree with FHWA and vice versa. Do not shop for answers. Allow us to work it out. Go through Caltrans; they advocate for you. There are members on my team that are on if you have any questions. For Caltrans, there will be some changes. You will see less of me and more of my staff. I need to give attention to people at other levels. You will slowly see me transition away from this group. Especially as the new Air Quality Specialist starts.

#### Federal Updates- **Karina O'Connor, EPA**

- **Staff Updates:**
  - Staff assignments are as follows:
    - Bay Area/MTC and SCAG, Michael Dorantes and Karina OConnor

- Sacramento, Butte, and San Luis Obispo, Andrew Ledezma
  - San Joaquin Valley, Karina for regional conformity and Lindsay Wickersham for project level conformity
  - San Diego and Rural Arizona regional conformity, John Kelly
- **PM 2.5 standard- Lindsay Wickersham, EPA**
  - Handouts were emailed before the meeting [attached to meeting minutes]. I am the PM 2.5 lead for the new NAAQS (2024 standard). Please reach out with any questions.
  - On Feb 7, 2024 EPA revised the primary annual PM2.5 NAAQS standard by lowering the level from 12.0  $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$  to 9.0  $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ .
  - CAA requires EPA to designate areas based on the new level as meeting or not meeting that NAAQS (attainment, nonattainment, or unclassifiable). This determination is based on 5 factors 1) air quality data - we look at the three most recent years of air monitoring data in these areas, 2) emissions data, 3) meteorology, 4) geography and topography and 5) jurisdictional boundaries.
  - States and Tribes are asked to submit recommendations for designation by Feb 7, 2025. The state agencies are currently working on these recommendations.
    - Once designations are received, they are reviewed by EPA. 120-day letters are sent no later than October 9, 2025. These are the responses to the state's boundary recommendations, and this starts a public comment period. Around December 2025, States and Tribes can respond to provide any additional information.
  - On February 6, 2026, final designations will be promulgated.
  - Within 18 months of the publish date of the notice, nonattainment areas will be required to submit a new SIP to allow attainment of the NAAQS- submittal deadline in 2027.
  - The effective date of the final designations triggers a 1-year grace period for transportation conformity. If an area is designated as nonattainment, they have one year to demonstrate transportation conformity. If an area is nonattainment within the one-year grace period, the MPO and DOT must conformity determination for the TIP must be made for the new NAAQS for they will fall into a conformity lapse.
  - EPA is happy to discuss as areas get designated.
    - **Rodney Tavitas, Caltrans HQ** With the new standard, we potentially have several areas that are isolated rural. How will project level conformity be done in those areas? Most

projects will be exempt from regional. If it is exempt from regional, will they have to complete the project level? I want to bring this up now so we can prepare before 2026.

- **Lindsay Wickersham, EPA** There are some guidance documents and resources explaining how to handle rural area conformity. We would be happy to circle back with more information. Thank you.
- **Rodney Tavitias, Caltrans HQ** Just wanted to bring it up to plan. We will figure it out and make it better as time goes on.
- **NAAQS Review and Implementation table- John Kelly, EPA**
  - The table shared in the email shows the various NAAQS that are under review at EPA Headquarters. It is split up into primary (health-based) and secondary (welfare-based), as well as secondary welfare-based subdivided into ecological and non-ecological NAAQS reviews. The columns are organized by what is being reviewed by HQ. When HQ reviews a standard, EPA has the choice to revise or retain. If the standard is retained there is no further implementation action (shown in the rows); that is, areas are not designated and there are no SIPs due.
  - The table is my own overview of the status of all the reviews.
  - Ozone is currently undergoing a review. A proposal and final date are yet to be determined. In 2020, the prior standard was retained. The last time it was revised was 2015 when it was lowered to 70ppb. The current information shown in the table is from science advisors, but there is no proposal just yet. Their advice so far is to lower the primary and create a distinct secondary standard called W126. The implementation dates in the ozone column will be filled in once there is a final action on this review.
  - For the NO<sub>x</sub>, SO<sub>x</sub>, and PM secondary ecological review, we have just released a proposal a few days ago and there is a deadline of December 10, 2024 to finalize the review. This is secondary - ecological because the pollutants have related ecological effects.
  - **Mike Brady**, On the ecological standards- they are secondary, but still NAAQS. Do we still have to demonstrate conformity to secondary, if so, how?
  - **John Kelly, EPA** Not sure how, but assume the answer is yes. We have looked into the question of secondary-only areas as a concept. We have not seen an actual secondary-only nonattainment area (NAA). The only difference in implementation of primary and secondary standards appears to be in the way the

