

Paratransit Advisory Committee (PAC)

February 23, 2023

Meeting Minutes

Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, the PAC meeting was conducted virtually via Zoom.

1. Welcome from PAC Leadership

Meeting was called to order by Chairperson RueZalia Watkins at 5:00pm.

2. Confirmation of participants and approval of minutes

PAC Members

Thomas Coppola, Luda Demikhovskaya, Ketrina Hazell, Jose Hernandez, Billy Mitchell, Sharlene Kraft, Mark Anthony Phifer, Jean Ryan, Tucker Salovaara, RueZalia Watkins

Absent - Sharada Veerubhotla, Ellen Rubin, Mindy Jacobson

MTA/NYCT Paratransit

Donna Fredericksen, Ami Freyberger, Eugene Griffith, Simone Harvard, Robin Hernandez, Patricia Ibarguen, Diane McFarlane, Chris Pangilinan, Nathasha Parris, Tammie Francisque, Donald Raimondi, Natalie Garcia, Lynda Edmond

MTA/HQ

Cindy Myers, Quemuel Arroyo, Howard Levine, Sean Kennedy

Chairperson Watkins made a motion to approve the previous meeting minutes.

3. Paratransit Dashboard AAR Report

A summary of the December 2022 operating statistics from the Paratransit Report was sent to PAC members and reviewed by VP Chris Pangilinan. *A copy of this report is on page 8.*

VP Pangilinan also reviewed the MTA NYCT Monthly Customer Pulse Survey for October.

PAC Member Discussion and Feedback

Chair Watkins acknowledged and expressed appreciation for statistics now being provided month-by-month vs. data formerly presented based on previous year data (as is noted on the AAR Dashboard at mta.info).

4. Paratransit Topic: AVLM

VP Pangilinan provided an update on AAR vehicle tracking issues:

1. Adept used for Scheduling, Dispatch, and other functions.
2. AVLM used for tracking vehicles.

Vendor Stratagen makes two products used by AAR (Adept and AVLM). The vendor was also under contract to upgrade Adept to Adept IQ. The relationship with Stratagen on management of Adept worked well. However, due to the vendor continuously being behind schedule and underperforming on the Adept IQ upgrade, the decision was made to discontinue the relationship with Stratagen regarding Adept IQ. Stratagen refused to continue providing services on AVLM, unless Paratransit agreed to pay

higher fees. As a result, Paratransit opted to terminate contracts for both Adept IQ and AVL M and is currently interviewing new vendors.

There is a back-up system in place that drivers are using, however the electronic touch displays (m-slates) were serviced by Stratagen. Paratransit will be procuring iPads to replace the m-slates for tracking and electronic mapping. These are scheduled to arrive in March with continuous roll out over April and May., Hopefully they will all be in place by June 2023.

PAC Member Discussion and Feedback

Ms. Ryan: Asked for clarification about what scheduling system is being used now. VP Pangilinan confirmed AAR has been using Adept version 4 since 2001. Adept IQ is the upgrade, which was rejected as it did not serve AAR's needs. The AVL M system, which, as previously noted, AAR was not able to keep because of the breakdown of the relationship with Stratagen. At least half of AAR vehicles are using the back-up AVL M system described previously.

AAR goals for improvements internally and externally once a new vendor is secured:

- Increased productivity of vehicles to improve capacity for customers.
- Collect more information regarding travel time/traffic which will allow for forecasting.
- more efficient shared rides.

Mr. Hernandez: Will drivers have the ability to turn off vehicle tracking with the new system?

VP Pangilinan: No, this feature will be disengaged.

Chair Watkins: When will iPads be in place?

VP Pangilinan: It's been about 4 weeks since meeting with the Chair. A batch of iPads should be delivered within the next 4 weeks, which would fall within the timeframe projected, installation to follow. In the interim, drivers are using cell phones which are acting as AVL until iPads are in place.

VP Pangilinan agreed to provide an update on installations by the next PAC meeting.

Ms. Demikhovskaya: How many AAR carriers does AAR have now?

VP Pangilinan: Currently, AAR has four dedicated carriers with seven locations.

Chair Watkins: How is AAR currently investigating complaints in the absence of tracking software?

Ms. Ibarquen: Currently, there is no issue with investigating dedicated carrier complaints. AAR can view Adept trip logs to aid in investigations.

Ms. Hazell: Would using iPads allow the GPS system to be more updated and accurate?

VP Pangilinan: Carriers using company cell phones are fine because those have GPS. The ones without phones now are not.

Ms. Ryan: Do you expect to totally get rid of Adept?

VP Pangilinan: Very likely. AAR is working on the best solution.

Mr. Coppola: Will iPads be distributed to broker service as well?

VP Pangilinan: No, just dedicated carriers. Brokers already have secondary GPS.

5. PAC Topic

MY AAR / MYmta App

Ms. Fredericksen shared a PowerPoint presentation with App updates (App update seen in Winter 2023 issue of On the Move).

PAC Member Discussion and Feedback

Ms. Hazell: Would it be possible to incorporate tracking for broker trips, with the ability to view future trips, and change preferences to request certain types of vehicles?

VP Pangilinan: We cannot accommodate requests for specific vehicles due to availability. Customers may contact AAR regarding such inquiries based on their disability needs.

Ms. Ryan: Made an inquiry about app design and expressed concerns over possible errors in functionality (ex: similar addresses in different areas of NYC).

Chair Watkins: Asked that any suggestions about additions to the app be shared amongst the PAC separately, and then brought to Paratransit collectively at the next PAC meeting.

