

Minutes

24th Meeting of the

Joint Advisory Committee for the Improvement of Air Quality in the
Cd. Juárez, Chihuahua / El Paso, Texas / Doña Ana County, New Mexico Air Basin
Santa Teresa Country Club
Santa Teresa, New Mexico
5 December, 2002

Welcome and Introductions

Ing. Jesus Contreras (JC) and Bill Luthans (BL) welcomed all to this meeting of the JAC. Bill commented that he was please to return to the role of co-chair of the JAC having sat out the previous meeting co-chaired by Matthew Witosky who was preparing to be stationed as EPA's liaison to Mexico. He added that several important activities have taken place. All of us are aware that the public meetings for the upcoming Border 2012 Program have taken place. We need to determine how we're going to integrate the new program into the activities of the JAC. BL also indicated that a report on the new border program is making its way to the offices of the Presidents of both countries. Jesus Contreras indicated that he has received a letter from UACJ announcing there has been a change in membership from Adrian Vazquez to Gilberto Velazquez.

JAC Members Present:

Mexico

Ing. Jesus Contreras - Co-Chair, Alternate for Ing. Sergio Sanchez, SEMARNAT
Ing. Daniel Chacon, PROFEPA
Ing. Jose Treviño, SEMARNAT-Delegación Chihuahua
Ing. Ives Figueroa - State of Chihuahua Ecology Department
Biol. Gerardo Tarin, Alternate for Biol. Alma Leticia Figueroa - Cd. Juarez Ecology Department
Ing. Rene Franco - MEM
Dr. Enrique Suarez, FEMAP
Ing. Gilberto Velazquez, UACJ

United States

Mr. Bill Luthans, Co-Chair, Environmental Protection Agency
Mr Ralph Gruebel, State of New Mexico Environment Department
Mr. Arch Clouse - TNRCC
Dr. Carlos Rincon- Environmental Defense
Wen-Whai Li, PhD - UT-El Paso
Mr. Bob Currey
Mr. Mark Rodriguez, El Paso Electric

A Quorum Exists

Presentation and approval of current agenda.

Rene Franco requested a modification to the agenda to join several topics which had similar themes. This was approved as was the modified agenda.

Approval of the minutes of the March and June JAC meetings

Bob Currey asked that the minutes be distributed at least 30 days before the meeting and requested that they be in a more sensible format. Carlos Rincon indicated that from now on there would be minutes

prepared by both Victor Valenzuela and Josefina Ortiz. Arch Clouse asked that there be more involvement by members of the JAC on the development of the minutes since there is too much technical information provided within the minutes. Members agreed that the minutes should be a summary of discussions and not necessarily a transcript of the meeting. Jose Treviño recommended that the minutes be a summary and if more details are needed they can be requested via an email. The minutes of Sept. 2002 JAC meeting were approved. **Agreement:** The minutes would be prepared in a more simplified format.

Regular Agenda Items

A. Air Quality Report - Q3-2002

Victor Valenzuela presented the air quality report. During the 3rd quarter of 2002 (Q3-2002) there was 1 PM10 exceedance in Cd. Juarez. No PM10 exceedances were reported in El Paso or Dona Ana County. There were 13 sampling days during Q3-2002. During Q2-2002, El Paso and Juarez had 1 ozone exceedance in June. Trendlines indicate that ozone concentrations in Juarez are minimizing in Juarez and increasing in El Paso. El Paso and Juarez had 1 exceedance of the ozone standard for their respective country in August. We have not received data from NMED for the Q3-2002 since today's meeting takes place before the AIRS reporting deadline. BL asked how the PM2.5 concentrations are looking. Victor Valenzuela (VV) indicated average concentrations are well below half the standard for the annual mean standard.

B. Cd. Juarez Air Quality Monitoring Network

Gerardo Tarin (GT) reported that Cd. Juarez recently undertook measures to update and repair its ambient air pollution monitors. The equipment was sent for repair and paid for by Applied Sciences Laboratories, Inc. Cost for repairs was \$500. The equipment is back in Juarez, but with current installation of the LEADs system in Juarez the equipment hasn't been installed. We also have a letter on behalf of the Cd. Juarez Ecology office regarding the monitoring equipment which was to be funded by EPA and directed thru EPCCHED. The equipment has not been purchased. The letter was signed and delivered to EPCCHED.