attainment date is constructed. Primary standard NAAs must attain the standard as expeditiously as practicable (AEAP) but not later than the maximum attainment date specified in the Act. Secondary standards don't have attainment deadlines listed in the Act but must attain AEAP. For ozone, we have never had a distinctly separate secondary standard. We generally have set the secondary equal to the primary. If an area is nonattainment, it must meet the attainment date that EPA approves. With secondary-only nonattainment areas, the state still has to come up with an attainment date via modeling that attains AEAP. But everything else is the same with the modeling and approvals. If the area is nonattainment, even for secondary-only, conformity still applies.

- **Karina O'Connor, EPA** I am not aware of this being addressed in the non-attainment rule. We can look into it more. For the recent standard, we have not designated any areas. Anticipate that existing tests would apply to both, but I don't think additional tests would be needed. We will get back to you.
- **Karina O'Connor, EPA** EMFAC2021 was approved in November of 2022. In May 2023, EPA approved heavy duty emission adjustment factors for EMFAC2021 and EMFAC2017. We have had no additional approvals. We anticipate working with CARB as next version of EMFAC is developed and will coordinate with Caltrans/FHWA on the grace period for the new model.
- **SIP Updates-** Andrew Ledezma
  - Approvals FY 23/24
    - SJV 1997 PM 2.5 annual plan
      - We approved the motor vehicle emissions budget outside of the plan approval. (12/14/23)
    - Sacramento PM10 second 10-yr maintenance plan (3/14/24)
    - San Diego 2008 & 2015 Ozone plan (3/1/24)
    - Coachella 2008 Ozone adequacy review (3/22/23)
    - MTC conformity SIP revisions (12/28/23)
    - Coso Junction PM10 second 10-yr maintenance plan
  - Changes in classification: Coachella Valley is reclassified from Severe to Extreme nonattainment of the 2008 Ozone standard
  - Attainment deadlines:
    - Areas classified as Moderate nonattainment of the 2015 Ozone standard; the attainment is August 3, 2024 (Mariposa, Pechanga).

- Areas classified as Extreme nonattainment of the 1997 Ozone standard are reaching their attainment dates in June 2024 (San Joaquin Valley, Coachella Valley and South Coast)
  - Areas coming to the end of their 20-year maintenance period for the PM10 standard (Coso Junction and Sacramento)
- **Litigation- Karina O'Connor, EPA**
  - We have routine litigation when we don't act within the required 18-month timeframe to update the SIP. We don't have the resources to get those done within the timeframe, so it does trigger litigation and negotiations and new deadlines to act on those plans. That very process has happened with South Coast 182e5 Plan, a contingency measure plan; and the SJV PM 2.5 contingency measure plan and FIP. There were litigation deadlines for both of those, so we had to respond and create proposals and final actions to stop sanction clocks (SJV).
  - Sanction clocks are a large part of the workload. We try to avoid triggering sanctions clocks although it is a priority as it determines which plans we work on. There are several sanctions clocks running for rules and plans in California right now. There are a number that are related to contingency measure plans in Mojave, Sacramento, San Joaquin Valley and Coachella that we are working to do a completeness finding proposal to turn off the sanctions clocks. Some of the deadlines are coming up really soon, and in terms of Antelope and West Mojave contingency measure plans. We are hoping to process those and turn off the clock for what we think is on May 1, 2024.
  - We have a finding of failure to attain the attainment date for the 2015 ozone plan. If we don't make the findings within 6 months of the attainment there is litigation so that is the timeframe for us to act on those. Last Fall, we had finding of a failure to submit a notice for a number of moderate areas, that triggered a finding of a failure to submit clock for those area as well. The notices of intents to sue are on the Headquarters website. That will be in the notes.
- **Sanctions - Michael Dorantes, EPA**
  - Highway sanctions are triggered after two years of after an effective finding of a failure to submit or a particular disapproval of a Plan or a Rule. Lots of time is dedicated by EPA to work with the State and Districts to resolve any issues and to avoid sanctions.

