



**TRANSPORTATION PROFESSIONALS ADVISORY
COMMITTEE
(TPAC)**

**Thursday, April 9, 2009
9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.
AON Center – 6th Floor Meeting Room
707 Wilshire Blvd.
Los Angeles, CA 90017
www.asila.org**

**TPAC
Mission Statement**

Through our diversity and expertise in the transportation industry, the Transportation Professionals Advisory Committee provides the ASI Board our perspective, advice, and advocacy with an understanding of the community, environment, and regulations.

TPAC promotes innovative, cost effective and high quality specialized transportation solutions.

<u>Time</u>	<u>Item</u>	<u>Item Description</u>	<u>Disposition</u>	<u>Pages</u>
0	1.	Call to Order	Action	
0	2.	Read TPAC Mission Statement		
5	3.	Introductions	Information	
5	4.	Chairperson’s Report	Information	

5	5.	Approve December 11, 2008 Meeting Minutes	Action	4-7
5	6.	Staff Report	Information	
5	7.	General Public Comment	Information	
5	8.	Report from Board of Directors	Information	
10	9.	Paratransit Plan Update	Action	8-12
10	10.	Service Animal Mat Subcommittee Recommendation	Action	13-15
10	11.	Policy – Return Trip Booking and Calling OMC for Rescue Ride	Action	16-20
10	12.	Update on ADEPT Software Implementation	Information	
10	13.	Officer Nomination Subcommittee	Possible Action	21-23
10	14.	Bus Stop Accessibility	Possible Action	
10	15	OIG Audit Update	Information	24-36
10		New Business Raised Subsequent to the Posting of the Agenda	Possible Action	
0		Adjournment	Action	

Access Services does not discriminate on the basis of disability. Accordingly, Access Services seeks to ensure that individuals with disabilities will have an equal opportunity to participate in the range of Access Services events and programs by providing appropriate auxiliary aids and services to facilitate communication. In determining the type of auxiliary aids and services for communication that will be provided, primary consideration is given to the request of the individual with disabilities. However, the final decision belongs to Access Services. To help ensure availability of those auxiliary aids and services you require, please make every effort to notify Access Services of

your request at least three (3) business days (72 hours) prior to the meeting in which you wish to utilize those aids or services. You may do so by contacting (213) 270-6000.

Note: ASI board meetings are held pursuant to the Ralph M. Brown Act [Cal. Gov. Code §54950] and are open to the public. The public may view and obtain all written information supporting this agenda provided to the board both initially and supplementally prior to the meeting at the agency's offices located at 707 Wilshire Blvd., 9th Floor, Los Angeles California and on its website at <http://asila.org>. Documents, including Power Point handouts distributed to Board Members by staff or Board members at the meeting will simultaneously be made available to the public. Three opportunities are available for the public to address the board during a board meeting: (1) before closed session regarding matters to be discussed in closed session, (2) before a specific agenda item is debated and voted upon regarding that item and (3) general public comment. The exercise of the right to address the board is subject to restriction as to time and appropriate decorum. All persons wishing to make public comment must fill out a yellow Public Comment Form and submit it to the Secretary to the Board. Public comment is generally limited to three (3) minutes per speaker and the total time available for public comment may be limited at the discretion of the Chairperson. Persons whose speech is impaired such that they are unable to address the board at a normal rate of speed may request the accommodation of a limited amount of additional time from the Chair but only by checking the appropriate box on the Public Comment Form. Granting such an accommodation is in the discretion of the Chair.

The Board of Directors will not and cannot respond during the meeting to matters raised under general public comment. Pursuant to provisions of the Brown Act governing these proceedings, no discussion or action may be taken on these matters unless they are listed on the agenda, or unless certain emergency or special circumstances exist. However, the board may direct staff to investigate and/or schedule certain matters for consideration at a future Board of Directors Meeting and the staff will respond to all public comment in writing prior to the next board meeting.

TRANSPORTATION PROFESSIONALS ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

MINUTES FOR THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 2009

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 9:45 am.

Members in attendance: Joseph Stitcher, Jesse Valdez, Wayne Wasell, Jose Medrano, Amelia Jennings, Kevin McDonald, Graham Ridley, Gracie Davis, Liz Carter, Kathryn Engel, John Fong, William Garcia, George Sparks, Shirley Hsiao, Matt Gleason

Members Absent: Dennis Kobata

ASI Staff: Arun Prem, Matthew Avancena, Charace Thompson, Geetu Banerjee, Luis Pacheco.

2. TPAC Mission Statement

Vice Chairperson Jesse Valdez read the TPAC Mission Statement

3. INTRODUCTIONS

Mr. Valdez asked attendees to introduce themselves.

4. CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

Chairperson Joseph Stitcher was not in attendance so Vice-Chair Mr. Valdez reported on the January 5th Board meeting.

5. APPROVE DECEMBER 11, 2008 MEETING MINUTES

Meeting minutes were approved.

6. Staff Report

Arun Prem announced that a number of community meetings will be held throughout the county to discuss ASI's proposed fare increase and/or service changes; he encouraged TPAC members to attend. A public hearing is scheduled for Wednesday, March 18, 10:00 am at Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration. Mr. Prem asked members to contact staff if they are interested in becoming an ASI coupon sales agent.

7. General Public Comment

Ms. Mary Sanders from Infoline 211 gave a brief overview of 211 L.A. County. She distributed pamphlets and encouraged members to use the service.

8. Report from Board of Directors

There was no board member in attendance so Matthew Avancena gave a brief summary of the January 2009 board meeting.

