

Summary of Caltrans' 7th Self Assessment under the Surface Transportation Project Delivery Pilot Program (16th–19th Quarters), January 2013

Executive Summary

Section 8.2.6 of the Caltrans/Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Surface Transportation Project Delivery Pilot Program (Pilot Program) Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) requires Caltrans to perform a formal process review or “Self Assessment” of its quality control and quality assurance (QC&QA) activities every six months for the first two years of the Pilot Program and no less than annually thereafter. Caltrans has participated in the Pilot Program for over five years and has submitted six Self Assessment summary reports to FHWA.

This 7th Self Assessment reports on issues related to National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) documents approved during the 16th through 19th quarters of the Pilot Program (April 1, 2011 through March 31, 2012). A total of 50 environmental documents for State Highway System and Local Assistance projects were approved during this Self Assessment period consisting of 24 environmental assessments (EAs), 21 Findings of No Significant Impact (FONSIs), one draft environmental impact statement (EIS), and four final EISs. Fourteen Section 6005 Categorical Exclusions (CEs) approved during this period were also reviewed.

The 7th Self Assessment evaluates Caltrans' progress toward meeting the performance measures identified in section 10.2 of the Pilot Program MOU. Table 1 lists the four Pilot Program MOU performance measures, components of each measure, and associated metrics. It additionally summarizes the 7th Self Assessment findings. The findings for each measure are based on the following:

- **Compliance with NEPA and other Federal laws and regulations:** Percentage of compliance with the performance metrics, which are then measured against an acceptable performance goal of 95%.
- **Attainment of supportable NEPA decisions:** Percentage of compliance with the performance metrics, which are then measured against an acceptable performance goal of 95%.
- **Monitor Caltrans' relationships with agencies and the general public:** The three metrics related to changes in communication among Caltrans, Federal and State resource agencies, and the public are expressed as being above or below the cumulative average rating for all relationship surveys and reviews conducted since the initiation of the Pilot Program. For these three metrics, 7th Self Assessment ratings above the cumulative average are considered acceptable.

The 4th metric, related to maintaining effective responsiveness to substantive comments received on NEPA documents, is measured as a percentage of compliance, which is then measured against an acceptable performance goal of 95%.

The 5th metric related to conflict resolution does not apply to this self-assessment since no formal conflict resolution processes have been initiated since the beginning of NEPA assignment.

- **Timely completion of the NEPA process:** Measured as number of months saved over pre- Pilot Program timeframes. Any time savings meets the goal of the performance measure.

For each metric, Table 1 identifies whether the identified goals were met during the 7th Self Assessment period and presents corrective actions for those metrics that did not reach acceptable goals. Table 1 also identifies additional topics, related to Caltrans' responsibilities under the Pilot Program that were reviewed during the 7th Self Assessment. These additional elements were reviewed because they enhance the assessment of the Pilot Program performance measures.

The 7th Self Assessment concludes the following for each performance measure:

1. Compliance with NEPA and Other Federal Laws and Regulations
 - The 95% goal was exceeded for six of the eight metrics. The goal was not met for the other two metrics.
2. Attainment of Supportable NEPA Decisions
 - The 95% goal was exceeded for three of six metrics. The goal was not met for the other three metrics.
3. Effectiveness of Relationships with Agencies and the General Public
 - The goal was met or exceeded for all four metrics that were measured during this Self Assessment (see Figures 1, 2, and 3 for the three metrics related to changes in communication among Caltrans, Federal and State resource agencies, and the public.).
4. Timely Completion of the NEPA Process:
 - Caltrans has increased time savings over all time frames when compared against pre-Pilot Program timeframes (Tables 2, 3, and 4).

In addition to the metrics collected for each performance measure, the 7th Self Assessment included a review of the Caltrans NEPA assignment program that documented the achievements related to Caltrans' environmental guidance, Caltrans' environmental training program, and Pilot Program reporting accuracy.

Caltrans is successfully carrying out the responsibilities it assumed under Part 3 of the Pilot Program MOU in accordance with the MOU and all applicable federal laws and policies. During the 7th Self Assessment, Caltrans achieved an overall 94% of compliance with NEPA and other federal laws and attainment of supportable NEPA decisions for the 15 comparable metrics (Table 1). For the three metrics which measure relationships with agencies and the public and timely completion of the NEPA process, Caltrans met or exceeded the identified goals. Caltrans management is actively engaged in refining staffing, procedures, and practices where necessary to ensure Caltrans continues and improves upon its successful assumption of responsibilities under NEPA assignment.

Table 1. Caltrans' 7th Self Assessment Findings and Corrective Actions

Performance Measure	Components of Measure	Metric ^a	Findings of 7 th Self Assessment	Acceptable Performance Goal	Goal Met?	Corrective Action
1. Compliance with NEPA and other Federal laws and regulations	1A. Maintain documented compliance with procedures and processes set forth in the Pilot Program MOU for the environmental responsibilities assumed under the Pilot Program	1Ai. Percent of Self Assessment reports submitted to FHWA	100% of the required Self Assessment summary reports have been submitted to FHWA.	95%	Yes exceeded by 5%	None required
		1Aii. Percent of identified corrective actions that are implemented	100% of the corrective actions identified in the 6 th Self Assessment summary report have been implemented.	95%	Yes exceeded by 5%	None required
	1B. Maintain documented compliance with requirements of all Federal laws and regulations being assumed (Section 106, Section 7, etc)	1Bi. Percent of final environmental documents that contain evidence of compliance with requirements of Section 7, Section 106, and Section 4(f)	All 25 (100%) of reviewed final environmental documents contained evidence of compliance with requirements of Section 7, Section 106, and Section 4(f). One CE project that was reviewed for Section 4(f) compliance did not properly document that all five conditions of a temporary occupancy were met.	95%	Yes exceeded by 5%	None required
		<i>Compliance with other Executive Order 11990; Executive Order 11988; and Section 176(c) of the federal Clean Air Act</i>	<i>All 25 (100%) reviewed environmental documents/ CEs appropriately documented compliance with Executive Orders 11990 and 11988, Section 176(c), and the 2011 Protocol.</i>	95%	<i>Yes exceeded by 5%</i>	<i>None required</i>

Performance Measure	Components of Measure	Metric ^a	Findings of 7 th Self Assessment	Acceptable Performance Goal	Goal Met?	Corrective Action
		<i>Compliance Section 6002 of the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, and Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy of Users</i>	<i>Ten of 11 (90%) reviewed EISs appropriately documented compliance with Section 6002.</i>	95%	<i>No below goal by 5%</i>	<i>Discussions will be held with the District staff involved with the project that had a late outreach effort. Staff in this District will also be asked to take the intranet on-demand course entitled "6002 Step-by-Step Compliance". Section 6002 requirements will also be discussed at NEPA assignment teleconferences.</i>
		<i>Compliance with Traffic Noise Analysis Protocol requirements</i>	<i>All 43 projects (100%) appropriately used the 2011 Protocol.</i>	95%	<i>Yes exceeded by 5%</i>	<i>None required</i>
		<i>Appropriate use of Section 6004 versus Section 6005 Categorical Exclusions</i>	<i>All 14 (100%) reviewed approved CE Determination forms appropriately identified the projects as categorically excluded.</i>	95%	<i>Yes exceeded by 5%</i>	<i>None required</i>
		<i>Appropriate use of Section 6004 versus Section 6005 Categorical Exclusions</i>	<i>Eleven of 14 (79%) appropriately identified whether the project fit under Section 6004 or Section 6005.</i>	95%	<i>No below goal by 16%</i>	<i>Discussions with the District staff will be undertaken regarding the Section 6004 CE activity types and when it is appropriate to use a Section 6005 CE. This topic will also be discussed at the NEPA assignment teleconferences.</i>
2. Attainment of supportable NEPA decisions	2A. Legal sufficiency determinations made by counsel on FEISs and individual Section 4(f) determinations	2Ai. Percent of final EISs and individual Section 4(f) determinations with legal sufficiency determinations completed prior to environmental document approval	All five (100%) of projects requiring a legal sufficiency determination obtained the required documentation prior to environmental document approval.	95%	Yes exceeded goal by 5%	None required

