



# Behind the Scenes

## Executive Director's Report

The Access Services Board of Directors met on May 20, 2024.

- > The Board approved renewals of employee health and benefit contracts along with an extension to its Oracle software support services contract.
- > The Board also approved the renewal of its self-insured retention automobile liability program along with a number of commercial business coverage policies.
- > The Board heard a presentation on the agency's progress on the facilities plan and the status of the Antelope Valley Paratransit Operations and Maintenance Facility.

The next meeting of the Board of Directors is scheduled for June 24, 2024.

**Andre Colaiace**  
*Executive Director*

## Access staff attends FTA's Drug and Alcohol Program National Conference



Each year, transit professionals come together from across the country to network, learn, and to hear the latest updates from federal experts at the FTA's Drug and Alcohol Program National Conference.

This year, the conference included an array of breakout sessions, such as: Beginner Drug and Alcohol Program Manager (DAPM)

Training; Best Practices for Random Testing; A Compliant FTA Drug and Alcohol Policy; USDOT Hot Topics; Ask the Auditors; and Transportation Drug and Alcohol Open Forum. The hottest topic of conversation for attendees was the concern with oral fluid testing and the critical concern with fentanyl pills. According to industry experts, in 2023, the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) seized more than 77 million fentanyl pills. This is the most fentanyl seized by the DEA in a single year. FTA experts stressed the importance of spreading the word to your family, friends, neighbors, and adolescents about the dangers of fentanyl.

There is great value in attending this conference every year. From networking with federal and industry experts; to the various breakout sessions where you learn something new; to making life-long connections with new colleagues from across the country; it is helpful to know we are working together for the common good of maintaining a safe and compliant drug and alcohol-free workplace.

**Onnika Payne**  
*Transportation Planner*

## RO Bus Sales hosts Gen3 Ramp training for contractor staff

With more than 100 new Ram ProMasters built and delivered for Access Services, RO Bus Sales hosted a training session for the new Gen 3 MPower Ramp at the Riverside Sunset Van facility.

Contractor staff including safety managers, trainers, road supervisors, and maintenance staff took part in the training sessions. The training covered two sessions: first on how to properly operate the ramp, and proper maintenance procedures. The technical service bulletin (TSB) distributed during the training covered the Gen 3 ramp's gas springs and how to perform minor adjustments to improve its operation. The training also provided a firsthand opportunity for contractor staff to see the facility where the new Ram ProMaster 136 units are currently assembled.



A certificate of completion was issued to everyone that participated and completed the training.

**Luis Pacheco**  
**Safety Analyst**

## Access staff attends spring CalACT Conference



Last month I had the opportunity to attend the CalACT Conference in San Diego. CalACT was marking its 40th anniversary, which is definitely something to celebrate.

One of the highlights of the conference for me was to hear a panel discussion that included Richard DeRock, the first Executive Director of Access, speak about how CalACT was conceived and how it has shaped the transportation community in California over the past 40 years.

Access has much to be thankful for as CalACT has been a voice of the ADA Paratransit community in Sacramento for four decades. In addition, CalACT established the CalACT/MBTA Purchasing Cooperative in 2009, which has saved Access and many other agencies hundreds of thousands of dollars in RFP issuance and review costs, and led to lower vehicles costs as well.

Did you know that 10,000 people in the U.S. are turning age 65 every day? This means that there will be increased demand for the services that Access provides and CalACT is starting to devote more of its conference sessions to ADA, Microtransit, Eligibility and On-Demand topics, which is very encouraging to see.

The industry is realizing that more creative attention is needed to improve the level and quality of transportation for seniors and people with disabilities. While no agency is perfect, I believe Access has much to offer the rest of the country in terms of best-practices and a commitment to meeting the transportation needs of our customers. I am thankful to be part of the team here at Access and I look forward to partnering with CalACT for many years to come to help improve transit for everyone here in California.

**Bruce Frink**  
**Senior Manager, Financial Planning and Analysis**

## Commendations

"Erica from the Abilities Expo was courteous, kind and always had a smile. She was well organized. She updated riders and told us where to wait."

***Ramon Pizarro***

***Rider since June 1995***

"My driver was excellent and appreciated that he was very understanding. I am grateful that he is doing a good job."

***Queen Searles***

***Rider since December 2022***