9. TPAC Training Summary

Consultant Victoria Stephan presented her training summary; the TPAC training took place on January 8. Ms. Stephan's report highlighted a number suggestions to improve TPAC's effectiveness:

- Consider monthly TPAC meetings, on ad-hoc basis
- Request direction/procedures from the Board
- Become more proactive; address TPAC role within Access
- Develop 2009-10 Annual plan
- Attend Access sponsored Community meetings
- Assist in identifying barriers to developing realistic expectations for Access; the Board, staff and riders.

To improve relationship with Board and CAC, she recommended the following:

- Reach out to Board and CAC

- Review the Strategic plan and goals
- Have the TPAC and CAC Chairs communicate
- Develop a collaborative orientation for TPAC, CAC and Board members

10. Fare Increase/Service Change

Due to a multi-million dollar deficit in current and future years, the Board directed staff to begin exploring fare increases and some reductions in premium services. Arun Prem presented the proposed fare increase for L.A. basin and North County which includes Santa Clarita and Antelope Valley.

TPAC deferred action on the proposed fare increase but asked staff to provide a more detailed list of non-mandated (premium) services and public hearing comments for the next TPAC meeting on April 9, 2009.

11. TPAC Subcommittee – Service Animal Mats; and OMC as Menu Option on 1-800 Reservation Number

Mr. Prem gave background information on the service animal mats issue and integration of OMC in the reservation phone tree.

Vehicle Mats

Public comment from Pamela Hill Metz. Ms. Metz stated that she has been on trips when her service animal has slid across the vehicle floor. Because of these incidents, she has had to retire a service animal because it refuses to board an ASI minivan. Ms. Metz also brought along a sample vehicle mat to show TPAC members.

The issue involved the texture of the floors in the vans, and whether animals could potentially slide across the floor during evasive driving maneuvers should the owner of the service animal lose control of the service animal's leash. A few riders with service animals have alleged that their service animals have slid across the floor.

The service animal subcommittee recommended that ASI purchase vehicle mats that can be secured to the floor for the service animal to lay on in hopes of avoiding situations where a service animal slides. CAC approved the subcommittee's recommendation.

TPAC took action to form a subcommittee to look into the feasibility of installing mats in vehicles while taking into account the operational and policy issues. The subcommittee members are Gracie Davis (OCTA), Wayne Wasell (Metro) and Kathryn Engle (Glendale Transit).

OMC as Menu Option on Reservation 800 Number

Mr. Prem gave background information on the integration of OMC in the reservation

phone tree. A few riders have asked staff to look into integrating the OMC option in the Reservation menu platform. However, a number of technical changes would need to occur which would add approximately \$2,500 to \$3,000 a month in telecommunication costs to the agency.

TPAC took action to not recommend integrating OMC with Reservation phone tree due to cost and relatively few riders who have requested this change.

12. CTSA Taskforce Recommendations

Taskforce chair, George Sparks (Pomona Valley Transportation Authority) gave a brief background on the role of CTSA's and their efforts to promote coordination and savings. Mr. Sparks presented the taskforce recommendations listed in priority:

1. Vehicle Donation Program
2. Specialized Training Programs including Grant Writing Assistance for JARC, New Freedom and 5310 Grants.
3. Volunteer Transportation Program
4. Joint Purchase of Fuel, Insurance and Travel Training

TPAC took action to approve and asked staff to concentrate on the 1) Vehicle Donation program and 2) Specialized Training Programs.

13. OIG Audit Update

Mr. Prem reported there are no updates regarding the remaining issues still open.

14. New Business Raised Subsequent to Posting of the Agenda.

None.

15. Adjournment

Adjourned 11:45 am

DATE: APRIL 9, 2009
TO: TPAC
FROM: ARUN PREM, DIRECTOR OF STRATEGIC PLANNING
RE: COMPLEMENTARY ADA PARATRANSIT PLAN UPDATE EFFECTIVE FY 2010

ISSUE:

Because of increased ridership, Access Services faces financial difficulties in current and future years. In order to ensure the agency moves forward with a balanced budget, the Board authorized staff to propose policy changes going forward. Changes to fares and service are proposed to follow up on the Board’s direction to propose changes to fares and premium services in order to balance the budget.

The recommended changes require an update of L.A. County’s Complementary ADA Paratransit Plan effective July 1, 2009.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends the following fare and service changes effective July 1, 2009:

Fare Change

L.A. Basin	July 1, 2009	July 1, 2010	July 1, 2011
0 - 20 Miles	\$2.30	\$2.40	\$2.50
Over 20 Miles	\$3.00	\$3.20	\$3.40

North County	Local Fare	Transfer Fare
Santa Clarita	\$2.00	\$6.00

Antelope Valley	\$2.00	\$7.00
Between Santa Clarita and Antelope Valley	n/a	\$7.00

Service Change

An additional transfer time of 3:00 p.m. for service to/from L.A. urbanized area to Santa Clarita. This will increase the number of transfers to four – 7:30 a.m.; 12:30 p.m.; 3:00 p.m. (proposed); 5:30 p.m.

IMPACT ON BUDGET:

Staff believes the budget deficits projected through year 2014 can be resolved by implementing the proposed fare increase. Additional cost saving measures such as a hiring and salary freeze, and elimination of overtime are already in place.

The additional transfer at Olive View for trips to/from Santa Clarita is expected to be cost neutral.

BACKGROUND:

It is anticipated that budget shortfalls will total \$4 million in FY 2010 and close to \$9 million in FY 2011.

In order to help balance the agency’s budget while maintaining a commitment to quality service, the Access Services Board of Directors authorized staff to begin exploring changes to services and fares, including “premium services”. (Premium services include call outs, standing order reservations, toll-free reservation phone lines, the Operations Monitoring Center (OMC), transfer free service in the LA basin, travel training, free fares and many others.) These services are provided free to riders, and are not required by law.