Performance Measure	Components of Measure	Metric ^a	Findings of 7 th Self Assessment	Acceptable Performance Goal	Goal Met?	Corrective Action
	2B. Compliance with Caltrans environmental document content standards and procedures	2Bi. Percent of internal QC certification forms certifying consistency with annotated outline	All 46 (100%) reviewed draft and final environmental documents had certification forms signed by the environmental document preparer indicating that the document was prepared consistent with the applicable SER annotated outline.	95%	Yes exceeded goal by 5%	None required
		2Bii. Percent of sampled environmental documents that followed applicable annotated outline	Forty-four of 48 (92%) reviewed documents generally followed the annotated outlines in terms of chapter and section organization. Four documents were either not organized consistently with the annotated outline, did not dismiss issues that were not covered, or had missing sections.	95%	No below goal by 3%	2Bii. Discussions will occur with staff involved in the environmental documents not following the annotated outline. This topic will be discussed with District staff during upcoming NEPA assignment teleconferences.
		2Biii. Percent of draft and final environmental documents for which the completed QA/QC procedures are appropriately completed based on an independent review of the internal QC certification form and follow-up information	For 36 of 46 (78%) environmental documents, QC procedures were properly implemented. Ten documents did not follow QC procedures.	95%	No below goal by 17%	2Biii. Discussions will occur with staff involved in the environmental documents not following QC procedures. This topic will be discussed with District staff during upcoming NEPA assignment teleconferences. QA/QC requirements are also addressed in the Nuts and Bolts course that is being offered four times during the 2012/13 fiscal year.

Performance Measure	Components of Measure	Metric ^a	Findings of 7 th Self Assessment	Acceptable Performance Goal	Goal Met?	Corrective Action
		2Biv. Percent of draft and final environmental documents with completed checklists	All 46 (100%) reviewed environmental documents had complete checklists.	95%	Yes exceeded goal by 5%	None required
	2C. Documentation of project records for projects under the Pilot Program	2Ci. Percent of sampled EA/EIS project files organized according to the established filing system	Thirty-one of 48 reviewed files (65%) conformed to UFS requirements. Seventeen files were either incomplete or did not conform to UFS requirements in some way.	65%	No below goal by 35%	2Ci. Discussions have occurred with staff involved in those projects with files that do not conform to UFS requirements. These staff have been reminded to make sure that project files are complete. UFS requirements will also continue to be discussed with District staff during future NEPA assignment teleconferences. UFS requirements will also be discussed at an Environmental Management Board meeting. Caltrans will also look for opportunities in its training courses to include information on the value of implementing the UFS requirements.

Performance Measure	Components of Measure	Metric ^a	Findings of 7 th Self Assessment	Acceptable Performance Goal	Goal Met?	Corrective Action
3. Monitor relationships with agencies and the general public (effectiveness of relationships with agencies and the general public)	3A. Assess change in communication among Caltrans, Federal and State resource agencies, and the public	3Ai. Resource Agency Survey: Compare average evaluation ratings for each period and cumulatively over time	58% cumulative average positive responses ("5" and "4" or "1" and "2" responses combined)	Equal to or above cumulative average of 57% positive responses since 2009	Yes exceeded goal by 1%	None required
		3Aii. Public Meeting Material Review: Compare average evaluation ratings for each self-assessment period and cumulatively over time	4.9 cumulative average rating	Equal to or above cumulative average rating of 4.5 since 3 rd Self Assessment	Yes exceeded goal by 0.4	None required
		3Aiii. Impartial Third-Party Public Meeting Review: Compare average evaluation ratings for each Self Assessment period and cumulatively over time	4.5 cumulative average rating	Equal to or above cumulative average rating of 4.5 since 4 th Self Assessment	Yes met goal	None required
	3B. Maintain effective responsiveness to substantive comments received from the public, agencies, and interest groups on NEPA documents	3Bi. Percent of signed final document internal QC certification forms in file with public review comments box checked	All 25 (100%) of the reviewed final environmental documents had certification forms that indicated that public review comments had been appropriately addressed.	95%	Yes	None required
	3C. Maintain effective NEPA conflict resolution processes whenever appropriate	3Ci. Date that formal conflict resolution process began to date resolution reached	No formal conflict resolution processes were initiated during the 7 th Self Assessment period.	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable

Performance Measure	Components of Measure	Metric ^a	Findings of 7 th Self Assessment	Acceptable Performance Goal	Goal Met?	Corrective Action	
4. Timely completion of NEPA process	4A. Compare time to completion for environmental document approvals before and after July 1, 2007	4Ai.	For SHS and Local Assistance projects, compare median time from begin administrative draft environmental document QC process to draft environmental document approval before and after delegation	1.9 (draft EAs) and 2.9 (draft EISs) months saved	Any savings in time as compared to pre-Pilot Program	Yes	None required
		4Aii.	For SHS and Local Assistance projects, compare median time from begin administrative final environmental document QC process to final environmental document approval before and after delegation	0.9 (FONSIs) and 4.6 (final EISs) months saved	Any savings in time as compared to pre-Pilot Program	Yes	None required
		4Aiii.	Compare median time from begin environmental studies/NOI to draft environmental document approval before and after delegation	9.7 (draft EAs) and 39.3 (draft EISs) months saved	Any savings in time as compared to pre-Pilot Program	Yes	None required

Performance Measure	Components of Measure	Metric ^a	Findings of 7 th Self Assessment	Acceptable Performance Goal	Goal Met?	Corrective Action
		4Aiv. Compare median time from begin environmental studies/NOI to final environmental document approval before and after delegation	13.7 (FONSIs) and 94.7 (final EISs) months saved	Any savings in time as compared to pre-Pilot Program	Yes	None required
	4B. Compare time to completion for key interagency consultations formerly requiring FHWA participation before and after July 1, 2007	4Bi. Compare median time from submittal of biological assessments to receipt of biological opinions before and after delegation	5.7 months saved	Any savings in time as compared to pre-Pilot Program	Yes	None required

^a Each performance metric identified in the Pilot Program Performance Measures table submitted to FHWA in June 2009 is identified with an alpha-numeric identifier. Additional metrics that were reviewed during the 7th Self Assessment, but that were not originally identified in the June 2009 table, are also shown in this table but they are identified in italics and they do not have an alpha-numeric identifier. These additional metrics are also measured against the 95% goal.

Scope

The 7th Self Assessment evaluated National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) documents approved during the 16th through 19th quarters of the Pilot Program (April 1, 2011 through March 31, 2012). A total of 50 environmental documents for State Highway System and Local Assistance projects in Districts 4, 6, 7, 8, 10, and 12 were reviewed including 24 environmental assessments (EAs), 21 Findings of No Significant Impact (FONSIs), one draft environmental impact statement (EIS), and four final EISs that were approved during this Self Assessment period. Fourteen Section 6005 Categorical Exclusions (CEs) were also reviewed.

The 7th Self Assessment evaluated District/Region environmental documents for compliance with Pilot Program MOU performance metrics and additional review elements related to Caltrans' responsibilities under the Pilot Program. While these additional review elements are not specifically identified as performance metrics, they were included because they enhance the assessment of the identified Pilot Program performance measures.

Similar to other Self Assessments, the Caltrans environmental program was also reviewed to identify achievements made in guidance, training and reporting accuracy.

