



**TRANSPORTATION PROFESSIONALS ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
(TPAC)**

**Thursday, June 11, 2009  
9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.  
AON Center – 6<sup>th</sup> Floor Meeting Room  
707 Wilshire Blvd.  
Los Angeles, CA 90017  
[www.asila.org](http://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.**

<b><u>Time</u></b>	<b><u>Item</u></b>	<b><u>Item Description</u></b>	<b><u>Disposition</u></b>	<b><u>Pages</u></b>
		Call to Order	Action	
		Read TPAC Mission Statement		
		Introductions	Information	
		Chairperson's Report	Information	
		Approve April 9, 2009 Meeting Minutes	Action	

		Staff Report	Information	
		General Public Comment	Information	
		Report from Board of Directors	Information	
<b>10</b>	<b>1.</b>	Access Coupons	Action	9-10
<b>15</b>	<b>2.</b>	Policy – Return Trip Booking and Calling OMC for Rescue Rides	Action	11-15
<b>10</b>	<b>3.</b>	Access Services Draft Budget	Information	
<b>15</b>	<b>4.</b>	Service Animal Mat Subcommittee Update	Information/Possible Action	
<b>10</b>	<b>5.</b>	Access Services Identity Program	Information	
<b>10</b>	<b>6.</b>	TPAC Officer Elections	Action	16-18
<b>15</b>	<b>7.</b>	Impacts on ADA Paratransit from State Budget Cuts	Information	
<b>10</b>	<b>8.</b>	Operations Project Update	Information	
<b>5</b>	<b>9.</b>	Metro OIG Audit Update	Information	19-32
		New Business Raised Subsequent to the Posting of the Agenda	Possible Action	
		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, APRIL 9, 2009

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## 1. Call to Order

Chairperson Joseph Stitcher called the meeting to order at 9:37 a.m.

## 2. TPAC Mission Statement

Mr. Stitcher read the TPAC mission Statement.

## 3. Introductions

Mr. Stitcher asked the attendees to introduce themselves.

TPAC Members in Attendance: Amelia Jennings, Elizabeth Carter, George Sparks, Gracie Davis, Graham Ridley, Jesse Valdez, John Fong, Jose Medrano, Joseph Stitcher, Kathryn Engel, Matt Gleason, Shirley Hsiao, Wayne Wassell, William Garcia

TPAC Members Absent: Dennis Kobata, Kevin McDonald

Access Staff in Attendance: Arun Prem, Charace Thompson, F Scott Jewell, Geetu Banerjee, Luis Pacheco, Matthew Avancena, Alfredo Torales

## 4. Chairperson's Report

Mr. Stitcher reported there was no Board meeting in March; thus he had no update.

## 5. Approve February 9, 2009 Meeting Minutes

Ms. Engel stated that her last name and the agency were spelled incorrectly in the February 9, 2009 minutes.

**Motion:** Mr. Stitcher moved the motion to approve the minutes as corrected

**First:** Ms. Engel, Glendale Beeline

**Second:** Ms. Davis, OCTA

**Vote:** Meeting minutes were approved

## 6. Staff Report

Arun Prem advised members that immediately following the TPAC meeting, a Member Agency meeting was scheduled to vote on changes to the paratransit plan.

Mr. Prem announced that Access Services was honored to receive the “Outstanding Paratransit System Award for 2009” by the California Association of Coordinated Transportation (CalACT). The award honors paratransit programs that demonstrate significant achievement in efficiency and effectiveness. The measures were based on Safety, Operations, Customer Service, Financial Management, Community Relations, Policy and Administration.

7. General Public Comment

There was no public comment.

8. Report from Board of Directors

The March Board meeting was canceled.

9. Paratransit Plan Update

Mr. Prem gave a presentation on the Paratransit Plan and summarized the fare and service change proposals. He added that staff conducted extensive outreach on the proposed fare and service changes including direct mailing of newsletters to active riders, public hearing notices in four major newspapers, twelve community meetings throughout the county, web survey and a dedicated telephone comment line. A public hearing was held on March 18, 2009. He explained that most of the comments were supportive in nature and riders preferred a fare increase to a reduction in premium services.

Motion: Ms. Engel moved the motion to approve the Paratransit Plan update as presented.

Second: Ms. Davis

Vote: All members were in favor and the motion passed.

10. Service Animal Mat Subcommittee Recommendation

TPAC Service Animal Mat Subcommittee members Kathryn Engel, Gracie Davis, and Wayne Wassell reported that ADA regulations did not require paratransit agencies to provide service animal mats. Several paratransit agencies were surveyed and none of them had any mat requirement. Hence their recommendation to TPAC was that Access Services should not

provide mats.

Mr. Prem informed committee members that current Access policy allows riders with service animals to bring their own mats. Staff was advised that it could be a safety concern. He added that service animal trips were 5% of the trips provided, and when a survey was conducted of nine agencies, Dallas was the only one that had this concern.

