

Comment Set A0012

California Department of Transportation

STATE OF CALIFORNIA—BUSINESS, TRANSPORTATION AND HOUSING AGENCY

ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER, Governor

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

DIVISION OF AERONAUTICS – M.S.#40

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March 25, 2008

Billie Blanchard
California Public Utilities Commission
CPUC c/o Aspen Environmental Group
235 Montgomery Street, Suite 935
San Francisco, CA 94104

Dear Billie Blanchard:

Draft Environmental Impact Report for the Sunrise Powerlink Project; SCH# 2006091071

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), Division of Aeronautics (Division), reviewed the above-referenced document with respect to airport-related noise and safety impacts and regional aviation land use planning issues pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The Division has technical expertise in the areas of airport operations safety, noise and airport land use compatibility. We are a funding agency for airport projects, and we have permit authority for public-use and special-use airports and heliports.

The proposal is for the San Diego Gas & Electric's (SDG&E) new 91-mile, 500 kilovolt (kV) electric transmission line from Imperial Valley Substation in Imperial County, near the City of El Centro, to a new Central East Substation in central San Diego County, southwest of the intersection of County Highways S22 and S2. The proposal also involves construction of a new 59-mile 230 kV transmission line that includes both overhead and underground segments, extending from the new Central East Substation to SDG&E's existing Penasquitos Substation in the City of San Diego. The project site is located in the vicinity of several airports in San Diego and Imperial Counties.

Public Utilities Code Section 21658 prohibits structural hazards associated with utility poles and lines near airports. Should any of the proposed towers be in the vicinity of a public use or military airport or exceed 200 feet in height, a Notice of Proposed Construction or Alteration (Form 7460-1) will be required by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) in accordance with Federal Aviation Regulation, Part 77 "Objects Affecting Navigable Airspace." Form 7460-1 is available on-line at <https://oeaaa.faa.gov/oeaaa/external/portal.jsp> and should be submitted electronically to the FAA.

The protection of airports from incompatible land use encroachment is vital to California's economic future. California's public use airports are an economic asset that should be protected through effective airport land use compatibility planning and awareness. Although the need for compatible and safe land uses near airports in California is both a local and a State issue, airport staff, airport land use commissions and airport land use compatibility plans are key to protecting an airport and the people residing and working in the vicinity of an airport. Consideration given to the issue of compatible land uses in the vicinity of an airport should help to relieve future conflicts between airports and their neighbors.

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A0012-1

Comment Set A0012, cont.
California Department of Transportation

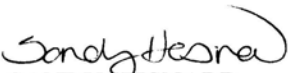
Billie Blanchard
March 25, 2008
Page 2

These comments reflect the areas of concern to the Division with respect to airport-related noise and safety impacts and regional airport land use planning issues. We advise you to contact our Caltrans District 11 office concerning surface transportation issues.

A0012-1 cont.

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on this proposal. If you have any questions, please call me at (916) 654-5314.

Sincerely,


SANDY HESNARD
Aviation Environmental Specialist

c: State Clearinghouse
San Diego County Regional Airport Authority
Imperial County Airport Land Use Commission

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Responses to Comment Set A0012

California Department of Transportation

A0012-1 The commenter's concern for construction of the project in relation to airports in San Diego and Imperial Counties is noted. The Transportation and Traffic section within Sections D.9 and E addresses airport facilities that would be directly or indirectly affected by construction and operation of the project (see also Section D.9.2.8 [Air Transportation] with regard to the Proposed Project).

It is noted that Caltrans District 11 should be contacted regarding surface transportation issues.