Methods

All methods used for the 7th Self Assessment were similar to those used during previous Self Assessments. These included review of environmental documents and QC forms submitted electronically by the Districts to Headquarters, review of District project environmental files, discussions with project generalists, a survey of resource agencies, reviews of public meetings and public meeting materials, and measurement of time savings. The methods used for each performance measurement are described below.

Compliance with NEPA and other Federal Laws and Regulations and Attainment of Supportable NEPA Decisions

For each of the environmental documents approved during the 16th through 19th quarter, reviews were conducted of materials provided electronically by the Districts to Headquarters. The reviewed materials included the internal and external certification forms, environmental document checklists, and environmental documents. These reviews were supplemented with District visits so that project files could be reviewed for consistency with the Uniform File System (UFS) and compliance with federal regulations and so that informal discussions with project generalists could be undertaken, as needed.

Visits to Districts were conducted twice; once in March 2012, when Districts 4, 6, 7 and 8 were visited, and in July 2012, when Districts 4, 6, 7, and 12 were visited. The locations for District visits were chosen primarily based on the number of project environmental approvals in these Districts during the relevant quarters, the number of times that each of the Districts had been visited during previous Self Assessments, and findings for the Districts during previous Self Assessments and audits.

The methods that were used for the major review elements are summarized below.

- **Compliance with Sections 7, 106, and 4(f):** A total of 40 approvals for 21 FONSI, four final EISs, and 15 CEs were reviewed for compliance with federal regulations. The fourteen CEs that were reviewed (out of a total of 25 CEs approved statewide during the 16th through 19th quarters) were for projects in the Districts that were visited (Districts 4, 6, 7, and 12).

During the July 2012 District visit, an in-depth review was also conducted for Section 4(f) compliance as an augmentation to the standard quarterly review that is conducted for compliance with federal regulations. (The standard review entails reviewing any Section 4(f) documentation language contained in the reviewed final environmental documents.) A total of 46 draft and final environmental documents/CEs were reviewed as part of the in-depth Section 4(f) review; of these three included *de minimis* findings and four included programmatic evaluations.

The in-depth Section 4(f) review focused on two areas:

- A detailed file review was conducted of the *de minimis* findings and programmatic evaluations contained in draft and final environmental documents and CEs approved in Districts 4, 6, 7, and 12 during the 16th through 19th quarters. The purpose of these reviews was to determine whether these findings/evaluations contained all required documentation, as required by the Section 4(f) regulation.
 - Additionally, to ensure that the temporary occupancy or use of a Section 4(f) resource was not overlooked, all draft and final environmental documents and CEs approved in Districts 4, 6, 7, and 12 during the 16th through 19th quarters were reviewed, together with their project files, to ensure that there were not any historic properties or publicly-owned parks, recreation areas, or wildlife and waterfowl refuges that should have been evaluated under Section 4(f), but were not.
- **Compliance with Caltrans Environmental Content Standards and Procedures:** Each quarter, the internal and external quality control certifications forms and environmental document checklists for each approved environmental document are reviewed for completeness. Each approved environmental document is also reviewed for consistency with Caltrans' environmental document annotated outlines.
 - **Environmental Record Keeping:** During the March 2012 and July 2012 District visits, a sample of 41 files for Pilot Program environmental documents approved during the 16th through 19th quarters was reviewed for consistency with the UFS and for general completeness. In addition, a sample of seven in-progress project files was reviewed. The project files reviewed were selected to include a range of staff involvement, project complexity, and project locations within the Districts/Regions.

Relationships with Agencies and the Public

To monitor relationships with agencies, a survey of state and federal resource agencies was conducted to assess whether Caltrans' relationships with resource agencies have remained consistent or changed since initiation of the Pilot Program. A total of 46 resource agency staff members were polled regarding Caltrans' effectiveness as the NEPA lead agency.

To monitor relationships with the public, public meeting materials were reviewed. Also, public meetings were attended and reviewed by impartial reviewers that acted as proxies for the public.

The public meeting material reviews involved rating the public meeting materials for 16 projects with 16th through 19th quarter environmental document approvals. The materials that were reviewed included the public notices and project displays. For the impartial reviews, independent consultant reviewers attended a sample of three public meetings held during the past year. The independent reviewers rated the quality of the public meetings based on a number of criteria including the quality of handouts distributed at the meetings, quality of visual aids presented at the meetings, and project staff knowledge conveyed at the meetings.

Timely Completion of NEPA Process

Each quarter, a comparative analysis is conducted that compares the median number of months that Caltrans is taking for review and approval of environmental documents under NEPA Assignment with FHWA's review and approval timeframes prior to NEPA Assignment. The timeframes prior to NEPA Assignment are based on the number of median months that it took FHWA to review and approve 39 pre-Pilot Program environmental documents immediately prior to enactment of the original waiver of sovereign immunity on May 19, 2006. Four different timeframes are evaluated to determine if any time savings have been achieved under NEPA Assignment as compared to prior to NEPA Assignment.

Program Review

As noted earlier, the program review comprised three elements: improved environmental guidance in Caltrans Standard Environmental Reference (SER), implementation of the Pilot Program training plan, and quarterly report accuracy. Caltrans maintains a SER, a comprehensive on-line resource for NEPA compliance and Caltrans' NEPA procedures. Postings made to the SER over the relevant quarters were assessed. The accuracy of quarterly reports was evaluated each quarter. The degree to which the Pilot Program training plan was implemented was also reviewed by comparing the 2011 training plan with the actual training sessions that were provided during this Self Assessment period.

Findings

This section summarizes the findings of the 7th Self Assessment (see also Table 1). The performance percentage that was achieved for each metric is identified in parentheses in the metric title.

1. Compliance with NEPA and Other Federal Laws and Regulations

This performance measure is measured by eight metrics, two related to the Pilot Program MOU and six related to compliance with specific federal regulations and/or Caltrans requirements, including Section 7 of the federal Endangered Species Act; Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act; Section 4(f) of the U.S Department of Transportation Act; Executive Orders 11990 and 11988; Section 176(c) of the federal Clean Air Act; Sections 6002, 6004, and 6005 of SAFETEA-LU; and the Caltrans Traffic Noise Analysis Protocol.

The summary below indicates that Caltrans' transportation projects comply with NEPA and other federal environmental regulations.

1Ai. Self Assessment Reports (100%)

The Pilot Program has been in place for five years. During the first two years of the Pilot Program, two Self Assessments were conducted each year. Beginning with the third year, one Self Assessment has been conducted annually. One-hundred percent of the required Self Assessment reports, including this report, were submitted to FHWA as required by the Pilot Program MOU.

1Aii. Implementation of 6th Self Assessment Corrective Actions (100%)

The corrective actions identified in the 6th Self Assessment and their effectiveness in addressing the areas needing improvement are summarized below. As indicated below, 100% of the corrective actions were implemented:

- **Revise quarterly report protocols for use with the new STEVE tracking database and continue to increase awareness of reporting accuracy metrics.**

Since the 6th Self Assessment, the protocol for collecting data and preparing quarterly reports was revised to reflect use of the STEVE tracking database; this database is expected to improve the accuracy of quarterly reports over time. In addition, beginning with the 20th quarter, a quarterly report “report card” is now being prepared and disseminated each quarter. The report card quantifies the number and percentage of reporting errors, by District, in an effort to improve accuracy. This report card will be posted on Caltrans intranet each quarter.

The error rate for the 7th Self Assessment period (quarters 16 through 19) had a slight improvement over the 6th Self Assessment period (quarters 12 through 15) decreasing from 24% during the 6th period to 19% during the 7th period.

- **Discuss potential non-compliance with Section 4(f) requirements with involved staff, discuss Section 4(f) requirements with District staff, and encourage staff to take on-demand Section 4(f) training.**

The one Section 4(f) compliance issue and the Section 4(f) documentation irregularities that were discovered during the 6th Self Assessment were discussed with the environmental generalists for the affected projects.

