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Ms. Carey Bylin  
California Air Resources Board  
1001 I Street  
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via e-mail at [energy@arb.ca.gov](mailto:energy@arb.ca.gov)

Re: WSPA Comments on the August 15, 2019 CARB SF<sub>6</sub> Workshop

Dear Carey,

The Western States Petroleum Association (WSPA) appreciates the opportunity to provide the following comments in response to the California Air Resources Board (CARB) staff presentation during the August 15, 2019 Workshop regarding potential changes to the Regulation for Reducing Sulfur Hexafluoride (SF<sub>6</sub>) Emissions from Gas Insulated Switchgear (SF<sub>6</sub> Workshop) and the Discussion Draft, also dated August 15, 2019. WSPA is a non-profit trade association that represents companies that explore for, produce, refine, transport and market petroleum, petroleum products, natural gas and other energy supplies in California and four other western states.

WSPA appreciates the changes made by CARB in the August 15, 2019 Discussion Draft, some of which address concerns cited in the WSPA comment letter of April 23, 2019.<sup>1</sup> There are key elements of the updated Discussion Draft that remain in need of further consideration, as described in the following general and specific comments, as well as the elements of our April 23, 2019 comment letter that were not addressed in the updated Discussion Draft..

## **General Comments**

### **Phase-Out Applicability**

WSPA continues to believe that the automatic inclusion of fossil fuel producers, pipelines, and users in the SF<sub>6</sub> regulation amendments (specifically, the phase-out aspect) puts some of California's most critical infrastructure (which accounts for approximately 1% of SF<sub>6</sub> capacity in California) at risk for a future Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emission reduction of less than **0.001%** of California's total CO<sub>2</sub>e emissions.<sup>2,3</sup> In an April 25, 2001 filing of "Comments of the California Energy Commission (CEC) on Decision 01-04-006, Relative to Fossil Fuels and Rotating Outages"<sup>4</sup>, the CEC determined: "*Essential use status for all fossil fuels is necessary to protect the public health and welfare*". In its recommendations, CEC requested the California Public Utility Commission (CPUC) to exclude fossil fuel producers, pipelines, and users from "*coordinated interruptions [of electricity], to the extent feasible*".

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<sup>1</sup> Western States Petroleum Association. "WSPA Comments on the February 25, 2019 CARB SF<sub>6</sub> Workshop", April 23, 2019

<sup>2</sup> [https://www.arb.ca.gov/cc/inventory/doc/docs2/2g1b\\_instategenerationtransmissionanddistrib\\_electricitytransmitted\\_sf6\\_2016.htm](https://www.arb.ca.gov/cc/inventory/doc/docs2/2g1b_instategenerationtransmissionanddistrib_electricitytransmitted_sf6_2016.htm)

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.arb.ca.gov/cc/inventory/data/data.htm>

<sup>4</sup> [https://www.energy.ca.gov/papers/2001-04-25\\_PUC\\_DEC01-04-006.PDF](https://www.energy.ca.gov/papers/2001-04-25_PUC_DEC01-04-006.PDF)

Stable, safe, and reliable electricity supply to a refinery and electricity distribution within a refinery are critical not only to avoiding operational interruptions but also in maintaining stable and safe refinery operation. As noted in our April 23, 2019 comment letter, even momentary electricity supply disruption can trigger shutdowns of sensitive equipment which can take days to recover from and return to stable operation. Reliable delivery of gasoline, jet fuel, and diesel to California consumers requires reliable and proven electricity supply using reliable and proven equipment.

WSPA again strongly recommends that CARB take a more systematic and logical pathway to phase out the use of SF<sub>6</sub>. Specifically, it is recommended that CARB take a phased approach to this regulatory change, based on critical versus non-critical equipment such that it provides the time needed to develop the new technologies and learn about the new technologies. In moving forward in this manner, critical infrastructure will not be subject to the initial uncertainties related to the new technology.

### **Non-SF<sub>6</sub> GIE Availability**

While WSPA appreciates CARB's intent with the single manufacturer exemption which it has proposed, without a verification process in place to ensure commercial availability of the equipment in the "clearinghouse", we further suggest that the verification process also ensures that a piece of equipment meets nationally recognized industry standards and has been in service and operating safely and reliably for at least two years prior to it being deemed commercially available in the clearinghouse. It is noteworthy that it is not unusual for operators to have corporate standards that require equipment, such as GIEs, be proven in the field for at least two years prior to installation onsite (i.e., cannot be a first generation equipment).

