

Executive Summary - Minutes
Eleventh Meeting of the
Joint Advisory Committee on Air Quality Improvement for the
Cd. Juárez, Chihuahua / El Paso, Texas / Doña Ana County, New Mexico Air Basin
Francisco I. Madero Meeting Room - Cd. Juarez City Hall
27 May, 1999

Welcome and Introductions

Dr. Victor Hugo Paramo (VHP) and Bill Luthans (BL) welcomed all to the 11th meeting of the JAC and gave special thanks to the Mayor of Juarez for providing an excellent location to hold the meeting at the Cd. Juarez City Hall (La Presidencia). Dr. Paramo also expressed great sorrow for the passing of our colleague, Biol. Maria del Pilar Lopez Marco, and expressed his deepest appreciation for the contribution she made to the environment and to Mexico.

Presentation and approval of current agenda.

The agenda was accepted.

Approval of the minutes of the 27 February meeting

The minutes were approved.

New Members

Bill Luthans announced the appointment of Dr. Wen-Whai Li to the JAC.

Oxygenated Fuels in Juarez

Biol. Guadalupe de la Luz Gonzalez, INE, indicated that after receipt of a letter from INE requesting an update from PEMEX on the status of future actions on the use of oxygenated fuels in Juarez, PEMEX on May 19 responded that this issue was discussed with their technical personnel, and a determination was made that we are currently outside of the period for using oxyfuels. The response added that an attempt will be made to distribute oxyfuels during the upcoming winter season. The PEMEX reply adds that infrastructure issues need to be addressed.

Updates

Air Quality Reports

Joe Rodriguez (JR) presented a consolidated report for the 1st quarter of 1999 identifying concentrations of carbon monoxide (CO) & particulate matter (PM) w/ a diameter of 10 micrometers or less (PM10) for the 3 jurisdictions represented on the JAC. Carbon monoxide data for the region indicate that Juarez had 11 days where 8-hour average CO levels were between 9ppm to 11ppm and 6 days w/ 8-hour average CO levels of 11.1ppm and higher. Juarez exceeded the Mexican PM10 standard 2 times during the reporting period. El Paso and Doña Ana County reported 1 exceedance during the reporting period. One PM exceedance in all 3 jurisdictions was attributed to high winds on March 7.

Update on DELPHI/SEC Ambient Monitoring Station in Juarez

Alma Leticia Figueroa (ALF) indicated the SEC CAMS is currently operational and collecting

daily continuous air quality measurements. The site collects CO, ozone, PM10, & met data.

Update on discussions during the Western Governors' Association Meeting

ALF stated that the goal from the WGA meeting was to discuss methods of reducing vehicle emissions on the US/MX international bridges. ALF also mentioned that at the last JAC meeting a motion was made to prevent the crossing of vehicles that do not meet air quality emissions limits. ALF proposed the following recommendations to reduce air pollutant concentrations on the US/MX international bridges and to prevent polluting vehicles from crossing into Juarez from the US:

- 1) Establish common emissions standards for all vehicles in the Border area;
- 2) Monitor vehicle importation from the US into MX and place sufficient personnel at the Border crossing stations to assure vehicles imported into MX meet vehicle emissions standards;
- 3) Utilize Border crossing queues to maximum potential to reduce vehicle wait times;
- 4) Open and / or add more primary inspection lanes at the international bridges when traffic becomes congested.
- 5) Add additional commercial vehicle crossing and inspection lanes.
- 6) Establish as an official goal a maximum international bridge wait time of 20 minutes for personal vehicles.
- 7) Establish as an official goal a maximum international bridge wait time of 20 minutes for commercial vehicles.
- 8) Open or add Dedicated Commuter Lanes at all International Bridges to reduce wait times for daily commuters who have passed appropriate security screening protocols.
- 9) Establish additional Ports of Entry along the US/MX border to improve the flow of commercial and personal vehicle traffic.