Fifteen Caltrans staff took the one-day live Basic Section 4(f) Evaluation training course, and 22 took the advanced version of this course. In addition, a Section 4(f) evaluation on-demand training module was recently posted on Caltrans intranet site.

A Section 4(f) Working Group was also created. The working group meets monthly to discuss project-specific issues related to implementation of Section 4(f) requirements and provides a communication link to disseminate Section 4(f) information to District staff.

Of the 40 final approvals (21 FONSI, four final EISs, and 15 CEs) that were reviewed for compliance with Section 4(f) requirements during the 7th Self Assessment period, 39 appropriately documented compliance with Section 4(f). See Section 1Bi below for further details on Section 4(f) compliance.

- **Implement Section 6002 coordination steps for referenced project, discuss Section 6002 requirements with District staff, and encourage staff to take on-demand Section 6002 training.**

The District involved with the Section 6002 project, which was referenced in the 6th Self Assessment report as having been behind schedule in their outreach effort, sent out letters to

participating agencies and the public on February 1, 2013 requesting input on purpose and need, range of alternatives, and impact methodology. The delay in sending out these letters was due to lack of funding and inadequate staff resources.

Reminders were provided to staff participating in the NEPA delegation teleconference held in September 2011 and at the Environmental Management Branch meeting in January 2012 emphasizing the importance that staff take the Caltrans intranet on-demand course entitled "6002 Step-by-Step Compliance". Between April 1, 2011 and March 31, 2012, six Caltrans staff took this course.

- **Develop web-based training module on air quality conformity requirements and encourage staff to take Air Quality Basics training.**

This corrective action was related to interviews conducted during the 6th Self Assessment aimed at evaluating Caltrans staff understanding of interagency consultation.

A web-based air quality training module on transportation conformity, including interagency consultation requirements, is close to completion and will be posted on Caltrans intranet in early 2013. Based on the reviews of 16th through 19th quarter environmental document approvals, all projects that were not exempt from obtaining an air quality conformity determination obtained a determination and underwent the required interagency consultation process, as required.

Twenty-five Caltrans staff took the Air Quality Basics training class during fiscal year 2012/2013. One of the topics covered in this course is the interagency consultation process. Twelve Caltrans staff also took the EPA PM2.5/1.0 Hotspot Analysis course.

- **Encourage staff to take Air Quality Basics training, discuss mobile source air toxics (MSAT) analysis requirements at NEPA assignment and Hot Topics teleconferences, and consider development of a web-based module on MSAT.**

This corrective action was related to interviews conducted during the 6th Self Assessment aimed at evaluating Caltrans staff understanding of analysis requirements for MSAT. As noted above, 25 Caltrans staff took the Air Quality Basics training class during fiscal year 2012/2013. One of the topics covered in this course is analysis of requirements for MSATs.

- **Clarify revalidation form and discuss reevaluation requirements at NEPA assignment teleconferences.**

Discussions occurred with project staff that had not completed a revalidation form for major approvals. The revalidation requirement was also discussed by Caltrans' environmental managers at a Hot Topics meeting.

- **Complete Environmental Commitment Records (ECRs) for the two projects without ECRs, and discuss the ECR requirement at NEPA assignment teleconferences.**

In follow-up discussions with the project generalist for one of these projects, the generalist was able to locate an ECR dated December 10, 2010 which is the same date of the Categorical Exclusion for this project. The generalist has placed the ECR in the file. For the other project which was a Local Assistance project, Local Assistance requirements regarding an ECR-equivalent were discussed with the project senior.

The ECR requirement was discussed at a Hot Topics meeting. Guidance for development of standard and non-standard construction contract specifications and the incorporation of these

specifications into ECRs was also posted in Chapter 39 (“Incorporating Environmental Commitments into Design”) of the SER in February 2012.

- **Discuss Section 7 requirements at Biological Consultancy meetings. Implement measures to promote Section 7 compliance in the one identified District that did not appropriately comply with Section 7 during the 6th Self Assessment period.**

Section 7 issues have continued to be discussed at Biological Consultancy group meetings. An introductory course on Endangered Species Act Section 7 compliance, offered in January 2012, was attended by 24 Caltrans staff. The Biological Assessment Preparation course, offered in May 2012, was attended by 20 staff. Caltrans Headquarters staff has facilitated quarterly meetings with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and National Marine Fisheries staff liaisons including meetings with the District that was identified in the 6th Self Assessment as having Section 7 compliance issues. Headquarters tracks the status of the Section 7 consultation processes statewide via the auto-elevation process for Section 7 consultations. No elevations occurred during the last fiscal year in the District that was identified during the 6th Self Assessment as having Section 7 compliance issues.

All 40 projects with approved final environmental documents or CEs that were reviewed during the 7th Self Assessment period appropriately complied with Section 7.

- **Obtain an air quality conformity determination for the two projects identified in the 6th Self Assessment that did not have one.**

As noted in the 6th Self Assessment report, one of the two projects obtained an air quality conformity determination immediately after the 6th Self Assessment review was conducted; this determination post-dated the final environmental document approval date. Subsequent to submittal of the 6th Self Assessment report, it was discovered that the other project identified as missing an air quality conformity determination was actually exempt from air quality conformity under 40 CFR 93.126.

All 40 projects with approved final environmental documents or CEs that were reviewed during the 7th Self Assessment period appropriately complied with air quality conformity requirements.

- **Discuss Executive Order 11990 compliance at NEPA assignment teleconferences and Biological Consultancy meetings.**

Discussions occurred with those project staff who did not document compliance with Executive Order 11990 during the 6th Self Assessment period. This executive order was also discussed by Caltrans’ environmental managers at a Hot Topics meeting. All 40 projects with approved final environmental documents or CEs that were reviewed during the 7th Self Assessment period appropriately complied with Executive Order 11990.

- **Discuss QC review requirements at NEPA assignment teleconferences and hold QC refresher for District/Region staff that had a concentration of QC errors during the 6th Self Assessment period.**

Discussions occurred with staff that did not conduct all required QC review steps during the 6th Self Assessment period. The QC review requirements were also discussed at a Hot Topics meeting.

- **Discuss use of the annotated outlines at NEPA assignment teleconferences.**

Discussions occurred with staff that did not follow the annotated outline during the 6th Self Assessment period. The importance of following the annotated outlines was also discussed at a Hot Topics meeting.

- **Discuss UFS requirements at NEPA assignment teleconferences.**

Discussions occurred with staff whose project files did not follow the UFS during the 6th Self Assessment period. The importance of following the UFS was also discussed at a Hot Topics meeting.

1Bi. Compliance with Sections 7, 106, and 4(f) (100%)

Caltrans achieved 100% compliance with this performance metric as described below.

Section 7 (100%)

The 40 projects with approved final environmental documents or CEs approved during the 16th through 19th quarters were reviewed for compliance with Section 7. Nine projects had obtained at least one Biological Opinion and ten had letters of concurrence from the resource agencies. All reviewed projects appropriately complied with Section 7.

Section 106 (100%)

The 40 approved final documents/CEs included seven Adverse Effect findings and one finding of No Adverse Effect without Standard Conditions. The remaining 32 approvals involved Screening Memos or involved either findings of No Adverse Effect with Standard Conditions or a finding of No Historic Properties Affected. All 40 documents appropriately complied with Section 106.

Section 4(f) (100%)

Of the 46 draft and final environmental documents and CEs reviewed for Section 4(f) compliance, all but one properly documented compliance. One CE project that involved a Section 4(f) temporary occupancy had concurrence from the agency with jurisdiction that the duration of the occupancy would be temporary and would not permanently interfere with the activities of the resource, but the concurrence did not document that the agency agreed to the other conditions of a temporary occupancy.¹

A 100% performance finding is identified for this metric since all of the final environmental documents reviewed appropriately complied with Section 4(f).