C. Brickmakers Technical Commission Report

Mark Rodriguez reported that construction on the low-emissions brickkilns in Cd. Juarez has begun. EP Electric requested that the TCEQ approve construction of modified brickkilns in Juarez to reduce emissions in exchange for emissions reduction requirements at some of its boilers at the Newman Power station. On 16 November the TCEQ approved the proposal. EPE is proud to be part of the effort to obtain real reductions in air pollution in this airshed especially since this is a pilot project and can serve as an example for the entire U.S.-Mexico Border. The first kiln was constructed at FEMAP, and this kiln shall be used as a training center. Construction of the kiln is based on materials currently used by the brickmakers such as adobe and mud mortar. EP Electric estimates that 30 kilns will be constructed within the next couple of weeks and will have all 60 proposed kilns constructed by May 2003. Other than Mexico 68, kilns are being constructed at Kilometro 20 and Anapra in Col. Felipe Angeles.

BL ask how EPE determined that 60 was an adequate number of kilns to construct to obtain the needed emissions reductions. Mark indicated that these 60 kilns should reduce emissions by 198 tons per year (of total pollutants), and given modifications completed at the grandfathered boilers at Newman, this was all that was required to obtain the needed amount. BL asked if the quantitative analysis data was available. MR replied that the data is available at TCEQ and at EPE.

JC stated that SEMARNAT is convinced that these projects or Emissions reduction Credits are needed and we want to provide regulatory guidance to make this work. His concerns are that SEMARNAT is not aware of these studies. We are aware there is a regulatory framework for an emissions trading program, but we're not aware of the protocol to arrive at the number of kilns. We also have other questions on

unknowns such as health effects since there are differences in breathing SO₂, PM₁₀, or PM_{2.5}. We need to know what happens to the emissions to assure that the emissions reductions are actually healthy and not causing any unintended consequences. On its face this project is very good in that there are no projects of this type taken at an international level, but we need to keep talking about this in depth. Mark indicated he's in agreement and he looks forward to continue working on improving this discussion. BL added that a good economic analysis has been conducted, but the public should have all the technical reports on this project.

CR asked who on the JAC has a copy of the letter discussing this project and proposed emissions reduction plan sent by EPE to TCEQ, and who here had seen the approval letter from TCEQ to EPE. Only Archie Clouse and MR replied yes. While all the JAC members probably agree that this is a very good project with far-reaching benefits, this is the 4th meeting where EPE has been asked to provide a technical presentation on the brickkiln, and all they're shown us are pictures of the kiln and the construction process. This is not a charity that EPE is providing; it is a mechanism to reduce costs that could be incurred by EPE to reduce NO_x emissions at its El Paso operations. EPE in its proposal states that there would be benefits, but it does not demonstrate the environmental benefit. EPE does not say how it the benefits outweigh the risks to human health. This project could be a point of reference to develop better projects.

CR said that as it is stated on the letter Environmental Defense sent to TCEQ' Executive Director Margaret Hoffman, "e urge TCEQ to give affected communities the opportunity to comment as part of the proposal review process" Since the effect of this program is to trade one health effect for another and one set of risks facing one population for another, the affected citizens should have a say about the commission's actions. Furthermore, as an important component of a meaningful public review, the TCEQ should work with the Joint Advisory Committee for Air Quality Improvement (JAC). Finally CR said that we have seen no documentation from EPE that demonstrates greater health benefits, for example there is no data that supports that the health benefit of a ton of CO being reduced at the brick kilns is greater than the health benefit of a ton of NO_x being reduced at the EPE power plant.

Daniel Chacon commented that all environmental projects can take two paths; those strictly scientific which can last 1000 years and those that intuitively take the information we know and put it to use to improve health and reduce risks to human health. We can't discard the need for more studies to evaluate the validity of interpollutant trades, but we need to use what information we have available and reduce air pollution from the brickmaking neighborhoods. Bob Currey (BC) stated this is an important issue given the concept of interpollutant trading across an international border is being undertaken. He added TCEQ is the agency which must respond since it gave EPE approval to proceed w/ its proposed project. Is TCEQ capable of providing this information? Archie Clouse (AC) replied that the proposal, the data, and TCEQ's approval letter are found at the TCEQ offices. BC requested that better environmental health information could be provided.