Update on SEP Legislation.

Tom Martin, ASARCO, commented that perhaps he can take some credit for passage of SB828. The Bill came out of conversation w/ State Sen. Eliot Shapleigh, D-El Paso, as a means of increasing options available to industry for addressing enforcement issues in a binational context. Passage of SB828 allows Supplemental Environmental Projects to take place in MX as long as there is a benefit for the State of Texas. The Bill was passed by both the House & Senate but was not signed as of today's meeting. He anticipates that the Governor will sign the Bill into law.

Update on Transboundary SEP Implementation Mechanisms

Matthew Witosky (MW), EPA, provided an update on an implementation time-line that was discussed by the Cooperative Enforcement Workgroup (CEW) at the National Coordinators meeting held in Ensenada. The CEW is composed of PROFEPA and EPA's Office of Compliance and Enforcement. The CEW agreed in principal on how the implementation of a Transboundary SEP can occur.

Update on the National Coordinators Meeting, May 12-14, 1999

MW reported that at the AWG meeting held in Ensenada, B.C., several activities taking place on the JAC were discussed, among them the Draft JAC Strategic Plan. The draft strategic plan was

reviewed and endorsed by the AWG.

Update on Cd. Juarez 1999 Vehicle (Emissions) Verification Program

Luis Carlos Salmeron (LCS), Cd. Juarez Ecology Dept., identified three strategies Cd. Juarez is working on to develop a Vehicle (Emissions) Verification Program.

- 1) Vehicle (Emissions) Verification - Cd. Juarez Ecology Dept is working w/ all Vehicle Emissions Inspection Stations regardless of the low number of vehicles being inspected.
- 2) Vehicle Diagnostics - Cd. Juarez Ecology Dept is working with the PDNAQTF to conduct vehicle emissions tests at public locations;
- 3) Decommissioning - Cd. Juarez Ecology Dept is applying sanctions to owners of high emitting vehicles, fining vehicle owners who do not comply with vehicle testing requirements, and working with the Environmental Patrols to retire and/or impound high emitting vehicles.

LCS asked Cesar Nuñez (CN), representing the State of Chihuahua, what the Governor or State Legislature says about enforcing Article 20 of the State Transit laws requiring Vehicle (Emissions) Verification Testing given the JAC has made several requests to have the law enforced. CN indicated the Governor does not have an official response, but by the next meeting a reply will be provided.

“Think of the Earth”

LCS showed a video entitled “Think of the Earth” that provides a positive environmental message for the community to follow an environmental philosophy.

Strategic Plan

Luis Raul Cordova (LRC), INE-SEMARNAP, indicated that the JAC formed a Strategic Plan Technical Commission (SPTC) to develop a plan to guide the activities of the JAC as it promotes recommendations for the Air Work Group (AWG). The document with 26 priority projects took 1 ½ years to complete. Priority projects were selected according to the following criteria: feasibility, significance of impact, and cost effectiveness. The document is completed in both English and Spanish and was presented to the AWG at the National Coordinators’ Meeting held in Ensenada, B.C. on May 12-14.

Report on Ambient Air Quality and Acute Pediatric Respiratory Illness in the Paso del Norte Airshed

Rebecca Hart from the Centers for Disease Control, Atlanta GA presented a recently published document entitled **Report on Ambient Air Quality and Acute Pediatric Respiratory Illness in the Paso del Norte Airshed**. The objective of this study was to examine the temporal association between daily counts of asthma related visits to emergency rooms and the ambient levels of ozone and PM10 in the PdN Airshed and to address the community’s concern about the effect of air pollution on health and individual activity, population growth, and especially children’s health. Principal investigators on this study were Jim VanDerslice (UTHSPH), Rebecca Hart (CDC), the Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists, EPA, and the National Center for Environmental Health. **Conclusions.** Characteristics of children w/ asthma related illnesses in this study population are similar to other studies. There is no excess of asthma-related problems in PdN Airshed compared to other US cities.