Compliance with Executive Orders 11990 and 11988 and Section 176 (c) (100%)

In addition to reviewing compliance with Sections 7, 106, and 4(f), compliance with the following laws was also reviewed. The findings for these reviews are documented below.

- **Executive Order 11990:** Of the 40 reviewed approved final documents/CEs, seven projects involved impacts to wetlands. All seven environmental documents contained the appropriate finding.

¹ This CE project was not counted in the percentage calculation since the metric applies to environmental documents.

- **Executive Order 11988:** Of the 40 reviewed approved final documents/CEs, one project involved impacts to a floodplain and appropriately documented compliance with this executive order.
- **Section 176(c) of the federal Clean Air Act:** All 40 reviewed documents/CEs appropriately complied with the air quality conformity requirement.

Compliance with Section 6002 (90%)

Section 6002 of the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, and Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy of Users (SAFETEA-LU): During the July 2012 District visits, 11 Section 6002 EIS files were reviewed to evaluate whether the requirements of Section 6002 were being appropriately implemented including inviting participating and cooperating agencies, preparing coordination plans, providing opportunities for participating agencies and the public to be involved in developing the purpose and need statement and the range of alternatives, and providing opportunities for participating agencies to be involved in developing methodologies for the analysis of alternatives.

Of the 11 project files reviewed, it was found that all but one project implemented the Section 6002 requirements, as intended. During the 6th Self Assessment, it was found that the Section 6002 coordination for this one project was behind schedule given the fact that the project's technical studies were well underway but that opportunities for participating agencies and the public to comment on the purpose and need and range of alternatives had not yet been provided. As noted above in the "Implementation of 6th Self Assessment Corrective Actions" section, the District staff for this project sent out letters to participating agencies and the public on February 1, 2013 requesting input on purpose and need, range of alternatives, and impact methodology. The delay in sending out these letters was due to lack of funding and inadequate staff resources.

Corrective Action: Discussions will be held with the District staff involved with the project that had a late outreach effort. Staff in this District will also be asked to take the intranet on-demand course entitled "6002 Step-by-Step Compliance". Section 6002 requirements will also be discussed at NEPA assignment teleconferences.

Compliance with Caltrans' Traffic Noise Analysis Protocol (100%)

A sample of 43 files, both for projects with approved environmental documents as well as for in-progress projects, were reviewed for compliance with the revised May 2011 Traffic Noise Analysis Protocol. The files were reviewed to determine if those projects requiring a Noise Study Report used the appropriate Protocol (i.e. whether Noise Study Reports approved after July 13, 2011 used the revised Protocol). Of the 43 files, three were for projects that had a Noise Study Report in preparation; the files for these three projects included notations that indicated that the Noise Study Reports were appropriately being prepared based on the May 2011 Protocol. All of the other files with Noise Study Reports had reports that were approved prior to July 13, 2011.

Categorical Exclusion Determinations (79%)

To evaluate compliance with NEPA and other federal regulations, the 7th Self Assessment included a review that is not currently identified as Pilot Program performance metric. Specifically, a review of approved CE Determination forms was conducted to determine if the projects fit the criteria for a CE, and if the determination of a Section 6005 CE was appropriate.

Of the 14 CEs reviewed in July 2012, 11 were determined to have been accurately identified as a 6005 CE. In the judgment of the reviewers, three projects were deemed to fit more appropriately under one of the Section 6004 activity types.

Corrective Action: Discussions with the District staff involved with the three CE projects will be undertaken regarding the Section 6004 CE activity types and when it is appropriate to use a Section 6005 CE. This topic will also be discussed at the NEPA assignment teleconferences.

2. Attainment of Supportable NEPA Decisions

This performance measure is measured by six metrics. One metric relates to legal sufficiency and four relate to compliance with Caltrans' environmental document content standards. The sixth metric relates to compliance with the UFS.

2Ai. Legal Sufficiency Determinations (100%)

Four final EISs and one final individual Section 4(f) evaluation approved during the 16^h through 19th quarters had legal sufficiency findings. In addition, one draft EIS and one complex EA approved during the 16^h through 19th quarters had Headquarter Coordinator and legal reviews. In all cases, the dates of the Headquarter Coordinator reviews and legal reviews/legal sufficiency findings were the same date or pre-dated the environmental document approval dates per procedural requirements.

2Bi. Certifications for Consistency with Annotated Outlines (100%)

All 46 of the reviewed certification forms, related to projects with 16th through 19th quarter environmental document approvals, were signed by the environmental document preparer indicating that the document was prepared consistent with the applicable SER annotated outline. QC forms for four projects were not received.

2Bii. Consistency with Annotated Outlines (92%)

Forty-eight of the 50 approved environmental documents were reviewed for consistency with the annotated outlines; two documents were not received and could not be reviewed. Based on this evaluation, it was found that 44 documents generally followed the annotated outlines in terms of chapter and section organization and report covers with the required Pilot Program language.

Of the four documents that were found to be inconsistent with the annotated outline, one final document was not organized according to the annotated outline as it had sections that were out of order or were combined in a manner that was inconsistent with the annotated outline. Two draft documents and one final environmental document did not contain all required sections and the sections that were missing were not dismissed at the beginning of Chapter 2 as topics that did not pertain to the project.

All 25 of reviewed FONSI and FEISs included the required Pilot Program language.

2Bii. Corrective Action: Corrective discussions will occur with staff involved in the environmental documents not following the annotated outline. This topic will be discussed with District staff during upcoming NEPA assignment teleconferences.

2Biii. Proper Implementation of Environmental Document Quality Control Requirements (78%)

Forty-six of the 50 reviewed draft and final approved environmental document forms were reviewed for implementation of QC requirements; QC forms for four projects were not received. The environmental documents were considered to be in compliance with QC requirements if all of the following QC steps were implemented. It was found that all these QC steps were implemented for 36 of the 46 documents (78%), as described below (Environmental documents that had not properly implemented more than one step were counted once.):

- **All QC reviews were completed as required by Caltrans internal certification QC form:** Of the 46 environmental documents reviewed, 45 had evidence of completed QC reviews, as required. One project was missing technical specialist review signatures of the draft environmental document.
- **All internal QC reviews were conducted after the last certification date on the external certification form:** For 39 of the 46 reviewed externally-prepared environmental documents, the internal QC reviews were sequentially completed after external reviews. For seven projects, one or more internal QC reviews preceded the final date on the external certification form.
- **The last internal QC review was conducted by the Environmental Branch Chief:** For 44 of the 46 reviewed environmental documents, the Environmental Branch Chief was the last to sign the environmental documents. For two projects, the NEPA QC Reviewer was the last to sign the form.
- **All internal QC reviews were conducted before the environmental document was signed:** Forty-five of the 46 reviewed projects had environmental document approvals that occurred on the same date as the last internal QC review or after the last date on the internal certifications forms. On the one project that deviated from this sequence of approvals, the NEPA QC Reviewer and Environmental Branch Chief signed the QC form after the air quality conformity letter was received, which post-dated the environmental document approval date.

For two additional projects, the appropriate sequence of QC reviews was implemented; however, the documentation of the QC reviews did not reflect the sequence of reviews that actually occurred². These project files contained internal QC forms in which the NEPA QC Reviewer and/or the Environmental Branch Chief signed after the environmental document approval date. On both of these projects, the District confirmed that the QC reviews were conducted prior to the document approval date, but the QC form was signed later. The project generalists have been asked to add a note to the file explaining the rationale for the date discrepancies.

- **The public review comments box is checked on all final environmental document internal certification forms:** Of the 25 final environmental documents reviewed, all indicated that public review comments had been appropriately addressed.
- **For environmental documents approved in Districts 4, 7, and 8, the required QC reviews are completed as identified on the QC checklist:** Twenty-seven reviewed environmental documents in Districts 4, 7 and 8 were required to have signed QC checklists. All of the checklists were completed.

