

# **Paratransit Advisory Committee (PAC)**

## **November 10, 2020 Conference Call Minutes**

Due to the Covid19 Pandemic the PAC meeting date, time and format was changed. A Zoom conference was conducted.

Meeting commenced at 4:30pm.

### **Attendees on Conference Call:**

**PAC Members:** Thomas Coppola, Lyudmila Demikhovskaya, Ketrina Hazell, Mindy Jacobsen, Sharlene Kraft, Jean Ryan, Ellen Rubin, Tucker Salovaara, Sharada Veerubhotla, RueZalia Watkins

**MTA/NYCT Paratransit:** Michael Cosgrove, Tammie Francisque, Donna Fredericksen, Ami Freyberger, Natalie Garcia, Kimeka Green-Hastings, Eugene Griffith, Anthony Griffith, Patricia Ibarguen, Felicia Jones, Diane McFarlane, Chris Messina, Danielle Nelson, Stephanie Palmadesso, Donald Raimondi, John Salerno, Shirley Teran-Marty

**Guest:** Moises DeJesus (MAGGIES New York Para-Group) Edward Friedman (MOPD) Inat German (MOPD), David Silva (GVC II New York Para-Group)

### **1. AAR Service Report – Michael Cosgrove, Vice President, Paratransit**

VP Cosgrove provided a summary of operating statistics from the Paratransit Report. A copy is attached to these minutes.

## **2. PAC Topic - Carriers: Maggies/GVC**

David Silva, GVC II Project Manager introduced himself and staff then provided additional follow-up responses to the previous meeting in August. With regards to driver training, GVC and MAG have implemented tactical training, which is specific for Paratransit and its ridership. The PAC members had suggested they take part in training when traditional classroom training, not being held during the pandemic, resumes. The carriers are willing to collaborate and create videos with AAR that can be shared across the system.

Mr. Silva described how pre-trip recommendations from the PAC were implemented by GVC and MAG in utilize field supervisors and road supervisors in the yard to monitor the drivers when they are pre-tripping and post tripping their vehicles. This also provides additional opportunities for reinforcement of daily, time sensitive safety messaging and customer sensitivity review. The drivers at both companies utilize different types of wheelchairs when conducting securement training.

### **PAC Member Discussion and Feedback**

Ms. Ryan asked if each carrier had their own equipment for training? She also wanted to know if GVC and MAG carriers are now working as one carrier? Mr. Silva from GVC explained that GVC and MAG are independently run carriers but are under one umbrella called New York Para-Group. In addition, each carrier has their own motorized chairs, manual chairs and scooters that are used for training.

Ms. Hazell inquired as to what kind of videos are being developed? Mr. Silva noted that creating an in-house video in the future including PAC members who could speak about different challenges they experience when traveling would enhance driver training.

Ms. Veerubhotla sought verification as to how drivers are getting trained with customers with other disabilities, such as a visual disability and not only customers in wheelchairs? In addition, could the current training materials used by carriers be reviewed? The carriers expressed how the securement process was just an example of some of the training the drivers receive and an extension of a response from the August meeting. The drivers are trained on different disabilities.

Ms. Jacobsen mentioned how important it is for drivers to communicate and identify themselves when picking up a customer who is visually impaired.

### **3. Paratransit Topic- Online Taxi Reimbursement Form**

Deputy Director of Outreach, Donna Fredericksen proceeded to share the navigation on the MTA website (<https://new.mta.info>) and demonstrated the different methods a customer can follow to find the online reimbursement form. On the left-hand side click on the “hamburger” and a drop down will display the different agencies. Click on Access-A-Ride Paratransit and scroll to the bottom where you will see Policies & Forms the link is located under Forms and is called “Online Taxi/Car Service Reimbursement Request.

Ms. Fredericksen read through the Authorization Instructions. The link will require a customer to fill in two detail tabs with the following information

#### Customer details:

Customer full name, email address, street address, city, state, zip code, phone number (mobile preferred) and AAR ID number.

#### Trip detail:

Pick-up address, Destination address, Date of Trip, NYCT Authorization No., Car/Medallion No., Tax/car service fare \$, Tip

\$, Tolls \$ then a receipt must be uploaded. If any additional comments need to be made you can type it in the “Other notes/comments” section. At the very bottom you must submit via electronic signature.

Ms. Nelson also informed PAC members that format can be translated into over 100 languages and is readable by different system such as JAWS.

### **PAC Member Discussion and Feedback**

Ms. Rubin asked if the response from the customer regarding this new process on reimbursement has been successful? Ms. Danielle Nelson, Director expressed that positive feedback has been received. Customers are submitting receipts immediately after taking their trips and receive a confirmation of acknowledgement.

