

**Port of Los Angeles Community Advisory Committee  
EIR/Aesthetic Mitigation Subcommittee**

August 13, 2008

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers  
Los Angeles District, c/o Dr. Spencer D. MacNeil  
ATTN: CESPL-RG-2004-00917-SDM  
P.O. Box 532711  
Los Angeles, CA 90053-2325

Dr. Ralph G. Appy, Director Environmental Management Division  
425 S. Palos Verdes Street  
San Pedro, CA 90731

Subject:           Comments Submittal for the Draft Supplemental EIR/Subsequent EIS for Pier  
                          400, Berth 408 Project/Pacific L.A. Marine Terminal LLC

Dear Dr. Appy and Dr. MacNeil,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit comments regarding the above referenced DEIR/  
DEIS for the Pacific L.A. Marine Terminal.. These comments are submitted by the Port  
Community Advisory Committee (PCAC) EIR/Aesthetic Mitigation Subcommittee.

As directed by the Harbor Commission, the PCAC's mission includes:

.. assess the impacts of Port Developments on the Harbor area  
communities and to recommend suitable mitigation measures to the  
Board for such impacts...

...To review all past, present and future environmental documents in an  
open public process to ensure that all laws—particularly those related to  
environmental protection—have been obeyed, all city procedures  
followed, and all adverse impacts upon the communities mitigated.

Based on the Commission's directives, the Department and the PCAC have worked to  
establish an "EIR Template" that provides a standardized approach to environmental  
review of projects.

Our EIR Template recommendations focus on priority areas:

Air Quality [No Net Increase]  
Traffic  
Off-Port Impacts [Light, Aesthetics, Noise, Land Use]  
Environmental Justice  
Project Description and Analysis

We are gravely alarmed that the Port again proposes a project with the statement that the air quality impacts are “considered significant, adverse, and unavoidable” after the proposed mitigation measures have been applied. We remind the Port and the Corps of Engineers that the affected area remains a Federal non-attainment area for Air Quality and that the proposed Project as currently defined could only be implemented through application of Overriding Considerations.

We recommend that the Port require the mitigation efforts for the Project as defined in the CAAP and if projected emissions still create residual significant air quality impacts after full application of all feasible mitigation measures, that mitigation measures be required for existing sources in closest proximity to the Project. The mitigations applicable to sources other than the Project provide the opportunity to reduce the residual emissions to below significant levels on a port-wide basis. We believe that the Port and the Corps of Engineers have the capability and the responsibility to require the application of currently available mitigations such that the impacts to air quality can be reduced to a level that will not require application of Overriding Considerations.

#### Port Master Plan/Energy Island

The Subcommittee is aware of the fact that the Pier 400 project was initially “sold” to the public in part as a means to relocate multiple hazardous petrochemical facilities further away from the community to diminish risk from accidents at these facilities. Pier 400 was also “sold” to bring in new energy sources for California. The Subcommittee has received lots of input from concerned community members questioning why a project to bring in more petrochemical resources is going forward while the promise to move existing hazardous petrochemical facilities to Pier 400 has been forgotten. Many community members have stated that the first order of business should have been to keep the promise initially made to move existing hazardous facilities to Pier 400. Further, they commented that this promise appears to have been evaded by revising the calculated hazardous footprint of certain existing petro chemical facilities near the community so that calculations “prove” they are no longer hazardous to nearby residents. Many community members felt this was an act of subterfuge that merely papered over some very serious hazards. We share their concerns.

#### **Air Quality Health Risk**

The Southern California Children’s Health Study, a large epidemiological investigation of the long-term effects of air pollutant exposure on respiratory disease within a population of more than 5,600 California school children, and numerous other studies have found that air pollution has significant impacts on child health. The HRA should give special consideration to the health of children residing and attending school in the area. We note

that more recent studies by CARB significantly increase estimates of the health effects of pollution (attached).