- We have a number of Rules in the SCAG area for the South Coast, Mojave, Antelope Valley and oil and gas rules in a few different areas that we are keeping track of.
- Recently, there is the interim final determination for the SJV contingency measures that deferred sanctions clock, this was back in December of 2023. We are keeping track of the contingency measure plans in the Coachella, Sacramento, SJV, to and West Mojave nonattainment areas to name a few and observing what actions we can take there.
- There are also older sanctions that are due to older Ozone standards but these aren't related in any transportation conformity framework.
- In terms of actual dates, the most impending date for highway sanctions are for a number of rules and the contingency measures for 2008 Ozone standard in the West Mojave and Coachella Valley would be October 31, 2024. These are also paired with 2:1 new source review offset sanctions that we are working to resolve prior to those occurring and those sanctions occur 6 months prior to the highway sanctions.
- **Project Level Conformity- Karina O'Connor, EPA**
  - Public involvement- we have done email rather than face-to-face in some areas. We are moving away from that because it does not give the public a chance to participate and weigh in on those decisions before they are made and made final. There has been some back-and-forth EPA, FHWA and Caltrans to look deeper into this issue and it has been determined that this important to involve the public.
  - We are trying not to be too prescriptive as we develop a process. The public must be involved in the process before the determinations are made. The key thing is to have enough time, both on the agency side and the public side, and notification to get through this process rather than rush through it.
  - We are also trying to do a better job, and will work with Caltrans, to figure out how to better track projects so once a conformity finding is made for these projects, so those analyses don't become stale and then something else comes up later down the line where there needs to be a reassessment of conformity.
  - I want to reiterate when we project level conformity findings and we are looking at the data, we really need to look at the changes in truck traffic and VMT between no build and build for each



segment of the road. Not the percentages, but the changes in traffic between those key alternatives. If you can provide that ahead of time rather than total numbers, it helps EPA with review.

- **Rodney Tavitas, Caltrans HQ** We want the MPOs to understand that those that do email concurrence- we are not calling you out, but there is litigation. By moving away from email concurrence, it will help as we move forward. For Karina, we have updated the FWHA submittal form to call out 40 CFR 93.105(e).
- **Karina O'Connor, EPA** It is a chance for us to refresh the process to see where we need to have the better document all front. It can be a mixed bag. We need truck data for future years, we need it for what we expect to be the high year for VMT. It makes the process smoother if we have that information up front. We need to be able to see the information for this process.
- **Rodney Tavitas, Caltrans HQ** For agencies that are transitioning to doing presentations for IAC, please understand we are here to help if questions come up. We will assist in answering them.
- **Jackie Kahrs, SACOG** For project level conformity determinations, will be made during the meetings? Is there a need to follow up with an email to document that the concurrence was issued?
- **Rodney Tavitas, Caltrans HQ** If you are going to have a determination, we want the materials two weeks in advance. Longer is better if there is more follow up. To document, every MPO does it different. With SCAG, they post it to their website. MTC sends out an email after the determination.

#### CARB Updates, Nesamani Kalandiyur

- **Staff Updates:** No updates
- **Recent State Actions on Air Quality Plans- Kevin Hendrawan, CARB**
  - CARB has adopted all of the 70ppb 8-hour ozone SIPs and 2022 State SIP Strategy and transmitted it to EPA. As a refresher, the State SIP strategies are commitments and measures to reduce emissions from state regulated sources to help meet the 70ppb 8-hour Ozone attainment.
  - CARB has released two major regulations: Advance Clean Fleets/ Zero Emission Vehicles and In-use Locomotives
    - The Advance Clean Fleets is a regulation that requires phase in use of zero emission vehicles for specific fleets and ZEV only manufacturing starting with the 2036 model year.
    - In-use Locomotives is a regulation that requires locomotive operators to spend money to reduce locomotive emissions. It

also requires that only more recent locomotives can operate in California with a 30 minute idling limit beginning in 2030.