Mr. Salovaara questioned how long is the reimbursement taking? Ms. Nelson stated they are taking three weeks. If a customer needs to inquire about taxi reimbursement status, they may call the Comment Line at #8.

Mr. Cosgrove informed members that the mail in process for reimbursement is still available. The online process provides customers with another option.

Ms. Fredericksen noted that the link to the “Online Taxi / Car Service Reimbursement Request” was sent to each member of the PAC, posted on Social Media and a press release was issued.

### **5. New/Old Business**

Mr. Salovaara questioned reinstatements to temporary protocols put in place due to COVID and the communication of updates to the PAC.

VP Cosgrove informed PAC that he has agreed to share information with them immediately when changes are made. He noted that approval from management and administration is required when the re-establishment of pre-COVID operations, such as reinstatement of fare collection and reopening of assessment centers, is going to be implemented. He thanked everyone for their patience and ensured communication. He also noted that due to the current MTA budget crises, certain service cuts may be made. However, the proposed changes to the On-demand pilot program remain on pause and the current program continues for now.

Topics for the next PAC meeting were suggested by various PAC members and included updates to application process and assessment centers in response to COVID and Technology progress report regarding the MYmta app.

VP Michael Cosgrove announced that he is retiring by the end of the year. He served 34 years with NYCT and joined Paratransit in 1996 where he valued the assistance of the PAC. He will miss everyone.

## **Closing**

The meeting ended at 6:30pm.

<b>CATEGORY</b>	<b>November-2019</b>	<b>November-2020</b>	<b>Increase/Decrease Nov-19 vs. Nov-20</b>
<b>AAR Registrants</b>	161,784	161,284	-0.3%
<b>Trips Requested (Total)</b>	834,010	580,497	-30.4%
<b>Trips Scheduled (Total)</b>	726,145	499,429	-31.2%
<b>On-Demand Trips Completed</b>	37,989	26,389	-30.5%
<b>Trips Completed (Total)</b>	698,291	483,143	-30.8%
<b>Total Boardings</b>	953,588	657,656	-31.0%
<b>Trips Scheduled (Primary)</b>	245,155	138,034	-43.7%
<b>Customer No-Shows</b>	8,375	4,881	-41.7%
<i>As a % of Trips Scheduled</i>	3.42%	3.54%	0.12%
<b>Carrier No-Shows</b>	289	105	
<i>As a % of Trips Scheduled</i>	0.12%	0.08%	-0.04%
<b>No Fault No-Shows</b>	2,366	925	
<i>As a % of Trips Scheduled</i>	0.97%	0.67%	-0.29%
<b>Trips Scheduled (Broker)</b>	439,549	360,659	-17.9%
<b>Customer No-Shows</b>	11,188	7,925	
<i>As a % of Trips Scheduled</i>	2.55%	2.20%	-0.35%
<b>Broker No-Shows</b>	512	163	
<i>As a % of Trips Scheduled</i>	0.12%	0.05%	-0.07%
<b>Pick-up On Time Performance (Primary)</b>			
<i>less than or equal to 30 minutes</i>	96%	98%	2.0%
<b>Pick-up On Time Performance (Broker)</b>			
<i>less than or equal to 30 minutes</i>	96%	98%	2.0%
<b>Appointment OTP Trips (Primary) *</b>			
<i>On-time (30 minutes Early to &lt; 1 minute Late)</i>	47%	Suspended	N/A
<i>Early (31 minutes to 45 minutes Early)</i>	44%	Suspended	N/A
<b>Appointment OTP Trips (Broker) *</b>			
<i>On-time (30 minutes Early to &lt; 1 minute Late)</i>	34%	Suspended	N/A
<i>Early (31 minutes to 45 minutes Early)</i>	55%	Suspended	N/A
<b>Complaints</b>	3,049	1,107	
<b>per 1,000 Completed Trips</b>	4.4	2.3	-2.1
<b>Commendations</b>	656	432	
<b>per 1,000 Completed Trips</b>	0.9	0.9	0.0

\* November service continues to change due to the COVID-19 Pandemic. Full service has been provided throughout the Pandemic. To further promote the safety of our customers and operators, shared ride service was also suspended. As a result, appointment time booking of trips would have led to excessively early drop offs and has been temporarily suspended. Customers can still book trips with a pickup time.

\* 'Drop Off Trips' have been temporarily suspended since March 2020, and therefore excluded in the 'Customer Experience' Reporting for November 2020.