



**OPERATIONS COMMITTEE
MARCH 18, 2004**

SUBJECT: ACCESS SERVICES INCORPORATED UPDATE

ACTION: RECEIVE AND FILE

RECOMMENDATION

Receive and file status report on Access Services Incorporated (ASI) Customer Service Complaints Process Improvements.

ISSUE

At the January 15, 2004 Operations Committee meeting, staff was directed to provide regular updates on ASI, addressing such issues as service levels, customer service, and ASI's budget. The motion also requested staff to report back on the possibility of implementing an 800-customer service number for people to directly contact Metro with ASI complaints and recommendations for improving service. Staff provided an ASI status report in February 2004, but was unable to report back on the customer service improvement recommendations because further research was needed. This report addresses that portion of the motion.

DISCUSSION

Customer Service Complaints Process Improvements

The Board requested staff research an 800 number for Metro to directly receive complaints from ASI customers. Staff believes this motion is in response to concerns about the sharp spike in complaints as reported last month and the ability of ASI to respond adequately to service problems.

As shown in Attachment A, ASI has an established complaint management process and 800 number. Even though ASI has a solid framework, there are improvements that are being made and others still to consider.

The 800 number is advertised through various means. New riders receive an ID card, a Rider's Guide and a wallet card, all of which have the customer service number located on it, along with other pertinent numbers. Existing riders receive newsletters and community meeting notices, can attend community meetings and have access to the ASI website.

Complaints are not only addressed through ASI's administrative processes, but there are also a series of committees and subcommittees with citizen representation that focus on service quality on a monthly basis. The Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) tracks ASI's progress in meeting its overall goals.

The advantage of the current ASI system is many customers can be helped directly when they call by getting a ride or helping them with reservation information that Metro would not be able to provide with a separate 800 number due to lack of the ASI scheduling software system. Staff reviewed all options and recommend ASI continue to move forward on the following items to improve the process:

- ASI to develop three tier customer review:
 1. All customer comments will be researched
 2. If the customer is not satisfied with results, ASI will reevaluate the complaints at a higher level
 3. If the customer is still not satisfied, Metro will have a final review and make a ruling
- The Quality Service Subcommittee of the CAC is a working group that has specifically focused on resolving service issues and was directly involved in re-designing the complaint database (went live January 2004)
- New Complaint Subcommittee has been formed and has had its first meeting in February 2004 (will focus on process of investigations as well as timing)

Staff recommends we continue to use and monitor the ASI complaint process and continue to work with the ASI to ensure the best possible handling of ASI's passenger concerns.

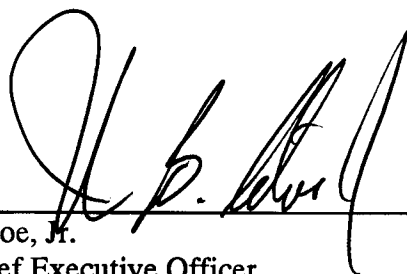
NEXT STEPS

Staff will report to the board on a monthly basis on ASI's progress in meeting its FY04 Plan goals as part of the Deputy Chief Executive Officer's Monthly Performance Update.

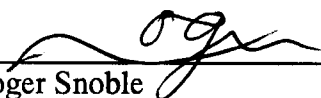
ATTACHMENTS

A. 800 Number Complaint Process

Prepared by: Mark P. Maloney, Director of Transportation Contract Services



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Deputy Chief Executive Officer



Roger Snoble
Chief Executive Officer

ASI 800 NUMBER COMPLAINT PROCESS

ASI's current customer complaints system is a robust complaint taking, tracking, and response system. The system functions as follows:

Customer Service Representative is called at 1-800-827-0829. They will

- (i) Document complaints in the Access Services Customer Service Database
- (ii) Explain to customers correct procedures to solve minor service problems
- (ii) Clarify policies that may be misunderstood by the customer
- (iii) Refer unresolved service problems to the appropriate Department of Access Services for investigation
- (iv) Process i), ii, iii) and iv) within one (1) working day

Access Services Complaint Response Team

- (i) Review complaints and assign for investigation
 - 1. Check trip information
 - a. TSS (scheduling system)
 - b. GPS (vehicle location system)
 - c. Trip sheets (drivers records)
 - 2. Obtain driver statements
 - 3. Review customers recorded phone reservation
- (ii) Monitor Complaint Database
 - 1. Determine pattern of service problems for individual customers
 - 2. Notify Operations of such patterns
 - 3. Notify Operations of overdue investigations
- (iii) Notify customer of the results of the investigation and any actions planned by Access Paratransit
 - 1. Customer will be notified within 14 calendar days of receipt of the complaint to provide a
 - a. Status report on the investigation, or
 - b. Report on the results the customer will be notified and the complaint closed of the investigation
 - 2. Upon completion of the investigation