The EIS/EIR must address additional deaths due to chronic diseases other than cancer. The California Air Resources Board has recently attributed 24,000 annual premature deaths to air pollution.. The proposed project includes a 30 year lease and 30 months of construction, during which time 720,000 Californians will die prematurely due to air pollution using the most recent CARB statistics. Considering the magnitude of this project and the substantial emissions from tanker ships, some of these deaths will be attributed to this project. This finding must be fully and candidly evaluated.

Additionally, the credits to off-set air pollution should not be purchased for areas outside of the Port. The Port communities are experiencing all of the impacts of the project and should be the recipients of any mitigation. There are wetland opportunities within the Port of Los Angeles that can be remediated. Yet credits were purchased to remediate wetlands in affluent areas outside the Port communities. Please evaluate this practice in terms of environmental justice. Credits should be spent on remediating wetland areas within the Port and the immediately adjacent communities. The Port needs to follow-through on its promise to identify potential wetland restoration areas in the San Pedro Bay so that this can be done. Please assess this opportunity.

We also include the “Specific Comments” section below from the PCAC Air Quality Subcommittee:

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### **SPECIFIC COMMENTS**

Measure MM AQ-14, Low Sulfur Fuel Use in Main Engines, Auxiliary Engines and Boilers, requires revision to schedule full implementation based on current availability of LSF and as was originally committed in the CAAP for Main and Auxiliary engines. The SEIR/SEIS currently stated phase-in of LSF (maximum sulfur content of 0.2 percent) for in-bound Ocean Going Vessels of 20% in Year 4, 50% in Year 5, and 90% in Year 7 violates the CAAP commitment to implement 100% LSF compliance in terminal leases as they are renewed or modified. The SEIR/SEIS requires revision to impose 100% LSF implementation on start of operations for both in-bound and out-bound ships.

We noted that the CAAP included implementation of Measures OGV3, applicable to Auxiliary Engines, and OGV4, applicable to Main Engines, which required that, on lease renewal or revision, all ocean going vessels utilizing the leased facilities must burn  $\leq 0.2\%$  S MGO within the current Vessel Speed Reduction program boundary of 20 nm, subsequently expanded to the 40 nm boundary. The schedule in the Draft SEIR/SEIS as proposed will never require all OGV to comply with the critically important CAAP OGV Measure.

We also noted that the recently published Fuel Availability Study, conducted by Tetrattech for POLA, established that regional LSF supply is sufficient such that the fuel would be available for Pier 400 ships in bunkering locations on inbound routes or that the inbound ships' routes can simply be planned in advance to ensure access to LSF prior to arriving at the San Pedro Bay ports.

We recognize and appreciate that the Draft EIR/EIS includes 100% LSF compliance for Hoteling and Outbound ships and extended the boundary zone to 40NM.

Measure MM-A Q15, Alternative Marine Power (AMP), requires revision to schedule full

implementation based on currently available technology. The Draft SEIR/SEIS currently stated phase-in of AMP of 4% in Year 2, 10% in Year 3, 15% in Year 5, 40% in Year 10, and 70% in Year 16 violates the Port's commitments to Air Quality and to Public Health and requires revision to implement AMP at 100% on project start.

As technology advances may include potential for methods other than AMP to reduce emissions at dock, such as bonnet applications, we suggest that AMP implementation may be reduced as other methods such as bonneting result in proven reduced emissions that would achieve the reductions possible through 100% AMP.

We request that the Project Description requirements applicable to boiler operations specifically require use of .2% LSF within the 40 nautical mile boundary zone.

We recognize and appreciate that the current Project description includes use of distillate Marine Diesel Oil/Marine Gas Oil (MDO/MGO) at .5% LSF for boiler operations while close to Port. Please note that use of .5% LSF MDO/MGO achieves minimal emission reduction compared to .2% LSF and that the .2% LSF should be considered the minimum threshold of all fuel use within the 40 nm boundary zone, as consistent with the CAAP.