- CARB has integrated EPA's Clean Truck plans into their SIPs.
- CARB is assisting the San Joaquin Valley and South Coast Air Basin to update annual 12.0 µg/m<sup>3</sup> PM 2.5 SIPs and the new annual PM2.5 9.0 µg/m<sup>3</sup> standard. CARBS and Air Districts are also preparing to evaluate and update their inventories for SIPs for 2027.
- **EMFAC Updates- Kevin Hendrawan, CARB**
  - Latest approved EMFAC is EMFAC2021. Adjustment factors for the HDINM program have been approved.
  - EMFAC202Y is in development. CARB staff has hosted another public workshop earlier this year in which the team presented technical updates for the next version of the model
  - It is scheduled to be released in 2025. A beta version will be released in Fall 2024 for testing.
- **SB 375 Updates**
  - Continued to work with state agencies on plans and policy development and incentive program project selections relating to transportation, housing, and land use. Some examples that we did include:
    - Regional Early Action Planning Grants of 2021
    - Congested corridors program
    - Local partnership program
- **California Transportation Commission and Housing and Community Development Collaboration**
  - Have collaborated in two meetings that include the topics of:
    - Roadway pricing
    - The Regional Housing Needs Allocation
    - Implementation of the climate action plan for transportation infrastructure
    - And other priority action items
  - We have published the 2022 SB150 progress report and data dashboard on progress related to SB 375 implementation while identifying new policy actions that could reduce passenger VMT. We are also working on updating the dashboard with the latest data.
  - CARB staff conducted a public workshop to kick off the process to update the Sustainable Communities Strategy evaluation guidelines. This included clarifying the existing 2019 final SCS program evaluation guidelines as well as discussing the timeline for medium and long term changes to the guidelines.

## Caltrans Updates, Caltrans Air Quality Branch

- **Staff Updates- Rodney Tavitias, Caltrans HQ**
  - Two new branch members: Erika Vaca and Emma Maggioncalda
  - Acting Office Chief, Keri Robinson
  - New Principal, Hannah Walters.
- **Conformity Status Table- Erika Vaca, Caltrans HQ**
  - Rodney, please update the latest version of the FHWA approval letter for the RPT
  - The table has been updated and is now posted to the AQ website. The link is in the chat. <https://dot.ca.gov/programs/transportation-planning/division-of-transportation-planning/air-quality-and-climate-change>
- **Project Level Quality Assurance Review- Karishma Becha, Caltrans HQ**
  - Caltrans HQ conducts quality assurance reviews on all project-level conformity submittals for 23 USC 327 projects to support a streamlined project-level determination from FHWA.
    - Our review includes analyzing the project's design, concept, and scope which must be consistent across all relevant package documents. This includes the:
      - NEPA Document and associated Air Quality Technical Report;
      - TIP and RTP;
      - Air Quality Conformity Analysis document and cover letter;
      - Public notices;
      - Interagency consultation (IAC) discussions and documentation (40 CFR 93.105e);
      - Project map and location;
    - **The FHWA Submittal Form must meet all FHWA conformity requirements. The form was developed at Caltrans HQ in collaboration with the FHWA California Division. This form is an integral component of the package, and without a completed form, projects may not receive a project-level conformity determination.**
  - Inconsistencies among the project scopes are a key reason for rejected documents. Review and approvals take an average of three submittals per project. Please keep this in mind when planning the timeline, as it may cause a delay if several rounds of submissions are required, or if RTP and TIP amendments are needed to correct inconsistencies across scopes.
  - There should also be documentation of the IAC process and decisions (including concurrence on POAQC determination) if

applicable. **Some MPOs use email to share project information and for Project of Air Quality Concern concurrence, however due to various litigation the concern is that this process limits public access and involvement. Per 40 CFR 93.105 (e), These agencies shall also provide an opportunity for public involvement in conformity determinations for projects where otherwise required by law.**

- Public participation must be documented, including proof that the public notice was circulated using the language found in the [air quality conformity public notice language](#). Caltrans's responses to any comments received from the public must be documented, including comments relating to transportation conformity and air quality in general. FHWA Submittal Form - Proposed Changes
- We have made several edits to the FHWA submittal form to address some of these challenges:
  1. *The preferred project alternative must be clearly stated in TIP and all relevant documents*
  2. *Concurrence must be consistent with 40 CFR 93.105(e)*
  3. *The package must include air quality comments and responses if comments were received*
- If these requirements are not met, Caltrans HQ cannot sign the FHWA form.
  - **An example** of a challenging situation was the Produce Avenue in District 4: There were inconsistencies among the project descriptions, where in some instances the project description omitted an overcrossing and did not list the project in the RTP and TIP. These issues had to be addressed before FHWA could issue an approval.
- **RTP/FTIP Quality Assurance Reviews- Erika Espinosa Araiza, Caltrans HQ**
  - The Air Quality Branch continues to complete quality assurance reviews of the Air Quality Conformity Analyses for RTP/TIP Updates and any amendments that require a new regional conformity determination.
    - The AQ branch reviews and verifies if the information/documentation is complete:
      - Submittal Cover Letter
      - Conformity Checklist
      - The Air Quality Conformity Analysis
      - RTP Checklist
      - RTP or website link
      - Board resolutions
      - Consistency amendment (if applicable)