Access Services has held the line on fares since it was started 14 years ago. The last

fare adjustment in 2002 actually decreased fares for many riders and ASI currently has some of the lowest fares of any comparable paratransit agency in the country. ASI riders currently pay less than 5 percent of the cost of their rides with the remaining 95 percent of the cost being funded by federal and local sources of transportation funding.

ASI's current fare is \$1.80 for trips under 20 miles and \$2.70 for trips over 20 miles. In Santa Clarita, the current fare is \$2.00 for a local trip and \$5.70 for a transfer to the L.A. Basin. In the Antelope Valley, the current fare is \$1.75 for a local trip and \$6.70 for a transfer to the L.A. Basin. For trips between Santa Clarita and Antelope Valley, the current fare is \$6.00.

Stakeholder Involvement

Staff conducted extensive outreach to stake holders on the proposed fare and service changes including direct mailing of newsletters to active riders and public hearing notices in four major newspapers. In addition, staff encouraged community input by soliciting comments via web survey, a dedicated telephone line, twelve community meetings throughout the county, and one public hearing.

Comments Received via email/mail/telephone

Of the 58 public comments received by email/mail, letter and phone, 69% were in favor or did not object to the proposed fare changes:

Format			Understand/ Accept Fare Increase		
			Yes	No	
E-Mail	9	16%	40	18	69%
Phone	39	67%			31%
Letter	9	16%			
Fax	1	2%			
Total	58	100%	Total	58	100%

Of the 55 respondents who completed the online survey, 87% understood that a higher fare will need to be charged in order to keep premium services intact:

Question 1: Do you understand that in order to keep the premium services that are offered by Access Services a higher fare will need to be charged?

Yes	48	87%
No	7	13%
Total	55	100%

Question 2: Would you prefer to have a smaller fare increase and eliminate some premium services instead?

Yes	13	24%
No	41	76%
Total	54	100%

Public Hearing Input

A public hearing was held on March 18, 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at the Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration. Nineteen people attended and twelve made public comments; seven were in favor and one was against the fare increase. The remaining four speakers expressed concerns about service quality.

Community Meetings Input

During February and March 2009 twelve Community Meetings were held across L.A. County – two in each of the six service regions to ensure riders have an opportunity for input. Of the forty-four people who attended the meetings, fifteen did not object to the fare increase and five were against. The remaining attendees did not speak.

West Central Region

Plummer Park
West Hollywood
February 19 & 26

Antelope Valley Region

Palmdale Cultural Center
Palmdale
March 3 & 5

Northern Region

Van Nuys State Building
Van Nuys
February 12 & March 7

Santa Clarita Region

Santa Clarita Senior Center/Sports Complex
February 24 & March 12

Eastern Region

Jack Crippen Community Center

Southern Region

Harbor Regional Center

El Monte
February 20 & March 10

Torrance
March 13 & 21

DATE: APRIL 9, 2009

TO: TPAC

**FROM: KATHRYN ENGEL, GLENDALE BEELINE
GRACIE DAVIS, OCTA
WAYNE WASELL, METRO
MATTHEW AVANCENA, ASI**

**RE: RESPONSE TO SERVICE ANIMAL MAT SUBCOMMITTEE
RECOMMENDATION**

ISSUE:

Although there are no official complaints received by ASI, riders with service animals have reported their service animals have slid across the floor during evasive driving maneuvers. ASI's Community Advisory Committee (CAC) recommended that ASI provide two sets of floor mats on all ASI owned minivans to avoid such incidents. The Board asked TPAC to review the recommendation and report back with a recommendation for the Board. TPAC formed a subcommittee to review the CAC's request to provide mats in the minivans.

RECOMMENDATION:

The TPAC subcommittee recommends that ASI not provide mats for service animals based on the following:

- ASI is not obligated under the ADA to provide securement or mats for a rider's service animal
- Under the ADA, the supervision, care, and securement of service animals while on ASI vehicles is the responsibility of the rider
- No other fixed-route or ADA paratransit operator provides mats
- Use of floor mats would create potential safety issues for other riders
- ASI could inform and encourage riders and vehicle operators regarding procedures to transport service animals while using the service.

IMPACT ON BUDGET:

The TPAC subcommittee recommendation would have no impact on the ASI budget. If TPAC should determine that mats are desired, two mats per ASI vehicle would cost approximately \$7,000. The durability of the mats are undetermined, therefore maintenance and replacement costs are difficult to estimate. Potential legal liability with providing mats is also undetermined.

BACKGROUND:

During 2006 riders reported that evasive driving maneuvers was causing service animals to slide across the floor of the vehicle. At the May 2006 Board Meeting, ASI demonstrated and disseminated information regarding products that would assist riders in the securement of service animals on ASI vans.

In 2007, ASI Project Administrator, David Foster, conducted a peer review of service animal securement practices. The peer review revealed that no other complimentary ADA paratransit systems have had this issue raised as a concern except for Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART); they resolved the issue with the implementation of Altro Chroma flooring materials. All ASI vehicles are installed with this identical brand of flooring.

In 2008, the CAC service animal subcommittee conducted a pilot program to test the effectiveness of a mat chosen by select riders with service animals. The service animal subcommittee was to evaluate the effectiveness of the mats and in turn ASI would solicit feedback from the contractors' drivers to evaluate how the use of these mats would impact aspects of service such as wheelchair securement, passenger safety and maintenance. In late 2008 CAC recommended that ASI provide two sets of floor mats on all ASI owned minivans to avoid such incidents of service animals sliding across vehicle floors.