Measure MM AQ-16, Slide Valves requires revision to state the specific rate of implementation and to ensure compliance with the CAAP. The AQ-16 as currently worded, "Ships calling at Berth 408 shall be equipped with slide valves or a slide valve equivalent . . . to the maximum extent possible," provides the Port opportunity to demonstrate commitment to Slide Valves and the CAAP.

The CAAP Measure OGV5 stated that Slide Valve Technology shall be implemented through lease requirements as new leases are established or existing leases are revised. Specifically, OGV5 requires that immediately upon lease renewal, all ocean going vessels utilizing the leased facilities must employ slide valve technology.

Measure MM-AQ-21, Throughput Tracking, indicates the Port's recognition of the potential for exceeding throughput as planned in the Draft SEIR/SEIS yet requires revision to impose review of actual throughput through a defined process and on a more frequent basis than as currently stated. The current MM-AQ-21 defines no specific requirement for how the reviews will be performed and further definition for the Measure is required to ensure compliance. The Throughput reviews are required on no less than a five-year basis rather than in the currently stated cycle of "through the years 2015, 2025, or 2040."

The lease term stated in the SEIR/SEIS requires adjustment to reduce the term or to include re-opener clauses to allow for evaluation at ten year intervals to ensure application of best available technologies and mitigation measures.

The EIR/EIS requires revision to incorporate the mitigations required in the recent TraPac EIR/EIS Memorandum of Understanding established through Settlement with the Claimants to the TraPac EIR/EIS.

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## **Off-Port Impacts [Light / Aesthetics / Noise / Land Use]**

Due to the potential benefits to noise and aesthetic impacts, there should be a co-equal analysis of the berth at the Face E (southeast) side of Pier 400. The berth should be on the East side of the Pier in order to reduce noise, aesthetic impacts and air quality impacts to the community and in order to better contain a potential oil spill. Please conduct a co-equal analysis of an East side berth location.

Based on the EIR Template, the Subcommittee/Working Group makes the following recommendations with respect to community impacts.

1. The EIR must consider the adjacent communities of San Pedro and Wilmington as the study area when evaluating direct and indirect impacts, both project specific and cumulative, on light, aesthetics, noise, land use and public services.
1. The EIR must specifically evaluate the project and cumulative adverse impacts of port industrial operations on community land uses such as container storage facilities and scrap-metal yards and provide mitigation measures to off-set these impacts.
1. The EIR must show how Community Plan and Port Master Plan provisions for creation of landscaped buffer areas will be created between port industrial operations and the adjacent community.

### **Aesthetics**

The Subcommittee is discouraged that the EIS/EIR makes a finding of no significant aesthetic impact. We believe this finding is incorrect and based on the false premise that a berth supporting 5 or so visits per year has the same aesthetic impact as a berth supporting 5 visits or so visits per week. Tanker ships are viewed by many as large and ominous.

We note that where impacts are downplayed due to the currently degraded nature of views, views have been degraded by other port activities. The Pacific L.A. Marine Terminal project would contribute to cumulative impacts from other past and present projects.

We are concerned that the restrictive standard for determination of impacts will set a precedent for evaluation of impacts for other, future projects which will also contribute to cumulative impacts. We are also concerned that declaring impacts to be insignificant when the community finds the same impacts to be significant and adverse reduces the possibility that any such impacts will ever be mitigated.

### **Environmental Justice**

We are disappointed that hard copies of the EIS/EIR were not more readily available. This must be remedied for future projects.

We are also concerned that large numbers of massive environmental documents will apparently be subject to simultaneous public review rendering it difficult, if not impossible, for Harbor Commissioners and members of the general public to review the documents thoroughly without putting all other aspects of their lives, including their jobs, on hold for an extended period. This will severely curtail achievement or the informational and public participation purposes of environmental justice policy and CEQA.

As provided in the EIR Template.

