
SUMMARY
TWG Biannual Meeting
1 March, 2017
10:00am – 3:00pm
Texas A&M Transportation Institute
Gibb Gilchrist Building
2929 Research Parkway
College Station, TX 77843-3135

Follow-up Actions from THIS MEETING

- **Chris Sasser** will prepare a summary of this meeting.
- Sasser will post all presentations from this meeting.
- Sasser will distribute a poll to the group regarding the next meeting location and ideas for training opportunities.
- Sasser will update the documentation section of the TWG website and distribute and email soliciting feedback from members.
- **Madhu Venugopal** will assist **Jenny Narvaez** in updating conformity process and documentation material on TWG website
- Need for MOSERS training refined towards individual MPO needs and goals (Tim Juarez)

Next Biannual Meeting

TBA

Participants

There were 30 TWG members in attendance, and 8 members attending via teleconference.

Discussion

The meeting was led by **Laura Norton** and **Venugopal**. **Joe Zietsman** began the meeting by welcoming attendees to College Station and discussing the workshops held the previous afternoon (Feb. 28).

The workshop training topics were as follows:

Workshop #1, instructor Tara Ramani and Reza Farzaneh– Transportation Air Quality and Conformity Basics – Provide a refresher course on transportation air quality and conformity basics for Texas practitioners with new nonattainment focus.

Time- (1:00 -2:45 pm)

[Workshop Slides in PDF Format](#)

Workshop #2, instructors Madhu Venugopal and Reza Farzaneh – MOSERS Manual 101 – Provide an overview of the updated MOSERS manual along with specific applications and hands-on case study examples (please bring your laptop).

Time- (3:00 – 5:00 pm)

[Workshop Slides in PDF Format](#)

Primary Discussion Items

Documentation Subcommittee—Jenny Narvaez

Narvaez presented on the progress of the documentation subcommittee. The purpose of the subcommittee is to review the conformity documentation and make updates and edits that will assist Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO) by providing the tools and resources in one central location. Narvaez reviewed the [Transportation Conformity Resources](#) page on the TWG site. After discussion, the group decided to remove the “currently approved” documents to avoid confusion, make the edits discussed during the meeting and last teleconference, and then send the link out to the group for final approvals.

NOTE: Sasser sent an email out on 3/15 asking for review of the documentation with a comment period due date of March 29.

Discussion of Master Schedule/Training—Tim Juarez

Juarez provided a presentation on his master schedule/training. Juarez explained that the air quality conformity determination master scheduler is a schedule of dates for MPOs (El Paso, AAMPO, NCTCOG, H-GAC) that indicates important events, such as beginning update to MTP 2045, UTP and 10-year plan. A copy of the master schedule is available on the TWG website: [Air Quality Conformity Determination Master Schedule](#).

Juarez also provided a detailed timeline of El Paso MPO’s amendment to Horizon 2040 MTP, Horizon 2017-2020 TIP and 2040 Conformity Report.

Todd Carlson provided several training documents that Juarez discussed as well:

[Alamo Area MPO Conformity Re-Determinations and Triggers](#)

[Alamo Area MPO Managed Lane Policies at Other Texas MPOS](#)

[Air Quality FAQs](#)

TWG Subcommittees Breakout Sessions

Near Nonattainment/Ozone Advance Subcommittee — Interim Chair: Janie Temple (Note: Temple was not in attendance. Bill Knowles led the discussion.)

Knowles moderated the discussion and the group talked about developing project consistency and near non-attainment training and nominated **Darcie Shipull** to be the new chair. Knowles also discussed having Zietsman provide updates about [The Center for Advancing Research in Transportation Emissions, Energy and Health](#) (CAR-TEEH) to the group at future meetings. CAR-TEEH focuses on the impact of transportation emissions on human health.

MOSERS Subcommittee — Chair: Tim Juarez

Juarez thanked everyone for providing comments and specifically said there was a need for further review on modules 2 and 3. Juarez explained that TTI performed extensive revisions on module 2. Juarez discussed the need to get the information back out there for the submittal method for new methodologies. Juarez said that on the TWG website on the MOSERS page, TTI will outline the actual process for adding new information and maybe provide a form to fill out, then part of that will involve how partners will review the requests, look at the information, then give an approval. Juarez stated that another action item was the need for training so their air quality efforts are refined towards their specific goal.

(Break for lunch. The group was provided lunch. Because of this, lunch was shortened to 30 minutes then the meeting resumed at 12:40.)

Agency Information & Updates

EPA (Jeff Riley)

Riley was unable to attend this meeting. He did not provide any updates.

