

# TORONTO TRANSIT COMMISSION REPORT NO.

**MEETING DATE:** OCTOBER 19, 2011

**SUBJECT:** TTC CUSTOMER SERVICE - UPDATE

## **ACTION ITEM**

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### **RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that the Commission:

1. Note that staff are developing a Customer Satisfaction Scorecard that will form the basis for continual reporting on a balanced set of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), with the first such Scorecard available in early 2012, and;
2. Review, in partnership with, The Metropolitan Action Committee on Violence Against Women and Children (METRAC) the opportunities and risks of expanding the TTC "Request Stop" program to cover any customer who feels vulnerable, and further, to approve this change at the first opportunity should it be appropriate to do so, and;
3. Approve a customer focused review of TTC fares and ticketing policies and procedures to address customer issues and nuisances in the run up to PRESTO electronic card acceptance across all modes and the subsequent removal of traditional TTC fare media.

### **FUNDING**

There is no new funding required for either updates or actions recommended. Should changes to the Request Stop program be approved, updates to promotional material and customer information in buses will be necessary. These costs will be met from existing budgets. Any changes to current fare media and policies that require funding will be considered along with the implementation timing of PRESTO.

### **BACKGROUND**

#### **CUSTOMER SERVICE DELIVERY UPDATE**

The TTC Customer Service Advisory Panel (CSAP) reported to the TTC at the end of August 2010. Significant progress has been made since that time including the continuing development

of a customer service strategy and business plan, delivery of a number of the 78 objectives and additional objectives to supplement the CSAP report. An example of these additional items is the review of the Request Stop Program proposed in this report.

Of the 78 CSAP recommendations approximately 20 will be delivered by the end of 2011. Highlights of that delivery include:

- The hiring of a Chief Customer Service Officer (CSAP 1A)
- Creation of a strategy and business plan (CSAP 1B) and an organizational review (CSAP 1D)
- The permanent Customer Liaison Panel announced October 13 (CSAP 1C)
- The holding of the first TTC Customer Town Hall in November 2011 (CSAP 3A)
- The expansion of the Next Vehicle Arrival System to all surface vehicles (part CSAP 3Y)
- A review of the TTC Customer Service Centre hours and processes (CSAP 3B,C,D,E,F)
- The installation of new microphones in Collector Booths (CSAP 2K).

The replacement of microphones represents a concrete improvement in providing appropriate tools to our employees to better communicate with customers. The old microphones represented a source of frustration for employees and customers alike, leading to friction and incidents of misunderstanding.

It is expected that a further 25 of the recommendations will be delivered in 2012 with the majority of the remainder delivered in 2013 and beyond. Several recommendations have been put on hold indefinitely or subsumed within other recommendations, and these are:

- The Student Advisory Panel recommendation (CSAP 1N) which will be addressed both through membership of the Customer Liaison Panel and improved working with the advocacy group "TTCriders". A closer working relationship is being developed with "TTCriders" in general allowing this advocacy group to act as a "critical friend" and further reflect the voice of the customer back to the TTC, and
- Touch Screen Information Kiosks (CSAP 2Z) have, in other transit authorities, proved unreliable and of limited value (although it must be noted that New York MTA are trialling once again in partnership with a private firm). The TTC plans to take full advantage of lower tech means of communication before expanding to technology in this area, and
- An image/brand improvement program (CSAP 1F) is a longer term project. The TTC brand lives in the minds of our customers and to attempt to rebrand the TTC anytime soon would only waste effort and organization attention.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SCORECARD**

A Customer Satisfaction Scorecard is being developed and will form the basis for continual

reporting on a balanced set of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) through a full quarterly update to the Commission, and a monthly update in the Chief General Manager's Report. The scorecard builds upon the KPIs suggested to the Commission in February, 2011. Furthermore this scorecard will be reported on TTC.ca. This scorecard will be publicly reported when results from our first Customer Satisfaction Survey will be available in early 2012.

