

BOARD MEETING DATE: May 1, 2026

AGENDA NO. 5

**PROPOSAL:** Transfer Funds Between Major Objects and Issue Purchase Order for AQ-SPEC Program

**SYNOPSIS:** The AQ-SPEC Program performs technical evaluations of currently available air monitoring sensors using both field and laboratory-based testing and communicates the results to the public. AQ-SPEC funds are included as part of the Monitoring and Analysis FY 2025-26 Adopted Budget. Based on an assessment of the priorities and resources, there is a need to reallocate funds for enhancing VOC sensor testing capabilities. This action is to transfer up to \$55,000 between Major Objects and issue a purchase order for air monitoring equipment.

**COMMITTEE:** Administrative, April 10, 2026; Recommended for Approval

**RECOMMENDED ACTIONS:**

1. Transfer up to \$55,000 from the Services and Supplies Major Object to the Capital Outlays Major Object in the Monitoring and Analysis (MAD) FY 2025-26 Adopted Budget (Org 43); and
2. Authorize the Procurement Manager, in accordance with South Coast AQMD's Procurement Policy and Procedure, to issue a sole source purchase order for one Agilent 8890 GC-FID System in an amount not to exceed \$55,000, as listed in Table 1.

Wayne Natri  
Executive Officer

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**Background**

South Coast AQMD established the AQ-SPEC program to characterize the performance of commercially available air quality sensors using both field and laboratory-based testing. Results of the air quality sensors are uploaded on the South Coast AQMD's

website. Air quality sensors that produce reliable data can augment and supplement current ambient air monitoring capabilities that predominantly rely on more sophisticated and expensive fixed-site federal-reference monitoring devices and methods. In addition, air quality sensors achieving levels of performance criteria have become effective tools to introduce the public to air quality matters. The type and number of sensors that have been tested through the AQ-SPEC program have increased substantially over the years. To date, South Coast AQMD has evaluated over 250 sensors measuring particle and gaseous pollutants (mainly fine particulate matter, ozone, NO<sub>x</sub> and other criteria pollutants) for their accuracy and overall quality. Interest is rapidly increasing in the use of air quality sensors for measurements of VOCs, with potential applications for ambient air monitoring, hotspot detection, personal exposure, and fence-line monitoring. The program requires replacement of specialized laboratory equipment to support continued performance testing of VOC sensors.

VOC analysis of chamber air for evaluating performance of VOC sensors is currently performed in the South Coast AQMD laboratory using gas chromatography with flame ionization detection (GC-FID). South Coast AQMD's current GC-FID is more than 15 years old, replacement parts are no longer available, and the software operating system is no longer supported.

### **Proposal**

Staff is proposing to replace the current GC-FID with an Agilent 8890 GC-FID System to ensure the ability to carry out laboratory evaluation of the novel VOC sensor with equipment that is compatible with the current laboratory method and supporting equipment. The estimated cost for this GC-FID is \$55,000, as listed in Table 1, and this equipment will be purchased through a sole source process. This action is to transfer up to \$55,000 from the Services and Supplies Major Object to the Capital Outlays Major Object in the MAD FY 2025-26 Adopted Budget (Org 43) and to issue a sole source purchase order to purchase an Agilent 8890 GC-FID System.

### **Sole Source Justification**

Section VIII.B.2 of South Coast AQMD's Procurement Policy and Procedures identifies four major provisions under which sole source awards can be made. The request for sole source purchase of the Agilent 8890 GC-FID System is made under provision VIII.B.2.d(6), other circumstances exist which in the determination of the Executive Officer require such waiver in the best interests of the South Coast AQMD. Such circumstances may include but are not limited to: Projects requiring compatibility with existing specialized equipment. The Agilent 8890 GC-FID System is a direct replacement for the aging GC-FID that is no longer supported by the manufacturer used to evaluate VOC sensors, is compatible with the current VOC sensor evaluation method and supporting laboratory equipment and allows staff to follow established procedures for operation and maintenance.

**Benefits to South Coast AQMD**

The proposed purchase is necessary to maintain the current AQ-SPEC testing capabilities of VOC sensors. VOC sensors are becoming increasingly more prevalent in the market and popular for public use. Continued testing of these sensors within a laboratory setting will provide invaluable information regarding how well these emerging technologies compare to traditional more accepted VOC analysis methods.

**Resource Impacts**

Sufficient funding is currently available in the FY 2025-26 Adopted Budget to transfer funds and purchase the instrument needed to maintain the laboratory VOC sensor testing capabilities of the AQ-SPEC program.

**Table 1  
Proposed Purchase through Sole Source Purchase Order**

<b>Description</b>	<b>Account Number</b>	<b>Program Code</b>	<b>Qty</b>	<b>Estimated Amount</b>
Agilent 8890 GC-FID System	77000*	43079	1	\$55,000
<b>Total</b>				<b>\$55,000</b>

\*Expenditures may be appropriated to Services and Supplies or Capital Outlays Major Object, as warranted.