



## Accessibility Advisory Committee

300 7<sup>th</sup> Street, SW  
Washington, DC 20024

October 2, 2023

Dear Chair Smedberg, and Members of the Board,

It is my pleasure to present you with the AAC report for the month of September 2023. The primary issues we reviewed were: 1) Presentation by Senior Vice President and Assistant Chief Safety Officer, 2) Way Finding Signs, and 3) MetroAccess Upcoming OCC Service Improvement.

### Issues of the Month

#### Senior Vice President and Assistant Chief Safety Officer:

Jayme Johnson, Senior Vice-President and Assistant Chief Safety Officer, shared information about the Organizational Structure Supporting Accessibility, Understanding the Safety Strategy, and Safety Performance compared with other transit agencies. Mr. Johnson informed that with the new organizational structure, Office of ADA Policy and Planning is now under Systemwide Accessibility, under Theresa Impastato, Chief Safety & Readiness Officer, and that a new Vice-President of Systemwide Accessibility has been hired and would start in October. He provided information about Safety Strategy along with the building blocks that include Employee Reporting Program, Safety Risk Coordinators and Safety Committees, Data-Driven Risk Mitigation Proactive Oversight and Quality Investigations, and Positive Safety Culture.

Mr. Johnson stated safety is a core shared value at the center of everything we do thus Metro only delivers service if it is safe. He provided information about the four priority projects: Implement the Safety Management System, Streamline and Optimize our Rules, Implement the Incident Management Framework, and Initiate Just Culture. Mr. Johnson shared Metro's safety performance comparison to peer agencies from 2018 through 2022. The AAC was delighted to hear the takeaways that accessibility is a priority in the organization, safety at Metro is sound compared to peer agencies, and safety is at the center of the Strategic Transformation Plan.

#### Way Finding Signs:

Sarah Meyer, Executive Vice President and Chief Officer of Customer Experience and Engagement, shared information about way finding signs. Ms. Meyer stated we are incorporating worldwide best practices. Providing examples, Ms. Meyer shared information from New York's digital screens; Tokyo's signs, floor decals, color coding, entrance and exits being labeled (A, B, C, and so on) to help aid online and in station navigation, something Metro is also considering. Ms. Meyer stated the effort is to try to reduce customer journey time and uncertainty. Ms. Meyer stated many customers get lost at a Metro station. Ms. Meyer informed about a wayfinding signage pilot at the L'Enfant Plaza Station's street-level entrance/exit "pylon". She invited the AAC to visit the station in about a month and provide feedback. Ms. Meyer also discussed the trackside wall/pylon, station-ahead-list (SAL) signs and stated improved SAL signs will return soon.

Ms. Meyer also shared information about the Station Exit Signs and the changes being tested. She stated those exits are being labeled, for instance, Exit C to 9 St. She stated the direction is also being added along with other information, such as the airport logo, visitor attractions nearby, elevator to upper level instead of just elevator. Ms. Meyer discussed the Neighborhood/Landmark Map and shared a new neighborhood map that takes our new exit labeling system to its full potential. Ms. Meyer informed that the concept is from London as they do a great job for way finding of these signs. It has landmarks, connection information, walking estimations, etc.

The AAC commends Ms. Meyer to have researched other agencies and for the recommended improvements, such as larger fonts for next station sign inside the trains on the overhead signs. The Committee looks forward to the pilot at L'Enfant Plaza Station.

MetroAccess Upcoming OCC Service Improvement:

Terrian William-Halls, Director, MetroAccess provided information about the upcoming OCC service improvement during the times of the service day where customers have grave difficulty reaching MetroAccess Reservations team. Ms. Williams-Hall introduced TiM, short for "Thinking Machine", a digital assistant that uses natural language based on artificial intelligence to address MetroAccess service requests, the first of several planned OCC communications improvements. With anticipated improved customer service experience, TiM will not replace any call center agents. TiM augments existing agents and support by ensuring that calls are answered quickly and consistently. Agents will still accept calls and will be available for any requests that TiM cannot quickly address, or even provide service to customers that prefer to only interact with human agents. Ms. Williams-Hall shared an audio version of what customers can expect on a typical call handled by this digital assistant.

The AAC was impressed by hearing the audio of a call sample involving TiM and looks forward to participating in the testing process of this OCC service improvement.

Sincerely,

Patrick Sheehan  
Chair