In 2009 the Board asked TPAC to review the issue and TPAC formed a subcommittee at the February 12, 2009 TPAC meeting. The TPAC subcommittee met via conference call on February 26, 2009. The TPAC subcommittee reviewed the ADA requirements and felt that ASI is not obligated under the ADA to provide securement or mats for a rider's service animal. In addition, under the ADA, the supervision, care, and securement of service animals while on ASI vehicles is the responsibility of the rider, and the use of floor mats would create potential safety issues for other riders.

ASI Legal Counsel, James Jones conducted a legal analysis on the issue and found:

- Under the ADA, the supervision, care, and securement of service animals while on ASI vehicles is the responsibility of the rider;
- Securement regulations by their terms apply to people and not animals;
- ASI could become legally responsible if providing mats results in injury to another;
- Costs include purchasing, maintaining, and replacing of mats, as well as the potential liability associated with providing them;
- Relatively few ASI trips are taken in minivans by riders with service animals; policy would affect less than 5 percent of all trips. There are no complaints in the ASI database on service animals being harmed from sliding due to evasive driving maneuvers.

DATE: APRIL 9, 2009
TO: TPAC
FROM: IWALANI "EVIE" PALICZ, PROJECT ADMINISTRATOR
RE: NOT BOOKING RETURN TRIPS AND CALLING OMC FOR RESCUE RIDE

ISSUE:

Currently Access Paratransit has a "No Strand" policy and on a very limited basis is able to provide rescue or backup same day emergency rides. Repeat riders have deliberately not booked return trips back to their home and have called the Operations Monitoring Center for same day rescue rides.

BACKGROUND:

Access Paratransit has a policy not to leave a rider stranded away from their home. This "No Strand" policy allows a rider to call the Operations Monitoring Center (OMC) for a rescue or same day emergency ride. This service is intended to provide a safety net for riders who encounter problems with their ride while out in the community.

In recent months the OMC has reported a sharp rise in calls for same day emergency rides and by the same riders. When the riders were asked by the OMC about their return rides, these riders did not book a return trip. They just called to OMC knowing they would be guaranteed a ride.

Riders who knowingly do not book return trips and depend on calls to the OMC for return rides are abusing a system that was designed to help riders in trouble. Rescue or backup vehicles sent to retrieve these riders are not available to help those riders who did book return trips.

Staff presented a written policy to the QSS at the October 2008 meeting. The policy, which used the No Show Policy as a template, is designed to deter riders from abusing the No Strand practice thus reserving the rescue or backup vehicles for those riders in true need.

The proposed policy was reviewed and discussed in depth from all perspectives; rider, staff, OMC, and provider. The QSS then made recommendations for changes to the proposed policy, voted to accept the revised policy, and to present it to the CAC for further review, discussion, and action.

The policy attached herein is the revised policy including the changes recommended by the QSS.

RECOMMENDATION:

As members of the QSS, staff requests the CAC/TPAC to review and approve the proposed policy prior to it being submitted to the Board of Directors.

Section: I Policy: _____

Issued:

10/10/08

Title: Not Booking Return Trips and Calling OMC for
Rescue Ride

Revised:

POLICY: Access Paratransit riders who have a pattern or practice of “Not Booking Return Trips and Calling OMC for Rescue Ride” may lose their riding privileges for a designated time period.

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IMPLEMENTING PROCEDURES:

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1. Definitions

1.1. A pattern or practice involves, regular or repeated actions, not isolated, accidental or singular incidents is three (3) or more “Not Booking Return Trips and Calling OMC for Rescue Ride” in any 60 day period shall, subject to the Rider’s right of protest, contest and appeal described below, constitute a pattern or practice.

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1.2. A “Not Booking Return Trips and Calling OMC for Rescue Ride” is defined as:

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1.2.1. Rider books a trip out into the community and does not scheduled a return trip and calls the OMC to request a rescue or back up vehicle be sent to transport him/her home.

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1.2.2. Rider who is out in the community and does not schedule a trip to return to their home and calls the OMC to request a rescue or back up vehicle be sent to transport him/her home.

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2. A trip will not be considered part of a pattern or practice of “Not Booking Return Trips and Calling OMC for Rescue Ride” if the rider is able to produce proof that he/she did book a return trip but it was cancelled without the rider’s knowledge.

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3. Riders who have a pattern or practice of two (2) or more “Not Booking Return Trips and Calling OMC for Rescue Ride” in any 60 day period, are subject to having their

riding privileges suspended as follows:

3.1. For a first suspension, loss of all privileges to use Access Paratransit for 10 days.

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3.2. For a second suspension, loss of all privileges to use Access Paratransit for 30 days.

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3.3. For a third suspension, loss of all privileges to use Access Paratransit for 60 days

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3.4. For a fourth and each subsequent suspension, loss of all privileges to use Access Paratransit for 90 days

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4. Riders will have the right and opportunity to informally protest the assessment of any alleged “Not Booking Return Trips and Calling OMC for Rescue Ride” within 10 days of receipt of notice as set forth below. This right of protest is in addition to and not in lieu of a Rider’s right to contest and thereafter appeal any suspension or other sanction sought to be imposed as a result of “Not Booking Return Trips and Calling OMC for Rescue Rides”. In order to facilitate this right of protest:

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4.1. Riders shall be notified by mail, in an appropriate format, when it is alleged that a 1st, 2nd, or 3rd, “Not Booking Return Trips and Calling OMC for Rescue Ride” has occurred and may be assessed. The letter shall:

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4.1.1. Inform the rider of the date, time, and location of the trips

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4.1.2. Provide an opportunity for the rider to review the trip information

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4.1.3. Provide an opportunity for the rider to protest the assessment of the “Not Booking Return Trips and Calling OMC for Rescue Rides set forth in the notice which have not been previously protested by the Rider. Such a protest may include one or more of the following: (i) challenge to the factual accuracy of the basis for the proposed assessment; (ii) challenge to the determination that the facts stated constitute a “Not Booking Return Trips and Calling OMC for Rescue Ride”; (iii) explanation as to why the reason for the “Not Booking Return Trips and Calling OMC for Rescue Ride” was beyond the control of the Rider.