² These projects were not counted in the percentage since the procedure was implemented appropriately.

The QC checklist for one of the 27 projects was signed by the all three signatories after the draft environmental document approval date. The District confirmed that the required reviews were completed at the same time as the internal QC certification, but the form was signed at a later date.³

2Biii. Corrective Action: Discussions will occur with staff involved in the environmental documents without proper QC procedures or with inaccurate documentation of the procedures that were implemented. This topic will be discussed with District staff during upcoming NEPA assignment teleconferences. QA/QC requirements are also addressed in the Nuts and Bolts course that is being offered four times during the 2012/13 fiscal year.

2Biv. Completed Environmental Document Checklist (100%)

The environmental document checklist was completed for all 46 reviewed environmental documents.

2Ci. Files Organized According to the Established Filing System (65%)

Of the 48 reviewed files, all had file tabs that were consistent with the UFS. However, 17 of the 48 files were missing materials including final technical reports, air quality conformity checklists, class of action concurrences and ready for signature correspondence from the Headquarters' Environmental Coordinator, and/or required QC documentation. The projects for the 17 files had generated these materials, as required, but had not yet filed this information in the project files. The generalists for these projects have been asked to file the missing information into the project files.

2Ci. Corrective Action: Discussions have occurred with staff involved in those projects with files that do not conform to UFS requirements. These staff have been reminded to make sure that project files are complete. UFS requirements will also continue to be discussed with District staff during future NEPA assignment teleconferences. UFS requirements will also be discussed at an Environmental Management Board meeting. Caltrans will also look for opportunities in its training courses to include information on the value of implementing the UFS requirements.

3. Agencies and the General Public

3Ai. Average Evaluation Ratings from Resource Agency Surveys (57% versus a goal of 57% or higher)

Caltrans conducted its fourth survey of federal and state resource agencies that work with Caltrans on Pilot Program projects. This year's survey differed from the previous surveys in that the survey group was divided into two subgroups. One subgroup comprised resource agency staff that had worked with FHWA prior to Caltrans' NEPA assignment. The second subgroup comprised resource agency staff that had not worked with FHWA prior to Caltrans' NEPA assignment. This change was made because, although a number of survey questions asked for a comparison between working with FHWA prior to NEPA assignment and working with Caltrans after NEPA assignment, 40% of the resource agency staff participating in the survey had not worked with FHWA prior to NEPA

³ This project was not counted in the percentage since the procedure was implemented appropriately.

assignment. This section focuses on the survey results from those participants with FHWA experience prior to NEPA assignment.

The results of the 2012 survey, as well as the cumulative ratings since 2009, are presented in Figure 1. As with the previous resource agency surveys, the 2012 results were compared with the Gallup Organization poll taken in 2006 prior to the start of the Pilot Program and the 2009, 2010 and 2011 surveys. In all four surveys, ten questions were asked (see Figure 1). The response choices for question #2a ranged from *very capable* (rating of “5”) to *very incapable* (rating of “1”). Questions #2b–2g ranged from *strongly agree* (rating of “5”) to *strongly disagree* (rating of “1”). Questions #2h–2j ranged from *excellent* (rating of “5”) to *poor* (rating of “1”).

A comparison of the percent of favorable responses for Caltrans (“5” and “4” responses or “1” and “2” responses, as applicable) received for the 2006, and 2009 through 2012 surveys is presented in Figure 1. Figure 1 shows that the resource agency opinions regarding Caltrans’ performance have improved since 2006 (before the Pilot Program began) in the following areas (in descending order starting with the area in which the resource agencies have indicated the greatest improvement): responsiveness (question 2b), capable of assuming FHWA NEPA responsibilities (question 2a), interagency coordination (question 2h), cooperativeness on programmatic agreements (question 2g), timeliness in reaching project resolutions (question 2j), and more efficient NEPA and consultation processes (question 2d). The resource agencies indicated a lower opinion of Caltrans’ consideration of the resource agencies’ missions (question 2i) between 2006 and 2012. For questions 2c (listening), 2e (quality), and 2f (adherence to Federal laws, rules and regulations), comparable results are only available for 2009, 2010, and 2011. These results for these three years indicate that the resource agency opinions were slightly lower in 2012 than they were in 2011.

The 7th Self Assessment goal for this metric is to equal or exceed the cumulative average percentage of favorable responses received since 2009, when this survey was first conducted. The 7th Self Assessment achieved a cumulative average of 58% favorable responses for all questions, as compared to 57% since 2009. Therefore, the 7th Self Assessment exceeded this goal.

3Aii. Average Evaluation Ratings from Public Meeting Surveys (4.9 versus a goal of 4.5 or higher)

The public meeting materials survey involved rating the quality of materials for 16 public meetings (including formal public hearings) that were held for projects with 16th through 19th quarter environmental document approvals based on the following five-point scale:

- 1: Disagree strongly
- 2: Disagree somewhat
- 3: Neutral
- 4: Agree somewhat
- 5: Agree strongly

Figure 2 presents the ratings for the 7th Self Assessment as well as for previous Self Assessments. This figure also presents the cumulative rating for the five Self Assessment periods in which this review has been conducted. Figure 2 shows that ratings for the 7th Self Assessment were the same or higher than the 6th Self Assessment for all questions. The 7th Self Assessment ratings were also consistently higher than the cumulative ratings.

The 7th Self Assessment goal for this metric is to equal or exceed the cumulative average rating achieved since the 3rd Self Assessment, when this review was first conducted. The 7th Self Assessment indicates Caltrans achieved a cumulative average rating of 4.9 for all questions, as compared to 4.5 since the 3rd Self Assessment. Therefore, the 7th Self Assessment concludes that Caltrans has exceeded its goal in this area and continues to improve on the quality of the materials developed for its public meetings.

3Aiii. Average Evaluation Ratings for Impartial Third-Party Public Meeting Review (4.5 versus a goal of 4.5 or higher)

An impartial independent consultant reviewer attended three public meetings during the past year. Figure 3 presents the ratings for each evaluation factor that was reviewed during the 4th through 7th Self Assessments, as well as the cumulative ratings. For the three meetings that were rated during the 7th Self Assessment, the ratings were higher than the cumulative ratings for five of the eight factors.

The 7th Self Assessment goal for this metric is to equal or exceed the cumulative average rating achieved since the 4th Self Assessment, when this review was first conducted. The 7th Self Assessment achieved a cumulative average rating of 4.5 for all questions, as compared to 4.5 since the 4th Self Assessment. Therefore, the 7th Self Assessment met the goal.

3Bi. Percentage of Signed Final Document QC Forms with Public Review Comments Box Checked (100%)

All 25 reviewed final environmental documents approved had certification forms that indicated that public review comments had been appropriately addressed.

3C. Date that Formal Conflict Resolution Process Began to Date Resolution Reached

This metric cannot be measured since a formal conflict resolution process has not been initiated on any Pilot Program project. This metric will be evaluated, as appropriate, in future Self Assessments.

4. Timeliness of Environmental Decisions

Review of the four timeliness metrics, as described below, indicates that Caltrans achieved a substantial time savings for each measured environmental milestone.

4Ai. Draft Environmental Document Review and Approval Median Time Frames

Caltrans achieved a savings of 1.9 (draft EA) and 2.9 (draft EIS) months in the median time that it took to review and approve draft environmental documents approved through the 7th Self Assessment period, when compared to the last 35 projects approved by FHWA prior to enactment of the Pilot Program waiver of sovereign immunity. These time savings are shown in the first and third rows of Table 2.

