



Accessibility Advisory Committee

600 Fifth Street NW
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METROACCESS SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES: September 19, 2016

In attendance: Mr. Paul Semelfort (Chair), Ms. Denise Rush (Co-Chair), Ms. Marisa Laios, Mr. Charles Crawford, Mr. Patrick Sheehan, Ms. Phillipa Mezile, Dr. Tapan Banerjee, Ms. Darnise Bush, Mr. Edward McEntee, Ms. Doris Ray, and Ms. Carolyn Bellamy.

Call to Order

Ms. Denise Rush called the MetroAccess Subcommittee (MAS) meeting to order at 4:02pm.

Review of July 2016 Meeting Minutes

Dr. Tapan Banerjee and Ms. Darnise Bush stated they were in attendance at the July 2016 subcommittee meeting. The minutes were approved with the amendments.

Review of September 2016 Agenda

Ms. Carolyn Bellamy requested the committee discuss the effects of MetroRail closings on MetroAccess service and fares; Ms. Rush requested the committee discuss the Abilities-Ride program. The agenda was approved with the amendments.

Public Comments from July 2016 Meeting

Mr. Carlton Brown, Quality Assurance Manager, MTM, presented the investigation results of four (4) customer comments from the July 2016 meeting regarding a no-show occurrence; Transport DC; a reported issue with MetroAccess dispatch agents; and correct geocoding for an address.

Vehicle Pre-Trip Inspection and Safety/DriveCam Presentations

Mr. Irving Frye, Service Monitor, MetroAccess, presented an outdoor demonstration of the operator vehicle pre-trip inspection procedures. Mr. Michael Martin, Safety and Training Manager, Transdev, assisted Mr. Frye in demonstrating the operator's steps for inspecting the vehicle and documenting the process prior to a MetroAccess vehicle being placed in service.

Mr. Alan Davis, Acting Fleet Maintenance Officer, MetroAccess, presented the safety features of the MetroAccess vehicle, including the backing indicator, strobe lights, and cameras. Mr. Davis also presented the features of the DriveCam system. This camera system is monitored by the service delivery contractors to provide incident investigation evidence, as well as coaching tools for operator training.

Presentation Discussion

Ms. Ray inquired if the presentation would be available in alternative format, as it was difficult to hear while outside.

Mr. Omari June, Director, MetroAccess, stated the requested alternative format will be disseminated to the committee members.

Mr. Crawford asked what happens when a vehicle has maintenance issues, especially problems with the heating or air conditioning, after the vehicle has left the base for service.

Mr. June stated the protocol for vehicles with maintenance issues is to have the vehicle return to base for immediate maintenance service. When complaints are received regarding air conditioning or heating not working properly, the pre-trip inspection document is reviewed to determine if the issue was identified before leaving the garage. The Maintenance department conducts an inspection of the vehicle as well.

Dr. Banerjee asked about the protocol for customers with wheelchairs in emergency evacuation situations, and if the operators are trained for those situations.

Mr. Frye stated operators are trained in emergency situations to remove passengers from the wheelchair if the situation warrants immediate evacuation from a vehicle exit that does not support wheelchair movement. The operator would lift the customer under the arms to carry the customer off the vehicle to safety.

Mr. McEntee asked what other methods the operators are trained to use for emergency situations, if that method will not work for a customer.

Mr. Frye stated operators are trained to use leverage from the customer's clothing to assist in sliding or pulling the customer safely off the vehicle. If a road supervisor is with the operator, the two of them will work together to ensure a safe emergency exit.

Ms. Rush indicated she has experienced vehicle issues early in the morning, including doors that do not open, broken seatbelts, inoperable air conditioning, and condensation from the air conditioning dripping on customers. She has submitted complaints regarding these vehicles in the past, and she inquired as to what is done in these situations.

Mr. Davis stated the vehicle manufacturers have been fixing the majority of these condensation issues, but maintenance staff is still working on fixing the problem. Maintenance has been clearing out the clogged drains that hold the condensation, in order to prevent dripping.

Ms. Bush asked how DriveCam responds to hard braking, potholes, and street construction. Also, she inquired how the operators receive information regarding traffic issues or construction while they are in service.

