

Paratransit Advisory Committee (PAC)

September 26, 2017 Meeting Minutes

Meeting commenced at 5:10 p.m.

PAC Attendees: Thomas Coppola, Lyudmila Demikovskaya, David H. DePorte, Edward S. Friedman, Ellen Rubin, Tucker B. Salovaara, Sharada Veerubhotla, RueZali Watkins, Stanley Weinblat

PAC did not attend: John Moynihan, Ketrina Hazell, Ken Stewart, Mindy Jacobsen, Sharlene Kraft

NYC Transit Staff Attendees: Brandon Anderson, Karene Chao, Michael Cosgrove, Lynda Edmond, Donna Fredericksen, Raymond Gaillard, Eugene Griffiths, Steven LoPiano, John Morris, Cassandra Lubin-Richards, Kenneth Stuart, Shirley Teran-Marty, Brenda Walker

Guests: Judith Buckley (NYCT ADA), Inat German (MOPD) Uwvie Obodo (PCA for Tucker B. Salovaara),

Introductions – David H. DePorte, PAC Chair

I. Approval of Minutes – David H. DePorte, PAC Chair

Mr. DePorte called for the approval of the July 18, 2017 minutes. Mr. Coppola moved to approve the minutes and Ms. Rubin seconded the motion.

II. AAR Service Report – Vice President Steve LoPiano

As requested by the PAC, VP LoPiano provided a summary of the Paratransit Report.

Registrants increased 2.3% comparing 145,901 in August 2016 to 149,248 in August 2017.

Trips Requested increased 2.4% comparing 658,663 in August 2016 to 674,547 in August 2017.

Early Cancellations increased 3.6% comparing 82,397 in August 2016 to 85,362 in August 2017.

Trips Scheduled increased 2.3% comparing 570,212 in August 2016 to 583,592 in August 2017.

Late Cancellation increased 8.5% comparing 16,468 in August 2016 to 17,865 in August 2017.

Trips Completed increased 4.9% comparing 518,814 in August 2016 to 544,359 in August 2017.

Customer No-Shows increased to 2.0% as a % trips scheduled in August 2017 up from 1.4% in August 2016.

Carrier No-Shows decreased 27.5% comparing 356 in August 2016 to 258 in August 2017.

No-Fault No-Show decreased 6.2% to 2,116 in August 2016 to 1,984 in August 2017.

Total No-Shows increased by 32.0% comparing 10,512 in August 2016 to 13,877 in August 2017.

On Time Performance increased 1.8% comparing 94.8% in August 2016 to 96.6% in August 2017.

Appointments On Time remained consistent comparing 94.0% in August 2016 to 94.0% in August 2017.

Late Trips by Carriers decreased 39.9% comparing 19,323 in August 2016 to 11,621 in August 2017.

Complaints per 1,000 Trips decreased 11.1% comparing 5.3 in August 2016 to 4.7 in August 2017.

Commendations decreased 12.9% comparing 912 in August 2016 to 794 in August 2017.

Total Boardings increased 0.6% comparing 770,778 in August 2016 to 775,589 in August 2017.

PAC Comments

Mr. Friedman stated that the last PAC meeting he had inquired about the statistics on carrier information such as on-time performance and other evaluation of service indicators. VP LoPiano informed Mr. Friedman that we are looking into this.

Mr. Salovaara and Ms. Demikovskaya wanted further explanation on the statistics referring to Net Customer Refusal. VP LoPiano stated that this is the number of times a customer refuses a trip based on the time given during the reservationist. It's a function of the trip negotiation process.

VP LoPiano informed PAC that the Customer Bill of Rights has been finalized and will be given to the MTA Board Meeting to be ratified. AAR will then distribute it to customers in a variety of ways (e.g. website, post in vehicles.) This will also be distributed to our Carriers, Brokers, Assessment Centers and other work locations. Mr. LoPiano thanking the PAC for their assistance.

