



AAC

Accessibility Advisory Committee

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April 6, 2015

Dear Chair Downey and Members of the Board,

It is my pleasure to present you with the Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC) report for the month of March 2015. The primary issues we reviewed were: 1) Emergency Evacuation Procedures; 2) the MetroAccess Long-term Sustainability Study; and 3) accessible meeting locations for proposed public hearing locations.

Issues of the Month

Metro's Emergency Evacuation Plan (Update)

In light of the incident at the L'Enfant Plaza station, the AAC requested an update on Metro's emergency evacuation procedures in the Metrorail system. Metro's Office of Emergency Management (OEM) provided the AAC with the update.

OEM shared that it provides evacuation support for a variety of events in the rail system and pre-stages emergency equipment and supplies strategically to address incidents, such as train door malfunctions; loss of power on the tracks; collisions, and other unexpected incidents. During an emergency Metro's first priority is to evacuate customers to the platform or other areas of safety. Evacuation to the tracks is always the last resort and Metro does not encourage self-evacuation due to the potential hazards present outside the rail cars.

In an evacuation, customers are evacuated according to the severity of their injuries. It is important that customers communicate their issues in the triage assessment including any physical or hidden disabilities. A customer who uses a mobility device maybe initially be evacuated without their device, but will later be reunited with it. When this occurs, the device and customer are tagged with a bar code that allows the customer to be matched with the mobility device.

To ensure immediate notification to first responders and the quick deployment of resources to resolve a situation in the system, Metro has added OEM personnel to the Bus Operations Control Center and Rail Operations Control Center. Additionally, all local fire and emergency medical departments in the Metro service region are trained quarterly in emergency preparedness and are staffed with personnel around-the-clock. This ensures that when an incident occurs there is no delay in responses.

The AAC commends Metro for the ongoing number of emergency training exercises for first responders around the region. The AAC views safety as a critical issue for all customers including those with disabilities in traveling in the system and recommends that future first responder training include working with customers who are deaf or hard of hearing and customers that use service animals.

MetroAccess Long-Term Sustainability Study

The AAC received an update on the MetroAccess Long-Term Sustainability Study. The study is designed to examine the needs of specialized services in the region and provide recommendations. Metro has collaborated with George Mason Center for Regional Analysis to conduct the study. The preliminary results suggest that Metro continue to take some or all of the following steps: 1) increase travel training; 2) add more alternative services, such as CAPS-DC, which provides taxicab alternative service for MetroAccess customers traveling for medical-related purposes; 3) continued development of human services transportation alternatives such as the very successful pilot project currently underway in Maryland.

The AAC views this topic as one of the most talked about issues by customers including the disability community and applauds Metro for its pioneering spirit in moving the discussion of sustainability forward in the region.

Accessible Meeting Locations (Update)

The AAC received an update on accessible meeting locations for proposed public hearing locations. The Department of Access Services continues to collaborate with the Office of the Board Secretary to review a number of locations to ensure they meet accessibility standards.

In closing, and in light of the announcement of the April 14th debut of the 7000 series rail cars, the AAC wanted to take a moment to thank Metro staff for incorporating nearly all of the AAC recommendations into the final design of the 7000 series railcars. We look forward to riding in the vehicles.

Sincerely,



Patrick Sheehan
Chairman