

Paratransit Advisory Committee (PAC)

February 1, 2024

Meeting Minutes

PAC meeting was conducted virtually via Zoom.

1. Welcome from PAC Leadership

Meeting was called to order by Chairperson RueZalia Watkins at 5:10 p.m.

2. Confirmation of participants and approval of minutes

PAC Members

Thomas Coppola, Luda Demikhovskaya, Ketrina Hazell, Jose Hernandez, Billy Mitchell, Mark Anthony Phifer, Jean Ryan, Tucker Salovaara, Sharada Veerubhotla, RueZalia Watkins.

Absent – Sharlene Kraft, Ellen Rubin, Mindy Jacobson

MTA/NYCT Paratransit

Sean Fitzpatrick, Quemuel Arroyo, Frank Camp, Tammie Francisque, Donna Fredericksen, Eugene Griffith, Simone Harvard, Patricia Ibarguen, Chris Pangilinan, Tejpal Prajapati, Beverly Richards, Diane McFarlane, Chris Messina, Cindy Myers, Natalie Garcia, Rosemarie Venero, Carlos Reinoso, Shari Bhushun-Ogbourne, Manju Ramasamy, Beverly Hamilton.

T. Salovaara requested that the Dashboard report be reformatted for ease of viewing.

3. PAC Topics:

My AAR App Update

PowerPoint was shared by Manju Ramasamy of the Project Management Office. Recent updates to app, sharing useful tips, and providing insight into future releases:

Google Address Issues

Latest Upgrades

App Best Practices Future Upgrades

T. Prajapati of the Project Management Office conducted presentation regarding the process for addressing customer feedback.

T. Salovaara asked when cross streets will be added to the app. T. Prajapati advised he will investigate and get back to the PAC with the response.

K. Hazell asked is the MTA app available in languages other than English. M. Ramasamy advised Google Translate may be used with the app.

S. Veerubhotla asked if someone from Paratransit would email the answers to the questions posed by PAC in this meeting.

T. Prajapati responded he would work with Outreach group to compile and send email.

J. Ryan would like to see 1) a drop-down list of favorite locations to travel to; and 2) for locations with non-traditional addresses to show up as valid in the app.

Chair R. Watkins would like to see the app recognize pick-ups at specific stores within a mall, rather than pick-up or deliver customers to one main address for the entire mall.

T. Prajapati will investigate these inquiries along with the pending status delay in the app.

4. AAR Service Updates / Dashboard AAR Report

A summary of the December 2023 operating statistics from the Paratransit Report was sent to PAC members (seen on page 5) and presented by VP Chris Pangilinan.

PAC Member Discussion and Feedback

Chair R. Watkins asked what time of day was the 22 second average response time for the call center is calculated?

VP Pangilinan noted this is an average for the month. However, he acknowledged response time can be longer during the 4pm to 5pm hour.

Chair R. Watkins asked for response time statistics for the 3pm - 5pm period.

S. Veerubhotla shared that customers have reported foul odors when riding in broker vehicles.

5. Paratransit Topic:

2024 Goals

VP Pangilinan shared a presentation outlining the 2024 Top Goals and Focus Areas. Also, highlighted some great accomplishments from 2023.

J. Ryan asked that the presentation be sent to PAC members.

Chair Watkins advised all that a separate PAC meeting regarding E-hail is being scheduled with VP Pangilinan for the week of 2/13 or 2/20.

K. Hazell inquired about whether customers assigned to broker service can opt-out and receive non-broker vehicles, the concern being that some vehicles smelling of smoke is impacting customers with certain medical conditions.

VP Pangilinan explained that due to supply chain demands and availability of vehicles, AAR cannot guarantee specific types of cars. AAR will investigate and monitor any drivers accused of smoking in vehicles. E. Griffith will work with broker services to reinforce no smoking permitted in vehicles.

S. Veerubhotla asked whether OMNY AAR is still scheduled to start with a small test group, or a full roll out.

VP Pangilinan confirmed the OMNY AAR pilot group of 89 customers will test the card, starting in March, and will assist with identifying any issues. Feedback will then be reviewed.

T. Salovaara asked when AAR will eliminate coins required to pay the AAR fare.

VP Pangilinan offered that there will always be a cash option. Although the benefits of a cashless system may appeal to many, customers will have the option to opt-out of OMNY AAR.

PAC requested a copy of 2024 Goals (emailed to all members on February 2, 2024).

Option #5 – Address emergencies across platforms/providers

Simone Harvard, Officer of AAR Command Center presented on the topic.

He outlined the process of a same-day call received by Travel Services line. Agents are the first line, receiving customer calls. A same day issue which cannot be resolved by an agent is escalated to a GCS (Global Contact Service) supervisor. If further escalation is required, the call may be forwarded to an NYCT Superintendent. The Superintendent may then reach out to command center leadership to obtain any necessary approvals or final resolution.