II. Paratransit Topic Providing Service for our AAR Customers

Ms. Fredericksen presented a PowerPoint that will be part of a new Train-the-Trainer program. We will instruct the trainers and supervisors of the contracted service providers. Overall, it focuses on customer interaction and sensitivity. It explains the ADA, what paratransit is, why customer sensitivity is important, proper customer interaction, proper boarding and securement, what to do if there is a problem and stresses the importance of having a positive attitude.

PAC Comments concerning presentation

Ms. Rubin and several committee members mentioned that the drivers are not allowing customers into the vehicle without showing ID and providing the fare. Ms. Rubin was informed that in the event additional assistance is needed, drivers are advised to contact their dispatchers for assistance.

Ms. Watkins mentioned how dispatchers are not always responding to drivers' calls. The drivers should have an alternate option for assistance when dispatchers do not respond. Ms. Watkins wants to make sure a clear distinction is made concerning the tie down of a wheelchair. What someone might call a frame may be the mechanical part of the wheelchair and a hook cannot be placed on that part. The explanation given must detail this information. Ms. Watkins also mentioned that drivers can express an apology to the customer which may diffuse a situation.

Mr. Cosgrove and VP LoPiano stated they will look into finding another method for drivers to contact their dispatchers.

Mr. Friedman expressed his concern about the limited or lack of available taxi authorizations during the reservation process. Mr. Stuart explained that staff members of Global Contact Service (GCS) are reminded that customers should not be refused authorizations. VP LoPiano added if customers can travel through E-Hail as opposed to taxi authorization we would like them to use E-hail. If a customer is unsure what time they want to travel they can still get taxi authorization until we replace it with an E-hail app that provides the flexibility of taxi reimbursement.

Ms. Ryan mentioned that some drivers of rear-entry accessible taxis are incorrectly placing the straps around arm rests of wheelchairs and that this should be covered in the upcoming training.

Ms. Veerubhotla asked if any consideration has been made for allowing MetroCard as Access-A-Ride payment. VP LoPiano stated there are plans to replace MetroCard. We are considering options moving forward. Once finalized, the next step would be to have AAR vehicles outfitted with appropriate equipment.

VP LoPiano added that another option for fare collection when using E-Hail would be to add a credit card or debit card to the system as a form of paying the \$2.75. It is not mandatory but a different option of payment. As part of the E-hail Pilot Program, AAR will be testing On-Demand E-Hail service. Mr. LoPiano further added that creating an AAR app which will allow customers to book on-demand trips and advance reservations through a smartphone or computer. More information on this will follow in future PAC meetings.

Comments and feedback solicited from the PAC will be incorporated into the program.

IV. PAC Topic **Emergency Procedures** **Discussions and Member Feedback**

Director of Command Center Ms. Walker and Superintendent Morris of Standard & Compliance were present for discussion.

Ms. Walker explained in an event of a breakdown:

- The driver should call the carrier base to let them know there was a breakdown. The driver should communicate to the customer what is going on.
- The carrier should be locating a rescue vehicle within their fleet. If a dispatcher needs additional assistance they can call the AAR Command Center. The Command Center can check if any other vehicles are within the vicinity to pick up the customer.

Mr. Morris added that AAR takes immediate action for getting another vehicle to the location. AAR can also provide a taxi authorization if a customer wishes to continue their trip using this method. In the event of an emergency situation the police should be called. Customers can also in all cases call the AAR Command Center. At all times the driver should ask customers if they are okay. A road supervisor from the carrier may also be called to the location for further assistance.

In all instances, it was told to Ms. Watkins that AAR advises the carriers to communicate with customers about what is happening. These will be emphasized in the upcoming training program.

V. New/Old Business

Due to limited time we were unable to discuss any new or old business.

Closing

Ms. Watkins moved to adjourn the meeting and Mr. Friedman seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously and the meeting was adjourned just before 7:00pm.