



Behind the Scenes

Executive Director's Report

Given that the County has declared an end to the COVID-19 emergency, Access will be ending its mask mandate on March 31st.

The following message will be communicated to our riders:

Effective March 31, 2023, masks are no longer required, but are strongly recommended, for riders and drivers onboard Access vehicles. This change in policy is in keeping with the County of Los Angeles ending the COVID-19 emergency declaration as of March 31, 2023. For everyone's safety, please consider not riding if you are sick.

With the official end of the pandemic, I would again like to thank our Board, Access staff and our contractors, particularly our brave front-line drivers, for successfully responding to one of the biggest emergencies in recent world history. Access' long-term focus on emergency preparedness and crisis response proved critical to the Agency's successful response.

Andre Colaiace
Executive Director

Preparing for disaster the Texas way

A derailed train sat haphazardly on the Texas prairie while smoke rose in the distance. A ship was beached on land. Firefighters in bunker gear fought refinery flames. Amid this organized chaos, students gathered within the Emergency Operations Training Center for two and a half days of intensive Emergency Operations training.

I was fortunate enough to travel to College Station, Texas, to Disaster City on the campus of Texas A&M University, which is world-renowned for its realistic emergency response training.



My objective was to join students from the City and County of Los Angeles, as well as the Red Cross and Los Angeles Unified School District, in training for the next big emergency to strike Los Angeles. The course, offered by the Texas A&M University Extension Service, also known as TEEX, would present our diverse group with the challenge of managing the response to a major earthquake in a highly realistic Emergency Operations Center (EOC) environment.

Eighteen instructors lined up to greet us on the first day of training. After the exchange of howdy greetings, we sat down to get to work. Microphones hung from the ceiling, to record how each EOC department (Operations, Planning and Intel, Administration/Finance, Logistics and Management) interacted with each other. The recordings and instructor observations would be used for the detailed "hotwash" debriefings at the end of each day. A control room above the training floor, which could easily have served as the EOC of a large city, housed the simulation cell, where instructors injected scenarios into the exercise.

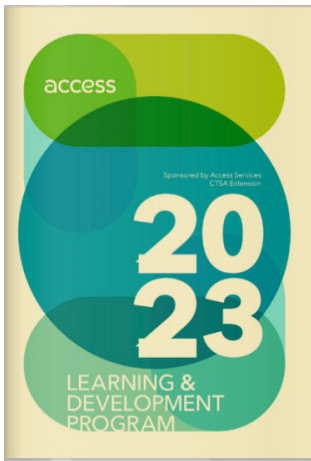
My role was, perhaps not surprisingly, Transportation. I was the only person in the room representing a transportation agency,

so all transportation related requests came through me. With hundreds of evacuees to transport, I was kept busy requesting fuel and ensuring that buses and drivers were available to transport citizens and first responders. I sat next to the Mass Care Leader, who was in charge of setting up and operating shelters; we communicated frequently given how much our roles interacted. I was also able to ensure that evacuation resources were available for the access and functional needs community. It was explained during the class how vital the Finance team is when it comes to getting reimbursed for disaster expenses. I was able to share the success that our Finance department here at Access had in getting fully reimbursed by FEMA and the City of Los Angeles during our Covid-19 response.

The training I participated in, IMS 665, was a top-flight, world class course offered by a group of dedicated instructors. I am proud to have been able to attend and learn from these professionals and my peers.

Alex Chrisman
Emergency Management Coordinator

CTSA Extension presents the 2023 Learning & Development Program



CTSA Extension is starting the New Year by opening registration for the 2023 Learning and Development Program. Dr. Sacha Joseph-Matthews is kicking off the program with a Diversity, Equity, Inclusion (DEI) Audit class where attendees will learn how to conduct DEI Audits at the department and organizational level. At the end of the class, students will be able to develop a road map that will help guide a company's DEI initiatives.

In addition to this class, many new subjects have been added to this year's programming schedule, including Creating Accessible Presentations; De-escalation Techniques for Transit Professionals; Leadership Development and Effectiveness, and many more. The complete schedule of courses can be found in the 2023 Learning & Development eBook (link below).

The Learning & Development Program is sponsored by Access Services' CTSA Extension Program. The CTSA Extension Program's mission is to bridge transit needs throughout L.A. County by providing professional development opportunities for cross-industry coordination. The Learning and Development program is available to public and non-profit agencies providing specialized transportation in L.A. County and their contractors, including health and human services representatives. Over 500 professionals from fixed route transportation providers, social service agencies and Adult Day Healthcare Centers have attended these workshops. Trainings are offered at no cost and subsidized by Access Services.

To learn more about the 2023 Learning and Development Program, visit the link below. If you have any questions about upcoming trainings or registration, please contact me at ctsa@accessla.org.

[2023 Learning & Development Program](#)

Vanessa Barajas
CTSA Analyst

Access hosts Q'STRAINT securement training

Access Services recently hosted a training event for the Q'STRAINT Q'UBE securement system and the L-Track shoulder belt restraints that are being installed in the Agency's accessible Dodge ProMasters. The training, which took place at San Gabriel Transit's facility in El Monte, was facilitated by Lisa Nippolt, Regional Manager for Q'STRAINT. The Dodge ProMasters are the only vehicles in Access' fleet that use the Q'UBE securement system.



The training mainly focused on best practices when securing a mobility device using the newer system. Along with the Q'UBE securement, a new L-Track shoulder belt restraint was also introduced. The belt is secured to the L-Track, which is mounted on the driver side upper-interior wall inside the ProMasters. The L-Track, in combination with the shoulder belt restraint, allows for different positioning of the belts to accommodate riders of different heights. Access contractors sent key safety personnel to participate in the training. Their feedback and real-world experience proved helpful during this valuable training.

Luis Pacheco
Safety Analyst

Commendations

"I was appreciative of how concerned my driver was for my safety. He took his time making sure that all the tie-downs were secure. He was very nice and deserves commendation."

Jember Carcamo
Rider since April 1995

"I am filing a Smile for my driver, Eddie. He is always very helpful."

Theresa Lloyd
Rider since Oct 2016