Table 2. Environmental Document Review and Approval Time Savings

Milestone	Median Timeframe in Months (Number of Projects)		Median Time Savings in Months
	Pre-Pilot Program Projects	Pilot Program Projects Through Quarter 19	
Begin QC of administrative draft EA to draft EA approval	5.6 (29)	2.7 (117)	2.9
Begin QC of administrative final EA to FONSI approval	2.5 (22)	1.6 (105)	0.9
Begin QC of administrative draft EIS to draft EIS approval	10.0 (8)	8.1 (10)	1.9
Begin QC of administrative final EIS to final EIS approval	9.9 (4)	5.3 (7)	4.6

4Aii. Final Environmental Document Review and Approval Median Time Frames

As shown in the second and fourth rows of Table 3, Caltrans also achieved savings of 0.9 (FONSI) and 4.6 (final EIS) months in the median time that it took to review and approve final environmental documents.

4Aiii. Draft Environmental Document Preparation Median Time Frames

Caltrans achieved savings of 9.7 (draft EA) and 39.3 (draft EIS) months in the median time that it took to prepare draft environmental documents approved through the 7th Self Assessment period, when compared to the last 35 projects approved by FHWA prior to enactment of the Pilot Program waiver of sovereign immunity. These time savings are shown in the first and third rows of Table 3.

4Aiv. Final Environmental Document Preparation Median Time Frames

As shown in the second and fourth rows of Table 3, Caltrans also achieved savings of 13.7 (FONSI) and 94.7 (final EIS) months in the median time that it took to prepare final environmental documents.

Table 3. Environmental Document Preparation Time Savings

Milestone	Median Timeframe in Months (Number of Projects)		Median Time Savings in Months
	Pre-Pilot Program Projects	Pilot Program Projects Through Quarter 19	
Begin environmental studies to draft EA approval	40.4 (31)	30.7 (117)	9.7
Begin environmental studies to FONSI approval	52.2 (31)	38.5 (94)	13.7
Notice of Intent to draft EIS approval	71.0 (8)	31.7 (10)	39.3
Notice of Intent to final EIS approval	134.9 (5)	40.2 (5)	94.7

4Bi. Section 7 Consultation Median Time Frames

Table 4 presents the median time savings that has been achieved for Section 7 formal consultations. Caltrans has achieved a savings of 5.7 months for the first 19 quarters of the Pilot Program as compared to pre-Pilot Program consultations.

Table 4. Section 7 Consultation Time Saving

Milestone	Median Timeframe in Months (Number of Biological Opinions)		Median Time Savings in Months
	Pre-Pilot Program Projects	Pilot Program Projects Through Quarter 19	
Submittal of Section 7 documentation to resource agency to Biological Opinion	11.0 (25)	5.3 (66)	5.7

Program Updates and Reviews

Improved Guidance: Standard Environmental Reference Update

The SER and Chapter 6 of the Local Assistance Procedures Manual continue to be updated, as needed, to clarify NEPA assignment requirements. These updates are based on observations and input from FHWA, Headquarters Environmental Coordinators, the NEPA Assignment Manager and staff, Environmental Management Office, Division of Local Assistance, Legal Division, and District/Region managers and staff. Notable updates to the SER this year included updates related to Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21), merging of the two air quality conformity checklists into one form for brevity, clarifications to the CE checklist, description of the changes to the Traffic Noise Analysis Protocol, improvements to the revalidation form, and revisions to the environmental document annotated outlines.

Accuracy of Quarterly Reports

The accuracy of the quarterly reports is reviewed each quarter. For the 16th through 19th quarterly reports, 29 environmental document or other related federal environmental approvals were not reported during the quarter in which the approval occurred or were initially reported with an inaccurate approval type. These misreported approvals comprised 19% of all reported approvals during the 16th through 19th quarters. The rate of misreported environmental document approval dates has fluctuated over time with a 14% error rate during the 12th and 13th quarters, and a 33% rate for the 14th and 15th quarters. The decrease in the error rate since the 14th and 15th quarters may be attributed to the statewide adoption of the STEVE database in March 2011. During the early months of regular use of the database, staff were trained in the use of this application and data integrity issues related to the transfer of data to the new database were resolved. In the long-term, the error rate is expected to continue to decrease over time.

A quarterly report “report card” has been developed and will be disseminated each quarter to Environmental Deputies, Environmental Coordinators, and District staff as well as being posted on Caltrans intranet. The report card quantifies the number and percentage of reporting errors during the reporting quarter by District. The report card and continued reminders to staff regarding the importance of the accurate reporting on the STEVE database are expected to improve accuracy.

Pilot Program Training

Caltrans' 2011/2012 update of the Pilot Program Training Plan, submitted to FHWA in September of 2011, identified all training courses to be offered to Caltrans environmental staff and technical specialists in support of the Pilot Program on an as-needed basis during fiscal year 2011/2012. These courses included 15 live training sessions that were to be offered one or more times and two on-line course offerings. With one exception, all training courses, both live and on-line, specified in the training plan, were delivered during fiscal year 2011/2012 per the plan, including a new course for staff involved with development and oversight of environmental commitment compliance. In addition, the Division of Local Assistance conducted a three-day Statewide Functional Workshop on October 3-5, 2012. The workshop was attended by 40+ local assistance environmental coordinators and technical specialists. Topics include NEPA assignment, MAP-21, NEPA compliance and various other federally-related environmental laws. The planned Environmental Document Review Workshop was not delivered as this course is being revised to reflect insights from previously-delivered courses and Self Assessment/audit findings; this course is scheduled for four deliveries during fiscal year 2012/2013.

In terms of the number of course offerings, with two exceptions, the number of offerings met or exceeded that which was specified in the training plan. The training plan specified that the CEQA/NEPA Basics and Beyond and Environmental Analysis Intensive courses were to be offered two times, but they were only delivered once since an exemption to non-essential travel could not be obtained for the second delivery.

Statement by Chief, Division of Environmental Analysis

Based on this 7th Self Assessment of Caltrans QC&QA processes under the Pilot Program, I find that Caltrans responsibilities assumed under Part 3 of the Pilot Program MOU are being carried out in accordance with the Pilot Program MOU and all applicable federal laws and policies.

Signed:



Bruce L. April, Acting Chief, Division of Environmental Analysis
California Department of Transportation

Date:



**Figure 1
Resource Agency Results¹**
(Percent of "5" and "4" or "1" and "2" Responses Combined)²

Legend

- Average by year
- 7th Self Assessment cumulative average

Cumulative average percentage for all questions for 4th-7th Self Assessments (2009-2012): 57%
Cumulative average percentage for all questions for 7th Self Assessment: 58%



¹ Sample sizes: 2006-unknown; 2009-49 completed surveys; 2010-54 completed surveys; 2011-46 complete surveys; 2012-46 completed surveys for questions 2a, 2b, 2h, 2i, and 2j, and 28 completed surveys for questions 2c through 2g.

² Since questions 2c, 2e, and 2f are phrased negatively, a "1" (strongly disagree) or "2" (somewhat disagree) response to these questions is comparable to a "4" or "5" response to the other seven questions that are phrased positively. Therefore, "1" and "2" responses are presented for questions 2c, 2e, and 2f to normalize the data and enable a comparison amongst all of the questions.