As the only substantive requirement which apply to hermetically sealed devices is the phase out requirement, WSPA suggests that the reporting requirements be adjusted to collect only that information which is relevant to demonstrate compliance with the phase out requirement. Specifically, the requirement for reporting under this regulation for hermetically sealed devices be adjusted such that regulated entities must only report changes in inventory (i.e., phase outs) of hermetically sealed devices. This will reduce the burden on regulated entities while still providing ARB with the information relevant to hermetically sealed device phase outs.

### **Annual Emissions Limit**

CARB should exempt the emissions from the catastrophic event category like how the regulation currently handles emergency events.

WSPA believes that the baseline year for the regulation should be the year before the first phase out year in the regulation upon promulgation (currently, this would be 2024), as the 2019 baseline year will not be reflective of the SF<sub>6</sub> GIEs onsite when compliance is required. Any additional SF<sub>6</sub> equipment installed between 2019 and the first phase out date will not be considered in the emission limit calculation and will competitively disadvantage any facility or company expanding their electrical infrastructure as compared to those that have no expansion plans.

### **Specific Comments**

**§ 95351. Definitions and Acronyms.** With regard to the definition for "Emergency Event", WSPA again requests that equipment failure and electrical fault be added to this definition.

With regard to the definition of “Distribution-level Gas-insulated Equipment” or “Distribution-level GIE”, WSPA believes that this definition is too broad to provide a clear distinction as to whether a piece of equipment would fall into the distribution or “all other” categories. Critically, it is difficult to assess the impacts of the new SF<sub>6</sub> Phase Out categories (and the proposed Phase Out dates) on equipment because it is unclear which category the equipment would be classified under (“Distribution” or All Other/Transmission). It appears that this definition was written with the electrical utilities in mind and does not seem to apply well to industrial facilities. This is compounded by the fact that the definition uses the terms “transmission system” and “end user” and they are not defined in the regulation.

For example at oil and gas facilities, there are often different configurations inside the facility that moves electricity around the facility (outdoor breakers located at primary side of the transformer owned by operators) which could be considered a “transmission system”, and there is equipment (breaker located at the low voltage side of the transformer feeding the load) which takes the electricity from that system brings it to the equipment which needs it and therefore may be considered the “end user”. The question arises as to whether this secondary side breaker is considered “distribution-level” regardless of its voltage level. While it may not be the intent of the regulation to be based on the kV/kA categorization, it remains unclear.

With regard to the definition of “Permanently decommission”, the definition appears to prevent a compliance entity from holding any backup or spare devices for longer than 3 years. Specifically, the definition would consider any device not in “active service” permanently decommissioned. As backup or spares are critical to minimize the impacts of GIE device failures, it is important that CARB alter the definition to ensure inactive backups or spares are not deemed permanently decommissioned after only three years. WSPA suggests that a compliance entity be provided the ability to identify equipment as backup/spare in order to avoid having it be considered permanently decommissioned.

**§ 95355.2. Nameplate Capacity Adjustments.** The nameplate accuracy requirement should only apply to new equipment. A compliance entity has no way of knowing whether the nameplate capacity of its SF<sub>6</sub> equipment is accurate to within 5% and would be forced to undergo the optional nameplate adjustment process every time it chooses to sell, lease, transfer, or offer for sale any SF<sub>6</sub> equipment to ensure compliance with this provision. Additionally, the term transfer is unclear and should be clarified. CARB should specify that this does not apply when SF<sub>6</sub> equipment is transferred within a compliance entity.

**§ 95355.4. Emergency Event Exemption.** In § 95355.4(b)(2)(A), WSPA continues to recommend that the language be changed as follows: *“The nature of the event (e.g., fire, flood, earthquake, equipment failure or electrical fault)”*.

WSPA appreciates the opportunity to provide feedback on the SF<sub>6</sub> Workshop and the Discussion Draft. If you have any questions, please contact me at (805) 701-9142 or via email at [tom@wspa.org](mailto:tom@wspa.org).

Sincerely,

