



County of Riverside  
TLMA Aviation  
4080 Lemon Street, 14<sup>th</sup> Floor, Riverside, CA 92501

FOR COUNTY CLERK USE ONLY

## NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

April 30, 2026

### **Project Name:**

Authorize the Purchasing Agent to Issue a Purchase Order to Mesotech International, Inc. for the replacement purchase of Automated Weather Observation Systems (AWOS) at Hemet Ryan Airport & French Valley Airport without seeking competitive bids; District 5 & District 3

**Project Location:** French Valley Airport, 37600 Sky Canyon Drive, Murrieta, CA 92563 & Hemet-Ryan Airport, 4710 W Stetson Ave, Hemet, CA 92545

**Description of Project:** The Automated Weather Observing System (AWOS) is a fully automated computerized system designed to continuously monitor and report weather conditions at airports. The AWOS measures multiple weather parameters, analyzes the data, prepares a weather observation that consists of the parameter(s) measured, provides dissemination of the observations and broadcasts the observation to the pilots within the vicinity of the airport. The AWOS operates 24/7, delivering frequent updates to capture actionable meteorological updates for aviation decision-making. The system is essential for ensuring safe flight operations.

County of Riverside Transportation Land Management Agency's (TLMA) Aviation Department requires replacement of the AWOS at Hemet-Ryan and French Valley Airports. The AWOS' are no longer functional at full capacity and are routinely out of service. In April of 2025, the ceilometer at Hemet-Ryan Airport failed and could not be repaired until mid-May. As a result, no weather information was transmitted for incoming or departing aircraft during that time. In May of 2025, the Ultra High Frequency (UHF) data radio failed and could not be repaired by the manufacturer. The UHF radio required a full replacement. In July of 2025, the ceilometer again failed and required replacement. AVCOM Company is currently providing routine inspections and maintenance on the AWOS systems at Hemet-Ryan and French Valley Airports.

Although there are currently three FAA certified non-federal AWOS manufacturers, only one (Mesotech International Inc.) of the three manufacturers includes comprehensive maintainer

(inspection and system maintenance) training with the purchase of their AWOS. Administration of the maintainer training will enable Aviation staff to complete and expedite repairs instead of relying on third-party scheduled repairs. Mesotech also offers a spare parts loaner program (RapidShip) that provides immediate access to replacement parts when needed. By combining in-house repair capabilities with Mesotech's RapidShip parts exchange program, downtime associated with parts repair or replacement is substantially reduced. This integrated approach eliminates single-provider dependency while significantly reducing the total cost of ownership and improving overall operational efficiency, which is essential to maintaining pilot safety.

TLMA's Aviation Department believes it would be in the best interest of the County to authorize the single source purchase of Mesotech International Inc.'s AWOS equipment to replace the existing AWOS' at the Hemet-Ryan and French Valley Airports and the agreement includes customer support, access to Mesotech's parts replacement program, and comprehensive maintainer training to County airport staff included in the total purchase price.

**Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project:** Riverside County Transportation and Land Management Agency (TLMA) Aviation Division

**Exempt Status:** State CEQA Guidelines Section 15301, Class 1, Existing Facilities Exemption; Section 15061(b) (3), General Rule or "Common Sense" Exemption. Codified under California Code of Regulations Title 14, Article 5, Section 15061.

**Reasons Why Project is Exempt:** The proposed project is categorically exempt from the provisions of CEQA specifically by the State CEQA Guidelines as identified below. The project will not result in any specific or general exceptions to the use of the categorical exemption as detailed under State CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2. The project will not cause an impact to an environmental resource of hazardous or critical concern, nor would the project involve unusual circumstances that could potentially have a significant effect on the environment. The project is limited to an upgrade of an existing system and does not include any new development or improvements to the Leased Premises. Furthermore, this project would not result in any physical direct or reasonably foreseeable indirect impacts to the environment.

- **Section 15301-Class 1 Existing Facilities Exemption:** This Class 1 categorical exemption includes the operation, repair, maintenance, leasing, or minor alteration of existing public or private structures or facilities, provided the exemption only involves negligible or no expansion of the previous site's use. The project, as proposed, is limited to the approval of replacing and upgrading an existing Automated Weather Observation System (AWOS) within the French Valley Airport and Hemet-Ryan Airport. Approval will result in the same purpose and substantially similar capacity on the existing facilities at the airport and would be consistent with the existing land use and contractual requirements for the use of the site. Therefore, the project is exempt as it meets the scope and intent of the Categorical Exemption identified in Section 15301, Article 19, Categorical Exemptions of the CEQA Guidelines.

- **Section 15061 (b) (3) – “Common Sense” Exemption:** In accordance with CEQA, the use of the Common Sense Exemption is based on the “general rule that CEQA applies only to projects which have the potential for causing a significant effect on the environment.” State CEQA Guidelines, Section 15061(b) (3). The use of this exemption is appropriate if “it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the activity in question may have a significant effect on the environment.” *Ibid*. This determination is an issue of fact and if sufficient evidence exists in the record that the activity cannot have a significant effect on the environment, then the exemption applies and no further evaluation under CEQA is required. See *No Oil, Inc. v. City of Los Angeles* (1974) 13 Cal. 3d 68. The ruling in this case stated that if a project falls within a category exempt by administrative regulation or 'it can be seen with certainty that the activity in question will not have a significant effect on the environment', no further agency evaluation is required. Certainly, there is no possibility that the project may have a significant effect on the environment. The project, as proposed, is limited to the approval of replacing and upgrading an existing Automated Weather Observation System (AWOS) within the French Valley Airport and Hemet-Ryan Airport. No significant direct or indirect environmental impacts would occur. Therefore, in no way would the project as proposed have the potential to cause a significant environmental impact and the project is exempt from further CEQA analysis.

Signature: Kimberly Loomis Date: 4.30.2026  
Kimberly Loomis  
Administrative Services Analyst II  
County of Riverside TLMA-Aviation Division

**RIVERSIDE COUNTY CLERK & RECORDER**

**AUTHORIZATION TO BILL  
BY JOURNAL VOUCHER**

**Project Name:** Authorize the Purchasing Agent to Issue a Purchase Order to Mesotech International, Inc. for the replacement purchase of Automated Weather Observation Systems (AWOS) at Hemet Ryan Airport & French Valley Airport without seeking competitive bids; District 5 & District 3 - CEQA Exempt; [\$362,737.70 Total Cost; - TLMA Aviation Budget 100%] (Clerk to File Notice of Exemption)

**Accounting String:** 526910-40710-1910700000

**DATE:** April 30, 2026

**AGENCY:** Riverside County

THIS AUTHORIZES THE COUNTY CLERK & RECORDER TO BILL FOR FILING AND HANDLING FEES FOR THE ACCOMPANYING DOCUMENT(S).

NUMBER OF DOCUMENTS INCLUDED: One (1)

AUTHORIZED AND PRESENTED BY: Kimberly Loomis, Administrative Services Analyst II

Signature: Kimberly Loomis

-TO BE FILLED IN BY COUNTY CLERK-

ACCEPTED BY:

DATE:

RECEIPT # (S)