4.1.4. Notify the rider of the current “Not Booking Return Trips and Calling OMC for Rescue Ride” accumulation

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4.1.5. Explain the potential of loss of service for an over accumulation of “Not Booking Return Trips and Calling OMC for Rescue Rides”

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4.1.6. Explain the consequences of not scheduling trips to the paratransit system and other riders

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5. If a suspension would otherwise be imposed under the provisions of this Policy, before such a suspension is imposed, the following shall occur:

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5.1. The Rider shall be notified in writing of the following: (i) the intention to suspend service or other sanction; (ii) the specific basis for the proposed suspension or other sanction; (iii) the nature and extent of the proposed suspension or other sanction; (iv) the Rider’s right of appeal and the method by which that right may be invoked; (v) that any appeal to be valid must be filed no later than sixty (60) days of the date of the notice; (iv) that if a timely appeal is filed, the imposition of the suspension or other sanction shall be stayed during its pendency

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5.2 A contest shall set forth the specific ground therefore, shall attach such written information, as the Rider believes relevant and shall state whether the Rider desires the opportunity to hear orally to present further information and arguments.

5.3 Any appeal of the result of a Rider contest of a proposed suspension or other sanction shall be conducted in accordance with Section III Policy 1

DATE: APRIL 9, 2009
TO: TPAC
FROM: MATTHEW AVANCENA, MANAGER, PLANNING AND COORDINATION
RE: OFFICER NOMINATION SUBCOMMITTEE

ISSUE:

In accordance with TPAC Bylaws, it is necessary for TPAC to establish an officer nomination subcommittee to recommend nominees for the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson position.

RECOMMENDATION:

Establish a 3 to 5 member nominating subcommittee to recommend nominees for each officer position.

BACKGROUND:

The TPAC bylaws require that officer elections take place for the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson to fill 12 month terms effective August 2009 through July 2010. Since officers are limited to two consecutive terms, the current officers – Joseph Stitcher and Jesse Valdez -- will be termed out from their current position as Chair and Vice-Chair, respectively. In addition to the slate of officers developed by the subcommittee, nominations may also be received from the floor.

Attached are relevant portions of the TPAC Bylaws that address officer elections:

Article 5 - Officers

The Committee will have a Chairperson and a Vice-Chairperson. The term is one year from August through July. Officers will be elected every year at the August meeting by a **ROLL CALL VOICE VOTE** of the majority of the members present. Officer seats will be limited to two consecutive terms served by any one individual.

Duties of the Chairperson

The Chairperson will preside at the meetings and will represent the Committee at meetings of the Access Services Board of Directors and Board committees, when appropriate.

Duties of the Vice Chairperson

The Vice-Chairperson shall perform the duties of the Chairperson in the absence of the Chairperson.

Vacancies of Officer Positions

A vacancy of an officer position shall exist in the following circumstances:

- (a) the resignation or death of an officer;
- (b) the removal of an officer by a **ROLL CALL VOICE VOTE** of the majority of the Committee;
- (c) the removal of an officer as a member of the Committee by the Board of Directors as provided in Article 3 of these bylaws.

Filling Vacancies of Officer Positions

Except as otherwise provided in these Bylaws, vacancies of an Officer position shall be filled by approval of the affirmative **ROLL CALL VOICE VOTE** of the members present at a regularly scheduled or special meeting held pursuant to Article 7 of these bylaws. Access staff will provide nominations to the Board of Directors. One (1) or more individuals may be nominated for any Committee vacancy.

In the event of a vacancy of the officer position of Chair, the presiding Vice-Chair officer will automatically assume the role of Chair for the remaining term. There will then be an election conducted for the Vice-Chair position by approval of the affirmative **ROLL CALL VOICE VOTE** of members present at a regularly scheduled or special meeting held pursuant to Article 7 of these bylaws.

Article 6 – Subcommittees

Officer Nomination Subcommittee

The Chairperson may establish a 3 or 5 member nominating subcommittee at its April meeting to recommend nominees, preferably two or more, for each officer position. In addition to the slate of officers developed by the subcommittee, nominations may be received from the floor. The nominating subcommittee report shall be presented in writing to the members in June prior to the election of officers.

DATE: APRIL 9, 2009
TO: TPAC
FROM: ARUN PREM, DIRECTOR, STRATEGIC PLANNING
RE: STATUS UPDATE - OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL'S AUDIT RECOMMENDATIONS

ISSUE:

The audit of Access Services Incorporated conducted on behalf of the Metro Office of Inspector General (OIG) in FY 07 – 08 confirmed Access Services system design and operational compliance with the ADA and funding requirements and the general satisfaction of Access Services riders with that service. The audit contained no negative findings, but the auditors did make sixteen recommendations and the audit report contains Access Services affirmative responses to these recommendations.

This item comprises the monthly update for February 2009. Of the sixteen recommendations, twelve have been completed as shown in the attached update.

RECOMMENDATION:

Receive and file the attached status report on the implementation of the audit recommendations from the “Report on the Evaluation of the Paratransit Eligibility Process; Administration, Performance, and Management of Paratransit Operations; and Compliance with Memorandum of Understanding.”

