

Executive Summary

Draft Minutes

Ninth 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

Doña Ana Branch Community College
Las Cruces, New Mexico
December 14, 1998

JAC Members Present:

For Mexico:

Dr. Victor Hugo Paramo - National Institute of Ecology

Quim. Ma.del Pilar Leal - Alternate for Biol.Ma.del Pilar Lopez Marco, PROFEPA

Dra. Rosalba Rojas - Secretariat of Health

Ing. Jose Luis Canales - Ecology for the State of de Chihuahua

Biol. Alma Leticia Figueroa Jimenez - Cd. Juarez-Urban Development and Public Safety

Quim. Adrian Vasquez - UACJ

Dr. Leonel Barraza - Consultative Committee on Sustainable Development - Region 1

Ing. Rene Franco - Mexican Ecological Movement

For the U.S.:

Mr. Bill Luthans - Co-Chair - USEPA Region 6

Mr. Tom Martin - ASARCO

Dr. Carlos Rincon - Environmental Defense Fund

Mr. George Avalos - Dona Ana County Transportation Dept.

Mr. Archie Clouse - TNRCC

Mr. Bob Currey - Alternate for Dr.Chip Groat - UTEP

Mr. Joe Rodriguez - Alternate for Jesus Reynoso -El Paso City-County Health and
Environmental District(EPCCHED)

Mr. Helly Diaz - Alternate for Ms. Cecilia Williams - NMED

Welcome and Introductions

Bill Luthans (BL) & Dr. Victor Hugo Paramo (VHP) welcomed all to the 9th meeting of the JAC. BL mentioned the demonstration firing of an environmental brickkiln attended earlier this day by several JAC members & the public at the KM-20 brick-makers' neighborhood.

VHP - introduce the new members of the Mexican delegation to the committee. Representing Cd. Juarez, Biol. Alma Leticia Figueroa Jimenez, General Director of Ecology & Public Safety. Representing the State of Chihuahua Ecology Department, Lic. Jose Luis Canales De La Vega. Representing the Consultative Committee on Sustainable Development - Region 1, Dr. Leonel Barraza. Representing the academic community, M. en C. Adrian Vasquez Galvez.

BL stated the US Delegation will be accepting nominations for the academic sector position vacated by Dr. Chip Groat.

Presentation and approval of current agenda

The Agenda was approved with the following changes: delete the discussion on vehicle importation into Cd. Juarez; delete a discussion on oxygenated gasoline use in New Mexico.

Approval of minutes of the 27 August, 1998 meeting

Carlos Rincon (CR) requested that several changes regarding wording be made on the Spanish version of the minutes. Joe Creagh (JCr), Environmental Manager from Chevron requested that some wording changes be made to the comments he provided at the Aug. 98 JAC meeting. With the given changes the minutes were approved. BL suggested the minutes also be a little more brief.

Updates

Air Quality Reports

Joe Rodriguez (JR) reported El Paso had no NAAQS violations for the months of Aug., Sept., Oct.

Helly Diaz (HD), NMED, indicated that Sunland Park, NM (SLP) has had no violations of the NAAQS for the 3rd quarter of 1998.

Biol. Alma Leticia Figueroa (ALF) indicated that Cd. Juarez (Jz) has experienced 25 total exceedances this year: 17 PM, 4 ozone, & 4 CO.

VHP asked that presenters make a similar type of graphic presentation, and instead of separating the air basin, that they get together and present the data in the same format. ALF agreed to get the group together to develop an official format.

Update on preventative measures and environmental contingencies

Dra. Rosalba Rojas (RR) from SSA provided an update on preventative measures and environmental contingencies. SSA buys spots on the television and radio to mention the importance of taking care of oneself under various environmental conditions including the proper use of home heating equipment to prevent indoor CO accumulation. She indicated SSA issues air pollution health alerts when pollution levels reach 250 IMECA.

ASARCO announcement on El Paso Plant shutdown

Tom Martin, Environmental Manager for ASARCO - El Paso, announced the El Paso smelter would suspend operations of smelting sulfide-based concentrates for 3 years beginning Feb. 1999. The reason for this is that the worldwide price for copper has fallen to such a level that it has become unprofitable for ASARCO-El Paso to operate.

Update on oxygenated fuel initiative for Cd. Juarez

Joe Creagh (JCr), Environmental Mgr. for Chevron, indicated Chevron met w/ PEMEX officials in Sept. to discuss supply and oxygenate of choice for Juarez. At the conclusion of the meetings PEMEX understood both ethanol and MTBE were available. Biol. Guadalupe de la Luz (GL) indicated that INE received a letter from PEMEX on 6 Nov. which states that there are two issues of concern: 1) the cost of the oxygenate, and 2) the distance of the PEMEX refineries to Juarez. VHP recommended that a Technical Commission form to address the two concerns raised by PEMEX (costs and distance) and send a reply to PEMEX to continue developing this issue.

Update on the Environmental Brick Kiln (EBK) Project undertaken by UACJ and NMSU.