- We have been providing comments during the draft phase of updates and amendments. Please be sure to include our team members on any emails requesting a review of the draft air quality conformity analysis.
- **Interagency Consultation Process- Erika Vaca, Caltrans HQ**
  - Public involvement is required and provides opportunity for public review and comment (40 CFR 93.105(e)).
  - NEPA-related discussion is not a substitute for IAC discussion. IAC is an additional requirement for project-level conformity.
  - Project sponsors must document how IAC and public participation requirements were met. IAC communications and decisions should be documented and maintained as part of the administrative record. The IAC documentation is one component that we review during the Caltrans Quality Assurance Review process.
- **Regional Plans/ Latest Planning Assumptions- Erika Vaca, Caltrans HQ**
  - Conformity analyses must use the latest available planning assumptions, which under the FHWA/U.S. EPA Joint Guidance
    - Establishes 5 year “lifespan” for LPAs
    - Examples: future population, employment and travel estimates, latest information on transit service, fares, ridership and control measure effectiveness
    - Motor vehicle fleet characteristics explicitly discussed
    - Use of data older than 5 years must be justified
    - Impact on EMFAC
  - Also, it’s important to note that LPA’s are established through interagency consultation.
- **Conformity Streamlining Exemption Form- Emma Maggioncalda, Caltrans**
  - To use this form the projects must correct, improve, or eliminate a hazardous location or feature. Clearly state the collision data and how this is a hazardous location.
- **Other Topics- Emma Maggioncalda, Caltrans HQ**
  - **Air Quality Conformity & EV Charging Exemption Code**
    - We have recently had several discussions about the appropriate exemption code for EV charging stations. We would like to open up a discussion with our federal partners for which code, would be most appropriate.
    - **Jasmine Amanin, FHWA** We have NEVI guidance online that outlines when NEVI would be considered for project exemptions. So we are really just talking about infrastructure projects that aren’t including any additional roadway or

capacity increasing improvements that we would consider being exempt. So just to clarify, that if your project goes beyond just a NEVI project, we would be looking at the other roadway or capacity improving elements. For NEVI only projects, for what we have provided in the past, is that this is pretty open. These projects normally do not require a project level conformity determination, but if we do want to consider them grouped in the exempt categories, like transportation enhancements, they do need to be consistent. There is flexibility, but it will need to be consistent with the project types.

- **Rodney Tavitias, Caltrans** MPOs are wondering how we would group some of the projects, such as charging stations or hydrogen stations. We can continue this discussion we were just asked to bring it up. To FHWA, what would be acceptable for charging stations or hydrogen stations. Is this something that must be discussed at a later time? We understand it will be exempt, but under which category?
  - **Jasmine Amanin, FHWA** Unclear about hydrogen station. I know that as far as grouping, we have been doing based on the exemption categories under 40 CFR 93. If they need to be grouped under transportation enhancement, that is an option. It just must be consistent. We need to have a more refined discussion on the project types.
  - **Rodney Tavitias, Caltrans** We will note this as an action items. For EPA/FHWA, we are noticing that concurrence is received in 2017 or not a POAQC. Normally we use 40 CFR 93.110 if it has been over 5 years, or if there is a new RTP, we recommend that it be brought back to IAC. What is your opinion on that?
  - **Karina O'Connor, EPA** Caltrans recommendation for a new RTP/planning assumptions in the right call. There is a couple of things that can affect the project if there is a new RTP. I agree with Caltrans HQ.
- **EMFAC2021 Transition- Emma Maggioncalda, Caltrans HQ**
    - The EPA's approval of the EMFAC2021 emissions model and EMFAC2017 adjustment factors for SIP, conformity purposes, and applicable CAA purposes as described in this notice is effective November 15, 2022. EMFAC2021 must be used as described in this

notice for all new regional emissions analyses for transportation conformity purposes that are started on or after **November 15, 2024**.

