



Accessibility Advisory Committee

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

July 1, 2019

Dear Chair Smedberg and Members of the Board,

It is my pleasure to present you with the Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC) report for the month of June 2019. The primary issues we reviewed were: 1) MetroAccess Fare Policy, 2) Pantograph Style Inter-Car-Barriers, and 3) MetroAccess Changes Effective July 1st, 2019.

Issues of the Month

MetroAccess Fare Policy:

The AAC discussed the MetroAccess fare policy, fare calculations, background of the fares charged in the past, and reasons for fare changes. Based on ridership numbers and average fares received from WMATA, the AAC performed some calculations, and recommends the Board considers implementation of a flat fare for MetroAccess rides, and have the flat fare be set at \$4.00 for MetroAccess trips. If the flat fare of \$4 is not adopted by WMATA then a discount for subscription trips may be recommended at \$3.50 per subscription trip. This is to incentivize MetroAccess customers to establish subscription trips, which would help MetroAccess in its scheduling of trips. Subscription trips also help reduce calls to the Operations Control Center, thus this incentive would virtually pay for itself.

Pantograph Style Inter-Car Barriers:

The AAC was invited to the demonstration of the modified pantograph style inter-car barriers. The new proposed barriers are more effective than the two chain barriers. The AAC was advised if the internal and external responses are positive, then there will be a retrofit project to replace the chain barriers by the pantograph style barriers. Although not yet confirmed, there is a possibility of a retrofit on the legacy trains as well. The AAC found the material of the proposed barrier to be a lot stronger and the barriers are tight enough for a customer who is blind/low vision to gauge and be aware that there is a barrier. The AAC was pleased with the demonstration and information received, thus provided a positive feedback and support for the idea of WMATA moving towards pantograph style inter-car barriers.

MetroAccess Changes - Effective July 1st, 2019:

The AAC was apprised of the up-coming changes for MetroAccess, effective July 1st:

- MetroAccess will pilot the use of a new scheduling window: 45 minutes before through 45 after the requested pick-up time. Data on the impact of this pilot will be collected, reviewed, and shared with the AAC throughout the year.
- MetroAccess has a new commitment for trips booked by appointment time to drop off customers at their destinations no more than 30 minutes prior to the requested

appointment-time. Data on this commitment will be collected, reviewed, and shared with the AAC throughout the year.

- The Pre-arrival call: MetroAccess customers will begin receiving a courtesy call 10 minutes prior to the estimated arrival of their vehicle. The required 5 minutes wait time will begin when the driver gets to the door. The only other call customers will get is that the ride is going to leave. This change, moving from arrival calls to pre-arrival calls, is designed to give customers 15 minutes from the time the first call is made to prepare themselves for boarding. This pilot will be rolled out in phases beginning with 30 customers, including six members of the AAC, and then other customers will be added each week or so, as data on the accuracy of the timing of the pre-arrival calls and other impacts of this pilot are analyzed.
- Improved Convenience for MetroAccess Customers Negotiating Pick-up Times: Currently, MetroAccess customers can propose 2 different pick-up times with one reservationist before being connected to another person in the reservations office. This transfer can often cause excessive on-hold times for the customers. The new policy will allow customers to propose up to 5 different pick-up times with one reservationist before having to be placed back into the call portal and transferred to a second reservationist.

The AAC is pleased that this fiscal year has been a productive one without too many major conflicts and looks forward to another successful WMATA fiscal year.

The AAC wishes the entire WMATA Board of Directors and Staff, a happy recess and hopes everyone enjoys the summer time! See you all in September!

Sincerely,

Philip Posner
Chair