Robert Marquez (RM), PhD Candidate in Chemistry from NMSU, provided an update on the work during the last two years to achieve emissions reductions in the Cd. Juarez Brickkilns. Research on the EBK indicates firing time and fuel requirements are reduced.

VHP congratulated RM and agreed that we should develop a report or update given the various aspects of this project such as the smoke, particulate matter and balance current research with issues that can help bring this issue to fruition.

Update on Dedicated Commuter Lane Initiative (DCL) at the International Bridges

Bob Gray, Information Technology Coordinator for UTEP, indicated the DCL was approved by the EP City Council; this opens the way to work with US Customs. Estimated opening day is April 1999.

Update on recommendation from the Air Work Group to the Governor and Legislature for the State of Chihuahua regarding the Cd. Juarez Inspection/Maintenance Program

Biol. Maria Guadalupe de La Luz, INE-SEMARNAP, reported that letters have been sent to the AWG co-chairs. The letters have not been signed yet. CR stated that in the spirit of the resolution regarding the Cd. Juarez vehicle verification program, the letters be signed a bit more expeditiously since the program is intended to begin soon & having letters signed by the co-chairs of the AWG would add strength to the argument being made locally that the Jz Vehicle Verification program be initiated.

Presentation of the 1999 Cd. Juarez vehicle Inspection/Maintenance Program

Luis Carlos Salmeron (LCS) provided an update on the Cd. Juarez vehicle verification (VV) program for 1999. Cd. Jz currently has a total of 420,000 vehicles; this program contemplates about 315,000 vehicles will participate. For those vehicles that do not pass the emissions test, the City will be implementing a new program to reduce emissions whereby the owner can work on their vehicle with authorized emissions testing shops to reduce emissions. The plan is to get the vehicle owner to use the money/fine on repairing the vehicle to reduce vehicle emissions. Proximate repair cost is \$650pesos (equal to the fine-\$65US).

Draft Strategic Plan -Discussion on development of a Strategic Plan for the JAC

Luis Raul Cordova provided an update on the draft JAC Strategic Plan (JACSP). The Draft was submitted to the JAC for their review and comment. This is the product of one year's work; by presenting the JACSP, the Strategic Planning Technical Commission (SPTC) is now in the process of finalizing the document. The goal of SPTC is to have the final draft completed by January 11, 1999 and would like to have a final meeting of the SPTC on January 13, 1999.

Bill Luthans took this opportunity to introduce Greg Cooke (GC), EPA-Regional Administrator. GC appreciates the opportunity to address the JAC, and commends the group for development of the strategic plan and looks forward to its implementation. He looks forward to working with the JAC in the future.

VHP commented that he was please w/ GC's coming to this meeting and stated that the JAC is unique since there is much participation among its members, and the Mexican government appreciates this group and believes that the JAC is working very well. Mexico plans to promote the formation of similar groups along the Border since it seems to be an effective way of doing things and working in a cooperative, binational relationship.

Report on a UACJ / SENES Particulate Matter -Carbon Monoxide Study in Cd. Juarez

Adrian Vazquez reported that this study involved a year-long effort to gather emissions inventory, meteorology, as well as receptor data from the local particulate matter samplers. Also included was information on mobile and point sources to obtain information on which areas of Juarez were being impacted by high concentrations of PM as well as high CO concentrations.

Collected information was modeled along with city planning efforts as well as regional cartography.

Presentation on Paso del Norte Summer Ozone Studies

VHP stated that this project has provided an updated emissions inventory (EI) for SLP, NM; Cd. Juarez and El Paso. This work involved gathering EI's, combining all the data into a single data-set, gridding a regional map, and integrating all this data into an Urban Airshed Model. Some of the data is still under review, and a meeting w/ the contractor should be upcoming.

EDF Proposal to integrate JAC Strategic Plan Initiatives with the Kyoto Protocol regarding the Worldwide Reduction of Greenhouse Gases

Carlos Rincon presented a review of his meetings that took place in Argentina regarding activities under the Kyoto Protocol rubric to reduce greenhouse gases. He asked that the JAC consider working with him to combine efforts proposed by the Strategic Plan with efforts stated in the Kyoto Protocol.

New Initiatives

Bob Currey asked that NMED provide information on establishing a vehicle I/M oxy-fuels program in Dona Ana County, NM.

Highlights and consensus items of the meeting.

- 1) A JAC Clean Fuels Technical Commission will send a letter to PEMEX regarding the distribution of oxyfuels in Juarez addressing the two issues (cost of oxygenate and distance to the PEMEX refineries).
- 2) The Air Quality Report will be developed jointly.
- 3) The JAC will continue to research the Environmental Brick Kiln (EBK)
- 4) Strategic Planning Technical Commission will meet Jan. 13, 1999 to finalize the Plan.
- 5) The JAC will firm-up its relationship with the Chihuahua State Legislators regarding the Cd. Juarez Vehicle Verification Program
- 6) CR will present the Strategic Plan to the "Encuentro Fronterizo" at its April Meeting

Establishment of date for next meeting

Next Meeting will be Feb. 25, 1999 in El Paso, TX

10. Adjournment