BL summarized by stating that it appears all here support this project, yet there are many more issues that can be discussed. CR recommended that all the information be forwarded to the co-chairs and they could distribute the information to the JAC members for their review and discussion at the upcoming JAC meeting, and added that since this is the first cross-border trade that it should be done as correctly and professionally as possible. Everything needs to be appropriately documented and available for public review. Rene Franco asked if anything had been done on the Mexican side such as environmental assessments, risk analysis, environmental health studies, anything?? Gerardo Tarin (GT) responded that there currently is a requirement in the on-going construction project whereby an older kiln would be destroyed after construction of an environmental kiln is completed. JC asked what was the criteria for developing an emissions inventory for the brickkilns; is there an emissions inventory for this type of brick

kiln since that what Mexico would like to know. Jose Treviño indicated that this discussion is moving into a very technical level and this topic has already been discussed at great depth, and if we wish to take this discussion any further we should have a meeting of a technical commission. Ives Figueroa (IF) added that we're all interested in this project, but we don't have any idea of what it is.

Luis Ito stated that he's concerned with the manner in which the Mexican government perceives this project, and he's concerned that this project is being questioned so much. The Newman power plant clearly is not in the airshed and the brickkilns are. Quite a bit of research was conducted by EPE into the brickkiln emissions and the new kiln noticeably reduces emissions. To question the value or validity of this project really doesn't make sense to him, and he'll be happy to discuss this project further if there is some technical aspect which does not make sense to those at this meeting who don't fully understand the value of this project. AGREEMENT: Jesus Contreras and several others were in agreement w/ Bob Currey's proposal to further analyze the documents submitted by EPE and TCEQ regarding this project, and we'll have a meeting of the brickmakers technical commission to find some common ground.

D. Oxygenated Fuels and Low RVP Fuels Programs

Two separate fuels programs are carried out in El Paso and Juarez to address seasonal air pollution. Chuy Reynoso reported that EPCCHED collected over 300 samples from local gas stations. 19 gas stations were issued notices of violation. In October as many samples were collected and 14 gas stations were not in compliance with the oxygenated gasoline regulations. During the Winter months gasoline sold in El Paso is required to have an oxygen content of 2.7%. These violations usually are a result of slow moving inventories and are usually repaired by requesting that the distributor add more oxygenate to the gasoline at the station. Gerardo Tarin reported that in Juarez several hundred samples were collected and Juarez also is within the Mexican rules for oxygenated gasoline.

E. Paso del Norte Printers Workshop

Pam Whaley from the TCEQ's Small Business and Local Government Assistance Program reported on the Printers workshop which took place in both El Paso and Juarez on Nov. 5 & 6, 2002. The themes covered at the workshop were controlling emissions and limiting waste. Participants indicated they were very happy that someone had come to the area to teach them techniques to be more efficient, and more workshops are planned as a result. Other workshops that are planned will help vehicle mechanics, dry cleaners, and paint bodyshops. Cd. Juarez is also developing a small business program designed provide this necessary assistance.

F. Air Monitoring Operations Workshop

A workshop on ambient monitoring operations in Mexico was conducted in October addressing Quality Assurance / Quality Control methodologies. Carlos Rincon congratulated Adrian Vazquez on organizing this meeting in Juarez. Representatives of air quality programs throughout Mexico attended this workshop which discussed EPA methods on QA/QC, maintaining and managing data, proper maintenance and operation of an ambient monitoring network, and proper air monitoring record keeping. A field trip took participants to one of the Cd. Juarez monitoring sites. One issue that was discussed is given the variability of air quality monitoring equipment and data collection equipment found in cities located throughout Mexico, how is the data accumulated at one common site, managed, and reported in a format which is useful to the public at large. A paper will be developed by Adrian Vazquez on this workshop as well as next steps that can be pursued to help this process along.

F. Possible Heavy Metals Contamination in Cd. Juarez

Daniel Chacon, Delegado for PROFEPA in Cd. Juarez, reported that in general, concentrations of heavy metals such as lead (Pb) or arsenic (As) were not found to be above Federal standards at a depth of 0 cm to 10 cm. At a depth of 11cm and deeper we found specific sites such as the Monument to Benito

Juarez where Pb concentrations were 500ppm and another site near ASARCO where elevated As concentrations reached 100ppm to 150ppm. Currently metals testing is taking place on human subjects where hair samples are being taken from children at the sites with As concentrations of 100ppm or greater at depth of 11cm and greater. It appears that in Juarez elevated As levels are not found at the first stratum of 0-10cm, but at 11cm and greater elevated Pb and As levels are found. While this is not a problem across the board, there are specific areas where these levels are found. It has been discussed internally that a larger-scale study needs to take place, and we need to look for any type of patterns in the data to see if there are localized elevated As and Pb concentrations such as have been found in the neighborhoods surrounding the ASARCO smelter.