FHWA (Barbara Maley)

Maley provided the following updates:

- See latest FHWA publication *Air Quality and Sustainable Transportation*:
 - a. [The Southern Transportation and Air Quality Summit 2017](#) is an event sponsored by the Federal Highway Administration and EPA Regions 4 and 6. The purpose of the Summit is to bring together stakeholders from both the transportation and air quality communities to discuss current and coming regulatory environment, technologies and current practices vital to the field of air quality and transportation. The summit is geared to practitioners involved with public agencies at all levels.
 - b. CMAQ articles (various)
 - c. Exceptional events article.

- NTI Training Opportunity
 - a. Introduction to Transportation Conformity, May 1-3, Houston
<http://www.ntionline.com/introduction-to-transportation-conformity/>

- Project-level conformities are on going
- Regional conformities – none under review at this time
- STIP comments – internal deadline of Mar 6
- CMAQ 2013-2015 reconciliation – on going with TPP and MPOs
- CMAQ 2016 – Agency wide deadline of Mar 3
- Texas Division Regional Transportation Conformity SOP drafted; under internal review

Maley also provided the following links as a follow-up:

Air Quality Planning for Transportation Officials:

https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/air_quality/publications/air_quality_planning/index.cfm

Transportation Air Quality Selected Facts and Figures:

https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/air_quality/publications/fact_book/

FHWAs What Is Transportation Conformity On demand training session:

<https://connectdot.connectsolutions.com/whatisconformity/>

TxDOT TPP

Field representative updates (Tim Juarez, El Paso; Nick Page, NCTCOG; and Leanna Shepherd, HGAC)

Juarez reported that the El Paso region is on their 2045 MTP update: the region has a meeting on March 2 to kick that initiative off and their intent is to have a fully detailed schedule with deadline. When that is available they will provide an update to the master schedule. Juarez reported that a consultant has been selected to develop their conformity document. Juarez discussed that one of their ongoing issues is with their pre-consensus analysis form and which one to use. Juarez reported that they continue to work with the San Antonio region on the development of their 2045 MTP. Juarez said they have begun to look at the elements associated with their travel demand model.

Page was unable to attend, but provided the following updates:

- NCTCOG is ramping up for November 2018 Conformity.
- Budget was found adequate last year and extends to the November deadline
- It will be an MTP Update and conformity on the 2019—2022 TIP
- This coincides with the latest timeline provided by NCTCOG (as things develop, it may be adjusted)

Narvaez also provided a brief update that echoed Page's comments.

Shepherd reported that Megan Campbell returned to the Houston District so she is the coordinator for H-GAC and said their UTP update was moved from February to March.

Graciela Lubertino also provided an update on H-GAC's activities.

TxDOT ENV (Jackie Ploch)

Topics of interest to TWG/research projects—Ploch was unable to attend, but provided a brief Legislative bill summary for transportation related air quality bills.

- HB 1979 – Relating to the Texas emissions reduction plan and other related programs and measures to reduce emissions. Identical companion to SB 26.
- SB 26 - Relating to the Texas emissions reduction plan and other related programs and measures to reduce emissions. Identical companion to HB 1979.
- SB 1046 – Relating to sources of funding for the Texas emissions reduction plan.
- HB 1903 – Relating to the use of toll project revenue for air quality projects.
- HB 2321 – Relating to low-income vehicle repair assistance, retrofit, and accelerated vehicle retirement programs and local initiative projects.
- HB 1437 – Relating to the use of funding in local initiative projects for litter reduction.

- HB 402 – Relating to money used by certain counties for the low-income vehicle repair assistance, retrofit, and accelerated

No new updates from research versus what was presented at the last TWG meeting.

TCEQ (Jamie Zech)

SIP updates—Zech reported that on October 19, 2016, TCEQ adopted a re-designation request from Colin County. On November 8, 2016, TCEQ published final approval of the re-designation substitutes for Dallas and Houston. On December 29, 2016, TCEQ adopted the attainment demonstration for Houston. On January 10, 2017, final approval for El Paso limited maintenance plan—has not been published.

Zech reported that team demonstration SIPs are due to EPA on July 2018 and that attainment date is January 12, 2022.

Near-road monitors update—Zech reported that there are no exceedances.

TTI (Joe Zietsman, Madhu Venugopal)

Venugopal reported that he was encouraging additional review on the MOSERS document.

• MPO's (For those in attendance) – Status & Updates

Narvaez reported that NCTCOG had two requests for information; one for electrified parking spaces. Narvaez reported that they had EPA funding to implement a number of projects. Narvaez reported that they are implementing idle free school zones and that they are planning on air advertising campaigns as well as other outreach campaigns. Narvaez also mentioned the Southern Transportation and Air Quality Summit 2017—an event sponsored by the Federal Highway Administration and EPA Regions 4 and 6.

Lubertino had no additional updates for H-GAC.

(Meeting Concluded)