



Customer Services, Operations, and Safety Committee

Board Information Item IV-F

September 24, 2009

City Year Secret Shopper Program

**Washington Metropolitan Area Transportation Authority
Board Action/Information Summary**

<input type="checkbox"/> Action	MEAD Number:	Resolution:
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

PURPOSE

To provide the Committee with an update on City Year Secret Shopper Program.

DESCRIPTION

In the fall of 2008, City Year partnered with Council member Jim Graham to receive a \$150,000 Council-approved grant to purchase bus and rail passes in exchange for implementing the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) Secret Shopper Program. The Secret Shopper Program is a way for Metro to receive feedback from riders about vehicle cleanliness, passenger satisfaction, and mechanical conditions in order to help track and improve customer services on the bus and train system.

FUNDING IMPACT

None – paid for by the District of Columbia.

RECOMMENDATION

None



City Year Washington, DC & The WMATA Secret Shopper Program

***Presented to the WMATA Board of Directors:
Customer Service, Operations, and
Safety Committee***

September 24, 2009



NATIONAL LEADERSHIP SPONSORS





Purpose and Background: City Year

- City Year unites a diverse group of 17 to 24 year-olds – called corps members – for a year of full-time, team-based service and leadership development.
- Corps members provide critically needed services to some of DC's most underserved children and youth, focusing on literacy tutoring, after-school programming, mentoring, HIV/AIDS prevention education, and youth leadership development.
- Corps members also inspire and improve communities by leading children and adults in transformative physical service projects at schools, parks, and community centers.
- Corps members work in schools and communities throughout the city, spanning nearly every Ward and the majority of neighborhoods in DC.





Purpose and Background: The Secret Shopper Program



- In fall 2008, City Year partnered with Councilmember Jim Graham to receive a \$150,000 Council-approved grant to purchase bus and rail passes in exchange for implementing the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) Secret Shopper Program.
- The Secret Shopper Program is a way for WMATA to receive feedback from riders about vehicle cleanliness, passenger satisfaction, and mechanical conditions in order to help improve customer services.



Training & Implementation



- In fall 2008, all 100 City Year corps members and staff were trained by WMATA on transit emergencies and safety procedures.
- On February 1, 2009, City Year began implementing the Secret Shopper Program.
- Secret Shoppers provide feedback to WMATA through the surveys, but they also serve as safety ambassadors in the transit systems by knowing basic safety and emergency procedures.



Training & Implementation

- Every week City Year corps members and staff complete a survey – developed by WMATA – reflecting their experience on Metrorail or Metrobus.
- The surveys are then manually entered into www.SurveyMonkey.com where they are tracked, tallied, and computed.
- Since the beginning of the program, City Year has completed more than 1,700 surveys, averaging 85 surveys a week.





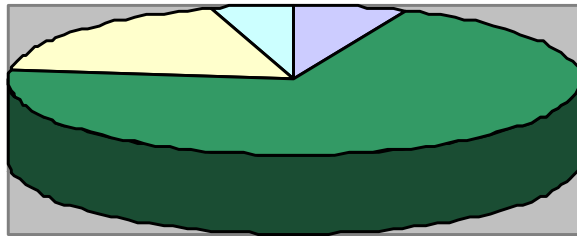
Benefits

- Benefits for WMATA of City Year implementing the Secret Shopper program:
 - Unique Perspective: City Year provides service in communities throughout the city, spanning nearly every Ward and the majority of neighborhoods in DC and the surrounding suburbs.
 - Both Rail and Bus Surveys: City Year staff and corps members use the transit system as their primary mode of transportation to get to work and travel during work. As a group, City Year uses both the Metrorail and Metrobus consistently and frequently.
 - Consistent Secret Shoppers: The same 100 City Year members participate in the Secret Shopper Program week after week.