BACKGROUND:

One of the early recommendations from the OIG was for Access to develop a procedure to periodically update the Board of Directors on the status of recommendations contained within audit reports performed on Access Services. Reporting on the status of audit recommendations through the Board Agenda should provide the Board and the general public assurance that recommendations/findings contained in audit reports were being addressed.

The majority of the recommendations were implemented by July 1, 2008 and the remaining few will be addressed by the implementation of the new reservations/scheduling software, beginning in the fall of 2008 and the approval of an Access Services Identity program. A written status report on the recommendations will be on the Board, CAC and TPAC monthly agendas until all recommendations have been implemented.

STATUS REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE AUDIT RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATION 1 – CLOSED IN JULY 2008

ASI should reassess its recertification policy and consider a) periodically reviewing its criteria for determining individuals that are allowed to renew without in-person reevaluations, b) increasing the recertification period on a case-by-case basis, and c) adopting a tiered approach for recertifying riders. The tiered eligibility determination approach should include an option to recertify a rider without the need for a face-to-face interview or functional test.

Apr - 08	A modification to the recertification policy to allow for a tiered approach to eligibility without the need for an in person interview or functional test requires a change in the adopted Paratransit Plan Update. The proposed revision will be presented to the Transportation Professionals Advisory Committee (TPAC) on April 10, 2008 and the Quality Services Subcommittee (QSS) on April 17, 2008. A public hearing has been scheduled for April 22, 2008. The Community Advisory Committee (CAC) will discuss the revision at their May 13, 2008 meeting and member agencies will provide their input via electronic mail during the month of May. The final approval for the revision will be placed on the May 19, 2008 Board of Directors Agenda. Assuming Board approval, the revision will be implemented on July 1, 2008.
May - 08	Staff prepared a recommendation for the Board to approve an updated to the Coordinated ADA Paratransit Plan specifying changes to the recertification process, which address Recommendation 1. If approved, the changes will be effective July 1, 2008.
June - 08	At the regular ASI Board of Directors meeting on May 19, 2008, the Board of Directors approved Agenda Item 10 - REVISION OF PARATRANSIT PLAN UPDATE which modified the recertification process to include a tiered approach versus a mandatory in person evaluation. The updated Plan will be mailed to FTA in June 2008.
July - 08	The revised recertification process has been implemented. This item is now considered to be closed.

RECOMMENDATION 2 – CLOSED IN SEPTEMBER 2008

ASI should a) review the narrative comments included on the Eligibility Survey and initiate any appropriate actions or changes, b) consider client comments/concerns when making any future changes or improvements to the eligibility evaluation process or the evaluation facility, and c) evaluate whether ASI can offer more evaluation locations through the use of mobile evaluation units.

Apr - 08	All of the narrative comments from the surveys have been organized into categories of service. ASI staff is in the process of reviewing the comments to identify areas of concern. The narrative comments will be presented at the May 2008 QSS meeting. Any potential recommendations will be forwarded to the CAC and TPAC prior to being presented to the Board of Directors for approval.
May - 08	Narrative comments from the eligibility survey were placed on the May QSS meeting agenda.
June - 08	QSS reviewed the narrative comments at the May QSS meeting and the top concerns raised in the survey will be used as a blueprint for discussion at future meetings.
July - 08	QSS will review the narrative comments from the eligibility survey in August 2008 and include them in the prioritization discussion topics established in July 2008. Any recommendations will be presented to the CAC as appropriate.
Aug - 08	The narrative comments on eligibility were presented to QSS at the August 2008 meeting. Due to a full agenda the committee tabled the item until the September 2008 meeting.
Sept - 08	In September 2008, the QSS prioritized the narrative comments from the eligibility survey and added these comments to their current list of comments from the rider survey to be discussed at future meetings. Any recommendations will be presented to the CAC as appropriate.

RECOMMENDATION 3

ASI should evaluate the process for informing individuals who complete the eligibility evaluations of their right to appeal and the process on how to make an appeal.

Apr - 08	ASI will re-evaluate the eligibility determination packet with the help of TPAC and CAC to ensure that appeal information is presented in a manner most likely to be understood by applicants. Staff is anticipating a new brochure to be available in July of 2008.
May - 08	ASI will work with communications professionals and small focus groups to re-evaluate the eligibility determination packet. This will be implemented in July 2008.
Jun - 08	No update to report.
July - 08	On July 17, 2008, the QSS reviewed recommended changes to the eligibility fact sheets. New information sheets detailing the eligibility and appeal process are being formatted by Metro Design Center and will be available in September 2008. Per ASI Policy, alternative accessible formats will be available upon request.
Aug - 08	The formatted fact sheets are expected to be ready for distribution in the near future.

RECOMMENDATION 4 – CLOSED IN JULY 2008

ASI should continue to critically evaluate its eligibility determination policies, general approach, and specific processes to ensure that reasonable eligibility determinations are being made, that the impact on and inconvenience for those seeking eligibility is reasonable, and that the total costs of the eligibility determination process are consistent with the value of the process.

Apr - 08	ASI will continue to evaluate the eligibility processes and policies used in Los Angeles County. ASI will continue to monitor the best practices used in the industry by participating in various forums and seeking out documents and reports published by organizations such as, but not limited to, Easter Seals
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	Project Action, Transportation Research Board Synthesis Studies, National Transit Institute, as well as from advocacy groups like the Disability Rights Education and Defense Fund. In addition, on a local level the eligibility contractor, under the new contract, will form a Community Council as an advisory group to provide feedback. ASI will be a part of that Council. This Council will begin in July 2008.
May - 08	No update to report.
Jun - 08	CARE held its first Customer Care Committee on Thursday June 29, 2008. The group had seven riders attend and discuss their experience with the evaluation process. CARE will use those comments to train staff and modify customer service procedures. The Committee will be meeting once a month.
July - 08	With the implementation of the revised recertification process and the opening of the new eligibility evaluation center in July, this item is now considered closed.

