

ALAMEDA-CONTRA COSTA TRANSIT DISTRICT



STAFF REPORT

MEETING DATE: 11/10/2021

Staff Report No. 21-455

TO: AC Transit Board of Directors
FROM: Michael A. Hursh, General Manager
SUBJECT: Operations Quarterly Performance Report

BRIEFING ITEM

RECOMMENDED ACTION(S):

Consider receiving the Quarterly Operations Performance Report for AC Transit Fixed Route Services during the First Quarter (Q1) of Fiscal Year 2022.

STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE:

Goal - Safe and Secure Operations
Initiative - Service Quality

The Quarterly Operations Performance Report provides Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and other District activities that support and are aligned with the following Strategic Plan Goals and Initiatives: Safe & Secure Operations, Convenient & Reliable Service, High Performing Workforce, Service Quality, Employee Recruitment, Training & Retention.

BUDGETARY/FISCAL IMPACT:

There are no budgetary or fiscal impacts related to this report.

BACKGROUND/RATIONALE:

Throughout the first quarter, Emergency Operations Control Center (EOCC) remained active. The District operated without passenger capacity limits due to the State fully reopening the economy in June. Face masks were still required by the Transportation Security Administration (TSA). Forging ahead, service expansion plans continued. Staff prepared for schools to open and met with school leaders from Oakland Unified School District, West County, Alameda, Fremont, Newark, Berkeley, and private schools. Coinciding with a successful bus operator System Sign-Up in August, Operations restored more supplementary bus lines to schools, and Early Bird Express, All-Nighter, and select Transbay bus lines. Service expansion will continue progressively over the next twelve to eighteen months and will be reliant on hiring additional bus operators.

Incentivizing a return to higher ridership and the District's commitment to riders returning to in-office work, going back to school, visiting family and friends, and attracting new riders, was the implementation of fare-free bus rides each Friday in September. Local and Transbay routes, including TEMPO, were free of charge. The last two weeks of the first quarter ended with the highest daily average ridership: over 100,000 riders per

day.

Continuing a commitment to safety, especially in the wake of the Delta variant, Operations hosted two on-site vaccination clinics. Even though over a thousand employees already voluntarily reported vaccinated, more work needed to be done. Partnering with the Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU Local 192), vaccination clinics were held at Hayward and East Oakland operating divisions, in August and September, respectively. The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved vaccine Pfizer was made available to employees and their families. More vaccination clinics are planned for the second quarter.

As stated, Operations achieved many successes in this quarter. Perhaps as significant as these was a strong desire to connect and to do so safely. The August System Sign-Up, as referenced earlier, was conducted virtually via Zoom for the first time ever. This empowered bus operators to view the online process together with a supportive management team and interact whenever needed to make the best work assignment choices possible. Moreover, in September, Operations hosted a Town Hall meeting, well attended by over 192 employees, all done virtually via Zoom. The meeting was also made available in each Division's main gathering areas (often referred to as 'Gillie Rooms'). All learned about significant District projects from a diverse panel of speakers and being afforded opportunities to ask questions of staff including, the General Manager and participating department leads.

First-quarter ended on a celebratory note as mid-September began the celebration of Hispanic Heritage month. Achievements and contributions of Hispanic American champions were recognized not only in the District's internal newsletter but also in a special video as well. A planned virtual celebration entitled *Celebrando Nuestra Cultura* (Celebrating Our Cultures) with staff from Mexico, Colombia, Guatemala, El Salvador, and Nicaragua shared a cultural celebration from their country respectively.

Data Reporting

The data presented in this report is extracted on October 15, 2021, and may differ from the "live" District KPIs. The Quarterly Operations Performance Report provides information on programs within the District designed to improve the performance, reliability, cleanliness, and safety of the District's bus service. The FY2022 Q1 Attachments provide graphical representations of the performance of the programs.

