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Help Desk/ LAN Coordinator

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# access ...**BEHIND** **THE SCENES**

## Executive Report

Each year New York City Transit compiles service statistics on paratransit peer properties. Their report for 2008 was just released. It is always fascinating to see how Access Services stacks up against our peers. New York City Transit continues to be the largest provider of ADA paratransit in the United States defined by the number of trips, eligible applicants, and dollars spent. The second largest provider is Chicago. Access Services Los Angeles is the third largest provider. Below I have listed a couple of interesting statistics from the top three providers. In the next edition of Behind the Scenes a more in depth analysis of the Paratransit Peer Report will be

provided. If you are interested in receiving a copy of the report just let us know.

All three systems offer service 24 hours a day, 7 days per week and require an in person functional assessment to determine eligibility. New York City accepts reservations 1 to 2 days in advance of the trip while Chicago has a one day in advance reservation policy but Chicago does offer same day service. All three achieved on time performance above 90% with New York offering the highest on time performance at 94.4%. The three systems all contract out for transportation services and drivers.

Shelly Verrinder  
Executive Director

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	Eligible Riders	Total Trips 2008	Annual Opertg Exp.
New York City Transit	123,027	7,243,550	\$366,191,495
Chicago	41,715	3,242,899	\$98,078,821
Los Angeles	77,647	2,551,401	\$79,264,675

## Save the Date

Access Services 15th Annual Membership Meeting will be held:

**Thursday, March 11, 2010 from 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.**  
at the San Gabriel Valley Service Sector  
3449 Santa Anita Avenue,  
Council Chambers Room, 3rd Floor  
El Monte, CA 91731

Meeting agendas will be sent by mail sometime next week. Please R.S.V.P. to Luis Pacheco at 213-270-6065 or e-mail pacheco@asila.org

We hope you will join us!

Luis Pacheco  
Safety Analyst

## Healthcare Reform Panel

The Employee Benefit Planning Association of Southern California (EBPA) held a symposium on February 9th at the Omni Hotel in Los Angeles to discuss the possible ramifications of current health reform legislation. Due to the current uncertainty as to whether the anticipated legislation will actually become law, the panel discussion focused primarily on the issues that are driving up health care costs and possible strategies to overcome the skyrocketing costs of health care and insurance premiums. On the panel were representatives from Blue Shield of California, CIGNA, the law offices of Emmer & Graeber, Healthcare Partners and Walgreens Pharmacy Management. Included in the discussion were strategies to defray costs by making the patient/



consumer more aware of their role in keeping costs down, tort reform to curb unnecessary and expensive testing, medications, promoting wellness, and procedures to lessen medical practitioners' exposure to litigation, and the role of government programs such as Medicare and Medi-Cal in the quest to keep costs from undermining the health of businesses who provide benefits to employees.

Linda Ross  
Mgr. of Human Resources

## Metro Ops Committee Meeting

On Thursday, the METRO Operations Committee unanimously approved the lease agreement that will enable Access to move into the newly-constructed Division Nine office building in El Monte. Moving Access to El Monte will save the region about \$600,000 a year in Proposition C costs or \$3.0 million over the course of a 5-year lease. The lease item now goes to full METRO Board next Thursday and will eventually have to

be approved by the Board of Supervisors at a so-called "TEFRA" hearing to allow Access to officially occupy the space. The full Board item with an explanation of the TEFRA process can be found at [http://www.metro.net/board/Items/2010/02\\_February/20100218OPItem22.pdf](http://www.metro.net/board/Items/2010/02_February/20100218OPItem22.pdf).

André Colaiace  
Dir. of Governmental Services

## Regional TAP Update

On Wednesday February 17th I attended a TAP (Transit Access Pass) workshop presentation for the region's General Managers given by Matt Raymond, Metro's Chief Communications Officer. Mr. Raymond provided an update on the project as well as outlining a path forward

on the regional system. From a technical standpoint Metro feels the project has overcome earlier difficulties and is close to functioning as expected. However through the implementation it has become evident that regional policy issues are affecting the effective use of the system. These issues need to be brought to the forefront and resolved in the near future in order to expand participation in the system. A lively discussion followed the presentation with a commitment to discuss regional issues as a specific topic.

