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# Behind the Scenes

## Executive Report

Dear Access Member Agency:

Next Thursday, October 15, 2015, Access Services will be holding a Member meeting to vote on changes to its regional paratransit fare system. The meeting will be held at the Bob Hope Patriotic Hall, Dining Hall, 1816 South Figueroa Street, Los Angeles, California, 90015 starting at 10 am.

Given the importance of this issue, it is preferable that a representative from each Member attend in person. If the current Member Agency voting representative or alternate cannot attend, you can designate another alternate to attend and vote in your place. This can be done by designating a new alternate on your Agency's letterhead and bringing the letter to the meeting or sending it to Access beforehand. If no one from your Agency can attend in person, please make sure to fill out a proxy form so that your vote can be counted.

If you have any questions about participating in the meeting, please contact Donna Cisco ([cisco@accessla.org](mailto:cisco@accessla.org)) or Matthew Avancena ([Avancena@accessla.org](mailto:Avancena@accessla.org)) for additional assistance. If you have any questions about the fare proposal, please contact Alfredo Torales at [Torales@accessla.org](mailto:Torales@accessla.org).

*Shelly Verrinder*  
*Executive Director*

## Beyond Traffic Forum 2015



What will transportation look like in the year 2045? How will we get from place to place? How will we move things? These and other important questions were asked at the Beyond Traffic Mega Region Forum, hosted by the U.S. Department of Transportation and Long Beach Mayor Robert Garcia, that I attended along with Andre Colaiace, Deputy Executive Director of Planning and Governmental Affairs.

Held at the Long Beach Convention Center on Monday, September 28th, the goal of the forum, one of 11 held nationwide, was to gather insights and perspectives from a broad array of stakeholders in the Southern California Mega Region regarding the future of transportation in America as detailed in the DOT's Beyond Traffic report. The Beyond Traffic report examines the trends and challenges facing America's transportation infrastructure over the next three decades, including a rapidly growing population, increasing freight volume, demographic shifts in rural and urban areas, and a transportation system facing more frequent extreme weather events.

A panel discussion included representatives from two of Access' member agencies—Santa Monica's Big Blue Bus and Culver City Bus—along with local elected officials. The discussion ranged from bikes and highways to ports and paratransit. The Beyond Traffic report predicts that by 2045, the number of people aged 65 or older will increase by 77 percent. The report states that about one-third of people over 65 will have a disability that limits mobility and their access to critical services will be more important than ever. It is critical that Access and all of its stakeholders understand these trends and think about how people will move in 2045. To learn more and comment on the Beyond Traffic framework, you can visit [www.transportation.gov/beyondtraffic](http://www.transportation.gov/beyondtraffic).

*By Alfredo Torales,*  
*Special Projects Administrator*

## TPAC and CalACT Elections



**Photo:** TPAC Re-elected Chairperson, Linda Evans

On Thursday, September 10th, Access' Transportation Professionals Advisory Committee (TPAC) held officer elections and re-elected Ms. Linda Evans for Chairperson and Ms. Gracie Davis for Vice-Chair. This will be Linda's second term as Chair and Gracie's first as Vice-Chair.

Linda Evans is a Supervising Transportation Planning Associate for the L.A. Department of Transportation. Linda currently manages the City Ride program and has been with DOT for over 25 years.

Gracie Davis is the ADA Eligibility Administrator for the Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA). Gracie has been with OCTA for over 15 years and is primarily responsible for coordinating and administering the eligibility certification program for the agency's ACCESS Paratransit service. Linda and Gracie have been long term members of TPAC.



**Photo:** TPAC elected Vice-Chair, Gracie Davis

On another note, the California Association for Coordinated Transportation (CalACT) elected Valerie Gibson, Access Services Board member to the CalACT Board representing the South Region. CalACT is a statewide, non-profit organization that has represented the interests of small, rural, and specialized transportation providers since 1984. Its membership is comprised of individuals and agencies from diverse facets of transportation, including operators of small and large systems, planning and government agencies, social service agencies, suppliers, and consultants.

Valerie will join fellow Access Board member Martin Gombert on the CalACT Board. Valerie's election marks the first time that two active Access Board members are represented on CalACT.

By *Matthew Avancena*  
Manager of Planning and Coordination

## Access Hosts Post-Accident & Reasonable Suspicion Determination



In an effort to comply with Federal Transit Administration (FTA) substance abuse regulations and their application to transit agency policies and procedures, Access Services hosted two classes on September 23, 2015. Both classes were taught by Ms. Leila Procopio-Makuh, a seasoned veteran of FTA regulations governing the drug and alcohol program. Ms. Procopio-Makuh's skills are recognized nationwide in the field of substance abuse program management.