F. Clean Air Investment Fund

A final report on actions that are needed to develop a CAIF was provided by Heather Himmelberger. Given the current state of El Paso air quality, perhaps a fund is not necessary. Under conditions where air quality would worsen and compliance issues would develop by certain industries, an ability to pay into a CAIF which could invest in projects on either side of the border. The CAIF can be developed as a pilot project where funds are disbursed by NADBank, which as expressed an interest in acting as project administrator. To prime this fund, from \$25,000 to \$30,000 U.S. may become available via a grant from EPA. CR interjected that Gerardo Tarin is working on a similar type of fund in Juarez which would be part of the Cd. Juarez PRO-AIRE program and supported by a national fund developed in Mexico. NEXT STEPS: the JAC will evaluate the possibility of supporting a pilot project to move a CAIF to reality.

G. LEADs Monitoring System Installation in Cd. Juarez

Dave Stroud from IPS Meteostar and TCEQ reported that this week the Cd. Juarez Ecology Department and TCEQ are working together on Integration of Cd. Juarez Air Quality Sites into the Texas LEADs Monitoring Network. This system will provide on the Internet near-real-time reporting of air quality data and meteorological conditions in Juarez. LEADs provides a centralized format for viewing regional air quality data as well as a platform where those who need to obtain archived data can do so thru the Internet. AGREEMENT: The JAC agreed to draft a letter in support of investment of funds for a similar type of system for the State of New Mexico.

G. Emissions inventory development

Karla Hardison from TCEQ has developed a workplan with contractor Eastern Research Group to develop a Fine PM area source emissions inventory and updated GIS spatial maps for Cd. Juarez. This work is developed in coordination with the Western Governor's Association initiative to develop emissions inventories in Mexico. The workplan involves coordinating with local personnel to survey a sample of industries such as cement batch plant operators, dry cleaners, auto bodyshops, agricultural organizations, metal foundries, etc. A series of questionnaires have been developed for each of the industries to obtain information on operations and using currently available emissions factors develop an emissions inventory for these particular "area sources". It was asked if this project would be redundant to the National Emissions Inventory Program currently under development. This project would be the foundation for that program in regards area sources.

H. JAC Website Development

Bob Gray reported that UTEP has developed a website for the JAC which is both informative and loaded with content. This website has been under develop for many years. Content includes the JAC Strategic Plan, minutes, agendas, and the workgroups which are identified within the Strategic Plan. One shortcoming is that not enough people are using the website to coordinate the activities which we undertake and more current information needs to be uploaded. AC stated that this site is just fantastic and needs greater utilization. AGREEMENT: Bob Gray will call a meeting to discuss the website in detail and requests that VV provide as much information possible of all previous JAC meetings.

I. EPA / SEMARNAT Border 2012 Initiative

Allyson Siwik reported that EPA and SEMARNAT recently concluded a series of public meetings along the U.S. - Mexico border accepting public comment on the Border 2012 draft document. She recognized and appreciated everyone's participation. She expects that a first draft report will be prepared between January and February with a final report prepared by March. The workgroups that are identified in the Border 2012 program may begin to work together and initiate activities in 2003. The Secretary of SEMARNAT and Governor Whitman would like to promote activities during the early months of 2003. In the Cd. Juarez meetings about 50 proposals were suggested, so all we need is everyone's cooperation and apply the experience developed by the JAC. Also, the JAC, being the model organization for binational cooperation may be the workgroup representing air programs in this region described in the B-2012 Program.

7. Observations and Comments from the Public

A. Brian Foster announced that CENRAP would hold a conference on March 4 & 5 to discuss Regional Haze and Visibility. CENRAP is the Central Regional Air Partnership.

B. Archie Clouse commented that as a follow-up to the resolution we worked on during the course of several months on redesignation, the TCEQ has been moving forward with the recommendations made by the JAC.

C. Bob Gray commented that the UACJ is an excellent resource to obtain information on the JAC website.

8. Highlights and consensus items of the meeting.

A. The JAC will draft a letter supporting development of a LEADs - type air quality data retrieval and management system for New Mexico.

B. A follow-up meeting of the brickmakers technical commission will take place to determine if anymore information is needed and consider proceeding with this project.

C. Victor Valenzuela will work with SEMARNAT to prepare more sensible minutes that are more quickly distributed to JAC members.

D. We will meet next Wednesday to have a workshop on the use of the JAC website and integration of data therein.

9. Establishment of date for next meeting

-March 6, 2003 in El Paso, Texas

10. Adjourn