RECOMMENDATION 5 – CLOSED IN AUGUST 2008

ASI should review the narrative comments on the Rider Survey and initiate any appropriate actions or changes.

Apr - 08	All of the narrative comments from the surveys have been organized into categories of service. For instance, comments regarding the order taking process have all been grouped together. ASI staff is in the process of reviewing the comments to identify areas of concern. The narrative comments will be presented at the May 2008 meetings of the transportation service providers and the QSS. Any potential recommendations will be forwarded to the CAC and TPAC prior to being presented to the Board of Directors for approval.
May - 08	Narrative comments from the rider survey were placed on the May QSS meeting agenda, and the May Provider meeting agenda.
Jun - 08	In May 2008, the QSS and Provider groups reviewed the narrative comments from the Rider Survey. Each group agreed that the top concerns would be discussed at future meetings to determine how to improve the service.

July - 08	On July 17, 2008 QSS prioritized the narrative comments from the rider survey into four groups with subtopics to be discussed at future meetings beginning in August 2008. Any recommendations will be presented to the CAC as appropriate.
Aug -08	At the August 2008 QSS meeting, the committee began discussion on one of the four groups of comments. The committee has agreed to have the narrative comments as a standing item on their agenda until all of the groups have been discussed and the appropriate action taken. This item is now considered closed.

RECOMMENDATION 6

ASI should evaluate whether the service providers are using the most efficient methodology for scheduling vehicles and drivers and whether there are opportunities to shift resources from low demand to peak demand periods.

Apr - 08	Prior to the audit in January 2006, ASI retained the services of the IBI Group to perform a Needs Analysis on ASI's Access Paratransit service. The recommendations from the analysis were presented to the Access Services Board of Directors in March 2007. One of the principal recommendations was the design and implementation of a centralized reservation/scheduling software to be used by all of ASI providers. The Board approved the award for that reservation/scheduling software in November 2007. The first phase of the implementation of this recommendation is scheduled to begin in August 2008. The implementation of the first service region, with phase-in to other regions as contracts renew, is scheduled for fall of 2008.
May - 08	The centralized reservation/scheduling software will be implemented within the first service region in September 2008 and will be phased in by region as contracts are renewed. Staff is anticipating system wide implementation will be completed in 2010.
Jun - 08	A notice to proceed was issued to the software contractor on June 9, 2008 and a kick off meeting was held with Global Paratransit.
July - 08	The project team has begun the implementation period for the software installation in the Southern Region. As the system is implemented relevant ride statistics such as travel times, will be reported monthly in the Operations

	Report contained in the Board Box.
Aug - 08	No status update to report.

RECOMMENDATION 7 – CLOSED IN JULY 2008

ASI should reinforce to contractor call takers the goal of providing courteous and helpful service to clients. In this regard, ASI should provide call takers with a written document that reinforces the policies and rules of conduct and service to paratransit customers, and ASI’s commitment to quality service.

Apr - 08	A draft of an Order Taker Code of Conduct is scheduled to be presented to the Transportation Service Providers at their meeting in May of 2008. Staff anticipates distribution of an Order Taker Code of Conduct in June of 2008.
May - 08	A draft of the Order Taker Code of Conduct was placed on the May Provider Meeting Agenda.
Jun - 08	The Order Taker Code of Conduct was reviewed at the Provider meeting in May. The Contractors will begin distribution and the document will be posted on the ASI website by June 23, 2008.
July - 08	The Order Taker Code of Conduct has been distributed and can be viewed on the ASI website. This item is now considered closed.

RECOMMENDATION 8

ASI should evaluate the scheduling system to minimize or eliminate circuitous routing of share rides and to ensure that the routing/dispatching methodology minimizes wait times and trip times.

See Recommendation 6 above.

RECOMMENDATION 9 – CLOSED IN JULY 2008

ASI should reinforce to contractor staff ASI’s policy on call-outs, and the importance of making all call outs that are requested.

Apr - 08	<p>ASI is in the process of redesigning new employee training tests for drivers, call takers, and dispatchers. Questions regarding call out procedures will be included in these tests. The driver, call taker, or dispatcher will be required to pass this test with a score of 90% or greater before they are allowed to work on the ASI contract. This test will be completed no later than July 2008.</p> <p>ASI Road Supervisors and Dispatch Coordinators monitor compliance with currently required continuous training for each contractor. The call-out procedures are a part of that training. Immediately, ASI will instruct the service providers to include this topic in the next rotation of training beginning in May 2008.</p>
May - 08	Service providers were instructed to include “call out procedures” in the rotation of training beginning in May 2008.
Jun - 08	Providers are in the process of updating the tests and training materials.
July - 08	All materials have been updated and the new materials have been implemented. A copy of the revised test is available upon request. This item is now considered closed.

RECOMMENDATION 10 – CLOSED IN MAY 2008

ASI should reinforce to service provider contractors ASI’s goal of providing courteous and quality service to clients. In this regard, ASI should provide contractor drivers and call takers with a written document, which reinforces the policies and rules of conduct and service to paratransit customers, and ASI’s commitment to quality service.

Apr - 08	The Driver Code of Conduct will be distributed to all certified drivers by May 1, 2008. The Order Taker Code of Conduct is scheduled for distribution in June 2008.
May - 08	Driver Code of Conduct was delivered to contractors on May 1, for distribution to drivers; it can be viewed at www.asila.org . This item is now considered closed.