While the KPIs to be used as input to the Customer Satisfaction Scorecard have not been finalized, some of the major categories being considered are:

1. Customer Satisfaction Survey - CSS
2. Customer Contacts  
(Compliments and Complaints)
3. Cleanliness  
(Stations, Trains)
4. Reliability  
(Elevators, Escalators, Token Vending, Pass Vending, Vehicles)
5. On Time Performance  
(Subways, Streetcars, Buses)

### **1. Customer Satisfaction Survey (CSS)**

As noted in the July, 2011 CGM Commission report, the top line KPI for the TTC relating to customer service will be the quarterly CSS - which will begin in early 2012. The CSS will be a continuous survey that asks customers to evaluate their most recent experience while taking the TTC. Additionally, it will provide an "Overall Evaluation" that allows customers to express a holistic opinion of the TTC and allow for self weighting of attributes. A continuous survey will control for isolated exogenous factors influencing customers.

### **2. Customer Contacts**

Customer complaints are a bellwether for the quality of service being provided. Most important is the number of customers / complaints to normalize for the ever increasing number of customers the TTC is carrying. Although this KPI cannot be directly influenced, it represents a valuable tool for representing both engagement with customers and customer satisfaction. As the TTC makes changes to its Customer Service Centre and makes it easier for customers to contact us, it is likely that this number will rise.

### **3. Cleanliness**

Measuring cleanliness requires a detailed and quantitative approach to ensure resources are deployed most effectively.

#### 4. Reliability

The reliability of TTC vehicles and equipment has a direct impact on the ease and speed with which customers can make a journey. Reliability is best considered in three distinct areas: Vehicle reliability, elevators & escalators and fare purchase.

#### 5. On Time Performance

On time performance, although in many ways the most intuitive aspect of service provision for customers, is actually one of the more difficult to measure and manage for customers in a meaningful way. A greater reliance, for example, on short-turning could be used to improve performance, but potentially at the expense of a greater number of unhappy customers than if the target had been missed.

#### REQUEST STOP PROGRAM

In 1988, the TTC worked with the Toronto Police and METRAC to conduct a security audit of the subway system. The audit, conducted from a woman's perspective, focused on reducing the risk of sexual assaults against women. The final report, entitled, *"Moving Forward – Making Transit Safer for Women"* contained the recommendation to extend the audit to the surface system. In 1990 an audit of 42 representative bus stops in Scarborough was conducted. The final report from that audit, entitled, *"Making Transit Stops Safer for Women – Scarborough Moves Forward"* recommended the implementation of Request Stops for "passengers" travelling alone during off-peak hours of darkness. This program, following a trial, was implemented system wide, for women, in May, 1991. In 1995 it was amended to clarify the 9pm to 5am time periods.

Although a leading program at the time, it has increasingly been imitated and overtaken by other transit agencies around Canada and the world. Increasingly, and in line with broader societal changes around social inclusion, these agencies have been adopting standards that apply to any customer that feels vulnerable – not just women.

Although current practice is permitted, as the TTC has a special exemption, it is not assured that the exemption would be granted again following its expiry in the future. Certainly, the program as it currently stands, no longer represents the best practice for customers in this area and increasingly becomes a source of friction for many of our wide range of customers. In practice, TTC bus Operators regularly exercise discretion on who, beyond women, they allow to use the program.

Extending the current policy from women to any customer that feels vulnerable and who requests a stop between standard stops, is unlikely to impact service. In fact, service impacts are not the deciding issue. Instead, it is fundamental that METRAC and other partners believe that the extension is warranted and does not jeopardize the overall aims of the program. Clear policy and guidance for bus Operators would be required and this will be developed to ensure success.

METRAC has begun consulting with their partners and stakeholders and early indications are that the overwhelming majority support such a change. Under these circumstances the TTC should move forward as quickly as possible to change our policy.

**CUSTOMER FOCUSED REVIEW OF FARES AND TICKETING**

The TTC has made clear its intent to move towards acceptance of the PRESTO system across all modes and the subsequent removal of traditional TTC fare media. In the short term, however, the TTC will continue to require its own systems to meet customer demand for fare media. Many TTC policies and procedures have not been considered collectively in their impact on service, customers and efficiency. Until PRESTO is ubiquitous across the TTC, a review is appropriate to ensure our fares and ticket policies are fit for purpose and meet customer expectations. Input into this review will be one of the first tasks for the new TTC Customer Liaison Panel. The review will focus on improving ease of use, customer understanding and simplification on issues such as types of fare media, purchasing fare media, concession fare eligibility and fare enforcement.

**JUSTIFICATION**

The updates provided, and actions suggested, demonstrate and deliver progress towards the creation of a customer focused organization allowing the TTC to keep pace with the ever increasing demands of our customers.

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