Oxyfuels for SLP, New Mexico

Cecilia Williams indicated that currently 1 gas station in SLP is supplied w/ oxyfuels, and this is perhaps due to the proximity of that SLP gas station to nearby gas stations located in Texas. Cecilia also provided a document which specifies what an agency can do regarding the requirement for distribution of oxyfuels. The language indicates that control strategies do not need to be imposed if the NAAQS are not being violated. It may not be possible for the NM Air Quality Control Act to require the sale of oxyfuels in NM since the area is in attainment for CO. However, the one gas station in SLP is perhaps voluntarily dispensing oxyfuels if that is the gasoline they receive from the distributor.

Clean Air Partnership - Ozone Action Days (OZAD) Program

Veronica Carbajal, OZAD Program Director, presented the activities that will be undertaken to increase public awareness & involvement to do their “Share for Clean Air”. The recently-formed Clean Air Partnership has met several times and developed a series of “tips” the public can follow to reduce emissions into the PdN airshed from vehicles and personal activities.

Alternate Fuels Presentation

Carlton Bennett, Executive Director for the Paso del Norte Clean Cities Coalition - PdNCCC, stated that the primary focus of the PdNCCC is to promote the use of alternate fuels (altfuels) in the mobile sector. The PdNCCC met w/ the IMIP to facilitate a meeting to promote the use of altfuels in the transit & municipal fleets in both EP & Jz. Salvador Gonzalez (SG), Director of the Integrated Transit Study at IMIP, indicated that improving the public transit system is identified in the JAC Strategic Plan. IMIP wishes to improve the quality of the Juarez transit system for the user as well as make the transit system ecological, affordable, and economical. What’s proposed for Jz is to improve the transit system by installing trunk systems over exclusive or semi-exclusive thoroughfares.

New initiatives:

CR stated that he would like to see a technical commission form to prepare a presentation for the Legislatures of the 3 jurisdictions which form the JAC. There is much that can be presented such as vehicle importation and oxyfuels for Jz and Doña Ana County. This is an opportunity to highlight the value and contributions of the JAC in a binational context. Pilar Leal indicated that during an earlier meeting a presentation was made to SEMARNAP Secretary Julia Carabias where she was informed as to the activities of the JAC. Carlos and Pilar will head this technical commission to prepare a presentation. ALF will organize the committee.

Carlton Bennett stated that the PdNCCC has developed a \$250K grant proposal to upgrade from gasoline to electric the service vehicles at the EP International Airport. The first deployment of electric vehicles will be at the American Airlines gates.

Carl Snow (CS) announced that TNRCC and local groups such as UACJ, IMIP, and the Cd. Jz Ecology Dept are working on the following proposals:

- 1) Emissions tests of 200 vehicles in Jz as a follow-up and further modification of the Mobile5Juarez Mobile Source Emissions Inventory;
- 2) Evaluate PM emissions from paved and unpaved roadways in Jz.;

3) Look at the transboundary movement of air pollution in this region using a GIS Program.

Highlights

1. INE will continue working w/ PEMEX for the distribution of oxyfuels in Jz.
- 2) The JAC will continue to pursue enforcement by the Jz Mayor's office of Article 20 of the Chihuahua State Transit Laws which is the Vehicle (Emissions) Verification Program.
- 3) The JAC will follow-up on Biol. Alma Leticia Figueroa's proposal to determine if siting criteria are followed at the ambient monitoring stations in Jz.
- 4) Visual aides and graphic data will be provided to the JAC members at least 1 week prior to the regularly scheduled JAC meeting.
- 5) The JAC will form a Technical Commission to look at preparation of a presentation for the State Legislators of the 3 jurisdictions which form the JAC.
- 6) The JAC will continue looking into the issues regarding the distribution of oxy fuels in SLP, NM.

Next Meeting:

2 Sept in Doña Ana County

Adjourn.