

Transportation Conformity

What is Transportation Conformity?

- A process where Transportation plans, programs, and projects are demonstrated to be consistent with the transportation-related elements of a State Implementation Plan (SIP)
 - Ensures that Federal funding and approval are given to activities that are consistent with air quality goals
 - Key element of the 1990 Clean Air Act amendments

What is Transportation Conformity?

- Requires evaluation of emissions from transportation plans, programs, and projects BEFORE any element may be implemented
- Applies in geographic areas where transportation-related pollutants (ozone, CO, NO₂, and PM)
 - Violate national air quality standards (Nonattainment)
 - Have violated air quality standards (Maintenance)

What is Transportation Conformity?

- Transportation plans, programs, and projects do not:
 - Create new violations of the NAAQS
 - Increase the frequency or severity of NAAQS violations
 - Delay timely attainment of the NAAQS

What is Transportation Conformity?

- Uses the interagency collaboration of both Transportation and Air Quality professionals to ensure/meet goals
- Interagency partners include:
 - US DOT (FHWA and FTA)
 - US EPA
 - SC DOT
 - SC DHEC
 - MPO's (local transportation planning agency)

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“The Process”

- Form Interagency Group for nonattainment area
- Review Consultation Procedures
 - Defines roles and responsibilities
- Look at nonattainment area LRTP/TIP(s)
 - Establish regional travel demand model
 - Group future projects into open-to-traffic dates and list within attainment date, interim years, and horizon year
 - Determine whether conformity applies to project

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“The Process”

- Run mobile emissions model (MOVES)
- Compare results to Interim or SIP Budget
- Public Involvement
- LRTP and TIP must show conformity
- Projects must be in conformity (NEPA)

Transportation Conformity “Timeline”

- The first conformity determination is due one year after an area has been designated nonattainment
- At least every 4-years after last conformity determination is made by FHWA
- After certain changes occur (SIP actions, changes to plans, updates)

Example

Emission Results from the Metrolina Model and Mobile6.2 with CMAQ Project Reductions Included*				
Year	NOX Build	NoBuild	Build - Nobuild	Build - Baseline (2002)
2002				11.4250
2010	8.4135	8.6851		8.4135
2015	4.8955	4.9087	-0.0132	4.8955
2025	2.8418	2.8973	-0.0555	2.8418
2035	2.8992	2.9080	-0.0088	2.8992
Year	VOC Build	NoBuild	Build - Nobuild	Build - Baseline (2002)
2002				6.8364
2010	5.9172	6.2410		5.9172
2015	3.6258	3.6452	-0.0194	3.6258
2025	2.8765	3.0106	-0.1341	2.8765
2035	3.5792	3.5901	-0.0109	3.5792

Lessons to learn

- Early and often discussion about projects
- Careful consideration of capacity adding projects
- Watch out for developments that induce lots of traffic
- Avoid moving projects in/out of interim years
- Avoid changes to a projects scope

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