

**Air Quality Conformity Task Force
Summary Meeting Notes
August 25, 2011**

This Conformity Task Force meeting was conducted via email. The agenda and meeting materials were posted at www.mtc.ca.gov but an in-person meeting was not held. Responses received are as summarized in this meeting summary.

1. PM_{2.5} Project Conformity Interagency Consultations

POAQC Status Determinations

San Francisco Dept. of Public Works (SFDPW): Bayview Transportation Improvements

Stew Sonnenberg (FHWA) commented that the additional information on truck percentage and emissions suggest this is not a POAQC.

Dick Fahey (Caltrans) commented that the supplemental information provided by SFDPW documents that the transition to a clean bus fleet will be completed by the time this project becomes operational. As such, this project is not a POAQC.

Mike Brady (Caltrans) commented that the intersection at LOS F is good for screening, but technically the EPA Guidance looks at intersection at D or worse. However, that has to be qualified by the traffic volume and truck (diesel) volume -- LOS D with only 10-20K of total AADT isn't an issue, but at 100K AADT regardless of trucks it probably would be. Anyway, using LOS F intersection as a screening analysis the way it was done here is OK, but consider it that way not as the way to go for all types of work.

For the buses, he added that there is good documentation for Muni bus emissions; however, in PM_{2.5} areas NO_x is also important as a PM precursor - how do Muni's remaining diesel/hybrid buses compare to EMFAC for that (the "plan" says their fleet is the lowest in the state - due mainly to the number of electric (trolley) buses)? Some studies suggest that biodiesel slightly increases NO_x emissions compared to "normal" fuel, but if the capital plan included actually goes as expected, he would agree that the bus emissions should be minor by the time the BTI improvements come on line.

Mike concluded that the scale of the project seems like it should be a POAQC, but the numbers don't really say that, and the bus emissions should be a negligible component of opening & horizon year emissions. So, this project would qualify as Not POAQC.

Ginger Vagenas (EPA) abstained from commenting on this project.

Final Determination: There was Task Force concurrence that this project is not a POAQC.

Contra Costa Transportation Authority (CCTA): I-680 Auxiliary Lanes, Truck Traffic Characteristics

Stew Sonnenberg (FHWA) commented that the additional information on truck volume and ADT suggest this is not a POAQC.

Dick Fahey (Caltrans) commented that the supplemental information confirms that the project is not capacity increasing, and will have little to no effect on future diesel truck volumes and percentages; and therefore this project is not a POAQC.

Mike Brady (Caltrans) noted the information provided responds to some questions at the original meeting. It clarifies how the lanes would work and would support a Not POAQC concurrence for the auxiliary lanes.

Ginger Vagenas (EPA) abstained from commenting on this project.

Final Determination: There was Task Force concurrence that this project is not a POAQC.

California Department of Transportation (Caltrans): SR-82/Millwood Drive Intersection Signalization

Stew Sonnenberg (FHWA) commented that the truck volume and ADT indicate that this project is not a POAQC.

Dick Fahey (Caltrans) commented that truck percentages and volumes are extremely small, and not expected to increase as a result of this project, and therefore that project is not a POAQC.

Mike Brady (Caltrans) commented that there is no real issue and agrees that this should project is not a POAQC. He questioned how this project can have federal funds but not be subject to NEPA. It's possible that this project would qualify for a NEPA CE, probably 6004. He noted that if there is truly no federal involvement, no NEPA, then there would be no need for project-level conformity determination.

Ginger Vagenas (EPA) abstained from commenting on this project.

Final Determination: There was Task Force concurrence that this project is not a POAQC.

Projects Exempt from PM_{2.5} Conformity

Ginger Vagenas (EPA), Stew Sonnenberg (FHWA), Mike Brady (Caltrans), Dick Fahey (Caltrans) noted that projects with ids of MRN110026, SM110048, SM110051 would qualify as exempt under 40 CFR 93.126 Safety Improvement Program exemption only if they are funded through HSIP.

Stew (FHWA) added that if however these proejcts are of the type listed in Table 3 of 40 CFR 93.127, they are exempt from regional emissions. In this case, CO and PM hot-spot analyses will need to be considered before making a project-level conformity determination.

Ginger (EPA) noted that she asked OTAQ if an intersection project undertaken for safety reasons could be exempt under table 2 in 93.126, instead of table 3 in 93.127, and if safety money is used for the project, is that enough to say it is a safety project under Table 93.126. (Projects in table 3 are exempt from regional emissions analysis, but could need a CO or PM hot-spot analysis.) OTAC responded that, if a project is part of a state's strategic highway safety plan and funded under 23 USC 148, it would be exempt as a safety project under Table 2, and pointed to the preamble to the May 2, 2007 SAFETEA-LU conformity rule at 72 FR 24488-89. Ginger assumed that when task force members refer to HSIP funding, they are referring to funds under 23 USC 148. If so, EPA would agree with the other task force members who commented that the source of funding needs to be confirmed.

Adam Crenshaw (MTC) confirmed that projects with ids of MRN110026, SM110048, SM110051 are funded through HSIP, and therefore, these projects are exempt from PM2.5 project conformity.

Final Determination: There was Task Force concurrence that projects identified as exempt are indeed exempt from PM2.5 project conformity.

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