Employee Recognition

To continually recognize outstanding employees who are an important part of achieving Division goals and objectives, the following employees were recognized as Employees of the Month during this quarter:

Transportation	Jul-21	Aug-21	Sep-21
Road Supervision/OCC	Preston Enis	Roger Cottle	Chris Sanderfer
Division 2: Emeryville	Elaine Simmons	Candace Freeman	German Zambrano
Division 3: Richmond	Ezra Curry	Alfonso Diazgranados	Tynisha Britton
Division 4: East Oakland	James Bowie	Stephen Walker	John Green
Division 6: Hayward	Ravideep Atwal	Dong Wei	Frances Renee North

Maintenance	Jul-21	Aug-21	Sep-21
Division 2: Emeryville	Patrick Harvey	William Chang	Isaac Paulin

Division 3: Richmond	Jose Guillen	Michael Siverson	Alejandro Mayo
Division 4: East Oakland	Matthew Grimm	Henry Young	Manuel Amaral
Division 6: Hayward	Michael Leite	Ricardo Duenas	Christopher Souza
Central Maintenance	Willie Crittenden	Diogo Albuquerque	Francisco Hernandez

On-Time Performance

(Reference Attachment 1, Chart 1: On-Time Performance)

On-Time Performance (OTP) is a District Key Performance Indicator (KPI) with the goal to achieve 72% or higher. System-wide OTP average in Q1 was 73.16% versus 74.49% in the prior quarter. The District met or exceeded the goal in July (75.91%) and August (72.71%) but did not meet this goal in September (70.87%). Average OTP for Transbay routes was 73.86% versus 74.49% in the prior quarter.

Performance declined in Q1 due to the increase in ridership, return of school service, and many businesses returning employees back to work. Operations Control Center (OCC) staff continues to utilize line management methods to monitor and track on-time performance. Each controller is responsible for reviewing and monitoring performance of a specified Division. During the quarter, standby buses were deployed when necessary with every available Operator to quickly respond to increased ridership or to help reduce overcrowding and pass-ups resulting from compliance with physical distancing limitations established by Federal and State guidelines.

Ridership

(Reference Attachment 1, Chart 2: Ridership)

System-wide weekday Ridership in Q1 averaged 87,196 versus 65,103 in the prior quarter. Ridership is steadily recovering and as referenced earlier, ending this quarter with daily high average in September that averaged over 100,000 riders since the start of the pandemic. Weekday Ridership through the quarter was: July (70,451), August (88,080) and September (103,057). Weekday ridership on Transbay lines during Q1 averaged 4,565 versus 3,294 in the prior quarter. Transbay Ridership accounted for 5.23% of system wide weekday ridership.

Ridership in general has been steadily increasing month-over-month; however, in September ridership increased significantly due to fare-free Fridays. This yielded an eight (8) percent increase in overall ridership. The return of school service and passengers going back to work also contributed to increasing ridership.

Service Operated Percentage

(Reference Attachment 1, Chart: Service Operated)

System-wide percent of Service Operated in Q1 was 94.38% versus 97.56% in the prior quarter. The Service Operated KPI goal is 99.5%. The District did not meet this goal during any one month in the quarter: July (97.61%), August (92.63%) and September (92.89%).

This KPI was impacted by operator availability. More absences occurred in this quarter due to Senate Bill 95 (California) and Paid Sick Leave (SPSL) establishing supplemental paid sick leave for reasons related to COVID-

19. This is in addition to the already established sick leave law in California. Many employees remained off work for a variety of reasons from childcare needs to health concerns with of an employee or dependents or were identified as being in the “at risk” category.

To help mitigate impacts, each Division developed a Division “Hot” list to identify priority routes that are required to be filled in the event of a workforce shortage. Operations Control Center communicates with each Division to monitor the line management process. This District-wide collaborative effort significantly helped with covering service during the quarter.

Operator Log-On Rate

(Reference Attachment 1, Chart 4: Operator Log-On Rate)

Operator Log-On Rate is a District KPI with the goal of achieving 95.0% or higher. The system-wide average rate in Q1 was 95.59% versus 98.28% in the prior quarter. The District exceeded the KPI target during July (96.99%) and August (95.34%) but did not meet this goal in September (94.43%).

