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Form Revised: February 2005

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## TORONTO TRANSIT COMMISSION

**TO Commissioners**

**FROM Richard C. Ducharme**

**MEETING DATE March 22, 2006**

**SUBJECT Staff Response to Commission Inquiry – Feasibility of Implementing a Message to Assist With the Issue of Overcrowding**

At its meeting on January 25, 2006 the Commission received a memorandum and presentation on Maintaining Commission Standards for Acceptable Levels of Crowding in 2006. In the course of the discussions the Commission requested that staff report back on the feasibility of implementing a message on vehicles to assist with the issue of overcrowding.

### **Background**

Standing customers on buses and streetcars tend to congregate in the front portion of the vehicle, between the front and centre doors. This slows down boarding times, results in unused passenger capacity, and has the potential of leaving intending customers at stops if they are unable to board.

### **Discussion**

TTC surface vehicles already have messages to encourage customers to move towards the rear of the vehicle. The following message techniques are in place:

1. All buses have a series of three decals applied at intervals along the length of the bus interior encouraging customers to move back and thanking them when they do. The three decals are:

*“Please step to the rear”*

situated approximately one half of the distance between the front and centre doors,

*“A little Further back, PLEASE!”* situated just in front of the centre doors,

*“THANK YOU for moving back!”* situated past the centre doors.

2. All surface vehicles have a decal immediately behind the front door that says *“Please Exit at Rear Doors”*.

3. All surface vehicles have a white line on the floor, across the aisle and immediately behind the Operator’s work station and the vehicle vestibule. The Highway Traffic Act and TTC operating procedures require that the Operator have a clear view of the door, entry steps, and curb side rear view mirrors. Although this is a safety regulation, it does have the effect of encouraging customers to move away from the front door.

A sign on the inside front of buses states:

The Law requires the Operator of  
this vehicle to have an  
unobstructed view at all times.  
Please remain behind the white  
line while the vehicle is in motion.  
*Thank You!*

The white line sign on streetcars is similar, but includes a request to exit via the rear doors.

4. During training, surface Operators are instructed to encourage customers to move to the rear and exit via the centre or rear doors. They may request this of customers as they enter and pay their fare and make periodic announcements to all customers as the passenger volume builds. Staff will issue an Operations Notice to surface Operators, reminding them to perform these announcements.

In addition, a feature of the Surface Vehicle Automated Stop Announcement System (SVASAS) project will allow Operators to initiate an automated audio and text display message to customers to move towards the rear of the vehicle. SVASAS provides automated audio and visual announcements of bus and streetcar stops. A number of standard service-related messages, which may be initiated from an Operator keypad, are being programmed into the system, including a request for customers to move back.

Chief General Manager