A. the EIR must show how its evaluation of individual project and cumulative impacts complies with federal, state and local environmental justice laws and polices. For example, the California State Lands Commission has established that “Environmental Justice is an essential consideration” and that state law requires “. . . the fair treatment of all races, cultures and incomes with respect to . . . enforcement of environmental laws.”

Further, SLC policy calls for investigation as to whether individual and cumulative impacts from proposed projects are disproportionately borne by relevant populations.

Specific recommendations on the Draft EIS/EIR:

1. The EIS/EIR should list all relevant agency EJ policies and describe how the proposed project is consistent with these polices.
2. The purpose of considering environmental justice is to ensure fair treatment for all”. Simple fairness would dictate that no individual or group should sustain disproportionate impacts in order that others, not sustaining those impacts, may benefit. In that regard, the EIS/EIR must identify who, specifically benefits from the proposed project and who, specifically, sustains impacts.
3. We note that principles of environmental justice dictate that all are to be treated fairly, regardless of race, color or ethnicity. Thus, the EIS/EIR must address any imbalance of impacts sustained and benefits realized, regardless of the race of those sustaining the impact—even non-minority communities.
4. Is Southern California a net “donor region” when externalized costs such as impacts on health are fairly examined? Some citizens are beginning to suspect we are donating our lives and money so big companies can make big profits.

### Land Use

In accordance with Section 15125(d) of the CEQA Guidelines, an EIR must identify any inconsistencies between a proposed project and adopted planning programs. This is important in order to assure that future on- and of-port infrastructure will be adequate for future needs. However, adopted local planning programs for the Port consist primarily of bland platitudes and are so out of date as to be nonfunctional and non-existent.

The Subcommittee continues to be concerned about the lack of comprehensive planning for both the proposed project and the Port as a whole. The Port of Los Angeles Plan,

which is intended to function as the general plan for the Port area, was last comprehensively revised in 1982 and fails to meet the most basic State requirements for general plans. Section 65302 of the Government Code requires that local agencies identify both land use type and land use intensity in the land use element of a general plan. An appropriate intensity designator for port uses would be throughput. For commercial uses, such as Ports O' Call Village, floor area ratio would typically be utilized to denote land use intensity.

In accordance with Section 65302, the land use element must be coordinated with other general plan elements addressing such factors as circulation, safety, noise, housing, and open space. The local plans must be coordinated with regional plans such as the Regional Transportation Improvement Plan and the Air Quality Management Plan.

Without some degree of certainty as to the magnitude of future uses, it is impossible to coordinate future infrastructure with future needs. The failure of POLA to address growth in a comprehensive manner has lead directly to our current critical problems in local and regional circulation systems and harmful levels of air pollution.

The Subcommittee is aware that POLA has stated its intent to prepare a Port Master Plan. However, little progress has been made to that end over the six years since the formation of PCAC and the Subcommittee formed to address the master plan. We are concerned that by the time a new Master Plan is prepared and adopted, it will be moot due to the numerous projects approved on a piecemeal basis in the preceding years. It is the position of the Subcommittee that additional projects should not be approved on a piecemeal basis, but only as part of a comprehensive plan for the entire port.

### **Cumulative Impacts**

The Subcommittee/Working Group evaluated a sample of past EIRs and determined that there exists in the port area an unmitigated backlog of cumulative impacts, especially with regard to Air Quality, Traffic and off-port community impacts. Therefore, evaluation of cumulative impacts and development of effective mitigation measures is a particular priority for the PCAC.

As stated in Section 15355(b) of the CEQA Guidelines:

The cumulative impact from several projects is the change in the environment which results from the incremental impact of the project when added to other closely related past, present, and reasonably foreseeable probable future projects. Cumulative impacts can result from individually minor but collectively significant projects taking place over a period of time.

Thus, if a past or present project is used as a baseline for environmental purposes, the impacts from the past or present project must be included in assessment of cumulative

impacts.