DOJ Letter

VP Pangilinan: Is working on the response, along with the AAR team, which should be sent out by the end of next week.

Of the six recommendations, three have been addressed in recent AAR performance metrics. Other issues to be addressed are: 1) untimely drop-offs, 2) excessive trip lengths, 3)

improvement of excessive wait times, 4) improving on-time drop off performance.

Chair Watkins: Will AAR provide the remedy and a timeframe to DOJ? What is the course of action if DOJ does not accept AAR's plan?

VP Pangilinan: If DOJ does not accept AAR's plan, AAR will return to DOJ and continue working on addressing concerns.

Chair Watkins: Asked if changes need to be made in terms of vehicles and other factors before the new tracking system is implemented.

VP Pangilinan: No. Scheduling software upgrade will solve a lot of the issues by being more efficient and helping target trips within the half hour window.

Chair Watkins: Will these changes affect the number of drivers and vehicles?

VP: Yes, adjustments will be made as needed to accommodate schedules.

Chair Watkins: Asked that the record reflect that the same issues outlined in the DOJ letter, are the same issues PAC has been bringing to the attention of AAR for a while. Although the data is old in the DOJ letter, the problems still exist.

6. New Business

Mr. Phifer: Shared his concerns about broker drivers who arrive too early and then demand customers be ready to travel, and additionally exhibit rude and unprofessional behavior.

VP Pangilinan: Announced Mr. Raimondi was promoted and has returned to Department of Buses. He wished him well.

7. Old Business

Ms. Kraft: E-hail (ARRO) drivers continue to insist that an address she frequently travels to does not exist, which affects her pick-ups.

Chair offered suggestion that guidance be shared with the riding public about what to do in the event of emergencies when riding with broker service.

OMNY Update – AAR is conducting technical testing. An update meeting with the OMNY test group should be scheduled next month to provide updates.

An agenda item will be scheduled for the next PAC meeting to provide an update on E-hail pilot program.

Meeting was adjourned at 6:40 PM.

Paratransit Report

Statistical results for the month of December 2022 are shown below.

Paratransit Operations - Monthly Operations Report Service Indicators							
Category	Performance Indicator	Current Month: December 2022			12-Month Average		
		This Year	Last Year	% Change	This Year	Last Year	% Change
Ridership	Total Trips Completed*	569,177	452,932	+25.7%	531,769	467,423	+13.8%
	Total Ridership	818,288	635,910	+28.7%	762,210	651,074	+17.1%
On-Time Performance	Pick-up Primary 30 Minute	97.0%	95.0%	+2.0%	95.1%	94.2%	+0.9%
	Pick-up Primary 15 Minute	89.0%	84.0%	+5.0%	84.8%	83.9%	+0.9%
	Pick-up Broker 30 Minute	94.0%	90.0%	+4.0%	93.0%	91.0%	+2.0%
	Pick-up Broker 15 Minute	80.0%	76.0%	+4.0%	78.8%	76.0%	+2.8%
	Appointment OTP Trips Primary - 30 Min Early to <1 Late (On-Time)*	49.0%	n/a	n/a	50.3%	n/a	n/a
	Appointment OTP Trips Primary - Early*	43.0%	n/a	n/a	26.3%	n/a	n/a
	Appointment OTP Trips Broker - 30 Min Early to <1 Late (On-Time)*	40.0%	n/a	n/a	40.8%	n/a	n/a
	Appointment OTP Trips Broker - Early*	51.0%	n/a	n/a	27.0%	n/a	n/a
Ride Time	Ride Time Variance Performance: Actual Trip Duration vs. Planned Trip Duration - At or Better Than Plan	81.0%	79.0%	+2.0%	81.3%	82.7%	-1.4%
	Average Actual Trip Duration in Minutes	37	36	+2.8%	37	33	+11.9%
	Max Ride Time Performance Primary	98.0%	98.0%	0.0%	97.8%	98.7%	-0.9%
	Max Ride Time Performance Broker	99.0%	97.0%	+2.0%	99.0%	98.6%	+0.4%
Customer Experience	Frequent Rider Experience Primary*	86.0%	n/a	n/a	85.3%	n/a	n/a
	Frequent Rider Experience Broker*	93.0%	n/a	n/a	91.5%	n/a	n/a
Provider No-Shows	Provider No-Shows per 1,000 Schedule Trips Primary	0.53	1.89	-72.0%	1.32	2.61	-49.3%
	Provider No-Shows per 1,000 Schedule Trips Broker	4.97	8.64	-42.5%	4.35	4.39	-1.1%
Customer Complaints	Passenger Complaints - Transportation Service Quality Per 1000 Completed Trips	1.6	5.0	-68.0%	2.5	4.8	-48.5%
	Passenger Complaints - Non-Transportation Service Quality Per 1000 Completed Trips	3.2	3.7	-13.5%	3.3	2.6	+28.5%
Call Center	Percent of Calls Answered	96.0%	90.0%	+6.0%	93.6%	90.3%	+3.3%
	Average Call Answer Speed in Seconds	53	159	-66.7%	97	147	-34.1%
Eligibility	Total Registrants	172,440	166,000	+3.9%	170,522	163,618	+4.2%

*NOTE: The reporting of Drop-off On-Time Performance and Customer Experience metrics resumed in September. The yearly data comparison is not available due to the temporary suspension of appointment time booking of trips associated with the COVID-19 pandemic which started in March 2020. Consequently, the last year's 12-Month Average rate for these two metrics cannot be calculated.