AIR QUALITY

Q

We recognize that the project is a key element in your strategy to attain air quality conformity. Please discuss what difference this project could make in pollution load and level.

A

Given the limited amount of public funding available to implement transportation projects, privately financed projects like MAGLEV are very critical in achieving regional air quality conformity. SCAG is in the process of preparing the 2001 Southern California Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). The Draft RTP's project mix fell short of attaining air quality conformity. Subsequently, SCAG added an additional MAGLEV line from LAX to March AFB and the final conformity analysis indicates that the 2001 Draft Regional Transportation Plan attains the air quality conformity requirements.

Implementation of the MAGLEV system would reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT) in the region by over 400 million miles annually, leading to substantial reductions in criteria pollutants. The net savings (accounting for pollutants associated with energy production) are forecasted to be:

- Total Organic Compounds -74.08 tons per year
- Carbon Monoxide -1,656.03 tons per year
- Nitrous Oxides -309.81 tons per year
- Carbon Dioxide -163,151.2 tons per year

The critical role of the MAGLEV system to the air quality conformity of the region is directly related to the magnitude of VMT reduction. Because MAGLEV service would provide such significant time savings for long trips across the region, it generates the high level of VMT savings. Only this type of premium transportation service (very high speed, limited stop, market priced, focused on major destinations, linked to local distribution systems) appears to have the potential to penetrate the auto-dominated travel markets in southern California.

TIP PROCESS

Q *When does SCAG plan to put the project on the TIP?*

A It is anticipated that the California MAGLEV Deployment Project will be programmed as a fully constrained project in the Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP) for the years 2004-2010. The Project will concurrently be programmed in the State of California's State Transportation Improvement Plan (STIP), which is approved by the California Transportation Commission.

The 1998 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) adopted in April of 1998 by the SCAG Regional Council included the development of an intra-regional high-speed transportation system based on MAGLEV technology. In September 1998 SCAG submitted a grant proposal under Section 1218 of TEA-21 to the Federal Railroad Administration. The preconstruction planning and development of the FRA Project Description document was included in SCAG's Overall Work Plan for fiscal years 1998–1999, 1999–2000, and 2000–2001. The next phase of work will be the preparation of an Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement (EIR/EIS) pursuant to Federal NEPA and California CEQA requirements. The planning phase will end on the completion of the environmental phase and with a formal Record of Decision.

With the Record of Decision the California MAGLEV Deployment Program will begin actual project implementation and will transition to the construction phase in late FY 2003 or early FY 2004. SCAG's Regional Council is the policy board given the authority to program projects in the RTIP).

The funds that are required to be included in the TIP are funds provided under Section 134 of Title 23, or from state transportation funding programs, which this program is not intending to use. We would add the project for conformity reasons and if $950 million is required to be added into the TIP. Then SCAG would include it in the appropriate TIP phase.

CORRECTIONS

Q *There are differences between the year 2020 O&M estimates in the cost section (Section 6, pages 6-34 to 6-35) and the cost data in the pro forma table of Appendix E. The Section 6 table is for the EA alignment. The Appendix E table is labeled "Version B1." There is a list of 8 scenarios on page 5-19, but the pro forma version does not seem to match any of them. Please explain.*

A The *pro forma* table in Appendix E is for the Optimal Alignment through San Bernardino which terminates at Riverside. The Optimal Alignment is not included in the modeling scenarios on page 5-19.

Q *On page 8-28 of the Project Description there is a reference to an $840 million funding gap that does not seem to appear in the pro formas. Please explain.*

A The statement from page 8-28 represents a previously uncaught editing error in the document. That sentence applies to the double track, 10-minute headway option, discussed briefly in section 8.8 on page 8-29. The funding shortfall for the "optimal alignment" is $3,500,000 as shown in Table 8-5 on page 8-22.

Q *There is an inconsistency between the revenue forecasts on p. 5-52 and those used in the Pro Forma financial table in Appendix E. We were not able to determine that the same scenario was used in both places. We also were not able to reconcile the present value estimates in section 7.7 with the revenue data on p. 5-52. Please provide tables with the back-up data and estimates for Section 7.7, and resolve or explain the noted inconsistencies.*

A

The revenue forecasts on page 5-52 are for the EA alignment. When the Optimal Alignment that was shown in the June 30, 2000 submission was analyzed, increased revenue from the addition of the San Bernardino station more than offset the loss of revenue from MIP. We are providing revised tables based on the eight-station Expanded Constrainable Alignment explained in the September 1, 2000 submission.