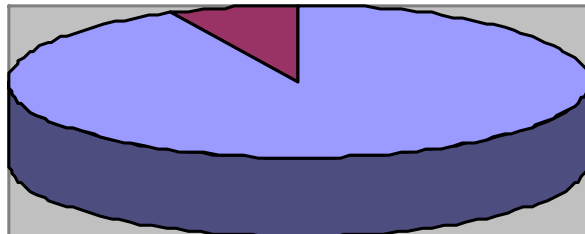
Sample Survey Results: Rail & Bus Transportation

How crowded was the vehicle?



Results from February 2009-July 2009		
	Total Number	Percentage
Empty	107	6.54%
Seats Available	1,161	70.92%
Standing Room Only	304	18.57%
Crush Load	65	3.97%

Vehicle Conditions- Interior Cleanliness

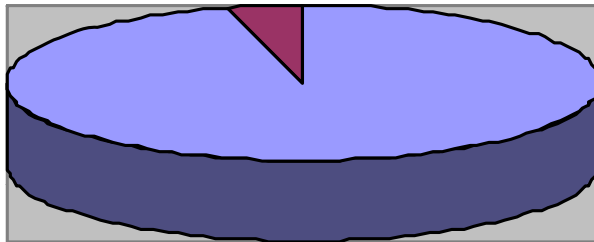


Results from February 2009-July 2009		
	Total Number	Percentage
Acceptable	1,503	92.78%
Unacceptable	117	7.22%



Sample Survey Results: Rail & Bus Transportation

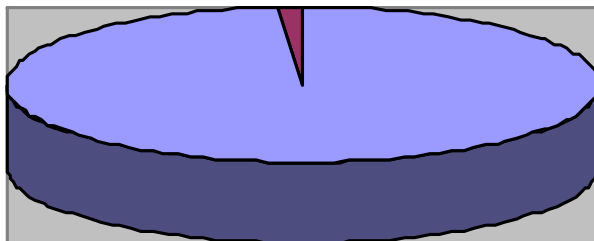
Mechanical Conditions- Stop Pull Cord



■ Functional
 ■ Non-functional

Results from February 2009-July 2009		
	Total Number	Percentage
Functional	917	95.82%
Non-functional	40	4.18%

Mechanical Conditions- Lights



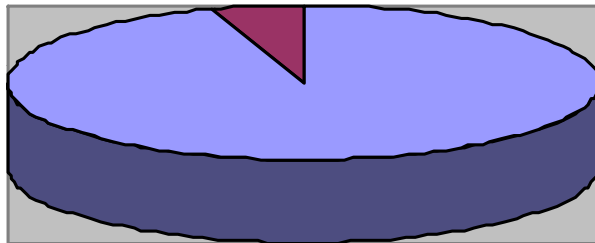
■ Functional
 ■ Non-functional

Results from February 2009-July 2009		
	Total Number	Percentage
Functional	1,549	98.67%
Non-functional	21	1.33%



Sample Survey Results: Operator Performance

Operator Performance: Courteous Behavior



Results from February 2009-July 2009		
	Total Number	Percentage
Yes	1,350	95.00%
No	71	5.00%



Additional Feedback

- In fall 2009, WMATA and City Year are going to hold a combined roundtable discussion with the Secret Shoppers to discuss their experiences using the transit system.
- Topics will include:
 - The overall experience of riding
 - Frequency and timeliness of buses
 - Station cleanliness and improvements
 - How can we improve the Secret Shopper survey?
- Roundtable feedback will be used to continue to enhance operations and also improve the Secret Shopper program.



City Year & WMATA: A Win-Win Partnership

- By partnering together, WMATA and City Year are both better able to meet their organizational goals:
 - By providing travel on Metrorail and Metrobus, WMATA helps City Year Washington, DC corps members serve as tutors, mentors, and role models to more than 6,000 children each year and make a lasting impact on the Washington, DC community.
 - By implementing the Secret Shopper Program, City Year helps WMATA achieve top-notch customer service by reporting problems and improvements on the Metrobus and Metrorail systems.