The Working Group is concerned that small, incremental changes have occurred at Port facilities without environmental analysis or mitigation resulting in unmitigated impacts on the surrounding community. Unfortunately, the list of projects included for cumulative analysis purposes in the DEIR appears to include only those major projects for which formal environmental documentation has been or will be performed. Even in those cases where environmental documentation has been processed, often no significant impact is found to occur. Analyses of cumulative impacts must include all projects, whether or not an EIR or other formal environmental documentation was prepared.

Use of the possibly inflated, unanalyzed, and unmitigated baseline, causes impacts resulting from the proposed project to be understated. The Subcommittee recognizes that where an impact is negligible, a project would not be considered to result in a significant cumulative impact. However, an impact which is less than significant may be far from negligible.

It is not enough that impacts are minimized in an individual project. Even if the impacts of individual projects have been mitigated to a level of insignificance, a significant cumulative effect may still occur. To assume otherwise is "at odds with the concept of cumulative effect", as stated in *Environmental Protection Information Center, Inc. v. Johnson* (1985) 170 Cal.App.3d 604:

CDF ... stated that...operations in general had to substantially lessen significant adverse impacts on the environment, and closed with this comment: 'To address the cumulative effect issue the Department has taken the tact [sic] that if the adverse effects are minimized to the maximum on each individual operation, then the total effect in the surrounding area will also be minimized to an acceptable level.'

This statement is at odds with the concept of cumulative effect, which assesses cumulative damage as a whole greater than the sum of its parts.

The Subcommittee is concerned about the number of separate projects with separate environmental documentation underway at the current time. We are concerned that the cumulative impact of these (and possibly other smaller projects) may be minimized due to the preparation of many separate environmental documents for the various projects.

### **Specific Issues Concerning the EIS/EIR**

In addition to the systemic issues discussed above, we have the comments and questions below on how specific information in the EIS/EIR is presented. Each of these items are themselves, though, so basic that each must be addressed in order for the EIS/EIR to provide, PCAC, the Harbor Commission, agencies and the public with information needed to evaluate the proposed project and its impacts.





## Hazards

1. Will bigger ships increase the potential for collisions in shipping channels?
2. The EIS/EIR seems to indicate that security will not be a problem. In that case, why were California taxpayers asked to pass a taxpayer funded bond to fund homeland security at the ports?
3. Where is the evacuation plan for the community of San Pedro. It is not included in the DEIR/DEIS. Due to the hazardous nature of this project, an evacuation plan for the community must be included. If one does not exist, then its creation should be included as a mitigation measure.
4. The recent study by City Controller, Laura N. Chick (attached) entitled: "Performance Audit of the City of Los Angeles' Emergency Planning Efforts and Citywide Disaster Preparedness" identifies significant and pervasive deficiencies in the existing disaster preparedness operations of the City and Port and homeland security. This must be remedied.

## Utilities

The section must address the ability of local substations and transmission facilities to provide peak demands for AMP and lighting.. We are concerned that interruptions in power supply could result in reduced use of AMP and increased emissions.

## Socioeconomics

The issue of externalized costs that will be attributable to this project must be evaluated. These costs come in the form of added healthcare costs for those who will unavoidably be made to become sick or die as a result of the additional pollution the project will create. Additionally, externalized costs will occur due to increased potential for hazards and increased need for homeland security. These must be evaluated.

The EIS/EIR ignores the fact that as a result of decades of Port activity, property values especially in Wilmington and "near Port" areas of San Pedro have long-term been much lower than those in communities by the sea but without the Port nearby. It also ignores the much slower rise in values in recent years vs. other ocean communities. Additionally of course we are at present in a period of dramatically dropping prices (never mind merely "stagnant"). We assert that this project *will* adversely affect property values in this area. Few people want to live near a giant hazardous liquid bulk facility operating all hours of the day and night. Please see attached: Median Home Sales Prices Coastal Los Angeles County.

