

MINUTES
BOARD CUSTOMER SERVICE, OPERATIONS AND SAFETY COMMITTEE
April 21, 2005
9:00 a.m.

The meeting was called to order at 9:09 a.m. Present were:

Committee Members

Mr. Robert Smith
Mr. Dan Tangherlini
Mr. Charles Deegan
Mrs. Gladys Mack
Mr. Christopher Zimmerman
Ms. Catherine Hudgins
Mr. Gordon Linton
Mr. Dana Kauffman
Mr. Jim Graham

Other Board Members

Mr. Marcell Solomon

Approval of Agenda:

The Agenda was approved.

Approval of Minutes:

The Minutes of March 31, 2005 were approved as submitted.

ACTION ITEM:

Vertical Transportation Maintenance and Rehabilitation

Mr. James Hughes, Acting Assistant General Manager for Operations, provided an overview of the multi-year elevator/escalator improvement plan, which the Board approved in early 2003. We have seen improved and consistent performance in all areas of vertical transportation performance: gains in availability and mean time between failures, elimination of original "Top 20" poor performers, and reduction in injuries and claims. However, our customer perceptions are not matching performance trends as customer satisfaction has not increased as greatly as other performance measures.

Mr. David Lacosse, Director of Elevator and Escalator Office, then provided a briefing on the 7-year program to improve reliability of our vertical transportation equipment and reviewed in detail the status of the individual elements and results of the improvements completed to date. Staff is seeking Committee approval to extend outsource maintenance for elevator and escalators, modify contracts for

escalator rehabilitation, and authorize de-obligation of remaining funds from a terminated contract. The total impact on funding for this action (capital and operating) is \$39,448,000.

The Committee commented that the real story is the improved performance and that the investment made in this program is beginning to pay off, although our customers' perception and what is reported by the media is not the same. A critical element is to better inform our customers with properly displayed signs stating the nature of the escalator/elevator repair, and whether the unit is out of service for routine maintenance or lengthy rehabilitation. There is no obvious information communicated to the customer. Staff recognized this lack of communication to our customers and will return to the Committee with a Communications Plan in the next 30 to 60 days that will include station-specific information by signage and brochures prior to the start of major escalator or elevator repair.

Staff responded to various comments and suggestions on the extra level of attention given to partner and walker escalators during a repair, setting more realistic deadlines for repair/rehabilitation posted on signs, possibly replacing escalators with permanent stairs, and more enthusiastic communication to the public of our system successes. The Committee also requested a status/progress report on the original top 20 poor performers.

The Committee recommended approval of this action.

Update on Nationals Baseball Service Plan

Mr. James Hughes provided an update on the service and ridership counts for the Nationals baseball games at the Stadium-Armory Station that began on April 3, 2005. Mr. Hughes noted some concerns for upcoming games, including the game to be held today, which will let out during our PM rush hour. Six home games were played during the first four weeks of the National's regular season. Metro carried over 100,000 customers to the six games or over 40% of the games' attendance.

Bus Ridership

Responding to comments by the Committee on lack of daily bus ridership numbers, staff noted that Metro does not promote or post a daily ridership number for bus because the fare collection system for bus is not yet verified. With the installation of new fareboxes on buses, ridership will become more reliable and readily available. Staff noted that there is very little contractor competition for bus farebox collection systems in the transit industry, and noted that the final phase for the Metrobus farebox acceptance will be a future agenda item. Staff also committed to doing a better job at promoting and highlighting bus ridership.

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APTA Rail Peer Review Findings and Prioritization

Mr. James Hughes presented the final report for Rail Operations from the APTA Peer Review Panel and outlined staff response to the recommendations and observations. He then reviewed four key action areas scheduled for future discussions with various Board Committees. Discussion ensued on the recommendations for train throughput, flow of passengers on platforms, eight car train operations, and the accumulation of large number of people waiting for less number of trains. Staff will prepare an overall analysis and summary of these combined key action topics to present to the Committee in the Fall.

PIDS Update

Ms. Leona Agouridis, Assistant General Manager for Communications, provided an update on the Passenger Information Display System. Based on customer feedback on preferred PIDS screen alternatives, PIDS displays on station platforms will again indicate the train length and other information for the next three arriving trains. ITSV is working on the new displays, which should be in place by May 31, 2005.

Staff responded to comments on the PIDS screen display, escalator/elevator information on PIDS in the free area, customer input and data collection, and expanding PIDS displays to outside of Metrorail stations, such as providing train arrival information for customers alighting buses or parking in station parking lots. Staff will return to the Committee in several months to discuss recommendations on items discussed.

Meeting adjourned at 10:29 a.m.