

MWAQC Technical Advisory Committee
1-Page Summary of Policy-Relevant Issues March 13, 2012 Meeting

Item #4a

Key policy-relevant issues discussed at the March 13 meeting are summarized below.

1. Motor Vehicle Emission Budgets and Safety Margins (PM_{2.5} Redesignation Request and Maintenance Plan)

- A key component of the PM_{2.5} Redesignation Request and Maintenance Plan, motor vehicle emissions budgets (MVEBs), was discussed in the meeting.
- MDE and TPB staff presented their perspectives on mobile budgets and Safety Margins for the PM_{2.5} Redesignation Request and Maintenance Plan.
- TPB staff, Virginia DEQ, and the DOTs are interested in applying a safety margin and having the MVEBs set above the actual projected future year inventories. TPB wants that safety margins of 20 percent of the 2017 inventory levels and 30 percent of the 2025 inventory levels be included in the budgets for both precursor NO_x and PM 2.5- primary. This is important for PM_{2.5}- primary because emissions of this pollutant from the mobile sector actually begin to increase between 2030 and 2040. In order for future transportation plans to demonstrate conformity, modeled emissions cannot be higher than the MVEBs. EPA does allow application of a safety margin and it must be explicitly included in the Plan.
- MDE took a different view for establishing MVEBs. While MDE proposed to use the current projected future year emissions for 2017 and 2025 as outyear MVEBs for PM_{2.5}-Primary, it proposed to establish mobile budgets for NO_x at levels, which are 10% less compared to the currently projected levels for 2017 and 2025. MDE thought that the NO_x emission from motor vehicles operating in the Washington region contributed a great deal towards the ozone and PM_{2.5} levels monitored at Maryland's downwind air quality monitors in general and Edgewood ozone monitor in particular. Therefore, reducing NO_x emission from motor vehicles in the Washington region will help the downwind Maryland monitors greatly in reducing ozone and PM_{2.5} levels there and attaining the current and future air quality standards.
- DDOE suggested an approach based on a compromise between the views of MDE and VDEQ and TPB. DDOE proposed to establish the PM_{2.5}-Primary budget for 2025 at a level, which is about 1.25% higher compared to the currently projected emission for 2025 so that the projected mobile PM_{2.5}-Primary emission for 2040, which is higher compared to the PM_{2.5}-Primary budget for 2025 would not pose any problem in meeting the PM_{2.5}-Primary mobile budget for 2025. At the same time, DDOE also proposed to establish the NO_x mobile budget for 2025 at a level, which is 1.25% less compared to the currently projected level for 2025 in order to accommodate the views of MDE on reducing NO_x emission from motor vehicles. DDOE was also open to discussing the possibility of a PM_{2.5} margin of safety in the 2017 budget by using the same approach described above if any conformity issue comes to the fore for analysis years 2018 thru 2024.
- TPB staff also presented transportation emission reduction benefits from various transportation emission reduction measures (TERMs). Staff estimated that TERMS reduce mobile source emissions by 2% and 1% for PM_{2.5}-Primary and NO_x respectively in 2040.
- No final decision was taken regarding the mobile budget issue and the members decided to discuss this issue further.

Upcoming events:

MWAQC TAC, April 10; ACPAC, April 16; TPB, April 18; MWAQC, April 25; CEEPC, May 23