

ALAMEDA-CONTRA COSTA TRANSIT DISTRICT



STAFF REPORT

MEETING DATE: 5/8/2019

Staff Report No. 19-125

TO: AC Transit Board of Directors
FROM: Michael A. Hursh, General Manager
SUBJECT: Operator Safety

BRIEFING ITEM

RECOMMENDED ACTION(S):

Consider receiving a report on operator safety.

BUDGETARY/FISCAL IMPACT:

There are no current direct fiscal impacts related to this report.

BACKGROUND/RATIONALE:

AC Transit is committed to the safe operation of our network of coaches, which includes the personal safety of transit riders, employees, and the public at large. One critical safety element is managing the safety of operators. Coach operators are the District's first responders for any incident involving their vehicles and their passengers. As such, the District has taken proactive steps to ensure ongoing measures are in place that support a robust safety program districtwide.

A collaboration between the Safety, Transportation and Maintenance Departments led to the creation of a pilot program to test some operator protective doors. Staff actively sought the input of ATU Local 192 during the review of prototypes for the pilot. ATU equally played a central role in the door's installation and review of its efficacy for Operators. The door is designed to minimize or avert potential safety issues for Operators. Staff launched the pilot onboard coaches 1532 and 1582. Both coaches are also outfitted with a pilot real-time video monitor. The monitors are specifically positioned, above the Operator, for visibility to each onboarding passenger. Additionally, the Safety and Protective Services staff is facilitating enhanced conflict resolution training during New Bus Operator classes, and for all transportation Road Supervisors.

BUS BARRIER AND MONITOR PILOT TESTING

Onboard Closed-Circuit TV Monitor (CCTV)

CCTV monitors have been installed onboard three vehicles. The 10" monitor, mounted on the upper left panel of the operator compartment area, is visible to all passengers boarding the coach. It displays a real-time image of some recordings by the onboard surveillance system. Demonstrating to passengers that CCTV technology is in use is intended to promote appropriate conduct onboard.

For a period of 10-months, no incidents occurred on both buses with the onboard monitors installed. The

review committee determined the onboard monitor completed a successful evaluation period and is currently in the procurement process. Once funding is secured, staff will retrofit an estimated 350-400 coaches with monitors. The onboard monitors are now added to the District's bus specifications for future purchases.

Operator Protective Doors (OPD)

Operator Protective Doors (OPD), in conjunction with the Onboard CCTV Monitor, have been piloted on two 40-foot coaches. There are two prototypes of the OPD under evaluation. The first is constructed of a transparent plexiglass material, while the second prototype is a steel door with a tempered glass window for transparency.

The OPD launched September 5, 2018 and is currently in the evaluation process districtwide. Each division will offer Operator evaluations following a 60-day in-service deployment. Evaluations are expected to be completed in early summer 2019.

Ad Card Campaign

The Marketing & Communications and Transportation Departments, in collaboration with ATU, developed an advertising card campaign. The advertisement featured four operators and an Operator Safety Committee selected tagline: *We work. We play. We ride. Let's get home safely together.* The ad cards districtwide installation was April 25, 2018.

A-Pillar Monitoring System

A-Pillar monitoring systems are now being piloted on three coaches. This system uses an exterior camera mounted to the upper left side of the coach to feed real-time images to a 5.5" X 11" vertical monitor mounted on the interior A-Pillar. The A-Pillar Monitoring System is designed to display an image of the environment obscured by the left side view mirror and A-pillar. The display only activates when the vehicle speed is below 15 mph. The evaluation period for this equipment began in February 2019 and is expected to conclude by August 2019.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION TRAINING RESULTS

Enhanced conflict resolution training courses, under the direction of AC Transit Safety and Protective Services staff, launched March 2018. In just over one-year, 197 employees have completed the new training course. ATU, the Training and Maintenance Departments and veteran Operators have undergone training. It should be noted, the bulk of successful completions are New Bus Operators and Transportation Supervisors. Staff is currently selecting additional training personnel to better accommodate increasing class sizes and frequency. Additional trainers will enable the District to reach its target of fully trained personnel in approximately one year. Respondent feedback has been positive with staff identifying the course material as pertinent to a safer onboard environment.

SUMMARY

AC Transit's success in preserving a culture of safety is dependent on a well-trained and dedicated staff. In partnership with ATU Local 192, new programs, enhanced protocols and refresher trainings will continue to be introduced to the Operator workforce to promote safety and wellness.

ADVANTAGES/DISADVANTAGES:

The implementation of these programs will continue to improve overall operator safety. The re-enforcement of providing a safe and reliable experience for the passengers and the operators is paramount. With AC Transit humanizing the operator position with our passengers, it will create a more secure environment. Operators will have an increased perception of security and management support.

There are no disadvantages to receiving this report.

ALTERNATIVES ANALYSIS:

There are no alternative actions.

PRIOR RELEVANT BOARD ACTION/POLICIES:

None.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Barrier and Monitor Pictures
2. Car card Advertisement

Approved by:

Salvador Llamas, Chief Operating Officer

Reviewed by:

Denise C. Standridge, General Counsel

Beverly Greene, Executive Director of External Affairs, Marketing & Communications

Michele Joseph, Director of Marketing and Communications

Cecil Blandon, Director of Maintenance

Kerry Jackson, Protective Services Manager

Tabby Davenport, Safety Administrator

Julia Kocs, Marketing and Communications Manager

Prepared by:

Derik Calhoun, Director of Transportation