As the results of studies such as those of the CARB and AQMD, there will be fewer buyers interested in buying a home in "The Diesel Death Zone". This DEIS/EIR admits it will make this situation worse even with all mitigation measures in place. We request

that SCAQMD's Draft Report MATES-III Jan 2008 (and subsequent Final Report) be made a part of the administrative record on this matter.

We assert that blight as a long term result of Port and Port related activities both on and off Port land does exist in the communities of Wilmington and San Pedro. This was described in a document titled "Review of Previous Environmental Documents" August 24, 2004 which was presented to PCAC and BOHC from this committee. The central finding was that "*A substantial backlog exists of unmitigated impacts especially on air quality, traffic, and off port community impacts (Blight).*" [Italics in the original.] The document identified some factors contributing to this. We request that this document be made a part of the Administrative Record on this matter.

### **Overriding Considerations**

We are gravely concerned over the possible use of Overriding Considerations by the BOHC to grant approval for this project despite the significant unavoidable adverse effects identified in the EIS/EIR. If this is the case, then an analysis of project benefits—such as direct and indirect employment – will need to be balanced by an equally comprehensive analysis of project costs. Costs include:

1. Costs born by the public due to impacts on health, in both dollars and quality of life
2. Costs born by the public for infrastructure
3. Costs born by the public for homeland security
4. Costs born by local business to balance emissions created by port activities
5. Job loss as businesses leave the region due to congestion and/or emissions restrictions

Identification and consideration of these costs are necessary for the public and decision-makers to make an informed decision about the proposed project.

The enormous healthcare costs that we have all learned are being created by diesel exhaust air pollution are not analyzed. As the region's largest single source of air pollution, activities associated with the twin Ports are responsible for 21 to 25% of the total air pollution in the South Coast Air Basin. Recently the CARB has tripled its estimate of the number of annual deaths statewide due to air pollution. A recent L.A. Times article was headlined "Up to 24,000 deaths per year in California are linked to Air Pollution" with the lead-in line of "New research finds rates of heart attacks, strokes and other serious disease increase exponentially after exposure to even slightly higher amounts of particulate matter" (L.A. Times article 5/22/08).

We assert that this region is most likely disproportionately represented in that horrifying annual death toll. We do live in the area with the nation's worst air quality. We further assert that this project will increase that death toll through the pollution it will unavoidably create. Further consistent with the principle that the polluter pays for the damages they cause, it is time for this and all Port related pollution sources to pay for the

externalized health care costs they have created.

A complete analysis cannot include direct and indirect benefits (including benefits generated "off-port"), without also including direct and indirect (externalized) costs generated by port growth and port pollution.

We call for a study to be done by an independent, credible third party institution that fairly compares the positive effects of this (and all other ) Port projects versus the less well recognized negative effects such as premature death and health care costs. Absent such a study, any findings regarding economic benefits would be arbitrary and capricious.

### **The EIS/EIR Process**

We remain seriously concerned about any environmental review process in which the Lead Agency, the Sponsoring Agency, the Reviewing Agency, and the Approving Agency (via BOHC) are all the same as is the case once again with this project. No matter what the merits of a project may be, this situation builds in conflicts of interest directly into the CEQA process.

We wish to re-iterate our concern about the timing of public review for numerous large, highly complex documents. The subcommittee is overwhelmed by the compounded effect of the Port releasing so many EIRs at the same time. Each one of these EIRs is extremely complex and it is sometimes difficult to understand which components and mitigations are associated with which project, as some are mentioned in more than one EIR. We believe that the cumulative effect of releasing so many EIRs at one time is that our capacity to understand the individual projects, and their integration with each other, is greatly diminished.

Many of these documents have been in process for years. Why is it necessary to release so many massive and opaque documents in a short time frame? This is especially distressing in the absence of a comprehensive plan addressing development of the Port as a whole.