Line Management groups at each Division track and monitor log-on performance, address systematic issues, log-on bus operators if needed, and coach bus operators with reminders to log-on before they depart from the Division. This combined effort resulted in sustained improvement and performance of the log-on percentage KPI.

However, during the review period the District experience several system outages in both August and September which impacted performance. With system outages, log-on data is not captured entirely. It’s important to note that Operations Control Center (OCC) still had the ability to track and communicate with each bus. Innovation and Technology Department is working with Clever Devices to identify system outage issues and how to address these in a timely manner.

Operator Unavailability

(Reference Attachment 1, Chart 5 & 6: Scheduled/Unscheduled Unavailability)

Total Operator Unavailability is a District KPI with the goal of remaining below a combined total of 22.50%: (1) Scheduled (8.50%) and (2) Unscheduled (14.00%). The system-wide average for Total Operator Unavailability in Q1 was 34.50% versus 31.55% in the prior quarter.

System-wide average Scheduled Operator Unavailability in Q1 was 9.25% versus 8.18% in the prior quarter. Scheduled Operator Unavailability met the District goal of being below or at 8.50% in August (7.49%) but was above this threshold in July (10.18%) and September (10.07%).

System-wide average Unscheduled Operator Unavailability in Q1 was 25.25% versus 23.37% in the prior quarter. Unscheduled Operator Unavailability did not meet the goal of less than 14.00% during any month in the quarter: July (24.15%), August (26.25%) or September (25.36%).

Bus Operator availability was also impacted this quarter due to Senate Bill 95 and Paid Sick Leave (SPSL) establishing supplemental paid sick leave for reasons related to COVID-19. Absenteeism may continue to be unstable and reflect the ever-changing conditions caused by pandemic. Staff remains engaged for up-to-date

information and communicates frequently with employees and our labor union partners. Moreover, Staff Report 21-506 addresses efforts to retain and engage the current bus operator workforce and operator unavailability to include the roles that the Leave Management Committee and the Alternative Dispute Resolution Committee play.

Accident Rates

(Reference Attachment 1, Chart 7 & 8: Passenger Falls/Vehicle Accidents)

The system-wide average rate of Passenger Falls per 100,000 Miles in Q1 was 1.56 versus 1.58 in the prior quarter. The goal for Passenger Falls met the District's KPI target of less than 3.25 in each month of the quarter: July (1.57), August (1.66) and September (1.44).

The system-wide average rate of Vehicle Collisions per 100,000 Miles in Q1 was 4.22 versus 3.65 in the prior quarter. The District achieved the KPI target of less than 4.00 during July (3.91) but did not achieve this goal in August (4.50) and September (4.26).

The Accident Reduction Taskforce meets monthly to analyze the root causes of incidents and develop initiatives targeted at minimizing passenger falls and vehicle collisions. Accidents that occurred during the period were evaluated by this taskforce, which initiated new campaigns as well as updated others to focus on the highest accident types. One initiative is to engage with Operators on all accident types, whether preventable or not, to get their feedback and raise awareness. Another critical initiative is activating daily safety messages sent from Operations Control Center (OCC) and broadcast to all buses. Messages are concise and diverse, each with the purpose to emphasize pertinent personal and defensive driving safety reminders. Finally, traffic is beginning to increase on roadways, even more important for the taskforce to put a higher performance focus with this KPI.

Miles Between Chargeable Road Calls

(Reference Attachment 1, Chart 9: Miles Between Chargeable Road Calls)

Miles Between Chargeable Road Calls (MBCRC) is a Maintenance KPI with the goal to meet or exceed 5,400 miles between chargeable road calls. System-wide MBCRC in Q1 was 7,455 miles versus 6,888 in the prior quarter. MBCRC exceeded the District's goal in each month of the quarter: July (7,151), August (7,958) and September (7,256).

