



AAC

Accessibility Advisory Committee

600 Fifth Street NW
Washington, DC 20001
202-962-6060

March 4, 2013

Dear Chair Downs and Members of the Board,

It is my pleasure to present you with the Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC) report for the month of February 2013. The primary issue reviewed by the AAC, its subcommittees, and workgroups during the month was Interior Signage in Metrorail Stations. Updates were provided on MetroAccess Signage, Train Operator Announcements, and the Transition to the new MetroAccess Contract.

Issues of the Month

Interior Elevator Directional Signage

The Bus & Rail Subcommittee (BRS) discussed the addition of new symbols to interior elevator direction signs in the Metrorail system, and the new placement plan for these signs. Three new symbols: the International Symbol of Accessibility (wheelchair), an elevator, and a directional arrow, would replace the old symbols on existing pylons and interior station name signs throughout the rail system. For side platform locations the signage will remain on the station walls, but with an increase in the number of such signs. For center platform locations the signs will be removed from the station walls and placed on the station pylons near the top. The purpose of this plan is to have a consistency of sign orientation when exiting a train. At side platform locations customers are facing a wall when exiting trains, so the signs would be on the wall in front of them. At center platform locations, customers are facing pylons, and that is where the signs would be located. This plan eliminates the need for a customer to turn 180 degrees to locate the directional arrow for the nearest elevator.

MetroAccess Signage (Update)

The BRS received an update on MetroAccess bus stop signs. The new bus stop signs will be installed at bus bays nearest to station elevators at Metrorail stations. To assist customer with their travel, a list of rail stations locations for the MetroAccess bus stop signs will be developed.

Although the BRS supported the placement of MetroAccess bus stop signs at bus bays throughout the rail system, they were opposed to the design of the bus stop signs because the signs lacked the accessibility features recommended by the Committee.

Enhanced Train Operator Announcements (Update)

The AAC received an update on enhanced train operator announcements, and specifically addressed the issue of announcements on "express" trains. Express trains are trains that skip a station for scheduling purposes following service disruptions or to manage crowded platforms. The practice of skipping a station does not occur at transfer stations or core stations, nor are stations skipped late at night. Even though there has been a decline in the number of express train occurrences, AAC members

believe that announcements by train operators regarding express trains have been inconsistent. The BRS reiterates its recommendation that train operators announce "express train" at least two stations prior to the impacted station.

Transition to the new MetroAccess Contract (Update)

The MetroAccess Subcommittee (MAS) received a brief update on the transition to the new paratransit contracts. The Department of Access Services has developed a communication plan and will work with disability organizations and advocacy groups to disseminate information to the community about any changes with the paratransit service. The MAS recommended opening audio conference lines where customers can call to have questions answered about any changes in MetroAccess service. Upon the announcement of the contract awards, MAS will be briefed.

AAC Recruitment

The AAC discussed the recruitment process for new members. The AAC has a total of seven vacancies throughout the jurisdictions and one At-large seat. Members interested in renewing their membership must re-apply. The recruitment period will take place from February 25, 2013 through March 24, 2013. The AAC will provide recommendations to the Board for approval.

Lastly, the AAC would like thank the Board's leadership, Mr. Downs, Mrs. Catherine Hudgins, Mr. Mort Downey, and Mr. Alvin Nichols for a productive quarterly meeting with the officers of the AAC. During this meeting the AAC was able to present our S.A.S. (Safe, Accessible, and Sustainable) goals and priority areas.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Patrick Sheehan", written in a cursive style.

Patrick Sheehan, Chairman



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March 8, 2013

Mr. Tom Downs
Chairman, Board of Directors
Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority
600 5th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20001

Dear Chairman Downs,

We want to thank you, Mortimer Downey, Alvin Nichols and Catherine Hudgins for a very productive meeting with us and Christian Kent and the ADAP staff. It was an excellent opportunity to discuss many of the salient issues surrounding safety, accessibility and sustainability and how the AAC could move forward to best serve WMATA in these areas. We look forward to reviewing the summary of the meeting and incorporating the items discussed into our work plan for the coming year.

We look forward to the coming meetings and would like to invite you and any members of the Board to visit the full AAC (first Monday of the month, 5:30-7:30) any time to see how we work and to task us with any issues you deem appropriate.

Sincerely,

Patrick Sheehan, Chair

Cc: Dr. Phil Posner, 1st Vice-Chair
Dr. Tapan Banerjee, 2nd Vice-Chair