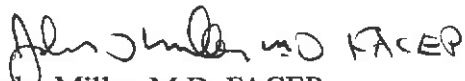
We are also concerned with the price of the hard copies of these documents, which now exceeds \$750.00 each. This raises a concern with CEQA compliance, which requires that the EIRs be accessible and understandable to the public.

**Conclusion**

Review of environmental documents is among the Port Community Advisory Committee's core responsibilities. In accordance with the Mayor's and Commission's directive, the Subcommittee has evaluated the Draft Recirculated EIS/EIR prepared for the Pacific L.A. Marine Terminal.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide these comments.

Very Truly,



John Miller, M.D. FACEP  
Chair, EIR/Aesthetic Mitigation Subcommittee



Kathleen Woodfield  
Member, EIR/Aesthetic Mitigation Subcommittee

## Median Home Sales Prices Coastal Los Angeles County

City	Zip Code	2003 median	2007 median
Long Beach, port area	90813	\$199,000	\$420,000
Wilmington	90744	\$248,000	\$459,000
Long Beach, port area	90802	\$275,000	\$420,000
San Pedro	90731	\$362,000	\$567,000
	90732	\$470,000	\$680,000
Redondo Beach	90277	\$535,000	\$1,097,000
El Segundo	90245	\$557,000	\$850,000
Venice	90291	\$615,000	\$1,050,000
Long Beach south coast	90803	\$653,000	\$965,000
Rancho Palos Verdes	90275	\$775,000	\$1,132,000
Hermosa Beach	90254	\$779,000	\$1,199,000
	90405	\$783,000	\$1,275,000
Playa del Rey	90293	\$790,000	\$1,185,000
Marina del Rey	90292	\$908,000	\$1,500,000
	90403	\$1,035,000	\$1,489,000
Palos Verdes Penninsula	90274	\$1,050,000	\$1,450,000
Manhattan Beach	90266	\$1,050,000	\$1,625,000
Malibu	90265	\$1,305,000	\$2,176,000
Pacific Palisades	90272	\$1,328,000	\$1,985,000
cp	90402	\$1,510,000	\$2,725,000
Santa Monica	90401	\$1,845,000	\$2,125,000
<b>LA County</b>		<b>\$330,000</b>	<b>\$560,000</b>

Source: Dataquick Information Systems

# NEWS FROM

## CITY CONTROLLER

### LAURA CHICK

City Hall East, Room 300, 200 N. Main St., Los Angeles, CA 90012

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**Monday, July 14, 2008**

#### **CHICK FINDS DEFICIENCIES IN AUDIT OF CITY'S** **DISASTER PREPAREDNESS**

Los Angeles-- City Controller Laura Chick has found that the City lacks key components in its emergency and disaster preparedness

"The City of Los Angeles certainly has suffered from its share of natural disasters, such as earthquakes, fires and flash floods. Unfortunately, since 2001, we also know that terrorist attacks are now additional potential man-made disasters. It is only a matter of time before we face the next large-scale emergency and we must be better prepared than we are now," said Chick, who released an audit of the City's emergency planning efforts and disaster preparedness.

"This audit was conducted to ask and answer the question: Is the City of Los Angeles well-prepared for a major emergency? How can we say the City is well-prepared when it doesn't even have an overarching strategy that coordinates all the necessary pieces for a disaster recovery plan? How can we say the City is prepared when there is no follow-through to correct problems that are identified during training exercises?," said Chick.

"With an utterance of a code word, the City's emergency plans should click inside the City as well as coordinate with leaders in the residential and business communities and key non-profits such as the Red Cross. To date, there is no integrated, comprehensive strategy that accomplishes this," said Chick.

The Chick Disaster Preparedness Report found the following deficiencies in the City:

- 1 Each City Department has its own emergency plan and many have not been updated in years, are not of high-quality, and don't meet national standards.
- 2 Emergency preparedness exercises and training are not well-coordinated or planned and corrective actions are not tracked or followed for implementation.