RECOMMENDATION 11

ASI should reinforce to paratransit applicants and riders that the primary purpose of using Access Paratransit Services is that the individual is unable to use the regular bus and rail service.

Apr - 08	ASI will work with TPAC and CAC to ensure that information on eligibility is consistent with the recommendation and presented in a manner most likely to be understood by applicants. Staff is anticipating new brochures to be available in July of 2008.
May - 08	Staff is anticipating new brochures to be available in July of 2008.
Jun - 08	No update to report.
July - 08	In addition to the information sheets discussed in Recommendation 3, the new eligibility center's transit theme and presentation should reinforce the connection between Access Paratransit and regular bus and rail service.
Aug - 08	See item 3 above.

RECOMMENDATION 12 – CLOSED IN APRIL 2008

ASI should:

- a) **Develop a written manual or procedures for processing and inputting complaints, and ensure that the list of complaint type codes and definitions are kept up-to-date.**
- b) **Institute a formal training program for the employees who handle complaints, for both new employees and periodic refresher training for current employees.**
- c) **Record all complaints relevant to the eligibility determination process so that any underlying problems can be trended and solved.**
- d) **Conduct a periodic trend analysis of complaints to identify problem areas to improve customer service.**
- e) **Develop a specific process to mark closed complaints, and incorporate this process into the policy and the staff training materials.**
- f) **Re-evaluate the complaint types used in the performance measure of Complaints per 1,000 Trips.**

g) Assure that no sequential complaint numbers are deleted from the database.

- a) The Complaints and Customer Service departments have developed a procedures manual with input from the Complaints Process Modification Subcommittee of the CAC. The manual was completed in April 2008. This item is considered closed.
- b) As of January 12, 2008, formal training now includes Customer Service workshops, as well as follow up and refresher trainings, one-on-one review with all Customer Support Supervisors and management, side-by-side training, and review of completed procedures manual. The Complaint Specialists now attend regular monthly meetings to address any observations and/or needed training refreshers to ensure that procedures remain standardized. New staff members are now required to train with both Customer Service and Complaints and are provided a copy of the procedural manual. This item is considered closed.
- c) As of February 25, 2008, all complaints related to eligibility have been entered into the complaint database as well as the relevant eligibility or appeal record. This item is considered closed.
- d) More intense trend analysis of complaints has been in place since January 29, 2008. New complaint procedures have freed up additional time so that staff can dedicate more of their resources to the analysis of information. This item is considered closed.
- e) The procedures manual has been completed. See item (a) above. This item is considered closed.
- f) Additional complaint categories have been added to the service complaints per 1,000: Animal, Booking, Conduct, Discourtesy, Routing, Service, Travel time, Urgent and Vehicle. These additional categories will be reflected in the April 2008 operations report to the Board of Directors.
- g) Sequential complaint numbers were deleted by ASI's Information Technology department in order to avoid combining real complaints with system tests. All complaints that are either duplicated or entered incorrectly are voided out but remain recorded in the database. To ensure that there are no duplications of complaint numbers, and as a security measure, as of January 29, 2008, the current system and Rider 360 does not recycle unused complaint numbers or complaints used for system testing. This item is considered closed.

RECOMMENDATION 13 – CLOSED IN JULY 2008

To improve its management and oversight of paratransit service providers, we recommend that ASI a) require all paratransit service providers to perform driver performance evaluations annually and maintain the evaluations in the driver personnel file for periodic ASI review, and b) develop a standard driver code of conduct and require each driver to sign and agree to such conduct.

Apr - 08	<p>a) ASI required an annual driver performance evaluation to be maintained in the driver training record in the most recent transportation service provider scope of work. Staff is in the process of negotiating with our existing contractors in order to implement the recommended change system wide effective July 1, 2008.</p> <p>b) See recommendation 10 response.</p>
May - 08	<p>a) ongoing</p> <p>b) Driver Code of Conduct was delivered to contractors on May 1, for distribution to drivers; it can be viewed at www.asila.org. This item is now considered closed.</p>
Jun - 08	No update to report.
July - 08	All contractors have agreed to implement an annual driver performance evaluation beginning in July of 2008. This item is now considered closed.

RECOMMENDATION 14 – CLOSED IN APRIL 2008

ASI management should increase its monitoring of average daily phone hold times to ensure compliance with the contractual performance requirement. Increased monitoring should identify the reasons why there are certain instances when daily phone hold times per hour exceed 4 minutes.

The audit recommendations were based upon operating statistics from fiscal year 2007. Average initial hold times after the audit period had dropped considerably and have been less than 1 minute for the last year. This recommendation is considered closed.

RECOMMENDATION 15 – CLOSED IN APRIL 2008

ASI should consider requesting that back-up providers submit their invoices semi-monthly to be consistent with other paratransit providers. ASI then will be able to concurrently review invoices and supporting documentation from both

paratransit providers and back-up providers to determine if payments due are for actual services.

ASI has requested that back up providers submit invoices semi-monthly. The majority cannot comply with the request. This recommendation is considered closed.

RECOMMENDATION 16 – CLOSED IN APRIL 2008

We recommend that the Accounting Manual, General Accounting Desk Manuals, and other accounting policies and procedures be approved by ASI Senior Management. In addition, the effective dates of the Accounting Manual, General Accounting Desk Manuals, and other accounting policies and procedures should be properly determined. Furthermore, the pages of these accounting documents should be properly numbered and cross-referenced. For accounting procedures that are still in handwritten editing mode, ASI should finalize the procedures as soon as possible.

Updated Accounting Manual and General Accounting Desk Manuals have been approved by ASI Senior Management. Each Manual includes an effective date and is properly numbered and cross referenced. Copies of these manuals are available upon request. This recommendation is considered closed.