



**UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION IX
75 Hawthorne Street
San Francisco, CA 94105**

Michael Benjamin
Division Chief, Air Quality Planning and Science Division
California Air Resources Board
1001 I Street
Sacramento, California 95812

Dear Michael Benjamin:

I am responding to your letter of April 10, 2023, requesting U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) approval of EMFAC2021 and EMFAC2017 interim off-model adjustment factors that account for the emission benefits of California's Heavy-Duty Vehicle Inspection and Maintenance Program ("HD I/M Program" or "program") for use in transportation conformity determinations in California. The EMFAC interim off-model adjustment factors are multipliers that would be applied to vehicle emissions modeled by EMFAC2021 or EMFAC2017 and replace the EMFAC interim off-model adjustment factors provided with your letter of February 17, 2023.

Under 40 CFR 93.122(a)(3)(i), emission reductions from a regulation can be included in a transportation conformity regional emissions analysis if the regulation has been adopted by the enforcing jurisdiction. The California Air Resources Board (CARB) approved the HD I/M Program regulation in December 2021, the California Office of Administrative Law (OAL) approved it with an effective date of January 1, 2023, and the HD I/M Program began operation on that date. Therefore, CARB has adopted this program, which is necessary before the emission reductions can be used in transportation conformity regional emissions analyses. CARB submitted the HD I/M regulation to EPA for inclusion in the California State Implementation Plan (SIP) on December 14, 2022. EPA anticipates reviewing CARB's HD I/M regulation SIP submittal and any additional information supporting implementation of the new HD I/M Program as it becomes available.

As you know, transportation conformity is a Clean Air Act requirement to ensure that federally supported highway and transit activities are consistent with the SIP. Conformity to a SIP means that a transportation activity will not cause or contribute to new air

quality violations; worsen existing violations; or delay timely attainment of the national ambient air quality standards or any interim milestone. EPA's transportation conformity regulations also require the use of the latest emissions model in regional emissions analyses (See 40 CFR 93.111). CARB has requested that EPA approve these EMFAC2021 and EMFAC2017 interim off-model adjustment factors before EPA approves the SIP submissions that incorporate the HD I/M regulations and associated emission reductions from the implementation of this program. These SIP submissions include reasonable further progress and attainment demonstrations for the 2015 ozone NAAQS, and EPA does not plan to act on these plans until EPA approves the control measures incorporated into the plans, including the HD I/M Program. CARB also plans to incorporate the reductions associated with the HD I/M Program in the next version of EMFAC.

We understand the importance of the HD I/M Program for reducing mobile source emissions in California and the need to ensure that benefits of new control programs such as the HD I/M Program are included in California's air quality plans, to help California areas attain the NAAQS. In addition, we also understand the need for some metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) to incorporate some of the emission reductions from the adopted HD I/M Program into their regional emissions analyses for transportation conformity determinations prior to CARB incorporating this regulation into the next version of EMFAC. In the interest of having the off-model adjustment factors available as soon as possible, CARB reduced the emission reductions from the HD I/M Program by 50 percent for use in regional emissions analyses in transportation conformity determinations. Based on CARB's request and the circumstances described herein, EPA considers these HD I/M adjustment factors, which will provide 50 percent of the program reductions at this time, to be appropriate and EPA is approving them through this letter. Therefore, these EMFAC adjustment factors may be used in transportation conformity determinations that occur prior to EPA's adequacy finding or approval of motor vehicle emissions budgets into the SIP that incorporate the HD I/M Program reductions, and consistent with EPA's approval of EMFAC2021 as described below.

The HD I/M adjustment factors for EMFAC2021 and EMFAC2017 are approved for regional emissions analyses in transportation plan and TIP conformity determinations, and not for CO, PM₁₀, or PM_{2.5} hot-spot analysis for project-level conformity determinations. As described in CARB's February 17, 2023 document titled "EMFAC Off-Model Adjustment Factors to Account for Emission Benefits of the Heavy-Duty Vehicle Inspection and Maintenance Program," the EMFAC2021 HD I/M adjustment factors in Appendix A apply to EMFAC2021 total emissions for each calendar year, vehicle category, and region in the EMFAC model. The interim off-model adjustment factors have been developed for three regions: South Coast Air Basin, San Joaquin Valley Air Basin, and the rest of California (i.e., regions not within the South Coast or San Joaquin Valley air basins). The EMFAC2017 adjustment factors in Appendix B are similarly applied to EMFAC2017 total emissions. However, since these new EMFAC2017 adjustment factors also account for benefits of additional regulations included in EMFAC2021, similar to the adjustment factors that EPA approved with EMFAC2021 (87 CFR 68483, November 15, 2022), MPOs should only apply one set of EMFAC2017 adjustment factors in a regional emissions analysis. The EMFAC2017 adjustment factors described in today's letter are only for use in new regional conformity emissions analyses that are started during the EMFAC2021 conformity grace period and where adequate motor vehicle emissions budgets are based on EMFAC2017 with the adjustment factors described in EPA's November 2022 Notice.

If you have any questions regarding this letter, please contact Assistant Director Anita Lee at (415) 231-4710 or Karina O'Connor at (775) 434-8176.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth J. Adams
Director, Air and Radiation Division

cc: David Quiros, California Air Resources Board
Nesamani Kalandiyur, California Air Resources Board
Vincent Mammano, Federal Highway Administration
Antonio Johnson, Federal Highway Administration
Ted Matley, Federal Transit Administration
Rongsheng Luo, Southern California Association of Governments