The first class covered two topics:

- Federal Transit Administration, Post Accident Testing Thresholds and Scenarios
- Testing Thresholds and Criteria: Reasonable Suspicion Decision Making

The goal of the comprehensive class is to inform and educate participants on the specific FTA criteria for conducting DOT-FTA post-accident drug and alcohol tests, and how to accurately document the event.

Reasonable Suspicion class delivers the necessary tools and skills to recognize and appropriately handle employees exhibiting signs of substance abuse, including how to accurately document the event.

The second class, Drug and Alcohol Awareness, is designed and targeted for new safety sensitive staff including management. The class goal is to raise awareness of the potential problems of drug and alcohol abuse in the workplace. This class also educated attendees on the consequences of substance abuse as well as the signs and symptoms of alcohol abuse, alcoholism, and drug use. This class follows the guidelines for the DOT/FTA drug and alcohol abuse training program.

There were a total of 22 participants for both classes from various transit organizations, including Access and service provider staff.

By *Alvina Narayan*,  
Grants Compliance Officer

## Call Center and Dispatcher Update

On Wednesday, September 30, 2015, the Operations Service Monitors hosted the bi-monthly Call Center and Dispatcher Supervisor Meeting. The meeting focuses on process improvement and performance trends. Some of the talking points discussed at this meeting were collision and incident reporting, reasonable modification request at existing stand sign locations, vehicle breakdown communication processes, and the current no-show process at stand sign locations.

Managers from all six service regions provided feedback and information from recent customer experiences. This knowledge sharing helps eliminate any confusion and ensures policy and procedures are being followed consistently across the board. This ensures Access customers are receiving safe and reliable paratransit service.

The meeting concluded with Customer Service Supervisor London Lee presenting Global Paratransit's Operations Manager of Customer Service Victor Garate with a prize for one of his dispatchers Teneshia Washington. The Operations Monitoring Center has awarded outstanding individuals each quarter for going above and beyond in assisting the Operations Monitoring Center during peak operational hours.

*By Faustino Salvador,  
Operations Service Monitor*

## Access Hosts Back Injury Prevention



On October 1, 2015, Access Services hosted a class on Back Injury Prevention that provided training in the concepts of back and lifting safety for employees. This training is in compliance with Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) standard 29 CFR 1903.1. The instructor, Dave Ofwono, facilitated discussion on ways to prevent a substantial number of injuries and exercises that included:

- \* Training requirements mandated by OSHA
- \* Understand the extent of the back injury problem
- \* Obtain basic skills for supervisors to help employees stay injury free
- \* Generate ideas for reducing back injuries

Mr. Ofwono emphasized techniques of embodying the anatomic, physiologic, and mechanical principles to promote the efficient use of human energy at the work place. He also taught the participants simple exercises to strengthen body core muscles which help to prevent back injuries. This class was well attended from various transit organizations including Access.

*By Sherri Adams,  
Training & Development Coordinator*

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## Rider Comments

" Access staff are wonderful, I don't know what I would do without you...I am so happy with the service, everyone is so nice and respectful...from the call takers to the drivers... thank you, thank you, thank you."

*Bishum,  
 Rider since July 2015*

## Access Hosts Slip, Trip, and Fall Hazards



**Photo:** *First On Compliance instructor,  
 Dave Ofwono*

On October 1, 2015, Access Services hosted a Slip, Trip, and Fall Hazard Safety Course. Dave Ofwono, First On Compliance instructor, called to mind the various ways slips, trips, and falls (STF) happen in daily activities. He emphasized all types of STF occurrences in the work place. From the not too obvious STF hazards such as half-way-open file drawers, uneven transition on carpet to floor edges, and spilled water. To the obvious hazards like standing on a wheeled chair or climbing up to the top step of a ladder (in spite of the "do not stand" warning on it). Mr. Ofwono stressed upon awareness of one's environment being 90% of winning the battle to avoid STF accidents. The best thing to do when one recognizes a STF hazard is to fix it within one's means.

*By Lucy Alonso,  
 Access Intern-Human Resources*

## ASE Mechanics, Drivers, & Customer Service Job Fair!

Tuesday-Wednesday, October 13-14, 2015 10:00 AM-3:00 PM

The Vernon-Central/LATTC WorkSource Center

Los Angeles Trade Technical College

400 W. Washington Blvd. (Redwood Hall-Rm C108)

Los Angeles, CA 90015

Please refer any inquiries to Sherri Adams at [adams2@accessla.org](mailto:adams2@accessla.org) or **213.270.6000**