

GOODS MOVEMENT ACTION PLAN ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT MITIGATION WORK GROUP

Co-Chairs

Julie Masters, Senior Attorney, Natural Resources Defense Council
T.L. Garrett, Vice President, Pacific Merchants Shipping Association

Introduction

Improving the movement of goods in California is among the highest priorities for Governor Schwarzenegger. It is the policy of this Administration to improve and expand California's goods movement industry and infrastructure. The Schwarzenegger Administration has established a Cabinet Work Group to lead the implementation of this policy for goods movement and ports by working collaboratively with the logistics industry, local and regional governments, neighboring communities, business, labor, environmental groups and other interested stakeholders to achieve shared goals.

Beginning in June 2004, the Schwarzenegger Administration began a concerted effort to assemble goods movement stakeholders to learn about the problems, opportunities, and challenges facing the future of goods movement within the State. These efforts led to the formation of the Administration Goods Movement Policy, "Goods Movement in California," in January 2005. The "Goods Movement Action Plan, Phase I, Foundations", was published in September of 2005. Part of a two-phase process, it is an attempt to characterize the "why" and the "what" of the State's involvement in goods movement in the following four segments: (1) the goods movement industry and its growth potential; (2) the four "port-to-border" transportation corridors that constitute the state's goods movement backbone and the associated inventory of infrastructure projects being planned or are underway; (3) the extent of environmental and community impacts—as well as a description of mitigation approaches; and (4) key aspects of public safety and homeland security issues. Substantial effort was focused on developing the inventory of existing and proposed goods movement projects. The listing includes previously identified projects in various Regional Transportation Plans (RTP) and Regional Transportation Improvement Programs (RTIP) prepared by Municipal Planning Organizations (MPOs), Transportation Commissions and Councils of Governments (COGs). In addition, the listings include a wide range of outlined projects underway or under consideration by the ports, railroads, and other third parties.

The Phase II Action Plan, to be completed by December 2005, will develop a statewide implementation plan for goods movement capacity expansion including financing options for facilities, environmental impact mitigation, community impact mitigation, and enhancement of homeland security and public safety. It will define the "how," "when," and "who" required to synchronize and to integrate efforts to achieve relief and improvement as quickly as possible.

The Phase II effort will be executed by work groups comprised of stakeholders, technical experts, and members of the public in conjunction with support from BTH and CalEPA staffs.

Work Group Focus

The Environmental Impact Mitigation Work Group will focus on actions needed to mitigate the environmental impacts of goods movement, especially air pollution near ports, intermodal rail yards, and major transportation corridors. This Work Group will serve as an interface between the Phase II Work Group discussions and the Air Resources Board's (ARB's) development of its Port and Intermodal Goods Movement Emission Reduction Plan.

The goods movement sector is the biggest source of air pollution in the Los Angeles region and a significant contributor in other regions. The air pollution from goods movement across California has serious impacts on public health, increasing the risk of premature death, cancer, and respiratory illness. Mitigating this pollution involves multiple players, including: ARB and local air districts; other state and local government agencies; the federal government; port and rail yard operators; and shipping, railroad, and trucking companies. Federal law already requires ARB to prepare State Implementation Plans to achieve the health-based air quality standards for ozone and particles. In addition, ARB has established goals to cut soot particles from diesel engines and reduce the health risk.

The federal government has the primary authority for regulating many of the highest-emitting sources of air pollution from goods movement, such as ships and locomotives.. Limits on emissions from ocean going ships are subject to international treaties and agreements that make it more difficult to achieve timely reductions. Federal action (such as rulemaking, other approvals, and financing) is critical to mitigation efforts, but it is not easy to secure.

Framing Questions

- *What more should the State do to mitigate the existing air quality impacts of goods movement and the impacts of projected growth in cargo, and what are the priorities for these actions?*
- *What are the roles of the State, regional and local government, the ports, and the intermodal rail yards in implementing mitigation strategies?*
- *What is the responsibility of the federal government? What actions can the State take assist the federal government in assuming that responsibility?*
- *What should California's backup plan be if the federal government does not step up and accept its responsibilities?*
- *Which approaches should the State use to determine the best means of achieving results between regulatory, incentive, or partnership agreement approaches?*

- *With years of effort ahead, how should priorities be set to sequence mitigation actions?*
- *Should activities that pose the highest risk to communities be addressed before activities of statewide concern?*