

## PM Hot Spot Analysis – Truck % and Volume

### Question

Should the reason for changes (or lack of change) of truck volume be better described in typical POAQC documentation?

### Discussion

Many if not most POAQC concurrence documentation (typically based on the SCAG form) includes discussion of truck % and volume for the facilities (ramps, streets, etc.) affected by the project. EPA's procedure focuses on trucks as the source for the major portion of roadway-generated particulate matter with serious health consequences.

Especially for projects on local roads or affecting interchange ramps with local roads, it usually is not expected that truck % and volume will change between Build and No Build; sometimes the % doesn't change from existing either. There is seldom any discussion regarding the basis for the truck volumes and why no change is expected. Typically, if the question is raised at the Conformity Working Group meeting, the answer is that the land uses don't change so the need for trucks doesn't either. That is probably true in most cases, though sticking with the same % can cause the volume (as a % of AADT) to increase which can cause issues. Should that typical discussion be stated in the form for the record?

Since truck volumes tend to be related more to economic activity than to road capacity, it's very likely that the usual position for smaller/local projects that don't affect access to a major transload or intermodal facility is correct. It may even be that the truck VOLUME will hold constant despite an increase in AADT for some local roads. How much detail is needed to justify that position?

### Recommendation

Project proponents should include a brief justification or discussion of how the expected change (or lack of change) in truck % and volume for the project is determined when preparing POAQC forms. For example, a typical project on a local road or affecting an interchange with no work on the freeway main line might include something like:

“The truck percentage for the current year, build year and horizon year is not expected to change. The project serves an area of generally residential and commercial land uses, without major industry, warehousing, intermodal facilities, or other major truck traffic generators, and is not on a designated truck route. Truck traffic is expected to increase in proportion to traffic volumes but the project itself will not cause changes in the truck volume or attract additional truck traffic.”

Of course, the truck % used, and truck and AADT volumes in the opening and horizon years (Build and No Build) are still needed for reference.

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