**Public Comments:** Ken Metz said that CAC and Service Animal Committee have been reviewing the issue for the past ten years. He stated that in many case's riders were forced to retire their guide dogs due to mental fatigue caused during long trips. The service animals also refused to board the vehicle due to fear of sliding. He mentioned that staff's recommendation to buy mats for riders is not a feasible option because riders cannot carry mats while walking, and they can get filthy. He hoped that staff would be proactive in seeking further advice and assistance.

Motion: Mr. Sparks moved the motion to accept TPAC Service Animal's Subcommittee's recommendations

Second: Amelia Jennings

Vote: All members were in favor and the motion passed

## 11. Policy - Return Trip Booking and Calling OMC for Rescue Ride

Mr. Prem explained that Access has a next-day reservation policy and a no-strand policy wherein a rider calling Operations Monitoring Center (OMC) for a ride will not be left stranded. However, this policy is being misused by riders who make one way reservations and then call OMC when they need to get home. The OMC no-strand policy is only for emergencies and should not be used for routine reservations. The new policy is being reinforced to discourage booking last minute trips.

## 12. Update on ADEPT Software Implementation

F Scott Jewell, Director of Administration and IT provided an update on ADEPT software implementation that was going live in the Southern Region on April 10, 2009. Riders in the southern region were notified via seat drops, website and list serve alerts.

Mr. Jewell stated that the new software takes into account various variables while making reservations. This change will make the operations system more efficient and effective. The software implementation in the San Fernando Valley will occur in October and November of

2009 followed by Antelope Valley, Eastern and Western region in year 2010.

### **13. Officer Nomination Subcommittee**

Mr. Stitcher noted that his two year term as Chair of TPAC and Jesse Valdez's term of serving as Vice Chair will be expiring soon. He requested volunteers to form the nomination subcommittee to select the next TPAC Chair and Vice Chair candidates. Ms. Davis, Mr. Wassell and Ms. Jennings volunteered.

Mr. Stitcher thanked Access staff Mr. Prem and Mr. Avancena for being a great support team during his term.

### **14. Bus Stop Accessibility**

Mr. Prem briefed members that FTA received a complaint and the concern is that Access could be asked to grant eligibility to a rider based on a presumption that there could be a bus stop location in L.A. County that is inaccessible. Anyone who has a problem with bus stop location would then be eligible for some form of ADA paratransit service. This is an issue not just because of the cost that it would entail but the intent of ADA was not to be a comprehensive service.

Mr. Prem stated certain mechanisms to address this issue already exist in the system and these include:

- Access Eligibility Policy has a category which allows riders to get restricted eligibility based on inaccessible factors in the environment that prevent them from using fixed route services such as the path of travel or the bus stops itself.
- Metro has a hotline and the 800 commute number where people with fixed route issues can get real time back-up service. When Access Operations Monitoring Center is contacted by Metro or Metrolink staff, then these trips are provided without checking the rider's eligibility status.
- Metro has a Bus Stop Retrofit Program wherein if a rider calls and complains about an inaccessible bus stop, staff takes action to fix the accessibility situation. If an accessible bus stop is not under Metro's service area, it is referred to the proper jurisdiction.

Mr. Prem informed members that an initial assessment and a response letter has been sent to FTA. In addition, Access staff plans to submit a detailed response to FTA in October of 2009 and will need the cooperation of all member agencies.

Ms. Verrinder added that the plan of action is to develop a database of inaccessible bus stop locations and sidewalks, which can be used for reference by Access and C.A.R. E. staff. If any of the listed bus stops are referred in complaints, then the back-up response system will automatically accept that trip. Also, if a rider calls the Metro hotline to report an inaccessible bus stop, he or she could be referred to Access until the problem is resolved.

**15. OIG Audit Update**

Mr. Prem mentioned that the four remaining recommendations are in the process of being completed but have not been closed yet. Two of the IG recommendations pertained to making trips more efficient through a better reservations and scheduling systems. ADEPT software is in the process of being implemented in the Southern region and will be implemented in a phased approach in the remaining regions.

The other two recommendations focus on educating the community and in particular to those who are not very familiar with Access policy. Metro is working with Access staff to create effective outreach materials.

**16. New Business**

Matt Gleason announced that SCAG is holding its General Assembly meeting on May 7-8, 2009, at the La Quinta Resort. Representatives from each of the 180 cities in the SCAG region plan to attend, and he invited TPAC members as well. He also said that the TAC group is being re-established and the first meeting is scheduled in mid May.

**17. Adjournment**

Mr. Stitcher moved to adjourn the meeting at 10:45 a.m.

JUNE 11, 2009

TO: TPAC

FROM: ARUN PREM, DIRECTOR OF STRTEGIC PLANNING

RE: NEW ACCESS COUPONS

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**ISSUE:**

Due to the change in Access fares as of July 1, 2009, it is necessary to change the coupon denominations accordingly. Staff reviewed the proposal with CAC and is ready to move forward with implementation.

The new coupons will be printed in two denominations – a Base coupon for \$2.25, for travel up to 19.9 miles, and a Plus coupon for \$0.75, which can be combined with the Base coupon for longer trips.