S. Veerubhotla opined that some questions asked of customers by call center agents seem bureaucratic and unnecessary (i.e., confirming e-mail addresses). Can this process be streamlined?

T. Coppola asked why it takes two hours to resolve same day issue?

S. Harvard noted any such instances should be escalated to a Superintendent if it cannot be addressed by a supervisor.

Chair Watkins explained PAC's overall concern on this topic was to establish whether there is 1) a team in place to address high-level emergencies (ex: customer who is blind and may have been dropped off at the wrong location), 2) to have those issues separated by borough and addressed, or 3) are there separate procedures for dedicated vs. broker when addressing such instances. PAC would like to work with AAR to establish a list of specific high-level emergencies that would be escalated directly from agent to Superintendent.

S. Harvard acknowledged PAC feedback and shared that a team of skilled agents will be trained by the contractor (GCS) to address these concerns.

J. Ryan moved to adjourn. It was seconded.

Meeting was adjourned at 6:30 PM.

Paratransit Report

Statistical results for the month of December 2023 are shown below.

Paratransit Operations - Monthly Operations Report Service Indicators

Category	Performance Indicator	Current Month: December 2023			12-Month Average		
		This Year	Last Year	% Change	This Year	Last Year	% Change
Ridership	Total Trips Completed*	670,705	565,558	+18.6%	635,805	530,427	+19.9%
	Total Ridership	976,165	815,894	+19.6%	921,657	762,800	+20.8%
On-Time Performance	Pick-up Primary 20 Minute	89.0%	92.0%	-3.0%	89.6%	n/a	n/a
	Pick-up Broker 20 Minute	90.0%	85.0%	+5.0%	86.8%	n/a	n/a
	Appointment OTP Trips Primary - 30 Min Early to <1 Late (On-Time)*	47.0%	49.0%	-2.0%	47.4%	50.3%	-2.8%
	Appointment OTP Trips Primary - Early*	42.0%	43.0%	-1.0%	44.7%	39.0%	+5.7%
	Appointment OTP Trips Broker - 30 Min Early to <1 Late (On-Time)*	47.0%	40.0%	+7.0%	41.8%	40.8%	+1.0%
	Appointment OTP Trips Broker - Early*	41.0%	51.0%	-10.0%	47.3%	47.8%	-0.4%
Ride Time	Ride Time Variance Performance: Actual Trip Duration vs. Planned Trip Duration - At or Better Than Plan	81.0%	81.0%	0.0%	80.7%	81.3%	-0.6%
	Average Actual Trip Duration in Minutes	40	37	+8.1%	38	37	+2.5%
	Max Ride Time Performance Primary	98.0%	98.0%	0.0%	98.1%	97.8%	+0.3%
	Max Ride Time Performance Broker	99.0%	99.0%	0.0%	98.9%	99.0%	-0.1%
Customer Experience	Frequent Rider Experience Primary*	85.0%	86.0%	-1.0%	84.1%	85.3%	-1.2%
	Frequent Rider Experience Broker*	87.0%	93.0%	-6.0%	87.8%	91.5%	-3.7%
Provider No-Shows	Provider No-Shows per 1,000 Schedule Trips Primary	0.60	0.53	+13.2%	0.66	1.32	-50.3%
	Provider No-Shows per 1,000 Schedule Trips Broker	1.30	4.97	-73.8%	2.53	4.35	-41.9%
Customer Complaints	Passenger Complaints - Transportation Service Quality Per 1000 Completed Trips	3.9	1.6	+143.8%	3.2	2.5	+26.4%
	Passenger Complaints - Non-Transportation Service Quality Per 1000 Completed Trips	0.9	3.2	-71.9%	2.2	3.3	-33.2%
Call Center	Percent of Calls Answered	97.0%	96.0%	+1.0%	95.7%	93.6%	+2.1%
	Average Call Answer Speed in Seconds	22	53	-58.5%	46	97	-52.2%
Eligibility	Total Registrants	176,466	172,440	+2.3%	176,174	170,522	+3.3%

*** For all Paratransit performance metrics (including legacy data), visit <https://metrics.mta.info/>

*NOTE: The reporting of Drop-off On-Time Performance and Customer Experience metrics resumed in September. The yearly data comparison is not available due to the temporary suspension of appointment time booking of trips associated with the COVID-19 pandemic which started in March 2020. Consequently, the last year's 12-Month Average rate for these two metrics cannot be calculated.

- Note: 1) The percentage comparisons are the percentage point change instead of the percentage change.
 2) Trip data and resulting metrics are preliminary and subject to adjustments.
 3) Total Registrants data for December 2023 is available.