

Interim IAC Focus Group, SCAG End of EMFAC2017 Grace Period

March 17, 2021

Via WebEx Conference Call

MINUTES

1. Purpose: This meeting was called to discuss the implications of the end of EMFAC2014 grace period on regional emissions analyses in the SCAG region. August 16th, 2021 is the last day to use EMFAC2014. EMFAC2017 will be required for all conformity emission analyses started after this date.
2. SCAG Conformity Update (Rongsheng Luo: Air Quality and Conformity Program Manager at SCAG)
 - SCAG's Regional Council adopted 2020 RTP/SCS (Connect SoCal) in May 2020 for federal transportation conformity purposes only.
 - Connect SoCal received federal approval of its transportation conformity determination in June 2020.
 - SCAG is processing Amendment 1 to Connect SoCal:
 - Emission analysis for the Amendment will start before the end of the grace period.
 - EMFAC2014 will be used for the Amendment as allowed by the Transportation Conformity Regulations and no issues are anticipated.
 - Next regional conformity analysis will be for upcoming 2023 FTIP
 - Projects submittal likely due early 2022 and subsequent modeling.
 - Draft 2023 FTIP public release anticipated in July 2022.
 - Board adoption anticipated in September and Federal approval in December 2022.
 - Will need to use EMFAC2017.
 - Anticipating significant emissions budgets issues with use of EMFAC2017.
3. Discussion
 - US EPA (Karina)
 - Concern is with TIP amendments after August 2021.
 - Looking at long term issues and possible solutions
 - Tracking timing of waiver requests of measures to be included in EMFAC2021.
 - Considering use of off-model reduction factors for control measures, however waiver may be required for these control measures as well
 - Working with CARB on possible solutions.
 - Rongsheng – can you provide background info on the waiver approval process?

- Karina: first question is whether updating original SIP budgets is possible – answer: not in the SCAG region
- Possible off-model adjustment factors for new control measures need an approved waiver to be considered enforceable
 - Ex. Low NOx omnibus (waiver request not currently submitted to EPA due to CARB not submitting any waiver requests during the Trump administration).
- Legal teams are talking now on how to move forward. Karina is setting up a meeting with CARB, EPA Region 9 and OTAQ in April 2021 to discuss this further. Do not currently have a final answer on how this is going to proceed.
- Rongsheng - there are 26 nonattainment and maintenance areas in the SCAG region, including those within the South Coast Air Basin.
 - Karina - we need to be specific about what types of adjustments are needed with current budgets.
 - Nesamani - CARB legal and EPA legal are talking about waiver submittals.
 - CARB is working on other regulations. For example, heavy duty I&M program which may help reduce the gap. This is a long-term solution.
 - ❖ Testing internally and results show there will be some impacts for South Coast, Coachella, Western Mojave.
- Rodney – moving forward, will SCAG be able to use EMFAC2014 for their TIP amendments right now, before end of grace period?
 - Karina - yes, it shouldn't be a problem for their current TIP amendment that their using. SCAG will begin the modeling before the end of the grace period.
 - Rongsheng – SCAG will be able to use EMFAC2014 if we start our emissions analysis before the end of the grace period.
 - Rodney – would like to know when SCAG plans to update their RTP?
 - Rongsheng – Update is every four years which means the next update will be in 2024.
 - ❖ FTIP is updated every other year, usually with corresponding RTP consistency update.
- Rongsheng - is there a possibility to extend the grace period for use of EMFAC2014?
 - Karina – No, EPA cannot extend the grace period.
- Rodney – Moving forward we can at least use their TIP amendment using EMFAC2014, but the next issue to think about is the 2023 FTIP update.
 - Rongsheng – Draft 2023 FTIP is anticipated to be released in early July, and we would like a solution by this time.
 - The board adoption is anticipated in September.
 - Rodney to Rongsheng: can you send us a schedule of the FTIP and RTP updates? We'd like a timeline.

- Muhaned – 2021 SCAG FTIP, using EMFAC2014, what about amendments that require the use of the model after the end of the grace period?
 - Rongsheng – on-going formal 2021 FTIP amendments include only category 3 which can rely on existing regional emission analysis.
 - SCAG's 2021 FTIP Consistency Amendment to 2020 RTP/SCS Amendment 1 still using EMFAC2014.
- Rodney to Andrew Yoon - The scope and design changes to individual projects cannot trigger a need for new regional conformity analysis after August 16th, 2021.
 - Andrew - takeaway is current amendments to the RTP and SCS should be okay. We would advise METRO to coordinate with SCAG as soon as possible for any additional changes.
 - Rongsheng – project submittals for 2020 RTP/SCS Amendment 1 are already closed and are being modeled. Not sure how much flexibility there is.
 - Rodney - can you make that clear at the next TCWG meeting?
 - Rongsheng - yes, there is a standing FTIP update on the agenda. We have been reporting on the schedule and we can confirm whether there is any possibility for further revisions.
- Joseph - can HQ and Andrew Yoon coordinate with local partners to see if there is a list of projects that may be impacted? This should be documented.
 - Andrew - when we notice any changes to projects, we advise the sponsors to contact SCAG immediately to make the next cycle. I'm not aware of any changes in the pipeline now. Laurie from METRO attends TCWG meetings and should be aware of this situation and the requirement/process for amendments.
 - In the past, as part of public circulation of amendments, we had the opportunity to submit late changes to SCAG as part of the amendment. Is this still possible?
 - Rongsheng - minor changes are no problem, but any changes that trigger recirculation would be an issue.
 - Joseph - if anything does come up, let FHWA know ahead of time.
- Rongsheng - timeline for potential solution? Karina requested magnitude of the emissions shortfalls by area. What would the process and timeframe look like for developing a solution once numbers are produced? Do we need to apply for waivers every year?
 - Nesamani - conversation is happening with legal teams between US EPA and CARB now. Trying to prioritize which rules need waivers and which don't. Not sure on exact timeframe but I will report back as soon as we know (through Rodney or TCWG). It's a process, needs to go through OLA (state process) and then to US EPA.
 - Rongsheng - can you email me directly as more information comes out?

- Nesamani - yes
 - Rongsheng – I would like Karina to go over the process when CARB submits the waiver request; how long does it usually take for EPA review and approval?
 - Karina - we've been looking and developing timelines now. Still need to be specific, which measures are needed? What needs to be prioritized first?
 - Generally, a six-month process, but the timing could vary with different mobile source measures.
 - Looking for ways to anticipate and streamline.
 - I will also get back to the group when more specifics are available.
 - Karina – there are a lot of unknowns out of our control that prevent us from providing a specific answer on timing at this point.
 - Rongsheng – EPA and CARB please provide monthly TCWG updates as they come in.
- Rongsheng - What is the situation in the San Joaquin Valley region?
 - Rodney - we can send you finalized meeting notes when they are available.
 - Karina - they're working on RTP and TIP updates concurrently and planning on finishing both at same time by end of next year using EMFAC2014.
 - Rodney - planning follow-up meeting with SCAG and SJV in same room sometime in May.
 - Rodney – Possible SAFE Rule rescission will trigger the need for further conversations.

4. Action Items: Finish FTIP amendments now

- Rodney – we will continue to have conversations on the FTIP.
- Reminder from Antonio (FHWA) - flag any changes and amendments early and notify FHWA. Knowing about these changes will put us in a better position.
 - Please let HQ know of any changes as well.
 - Muhaned echoes Joseph and Antonio - Strategizing and anticipating early is important to minimize impacts to programs.
- There will be a follow up meeting in May.