- Next Meeting – Fall 2024

## Status of Transportation & Air Quality Planning

### Lijin Sun, Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG)

- SCAG RTP/SCS and FTIP
  - Connect SoCal 2024 has been adopted, along with the associated conformity determination. Documents have been submitted and are under review. FHWA and FTA approval is anticipated and needed by June 6, 2024.
  - SCAG staff is in the process of developing the 2025 FTIP concurred Connect SoCal for Amendment #1 and the associated transportation conformity analysis. We plan to seek authorization from our policy makers and the regional council to release the Draft document including the draft conformity analysis at their meetings in June. It will be then opened up for public review and comments before we seek adoption. This will be submitted to FHWA and FTA for formal review and anticipate approval by mid-December.
  - Regionally conformity planning track. SCAG has been preparing several items in the last year or so. The items include:
    - SCAGs portion of Appendix IV-C RTP SCS and TCMs of South Coast AQMD 2012 Annual PM 2.5 Standard for the South Coast Air Basin.
    - Draft TCM RACM analysis for the South Coast AQMD 2024 Coachella Valley Extreme nonattainment SIP for 2008 8 hour Ozone Standard; Attainment plan is due to EPA 18 months from April 2023, so around October of this year is the deadline
  - TCM Infeasibility Justification for the Coachella Valley and West Mojave Desert contingency measure for the for the 2008 8 hour Ozone Standard. For this effort, it was meant to correct deficiencies previously triggered by EPA finding failure to submit. The offset sanctions are May 1, 2024. The three AQMD governing boards have adopted the SIP, they have been submitted to EPA for the completeness review and finding.
  - Monitoring and tracking the sanctions. There are 15 sanctions clocks impacting 4 local air districts in the SCAG region. 12 active and 3 anticipated clocks; 3 sanction clocks have already been successfully paused; 4 sanction clocks are expected to be paused

soon; the remaining clocks are not ready yet or will run out in 2025 or 2026; 2 active, 1 anticipated clocks have 3 triggered lawsuits.

#### Ryan Niblock, San Joaquin Valley

- SJV and Fresno council governments are processing type 5 RTP/FTIP amendments. Should be going to the boards in the next month or two.
- Working towards 2025 FTIP documents, seeking board adoption in July or August
- Trying to implement an updated hot-spot process to take place at soon. Details will be released at a later date.

#### Harold Brazil, Metropolitan Transportation Commission

- Conformity analysis for the 2025 TIP is ongoing and will go through FY 24/25 – FY 27/28. This analysis will be used the first with EMFAC2021.
- Nonattainment for 2008 and 2015 standard Ozone; for PM 2.5 2006 standard we are nonattainment (unclassifiable); we use the interim conformity test.
- The new Plan development is ongoing. The final blueprint will be finalized. EIR process will be started in the Fall. One year from now will be the conformity analysis for the new Plan.

#### Miguel Mendoza, SACOG

- SACOG is preparing the 2025 FTIP. Currently project analysis and working on accompanying air quality conformity document.
- Modifying the POAQC process. Will be reaching to the SJV for feedback.
- For MTP/SCS, the process is ongoing. An update to the MTP was completed last year with approval in 2024. There is an extension on the SCS.

#### Information Sharing

- No questions

#### Next Meeting

- November 2024

#### Participants

Kirsten Uchitel, SANDAG  
Renee DeVere-Oki, SACOG  
Shengyi Gao, SACOG  
Ryan Bañuelos, SCAG  
Brian Lasagna, BCAG  
Alison Wong, Caltrans D7



Ken Romero, Caltrans D6  
Brent Berge, Caltrans  
David Deel, Caltrans  
Daisy Loida S Laurino, DOT  
Julie Lugaro, DOT  
Leonard Seitz, DOT  
Andrew Yoon, Caltrans District 7  
Keri Robinson, Caltrans HQ  
Rodney Tavitas, Caltrans HQ  
Erika Espinosa Araiza, Caltrans HQ  
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Erika Vaca, Caltrans HQ  
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Lindsay Wickersham, US EPA R9  
Michael Dorantes, US EPA R9  
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Jackie Kahrs, SACOG  
Darin Grossi  
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Harold Brazil, MTC  
Karen Calderon, SCAG  
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Miguel Mendoza, SACOG  
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Monica Soucier  
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