The Road Call Reduction Taskforce (RCRT) analyzes road calls to prevent repeat failures and develop initiatives to increase fleet reliability. With the updated OCC Road Call Guideline Manual implemented over one year ago, this bus fleet troubleshooting guide enables OCC Controllers to assist Bus Operators in resolving many common bus issues experienced while in service. A contingency fleet was also approved allowing the maintenance team to focus efforts on the active fleet used to deliver service and setting aside some of the older buses that are not required for current service levels. This strategy continues to help in achieving a lower number of road calls across the fleet.

Bus Cleanliness Inspection - Overall Rating

(Reference Attachment 1, Chart 10: Bus Cleanliness Inspection - Overall Rating)

The system-wide average for Bus Cleanliness Inspection Overall Rating in Q1 was 7.97 versus 8.12 in the prior quarter. The District did not meet the KPI target of 8.10 but was close in each reporting month: July (8.05), August (7.99), and September (7.86).

The Bus Cleanliness Taskforce meets monthly to analyze, investigate, and solve issues regarding bus cleanliness. Continual focus resides in those areas receiving the lowest rating in the monthly quality assurance inspections. Service Employees continue to provide enhanced cleaning and disinfecting on the fleet in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Staffing shortages and bus wash equipment under repair contributed to lower than normal scoring.

Journey Level Mechanic Staffing

Led by a District and ATU Local 192 labor management leadership team known as “Progress In Action” (PIA), the Maintenance Career Ladders Training Program (also known as Mechanic Helper) was established to create direct career ladders for front line employees who otherwise may not have the opportunity for a career advancement with Maintenance. The inaugural launch of the Mechanic Helper program began with the first day of class on July 8, 2019. To date, two cohorts completed year-long programs awarding five employees a new career on the pathway to becoming Journey Level Mechanics.

Sixteen apprentice mechanics are currently active in the District’s State of California approved Heavy Duty Coach Maintenance Mechanic Apprenticeship Program. Of these, the Mechanic Helper program successfully graduated a former Service Employee into the apprenticeship program. Moreover, three more employees were promoted, two Service Employees and one Bus Operator, into the year-long pre-apprenticeship. Conversely, external recruiting for Journey Level Mechanics remains on hold. Human Resources will continue to evaluate staffing needs and is currently developing new recruitment strategies.

Protective Services Report

(Reference Attachment 1, Table 1: Protective Service Report)

The Q1 performance is based on data from the Alameda County Sheriff’s Department. Contra-Costa County Sheriff’s data will be securely incorporated once the data is automated through the District’s Innovation and Technology (IT) Department’s Data Integration and Management Environment (DIME). Staff will continue to refine the data collection and validation process to establish performance benchmarks utilizing industry standards and best practices.

The percentage of AC Transit related activity has a 95% target setting goal. This goal was met in each of the three months in Q1: July (98.3%), August (98.2%) and September (98.5%) with a total average of 98.4%. Average response time for all calls was four minutes and thirty-five seconds (4:35) where 71.9% of the responses were under 5 minutes and 28.1% of responses over 5 minutes had an average time of fifteen minutes and forty-seven seconds (15:47).

Additional metrics are provided in Table 1 of the attachment that provides Q1 incident totals on altercations (27 total), arrests (61 total), citations (944 total), bus activity (5,535 total). Sheriff Deputies responded to passenger falls in July 6 out of 12 times or 50.0%; in August, deputies responded to 2 out of 2 calls or 100%; and in September, deputies responded 4 out of 8 times or 50.0%. During the quarter overall average for a deputy response to slips, trips, and falls was 54.5%. Deputy Sheriffs also made a total of seven (7) mental

health referrals in lieu of arrest during Q1.

ADVANTAGES/DISADVANTAGES:

This report does not recommend a course of action with notable advantages or disadvantages.

ALTERNATIVES ANALYSIS:

This report does not recommend an alternative analysis.

PRIOR RELEVANT BOARD ACTION/POLICIES:

There are no prior relevant Board actions/policies.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. FY2022 Q1 - Operations Quarterly Performance Report: Charts & Table

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