



## Accessibility Advisory Committee

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

November 2, 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 October 2015. The primary issues we reviewed were: 1) Fare Policy; 2) Metrorail Elevator Cleanliness; 3) Railcar Announcements; and 4) AAC Recruitment.

### **Issues of the Month**

#### MetroAccess Fare Policy

The AAC discussed the proposal listed in the MetroAccess sustainability study to eliminate the Free Ride Benefit for conditionally eligible MetroAccess customers, and expand the Reduced Fare Program. The AAC does not support any fare policy changes that would result in the elimination of the Free Ride Benefit. This benefit has been demonstrated to aid both riders with disabilities and WMATA's fiscal sustainability. It gives the riders a greater independence for travel and it saves WMATA more than \$40/ride over the use of MetroAccess. In addition, the impact of losing such a program on people with disabilities, seniors, and customers at lower-income levels would have devastating effects on the quality of their lives.

The increased hours of track work during off peak, nights, and weekend hours does not appear to be reflected accurately and consistently in the "Trip Planner" and thus MetroAccess fare calculation may be using rail fares rather than bus fares when rail is not the fastest mode during track work. To address this issue, we request that the accuracy of "fastest trip" be monitored or as an easier fix, calculate MetroAccess fares based upon twice the bus fare during periods of heavy track work and rail delays.

#### Metrorail Elevator Cleanliness

At the request of the AAC, Metro's Office of Plant Maintenance (PLNT) and Transit Police Department (MTPD) discussed the ongoing issue of elevator cleanliness and enforcement. The AAC is concerned about the frequency of individuals using Metro's elevators as restrooms and how this behavior adversely affects customers with disabilities who must rely on the elevators. One issue appears to be that custodial and maintenance schedules do not correspond with the system's hours of operations, leaving wide gaps between services.

To address the custodial gaps, upon report from station manager, PLNT will dispatch a custodial emergency response team or a special project teams to reported incident locations to resolve cleanliness issues in the elevators. MTPD plans to reduce unlawful

behavior in the elevators by targeting the following stations: Takoma Station, Shady Grove, Gallery Place, DuPont Circle, U Street Cardoza, Tenleytown-American University, and Bethesda. This targeting effort will occur during the early morning and late night hours.

The AAC recommends that Metro enhance its photographic equipment to include a camera with a monitor in the elevators. This will allow customers to see themselves in the act and remind them that they are being watched.

The Committee is also recommending that Metro post the bathroom policy in all elevators, and consider using a special paint that can detect whether urination has occurred in an area. This will help staff identify and address the issue more readily. The AAC also encourages WMATA to advise riders to use the elevator call system to inform Station Managers of the need for cleaning when they enter an elevator in need of cleaning. Lastly, the AAC recommends that the MTPD be restored to full staffing levels, so more officers can be available to address this issue as well as other safety issues.

Members thanked PLNT, MTPD, and Station Managers for working together to keep Metro's elevators clean.

#### Train Announcements

Some Train Operators are failing to provide line and destination information once the doors open. With all the single tracking occurring on the Orange, Blue, and Silver Lines, this critical information is especially needed because it allows customers, including those with disabilities, to understand whether they are on the correct train when the platform serves more than one line. The AAC recommends that Metro switch its announcements; announce the line and destination information first, thus giving customers an opportunity to exit if they have entered the wrong train. Additionally, the AAC recommends that Metro have personnel on the platform to provide train information in multiple formats. This will ensure all customers, including customers with hearing, vision or intellectual disabilities, will have access to the correct information.

#### AAC Recruitment

The AAC would like to thank Metro's Board for the expeditious approval of a new member. The member will fill a vacancy from the District of Columbia.

Sincerely,

Patrick Sheehan  
Chair