1. Base Coupon - \$2.25 each, will be sold in books of 10 for \$22.50
2. Plus Coupon - \$0.75 each, will be sold in books of 24, for \$18.00

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff requests that TPAC reviews the new coupon denominations and design and approve implementation.

**IMPACT ON BUDGET:**

Printing the new coupons is not expected to add to the existing budget, which includes expenses for printing the current version of the coupons. It is possible that due to the higher denomination of the Base coupons (fewer coupons needed) the printing expenses may decrease.

## **BACKGROUND:**

The new coupons are proposed in two denominations, \$2.25 (Base) and \$0.75 (Plus). The Base coupon can be used to pay for a trip up to 19.9 miles, which comprises the majority of rides taken on Access. For longer trips, a combination of the Base and Plus coupons, or a combination of one of the coupons and cash could be used. The new coupons will not have an expiration date, and will be good forever at current value.

There is no change in the distribution process for coupons. Access will continue to sell coupons via mail and from 5 transit store/locations across LA County. Existing coupons and Metro tokens will still be accepted at face value (\$0.90).

Staff prepared mockups of the new coupons and reviewed them with CAC on May 12. CAC made several suggestions including:

- stronger color contrast
- same card stock as current coupons
- different denominations in different sizes
- Braille like embossing for tactile recognition if cost effective, and
- as little text as possible

CAC took action to approve the coupon in concept with a recommendation to incorporate the above suggestions where possible.

JUNE 11, 2009

TO: TPAC

FROM: IWALANI "EVIE" PALICZ, PROJECT ADMINISTRATOR

RE: **NOT BOOKING RETURN TRIPS AND CALLING OMC FOR RESCUE RIDE POLICY**

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**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 in October 2008, and to the CAC in May 2009. 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 send it to the CAC for further review, discussion, and action. The CAC made further revisions and voted to accept the revised policy.

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

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff requests the TPAC to review and approve the proposed policy prior to it being submitted to the Board of Directors for final action.

Section: I Policy: \_\_\_\_\_

Issued: 10/10/08

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

Revised: 06/04/09

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.

IMPLEMENTING PROCEDURES:

1. Definitions

1.1. A pattern or practice involves, regular or repeated actions, not isolated, accidental or singular incidents is two (2) or more "Not Booking Return Trips and Calling OMC for Rescue Ride" in any rolling 12 month period shall, subject to the Rider's right of protest, contest and appeal described below, constitute a pattern or practice.

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

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.

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.

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.

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 rolling 12 month period, are subject to having their riding privileges suspended as follows:

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

3.2. For a second offense, permanent suspension of all privileges to use Access Paratransit.

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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 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> “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

-  
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.

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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 heard 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 12.

JUNE11, 2009

TO: TPAC

FROM: MATTHEW AVANCENA, MANAGER, PLANNING AND COORDINATION

RE: TPAC OFFICER ELECTIONS  
FY 2009-2010

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**ISSUE:**

In accordance with Transportation Professionals Advisory Committee Bylaws, it is necessary to elect new officers of the TPAC for Fiscal Year 2009-2010.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Elect Mr. Jesse Valdez from Eastern Los Angeles Regional Center and Ms. Kathryn Engel from Glendale Beeline as Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson, respectively.

**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. A three member nominating subcommittee was formed to select potential nominees at the April 9 TPAC meeting. Ms. Gracie Davis (Orange County Transportation Authority), Mr. Wayne Wassell (Metro), and Ms. Amelia Jennings (City of Downey) volunteered to serve on the nomination subcommittee.

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.

JUNE 11, 2009

TO: TPAC

FROM: STEVE CHANG, ACTING MANAGER OF CONTRACT SERVICES

RE: STATUS UPDATE OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL'S AUDIT  
RECOMMENDATIONS

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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 May 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.. 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.
Feb -08	The Board of Directors approved a new identity program for Access Paratransit at their February 2009 meeting. Metro Design Center will begin work on finalizing these new information sheets. The new sheets are expected to be distributed in April 2009.
May -09	The eligibility and appeal information sheets consisted of four different parts. The four parts have been condensed and simplified into one user friendly document. Metro Design is currently finalizing the language and the layout. It is expected that the finalized document will be distributed in the Summer of 2009.

**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 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.
Feb - 09	Due to beta testing and related infrastructure issues the implementation of the new software has taken longer than expected. The first phase of implementation will begin in the Southern Region in Spring 2009.
May – 09	Implementation began in the Southern Region. The contractor is working to fine tune all of the scheduling parameters within the software and things are moving accordingly.

**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	<p>Service providers were instructed to include “call out procedures” in the rotation of training beginning in May 2008.</p>
Jun - 08	<p>Providers are in the process of updating the tests and training materials.</p>
July - 08	<p>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.</p>

**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 <a href="http://www.asila.org">www.asila.org</a> . 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	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.  b) See recommendation 10 response.
May - 08	a) ongoing b) Driver Code of Conduct was delivered to contractors on May 1, for distribution to drivers; it can be viewed at <a href="http://www.asila.org">www.asila.org</a> . This item is now considered <b>closed</b> .
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.

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