-more-

Chick Report  
Add-1-1-1-1-1

- 3 Administration of about \$200 million in Homeland Security and other public safety grants has been hampered by weak program management, excessive delays in spending the money, and not having an outcome assessment of the overall grant program performance.
- 4 The City's collaboration with other government, private and non-profit entities, including the Red Cross, needs to be strengthened.

"While a 2006 National Peer Review on plan sufficiency found Los Angeles at the top of State and national cities, it also made numerous recommendations for needed improvement. The City still has not implemented many of those recommendations," said Chick.

"An essential role of government is to ensure the safety of its residents. Being prepared for a major emergency is paramount to providing that protection. It is now up to us, the elected leadership of Los Angeles, to take swift and effective action to ensure that we are absolutely ready to meet any emergency or disaster that may come our way," concluded Chick.

The Chick Disaster Preparedness Report can be accessed on her web-site at [www.lacity.org/ctr](http://www.lacity.org/ctr).

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Steve Laumer / Los Angeles Times

Californians exposed to high levels of fine particulates had their lives cut short on average by 10 years, researchers found

particulate pollution, triple the previous official estimate of 8,200, according to state researchers. The revised figures are based on a review of new research across the nation about the hazards posed by microscopic particles, which sink deep into the lungs

"Our report concludes these particles are 70% more dangerous than previously thought, based on several major studies that have occurred in the last five years," said Bart Croes, chief researcher for the California Air Resources Board. Croes will present his findings at a board meeting in Fresno this morning

The studies, including one by USC tracking 23,000 people in greater Los Angeles, and another by the American Cancer Society monitoring 300,000 people across the United States, have found rates of heart attacks, strokes and other serious disease increase exponentially after exposure to even slightly higher amounts of metal or dust. It is difficult to attribute individual deaths to particulate pollution, Croes conceded, but he said long-term studies that account for smoking, obesity and other risks have increasingly zeroed in on fine particulate pollution as a killer.

"There's no death certificate that says specifically someone died of air pollution, but cities with higher rates of air pollution have much greater rates of death from cardiovascular diseases," he said.

Californians exposed to high levels of fine particulates had their lives cut short on average by 10 years, the board staff found. Researchers also found that when particulates are cut even temporarily, death rates fall. "When Dublin imposed a coal ban, when Hong Kong imposed reductions in sulfur dioxide, when there was a steel mill strike in Utah ... they saw immediate reductions in deaths," Croes said.

More measures will be needed, air board officials said, including eventually lowering the maximum permissible levels of soot statewide. California already has the lowest thresholds in the world, at 12 micrograms per cubic meter, but researchers say no safe level of exposure has been found. More regulations are being drafted, including one requiring cleaner heavy-duty trucks.

"We must work even harder to cut short these life-shortening emissions," Air Resources Board Chairwoman Mary Nichols said in a statement.

## Up to 24,000 deaths a year in California are linked to air pollution

New research finds rates of heart attacks, strokes and other serious disease increase exponentially after exposure to even slightly higher amounts of particulate matter.

By Janet Wilson, Los Angeles Times Staff Writer  
May 22, 2008

As many as 24,000 deaths annually in California are linked to chronic exposure to fine

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Clean air advocates said they would be watching closely.

"These numbers are shocking; they're incredible," said Tim Carmichael, senior policy director for the Coalition for Clean Air, a statewide group. He and others said the board must strengthen a soot clean-up plan submitted to them by the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District. A hearing and vote on the plan is scheduled for today.

Numerous Central Valley public health groups wrote Nichols this week, urging bans on the use of industrial equipment on bad air days, tougher controls on boilers and crop drying equipment, and other action. The economic cost attributed to premature deaths and illnesses linked to particulate exposure in the Central Valley has been estimated at \$3 billion a year, and \$70 billion statewide, according to separate studies. Those figure are expected to be revised upward based on the new report.

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