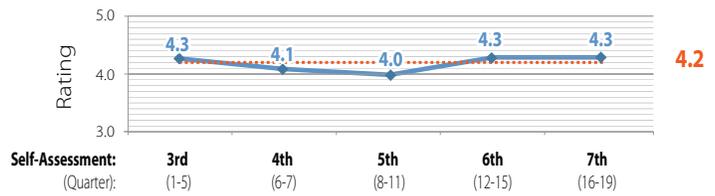
Figure 2
Public Meeting Review Results ¹

Legend

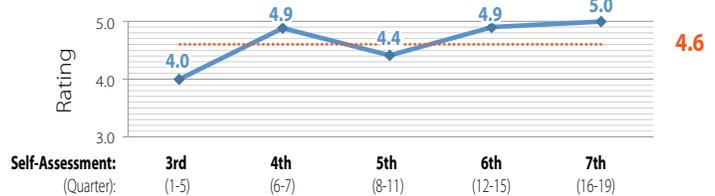
- Average by year
- - - 7th Self Assessment cumulative average

Cumulative average rating for all questions for 3rd-7th Self Assessments : 4.5
Cumulative average rating for all questions for 7th Self Assessment: 4.9

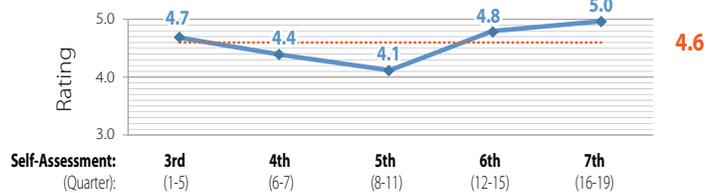
To what extent did the public meeting notice or notice of opportunity for the project environmental document meet SER requirements?



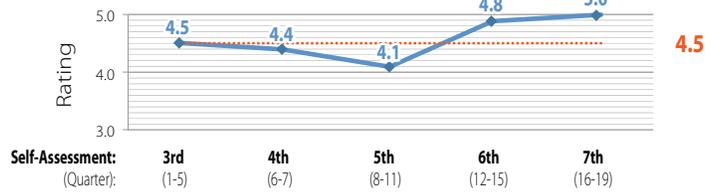
To what extent do you agree or disagree that the public meeting provided adequate opportunity for the public to register written and oral comments?



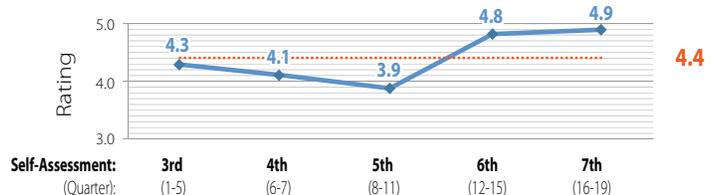
To what extent were appropriate Caltrans specialty staff available to discuss the project, its purpose and need, and alternatives with the public?



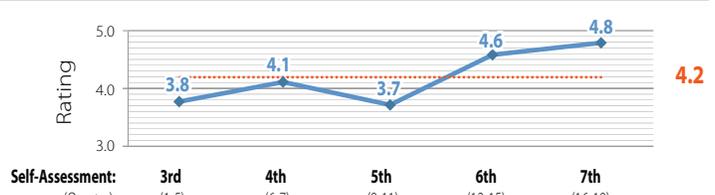
To what extent were appropriate Caltrans specialty staff available to discuss the project impacts with the public?



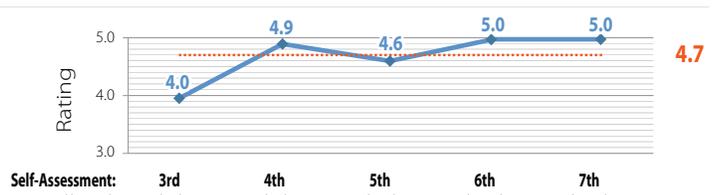
To what extent do you agree or disagree that displays depicting the project and its alternatives were easily understandable to the lay public?



To what extent do you agree or disagree that displays depicting the project impacts were easily understandable to the lay public?



Based on review of the public meeting material and input from the project generalist, to what extent do you agree that the project meeting was accessible to the public?



¹ Sample sizes: 3rd Self-Assessment - 27 projects; 4th Self-Assessment - 8 projects; 5th Self-Assessment - 22 projects; 6th Self-Assessment - 19 projects; 7th Self-Assessment - 16 projects

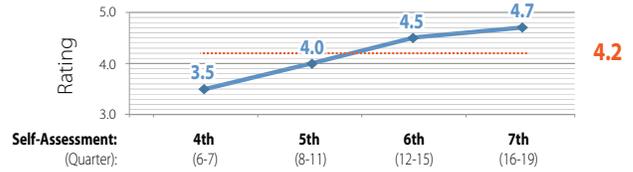
Figure 3
Impartial Third-Party Public Meeting Review Results¹

Legend

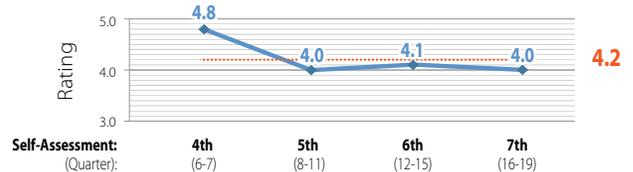
- Average by year
- 7th Self Assessment cumulative average

Cumulative average rating for all questions for 4th-7th Self Assessments: 4.5
Cumulative average rating for all questions for 7th Self Assessment: 4.5

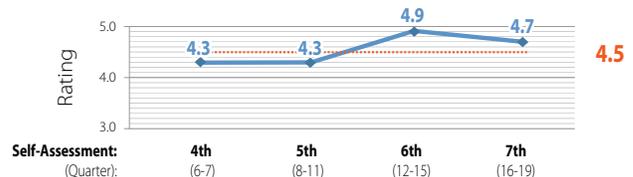
The handouts provided clear information and were understandable to the public.



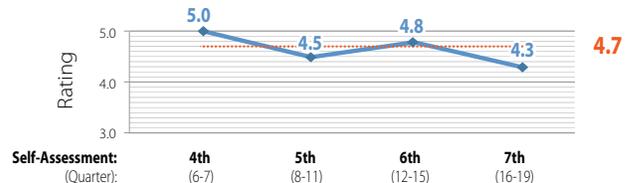
The visual aids (e.g., posters, figures, Power Point presentations, photographs, and maps) were beneficial in helping me and other members of the public understand the project and its environmental impacts.



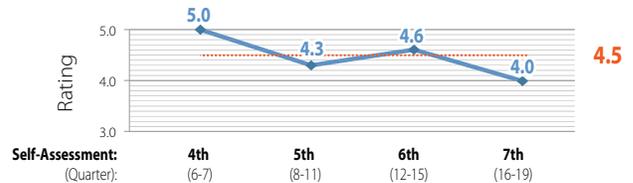
Overall, information I needed to understand the project was provided.



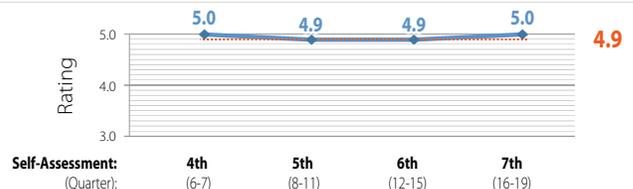
Project staff conveyed their knowledge effectively.



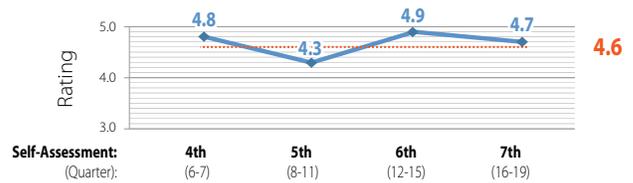
Project staff responded to questions effectively



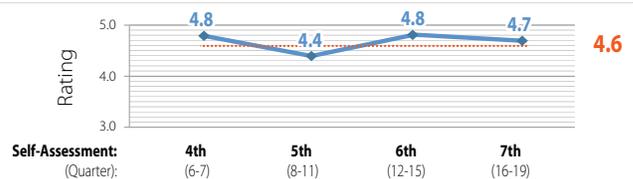
Project staff treated participants with courtesy and respect.



Overall, the meeting was valuable.



Overall, the meeting provided a positive experience.



¹ Sample sizes: 4th Self-Assessment - 4 projects; 5th Self-Assessment - 8 projects; 6th Self-Assessment - 8 projects; 7th Self-Assessment - 3 projects