Mr. Davis stated the clip is a total of 14 seconds, and the DriveCam is activated by an event. The clip records approximately seven seconds before the activation, showing the events leading up to the trigger event. Sudden stops and potholes are events that can trigger the DriveCam. Commendations have been given to operators based on DriveCam clips of operators avoiding accidents by stopping quickly.

Mr. William Proctor, Field Operations Manager, MetroAccess, stated the Operations Control Center (OCC) monitors traffic updates, and operators are alerted by dispatch agents if there is an issue in an area they will be traveling. Road Supervisors are also dispatched to locations that require additional assistance or detours.

Ms. Allison Anderson, OCC Operations Manager, MetroAccess, added that operators also call the OCC to inform dispatchers of any unusual traffic activity in an area they have recently traversed.

Ms. Mezile inquired how DriveCam can record the time before an incident occurred.

Mr. Davis stated the DriveCam is constantly recording, but the system only saves the information directly before and after a triggering event.

Mr. Semelfort asked about the process when the Rangers are not working in the vehicle.

Mr. Frye stated operators are trained in reading a map, and every operator has a map book. The map book is utilized in times when Rangers are not working properly.

An audience member inquired who has the responsibility for ensuring safety kits are being placed on the vehicle.

Mr. Frye stated a safety kit is available in the hatch above the operator's seat. In the event of a serious emergency, EMS would be contacted to render emergency medical services.

An audience member asked whether the operator should check to ensure the vehicle seats are secure.

Mr. Frye stated the operator checks all the seats of the vehicle during the pre-trip inspection. Any issues reported during pre-trip inspections are reported immediately to maintenance for repair.

An audience member asked why the ranger is not used to assist in picking up customers in the area.

Mr. June stated there has been a comprehensive ranger update over the last few months, fixing many of the issues with directions and mapping to locations.

The audience member clarified that her question was regarding whether the ranger is equipped to identify a customer in the area of a vehicle, and notify dispatch that the vehicle is in the area and would be available to pick up the customer.

Ms. Anderson responded this would not be a capability of the technology on the vehicle. Matching available vehicles with appropriate passengers is performed by dispatch agents, who have an understanding of the direction each vehicle is heading.

Mr. Frye clarified that the operators should be paying attention to their Rangers so that when a trip insertion occurs to the route, the operator would be notified of it immediately.

An audience member inquired about the procedure for a cracked windshield.

Mr. Davis stated depending on the location and severity of the crack in the windshield, the vehicle would either return to base immediately for repair, or continue service, and the crack would be repaired at the end of the service day.

An audience member asked about the life of a vehicle in years or mileage.

Mr. Davis responded the vehicles are usually replaced every four to five years or after 150,000 miles. New vehicles are being ordered, and until their arrival, there are a few vehicles in the fleet currently exceeding that mileage or year timeframe.

An audience member inquired why there are empty vehicles departing from locations, when there are customers in those locations waiting to be picked up. Additionally, the customer inquired about the procedure for informing operators of special events in the area.

Mr. Christian Kent, Assistant General Manager, Access Services, stated the shortage of vehicles makes reconfiguring a route difficult during the day of service. Ms. Anderson added an improper trip insertion could cause a situation of circuitous routing. If the situation works for the time in the route, then dispatchers will perform the trip insertion onto the route.

Mr. Kent also added the operators need to pay attention to the Ranger for updates and changes to their route, but operators are not supposed to choose the order of the customer pick-ups and drop-offs without dispatch approval. Dispatch needs to know where the operators are going in order to effectively assist the customers.

Ms. Ray stated she has experienced a trip where a customer with a trip inserted to the route gets dropped off before the other customers. She inquired whether the trip insertion can be moved last.

Mr. Kent suggested we add a presentation at a future meeting for the process of trip insertions.

Public Comments

Comments received were with regard to an early appointment time drop off to a closed location; circuitous routing; reminder phone calls; informing customers of vehicle information; and updating time between drop off and pickup.

For detailed descriptions and resolutions of public comments made during the meeting, please refer to the September 2016 Complaint Resolution Report located at http://www.wmata.com/accessibility/advocacy_policy/subcommittee.cfm.

Meeting adjourned at 6:05pm.