F Scott Jewell  
Director of Administration



## Customer Perception Program Update



In December 2009 the Miles of Smiles campaign began and seat drops were distributed to the service providers to encourage our customers to look for and acknowledge good customer

service from the drivers and call center operators by filing a "Smile" with our customer service center. Thus far, this grass roots component has been successful in capturing our customers' attention. Since the inception of the campaign there have been 250 Commendations (compliments) filed, of which 10% are a direct result of the Miles of Smiles Campaign!

Another project near completion are Customer Perception Posters for the call centers and our customer service center. The theme of the posters "Are you talking to me?", portrays persons with various disabilities and provides a narrative explaining how quality service and effective communication and customer service skills make Access Paratransit an integral part of their daily lives. Having these types of images and messages placed at our contractors call centers will help to remind each and every employee who our customers are and how important they are to all of us! The posters are currently in production and will be in our service

providers' call centers and Access Services' customer service center very soon!

In the upcoming months I will be providing updates with respect to the Customer Perception Program, and will also profile both the employees who receive recognition as well as the customers who are filing "Smiles". Lastly, if you are talking to a customer either on the phone, or in person, encourage them to File a Smile when they experience the type of customer service behaviors outlined in the attached flyer from our service providers' drivers or call center operators.

More to come!!

David Foster  
Project Administrator



## Safety Initiative Update

In addition to managing the daily accident and incident investigation process, Access Project Administrators meet with Access Risk Management Analyst and Operations Analyst each week to review all reported cases from the previous week. The importance of this internal weekly Risk Management meeting is to ensure all reported cases have been properly processed.

During the meeting discussions, the team also reviews system and regional risk management trends as well as discussing potential action steps to take in addressing high risk trends. Information discussed at the meeting is usually shared immediately with the service providers so they can be informed and take corrective actions right away.

Steve Chang  
Dir. of Contracted Services

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Consolidated  
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## ~ Mission Statement ~

*Access Services promotes access to all modes of transportation and provides quality and safe ADA paratransit service on behalf of public transit agencies in Los Angeles County.*

## ~ Vision Statement ~

*Access Services serves the community as the leader in promoting accessible and innovative transportation solutions.*

*We accomplish this vision by:*

- *Providing quality, efficient, safe and dependable ADA paratransit service.*
- *Leading the national dialogue as an advocate for universal access to transportation.*
- *Partnering with other entities to secure alternate funding sources and legislation that expands transportation options.*

## Access to be Awarded Grant for Vehicle Purchase

During 2009, Access Services completed a FTA Section 5310 Grant application that asked for \$624,000 in federal funds for the purchase of 13 replacement vans. (The FTA Section 5310 Grant Program provides funds for public agencies and non-



profit organizations that provide transportation for the elderly and people with disabilities.) In California, 5310 Grant funds are administered by the State of California and awarded on a

competitive basis. On February 3<sup>rd</sup> the California Transportation Commission announced that Access Services' application has been assigned a final score of 93 points out of a possible 100 for eight of its requested vehicles and 88 points for five of its requested vehicles. The 93 point score was good for 19<sup>th</sup> place in the State of California. Both of these scores all but guarantee that Access Services will be awarded the requested grant funds. The California Transportation Commission will meet on April 7<sup>th</sup> to consider, approve, and officially award 5310 funds. Gilbert Garza and Geetu Banerjee worked on the preparation of Access Services' grant application.

## Rider comments

"I am a semi-invalid and Access has been a God send to us in many ways. We have called on Access to help us do our marketing and go on various errands ... because my walker is heavy and large and cannot go on the bus... Access drivers are wonderful, patient, courteous, loving and caring people. They are great! I think we are blessed to have Access and hope we will always have them. They try very hard to keep their schedules on time and we never miss our doctor appointments. The drivers help me get on & off, reminding me to be careful of this & that. We want to thank you from the bottom of our hearts for Access."

– Lois, Sherman Oaks  
– Rider since 2000