Transportation Conformity Working Group
Interagency Consultation
Meeting Summary

Tuesday, February 22, 2005
10:00 AM – 12:00 PM

Southern California Association of Governments
818 W 7th Street, 12th Floor
Los Angeles, CA 90017
Riverside 'A' Conference Room

The Transportation Conformity Working Group (TCWG) held its monthly meeting on Tuesday, February 22, 2005 at SCAG's downtown offices. The following summary is intended to summarize the matters discussed. An audio recording of the entire meeting is available for review at SCAG's office.

1.0 CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at about 10:00 AM by Doug Kim, MTA, on behalf of Chair Ty Schuiling, SANBAG.

2.0 WELCOME AND SELF-INTRODUCTIONS

ATTENDANCE:

In Person:

Rosemary Ayala, SCAG
Al Bowser, SCAG
Eric Carlson, MTA
Herman Cheng, MTA
Mike Gainor, SCAG
Jose Gutierrez, LA-EAD
Ashad Hamideh, MTA
Ted Harris, SCAG
Doug Kim, MTA
Sylvia Patsaouras, SCAG
Arnie Sherwood, ITS/UCB
Leann Williams, Caltrans District 7
Sina Zarifi, SCAG

Via Teleconference/Videoconference:

Joe Cassmassi, SCAQMD
Paul Fagan, Caltrans District 8
Kathryn Higgins, SCAQMD
Dave Jesson, US EPA
Jean Mazur, FHWA
Jonathan Nadler, SCAQMD
Dennis Wade, CARB
Jeff Weir, CARB
Jilll Whynot, SCAQMD

3.0 PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

There were no public comments at this meeting.

5.0 ACTION ITEMS

5.1 Approval of the December 10, 2004 Meeting Summary

Approved Unanimously.

6.0 INFORMATION ITEMS

6.1 2004 RTIP Update (Rosemary Ayala, SCAG)

Rosemary Ayala (SCAG) presented an update on the 2004 RTIP, reporting that Amendments #1 and #4 have been approved by FTA and FHWA, and formal letters of approval are forthcoming. Ms Ayala explained that Amendment #6, the STIP reconciliation amendment, is currently being processed by SCAG staff, and that analysis for Riverside, San Bernardino, and Orange counties has been completed. Staff analysis for Los Angeles and Imperial counties will be completed this week. All counties included in Amendment #6 will be forwarded to the funding agencies by March 8, 2005. Caltrans will start reviewing county amendments as they are received in order to quickly process the full amendment.

6.2 RTP Update (Naresh Amatya, SCAG)

Naresh Amatya (SCAG) presented an update on the 2004 RTP. He reminded members that the RTP is updated every 3 years, with the next document scheduled for completion in April, 2007, with a conformity lapse date of June, 2007. Mr Amatya reported that regional fiscal issues could potentially warrant an earlier than scheduled RTP update. However, the Transportation and Communications Committee (TCC) has directed SCAG staff to proceed for now on the original 2007 triennial update schedule. The situation regarding the possible need for an earlier update will be closely monitored by the Committee. The possibility of a RTP amendment must be determined by December 5, 2005, in order not to conflict with activities required for the timely development of the new 2007 document. Mr Amatya stated that it is still too early to preclude the possibility of a RTP amendment. Doug Kim (MTA) asked what would prompt SCAG to move on an interim RTP. Naresh answered that it would be a regional decision based on fund estimates. Mr Kim then asked if SCAG is proceeding on the regular triennial RTP update schedule, are federal and state agencies pushing SCAG to amend the 2004 RTP. Mr Amatya responded that they are not.

6.3 EPA PM 2.5 Rule Update (Dave Jesson, US EPA)

Dave Jesson (EPA) reported that the PM 2.5 Rule was published on January 5th, and has an effective date of April 5, 2005, which is when the one year grace period begins. The PM 2.5 Implementation Rule will be proposed before April 5th, and finalized by the end of the year. States must submit PM 2.5 attainment plans by April 5, 2008. Mr Jesson also reported that EPA is in the process of reviewing PM standards, and that the second draft report of PM standards was released on January 31. He mentioned that health evidence indicates that higher standards for PM 2.5 may be warranted. An EPA staff paper on revised PM standards will be released by mid-2005, and will provide a better estimate of what the final standards might be. The final standards should be available by September, 2006. Doug Kim (MTA) asked what additional steps are required in the approval process. Mr Jesson answered that it includes a public comment period. Mr Kim asked whether there will be any new non-attainment areas. Mr Jesson responded that currently only the South Coast Air Basin (SCAB) and San Joaquin are designated as non-attainment, however, revised standards would likely include many more areas.

6.4 2007 AQMP Update (Jonathan Nadler, SCAQMD)

SCAQMD provided an update of the 2007 AQMP development process. Important milestones in the development of this document include: June, 2005 (freezing of emissions inventory); August, 2006 (release of draft SIP); March, 2007 (AQMP); April, 2007 (SCAG RTP due); and June, 2007 (proposed SIP submitted to EPA). Currently SCAQMD staff are updating emissions inventories and performing pre-modeling work. SCAQMD and CARB are cooperating on railroad emissions analyses. Joe Cassmassi of SCAQMD staff is developing the meteorological inventory.

6.5 CO Maintenance Plan Update (Joe Cassmassi, SCAQMD)

Joe Cassmassi (SCAQMD) provided a summary of recent CO Maintenance Plan activities. Mr Cassmassi reported that SCAB is the only serious CO non-attainment area in the state. However, in 2002 SCAB attained the standard, and maintained it in 2003 and 2004. SCAQMD is now in the process of submitting a letter to EPA requesting that SCAB be redesignated as being in attainment of the CO NAAQS. This matter will be further considered at the March 4 meeting of the SCAQMD Board.

6.6 TCM Monitoring Process Workgroup (Mike Gainor, SCAG)

Mike Gainor (SCAG) presented information regarding the upcoming TCM Working Group meeting scheduled for March 15 at SCAG.

6.7 8-Hour Ozone Conformity Determination (Ted Harris, SCAG)

Ted Harris (SCAG) reported on current status of the 8-Hour Ozone Conformity Determination. Mr Harris informed members that the packet will be mailed out for FHWA approval in March. Sylvia Patsaouras (SCAG) mentioned that the 8-Hour Ozone packet was held until now to be consistent with the STIP amendment.

6.8 Information Sharing (Group Discussion)

Doug Kim (LACMTA) asked whether any of the federal agencies have an update on reauthorization. Jean Mazur (FHWA) responded that no new information was available.

7.0 COMMENT PERIOD

Jean Mazur (FHWA) suggested that a meeting discussing the NEPA approval process be beneficial. Ted Harris (SCAG) answered that SCAG would welcome such a meeting. Ms Mazur suggested that she could include this discussion as an item on the agenda for the next TCWG meeting and determine whether enough interest is generated to schedule a separate meeting on the topic.

8.0 ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at approximately 12:00 Noon.